SERMONS
OF M. IOHN CALVIN
VPON THE FIFTH BOOKE OF
Moſes called Deuteronomie:
Faithfully gathered word for word as he preached
diuers in ſpes Pulpit;
Together with a preface of the Miniſters of the Church of
Geneua, and the principall matters handled by the Doctor there.
All ſhewing an ordinarie courſe of Gods Table, for expounding
the holie Scriptures in the Congregation.

Tranſlated out of French by ARTHVR GOLDING.

AT LONDON,
Printed by Henry Middleton
for GEORGE BISHOP.
Anno Domini 1583.

THE SERMONS OF M. IOHN CALVIN UPON THE FIFTH BOOKE OF MOSES called Deuteronomie:

Faithfully gathered word for word as he preached them vpon the Pulpit:

Together with a preface of the Ministers of the Church of Geneua vpon their seuerall Sermons made by the Deacons there.

Translated out of French by ARTHVR GOLDING.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE

Syr Thomas Bromley Knight, Lord Chauncelour of *England, one of her Maiesties most honourable priuie* Counsell, his singular good Lord, health, prosperitie, and increase of Honour.

BEing desirous to testifie my dutifull minde towardes your good Lordship, I thought there could be no better meanes in all respectes, than the dedication of this present worke, which containeth a large exposition of the whole Lawe of God, and of the practise thereof in the Commonwealth of Israel: whereof the onely reading with due consideration, may iustly commend it many wayes, euen to such as are of greatest learning, wisedome, authoritie and yeares. For if we haue an eye to the author of the groundworke thereof, it is God and not man. If to the Lawemaker, it is the Lawe of the Iudge of the whole world, the lampe of light, the welspring of wisedome, the touchstone of truth, the rule of right, the ground of godlinesse, the bond of blessednesse, the loadstarre to life, the quener of our vnderstanding, and the gouernour of our wits: the faithfull following whereof is the way to welfare, the procurer of peace, the path of true pleasure, the entrie of immortalitie, and the harbourer of happinesse. Or, if we haue an eye to the maner of the deliuering thereof: it is most wonderful, accompanied with many great miracles, signes, and tokens, and honoured with the glorie and maiestie of Gods owne presence. If to the intent of the Lawegiuer: it is the repayring and reforming of man according to the Image of his maker, in true holinesse and righteousnesse. If to the end of the Lawe, it is to driue vs vnto Christ, that by him we might be saued. If to the obedience which is required therin: it is altogether perfect, holie & euerlasting. All which things are not onelie great, but the greatest that can be, and fuller of maiestie and glorie than can be expressed or conceiued by man. Againe, if we haue an eye to the parties by whose seruice and ministerie this Lawe was published: but was a man peculiarlie chosen of God, indued with most excellent gifts, full of the holy Ghost, such a prophet as neuer had his like (Christ onlie excepted) a figure of Christ, familiar with God, a perfect patterne of a good gouernour, and a verie father of his Commonweale. Or if we haue an eye to the parties to whom it was deliuered: they were a people whom God had purposely chosen, redeemed, and deliuered from most miserable thraldome, to the intent to be their King and to dwell among them, and that they should be vnto him a holie people and a royall Priesthoode: for euen which things are further most excellent and singular prerogatiues. And as for the Preachers of these Sermons, by whom the foresaid things are laide forth, and expounded to the better vnderstanding of the Reader: it is well knowen, that for the manifold talents and excellent gifts which God had enforced vpon him, and for his diligent and most painfull employing of the same to the beating downe of Idolatrie and superstition, to the winning of soules vnto God, and to the edifying of Christes flocke: he was in his life time, and yet still is, a man of great reputation and reuerence. As for mine owne trauell in translating this worke, I humbly submit the iudgement and censure thereof to your Lordships fauourable acceptation, the obteinement whereof shall greatlie increase my gladnesse in that I haue done any thing whereby the Church of GOD is or may be any whit edified. *Written the xxj. of December, 1582.*

Your good Lordships most humble
alwaies at Commaundement,

ARTHVR GOLDING.

¶. ij.

To the Christian Reader, Grace and Peace from GOD, &c.

IT is no small fauour that wee daily receiue from the hands of our God, partly by the publike ministerie of his word, and partlie by the priuate reading of such good workes as by the meanes of manie his faithfull seruants he hath published and spread abroad in this last age of the world. But as the beholding of this doth make manie Godly minded to reioyce in that they see Gods great goodnes striuing continuallie to ouercome the malice and frowardnesse of mans minde: So on the otherside it pincheth them at the heart when they perceiue not only what slender entertainment Gods graces haue amongst vs, but euen what manifest contempt is offered vnto them, while men notwithstanding the wonderful sunshine of Gods holie trueth, remaine in as great darknesse almost, in respect of iudgement, and be as dissolute and vnruthfull in their conuersation as euer they were, in the time of the most grosse and palpable blindnes. Would to God that the miserable experience of our dayes were not too plaine a proofe of this point: And yet this is not spoken either as in dislike of our state with some discontented people, or to the discrediting and defacing of Gods religion which we professe, with the preaching Papists (who with one blow at the Gospel, would if they could, ouerthrow the two States both of Religion and policie,) but in all loue and affection, to make this careles generation more studious to labour to abound both in sound knowledge of the trueth, and in all holie obedience to the same. In which respect, not onelie are these few lines written at this present, but that notable worke of Master Caluins Sermons vpon Deuteronomie published, & thus in our owne mother Language: wherevnto what paine and cost hath beene bestowed, that they might come forth as beneficiall to the Christian Reader as might be, though I my selfe may speake much in trueth as an argument of some weight, to induce the godly brethren to the buying and reading thereof; yet letting that point passe as a matter not much to be standed vpon, I minde onely to presse those things, and that also in very few words, which shall be most materiall. And that is, that as all states and conditions of men may out of the same fetch many profitable points for their instruction both in faith and obedience towards God and men: So particularly if a man would contribute his endeuour to conuince Papists, and other Heretikes, to conuert the wicked, or encourage the fainthearted, or comfort the afflicted conscience with doubt, with the sight of sinne, or performe any other seruice towards God, himselfe, or others, he shall haue matter, and that large enough plentifully manifested vnto him for the performance of these and all other duties whatsoeuer. Wherefore I would admonish thee (good Reader) to get it speedily, seruedly diligently, and remember it faithfully, and to express it fruitfully in thy conuersation, to the glorie of God, the profite of his people, and the saluation of thine owne soule through Christ. In whose loue desirous

Thine vnfayned, T. W. the Lord
his vnworthie Seruaunt.

To all the faithfull which hold the holie faith of the true Catholike Church, and generallie to all Christian Readers: Greeting in Iesus Christ our Lord and GOD. Amen.

IT is not without cause, that the psalme speaking of the great benefits which GOD had bestowed vpon the Iewes, among whom was his Church at that time, doth cheefly magnifie the grace which he had vttered towards them in deliuering vnto them the sure rule of his seruice, the true maner of good life, & the right way of saluation, aswell by the writings of Moses and other his seruants, as also by the liuely voyces of them agreeing with their writings. For without that all the abundance and prosperitie which they could haue had, had beene but as accesse against them to haue increased stil the measure of their condemnation. Therefore hauing spoken of Gods defending of the gates of the holy citie Ierusalem, of his blessing vpon the inhabiters thereof, of the peace and quietnesse that was in all coasts about it, and of his carefulnesse in furnishing it with all things necessarie for the maintenance of the whole people: finally he setteth downe the principal point whereon the sweetnesse and assurance of all the rest hung, saying: He hath giuen forth his word vnto Iacob, & his statutes and iudgements vnto Israell. And this benefite was at that time peculiar to the citie of Ierusalem, and to the people that came of Abraham, according as it is said expresly in the same text, that God had not delt so with any other nation, nor giuen them knowledge of his iudgements. But we know that Iesus Christ hath by his comming made the same grace to extend to al nations of the earth, and that looke whatsoeuer he had promised by his Prophets in the holy scriptures, he hath performed it by his holy Apostles, who haue preached the Gospell faithfully, as their writings do autentikely, fully, and sufficiently witnesse. This aduertisement therefore belongeth as now to all churches of our lord Iesus Christ, in what countries soeuer they be, so as they ought to acknowledge Gods mercie in that he teacheth them familiarly and in such language as they may vnderstand, by the reading and preaching of his worde. For so little ought the long intercessing of so great a benefite (inforced through the tyrannie of Antichrist) to make vs to holde scorne of it, now that God renueth the course thereof againe: that contrariwise wee should thinke it the more sweete and amiable, praying God for restoring vs the thing through his great mercie, which Satans vnderlings had wickedly bereft vs of: acknowledging that God had beene too sore prouoked by the sinnes of the worlde, when he punished it in such sort: and seruing him with such obedience according to his worde, as we may not prouoke him hereafter, to vse the like vengeance against vs or our children after vs. And no doubt but this lesson is told vs throughout the whole Scripture, from the beginning to the end of it, and specially in the bookes of the New Testament, wherin the perfection of all learning is throughly comprised, wel written, and faithfully inrolled. Neuertheless, forasmuchas the bookes of Moses the seruant of god are as the fountain from whence all aftercomers, that is to wit both the Prophets and the Apostles, haue drawne water: you will not beleeue how greatly it is to the benefit and behoofe of the Church, to confer them with the other bookes of holy writ. And for the same cause hath God by his prouidence preserued them so woonderfully, from so many dangers through so long a race of so many hundred yeares. For there, besides other things, we see the antiquity of our faith, and that the substance of true religion hath alwaies been one, yea and that the very forme of it hath euer tended to the perfection that is fully and infallibly shewed vs in the holy writings of the New Testament. And in very deede whereas S. Peter saith generally of all the Prophets, that the faithfull do well to take

heede to their worden, that they may go forward in Christianitie: it is full certaine that therin he comprehendeth Moses as the foremost of them al. And in asmuch as he wrote of Iesus Christ, as Christ himself auoucheth in expresse words in ỹ fifth Chapter of S. Iohn: it may well be concluded (according also as saith the Apostle to the Hebrues) that his speaking and writing was to beare record of the things that were to be spoken afterward, namely by the son of God & his Apostles, as we reade them written in the new Testament. Now among the bookes of Moses, al such as can skil of the wil easily grant, that as *Deuteronomie* is the last, so it teacheth whereto the other bookes tend, shewing the meane how to fare the better by them, yea and containing as it were the summe of the. Therfore it is very likely, that that was the cause which moued our welbeloued brother or rather good father Master Iohn Caluin, that most faithfull minister of the Gospell of Iesus Christ, to preach and expound the same in the Church, bicause that by his setting forth therof, he should after a sort cõprehend the other next three also, so farre forth as the vnderstanding of them should be needfull for the people. His sermons therfore were faithfully gathered in order, like as his sermons were which he preached vpon other bookes of ỹ scripture, wherof many haue beene printed here already. And in the meane time til all the rest of his sermons may by Gods helpe be brought to light, it hath seemed good that these same should be put forth first in the meane while: the impression wherof should not neede any commendation or preface, but that the long continuance of custome requireth it. For as many as haue heard true report of the person and skil of that good man Master Iohn Caluin, wil be sufficiently drawne to the reading of his sermons, by finding his name here set vnto them: assuring themselues that they shal not finde any thing in them, but such as agree with Gods spirite, that is to say profitable, good, and holy things. As touching the principall and notablest points that are to be found here, there might very well be made a rehearsall of them, to giue the readers some tast of the whole booke of the said sermõs, at their first entry. But forasmuch as it is better that euery man should hie him to the reading of them, and to heare the preacher himself speake as it were in his owne person, we purpose not to enter into such discourse, which might peraduenture be somewhat with the longest. Onely we will touch one point, wherof some word hath beene cast forth already heretofore: that is to wit, that this booke of Moses beeing well read and vnderstoode, doth shew sufficiently who they be that holde the true religion, and resolueth a question wherof men seeme partly to doubt yet at this day, and partly to determine ouer boldly after their owne fancie, against the expresse word of God. We speake not here of Turks, Iewes, Sarasins, and such other, which are commonly called Miscreants, or Infidels as they be in deede: but we speake of the nations which haue long time borne the renowne of Christianitie, bicause that through Gods gracious goodnes some signe of holy baptisme hath continued amongst them, and Iesus Christ is professed there in name. We see then that there is great variance nowadaies. The one saith, that Christianitie requireth, that in seruing God, men should, or at least wise may haue Images, & set them vp in churches for Christian people: the other side vpholdeth on the contrary part, that it is a vilanous defiling of religion, and an vtter forsaking of the true Christianitie, and a taking in of a bastard religion in steede of it. If men can finde in their hearts to heare Moses speake in this booke (as they needes must, or else be conuicted of renouncing God the Father and his sonne our Lord Iesus Christ who is very God and euerlasting life, and of resisting the holie Ghost:) he sheweth the thing which he forgetteth not in his other bookes also, namelie that God could neuer away to be serued after that fashion, but euermore expresselie forbade images in case of Religion, and threatened his owne people with horrible punishments, if they held not themselues contented with that single order, to rest thereupon without attempting any further. Were there no more but the onely text of the second commandement, it were ynough and sufficient. For (as Moses wrote in the twentith of Exodus, and hath rehearsed againe at large in the fifth of this present booke,) God saith, *Thou shalt*

not

not make to thy selfe any grauen image. And to the intent that no man should vse any wrangling by standing vpon the particular, he addeth, *nor the likenesse of any thing that is in heauen aboue, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters vnder the earth*. Moreouer, to shew that he will not haue men to yeelde them any part of his seruice, how little soeuer it be: he addeth, *Thou shalt not bowe downe to them, nor worship them*. Last of all he addeth a horrible and dreadefull threate, *that he will take vengeance vpon the transgressors and their children, to the third and fourth generation*. This commandement then is set downe in so expresse termes, that the matter is as manifest as may be. And therefore the lusty laddes that haue holde the people in error, perceyuing the great gaine which they and their bellies reaped, by this meane or occasion of mingling Images with religion, haue ouerleapt this second commaundement, and diuided the last commaundement into two, that the full number of tenne might be found there still. But besides this, Moses deliuereth so often expositions of it euen in this selfesame booke, and setteth forth so liuely and precise discourses thereof: that if any man will not giue place thereunto in these dayes, this prouerbe may well be verified of him, that none is so deafe as he that will not heare: and that he is ouerpreached vnto, which hath no care to doe well. For as touching the arguments which some haue alledged for that purpose in these latter yeres, although they haue beene oftentimes chafed and rechafed, yet are they so starke and stiffe for colde, that they haue no force nor might to giue any holinesse to Images in the Temples of the Christians, as hath beene well shewed to the forementioned gainesayers in due time and place, and shall still hereafter whensoeuer they list to giue eare. And as for vs, we haue on the one side, to continue in praying vnto God, that he vouchsafe to touch the heartes of the people and of their leaders and gouernours, effectually by his holy spirite, so as they may well vnderstande this point, which would be a good meane to appease Gods wrath, and to open a great gappe to the reformation that might insue from better to better. And on the other side it standeth vs on hand to strengthen our selues in the infallible certaintie of the holy Christian religion and true Apostolike faith, which we holde with the other holy Churches that are reformed. And as concerning this point, no doubt but it is an inuincible fortresse vnto vs, that we are able to shewe forth this thing from age to age: namely, first of all that the true Apostolike and Primatiue Church had no Images at all in their holy meetings, whether it were in Temples or elsewhere, ne willed the people to kneele downe to them, or to set them vp before them. That likewise aforetimes when the Church was gouerned by the Iewes, both after their returne from Babylon, and euen in the captiuitie it selfe, the good and faithfull sort did warily keepe themselues from it: that if yee mount vp yet higher, the true Prophetes were commended for crying out against Images and the manner of worshipping of Images, and the holy Kinges were well liked of God for pulling downe, rasing out, and rooting vp the occasions of such superstitions among their people: that the good Iudges and gouernours had doone likewise before the kings: and that euen Moses himselfe (who was auncienter than any others that haue left any bookes of long time) spake of them after the same manner, and dealt accordingly thereto, because he had both the administration of the doctrine and the gouernement of the common weale together, which was not ordinarie afterwards in others. Yee see then, yee see howe the true Catholike Church is on their side which follow the Gospell, whatsoeuer men list to say to the contrarie. And nowe that we be deliuered from outwarde Idolatrie, it standeth vs on hande to looke neerely to our selues, that our life bee agreeable to the pureneſse of Gods seruice, to the end we shunne Couetousnesse (which also is named Idolatrie) ambition, excesse and vanitie of the worlde, taking good heede (as much as is possible for vs to doe) that no man bee withdrawne from the Gospell and the loue thereof through our vndiscreete dealings: to the ende it may appeare that whereas the disobedient doe seeke excuses and take occasion of stumbling, they doe it

without any cauſe giuen on our behalfe. Furthermore the ſtrange blindneſſe or rather wilfull ſtubbornneſſe which is to be ſeene nowadaies in a number of them that cal themſelues Chriſtians, ought to make vs ſo much the earneſter in praying, to the end aforeſaid, that is to wit, that our good God may vouchſafe to worke ſo effectually in the hearts of all men, as well great as ſmall, Kings, Princes, and other gouernors, as their ſubiects: as the wretched world may not alwais continue at the A,B,C of Chriſtianitie, without learning any further. We terme the ſecond commandement an A,B,C, becauſe it is and euer hath been one of the firſt and ſureſt grounds of the true religion, and is (as ye would ſay) a neceſſary appurtenance to the firſt commandement. For whoſoeuer mingleth the worſhipping of Images with the ſeruing of God, doth as much as in him lyeth, to ſet forth other gods than the true God. And it is a maruelous thing, that the world becommeth neuer the wiſer for all the great number of puniſhments which God hath powred out, and ſtil powreth out to warne vs to come to repentance. For within theſe fiftie yeres, ſince which time God of his grace hath ſet vp the preaching of the goſpell in diuers places: beſides his ſufficient ſmiting of the people of the earth with his roddes in former yeres, he hath alſo made them feele his ſcourges diuers wayes, in puniſhing their contempt of his holy doctrine. Yet notwithſtanding we hope that God (conditionally that we continue in prayer) wil one day ſhew by more aboundant effect, that he hath heard the prayers of his ſillie faithfull ones, euen in this behalfe, and draw the reſt of his churches out of the miſerable deſolation, which hath laſted now too long by reaſon of our ſinnes. And hereof we haue good hanſel in the furtherance that he hath giuen already to the goſpell, notwithſtanding that Satan hath ſpit out his ſpite againſt it on all ſides. For albeit that the holy doctrine doe ſounde in the eares of the poore people in diuers places, the ſacraments of Baptiſme and of the Lords ſupper be miniſtred purely, the praiſes of God doring ſhirlely to mens vnderſtanding in the pſalms and ſongs, and the father is woorſhipped in the name of Ieſus Chriſt our hope and the onely aduocate of wretched ſinners: yet are there a number which hope, or at leaſtwiſe wiſh, that as the ſunne hath been eclipſed this yere, ſo there might be an euerlaſting eclips of the preaching of the goſpell: but by the helpe of God and of our great day ſunne Ieſus Chriſt, they ſhalbe deceaued. And in the meane time while Gods kingdome may inlarge it ſelfe ſtil further out here below, we pray al ſuch as are deſirous to haue the vnderſtanding and vſe of the doctrine of this godlie booke of Moſes, to take the paine to reade theſe preſent Sermons of the faithfull ſeruaunt of God Maſter Iohn Caluin: of whom like as the ſpeeche and pen ſerued the Church as long as he lined, (whatſoeuer ſome Balaams bable to the contrarie:) ſo we beleeue y his writings wil by Gods help edifie al men continuallie hereafter. Moreouer it were a needles thing to warne men, and to pray them to take heede that they make not the Printer to loſe the fruite of his labour, and his coſt which he was faine to be at in the printing of this preſent worke, were it not for the greedie and vnſatiable couetouſneſſe that reigneth nowadaies in men of that trade, by reaſon whereof diuerſe times they ouerrun one another without any honeſtie or conſcience. Surelie we had forborne to giue this warning, and had leuer to haue let the Printers alone to deale with their owne peculiar cafes, as they liſted among themſelues, if it were not for one reaſon which inforceth vs to fall purpoſelie into that matter: which is, that in ſome places they not onelie print againe in ſuch haſt the bookes of that excellent teacher Maſter Iohn Caluin that were erſt printed here, as it is pitifull to ſee the workemanſhip of the imprinting ſo ill corrected: but alſo moreouer, ſome haue gone ſo farre, as to prine in Maſter Caluins name the vnperfect copies which they haue gotten by peecemeale or ſtealth where they could come by them. We knowe not what they meane by it: but ſurelie they doe wrong both to the author, and to the Church of God. Yea and they open a gappe which may be dangerous in time to come, whenſoeuer any man will foyſt in bookes ſtained with wicked doctrine, to make them paſſe foorth vnder the name of a faithful ſeruant of God, as euery man knoweth hath

beene

him done to diuerse ancient doctors of the Church. Insomuch that euen S. Paul warneth the Thessalonians to beware of letters & Epistles that were made to run abroade in the Churches [vnder his name], as though he had been the very author of them. Truely, so long as it shall please our good God to preserue vs & the Church wherein he of his grace hath made vs shepherds: it is our duetie to find fault with such as wil needs father any other bookes vpon Caluin than his owne, or by their false additions corrupt those which he hath made truelie. But yet is it much better to preuent y danger aforehand, & to eschew the occasions thereof as neere as may be. Wherefore, in Gods name we beseech all such as haue any written copies, specially of the said authors sermons, not yet printed: to forbeare the putting of them forth, vntil they haue first but duely conferred with the originals, which are here in y keeping of one of the Deacons. And as touching them that are minded to print againe any worke of y said author that is printed alreadie, we pray them to haue regard to the common profit & edifying of the Church, rather than to the furtherance of their owne peculiar gaine. And herewithal we commend you all to the grace of God. The Lorde Iesus be with you, who is of y seed of Dauid according to the flesh, the verie son of the holy virgin Marie, the very Christ, & God blessed for euermore as S. Paul hath expressly written, and so haue we alwayes beleeued & do beleeue all of vs. Amen. Deare brethren, we commend our selues to your prayers. From Geneua this moneth of Ianuarie, 1567.

Your humble brethren, the Ministers of Gods word.

The Deacons and disposers of the goods that are giuen in almes to the poore strangers that are come hither into the citie of Geneua for Gods

words sake: to all faithfull and true Christians, helth and peace from our Lord Iesus.

FOrasmuch as our good & faithfull shepherds the ministers of this church, peradnenture fearing to be ouerlong or tedious to their readers, doin the end of their preface made to these sermons, but (as it were glauncinglie) touch one point, which notwithstanding is of great importance for the poore strangers that are come into this towne: to our seeming it would be thought neither amisse nor strange, if we for our duelies sake, declared the thing somewhat more at large, which they spake in one word, concerning the printing of the sermons of our late good father M. Iohn Caluin. Nowe then, for the better vnderstanding of the whole, you must consider that from the yere of our Lord 1549 forth on, the late M. Dennis *Ragueneau* being fled hither, gaue himselfe to the gathering of the Sermons word for word, which M. Iohn Caluin did ordinarilie make: and that with such swiftnes and cunning through the vse of certain notes & shapes, as they would escaped him euen from the beginning. Which thing when they saw which had the charge of the poore strangers at that time: although they had not any great sum of money wherewith to releeue the present needes, yet failed they not to take such order, that y said writer was intertained after a sort with some part of the same money, to the intent he might haue whereby to maintaine himselfe and his small familie, while he gaue himselfe wholly to the gathering of these sermons, & to the ingrossing of them faire againe afterward: because he should spare no time to any other businesse than that. He vnder tooke the charge, with condition that he should copie out all the Sermons fair into bookes of a certain standing or syse wherby they should be made, which he should deliuer to one of the Deacons to be faithfully kept, as a peculiar benefite belonging to the poore strangers, at whose charges the said matter was determined. And forasmuch as afterwards the number of the faithfull interested chiefly in the reading of Prayers and many that could not heare the liuely voice of this good seruant of God in the pulpit, were desirous as lesse liue to haue the things in writing which he preached openly, and prayed to be made partakers of them: in that respect & none other, the writer had leaue giuen him to deliuer copies of whatsoeuer sermons were demanded of him, to the end that such as receiued them as his hand might profite themselues by the doctrine of them, howbeit vpon condition that the same should not afterward in any wise preiudice to hinder the poore, for

whom

whom the originall copies were carefully preserued (as hath beene said), that they might be printed to the common benefite of them all, whensoeuer it should please God to giue them abilitie, as was done afterward. By reason hereof some which had gotten out copies that came to whole books, taking oportunity of the liberty which our Lord of his infinite goodnesse and mercie gaue to the realme of Fraunce, sticked not to cause some of them to be printed, not onely to the great hinderance of the poore, who by ỳ meanes were bereft of the thing that belonged vnto them: but also to the disaduantage of all the faithfull, inasmuch as those copies were neuer ouerlooked & conferred with the originals, which are kept diligently here: which is such a dede as we know not how to name in one word, and therefore do willingly leaue the iudgement therof to such as see whereto it tendeth, and what sequele may insue of it. For if euerie man may haue libertie to print at his pleasure, al the sermons which he can pretend to haue bin so gathered, whereas notwithstanding they haue not bin conferred with the originall copies which we haue here: who shall let them to falsifie the most part of the true sermons by adding or diminishing, and by mangling or nipping of them after their owne fancie? It is well knowen that the abusing of the names of Gods good and faithfull seruants, is no new thing. If such libertie be giuen, & men deale as they haue begun, in this case: what wil come of it, but that ỳ doctrine of saluation shall stand as it were at the courtesie of such as will make their owne deuices flie through the whole world, vnder pretence of setting the name of this good man to the titles of them? For sufficient proofe whereof, and to the end it should not be thought that we do wrongfully & without cause giue inkling of the things afore-said: we will briefly touch what hath bin doone herein a fewe yeares since; namely that there haue bin certaine men, who without any forecast, haue bin so bolde as to cause certain sermons vpon the Prophet Daniel to be printed, without vouchsafing to see the originall copie, or to be aduertised thereof from hence. And to couer their whole doings the better, they alledge that their so doing was for the glorie of God. Yea marie: but that should haue beene done without the hinderance of other men. And it is a wonder to see how such folke dare boast themselues to be of the reformed religion. For to thinke that Papists are the doers thereof, there is no likelihood at all, considering the hatred that they beare to that good man. Therefore it is not to be doubted, but that they be of that sort which crowd themselues into the number of the faithfull, and of the reformed Churches, and will needs seeme to be great Christians. But let all men iudge whether it be a dealing meete for them that feare God, so to filch away ỳ things that belong to the poore members of our Lord Iesus Christ. And this thing bringeth vs to the remembrance of another deede, whereof we be constrained to make our moane likewise to the whole world, to the end that such as wittingly withhold the goods of our poore folke, may aduise themselues better than they haue done hitherto, and make amends as they ought to do. The matter concerneth them that print or daylie cause to be printed, or which haue heretofore printed the Psalmes made into meeter by M. Beza. There is none of them all but he knoweth right wel, that he cannot with good conscience, ne ought also to print them, without paying to our poore folke the thing that was promised and agreed vpon before they were euer once put in print, as all of them can well enough tell. Yet notwithstanding the most part, and in maner all that haue had to do with that matter, would neuer yet pay aught of that which they ought to haue doone, for any thing that could be tolde them of it. But let them vaunt themselues to be good and faithfull Christians as much as they list: they shall not suffice make men beleeue that they haue so much conscience as the Papists had in that behalfe. For how ignorant so euer the Papistes were, yet would they neither take away nor withholde the things which they knew to belong to the poore. And therefore it is a great shame, that they which professe the Gospell, which resort to the Christian congregations, which receiue the holie supper of our Lord Iesus, and (to be short) which will needs be mustered in the rray of the faithfull, do no better, bethinke themselues of the discharging of their duelies. Surely we marueil how they dare presse to the open Sermons, where they be so of-

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ten condemned, at leaſtwiſe in generalitie. But it is ſeene by experience, that they be no whit mooued with them, but doe fall aſleepe, inſomuch that they thinke not that the great number of threatnings which are vttered againſt all ſuch as behaue not themſelues truſtilie towards their neighbours, and againſt ſuch as withhold other mens goods, ſpecially the goods that are appointed to the poore, do concerne themſelues. Yet notwithſtanding, howſoeuer any of them both doe take the matter, they ſhall one day be faine to feele to their coſt, that whatſoeuer is doone to the poore members of the ſonne of God, he taketh it to be done to his owne ſelfe, ſo great ſtore doth he ſet by them. Wherefore it were nowe high time that all ſuch folke ſhoulde looke more neerely to themſelues and to their duetie, and not ſuffer themſelues to be ſo caried away by their vnruly fancies and affections, which hinder them to make any conſcience in withholding the poore folkes goods, and in turning them to their owne priuate vſe. As touching ſome other ſort of Printers, which ſticke not to print againe immediatlie the copies that others haue printed at their great charges afore, and by that meanes doe bring to paſſe, that many good men dare not aduenture to print (among other things), a great number of the ſame authors ſermons which are here, and belong to our poore folke: the warning that is giuen thereof in the preface of the ſaid miniſters, (notwithſtanding that it be verie ſhort) ought well to reſtraine them, and to make it ſeeme to the world, that there is at leaſtwiſe as much modeſtie & honeſtie in them, as there appeareth to be in the wretched Papiſts that deale with the Art of printing. For they would be aſhamed to haue it caſt in their teeth, that they had incroched one vpon another. Thus much haue we thought good to adde in this behalfe, aſſuring our ſelues that none of the faithfull and of ſuch as feare God will thinke amiſſe of this warning, which we haue bin driuen to make in diſcharge of our duetie, which ought alone to be a ſufficient excuſe for vs if any man ſhould think that the things which we haue vttered are not material. But we hope that al men of good diſcretion & ſound vnderſtanding, will iudge that we neither could nor ſhould haue let ſlip ſo good an occaſion as this, to warne ſuch as print or cauſe things to be printed, to do their dueties towards the poore. At Geneua the 12. of Februarie, 1567.

The ſame Deacons.

IT falleth out well to the purpoſe, that when the former warning was ended, there remained a voide roome to put in this addition, which ſhall ſerue for a confirmation of the things that were ſpoken concerning the former maner of dealing, vſed in the printing of the ſermons vpon Danyel. For immediatly vpon the getting of a copie printed at Rochell by Bartilmew Berton, in the yeare of our Lord 1565, he that nameth himſelfe the firſt author of the putting of them abroade, gaue forth that they had bin kept as it were in priſon by the ſpace of twelue yeares or thereabouts, & that the Author of them had ſuppreſſed them and held them faſt locked vp, with ſuch other like ſayings deuiſed of his owne braine. But therein he ſheweth ſufficientlie by what meanes he came by thoſe copies, which were neuer kept backe from any that were deſirous to haue them, ſo it were but to reade them, albeit that they were kept from ſuch as would copie them out to defraud our poore folke of the benefite that was lawfully gotten for them. And whereas he reporteth that the copie which he cauſed to be imprinted, fell into the hands of a friend of his: he ſhoulde at leaſtwiſe haue inquired how that came to paſſe, and by what title his friend made it his owne, ſo as he durſt cauſe it to be printed. But it is apparant how great his fault was againſt our poore folk: and what pretence ſo euer he make, no man can doubt what zeale or affection draue him to do that thing. By the way, God grant that the Readers be not diſappointed of the profit which they ſhould reape of thoſe ſermons, & that they be put forth according as they were gathered, wherof we neither can nor wil iudge, vntill we haue read them throughly, & conferred them with the originall copies which we haue heere, which thing we will by Gods helpe doe ere it be long, that we may faithfully warne the readers thereof, againſt the next imprinting of them againe.

ten condemned, as lewd wife in generalitie. But it is feene by experience, that they be no whit moued with them, but doe full alcope, inasmuch that they thinke not that the great number of threatnings which are vttered against all such as belong not them selues vnfaithfully towards their neighbours, and against such as withhold other mens goods, specially the goods that are appointed to the poore, do concerne them selues. Yet not withstanding, howsoeuer any of them both doe take the matter, they shall one day be faine to feele to their cost, that whatsoeuer is doone to the poore members of the house of God, be taken it to be done to his owne selfe, to great losse doth he let by them. Wherefore it were neede high time that all such folke should looke more neerely to themselues and to their duetie, and not suffer themselues to be so carried away by their vnruly fancies and affections, which hinder them to make any conscience in withholding the poore folkes goods, and in turning them to their owne priuate vse. As touching some other sort of Printers, which labour not to print against immediatlie the copies that others haue printed at their great charges afore, and by that meanes doe bring to passe, that many good men dare not aduenture to print (among other things), a great number of the same authors sermons which are here, and belong to our poore folkes the warning that is giuen therof in the preface of the said minister, (notwithstanding that it be verie hon) oughe well to refraine them, and to make it seeme to the world, that there is as lawfull as much modestie & honestie in them, as there appeareth to be in the wretched Papists that deale with the Art of printing. For they would be ashamed to haue it said in deed, that they had incroched one vpon another. Thus much haue we thought good to adde in this behalfe, aduising our louing brethren of the faithfull and of such as feare God will thinke amisse of this warning which we haue bin driuen to make in discharge of our duetie, which ought also to be a sufficient excuse for vs if any man should think that the things which we haue vttered are not materiall. But we hope that all men of good discretion & iudgement will iudge that we could not (should not) haue let slip so good an occasion as this, to warne them as plaine as cattle things to be printed, to do their duelties towards the poore. At Geneua the 22. of Feb. 1567.

The Iames Deacons.

IT falleth out well to the purpole, that when the former warning was ended, there remained a voide roome to put in this addition, which shall serue for a confirmation of the things that were spoken concerning the former matter of printing, vttered in the printing of the sermons vpon Daniel. For immediatly vpon the printing of a copie printed at Rochell by Barnabee Breton in the yeere of our Lord 1567. the diligent minisle the first author of the printing of them abroade, gaue forth that they had bin kept as it were in prison by the space of twelue yeers or thereabouts, & that the Author of them had supprelled them and held them fast locked vp, with such other like things deuised of his owne braine. But therein he shewed himselfe by what meanes he came by those copies, which were neuer kept backe from any that were desirous to haue them, so it were but to reade them, albeit that they were kept from him as would copie them out to defraud our poore folke of the benefite that was lawfully gotten for them. And whereas he reporteth that the copie which he caused to be imprinted, fell into the hands of a friend of his: he should ere lastwise haue inquired how that came to passe, and by what title his friend made it his owne, for to be duly caused it to be printed. But it is apparant how euer his friendship was against our poore folke: and what pretence to euer he make, no man can doubt what zeale or affection drawe him to do that thing. By the way, God grant that the Readers be not diuerted of the profit which they should reape of those sermons, & that they be put forth according as they were gathered, whereof we neither can nor will iudge, vntill we haue read them throughly, & conferred them with the originall copies which we haue here, which thing we will by Gods helpe doe ere it be long, that we may finishly warne the readers thereof against the vncertaintie of them againe.

THE SERMONS of Master Iohn Caluin

vpon the fifth booke of Moses *called Deuteronomie.*

On Wednesday the xx. of March. 1555.

The first Sermon vpon the first Chapter.

HEre followe the wordes which Moses spake to all Israell beyond Iordan, in the wildernesse, in the plaine against the red sea, betweene Pharan and Tophell, and Laban, and Hazerot, and Dizahab.

2 There are eleuen iourneyes from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir, to Cades barne.

3 And it came to passe, that in the fortith yeere, the first day of the eleuenth moneth, Moses spake to the children of Israell, according to all that euer the Lorde had commanded him to say vnto them.

WHen God caused his lawe to be publishe in mount Horeb, after his conueying of the people out of the thral dome of Egypt, there by he shewed to what ende and purpose he had had pitie of his people in deliuering them: that is to wit, to be glorifyed thereby, as the marke whereunto we also must referre all the gracious giftes which he bestoweth vpon vs. Zacharie the father of S. Iohn Baptist, speaking of the great and souereigne deliuerance that was made in the
Luke.1.74. person of our Lord Iesus Christ, saith, that Gods discharging of vs from the hand and tyranny of our enemies, was to the end that we should serue him in holinesse and righteousnesse all our life long. And this is a doctrine very common throughout the whole holy scripture. And for the same cause also is it sayd by the prophet
Esay.43.21. Esay, that God hath created a people to set foorth his prayse. Seeing then that the Lawe was giuen to the people, to make them perceiue why they had bin deliuered from the bondage of Egypt: it was good reason that they should yeelde themselues to the obeying of God, which had shewed himselfe their redeemer in such wise. Neuertheleſſe the people were vntowarde, and could not finde in their hartes to yeelde themselues pliable, in hearkening to the things that were tolde them in the name of their God. Yet ought they of right to haue done it, seeing they had receiued so great & so inestimable a benefit. For God had vttered the mightie strength of his arme in deliuering the people. Therefore ought they to haue considered thus: Behold, our God hath magnified himselfe towardes vs after a wonderfull fashion, we haue had as it were a visible presence of his maiestie, if the heauens had opened and God had shewed himselfe to our eyes, we should not haue had a greater and more vndoubted assurance of his neerenesse vnto vs, to warrant vs that he was our leader. Seeing then that God is so come downe vnto vs, and that is hath pleased him to impart his goodnesse in such wise vnto vs: is it not reason that we should be wholy his? And seeing he hath reached out his hand to redeem vs, ought we not to be his heritage, inasmuch as he hath gotten vs by his owne mightie power? Had the people had one drop of wisedome, they should haue yeelded themselues with all humilitie, to receiue the doctrine that was preached to them by Moses. Yea and what authoritie deserued the Law, which was so confirmed with such store of miracles? For when God had chosen Moses to be his prophet: he not onely commaunded him to speake, but also tooke him vp into the mountaine, and separated him from the companie of men, to the ende that when he should come to set forth his Law, the people should accept him as an Angell, and not as a mortal creature. He was there fortie daies with-

out eating or drinking, to shewe that he was exempted from the common sort of men, and that God had taken him vp as it were into his heauenly glorie. And when he came downe againe, his face shone as bright as it had beene another sunne. Where as men attribute hornes vnto him, it is saide that he had sunne beames rounde about him, that is to say, he had such a brightnesse as he was faine to weare a veyle before his face. And where to serued that, but to ratifie and confirme the lawe which God had giuen and committed vnto him, and to make it knowen that it was not a doctrine deuised by a mortall man? Besides this, there was thundering and lightning and trumpets sounding [in the aire,] so as it seemed that all the worlde shoulde haue gone to wracke: and there was not any place either high or lowe, which did not shake & tremble when God went about to vtter his voice.

Seeing then that the lawe was so well sealed and with such maiestie: must it not needs be that the people were worse than blockes, when they hearkened not to their God speaking with such force? Yet for all that, the lawe was despised, & euen while God was preparing of his seruaunt Moses to set it forth, behold, the people coulde not abide to tarie the bringing of Gods wil vnto them, but made them a Calfe of golde, and fell flatly to setting vp of new superstitions, euen in spite of God, of whose power and fauour they had so often had experience. Againe, when the law was once giuen, the people trembled & quished for a while, insomuch that they were inforced to say, if God speake any more vnto vs we be vtterly vndone: there is no way w vs but death: and therwithal they stood aloofe from ỹ mountaine, according also as they were commanded. It shoulde seeme then that there was some reuerence. But the issue shewed that all was but hypocrisie, and it appeared well that they were not rightly touched in their hearts, nor had taken liuely roote to profit in the doctrine. We see then in effect, that when God did first of al publish his law, it had verie scant & slender hearing, & the people were not yet disposed to submit themselues to it as they should haue done. By reason wherof God was faine to return to it againe, notwithstanding that the people deserued not that God shoulde cause Moses to serue still in that office. For was it not reason that they which had so despised the liuing God, should thenceforth haue ben left destitute of all truth? that ỹ diuel might haue taken possession of them? that hee might haue made them starke blinde? that they might haue starued for want of liuely foode? and that they should haue ben poysoned with all the deceites and errors of Satan? Of a truth, ỹ people were well worthy of such reward. But God had not an eye to the deserts of that wretched people. For he surmounted their sinnes with his infinite goodnes, & proceeded in teaching of thē still, euen when they had shewed themselues most stubborne & rebellious, and had matched their vnthankfulnes with such wilfulnes, as there seemed to bee no way to come neere them to doe them good: & yet did God euē then vse his mercie, and vouchsafed to assay whether the people would suffer themselues to be brought backe againe or no. And that is the cause why Moses did not onely set forth the Law in Horeb, but also vsed vehement exhortations therwithall, because he saw the lightnes and vnconstancy of the people, indeauoring and streining himselfe by all meanes to bring them backe againe vnto God.

Yet notwithstanding, God vouchsafed still, that in the end there should be an abridgement of the law, & that the same should be confirmed as it is contained in this booke. And that is the cause why it is intituled *Deuteronomie*, which is as much to say as *the Law repeated*. Not that God bringeth in any newe thing here: but for that he blameth the people for their foresaid lewdnes, shewing that his doctrine had ben ill obserued, like as when children do not profit wel at schole, but play the grosse Asses, when they haue spent a whole yeare and are neuer the further forewarde, they must bee faine to returne againe to their Apcie. And why? For notwithstanding that they haue heard their schoolemaister, yet they be as ignorant as they were before, insomuch that instede of learning any thing, a man shall see them continue still alwayes at one staye. So then, our Lorde vpbraideth the people of Israel with their brutish dulnesse, in repeating his lawe vnto them the second time. As if hee should say, Ye be verie ill scholers: for I haue trained you sufficiently in my Lawe. The doctrine comprehended in the ten commandements conteineth the full perfection of all wisedome. Yet hath not all this beene ynough for you, because yee haue no eares at all, or else they be too long, so that of all this while nothing is entered into your harte, or rather yee haue not hearde what I saide vnto you. And therefore you must bee faine to turne backe againe to your first lesson, and to your Apcie: I must be faine to open my Lawe againe vnto you, and to chawe your meate vnto you, that you may digest it the better. And because yee be so dull vpon the spurre, I must be faine to prick you forward, and to vse greater force to waken you, that the hardnes of heart which I see in you may be amended.

Thus we see in effect, what the groundworke of this Booke is: that is to wit, that God hauing erst alreadie giuen his law to the people of Israel, and warranted it as much as was requisite, vouchsafed because of their hardhartednesse & stubbornesse, to giue a larger declaration therof, than Moses had put in writing as yet. And hee hath not only opened the meaning of the Law, but also exhorted the people to keepe it better than they had done before, vpbraiding them with their lewdnesse in that they had beene so vnrulie and so ill disposed, to receiue the instruction of their maker and redeemer at the first time. Nowe, all the thinges that wee see in this people, belong vnto vs. And would GOD wee resembled not the Iewes in any thing, I meane as in these pointes. But if euer there were too much hardenesse of hearte in them, howe much more is it to bee founde in vs nowe adayes? For our Lorde hath spoken more than

once

once vnto vs. If the law were well warranted in the hand of Moſes hath the goſpel bin leſſe confirmed vnto vs in theſe daies? If the earth were ſhaken then, if the trumpets ſounded, if the lightenings flowe abroade, if thunderclappes were heard: the Goſpel alſo ſhaketh both heauen and earth as now, as it is ſaide by the Prophet Aggeus, and alleaged by the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Hebrues. Alſo we heare what S. Paul ſpeaketh of it in the third Chapter of the ſecond Epiſtle to the Corinthians. The meſſage of life and ſaluation (ſaith he) which is contained in the Goſpel, muſt needes bee glorified as much or more than the doctrine of the Lawe, which was dead of it ſelfe and coulde not giue men life.

Agge 2.7. Heb. 12.26.

2. Cor. 3.7.

Seeing then that God hath vttered ſo great maieſtie in the Goſpel, and his preaching of it vnto vs hath not bin for once and away, but wee haue our eares beaten with it euery day: let vs ſee if we be good ſcholers, and whether we beare in minde the things that haue beene tolde vs, ſo as God is honoured at our hands. Are we linked vnto him? Alas, it is nothing ſo. For continue God neuer ſo much in ſetting forth his doctrine vnto vs, wherein we do as it were ſee his heart laid open vnto vs: yet are we locked vp on our part, and we giue him no entrance, but rather wee be gadding and full of vanitie, and we be ſo farre off from being touched with the doctrine, and from receiuing it to holde our ſelues wholly to it, & to ſet our mindes vpon it, and to be ſtaied in right obedience to it: that rather the cleane contrarie is to be ſeene. And ſo we ſee that the Iewes are as a looking glaſſe wherein we may behold our owne rudeneſſe, frowardneſſe, vnthankfulneſſe, & wilful ſtubbornеſſe againſt God.

Yea and we be more blame worthie than the Iewes for gauing ſo ſlender eare to our God. For as I haue tolde you already, the people of olde time ought to haue thought themſelues bounde vnto God, and to haue yeelded and giuen ouer themſelues wholy to his ſeruice, becauſe he had deliuered them from the ſeruitude of Egypt. And what is it that God hath rid vs from now at this time? Is it but from the tyranny of a mortall man, or of ſome earthly people? No, but we know that he hath ranſomed vs from the cheins of ſin and of the diuel, he hath pulled vs out of the gulfe of death, he hath drawne vs out of the dungeon of hel, and he hath not onely promiſed vs the land of Chanaan for an inheritance, but alſo opened the heauens vnto vs in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who hath taken poſſeſſion thereof for vs, to the end we might be ſure that our abiding place & euerlaſting reſt is made ready for vs there. Seeing then that God hath bound vs in ſuch wiſe vnto him, is not our vnthankefulneſs double, yea or rather an hundredfolde more ſhamefull, than the vnthankfulneſſe of the people of olde time?

Furthermore, whereas God hath vouchſafed to hold on in the office of inſtructing, to teache his people which was ſo rude & rebellious: let vs aſſure our ſelues that he doeth the like towards vs nowadaies. Yea & it is requiſite for vs, he ſhould ſo doe (as I haue ſaide already): or elſe what would become of it? But ſith we ſee that God is ſo gracious as not to bee weary of teaching vs, though it boote vs not at the firſt day, nor at the firſt yeare: let vs aſſure our ſelues of his dealing with vs after that ſorte from day to day, in no more than nede deth. And it is a point well worth the marking. For men haue itching eares, and be deſirous to heare alwaies new things: & if the doctrine of God be preached and ſet forth to them euery day, it becometh irkſome to them & they wax weary of it. For to their ſeeming it is inough to ſpeake of it once or twiſe, and they conſider not how they forget the things which they ought to haue borne away. So then, to the end we wax not weary of the doctrine that is preached vnto vs: let vs marke that it is needful for vs that God ſhould put vs ſtill in minde of the things that he hath taught vs already: for our wits are ſhort towardes him. And therefore let vs bethinke our ſelues well, & whenſoeuer it is told vs that there is but one God in whom we be, & that he is not only our maker, but alſo our father, & hath adopted vs to be his children, and moreouer tied vs to him by a much ſtreiter band, in that he hath redeemed vs with the bloud of his owne ſonne: whenſoeuer we be put in minde of theſe things: although we haue heard of them before, yet let vs not ſay, tuſh, theſe thinges haue beene preached to vs long ago: but let euery of vs enter into himſelfe, & examine himſelfe, & ſee whether ſ things ſ we haue heard heretofore, be wel printed in our harts. Let vs then enter into accompt after ſ ſort. And why? For if we remembred wel, ſ we be ſet in this world to the end to glorifie our god: would we not be more mindful to diſcharge our dutie towards him? If we conſidered the fatherly kindeneſſe that hee vſeth in calling vs his children, and which he hath ſhewed towards vs once alredy in adopting of vs in the perſon of his own ſonne: & if we mark how dearly we coſt our Lord Ieſus Chriſt whē he did ſet vs free frō endleſſe death: ſhould we not be deſirous to giue our ſelues wholy to our God? Should we not be moued to yeelde him another maner of reuerence than we do? Now therfore, whenſoeuer we be vrged, ſo as ſ world carieth vs away, & we be inclined to earthly luſts & affections: let vs aſſure our ſelues it is becauſe we haue not giuen good eare to our God, when he ſpake to vs, nor taken heede to it when he warned vs of our duties. And therfore it is good for vs to be put in minde of it, and to haue God come backe againe to vs & to ſay vnto vs, yee wretched fellow, what meane yee? When I haue once taught you the doctrine that is contained in my word ought to ſinke throughly into you, and yet notwithſtanding you be ſtill like little babes. This is it (ſay I) which we haue to doe, to the end we may finde fauour in Gods worde, and be nouriſhed therewith as with our ordinarie foode. We muſt aſſure our ſelues, that the appointing of this order that we ſhould be preached vnto all the time of our life, and that wee ſhoulde haue our eares beaten continually with the things, which we ought to vnderſtande in one or two monethes, is not in vaine.

Furthermore, if we doe not ſo, if we ſubdue not our ſelues to the hearing of our God, & ſuffer our ſelues to be taught by him all the time of our life: let vs be afraide leaſt he execute the vengeance vppon vs, which he threatned once to the people of Iſraell by his Prophet Eſay, ſaying that his lawe ſhould be to them as a booke ſhut vp and ſealed, ſo as if it were offered to men of ſkill, they ſhould ſay, the letters are not to be ſeene, there is a ſeale vpon then, I cannot tell what is within it: And if it were offered to ignorant and vnlearned men: they ſhoulde anſwere, we be not booke learned, we neuer went to ſchoole, we cannot reade. Loe how God puniſheth all ſuch as walke on in their brutiſhneſſe, and wil neuer ſubmit themſelues vnto him. True it is, that God beareth with vs for a time, and that (as I ſaid afore) although we be worthy to be cut off from his houſe, & to be bereft of his truth, ſo as he ſhould giue vs vp into Sathans handes, to bee blinded with lies and to bee poyſoned by him: yet notwithſtanding, our God hauing pitie vppon vs, aſſayeth ſtill to winne vs to himſelfe. But if we continue ſtill in refuſing the good doctrine, and become neuer the better for it at the yeares ende, than we were at the firſt day: at length this threat muſt needes light vpon vs, namely that we ſhall take the holy ſcripture into our hands, and haue it preached vnto vs, and yet wee ſhall vnderſtande neuer a whitte of it, though we be neuer ſo witty: and that when as the vnlearned ſhall ſay, I wote not what it meaneth, it ſhall alſo bee as a letter folded vp and faſt ſealed, euen to them that are ſkilfulleſt and ſharpeſt witted. Wherefore let vs ſtande in feare of ſuch threatnings: and leaſt our light bee turned into darkeneſſe, let vs take holde of the opportunitie which God offereth vs nowadaies, that wee may fare the better by his continuall ſpeaking to vs after that ſort.

Eſa. 29. 11.

True it is that the thinges which are conteined here were ſpoken to the people of Iſrael, and might haue profited them in their time: but yet doe they alſo belong vnto vs at this day, and they be as a common treaſure whereof God will haue vs to bee partakers. For as wee ſhall ſee hereafter, the Lawe was not onely giuen as a rule whereby to liue well: but alſo grounded vpon the couenaunt which God had made with Abraham and his ofspring. And by vertue of that couenant, wee are become heires of the heauenly kingdome, as ſheweth Saint Paul. To ſeeke our ſaluation, wee muſt reſort to the promiſe that was made to our father Abraham: and to bee of the houſeholde of Gods Church and members of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, we muſt be of Abrahams ſpirituall linage. Hereby then wee ſee, that this doctrine not onely ſerued till the comming of the ſonne of God: but alſo ſerueth ſtill to our behoofe, and ſhall doe ſo ſtill to the worlds ende. For it is a building that is founded vpon the euerlaſting couenant, from whence as from the true fountaine thereof, our ſaluation ſpringeth as I ſaid afore.

Gal. 3. 29.

Wherefore let vs marke, that whenſoeuer God ſhall hencefoorth ſpeake to the Iewes, the ſame is ſpoken alſo vnto vs: and wee muſt receiue it in ſuch wiſe, as wee muſt vnderſtande that God hath ſhed forth his grace through the whole worlde by the comming of his onely ſonne, and builded vp the heauenly Ieruſalem, to the ende that we ſhoulde all be linked together in one holy brotherhood, to cal vpō him as our father all with one mouth. Sith it is ſo then, let vs vnderſtand that it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde giue ouer our ſelues vnto him, and that he ſhould hold vs in awe, and enioy vs, & that like as he hath vouchſafed to giue himſelfe vnto vs, ſo we on our ſide ſhoulde bee wholly his, to yeelde him the duetie which children owe to their father: and that when we be negligent and ſlowe therein, we ſhould at leaſt wiſe be moued with the exhortations that are conteined in this booke: and that ſeeing God calleth vpon vs ſo earneſtly, we ſhold not ſtop our eares againſt him but euerie man awake, and one of vs rebuke another. Yea and that if we were wiſe, we ſhould not tarie till God quickened vs vp ſo ſharpely, but rather preuent him, howbeit that we ought to be moued to bee aſhamed of our lewdneſſe and to returne againe vnto God, at leaſtwiſe when hee falleth to correcting of vs by thundering out his threatnings againſt vs, and by vpbrayding of vs with our ſinnes. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke in generall vpon this booke.

Now let vs come to the text that I haue rehearſed afore. *Thoſe are the wordes which Moſes ſpake vnto the people in the wilderneſſe, in the plaine* (or champion grounds) *beyong Iordan, euen from Horeb* vnto the places here before rehearſed. Herein we haue to note, that God intended to rebuke the people for their not keeping of the lawe, which had not onely bin preached to them by mouth, but alſo ſet downe in writing: as if a man ſhould make an inſtrument or conueyance of ſome bargaine betweene two parties. And God himſelfe vouchſafed to ingraue his Lawe (at leaſtwiſe the ten commaundements) in two tables, to the intent they might be remembred the better. For albeit that the doctrin was eleere ynough of itſelf, & god had prouided to preſerue it from forgetting: yet did not the people receiue it. Therefore as nowe he caſteth them in the teeth, as if it ſhould be ſaide vnto vs, Behold, the Goſpell of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hauing bin preached with ſuch power and maieſtie, is alſo left in writing. Wee haue had the Goſpel preached vnto vs nowe a long time, euen the ſame Goſpel which is ſet downe vnto vs in Bookes. Therefore are we too vnexcuſable, if we cannot tell what God ſaith to vs there. If a man ſhoulde ſpeake after that maner, it were a blaming of vs for our beaſtlineſſe. Againe, if it ſhoulde be ſaide that where as wee were baptiſed in the name of the ſonne of God, when we were babes, yet wee knowe him not that being come to mans eſtate, we bee ſo bruiſh that after ſo often hearing of Gods truth, yet we be ſtill but nouices in it: and that we can ſcarſly tell what it is, or at leaſtwiſe haue neuer taken any taſt of it at al: ſuch maner of opening of the goſpel vnto vs, how it hath bin offered vs of long time & after diuers faſhions,

Deut. 34. 1

were

were as a framing of an inditement against vs. So now likewise Moses, to witnesse openly to the people that they had shewed themselues too vnthankefull towardes God, saieth expressely: These are the wordes that I vttered and preached vnto you from time to time, not for a day or two, but euer since the publishing of the Lawe in the mountaine of Horeb. And because you shewed your selues so ill disposed, I haue not ceassed to put you still in remembraunce of the things that you had heard before. Now let vs learne hereby, to bee the better quickened vp, and sith wee see it hath bin Gods will, that euen from the beginning of the worlde, his truyeth should haue some certaine record among men, and that he hath not ceassed to set it forth still, and to raise it vp againe when men haue gone about to burie it by their spitefulnesse: let vs acknowledge his wonderfull goodnes in so doing, and be moued to receiue the things that shall be spoken vnto vs. Marke that for one poynt.

But to the end wee may bee the better disposed: we must also weigh this saying which Moses addeth, *Euen according to all that God had commaunded him.* Nowe by this preface he sheweth, that he brought not any thing of his owne, ne meant to subdue the people to his owne dotages, nor to any thing that he could haue deuised of his owne reason and wisedome as in respect of men, but that he did simply obey God, as a faithfull & trustie messenger, without swarueing aside either to the right hand or to the left. Deut. 34. 10. Nowe if Moses who had so excellent a record as wee see, insomuch that God neuer raised vp any Prophet equall or like vnto him: If Moses y prince of all Prophets next vnto Iesus Christ, and the chiefe of all vnder the olde Lawe, doe neuertheleſſe protest that he putteth not forth any thing of his owne head: I pray you what shall others do? May they compare themselues with him? No: but put the case that they be as highly aduanced and placed as he: yet notwithstanding, the furthest that they ought to goe, is but to set forth the things that God hath commaunded them. And therefore let vs learne, that here all mens traditions are shut out of doores. And hereby it appeareth, that the Pope hath marred and corrupted the whole order of the Church, by his taking vpō him to be a Lawmaker, to deuise lawes & to lay them vpon mens necks at his owne pleasure, to forge & contriue newe articles of faith, and to inforce men to receiue his inuentions as the holy scriptures. Was not this a turning of all things vpside downe? Yes: for God neuer ment that men should haue such libertie and sway in the Church, as to set forth any of their owne inuentions there, but he himselfe onely will be heard there. Marke that for one poinct.

But there is yet more in it: for it is not onely said that Moses spake according to the charge that was giuen him: but *according to all that euer the Lord had commaunded him.* He sheweth then, y he did not as it were make a medlie, or seeke by any meanes to bring in what he himselfe thought good, or to separate himself from Gods worde: but that he followed Gods will from point to point to the vttermost. Ye see then that there was a great singlenesse of heart in Moses, insomuch as he not only gaue forth the things that he had receiued at Gods hand: but also continued throughout in the same singlenes of keeping himselfe within his bourdes, so as he ranged not abroade to say, this is good, or that is good, thus or thus doe I thinke of this matter. No but in all poines he ruled himselfe according to the charge of his commission, vttering his message according as he had heard God speake it. Marke that for the second point.

Nowe herewithall wee be warned to receiue the doctrine here conteined, not as comming from a mortall man. In speaking vnto vs, Moses protesteth that he himselfe is not our schoolemaister though he rehearseth our lesson vnto vs; but that must alwayes be God and his holy spirit, that must be euen our Lord Iesus Christ, in whose hand the Lawe was giuen, as S. Paul Gal. 3. 19. speaketh of him. For he was the gouernour of y Church at all times. Ye see then that the thing which we haue to consider here, is that we must reuerendly and carefully receiue the things that were giuē vs by the hand of Moses. Not that wee may think that any thing came of himselfe: but that God sent him and ordeined him to be his instrument, so that when we receiue any thing that was spoken by Moses, wee may warrant our selues that God guideth and gouerneth vs by his owne pure trueth, and that our faith resteth not vpon men nor vpon any mortall creature, but that the laying God is the author, and will also be the warranter thereof.

Now after he hath spoken so, he saith, *That he rehearsing of all these things was in the fourtith yeare, the eleuenth moneth, and the first day of the moneth.* As if it had bene saide, when the people drewe nigh to the land of promise and were readie to enter into it: then did he repeate the Lawe of God, and make an abridgement of it, and rehearse all the exhortations and warnings which he had made to them before. Not that Moses had holde his peace and kept silence euer since [the giuing of the Lawe in] Horeb: for as I haue tolde you alreadie, he ceassed not to call vpon the people continually, bicause he sawe them so wilfull and stubborne, and so stiffenecked and hard to be bowed. But in the end, forasmuch as he drewe neere to his long home, and had as good as finished his race and should anon after depart out of this world, (as wee shall see that he did in the end of this booke:) he made a rehearsall of all the doctrine that he had preached by the space of fortie yeeres, of purpose to ratifie & confirme it in such wise to the people, as their successours might bee edified by it after his decease, and the profit thereof redound vnto vs at this day, and wee be taught all the lessons contayned therein. Neuertheleſſe, we see moreouer, that the people ought ere that time to haue bin throughly subdued, and to haue submitted themselues better vnto God than they did. For fortie yeeres are a good reasonable time to dispose a man to goodnesse if euer he will be good.

When we see a man hath bin let chawe vpon the bridle by the space of fortie yeeres, and yet will giue eare to no counsell nor reason: it is then high time or neuer for him to bethinke himself, and to fall to better disposition and ripenesse of discretion than he hath done afore, if he be told of his fault. God therefore perceiuing his people to be so wilde, gaue them time and respit to become tame, & led them about by y space of fortie yeeres, which thing he did to thē for their stubbornnesse sake, as we shall see hereafter. But y thing that we haue to marke at this present, is no more but that the cause why Moses spake now vnto the people, was for that he drew neere his ende, and God was at the point to take him out of the worlde, and also for that the people should be as it were renewed at that time. For it had bin saide to them that had refused to enter into the land [of Chanaan,] Your carkesses shall rotte here in the wildernesse, you be not worthy to possesse the inheritance which your God promised to his seruaunt Abraham. Ye see then that when the people were after a sort renewed at the ende of fortie yeeres, then did Moses set foorth the Lawe againe, and speake to them according to Gods commaundement. Nowe must we also apply this to our instruction. That is to say, when soeuer we haue bin so farre ouerseene, as not to profit in Gods schoole, so as we continue Asses still, or at leastwise haue but pricked vpon the doctrine, without suffering it to worke any true inclinesse in vs: if God subdue vs and prepare vs better by continuance of time to hearke vnto him: let vs aduise our selues to make our profit therof, & let vs not be vnamendable. For what shal wee win by it in the end if we continue still vnruly, and be so stubborne that God cannot ouermaister vs? Shall it not turne to our confusion? Therefore as well publikely as priuately, let vs bethinke vs to profite our selues by this warning, & if wee haue ill receiued the doctrine that hath bin long preached vnto vs heretofore: let vs consider that inasmuch as God doth not yet giue vs ouer, but vseth such mercy towardes vs: his desire is to drawe vs still vnto him, and therefore let vs prepare our selues, that we become not stubborne against him, but rather let vs learne to bee meeke, and let vs giue way to the doctrine, that it may enter into our mindes and hearres. Thus ye see how we ought to behaue our selues.

Furthermore when God visiteth vs and sendeth vs any corrections, to humble vs and to abate our ouergreat vnthankfulnes and frowardnes: let vs turne ouer a newe leafe and returne againe vnto him. And when wee haue done so generally for the whole body of the Church: let euery of vs do the like priuately on his owne behalfe. If any man haue runne astray, and neuer knowen God aright, nor neuer submitted himselfe fully to the wholesome doctrine: if God visit him by sicknes, pouerte, or otherwise howsoeuer it bee: let him bethinke himselfe and say, Alas, the Gospell hath bene preached vnto me, but howe haue I receiued it of all this while? I knew not my God, and although I professed my selfe to bee one of his nombers, yet did it not touche me at the heart. Howe shall I nowe doe therefore? Sith it is Gods will to haue me to bee his scholler, it is good reason that I yeelde my selfe wholly to him, and that I reuerence him as I ought to doe my soueraigne maister and teacher. Thus ye see that the thing whereof wee be warned in this text, is that when we see how our Lorde indeauoureth by all meanes to bring vs backe, and is minded to beate downe the rebelliousnesse that is in vs, by rebuking our vices: & that he gathereth vs home to him when he seeth vs go astry, to the intent to reforme vs: we must not kicke against the spurre as I saide, but rather meekely and mildely seeke to bee gouerned by him, & to profit more and more in his word.

Now let vs cast our selues downe in the presence of our good God, with acknowledgement of the innumerable faultes which we ceasse not to commit dayly against his Maiestie: praying him to vouchsafe to wipe them out through his free goodnes, and therewithall to bring vs home againe to him, and to worke so in vs by his holy spirit, as our consciences may be mortified from day to day, vntill we be tidde quite and cleane of all the corruptions of our flesh, to be clothed againe with his righteousnes. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxv. of March. 1555.

The second Sermon vpon the first Chapter.

3 And it came to passe, that in the fortieth yeere, the first day of the eleuenth moneth, Moses spake to the children of Israel, according to all the things that the Lord had commanded him to say vnto them:

4 After he had ouercome Sehon King of the Amorrhyts which dwelt in Hesebon, and Og King of Basan which dwelt at Astaroth in Edrai.

5 And so Moses began to declare the Lawe beyond Iordan in the lande of Moab, saying:

6 The Lord our God spake to vs in Mount Horeb, saying: you haue taryed long ynough at this mountaine.

7 Turne

7 Turne ye and depart, that ye may goe to the hill of the Amorrhytes, and to all the Countries there abouts, in the plaine about the hill, and in the lowe places towards the South, and vpon the shore of the red sea, in the land of Chanaan, and in Libanus vnto the Riuer, euen the great riuer of Euphrates.

8 Looke about ye, I haue set the land before you, enter into it and possesse the land which the Lord God hath sworne to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, to giue it to them and to their seede after them.

I Haue tolde you alreadie, that the doctrine which is conteined here, is not the beginning of a matter, as though it had bin new to the people, and that God had not taught it them before: but a confirmation of the things that Moses had spoken in Horeb, because the people had not profited so well by them as they ought to haue done. And it hath bin declared further, that God had spent the space of fortie yeeres or thereabouts in subduing ỳ people, which had bin ouerstubborne euen at the very first, & could in nowise abide to take his yoke. For this cause is the time set out here, to the ende that wee might vnderstand, ỳ the people ought to haue framed themselues to some obedience, after so hard & so long a chastisement as they had endured. Besides this, there is one other circumstance: which is, that ỳ people had alreadie had some victorie against Og king of Basan and his neighbours, wherein they had had experience of Gods fauour. And I told you ỳ those things were worthy to be marked, bicause they bee the two meanes whereby God draweth men vnto him, to win them vnto him and to inioy them. On the one side he chastiseth them, to ỳ ende they may learne to obey him as being vnder his hand & authoritie: and on the otherside he vseth gentlenesse, to make men in loue with him, and to consider that nothing is better for them, than to sticke to him at whose hand they looke for all welfare. And both of these are expressed here by Moses: namely that ỳ people had lingered in the desert fortie yeeres long, feeling Gods horrible punishmẽt for their shrinking away frõ him: & yet neuertheles, had ouercome Sehon & Og & such like kings, howbeit not by their own power, but by Gods helpe.

Wherefore let vs learne to profite our selues, as well by Gods scourges when wee bee beaten with them for offending him, as also by his benefites whereby he witnesseth that he is readie to receiue men to his mercie, and to haue pitie vpon them when they returne vnto him. And let such knowledge make vs teachable. Whensoeuer it pleaseth God to preache his worde vnto vs, let vs haue our hearres open to receiue it: let vs be plyable to follow that which he commaundeth: & to be short, let vs yeeld our selues wholly to his goodnesse.

Now it is said here, that *Moses expounded the Law*, howbeit that in ỳ Hebrew there is a word which signifieth, *that he vnderstood or studied to declare the Law*. And that serueth to shew still that he performed his commission with a free courage or willing minde. For it may bee that he whom God commandeth to teache his people, shall discharge himselfe thereof, howbeit but as it were by force: & such necessitie, if a man haue an eye vnto it, doth alwayes import a constraint, so that all that euer we can doe shall be nothing worth. And here the ministers of Gods worde are exhorted, not onely to preach the word that is committed vnto them: but also to do it with a free and cheerefull courage, according also as S. Paul auoweth it to be requisite, and protesteth that he himselfe did so. And therefore let the example as well of Moses as of S. Paul, serue for our instruction. 1.Cor.9.17.

Moreouer, let vs marke also, that vnder this saying *of the Law*, is comprehended the rehearsall of the things that Moses intended to make, of the things that were come to passe. True it is that the word *Law* betokeneth teaching and instruction: and therefore a man might take at the first blush, what instruction there is in the report of stories. It is not without cause, ỳ Moses hath sayde so. For when God putteth vs in remembrance of our sinnes, and of the benefices ỳ he hath bestowed vpon vs, and of the chastisements which wee haue receiued at his hand: it ought to teache vs to our profit. Gods setting of such things afore vs, is not to make vs passimes but to the end, that on the one side we should be the better disposed to serue him, and to continue in his feare: and on the other side be trained and allured to resort vnto him, and to seeke all our welfare and all that euer belongeth to our saluation, at his hand. We see then howe it is not without cause, that Moses giueth the name of *Law* or *Doctrine*, to the rehearsall of things that were come to passe, forsomuch as by ỳ meanes the people ought to haue bin led vnto God & to haue bin the better edified. And therefore let vs marke, that when we reade the holy stories, it is not onely to know what hath bin done, to ỳ end we may be able to talke of it: but to the end we should behold there the grace of God towardes ỳ faithful in deliuering them. Also we must consider after what maner he hath exercised his children in patience, and made them to wade through many afflictions, that their faith might bee tryed: and consequently how he neuer forsaketh them at the point of neede and necessitie. Againe we must consider the iustice that he hath executed in punishing such as haue done amisse and transgressed his will. If we haue such regarde and discretion with vs, the Stories will bee as an instruction to vs. For wee shall bee better assured by them, than if GOD did but simply tell vs what he requireth at our handes and what our duetie is. That then is the thing

which we haue to beare in minde: & it will bea good preparatiue for vs to the thinges that are to ensue. For otherwise it would be thought an vnprofitable thing, to knowe that Moses chose men to gouerne the people, & that on the other side the people followed not Gods commaundement in pursuing their enemies, and such other like thinges. What haue wee to doe with those things, will some men say? But forasmuch as we be admonished, that all these things concerne our instruction: we must put them to such vse as nothing may be vnoccupyed: assuring our selues that God procured our benefite & welfare, when he did set foorth to vs as it were in a painted table, the things that belong vnto vs at this day, and may be applyed to our instruction.

Whereas it is sayde, *That is is ynough that the people had taryed a certaine time at Mount Horeb*: therein we see that Gods deliuering of the children out of the bondage of Egypt, was not to lay the brydle in their necke that they might go where they listed: but to be their gouernour for euer. And that is a thing that ought to stand vs in good stead. For wee haue a president, that when God receiueth vs for his people, it is not only for a day or twaine, but of purpose to haue a continuall care of vs to the end, so as he will not leaue vs in the midde way, but proceede in guiding of vs still, vntill wee bee come to our right marke. And this is a verie profitable doctrine: for what a thing were it, if God shoulde once giue vs his lawe, and set vs in a good trade: and afterwarde let vs alone without looking to vs? Wee see our owne frayltie, insomuch that wee could not steppe one steppe but wee should bee readie to stumble or to start out of the way, and the incomberances are so manie and so great, as it would bee vnpossible for vs to ouercome them, if God assisted vs not. And therefore let vs learne, that when God hath once adopted vs, and chosen vs to bee of his flocke: it is not to the end we shoulde but onely take a taste of his grace for a day: but to the end that he will continue in doing vs good: and his taking of vs into his gouernment, is of purpose neuer to giue vs ouer, so as wee shall alwayes be vnder his protection, and he will neuer ceasse to increase the good turnes that wee haue felt and receiued of him, vntill we bee come to the full perfection. Forasmuch then as wee see that he neuer leaueth his worke vnperfected, but goeth through with it, as it is sayde in the Psalme: Psal. 138. 8. it ought well to cause vs to magnifie his goodnesse, and to incourage vs to giue ouer our selues wholly vnto him. And the same belongeth to the spirituall health of our soules, according to this saying of S. Paul in the first Chapter to the Phil. 1. 6. Philippians, that he which hath begun the good worke will goe through with it, euen vnto the day of our Lord Iesus Christ. Wherefore let vs marke, that whereas God declareth here by the mouth of Moses, that the people had taryed long ynough about mount Horeb, and that he would haue them to goe foreward: thereby he doth vs to vnderstand, that seeing he hath deliuered vs from the dungeon of death, and from the bondage of the diuell and of sinne: we shall haue him to be our guide for euer, so we hearken to his voyce, and doubt not but he thinketh vpon vs and will continually leade vs still.

Moreouer he sayeth, *Let the people arise and drawe towards the hill of the Amorites, & from thence inuade and possesse the land of Chanaan, whether in the plaine Countries, or the drownes, or the descents, or the sea coastes*: for *the land* (saieth he) *is before you*: that is to say at your commaundement, I haue deliuered it into your handes, nothing shall keepe yee from the possession of it, if it bee not long of your selues. Why so? For *I haue sworne* (sayeth he) *to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob: I haue promised to giue it for an inheritance to them and to their seede after their decesse*. Here first of all wee must marke the order that is set downe: for God sheweth the cause why he gaue that people the land [of Chanaan:] namely for his promise sake. And thereby he betokeneth, that the lande belonged not to them as by way of conquest through their owne power, nor yet for any desert of theirs, but onely of free gift. God then assigneth this title to the children of Israel, and telleth them that they shall bee as much bound to his meere goodnesse when they bee brought into the land of Chanaan, [as they were before.] And in deede the othe that Moses speakes of here, was made foure hundred and thirtie yeeres afore, euen in the person of Abraham, before any of them was borne. Seeing then that GOD had promised them the land, euen before they had done either good or euill, and before they were borne: it may bee concluded thereupon, that their possessing of it was not for any worthinesse of theirs, as though God had beene beholden to them for some seruice: but bicause he had made them heires of it, through his owne free goodnesse. Nowe if this bee verified of the earthly heritage which the children of Israel had: what is to bee saide of the kingdome of heauen? Are wee able to compasse it? Can wee deserue as Gods hand to bee partakers thereof? No: but contrariwise, it is of his meere goodnesse that we be brought in thither, and shall haue fruition of it at the last day: for surely all that is spoken of the land of Chanaan, must serue vs for a figure and shadowe.

Therefore when as God telleth the people that they gat it not by their owne power, and sendeth them backe to the promise that he had made long ago: it is to shewe vs that whereas he is our father, whereas we bee maintained by him in this world, and whereas wee looke for a better and more excellent life than this: we must not dreame vpon any desert or power of our owne, but attribute all wholly to his meere free goodnesse, in that he vttereth the infinite treasures of his grace and loue towards vs. Thus much haue we to remember in the first place.

Furthermore whereas here is mention made of an othe: let vs note that God vouchsafed to stoope so lowe to the infirmitie of the people, as to put them out of all doubt, by sweasring by his owne name: and so doeth he nowe likewise towardes

towardes vs. For he is not contented to speake onely, and to tel vs what he will haue vs to do: but he also confirmeth his promises with a solemne othe. And why? Forasmuch as wee be inclined to vnbeliefe, and would euer be wauering if we were not well vnderpropped: therefore doeth he sweare to the ende to stablishe vs the better.

Seing then that God sweareth to vpholde our weakenesse: let vs consider, first that we be too vntoward, if wee cannot beleeue his single worde: and secondly that his goodnesse is inestimable, in that it pleaseth him to beare with vs, and to sweare for the confirming of our beliefe. And herewithall we haue to note also, that we must not seeke Gods will in the aire, but content our selues with his word; and that seeing it hath pleased him to shewe himselfe vnto vs, and to giue vs warrant of his will, we must holde vs to it, and reste wholy vppon it.

Now then, will wee bee sure that God will neuer faile vs, neither in this lyfe, nor after we bee gone hence? Will wee haue an infallible hope of the heauenly lyfe? Let vs haue our eye vppon the promises: let vs not wander here and there as a nomber doo, which are caryed away with fonde curiositie: but let it suffice vs that God hath certified and taught vs, that he will not onely be a father to vs to guyde vs in this worlde, but also that hee will neuer leaue vs, so as wee shall alwayes be gouerned by him, and that when hee hath tryed our faith, wee shall haue full fruition of the thinges that are promised vs: and when wee bee once ridde of this mortall body, wee shall bee raysed vp againe, and inioye an immeaselitie which is hidde from vs as now. Let vs content our selues (say I) with this word of Gods mouth for all other things, & let vs not seam after our owne foolish fancies how the matter shall goe: but haue God once spoken the worde, let vs holde vs to it. And that is it which Moses meant here, in saying, God sware to your fathers.

Moreouer wee must note, that the doctrine which is set forth in the name of God, serueth not for one age onely, but for all euer, and keepeth his force and strength continually. Abraham, Isaak, and Iacob were dead and rotten in the earth when these thinges were spoken: but yet the promise that God had made to them was aliue still. Although then that men bee mortall and transitorie: yet is Gods worde euerlasting. And if it bee the seede of the vncorruptible lyfe, needes must it be endelesse and exempted from all corruption.

Therefore let vs marke, that Gods speaking in olde time, was not to the ende that his doctrine should be buryed after an age or twaine: but that it shoulde be set before vs to the ende of the worlde, and we receiue it with all reuerence. Likewise at this day, although the Prophets and Apostles be dead: yet doeth GOD worke still by them, & the word that is brought among vs in these dayes, not onely hath his liuely force, but also quickeneth vs, and maketh vs to receiue the food of our soules by it. Our saluation must needes goe forewarde, and wee must needes be stablished in it, in such wise, as wee may ouercomme the worlde and attaine to the kingdome of heauen. Thus yee see what we haue to beare in minde, when as mention is made here, of the promise that God sware to the auncient fathers that were dead long time afore.

And it is sayd expressely, *that Abraham, Isaak, and Iacob were their fathers*: to the ende that they might knowe themselues to bee the successors of the blessing that had bin promised. And therefore he addeth, *that God had sworne to giue that land to Abraham, Isaak, and Iacob, and to their offspring.* As though Moses should say, that Gods promise is not disanulled, but must now presently take effect, and be accomplished in their persons. Hath God said so, saith he? Then must you consider, that he spake it not onely to your fathers which heard the promise, but also to [you which are] their offspring. For it is expressely sayd, that Abraham should teach his children the wayes, rightes, iudgementes, and statutes of the Lord. Then was it for the children of Israel, to haue receiued the promise that had bin made in olde time to their fathers, as if God had spoken it within fresh remembrance. And in deede wee ought to wey well this circumstance: For it is not to those only which were at the beginning of the Gospell, that God sayth, I receiue you for my people: but his wil is that ỹ same doctrine should be preached stil, to the worlds end. Let vs note then, that we also are comprehended with them that heard the word of god at the beginning. And forasmuch as his grace reacheth out vnto all men, and is common to all ages: it becommeth vs to giue eare to it, seeing it is appointed and offered vnto vs [as well as to them.] And why? For it is not to S. Peter and to S. Paul onely, that God hath sayd, I am your Sauiour: but he hath ordeyned them to be messengers of his goodnes, that we might be taught by their mouth, and we doubt not but God will doe the lyke to vs as he did to them. Thus ye see what we haue to consider, when as it is sayd that God promised the land of Chanaan for an inheritance to the whole linage of Abraham, and vnto them that should descend of his race.

And in very deede it behoued the people alwayes to come back to this saying: I am thy God and the God of thine offspring after thee. And against vnto this, I am the Lord which sheweth mercie to a thousand generations: as we shall see hereafter. Now, this was not said for that one tyme onely, it must be accomplished nowadayes also. Thē let vs consider ỹ God hauing once plighted ỹ warrant of our saluation, will haue it goe forewarde dayly, so as we should knowe ỹ he calleth vs to the possessing of his kingdome, & that in vs he calleth them ỹ are to come after vs: Insomuch that ỹ children which come of Christians, are already chosen of God to be his flock & of his household, & God hath take thē to himselfe already, euen before they come out of their mothers wombe. Is not ỹ knowledg of such doctrine an ex-

Gen. 18. 19

Gen. 17. 7.

Deut. 7. 9.

an excellent ſtrengthening to vs, when we ſee that God hath giuen our ſaluation a ground to build vppon, before we were borne or created? yes.

But here it might be demanded how the land was promiſed to the fathers which neuer had poſſeſſion of it? For wee knowe that Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob acknowledged themſelues to be but ſoiourners there, and that they had not the Lordſhip of the land, but that they were as
Gen. 47 9. poore wanderers, and were toſſed too and fro, inſomuch that euen their water was taken from them, ſo as they had not water to drinke, and not onely were kept from comming to the pits that had bin digged already, but alſo were put from water when they had digged pits by
Gen. 21. 25. and 26. 15. their owne labor and trauell. Where is then the promiſe of God which he made to Abrahã, concerning the giuing of the land vnto him? Hereby we be put in minde of that which the A-
Heb. 11. 13. poſtle ſayeth in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes: that is to wit, that the auncient fathers had not an eye to the viſible land: but onely tooke it as a repreſentation of the euerlaſting dwelling place wherevnto God calleth them: Inſomuch that although Abraham had not anie poſſeſſiõ in the land of Chanaan, yet was he Lord & maiſter of it neuertheleſſe, howbeit that he held himſelfe contented wᵗʰ the only ſight ỹ God gaue him thereof, to the end he might haue his heart lifted vp into heauen, and wayt to haue his euerlaſting abodé there. Thus to be ſhorte, the Lordſhip which Abraham had of the viſible land, was ſpiritual. For although in mans opinion he had no whit at all of it, but was like to haue bin driuẽ out of it euery day: yet poſſeſſed he the thing that God had promiſed him.

But now if we make compariſon between Abraham and vs, haue we not greater cauſe to lift vp our hartes to the kingdome of heauen than he had, ſeeing we not onely haue a mirror or image of it ſet before vs by God, but alſo that Ieſus Chriſt hath in his owne perſon opened vs ſuch a way thither, as our faith may well atteine to the glorie of God? Therefore ought we to be the better confirmed in the promiſe that God hath made vnto vs, of aduauncing vs into his kingdome to enter into it as his lawfull heires thereof.

And although wee doe but as it were creepe on al foure here belowe vppon the earth, and our body is to vs as a corruptible and tranſitorie lodging, and we be weyed downe with theſe bace thinges: yet muſt our true dwelling place needes be aboue, and wee our ſelues muſt needes be citizens of heauen and fellowes with the Angels aforehand, and poſſeſſe the thing aforehand by faith and hope, which wee haue not as yet in very deede, as the holie fathers haue done afore vs, who notwithſtanding had not thinges opened ſo plainely & manifeſtly vnto them, as wee haue nowe, nor nothing neere.

Thus ſee you the maner how Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob were not diſapointed of ỹ land which God promiſed to giue thẽ, although they neuer had the full fruition there of themſelues, but waited patiently til the conuenient time were come, for God to put their ſucceſſors in poſſeſſion of it after their deceaſſe. Sith it is ſo, let vs walke on vpon earth in ſufferance of many conflicts, looking only vpon the things that are promiſed vs, not doubting but that we be ſure of the benefite of them already, although we holde them not in our handes, ne behold them with our eyes. For why? God cannot fayle in his promiſes.

But now let vs come to the ioyning together of ỹ thinges ỹ Moſes ſetteth downe: for he ſaith, *Drawe towards the land and poſſeſſe it, for it is at your commaundement, according as God ſware to your fathers.* Here Moſes matcheth Gods promiſes, with ỹ exhortations which he himſelfe maketh: for the true faſhion of building when men are to be brought vnto God, that they may honor him & ſerue him & ſeek his kingdom, is to begin at his free promiſes, & to vewe that he preuẽteth vs through his own mere goodnes, ỹ he paſſeth not whether we be good or no, & ỹ although we haue not deſerued ought at his hand, yet doth hee of his meere free goodneſſe come vnto vs, & bynde himſelfe to vs without any cauſe why. Thus ye ſee at what end we muſt begin. Againe, men muſt be exhorted & warned not to deſpiſe ſuch a benefite, but to receiue it, & therewithall to inforce and indeuer themſelues to anſwere God when he calleth them. This is the order which wee muſt obſerue in this text of Moſes.

Drawe hence (ſayth he) *and march forward.* As if he ſhould ſay, Go to, your God hath called you longer time than you be aware of. For in deede, the promiſe of ſaluation was giuen vs before we were created: yea euen before the creation of the world did God chooſe vs, as S. Paul
Ephes. 1. 4. 2. Tim. 1. 9. auoucheth: and againe he hath fetched vs backe to him, when wee were as caſtell gone aſtray. Loe how Gods meere free goodneſſe ſheweth it ſelfe. We cannot alledge here any ſtrength or any worthyneſſe of our owne: We cannot ſay, oh, God hath payed vs our wages for our comming vnto him: There is no ſuch thing at all. But at ſuch time as we were forlorne and damned, our God opened vs the gate of ſaluation: when we were in Satans bondes, he did ſet vs free: when we were become his vtter enemies & were baniſhed out of his kingdom, he made vs heirs therof. Therfore lyke as he hath freely preuented vs, and ſheweth vs ſtil that it is of his owne meere grace, that we can attayne to ſaluation: ſo we on our ſide muſt not be negligent and ſlothfull: but ſeeing he hath ſpoken vnto vs, we muſt alſo anſwere vnto him: ſeeing that he ſayth, Go, *march on*, let vs be going our way out of hand.

When there is any talke of doing good or of ſeruing God, the Papiſts imagine by and by that men earne the kingdome of heauen by their owne deſertes or merites: but the holy ſcripture holdeth the cleane contrary order, as wee ſee here. For why? It is not ſayde that men bynde God to them by their meritorious deedes: but after that the inheritance is ſet before them, and that of free gift: and after

into

it is shewed them, that nothing beareth sway in that behalfe but onely Gods goodnesse: then is it sayd vnto them, *March forward*. And so wee learne to doe good, and to giue our selues to the seruing of God, & to become holy through his righteousnesse: not of purpose to make him beholden vnto vs, but to followe his holy calling, least wee should reiect his grace, howbeit that we cannot stirre one finger without Gods working in vs by his holie spirit. For whereas it is sayd, *Go ye hence and march forward*: it is not for that the people was able so to doe: but when God hath once incouraged vs, he printeth his doctrine in our heartes, and to the intent the same should not be vnauaileable, he quickeneth vs vp: and to be short, he worketh so mightily in vs, that after he hath once giuen vs willingnesse, hee giueth vs also performance therewithall, according as S. Paul auoucheth in the
Phil. 2. 13. second to the Philippians. Yet for all this, wee must beare well in minde the thing that I haue touched alreadye: which is, that Gods offering of his grace vnto vs, is not to the end we should as it were fall asleepe and make none account of it: but to the ende wee shoulde be quickened vp to doe good, according to this saying,
2. Pet. 3. 11. that his goodnesse and loue which hee beareth towards men, is vttered to the intent to purchase him a holy people fit for good workes, and [to the end] that we should walke in all pureness, wayting for the discouerie of the lyfe which he hath promised vs. And if this had place vnder the shadowes of the lawe: much more must we doe it now in these dayes. So then, let vs marke well, that Gods seruing of the infinite riches of his goodnesse and mercie afore vs and his opening of the gate of heauen vnto vs, is to the ende we should mount vp vnto him, and rid our selues of all earthly affections, seeking nothing but to lift vp our heartes on high, and to passe out of this worlde, and to be discharged of all bondes and fetters that hinder vs and hold vs back, indeuouring with all our might to come vnto him, as they that know how this present lyfe is but as a race, and that men must not loyter and linger here, but rather go still foreward according to gods calling of vs, who sayth, Come, Come, drawe neerer to me. And if wee goe to him, we shall no more be in daunger of wandering here and there, but we shall keepe on our way to the mark that God hath set before vs, and we wil neuer rest till wee be come thither.

Now herewithall, to the intent to incourage the people, Moses telleth them that they shal not trauel in vaine. *Go* (sayth he) *and possesse the land*: and that is one poynt more well worth the noting. For if we should bestowe our labor, & not knowe that we shal fare euer the better by seruing God: we would become lazie, and our hartes would fayle vs euey minute of an houre. But when we be sure that we runne not in vaine, and that God will reach vs his hand, so as wee neede not to feare but our matters shall come to passe, though Satan streyne himselfe to hinder vs: when we stand vpon such a sure ground that our Lord will put vs in possession of the thinges that he offereth vs: it giueth vs an inuincible courage and constancie to outstand all temptations.

And therefore let vs way wel these wordes where he sayeth, *Go ye hence and possesse the land*, God sayeth not singly to his faithfull ones, goe your wayes, see what ye can doe, trye your strength, and in the meane while leaueth them at all aduentures: no, but he sayeth to them, *Go to possesse*. As if he should say, doe but onely apply your selues to serue me, and let me alone with the doing of it. for I will worke after such a sort, as he that endeuoreth to followe me shall not lose his labor, he shal not take paine in vain, I will make all his doings to prosper. That then is the thing that wee haue to marke vppon this streyne. And therefore what excuse is there for vs, if we followe not our Lord whither soeuer he call vs, considering that this voyce, *Go and possesse*, ought to sound in our eares? And if it were spoken for y land of Chanaan, much more shall it be auowed and verified still at this day. Wherefore whensoeuer we be slowe to obey God, loath to part from this world, or astonished with distresses: let vs enter into such thoughts as these: Alas, is it possible for to me to come vnto God? how may I ouercome so manie and so great distresses? It farre surmounteth all my power and strength. When we be so incombred and brought in perplexitie and doubt, let vs bethinke our selues thus: well, seeing it hath pleased God to shewe himselfe to me, it is good reason that I should be contented with the assurance that he hath giuen me, and with the experience of his goodnesse which hee hath made me to feele. And so must we passe on forward still, notwithstanding all the temptations of distrust that may come in our heads.

And for a further confirmation of our selues, let vs also take to vs this saying of his, *I haue set the land before you*: for it expresseth yet better how they should possesse it. If men haue an eye but to their owne power, and consider but their owne abilities: they may well distrust and vtterly despaire. But when wee knowe how it is Gods office to giue vs the strength which we want of our selues, and to performe our saluation, whereof he himselfe is the founder: that is the thing wherein lyeth our trust. And therefore without presuming any thing of our selues, let vs runne on with a cherefull courage: but yet let vs consider neuertheless therewithall, how it is God that vttereth his power for the working of our saluation, and that he is the author thereof, and reserueth the leading of vs to himselfe, in such sorte, as the possession thereof is already in his hand. Now if we intend to fare the better by his doctrine, first let vs put out of our mindes all vaine imaginations of our owne strength, of our owne freewill, and of all that euer men haue surmised. For those are the thinges wherewith the diuell hath made men drunken, and beguileth them still, by bearing them in hand that they can doe much

much of themselues. And we see how the Papistes are puffed vp with that diuelish pryde yet stil at this day. There is descanting among them of their owne Freewill, there is descanting of their owne forewardnesse: and yet as able folke as they be, they doe no sooner set foorth one step, but they be ready to breake their necks. And well worthie: for God must needes laugh their ouerweening to skorne, yea or rather punish it, because it is a robbing of God. But whereas it is sayd, *that it is God which hath set the land at their commandement*: let vs vnderstand that there is no strength in vs, and that we must rid our selues of all selfetrust. And when we be so beaten downe, then let vs take heart againe, assuring our selues that God will goe through with his worke, and that he hath not forgot his cunning, and that he will neuer giue ouer till he haue brought the things to passe which he hath promised vs. Againe, if it were so that the land of Chanaan was to be set before the people of Israel, & that the same was to be done by y hand of God: I pray you must not wee be fayne to haue the kingdome of heauen set before vs? [yes surely.] For that people had but mortall men to ouercome, that they might enter into the possession of a strange countrie. But we must ouercome Satan the prince of the world, wee must ouercome an hundred thousand enemies that fight against vs, yea and all that euer wee haue of our owne must be done away. Wee must flye vp on high: and what a distance is there from hence to heauen? Then seeing it is so, let vs resort to our God, let vs put our selues wholy into his hand, let vs rest vppon his onely grace, and let vs cal vppon him with lowlynesse and reuerence. And therewithall let vs walke on in such sort, as we suffer him to guide and gouerne vs, assuring our selues that hee will neuer fayle vs. For if we proceede after that fashion, wee shal finde that the trust which we haue to attaine to saluation, will not puffe vs vp with all selfeweening, but make vs to yeeld God his due honor in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more & more, and that therewithal we acknowledging our infirmities, and perceyuing our selues to be poore and naked of all goodnesse, may runne wholy vnto him, so as we seeing that there is no cause why we should glorie in our selues, may seeke our whole glorie in his onely goodnesse and mercye. And that forasmuch as wee haue not nowe an onely Moses to leade vs into the land of Chanaan, but Iesus Christ which is come downe vnto vs to drawe vs vp into heauen after him: we may follow such a guyde, yeelding our selues wholy vnto him, and in no wise dragging backe from him, saying he will haue vs to come vnto God his father. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth. &c.

On Wednesday the xxvii. of March. 1555.

The third Sermon vppon the first Chapter.

9 And at the same time I spake to you, saying, I cannot beare you my selfe alone:

10 The Lord your God hath multiplyed you: and behold, you are this day in nomber as the starres of the skye.

11 The Lord the God of your fathers make you to increase a thowsand times as many as you be, and blesse you as he hath sayd vnto you.

12 How shall I alone beare your comberance, charge, and strife?

13 Bring me from among you, men of wisedome and vnderstanding, and tryed men, according to your trybes, and I will make them your heades.

14 Then answered you me and sayd: It is good to doe as thou hast sayd.

15 Then tooke I the heades of your tribes, men of wisedome and skil, and made them gouerners ouer you, rulers ouer thowsandes, ouer hundreds, ouer fifties, ouer tennes, and officers among your tribes.

AMong the benefites that God bestowed vppon the people of Israel after his deliuering of them from the thraldome of Egypt, one is that he did alwayes lay hold on them to gouerne them. For without that, what would become of men? If all thinges be well considered, there is lesse gouernment in them, than in brute beastes. So then, it was needeful that God should take order for the gouerning of them. And now Moses putteth the people in remembrance how God had bin their guide at all times, and had not onely bin consented to rid them out of the horrible thraldome wherein they had bin held, but also had established such a gouernment and state among them, as there was no let but in themselues, that they might not liue in quiet, and also walke in all kind of vprightnes. It is all one therefore as if Moses should say,

See

See how greatly ye be beholden to your God: For he hath euery way prouided well for you: he hath continually pitied you, and by all meanes procured your welfare. And in very deede, the remembrance of Gods benefites, ought to prouoke vs continually to serue him the better: and when we see that he hath not fayled vs in any thing, is it not reason that we shoulde be the more disposed to yeelde our selues wholy to his obeisance? For he sheweth how deere we be vnto him, what loue he beareth towardes vs, and what a care he hath of our welldoing, when he procureth it after such maner.

And by the way, wee haue to note here for a speciall poynt, that when God setteth a good order among vs, and appointeth men to haue the guiding of vs: it is a singular president of his goodnesse and loue towardes vs. True it is that the thing which is rehersed here by Moses, proceeded of the counsel of Iethro his father in law, as he himselfe sheweth in the eyghteenth of Exodus. And although Iethro was an heathen man, yet did God serue his owne turne by him in this behalfe. And so we see, that God applyeth all thinges and all persons to our benefite. Who would haue looked that a man which had none acquaintance with the people of Israel, saue that Moses had maryed a wife out of his house, should haue come and giuen such counsell? But so doth God apply all his creatures to the benefite of his people, as I sayd afore.

Exod.18.17

Besides this, we haue to note the lowlynesse of Moses, in that he held not scorne of the counsell that was giuen him by one that was not so excellent as he himselfe, nothing neere. Moses might haue replyed and sayd, what fellowe is this? For I am chosen of God to gouerne his Church, and to be the chiefe of it. I haue published his lawe in his name, I haue represented his maiestie, yea and he hath giuen mee such a visible signe thereof in my face, as though I were an Angell come downe from heauen, rather than any earthly man. I haue bin separated from the companie of mortall men by the space of fortie dayes, as though God had glorifyed me already: and shall a common person presume now to teach me? Moses then might haue cast foorth such wordes: but he submitted himselfe to reason. Why so? for he knew that God dealeth his gratious giftes as it pleaseth him, insomuch that the little ones may diuers times further the greatest and excellentest. And therein God intendeth to try the soberneſſe and mildnesse of those whome hee hath aduaunced to degree of soueraintie. For when they forget not themselues, but are alwayes pliable, and if a man bring them any better aduice than they themselues wist of, they receiue it willingly, and yeld vnto it: it is a true tryal of their obediennesse [vnto God.] Seing then y Moses, who was chiefe among all the auncient prophets, could finde in his heart to yeeld to the counsell of his father in lawe Iethro, who neuer knew what true Religion meane, but had only a little taste of it in a shadow: what shal we do which are not come to y like glorie that Moses had? Wherefore let vs vnderstand, that although God haue bestowed his giftes most plentifully vppon vs: it is not to the end that we should hold skorne of the aduice and counsell of such as are meaner than our selues. For y meane and very knot wherewith God will haue vs knit and ioyned togither: is that the greate ones should stoope to the least, and all agree in one. Moreouer, as hath beene declared already, although Iethro was the instrument to put Moses in mind of it: yet ought it to be imputed vnto God, who had a care to prouide for the benefite and safetie of his people, y he might not faile them in any thing. And to this intent is it that Moses speaketh thereof. Now let vs come to the words that are set downe here.

First he sayth, *that he himself is not able to beare them any more alone, because they were greatly increased: for you be* (sayth he) *as the starres of the sky*: and we knowe that they were moe than seuen hundred thowsand persons. Seeing it is so then, I am no more able (saith he) to beare your charges, your incumbraunces, and your strifes: and therefore you must bee faine to choose some men to bee in office with me, men of wisedome and vnderstanding, and well tryed. First of all, whereas Moses protesteth that he was no longer able to beare the charge of the people: therein he sheweth vs, that such as are aduaunced to any degree of honor or dignitie, must not be as Idols without doing any thing at all, but [are set in that stare] with condition to take paynes, yea and to doe seruice for the welfare of the commons, in asmuch as God hath layed that burthen vpon their shoulders, for the vpholding of the common weale. And it is a poynt of doctrine well woorthie to be obserued. For we see how all men are giuen to ambitiō, so as euery man seekes to be esteemed and honored, & all indeuour to growe great. And why? Because wee consider not, that Gods aduaunсing of vs is to the intent we shoulde represent his person in this worlde. And surely that cannot be without incumberance. The more honorable therefore that any charge or office is, the more paynful and cumbersome is it. But for asmuch as men imagine an idle honor: that fancie of theirs caryeth them into so fond or rather furious ouerhastinesse, that they passe for no more but to haue their owne swindge, and to mount vp on high, yea euen (diuerse times) to breake their owne necks.

And on the other side it behoueth vs to marke well, how Moses sayeth that he is not able to beare so great a charge: for it doth vs to wit, that he bewrayeth his owne infirmitie, or at leastwise sheweth it to be such, as he must be faine to beare a lower sayle. Thus then the second consideration which we ought to haue to correct all ambition and foolish lothnesse in vs with all, is that we must examine well our owne abilitie, and then shal we finde that it were more for our behoofe to creepe belowe vppon the ground, than to couet to growe great to ouerrule our neighbors. These (say I) are the two respectes that may abate our pryde and fond desire of superioritie. The one is, that we assure our selues that the hyghter a man is exalted, the more also is he

bound both to God and to them ouer whom he is set, inasmuch as there is no preheminence without burthen, yea or rather without bondage as I sayd afore. Marke that for one poynt. But we must also beare in minde, that wee haue no ability at all of our selues, and therefore much lesse is any man to be found sufficient to beare so great a burthen. There cannot so small a charge be committed vnto vs, but the same is able to make our shoulders shrinke, yea and euen to bow too. For our infirmitie is so great, that whosoeuer sifteth himselfe throughly without hypocrisie and soothing, shall see that he is able to doe as good as nothing at all. Therefore if we think wel vppon such weakenesse, it wilbe as a bridle to restraine vs from clymbing so high. For what followeth but vtter confusion, when men will needes be honored, and yet in the meane while not discharge their duetie, but rather make themselues as Idols, and moreouer not haue any regard at all of their owne abilitie?

Furthermore wee must marke also for a thyrd point, that although Moses sawe the burthen to be ouerheauie for him: yet he did not quite and cleane renounce his calling, to giue ouer the office that God had committed vnto him: but sought to be helped and succored, saying, *Let men be chosen &c.* And this is well worthie to be noted: for there might haue bin two faultie extremities. The one is that which wee haue condemned already: that is to wit, that men haue not an eye to their owne slendernesse, but beare them selues in hand that it is a matter of no importance to be in authoritie. And that is it, that maketh him so rashe and bolde to gripe more than they be able to weelde, by reason wherof they see themselues confounded in the ende, but it is too late first. For this foolish ouerweening maketh men to forget themselues, and to take too much vppon them for want of considering their owne vnabilitie: and of such fonde enterpryses can come nothing but euill, because God punisheth them for them.

Nowe there is also an other euill extremitie, which is, that when men see themselues to be very fraile, they become faintharted and thereupon, if God call them to anie office of charge, they plucke backe their neckes because they see the burthen cumbersome for them, and woulde faine shake off the yoke, and shun the vocation that God calleth them vnto. That is a vice whereof we must beware. But there is a meane betweene both, which is, when we see that the cumbersomnesse thereof passeth our power: then to take as much thereof as we be able to beare, measuring our selues by our owne span, and moreouer to pray vnto God to make vs meete to go through with the thinges that shall be commaunded vs. Those are the thinges that are shewed vs here by the example of Moses. For he did not fling away the gouernement of the people: because that in so doing he should haue bin a rebell against God. We see how God dealt with Ionas, for he ouertooke him though he fled away. Therefore we must not refuse to obey God vnder pretence of our owne feeblenesse, though the charges or offices which he allotteth vnto vs be so troublesome, that we must be faine to grone vnder them. Whatsoeuer come of it, let vs hold this rule: namely to submit our selues to Gods calling, and to followe him whither soeuer he will haue vs. And aboue all thinges let vs pray vnto him to supply our wantes: and in the meane time let vs not take too much vpon vs, but let vs measure our charge by our abilitie.

Were this wel followed, wee should not see so many outragious disorders euery where as there be. For what hath caused so barbarous tyranny in the Church, as is to be seene in the Popedome? Behold, the Pope hath vsurped an vniuersall supremacie ouer the whole world. For there must needes be one head sayth he. Verily as who should say that Iesus Christ were discharged, who is ordeined to be the head both of men and Angels. Nowbut the Pope will needes thrust the sonne of God out of his place. But if he wist what it is to reigne ouer the whole world, would he not be loath to take vpon him so vnpossible a charge? yes: but it cost him nothing to call himselfe the vniuersal head, and to spread out his winges euery way. Therefore that diuelish pride of his was the cause of the breaking & renting assunder of the order which God had set, according as S. Paul speaketh of it in the fourth to the Ephesians, where he sayth that our Lord Iesus Christ is gone vp into heauen to fill all thinges, and yet in the meane while hath not forsaken his Church. For he hath ordeyned Shepheardes (sayth he) & men meete to teach. And he addeth that that is according to the measure of euery member, that we might al grow together, and Iesus Christ reigne ouer vs in cheefe place. Eph. 2. 20. Col. 2. 10. Eph. 4. 11.

Thus doth Saint Paul distribute the offices in such wise, as euery man must haue his portion of them, because there is not any one man y is able to doe all. But this order which ought to be vnuiolable, is rent assunder by the diuelish pryde of the Pope.

And afterward his taile, & the vermin of his clergie haue followed the same: for there is none of them all that mindeth his charge. When they angle for their benefices, doe they consider that Gods calling of them is with condition, that they shall yeeld an account of the soules that are committed to them? There is no talke among them but what a benefice is worth: and anon after, pomp and credite must be matched therewithall: and so they giue themselues to all lycentiousnesse. A man shall see, not onely Byshops, but also Archbishops and Primates, which passe for nothing but for hunting, or drinking, or playing, or chambering: those are their ordinarie trades. And why? for it neuer came in their thoughtes, that the honour which they haue vsurped, shoulde bee matched with any bond of duetie. And this hath happened, not onely in the Churchmen, but also in all estates.

If Princes nowadaies did mind y charge which they haue taken in hand: thinke you y the whole world should be so turmoyled w warres, & y euery of

ry of the would be catching and snatching to inlarge his territories? Not for there is not any one which hath but a countrie of one leage to rule, which findeth not himselfe throughly incumbered, if he haue a regarde of his office and dutie, as well towardes God as towards his subiectes. And yet notwithstanding he that hath a countrie of two hundred leages vnder him, woulde faine subdewe the whole world to him. And why is that? Because he thinketh not vpon the burthen that Moses speakes of here. As who should say, there were noe rule giuen to all such as are in any prehemynence or authoritie, which he vttered & declared of God by ỹ mouth of Moses as of his herault: namely ỹ they be not Idols to sit ouer their people in pompe only, but ỹ they must beare the burthen of the people, which cannot be without an honorable kinde of bondage as is sayd afore.

Also this extendeth euen vnto priuate persons. There is not that man which seeketh not to get still more and more: and when he hath three times as much reuenewe as hee needeth for his houshelde, yet is he stil laying of baytes, to ioyne peece to peece. For no man bethinketh himselfe, How discharge I my selfe of that which God hath giuen me already? I haue goods vnder my hande, I haue an houshold, I ought to occupy my selfe in trayning my wife, my children, and my seruauntes in the feare of God: I ought to haue mine eyes alwayes open, to see that nothing be done in my house whereby God may be offended. As touching my goods, I ought to vse them in such wise, as they may be employed according to Gods will. If I haue aboundance, I ought to relieue such as haue want and necide. Howbeit, no man looketh to this geere, but such as haue goods are as gulfes to swallowe vp all that euer they can finger: there is no other talke with them, but how they may bring all thinges vnder their pawes, so as no man may be succoured at his neede. For all is one with them, so they may make their hand. As for Gods honor, they passe not so much for it, but that they had liuer to be feared in the world, and to reigne in as their pleasure. And in the meane while they be still set vpon gathering, and they consider not that in so doing they doe but plunge themselues continually into greater confusion.

Wherefore let vs marke well the doctrine that is giuen vs here by the example of Moses: which is, that first of all euery of vs must consider, that when God vouchsafeth to put any goods into our handes, or to aduaunce vs to any degree: hee bindeth vs with the straiter bond, and we haue the harder account to make: to the ende we may learne thereby to holde our selues within the bounder of our owne slender abilitie, whē it pleaseth God to haue it so. Moreouer let vs also haue a continuall eye to our owne infirmitie, so as we may acknowledge that our abilitie is very small: and if it please not God to aduaunce vs, let vs not beare enuy towardes them that are in that daunger, and haue that heauy burthen vpon their shoulders. If they seeke it not: it is so much the worse for them. And for our owne parte (as I sayd afore) let vs be contented that our Lord let vs alone sitting as it were vpon the ground, and let vs not couet to clambe higher. Also therewithal let vs haue compassion vppon such as beare the hard burthen, & let vs pray God to giue them strength and might as their neede: for we see that if God let them alone, they must needs be vtterly vndone. And thirdly, if it please God to put vs in any office, let vs be ready to obey him, at leastwise according to our abilitie. Howbeit, let vs not take too much vppon vs, least this olde sayd saw be verified vppon vs, that he which ouergreedy too much can hardly holde it. But let vs stedfastly offer our selues vnto God, that he may gouerne vs by his holy spirit, so as euery of vs may doe his duetie, and euery of vs employ himselfe according to his measure and abilitie, referring all our doinges to the common weale, to the ende that God may be serued thereby, and our labor may redounde to the benefite of the people committed to our charge. Thus ye see in effect what wee haue to marke.

Now must wee also marke this saying of Moses, *Chose ye men of wisdome and of good skill, men well reported, that they may be for ouer you according vnto your tribes, euen ouer Thousandes, ouer Hundreds, and ouer Fiftes, as wee shall see afterward.* Hereby it is shewed vs, that when men are to be chosen to beare office in the common weale, they must be chosen with discretion, and nōe taken at aduenture whosoeuer can thrust in himselfe first: neither must they be preferred at any mans pleasure for fauor or for some fond braunery: but in such wise as God may couerde the choyce, and such men be picked out as are knowen to be meete to occupy the roomes that they be called vnto. And specially wee must obserue that which is rehearsed in the eighteenth chapter of Exodus heretofore alledged: for there Iethro sayth that we must take such men as are feareing God, louers of the truth, and haters of couetousnesse. Who is he ỹ speaketh this? A poore heathen man, as I haue sayd already: & yet God gouerneth his tongue in such wise, as we cannot haue a better teacher than him, when we be about to choose men to gouerne a people. First of all he requireth men that are fitte, such as are not vnreasonable, but haue wherewith to go through with such a charge, and haue both good wealc, courage, and noble minde to doe. Howbeit, for asmuch as without the feare of God all ỹ vertues in man doe vanne to nought: behold, Iethro who neuer heard anie thing of holy scripture, doth notwithstanding pronounce ỹ well ỹ it is impossible for a man to discharge his duetie in gouerning a people, vnlesse he feare God. If a heathen man could speake after that manner: what a shame is it for vs nowadayes, that wee should haue lesse discretion than he? And yet a man may see with his eyes how the worlde goeth. Haue we this consideration in deede when they goe about to choose officers of iustice, that they will not den haue the feare of God to be the first thing in ỹ parties? True it is that men will pre-

selfe so, & euen nature compelleth vs to say, ỹ we had neede of men that are wise, and stout, verily as graunting couertly that there is neither wisdome nor courage, without ỹ feare of God beare sway. Againe, to expresse the fruites of the feare of God yet the better, Iethro addeth, that there must be vprightnesse and trueth. As if he should say, that a man shall neuer be meete to gouern, vnlesse he haue soundnesse in him, so as hee be not hollowhearted, but walke on with a good conscience. And because that brybes doe blinde the eyes of the wise, and make good men to swarue from vprightnesse: he sayth that if we will haue men fit to beare authoritie, they must hate couetousnesse and despise the goods of this worlde, so as they can finde in their hearts to forbeare thē. Seing then that such a lesson is told vs by a heathen man: I pray you what a shame shall it be, that we which professe our selues to be brought vp in the lawe of God and in his Gospell, & haue our eares so much beaten with it, should still be nouices in the doctrine, or at leastwise put it so ill in practise among vs? And yet for all that, if we vse it not to our profite, it is written to be kept to our great confusiō, & to make vs vnexcusable.

So then, let vs wey wel this saying where Moses exhorteth the people *to chuse men of vnderstanding and wisedome, and tryed men*. For if a man be put in office but vpon hope, without good knowledge and experience had of him: is it not a defiling of the feate of God and of Iustice? In deede God reserueth to himselfe the soueraintie ouer all men, as he is also worthie to haue: and yet notwithstanding he wilbe serued by mortal men as by his ministers & officers: and therefore the seate of Iustice is (as ye would say) consecrated or hallowed vnto him, as shall be shewed in the next lesson. Now, there is taking of men at aduenture, and they know not what they ought to doe, nor how to behaue themselues. Well, such a one must needs make a tryal what he can do, & when he is once set in his seate, he wil haue an eye to himselfe, yea? Shal he ỹ would not take a Cowheard or a Shepheard into his house vpon bare hope, without knowledge or vnderstanding of him what he is: shall he (I say) go set a man in Gods seate, of whom he hath no knowledge, and of whom he hath no experience to iudge what he is? Now then, let vs be well aduized, & ferdmuch as God graunteth vs the grace or rather priuiledge of choosing officers to gouerne vs, which is not common to all people in any wise let vs not abuse that gift of God, or els we shal be amazed to see our selues bereft thereof. And soothly ỹ very cause why so many tyrannies are crept into the world, is that all nations haue forgone their freedome, so as there is no more election, by reason whereof Princes do sell the offices of Iustice, & thinges are so out of order as is horrible to see. And whereof commeth that, but that when the people had the election in their hands, they abused it, & so were worthy that God should bereaue them of the honor ỹ he had done them? For is it not as good as a wilful prouoking of Gods wrath, and spyting of him, when folke hauing free electiō, whereas they should choose men to serue God and to be as his officers, doe instead thereof keepe rowtings in Tauerns or Alehowses, and euen as it were in skorne & mocherie of God, choose such as are most vnthrifties & furthest out of order? See ye not how it is a peruerting of all order? To be short, it should seeme that men intended to thrust God out of his seat, when they set his enemies in it after that sort, & such as despise him, & such as seeke nothing else but to treade his name & Maiestie vnder their feete. When men deale so, is it any wonder that God sendeth such disorder into the world as we see there is? Now then, it standeth vs so much ỹ more on hand to marke wel this doctrine, where it is saide that when God giueth a people libertie to choose officers, they must not abuse it, but must vse discretion in choosing of them. Yea and forasmuch as we may often times be deceiued, it behoueth vs to resort vnto God, ỹ he may giue vs discretion & gouerne vs with his holy spirite, as though he had poynted them out with his finger whom we ought to choose. And ỹ is the cause why I said ỹ elections shal neuer be wel ordered, except God ouerrule them by his holy spirit.

Last of al Moses saith, *I wil not alone beare you to rule you*. He sheweth ỹ God had giuen him authoritie, & yet a man may see ỹ he imparted it vnto ỹ people, & shewed by his doings, as we haue seene afore, ỹ he challenged not to himselfe an inordinate power, but acknowledged ỹ God had bound him to the common weale. So then, Moses hath authoritie & knoweth wel enough that Gods wil was to preferre him aboue the rest of ỹ people, & yet doth not he abuse his right for al that, but referreth all vnto the people. As if he should say, I will but onely shewe the way how to guide, and in so doing I will take the payne to my selfe, as for the honor, I giue it ouer vnto you. And the same mind ought to be in all good magistrates and gouerners of people, ỹ they may be able to maintaine the authoritie that is requisite for euen to that end also hath God set them vp. But howsoeuer the world goe, let them not seeke their owne profite, but let them indeauour to make themselues fit ministers as nere as is possible, alwayes maintaining ỹ chiefe charge ỹ is committed vnto them.

But now let vs come to that which Moses interlaceth concerning the multitude of ỹ people. *Your God* (saith he) *hath increased you, in such wise that you be now as the starres of the skye, and I beseech him to increase you a thousand times more*: or els, he will increase you a thousand times more, according as he hath promised you. Here Moses, in alledging the hardnesse that he had to decide all cases, doth also shewe the people Gods blessing and grace. And thereby a man may see, that his chiefe trauell was to make the people conceiue the benefites ỹ they had receiued at Gods hands: and that is a lesson which we cannot be put in minde of too often. For on the one side wee see what vnthankefulnesse is in vs, how we shut our eyes at the benefites that God bestoweth vppon vs, Not ỹ we lyke not to haue them: but for ỹ we consider not from whence they come, that we might glorify the giuer of them. And on the other side wee abuse the gifts that wee haue receiued, because wee bethinke not our

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ſelues how it is God that hath put them into our handes. Nay, which worſe is, wee ſee how men do ſo waunt themſelues of them, that Gods glorie is darkened thereby, as though they were not beholden to God at all. And not onely that, but it ſhould ſeeme alſo that they arme themſelues againſt him to bid him battell, for ſhewing of himſelfe ſo bountifull towardes them: and as ſhall bee ſhewed in the two and thirtieth Chapter, they play the ouerpampered Iades, which fall to kicking againſt their maiſters. See (Iſay) how God is vnacknowledged of vs in his benefites. And afterward when wee haue forgotten him, wee growe after a ſort heathenish, and all his giftes are defiled by vs. Sith wee ſee this, let vs conſider that this doctrine cannot bee too often ſet afore vs: namely, that when God chooſeth vs to doe him ſeruice, he bindeth vs to him the more exceedingly. And therefore his opening of his benefites vnto vs, and his ſetting of them before our eyes, is to the ende wee ſhould knowe that he is readie to continue them ſtill towardes vs, if wee let him not through our vnthankfulneſſe. Therefore if we be often told of the free goodneſſe of our God, and it be ſhewed vs how richly he hath powred out his benefites vpon vs: although it ſeeme to be a very common matter, and that we haue heard ynough of it before: yet let vs aſſure our ſelues, it cannot bee ſpoken too much. Wee ſee howe Moſes, who is the true patterne of all Prophets and true miniſters of Gods worde, behaued himſelfe in that caſe. And foraſmuch as he ſtoode ſo much vpon that point: let ſuch as haue the charge of teaching in the Chriſtian Church, bee ſure that they can neuer be too lauiſh in that behalfe: & let all people alſo vnderſtand, that the often putting of them in remembrance of Gods benefits, is not a needeleſſe and vnprofitable doctrine. Marke that for one point.

Furthermore Moſeſes intent is that the people ſhould perceiue and haue it manifeſtly prooued, that the great increaſe of them came not of the common order of nature, as we ſee that ỹ world doeth multiply: but that it was a very myracle of God. And for the ſame cauſe doeth he alſo ſet downe the ſimilitude that was behighted to their father Abraham. For God had ſhewed him the ſtarres of the ſkie in a viſion, and ſayde vnto him: thy ſeede ſhall be as the ſtarres of the ſkie. Like as the number of the ſtarres is infinite, ſo ſhall thy ſeede be after thee. Now then to the intent to magnifie Gods grace, and to print it the better in the peoples heartes: Moſes ſayeth thus vnto them: you know what was promiſed to your father Abraham, how that his offspring ſhould bee in number as the ſtarres of the ſkie. Now therefore, ſee what a multitude is of you. For in very deede it is a wonder, conſidering howe ſmall a number went downe into Egypt. When they went thither they were but one houſhold, and little aboue threeſcore perſons. But when they came out, they were not any longer ſixtie, but welneere ſeuen hundred thouſand, and it was within leſſe than three hundred yeeres, that this nomber was ſo increaſed. For the foure hundred and thirtie yeeres are to bee reckened from the promiſe made vnto the people. And wee ſee that Abraham was long time without child. In the end he had Iſaac, who by all likelyhood ſhould haue beſne made away. There was ſome likelyhood that Iacob ſhould be increaſed: he had twelue ſonnes: but what was that in reſpect of ſuch a multitude? So then, Moſes ment purpoſely to declare vnto the people, ỹ their multiplying came of ỹ grace of God, yea euen after an extraordinarie maner, and not after the courſe of nature. And yet notwithſtanding, (which ſhall ſerue for an end) Moſes prayeth vnto God to increaſe the people ſtill, or rather aſſureth the people that he will increaſe them more and more. Although this multitude was a great trouble to Moſes: yet doeth he not grudge at it, but receiueth it as a bleſſing of God ioyfully, and glorifieth him for accompliſhing ſo his promiſe. And therewithall he hath a care to prouide for them by good meanes, ſeeking nothing but that God might be ſerued and honoured, and that the fauour which he had begun to ſhewe to his people, might continue till it were come to full perfection.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to make vs ſo to feele them, as we may come to him with true repentance to craue forgiueneſſe of them, and be releaſe them in ſuch wiſe, as wee may ſeeke nothing but to giue ouer our ſelues wholly vnto him, forſaking all the luſtes of our fleſh, and all the vntoward deſires which plucke vs backe to the worlde, and turne vs away from the obeying of righteouſneſſe. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

Deut. 32. 15.

On Thurſday the xj. of Aprill. 1555.

The fourth Sermon vppon the firſt Chapter.

16 And I charged then your Iudges, ſaying, Heare your brethren, and iudge vprightly betweene a man and his brother, and betweene the ſtraunger that is with him.

17 You ſhall haue no reſpect of perſon in iudgement, but heare the ſmall as well as the great. Ye ſhall feare no mans countenance: for the iudgement is the

Lordes. And the case that is too harde for you, bring it before mee and I will heare it.

18 And at the same time I commanded you all the things which you ought to doe.

WE haue seene already what warning Moses gaue for the choosing of men meete to gouerne the people. For (as hath bin declared) if they had taken iudges at all aduenture, it had bin a defiling of Gods seate. Therefore in that case, it behooued them to vse good discretion. But here Moses addeth a point which wee ought to marke well. For although he had procured, that such as were chosen were men that feared God, and were indued with singular giftes: yet ceaseth he not to put them in minde of their duety, and to warne them of the thinges that they had to doe. Wherein wee see, that euen the wisest haue neede to be taught, and the vprightest and iustest haue neede to bee warned. And therefore if God haue set vs in the good way, and bestowed giftes of his holy spirit vpon vs: let vs not thinke that therefore wee haue no neede to bee taught. For wee must bee guided euen vnto the ende, and wee knowe that our perfection is not in this world, nor so long as wee beare our flesh about vs, and are conuersant here beneath. Againe, whom soeuer God hath honoured by setting them in state & degree of preheminence: let them vnderstand that they haue neede to be told of their duetie, and to bee quickened vp to discharge themselues accordingly.

But let vs come now to that which is conteyned here. The first charge that Moses giueth to them that are ordeyned to bee Iudges and Gouernours, is *to heare mens causes*. Wherein he doeth vs to vnderstand, that they ought to bee attentiue and diligent to vnderstande euery mans right. For if a iudge vouchsafe not to heare, howe shall he execute his office? Wee knowe that although men doe the best they can to iudge aright, yet their frailetie is such as they may misse: and if they be negligent too, then must all needes goe to confusion. Therefore it is not without cause, that Moses warneth the Iudges to vnderstande well mens cases. And he sayeth expressely, *betweene the Iewes and betweene the strangers*. As if he should say, euery man must bee suffered to shewe his reason. Notwithstanding that the examination and sifting out of things may now and then procure fauour or hatred: yet the iudge that will doe his duetie well, must forget all thinges that may turne him from the right way. And forasmuch as the straunger hath no vpholder nor stay to leane vnto: the iudge must supply his want. And although he can looke for no reward, no nor for any great thankes at his hand to whom he may doe right: yet let him not forbeare to discharge his duetie, for he doeth acceptable seruice to God: albeit that there come no rewarde on mens behalfe, God is able ynough to recompence him.

Nowe then, such as are Iusticers haue their lesson here in writing: that is to wit, that they must maintayne right and equitie towardes all men that are committed to their charge. For (as hath bin declared afore) the office of iustice is an honourable seruice. They that are set in authoritie are not aduaunced to that high estate to the intent they should trample their subiectes vnder their feete, or make none account of them: but contrariwise they bee bounde vnto them, and it is a kinde of seruice. For God hath not made principalities for a fewe mens pleasures, to the end that all mankind should be their vnderlings: but for the common welfare and benefit of all men. Then if gouernours vnderstand not that they be bound by Gods will and by the order of nature, to them of whom they haue the charge: they must be faine to yeeld an account vnto God for their abusing of his gift and of the honour that he bestowed vppon them. Thus much concerning the first point that we haue to marke here.

And herewithall let vs marke also, that if they bee so greatly bounde vnto men: much more straitly are they bound vnto God. If a man be grieued in a matter of fiue shillings or lesse, and the iustice cause him not to haue right: we see what is sayd here. But now, if the name of God bee blasphemed, if his honour bee defaced, if wicked and detestable thinges bee done, and they that sitte in the seate of iustice and beare the sworde in their hande withstand it not, but are careleese what iniurie bee done vnto God: are they to bee excused? No: for if they suffer but a poore man to bee troden done, so as he haue but one penny losse: they shall bee blamed for it before God. But yet much more precious is the Maiestie of God, and the thing that concerneth his honour and seruice. Sith it is so, that Magistrates bee bounde to minister right to euery man, in thinges that are small and in maner of no valew: let vs marke well that they ought in any wise to procure the maintenaunce of Gods honor, more carefully without al comparison, specially when the case concerneth the kingdome of our Lord Iesus Christ, whereunto all the whole world is not to bee compared, in as much as Gods glorie shineth forth there. And that is the second point which we haue to marke vpon this streine.

Againe, whereas it is sayde, that the Magistrates must accept no mans person: it betokeneth that they must not bee moued with any mans riches, or pouertie, or byrth, or friendship, or any thing else. For in the holy scripture, this worde *Person* is taken for any qualitie in man, which may purchase him grace and fauour, or disgrace and disfauour. When wee speake of a person in our common speache, wee meane a man or a woman: but the Scripture meaneth

meaneth a more speciall thing: namely that there should no regard be had what maner a one the man is, whether he bee our neighbour, our friend, a riche man able to doe vs good, a man of credit and authoritie able to reuenge himself of vs, or a poore man, a man of no allyance or kinred, or I wote not what else. All these accidentes which serue but to induce vs to liking or misliking of the partie, and to make vs swarue from the right way, are comprehended in the Scripture vnder the worde Person: as if wee should vse the word *Vizor*. And in very deede, all these accidentes which bleare our eyes and beguile vs to make vs start out of the right way, are but as vizors. If a man come before vs without any qualitie: very well, we would heare him simply, and wee woulde not bee corrupted to iudge amisse. But if there happen any stoppe, by and by wee bee ouerraught, and our reason is so troubled, that wee iudge not any more as wee ought to doe. That therefore is a vizor, which yeeldeth foorth such a qualitie to bee seene in the partie, as maketh vs eyther to fauour him too much, or else to mislike him out of measure, so as wee keepe not an vpright and euen hand betweene the great and the small. And truely Moses declareth the same very well in this text, in that he sayeth, *Thou shalt heare the small as well as the great*: for it serueth to expound the word *Person*, and there needeth none other glose from elsewhere. And it is a phrase of speache which wee shall see in other texties hereafter. Therefore it behoueth vs to acquaint our selues with the termes and phrases of the holy Ghost, that the thinges which are contained here may not seeme straunge vnto vs.

Howbeit by the way, that wee may fare the better by the things that are declared here, let vs marke that the chiefe reason and ground of this doctrine, is bicause there is no accepting of persons before GOD. For the same cause ought Iudges to haue a stay of themselues, and to keepe them cleare from all considerations that may thrust them aside; or make them to swarue one way or other: namely (say I) for that they represente the Maiestie of God, in as much as he hath made them his officers. Now then, there is no accepting of persons before God, that is to say, when he iudgeth he hath no respect to the thinges that men regarde, and wherewith they bee drawen too and fro, so as they iudge not vprightly any more, bicause their excessiue affections doe ouermaister them. And this saying, that there is no respect of persons with GOD, extendeth very farre. For when as Saint Peter speaketh of it, first in the tenth of the Actes, and afterward in his Epistle, he sheweth that God chose whom he listed out of the whole world, in so much as he pulled not whether they were Iewes or Gentiles. Whosoeuer doeth good (saieth he) shall haue the fauour of God, and as for Circumcision or vncircumcision, they shall none of them both bee made account of. True it is that God must bee faine to looke mercifully vpon vs, before we can do any good. For of our owne nature wee bee vtterly

m.13.1.
ut.10.17

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.Pe.1.17

froward, and there can nothing come from vs but all maner of naughtinesse: insomuch that God should haste and abhorre the whole world, and cast vs away euery chone, if hee should crie till any of vs gaue himselfe to well doing: for our nature driueth vs alwayes vnto euill. But God chooseth his, without any abilitie of deserving afterhand on their behalfe: and yet notwithstanding, after he hath marked them to bee of the number of his flocke, he auoweth them & loueth them as his children and houshold folke, yea euen without regarding of what nation or state they be, whether they be riche or poore, or in credit, or indued with any good qualitie and handsomnesse, or any other thing. God then doeth as it were shut his eyes against all the respectes which are had in so great estimation. For he hath an eye to nothing but to soundnesse of heart, he doteth not vpon these vizors that are seene to the eye, according to this saying in an other place, namely that the outward showes deceiue not him, but that he looketh vpon that which is within. Thus much concerning the first point.

1.Sam.16.7.

But wee must apply this reason to the same vse that Moses putteth it: which is, that after the example of God, wee must haue this vnpartialitie in vs, so as wee will not bee drawen one way nor other by the thinges that appeare in men. And this is a very profitable or rather needefull doctrine. True it is that this is spoken expressely to Iudges and gouernours, in as much as God hath taken them neere to himselfe by setting them in his owne seate, and by willing them to execute his office in this worlde: and therefore ought they also to haue the greater care to followe vprightnesse, that they suffer not themselues to bee perturbed by the thinges that are to bee seene in men. But yet for all that, euery man for his owne part ought to take warning to follow Gods example, and to frame himselfe thereafter, according also as Saint Paul sendeth vs thither, when he speaketh of bondmen and of men of base degree that are easie to bee oppressed, bicause men take leasure to doe euill when they see that a sillie soule cannot reuenge himselfe, and that if he haue any wrong done vnto him he must bee faine to put it vp patiently: by reason wherof they presume y more boldly to say, O, as for him, when I haue done the worst to him that I can, he hath no meanes to hurt mee. Thus are wee the bolder when we see that men are base & haue no maintenance. But in this case Saint Paul saieth that wee must lifte vp our eyes to heauen, and that forasmuch as there is no respect of persons before God, wee must not thinke wee shall escape vnpunished when we abuse the priuiledge & authoritie that he giueth vs. He then y despiseth his neighbour ought to thinke that yet notwithstanding, we haue a common iudge in heauen, & although I be now rich & honorable to the worldward, although I be in authoritie & estimation, yet when I come thither, all this geare must ceasse: and although my counterpoise be now despised, & haue no mã to hold by him, yet hath he a defender in heauẽ.

Coloſ.4.1.

Lo here (say I) what ought to beate downe all pride in vs, to the end that none of vs aduance himselfe, nor take more vpon him than is lawfull, ne thinke he hath leaue to doe euill, vnder colour that our counterparties are of no credite and authoritie. Let vs not tarie till ordinarie Iustice doe redresse our extorsions, or till those whom God hath set in his place to iudge without respect of persons, doe punish vs for committing of some outrage: but let euery of vs remember this lesson here, namely that inasmuch as God regardeth not any outward shewes at al, it behoueth euery of vs also to frame himselfe to the like vprightnesse and indifferencie.

And forasmuch as men do alwaies put vs in feare, so as there spring from thence the sorest and worst temptations that can be to hinder the performance of our duetie: Moses warneth iudges expressly, not to be afrayde of men. Why? *For the iudgement is Gods*, sayeth he. Loe here a text well worthy to bee marked. I haue tolde you alreadie, that which experience sheweth too much: that is to wit, that they which otherwise are of good nature, doe neuertheleſſe ouershoote themselues through fearefulnesse. Ye shall see a man in the place of Iustice, who being not euill of himselfe, would that all should goe well, it grieueth him when he seeth any fault, and he could finde in his heart that euery man should brydle himselfe, or else that there should be some good correction when any men haue done amisse: but in the meane whyle, forasmuch as he seeth that there will be some grudging and misliking of the matter, [he thinketh thus with himselfe:] What? Shall I prouoke euery man to anger against mee? That man hath kinsfolke and friends, and such a one is able to be euen with me if I trouble him. Againe forasmuch as naughtinesse reigneth euerywhere, and wicked folke haue their full scope, and are most in number: I shall bring all the world in my top, & if I minde to discharge my duetie, I must not set my selfe against two or three onely, but I see that all are corrupt, and there is no man but he resisteth weldoing. They therefore which otherwise feare God and woulde ministre right and iustice when they sit in iudgement, are letted through fearefulnesse. If they stand in awe of men, they shall surely bee shaken downe. And why? Bicause they bee not grounded vpon the foundation that Moses layeth here, namely *that the iudgement is Gods*. They knowe not (say I) that they offer great dishonour and reproche vnto God, when they preferre men before him. For he that feareth from his duetie for feare, esteemeth mē more than God. Why so? A iudge ought to consider, that God hath set him in the place where he is, with another maner of countenance than other simple creatures. For he that sitteth in the seate of Iustice, sitteth in the roome of God, and is as his Lieuetenant. A iudge therefore ought to consider that: and if he doe not, he forgetteth God, whom he was bound to serue. It is all one as if a man being feeed by his maister to doe him seruice, knoweth not whether there bee a maister in the house or no, but falles to singing and playing, and eateth & drinketh at his bourse, and sleepeth when he listeth, without hauing any care or regarde of his maister. Doeth not the seruaunt that forgetteth his maister after that fashion, deserue to haue men to spitte in his face? Nowe then, if Iudges consider not of whome they holde their estate and dignitie: their vnthankefulnesse or rather blockishnesse is too too shamefull & beastly. Againe, if Iudges knowing themselues to bee set vp of God, doe neuertheleſſe shrinke from their duetie for feare of men, and bee stopped and held backe from doing the things which they knowe they ought to do, bicause men are against them: what yeelde they vnto God? what estimation haue they of his power? And yet for al that, God hath taught them their lesson, and promised them to stande by them, and to bee their defence. Seeing it is so, ought they not to make a bucklar of his inuincible power, and to fight lustily though al the world should step vp against them? Is not God mightie ynough to ayde them and succour them, if they trusted thereunto, so as they woulde rest vpon it, and plucke vp a lusely courage and constancie to goe on in the right way? Yes: but else, if they bee moued by such temptations to swarue from their duetie: let them assure themselues that God wil leaue them destitute of his power. Thus then wee see, that this streine (as I saide afore) importeth a very profitable doctrine.

But yet wee must note also, that this perteyneth not only to them that are in authoritie: but also to all men in generall. For there is as it were a comparison made betweene God and mortall men. And why? For nothing beguileth vs more, than that wee make too great reckening of men, and in so doing either diminishe God, or abolish his highnesse. As oft as men come in our minds, God is no body in comparison in so much as if wee put him in ballaunce, hee seemeth lighter than a feather: whereas men doe alwayes keepe their full weight with vs. Surely if wee were about to compare other men with our selues, wee couldde set them light ynough: for euery of vs wouldde make much of himselfe. Or if wee were to consider one man with another: looke whom wee lyked off, he should giue greatest glosse to disgrace the thinges that were to bee misliked in the contrarie partie: insomuch that wee say, tushe what is he? he is no body. For why? Wee wouldde make farre greater estimation of the other. Thus ye see howe wee could skill to disgrace men. But come we once to GOD, he must bee as good as cast downe, and men must bee set vp in his place. Lo howe spytefull and frowarde wee bee. So much the more therefore doeth it stande vs on hand to marke this saying, where it is declared, if God come in place, it is not for vs to make any reckening of men. For it is a great vnryghteousnesse that men or creatures shoulde bee in such estimation, that Gods right shoulde bee defaced, or any thing bee plucked from him. And yet for all that, we see it is too common a thing, & it hindereth vs that we cannot serue GOD

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as we ought to doo. True it is that euery man is carried away by his owne lustes, insomuch that although we haue none other to withstande vs, yet haue we inwarde inconueniences of our owne, and our nature is so sinfull, as wee cannot in any wise applie our selues to doe good. But yet is there this inconuenience more in it, that alsoone as another man comes in place, by and by wee lose all our wittes ende. I would faine doe my duetie (say we), but what? Then must I purchase me such a mans displeasure. Wee see nowe adayes that a man cannot pleasure men, excepe hee doe as the worlde doeth, and followe the byasse of other men. And againe, behelde heere my neighbour, hee will alwayes bee at deadly foode with mee, if I fashion not my selfe to his manner of dealing: beholde, such a man it my friende, I must needes beare him out. Hence come all priuie packinges and other lewde trickes, namely that euery man despiseth God, to please his neighbor or his friend. For whē vices reigne, as whoredome, drunkennesse, and other disorders, so as euery man is infected by y^e^ example of his neighbor, & one catcheth diseases of another: what is the cause of al this? It is for that we admounce men too much, and consider not that it were meete for vs so abase both great and small, and so frame our selues earnestly to the will of God.

Now therfore let vs beholde vs so much the better of this doctrine that is set down here, not only for Iudges but also for all men in generall: That is to write, that forasmuch as the iudgement is Gods, we must not in any wise be flatters any more by mē, but giue God his preheminence, & thrust downe all consideration of men, so as if men vex vs we set our selues against them, and be not so lewd as to rob God of that which belongeth vnto him, to furnish creatures therewithal. Thus yee see what we haue to remember heere.

Moreouer also, whereas it is saide that the Iudgement is Gods: that speech importeth another good lesson. True it is that Moses speaketh heere of the roome that Iudges and Magistrates holde: as if hee shoulde say, they haue it not in fee simple or as a Lordship of inheritance, but as an office: and God in setting them in that degree of honour, reserued not his owne maiestie to say, Sirs, you shall reigne with absolute power, and I will henceforth bee no bodie. God therefore, when hee did thus set men in office, did not for all that diminish his owne estate. For hee holdeth still the soueraine dominion ouer all men, and they ought to bee but as instrumentes of his power, and consequently to serue him, and so referre all thinges vnto him. If this doctrine were well knowen, Kinges and Princes wouldo not lorde it so licentiously nowadayes as they doe, and men shoulde haue seene another maner of modestie in them at all times than is now seene. For they that are aduaunced vnto honour, doe beare themselues on heades that the worlde was made for them, and for their faire eyes (as they say): and there vpon they reiect all informacions, lawes & statutes, and shake off the yoke from their necke, as though they holde all things at their owne fingre, and God were no bodie at all with them. But yet in this text Moses telleth them, that be they neuer so great kings & princes, their superioritie ought not to diminish the authoritie of God, that his glory should not continue alwayes vnimpaired. Why so? For what else are the princes of the world than Gods officers, to the end y^t^ by their meanes he might be obeyed, and al men do him homage, so as the highest should begin & giue example to the lowest? Seeing then that the iudgement is Gods: they that peruert the order of gouernment when they be called to do their duetie, shalbe double blamed. And therfore shal Kings and Princes and al such as are in roome of Iustice, haue a verie harde account to make. For if they do amisse, they be not bound alonely vnto men, neither haue they offended creatures onely: but they haue violated the maiestie of God, and defiled his seate. Why so? Because iudgement belongeth vnto him, and he reserueth it to himselfe.

But like as it is said of the execution of Iustice: so let vs note that it belongeth also to the spirituall gouernment which god hath ordeined in his Church: yea and this doctrine ought to bee kept more straitly in that respect, than in the earthly gouernment. Why? When God ordeineth kings, Princes and Magistrates: there withall he giueth them authoritie to make Lawes. True it is, that they ought to learne them in his schoole, according as it is said that lawes and ordinances which are made in commō weales, do take their force of Gods wisedome. But yet for al that, ciuil or politike lawes are made by men. Yet notwithstanding God hath not resigned any thing, y^t^ he should not hold stil the soueraine dominion ouer men, I meane euen in respect of outward policy. And as touching the spirituall gouernment of the Church, we know that God wilbe heard, and that he wil haue his word obeyed aboue all things, so as men may not take vpon them to make lawes & statutes, but must hold themselues contented with that which he commaundeth them. For the rule that is conteined in his word is the very perfection of it self. Therfore when we go vp into the pulpit, it is not to vtter our owne dreames and dotages, why so? For God reserueth the mastership and chiefe superioritie still to himselfe, so as hee will haue me to receiue his word, so rest wholly thervpon without any swarming at all from it. Seeing that God hath once set it downe so it behoueth vs to rest vpon it. Had this bin well obserued in the world, there should not be so great troubles & variances as this day as there are. Whence come the variences that are betwixt vs & the papists, but of y^t^ men haue not referred vnto god y^t^ thing that belongeth vnto him, but haue framed articles of faith, lawes, and ordinances at their owne pleasure, it is the ende are come to this horrible confusion of mingling the inuencions of mens braines with the pactions of the holy scripture, so as they haue marred all thing? And whereof ariseth it, that euen at this day, the papistes fight still for the maintenance of that tyrannie, that a man might not know God from his Apostles as they themselues say, by which common

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prouerbe of theirs they condemne themselues and cut their owne throtes? Wherefore let vs marke well this lesson wherein it is saide *that the iudgement is Gods*, that is to say, that the superioritie which men haue, in what degree so euer it bee, is not to diminish Gods preheminence, but rather to maintaine it. What then are the states of honour and all the dignities of the worlde? They are all meanes to bring to passe that God may reigne ouer vs, and to make all men to stoope to him, and to knowe him and obey him in all cases. So then, what ought kings, Emperours, and Magistrates to doe? They ought to see that God be exalted and magnified as he is worthie, and that all their subiectes doe him homage, and they themselues must shewe them the way. Againe, what ought schoolemasters and fathers to doe, and all such as haue anie householde [or seruaunces]? Euerie of them ought to consider on his owne behalfe howe greatly God hath inhonored him? He that hath children ought to consider, thou holdest Gods place in this roome of a father, but yet hath not GOD stripped himselfe to clothe thee with his honour. What then? He is the father still, both of mee and of my children, therefore must I indeuer that he may be obeyed. The master must thinke thus: Is the mastership mine? Nay but it is Gods, who hath graunted mee that prerogatiue vndeserued on my parte. It hath pleased him to put this householde vnder my gouernement, but yet for all that, it is he that must rule me, yea both me and all that are vnder my subiection. After this manner ought wee to put this doctrine in vre.

And when wee haue passed through all the states of the worlde, wee must also come to the spirituall gouernement of the Church. Therefore let such as are ordeined to preach Gods worde, vnderstande that God hath not appointed them to set foorth their owne dotages, and to speake what they list: but to thinke vppon Gods superiorite, specially seeing that our Lord Iesus Christ is nowe declared to bee the heade of his Church, according to the euerlasting mastership which God gaue him ouer vs, in saying, Heare ye him. Seeing it is so, let such as haue the charge of teaching in the Church and are shepherdes and ministers, vnderstande that they must not seeke to aduance themselues, nor to be heard, nor to bring the people in a mase with their owne inuentions: but [they must indeuer] that God may alwayes haue the ouerhand, and be obeyed, and his worde bee receiued purely and simplie without any mingling or adding to it.

Ephe. 1. 22.

Mat. 17. 5. & Luke. 9. 35.

And like as they that are in that vocation and office, ought to haue mildnesse, and lowlinesse, that they vsurpe not the authoritie which God hath reserued to himselfe, yea and giuen to his onely sonne: so all Christians ought to thinke thus with themselues. Wherefore come wee to Sermons? Wherefore is there order in the Church? It is to the ende that GOD shoulde gouerne vs, and that wee shoulde haue our Lorde Iesus Christ to bee as our soueraine teacher, and that wee shoulde be his flocke to bee led by him. Nowe this cannot bee done, vnlesse we hearken to his voyce, and discerne it from the voyces of straungers, so as wee be not caried too and fro like wauering Reedes with euerie winde, but stande fast fixed vppon the pureneſse of the holy Scripture, and that our faith be so grounded thereupon, as the diuell may neuer shake it downe. Loe (say I) howe we ought to applie this doctrine to our vse, namely that the iudgement and authoritie is Gods. For if wee doe so, wee may well see many contrarieties in this world, men may assayle vs with many troubles, they may well set themselues against vs, and they may well speake against vs: but yet shal we stil keepe on our pace. And why? for GOD is not variable. Although the diuell keepe neuer so great a sturre here beneath, yet is Gods purpose alwayes vnchaungeable. And so is meant by this that is saide of the truth, that it dureth for euer. It is not such a trueth as is hidden or shutte vp in heauen: but it is saide expressly that it is the same truth which God vttereth to vs by his worde, as he witnesseth dayly. Sith it is so, let vs looke vp to GOD, and yeelde him the gouernement that is due vnto him, that hee may reigne ouer vs: and then shal our faith bee vnuariable, though the diuell trouble and turmoyle all thinges vpsidedowne, and sturre vp neuer so much strife and contention. Thus you see howe we must put the doctrine in vre that is conteined heere.

Psal. 117.

Nowe furthermore Moses saith expressly, *that if there were any harde caſe, it should be brought vnto him*. And afterwarde hee addeth for a conclusion, *that hee had commaunded them all the things which they ought to doe*. As touching the harde cases, Moseses reseruing of them to himselfe, was neither for desire of praise nor for pride, but because they belonged to his vocation: hee knewe that God had ordeined him to the same purpose. And therefore let vs not bee afraide to keepe still that which God hath giuen vs, if wee execute the charge that hee hath committed vnto vs. For why? like as a man must not esteeme of himselfe, so must hee not surmise, oh, this is hatefull, it may be ill taken, it is subiect to slaunder: but wee must followe that which God commaundeth vs. And therefore let vs not take any thing vppon vs of our owne heade, that is to say, let vs not bee rashe to say, this belongeth to mee, for ambition tickleth vs continually, and euerie of vs would haue I wote not what a pratle degree: wherefore let vs beware of such folly. Yet notwithstanding like as there shoulde no such boldnesse reigne in vs, as to vsurpe or take any thing vppon vs: so on the contrarie part, when GOD will haue any office or charge laide vppon vs, it becommeth vs to take it. True it is that men may chaunce to speake euill of vs for it, but wee must ouerpasse that, and keepe on our pace still. That is the thing which Moses hath shewed vs heere by his owne example.

And in his owne person, hee hath set vs as it were

were a looking glasse before our eyes, to shewe vs that we must followe the order that God hath set, and not swarue from it at all. If wee doe not so, it is an vntolerable vnthankefulnesse. We knowe what infirmitie is in our selues: not onely in some one point but in all things are wee so fraile as is pitie to see. But our Lorde hath well prouided for all our needes, and giuen vs remedies for them. As for example, hee hath giuen vs meate and drinke to maintaine this transitorie life of ours, hee hath ordeined Magistracie to gouerne vs, hee hath ordeyned the ministerie of his worde to rule our soules, and hee hath giuen singular giftes of grace to seuerall persons, so as they bee able to giue vs counsell, and to comfort and incourage their neighbours, and to helpe them at their neede. What is to be done then? Whensoeuer wee bee cumbered or in any perplexitie, let vs looke that wee vse the meanes of remedie that GOD giueth vs, yea and to vse them alwayes in his feare. For wee may bee abused, as wee haue seene. What is to bee done then? We must not turne aside nor stoppe for such as haue neither right nor reason in them, but euerie of vs must further himselfe by such meanes as God giueth him, euen as though hee were going to God himselfe. And that will make vs to vse the order of Lawe lawefully, which thing men doe not nowe. And it is a point well worthie to bee marked, to wit, howe men may repulse iniuries, and howe they ought to behaue themselues, when any of vs findeth himselfe intangled or in perplexitie, let vs pray to God to direct vs. If wee did so, surely wee would not goe to lawe but with trembling, and wee woulde say in our selues, I goe now to present my self as it were before my God. But howe goe men to it nowe adayes? Rather to seeke a cloke for all naughtinesse: so as there is neither craft, nor spite, nor any other wickednesse which is not to bee founde there. And why? For without hauing any regarde of God, there is nothing thought vppon but howe to beguile men, or howe to winde them in by some wicked practise. So much the more neede therfore haue wee to marke well what is saide here, that is to wit, that according as God hath ordeined states and degrees among men: so must men dispose things and direct them by the order that God hath set and established.

And for a conclusion let vs also wey well this which Moses addeth in the ende: namely, *that hee had taught the Iewes all things which they had to doe.* When hee saith so, it is all one as if hee shoulde protest, that they coulde not but know, that they sinned not through ignorance, neither coulde say, I tooke it to haue beene otherwise, I knewe not what was to bee done. You knowe (saieth Moses) there is no let but in your selues, for I for my parte haue beene faithfull to Godwarde: since the time that hee did put mee in trust to instruct you, I haue taught you as hee commaunded mee: nowe therefore you cannot haue any excuse to hide you withall. And if Moses had such a care to teach the people in respecte of the earthly gouernment: no doubte but hee was yet more diligent in teaching them the doctrine of saluation. That is the first poynt whiche wee haue to note. Doth Moses tell vs, that hee did not conceale nor hyde any thing from the Iewes, in the thinges that concerned their worldlie duelies, for the mainteyning of some order and humaine honestie among them? Then is it much more likely that hee first preached to them the grace of God, and afterwarde shewed them the rule of good conuersation and there withall tolde them of the couenant of saluation, which GOD had made with his people. It is certaine that nothing was concealed in that behalfe, but that he vsed an exquisite diligence, so as hee leste not the Iewes in doubt without due warrant how to behaue themselues to Godward.

Nowe then, if Moses discharged his duetie after that sort, wee must conclude that the Lawe was a sufficient doctrine to instructe the people, and that hee vsed not anie shiftes to carie them heere and there. Afterwarde came the Prophetes, which added yet a greater lighte. Last of all, the Gospell was preached through the whole worlde. Nowe then, can wee say that our Lorde hath not taught vs sufficiently, and that all the Prophetes, and the Apostles, yea and Iesus Christ himselfe haue giuen vs but halfe an instruction? Can wee say so? No: that were too vilanous a blasphemie. Nowe therefore, let vs haue our eares open to hearken to our GOD, and he will be a good schoolemaster to vs, and let vs bee contented with the doctrine that is conteyned in the holy Scripture. For there wee haue so perfect wisedome, as no fault can bee found with it. Consider well therefore what we haue to marke vppon this streine, to the ende that euerie of vs may indeuer to profite dayly more and more. And if there bee any ignorance in vs, let vs assure our selues it is through our owne fault, in that we bee as blinde wretches, vntill God haue inlightened vs through his grace. Therefore it behoueth vs to pray him to open our eyes by his holy spirite. And on the other side, let vs not stop our eares against the thinges that God speaketh, nor pretende ignorance to excuse our naughtinesse. But seeing that God telleth vs, that he hath shewed vs all thinges by his worde which wee ought to doe: let vs holde vs to it without coueting any nouelties, and without fond curiositie, for wee shall neuer scape from him; and therefore let vs not be gadding to receiue euerie newe toy that is offered vnto vs. And so let vs ponder well the thinges that wee haue to marke vppon this text, to the ende that for asmuch as GOD hath nowe giuen vs a confirmation of his Lawe and of his Prophisies, and directed vs to the right marke: wee may take the Gospel [alwayes] for our guide, in waying till he haue gathered vs together into his kingdome.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better,

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to the ende we may returne to him with true repentance, and being ashamed of our selues flee for refuge to his mercy: and that forasmuch as we knowe hee hath set it forth most largely and abundantly in our Lord Iesus Christ, wee may resort to him the more boldely, seeking continually for the great treasures which he hath prepared for vs in his kingdome. And [beseeching him] to guide vs so hencefoorth with his holie spirite, as we may liue in his feare, framing our selues vnto his righteousnesse, and serving him according to his holie will, so that although wee might be hindered by the stumblingblockes and cumberances which wee see in the worlde, yet wee may not cease to followe our good GOD, whither soeuer hee calleth vs, notwithstanding that the worlde bee blinded with neuer so outragious confusion and disorder. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs &c.

On Fryday the xij. of Aprill. 1555.

The fift Sermon vpon the first Chapter.

19 Then departed we from Horeb, and went through the wildernesse which is great and terrible, as you haue seene, along the way of the hil of the Amorrhytes, as the Lord our God had commaunded vs, and we came to Cades barne.

20 And I said vnto you, come ye to the Hil of the Amorrhytes which the Lord our God doth giue vs.

21 Behold, the Lord thy God setteth the Land before thee: Goe vp and possesse it as the Lord the God of thy fathers hath saide vnto thee. Shrinke not, neither be afraide.

IN this text Moses rehearseth, after what sort he had exhorted the people to take possession of the Lande that God had promised them, and by what meanes he would haue incouraged them to it. And that is to the ende that the people shoulde knowe their owne vnthankefulnesse and naughtinesse, in reiecting the benefite that was offered vnto them, and in that they obeyed not God, but were giuen too much to their owne sensualitie. This then which Moses doth heere, is as it were an vpbraiding of the Iewes, to the end they might knowe howe it was long of none but themselues, that they inioyed Gods blessing no sooner: and that they might afterwarde yeelde themselues more pliable, and not bee so wilfull any more in their owne frowardnesse, but simple submit themselues to God as soone as they shoulde heare him speake. That is in effect the intent of Moses.

Neuertheless hee interlaceth also another matter therewithall: which is, that he telleth the people they be so much the lesse to be excused, because they had had experience of Gods goodnesse, in that he had led them with his mightie hande. For, their passing through the horrible and dreadfull desert, was not without the assistance of a singular and vnaccustomed power of God: where as they notwithstanding forgetting the goodnesse which they had felt, and which they ought to haue borne in minde for euer, did grudge at God, and became wilfull, and woulde not goe forwarde when he was redie to haue led them to the end. And that is the cause why Moses saith expresly, *that they had sorne*. As if hee should say, you wrought euen against your naturall senses, when you went not on as your God commaunded you. The reason is this. So long as you suffered your selues to bee gouerned by his hand, and so long as you walked in the way that hee appointed you: did you not euen see with your eyes, that hee made you to ouercome all hardnesse? Was not the wilderness wherthrough you passed, a verie gulfe? And yet notwithstanding you scaped out of it. And how came that to passe, but by the wonderfull working of your God among you? Seeing ye heard his voyce, you were sure that hee was come among you. Then said I vnto you, now is there no more for vs to doe, but to inioy the lande which our God hath assigned to vs for our heritage. Goe, let vs fight, our God hath promised it vs, and hee will not disappoint vs. Wee knowe he hath wrought mightily for vs hither to, and surely he will goe through with his worke. These and such other things did I alledge vnto you: And yet you followed not them as you ought to haue done. Wherefore acknowledge your vnthankefulnesse in that you refused to enter into the inheritance which God had promised to your fathers, and which he hath prepared for you.

Note by the way, the first good lesson that wee haue to gather here, is that forasmuch as God hath alreadie vttered his goodnes towards vs in making vs to feele his blessing: wee be the more worthy to be blamed, if we rest not wholly vpon him, or put not our whole trust in him to walk on boldly & without douting. For although God had neuer shewed himselfe to our experience: yet ought wee to giue credite to his holie worde. And it is good reason that we shoulde do him the honour to beleeue whatsoeuer he saith or speaketh vnto vs: for as much as he is faithfull, and his worde is better tryed than either gold or siluer, as it is saide in the Psalme. And Psal. 119

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therefore if there were no more but Gods vttering of his worde with his owne mouth: it were ynough to condemne the whole world for their disobeying thereof. But seeing that God hath confirmed his sayings by deedes, and hath shewed vs as it were to our eyesight, that his making of his promises vnto vs is not in vaine, but hee hath made vs to feele the thinges with our handes: so as we know in effect what his power is, and that it neuer faileth those which are his: if after all this teaching we fall to checking still, and be so stiffenecked as we will not bow to submit our selues to the thinges that hee speaketh, nor haue any will to obey him: I pray you doth not the greater condemnation lye vppon vs? What is to be done then? Let euery of vs consider aduisedly the good turnes that God hath done him, & let him marke them and note them that hee may beare them in minde. Verie well, God hath succored mee at such a pinch, I haue felt his helpe in such a case, I haue beene ayded at his hande, and he hath made me to perceiue his mightie power after such and such fashion. After this manner must wee make rehearsall of Gods benefites, and of his helping of vs all the time of our life. And after as hee hath vttered himselfe vnto vs, so must we be the more confirmed to trust to his promises, and to rest wholly vpon them. Herewithall let vs be stablished in inuincible constancie, to goe which way soeuer he leadeth vs, without feare of any distresse. Why so? For my God which hath neuer forsaken me to this day, will not giue me ouer now. As I haue felt [heretofore] that he giueth strength to those that are his: so am I sure that hee will reach me his hande and succour me still. So then there is no more for me to doe, but to commit my selfe vnto him. I see that this thing & that thing may cumber me, there are a number of temptations which may make me turne heade: but yet forasmuch as my God hath succored me hitherto at my neede: I doubt not but hee will doe the like vnto the ende. Thus yee see that the way for vs to eschewe the blame of vnthankefulnesse, is to call Gods benefits oftentimes to our remembrance, thereby to strengthen our selues still in trust that he will neuer faile vs vnto the end. Also this wil serue to make vs ouercome al temptations: and although the diuel haue neuer so many meanes and stoppes to turne vs out of the right way, yet shall we not cease to goe on still. And why? Because the hope which wee shall haue gathered, of Gods former making of vs to feele his goodnesse, will serue to carie vs ouer all tempestes in the middes of the sea: it will be as a boate, or as a shippe, or as a bridge to conuey vs safely ouer. To bee short, wee shall haue wherewith to strengthen vs continually, so wee shutte not our eyes at the assistance which God sheweth vs dayly. Thus you see generally what wee haue to gather vpon this saying of Moses. Anon the matters shall bee layde out more particularly by similitudes.

Let vs proceede to the things that he addeth: namely, that being come to the hill of the Amorrhytes, he saide, *Let vs possesse the Lande which the Lord our God and the God of our fathers promised vs. For he is here before vs*, that is to say, at our commaundement, as hee had said afore, for this is but a repetition of that which wee haue seene already. And heere Moses setteth forth the promise that God had made vnto the people, to the end to assure them of the Land in such wise, as they shoulde bee out of all doubt that it was their owne. And why? Because it had bene promised them of God. Beholde (saith he), thy God ment not to lye to thee, nor to beguile thee: and therefore thou must assure thy selfe, that the thing which hee hath spoken shalbe performed. Marke that for one point.

Neuertheleſſe, to the ende that the people may the better vnderstande, that they were not to possesse the lande for their owne deserts sake: hee telleth them expressly, *It is the God of your fathers* that doth it. For the Lande was promised as well to Abraham as to Isaac and Iacob, before the Iewes which then liued, were borne. Thereby then are they put in minde, that they had not deserued such a benefite at Gods hande, but that it proceeded wholly of his free goodnesse. And so much the more were they to blame, in that they had felt such experience of Gods goodnesse, and their sinne also was so much the heinouser, in that they acknowledged not the mercie that he had vsed towards them. That then is the effect of Moseses meaning heere.

But we haue to note herewithal, that although the promise was then growen olde, yet had it not lost his force: neither ceased it to liue still, though Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob were deade. True it is that the promise which had beene made, was not spoken to them that were presently aliue at this time: [they to whome it was spoken] that is to wit, Abraham, and the Patriarks, were all deceased. But Gods promise & his truth die not with men, they haue not the course of a transitoritie and slightfull life as wee haue. Therefore let vs marke well, that whereas God had promised the lande to Abraham, for him, his heires, and successors that shoulde descende of his race: although Abraham was rotten in the earth, and they that followed him together with all the Patriarks were consumed to powder and dust: yet the worde that GOD spake continued still, and forewent no whit at al of his force. This (I tell you) is a point which wee ought to marke well. For it is nowe long ago since the Lawe was giuen: so that if we haue an eye to the oldenesse thereof, it will seeme to vs to bee an ouxworne and deade thing. About a two thousand yeares after that, the Gospel was published to the worlde: and wee see that manie yeares, yea many hundred yeares are passed since. Then if wee shoulde measure Gods trueth by time: wee might thinke it to bee a thing as good as buried and quite and cleane forgotten.

Moreouer they that first caryed the Gospell abrode, are deade long agoe: but yet must we beare in minde, that Gods trueth is euerlasting,

and that although men be corrupible and passe and vanish away: yet the doctrine of salvation abydeth alwayes vnappayred, so as the force thereof abateth not at all. That is it (say I) which we haue to beare in minde. For although it was in olde time that GOD spake vnto Moses and the Prophetes, and although it bee nowe long agoe since the Gospel was deliuered to the Apostles: yet must we receiue the doctrine thereof nowadayes, as being in full force still. And that so much the rather, in respect of this saying of the Apostle, that our Lorde Iesus Christe hath made the way fresh by his bloude. They that liued vnder the Lawe and the Prophetes ought not to haue despised the trueth that had beene manifested to their fathers, though it was done long time before: and yet did not God discouer it so openly to them as hee doth to vs. It is not for nought then that the Apostle saieth, that the way which Iesus Christ made, is freshe. And why sayes hee so? His meaning is, that the bloude of our Lorde Iesus Christ cannot drye nor putrifie, but is alwayes freshe in remembrance before God, to the ende that wee shoulde bee assured of his trueth, which hee hath sealed with his death and passion. Seeing then that we haue such a pledge, we ought to be so much the forwarder to receiue Gods truth, forasmuch as wee perceiue that the force and vertue thereof dureth for euer. Heb. 10,20.

Nowe must wee marke further howe Moses saieth heere, *Thy God hath promised thee the lande, it is before thee, possesse it.* By these wordes he betokeneth, that wee must rest wholely vppon that which God saith, and not stande scanning after our owne fancies. For if men content not themselues with the thinges that God speaketh to them: where shall they seeke for greater certentie? Or when they haue sought it, where shall they finde it? But it is an offering of too greate wrong to our GOD, when wee bee not satisfied with his vttering of his will, and with his warranting of the same vnto vs. For if therevppon wee bee still wauering and doubtfull: what else is such vnbeliefe, but a replying against Gods trueth as though hee were not faithful, or as though he went about to abuse vs by alluring vs with vaine hope? So then let vs marke well, that all our life long wee must content our selues with Gods worde, and when we haue it wee must followe it without seeking any further.

For looke howe many doubtes and mistrustes wee conceiue, so many ouerthwart nippes and priuie vpbraydings doe wee giue vnto GOD, as who shoulde say there were no certaintie in his saying. But wee knowe that nothing is more peculiar to him than his trueth. And so (as much as in vs lyeth) wee make it a thing of nothing. Therefore it is a verie profitable warning when hee saieth, *The Lorde thy God hath promised thee the Lande.* For hee speaketh still in generall, meaning that we must all our life long hold this rule of sticking simply to the word of God. Anon the things shalbe laide foorth particularly, as I saide afore.

But let vs marke well, that Moses hauing alledged Gods promise, and hauing saide that the Lande was at the peoples commaundement, because GOD ment not to fayle in the performaunce of the thing that hee had once promised: addeth afterwarde, *Enter heere in and take possession of it.* Wherein hee sheweth vs that although GOD performe in vs al that hee hath saide: yet must not wee on our side bee idle, nor bee as blockes of wood, but wee must offer our selues to his seruice. For albeit that wee cannot stirre one finger to doe well: yet hath GOD made vs instrumentes whereby hee will worke.

Therefore wee must goe forwarde when hee commaundeth vs, and wee must indeuer to apply all our membres and wits to obey him. True it is (as I saide) that men are vtterly vnprofitable, yea and that their will goeth cleane backe from that which God commaundeth: but yet for all that, God ceaseth not to giue vs willingnesse, and when hee hath giuen vs willingnesse, hee giueth vs also performance, as saint Paul teacheth to the Philippians: and therewithall hee maketh vs to doe it with feare and carefulnesse. When as Saint Paul saith, *Doe ye*, and also, *It is God that doeth*: those two thinges seeme to bee contraries: but they bee not. For Gods working is in such wise, as hee imparteth to himselfe the thinges that hee doth in vs: and yet for all that, hee will not haue vs to bee slothfull and to fall a sleepe, but that euerye of vs should indeuour himselfe. Let vs learne then that whensoeuer God promiseth vs any thing, it is his office to accomplishe the whole. Phil. 2,13

Neuertheless he will haue vs to take paynes and to straine our selues, yea euen vs which are vtterly vnprofitable. And hauing giuen vs his power, hee will haue vs indeuour to make the thing auailable which he hath bestowed vppon vs, and to make it to bee profitable. That then is the thing which we haue to note here.

Howbeit, there withall there is also the conclusion which Moses maketh: namely when as hee saith, *Feare not, bee not dismayed.* And hereby hee doth vs to vnderstande, that although we bee armed and fenced with Gods promises, so as wee ought to bee sufficiently resolued, that hee will guide vs vnto the ende: yet shall wee haue manie occasions to make vs grudge and repyne, so as we might swarue aside from the right way, or vtterly forsake it, if we had not constancie to ouercome all the stoppes and lettes that the diuell thrusteth in our wayes: for of nature we be fearefull. True it is that in many things we be but too hardie. When any fond thing is to be attempted foolishly, in that case men needs not to be hartened, for they be but too bold already, to attempt this and that, & to mount aboue the cloudes as thee say. But when GOD shoulde be followed whithersoeuer hee calleth vs: our eyes runne heere and there, vp and downe, wee bee at our wittes ende, yea and if a flye doe but whiske before our eyes or a strawe stirre at our feete: by and by wee are at a stoppe. Nowe seeing wee haue this vice in our nature, let

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vs determine to fight on al sides against this sinful fearefulnesse, to the ende wee bee not holde backe from following God whithersoeuer hee commaundeth vs, but that wee may ouercome all the temptations of Satan, though he bee neuer so wylie in forging and framing of innumerable occasions in that behalfe, to turne vs away from our calling. And therefore let vs marke this warning giuen to the Iewes by Moses. For it is a warning to vs as well as it was to them, that it is vnpossible for vs to come thither as god calleth vs, if wee ouercome not this fearefulnesse and dismayednesse, that is to say, if wee fight not against all the incumberances that sathen can set before our eyes to make vs afraide. Therefore it standeth vs on hande to bee armed with strength from aboue. Thus you see howe wee ought to apply this streyne to our instruction.

Nowe the thinges will bee the plainer and better vnderstoode, if we make a similitude betweene the lande that was promised to the children of Israel, and the kingdome of God whereunto wee bee called. For in good sooth, the land of Chanaan was but as a figure & earnest-penny of the kingdome of heauen. Had the auncient fathers setled their mindes vppon the lande which they sawe: they had had a verie poore rest and weake stay, for in verie deede they inioyed it not of all their life, they did but onely trauell through it as straungers and wayfarers. Wee see that Abraham had not one foote of it in possession, sauing that hee purchased a little peece to burie his wife in, no hee had not so much as water to drinke. Iacob was banished out of it a great parte of his life. Isaac and all the Patriarks had but their walke in it, they neuer possessed one foote of the land which God had giuen for an heritage to them and their issue. Wee must needes conclude then that the auncient fathers did not passe through this visible land, and that their acknowledging of it for their inheritance was after such a sorte, as they tended alwayes towardes heauen, and that was the marke which they aimed at. Seeing it is so, wee must make a similitude betweene this lande, and the inheritance whereunto GOD calleth vs, as it hath beene purchased for vs by our Lorde Iesus Christ.

Whereas hee saith *That God made the people to passe through a horrible and dreadfull wildernesse*: the same belongeth vnto vs allo, if wee consider in what state God founde vs, and whence hee hath drawen vs. For are wee not all damned and forlorne by nature? Hath not the diuell a tyrannous dominion ouer vs, from whence no man can deliuer himselfe by his owne power? Euen so, if wee consider where GOD seeketh vs when hee calleth vs to him: [wee shall finde, that] the wildernesse wherethrough the Iewes passed is not so dreadefull and terrible, as is the damnation wherein wee were. For wee bee in bondage of sinne, wee bee vnder the thraldome of death, Satan reigneth ouer vs, and is king and prince of the whole worlde. Seeing then that GOD riddeth vs out of so miserable slauerie, and setteth vs at liberte by his holy spirite: is it not all one as if hee shoulde make vs way through the gulfes of hell? Yea: for wee bee there in verie deede, and wee cannot come at Iesus Christ, except we be brought out of the dungeons of death. Nowe then, if there were no more but this, that God hath ridde vs from the curse which was brought vppon vs by Adam, and wherein wee are all of vs fast shut and locked vp vntill hee haue pitie vppon vs: the experience of that one point ought to make vs perceiue his goodnesse. And if there were no more but that: it ought to giue vs courage to followe him, and to giue our selues wholly vnto him. For if wee bee slouthfull, there is no excuse for vs, because his goodnesse is sufficiently warranted vnto vs, and it is long of none but our selues that wee bee not fully resolued and perswaded that hee will goe through with the thing that hee hath begunne. And that it is so, if euerie of vs bethought himselfe well, wee shoulde finde that God by infinite wayes made vs to ouercome the thinges that seemed vnpossible. But what? To set foorth our owne valiant deedes, wee can well ynough alledge this and that, and our memorie is but too good. And though it bee but a thing of nothing that wee haue done, yet wee can skill to magnifie it and to make great reportes of it. Loe howe men can bee quicke ynough to remember all that euer they haue done in their life, that may set foorth their owne glorie: but in the meane whyle wee doe wickedly forget the benefites of GOD. And yet worketh hee in such wise towardes vs, as ought to quicken vs vp to acknowledge his goodnesse, or else on the contrarie parte wee doe but thrust all vnder foote. Hee shall haue deliuered vs from manie after delays, and hee shall haue made vs to haue passed manie greate lettes, so as wee may haue thought that we had beene vtterly shut out and fordone, and hee shall haue reached vs his hand: and yet for all that, wee neuer thinke of it againe. Nowe then, where as wee see men to bee reckelesse and slouthfull in following GOD, it is because they forget his benefites which they haue had proofe of, and become like the Iewes. And therefore it behoueth vs all to acknowledge our fault in this behalfe, and to mourne before God, and to seeke redresse of it.

Thus yee see howe wee ought to put this text in vre by similitude: that is to wit, when the promises of the Gospell are set forth to bring vs to the kingdome of heauen: let vs consider whereat God hath begunne in vs, by what meanes he hath brought vs to him, and howe hee hath strengthened vs, to the intent to bring vs out of the damnation, whereof wee are founde worthy by too too apparant conuiction. Nowe therefore if wee thinke there vpon, and consider thus with our selues, beholde, our God hath made vs partakers of his power, wee haue had too apparant experience therof, he hath deliuered vs out of the gulfe of hel, he hath ridde vs out of the bonds of the diuell and of death: let vs not doubt but hee will alwayes continue like himselfe hereafter,

and hold out to the end.

Furthermore let vs also marke well this saying in this text: *The God of thy fathers hath promised thee the Lande. Beholde therefore, it is at thy commandement, enter into it and take possession of it.* The meaning is that wee shoulde yeelde so much honour to Gods truth, as to bee fully and throughly resolued in our selues, that inasmuch as hee hath adopted vs to his children, our inheritance is certaine and infallible in heauen. For to what purpose is the Gospell preached vnto vs, but to make vs knowe that GOD is our father, and that wee being become his children by his free adopting of vs, shoulde bee assured that the kingdome of heauen belongeth vnto vs? And in verie deede for the same cause is the Gospell called the kingdome of heauen, forasmuch as it openeth the gate vnto vs, to the ende that wee nowadayes shoulde not doubee but that GOD auoweth vs to bee his heires. But wee must haue a further consideration of the inheritance that God giueth vs, than of all the benefites that Moses speakes of. For it stoode the Iewes on hande to haue helde themselues still to the thing that had beene spoken to Abraham, Isaac, & Iacob. But now is the Gospel another warrant vnto vs. For God is called the father, not onely of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, but also of our Lord Iesus Christ, who is our head in such wise, that being once vnyted vnto him, we become partakers of his own substance and life, and [therefore] we must not doubt but that the inheritance of the kingdom of heauē belongeth vnto vs. Nowe then, like as Moses said vnto the Iewes, *The God of your fathers*: so must this voyce sounde in our eares, The GOD and father of our Lorde Iesus Christ, hath not onely promised vs the kingdome of heauen, but also giuen vs wherewith to assure our selues the better of it. For we haue the performance & effect thereof, in that our Lord Iesus Christ suffered death, to recouer vs the inheritance, whereof wee were bereft and dispossessed in the person of our father Adam. Nowe then wee see after what sort we ought to looke vpon this doctrine: that is to wit, that although wee bee vnhappie wretches, although wee deserue to bee reiected of our GOD, although there bee nothing but cursednesse in vs, and although that by nature wee bee plunged in the gulfe of hell: yet notwithstanding, seeing that God hath adopted vs in our Lorde Iesus Christ, and made vs all one with him by faith: wee neede not doubt but we be heires of the kingdom of heauen. And why? For GOD cannot lye, and forasmuch as hee is vnchaungeable, wee haue sufficient warrant that wee shall not bee disappointed by putting our trust in him. Againe, wee haue our Lorde Iesus Christe, who is the mediatour betweene God and men, and hee hath not onely taken solemne recognisances as a publike notarie: but also accomplished the thinges that were promised on the behalfe of GOD his father. He hath signed the euidence in such wise with his owne bloude, as wee see he hath payed that which hee owed not, and that which he was not to bee charged withall. So then let vs haue this stedfast assuredneſſe with vs, that GOD auoweth vs for his children, and consequently that wee bee heires of eternall life. Howbeit, let vs alwayes take that assuredneſſe out of the Gospell, accordingly as we see that Moses leadeth the Iewes thither.

Mat. 13. 24. and 31.

True it is that wee must not forget the heauenly power that was vttered euerie where in the ryſing againe of our Lorde Iesus Christe. But howe might we applie such a benefite to our selues, or how could we inioy it, if it were not by faith? Therefore like as our Lorde Iesus Christ hath purchaced vs the kingdome of heauen by his death and passion: so is it his will that comfort shoulde bee giuen vs nowadayes by his Gospell, where hee witnesseth vnto vs that all that euer hee did was for our sakes and for our welfare: so that hauing that once, and being assured thereof, we may inioy the benefite that was purchased for vs.

But yet in the meane while, wee must doe so much honour to the Gospell, as to beholde that thing by faith, which is hidden from our eyes. It is saide *that the Lande is at thy commandement*. Nowe if wee beleeue our senses, wee cannot perceiue that the kingdome of heauen is ours, or in our hande: it will seeme to bee too farre off from vs, and that wee had neede of wings to flie aboue the skyes. But what? Wee must so honour Gods worde (as I saide) as wee must not doubt but that the thing which is spoken there, is possible to be done, although wee conceiue not howe by our fleshly vnderstanding: faith must surmount all capacitie of man. And if wee finde any hardnesse therein, let vs fight against our selues, and dayly indeauour to recouer vnto God. For the way whereby hee will be glorified at our hands, is (as I saide at the beginning) that if there were no more but his bare worde, yet ought the same to contēt and suffice vs. But seeing he hath vouchsafed to deliuer vs this pledge which he hath giuen vs in the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ: we shalbe the lesse excusable, if wee haue not a full and whole contentation. Seeing then that we haue such an assurance of the kingdome of heauen, let vs go and take possession of the lande. For (as I said afore) God will not haue vs idle.

True it is, that hee sheweth vs by the holy scripture, that there is not one drop of power in vs that tendeth vnto good, but that wee be wholly giuen to euill. And yet notwithstanding it is his will also that when he hath put his gratious gifts into vs, we shoulde make them anayable, without chalenging any thing at all to our selues. For in this case it is not for vs to glorie in our selues, nor to trust in our owne legges, according whereunto it is saide in the Psalme to such as are giuen to the worlde, that they must not trust in their owne strength, nor in the strength of their horses. If this bee saide of the thinges that perteine to this slightfull life: what is to bee saide of the spirituall life which is much more excellent? So then with-

Psal. 33. and 37.

vout attributing any thing to our ſelues, let vs indeuour neuertheleſſe ſeeing that God commandeth vs, and let vs goe on to enter into the poſſeſſion of the ſpirituall kingdome whereunto he calleth vs. And that is the cauſe why I ſaid that wee muſt euermore come backe to our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and there ſeeke euery thing that is wanting in our ſelues. For wee knowe that his ſuffering of his death and paſſion, was to exalt vs aboue the heauens: and although wee doe but creepe vppon the earth, or rather bee ſo loppeheauie that wee ſinke ſtill downeward, to plunge our ſelues in the bottomleſſe gulfes: yet will our Lorde Ieſus lift vs vp, according as he himſelf was exalted, to the ſame end and intent, as is declared in the third Chapter of the Goſpel of S. Iohn.

Iohn. 3. 14.

Furthermore, to the ende wee may bee diſcharged of all ſelftruſt, let vs looke vppon the notable example that was giuen vs at the death of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For if wee will goe the right way to heauen, wee muſt followe the poore theefe to whom he ſaide, This day ſhalt thou bee with mee in Paradiſe. Howe can wee bee ſure that GOD will bring vs to the kingdome of heauen, ſeeing that wee ſeeke hell, and all our affections, all our thoughtes, all our deſires, all our powers, and all our workes, tend wholly thither, euen to ſeparate vs from God, and to alienate vs from his kingdome, and to driue vs away from life and ſaluation? How may wee (ſay I) be ſure that God will take vs vppe into his heauenly kingdome? We muſt haue recourſe to this word that was ſpoken to the poore theefe: This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe. Seeing it is ſo that our Lord died, & that he entred into ſuch gulfes of ſorrowe, that he was pinched ſo farre as to abide the tormentes that were due vnto vs, and not only abode reproch and griefe of bodily death, but alſo felt Iuſtice of God, and became as a wretched offender to beare all the ſinnes of the world: let vs not doubt but he hath deliuered vs from the paines & anguiſh which wee ſhould haue felt, and will lifte vs vp to himſelfe, and therefore nowe let vs not bee afraide of death. But firſt of all it behoueth vs to followe the poore theefe. What had he in him to bring him to the kingdome of heauen? He was faſtened to a croſſe, he had his armes and legges broken, he ſeemed to bee but a wretched carkaſſe, there was nothing but reproche in him. Thus then you ſee howe he was an vgly myrrour to looke vpon: and yet neuertheleſſe, Ieſus Chriſte promiſeth him to make him his partaker and companion of his heauenly glorie. And what had hee beene all the time of his lyfe? So lewde and wicked both before God and man, that he was worſe than condemned and accurſed. Will we then be the heires of God? Wee muſt follow this theefe who had the preheminence to goe before vs into the heritage of heauen. And how [muſt wee follow him?] We muſt acknowledge naturally there is nothing in vs but vtter wickednes, and that GOD might iuſtly holde vs accurſed. Alſo wee muſt thinke our ſelues to bee as folke that haue their armes and legges broken, yea and as men vtterly diſmembred, ſo as we haue not one whit of ſtrength in vs, at leaſtwiſe as in reſpect of our ſelues. And yet for all that therewithall we muſt not doubt but that God accepteth vs to him, when wee linke in with our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt by right faith and pure affection, acknowledging him to be our king, and hauing our eyes faſtened vpon the inuiſible kingdome, as I ſaide afore. For if the wretched theefe which ſawe death before his eyes, which was in as great tormentes as was poſſible, and ſawe himſelfe as it were behated of all the world, did put his truſt in Ieſus Chriſte: what ought wee to doe? Againe, in what ſtate was our Lord Ieſus Chriſt at the ſame time? He hung vpon a croſſe full of reproche and ſhame, all men did ſpit at him, all men did ſpite him. And yet, notwithſtanding that reprochfull ſtate, the poore wretch ceaſſed not to behold life in death, and to ſay, Lorde remember me when thou commeſt into thy kingdome. But nowe wee knowe that Ieſus Chriſt is exalted to the right hand of GOD his father, and hath ſouereigne power ouer all creatures: ſo that if wee yeeld him not his due honour now that he is entered into his glorie, wee ſhall haue no excuſe at all. True it is that he was once hanged vpon a gibbet ful of reproch and ſhame: but yet wee ſee therewithall that the ſame was turned into glorie and triumph, ſo as the victorie which he obteined was more royall than all the triumphes of all the Princes in the worlde. Seeing then that wee doe ſee that Ieſus Chriſt hath ridde away all the ſlaunder of his croſſe by the power of his reſurrection: ought wee not at leaſtwiſe to looke vp to the kingdome where he dwelleth, whereunto he calleth vs, and which he hath purchaſed ſo dearely? Thus you ſee after what maner wee muſt put in vre this text *of the poſſeſſing of the land which he hath promiſed vs and purchaſed for vs.*

Beſides this, when wee heare this ſaying, *that it is at our commaundement*: let vs vnderſtand that it were a diſanulling of the death and paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, if wee ſhould not bee fully reſolued of this inheritaunce, according alſo as Saint Paule ſheweth. If thou ſay, who is he that ſhall goe downe into the deepe, it is all one as if thou ſhouldeſt fetche vp Chriſt againe from death. Then if wee imagine with our ſelues, alas wee bee wretched creatures, there is nothing but vtter weakeneſſe in vs, euill doeth ſo euermuther that wee wote not what to do, the diuell tormenteth vs, on the one ſide, and on the other ſide wee bee ſo fraile as is pitifull to ſee, and wee bee in trouble and vnquietneſſe: if wee ſtande hereypon as quitte out of heare and diſcouraged: Saint Paule ſayeth it is all one as if we beleeued not that Ieſus Chriſt dyed for vs. For why? The death and Paſſion that he ſuffered are no trifling thing, but a thing of verie great price. Nowe then wee muſt take it to bee of power as it is, ſo that although wee ſee our ſelues in the midſt of bottomleſſe pits, yea & that very often and commonly, inſomuch that when wee bee out of one gulfe, by and by

Rom. 10. 7.

wee enter into another, and therewithall Satan hath such power against vs and wee on the other side are so feeble, that we can scarcely stirre one finger: yet let vs not forbeare to assure our selues, that the inheritaunce belongeth to vs still: for that is the honour which wee must yeeld to our Lord Iesus Christ. But therewithall let vs go forward still. After what maner? Let vs call to minde howe the Apostle saieth, that like as our
Heb. 13. 12. Lord Iesus Christ went out of the Citie as reiected out of the companie of men: so we must not disdaine to become like him, and to beare the shame and reproche of his crosse: for it becommeth the members to be fashioned like to their body. And therefore let vs determine to goe after him, For those are the true markes whereby he knoweth vs to bee his. And for performance thereof, let vs vnderstand that wee must forsake the world in general, yea and our selues too. For the matter standeth not alonely vpon going out of the world. True it is that so long as it pleaseth God to haue vs lodge here, here wee must abide: but yet howsoeuer we fare, we must euer haue one foote vp, readie to goe hence whensoeuer it shall please God to take vs to him: so that if wee will be heires of the heauenly kingdome, wee must be but pilgrims and straungers in this world. Yea and (which more is) wee must go out of our selues, that is to say, we must not leane to our owne will and wit, but wee must ridde our selues of all selfweening, and couet nothing but to goe vnto God. And if the world shake vs off and make a mocking stocke of vs, (as we see now adayes how the poore Christians are lightly esteemed, so that they bee taken to bee as the offscouring of the world, or rather as myre & dung, as saieth S. Paul:) I say, if wee bee so reiected of
2. Cor. 4. 13. the whole world: let vs beare it patiently. For why? Iesus Christ went out of the Citie Ierusalem, bearing the reproch and curse of the whole world vpon him; and therefore let vs bee readie to bee fashioned like vnto him. Also therewithal let vs determine to separate our selues from all the vncleannesse that reigneth euerie where now adayes in the world. And forsmuch as we can not possesse the heauenly heritage, vnlesse wee ouercome this doubting and fearefulnesse which plucke vs backe: insomuch that if our mindes runne still vpon our owne feebleneſſe, truely wee shall not neede any other thing to shake vs downe: whereas on the other side if we haue our eye vppon our captaine Iesus Christ, who alonely hath vanquished all feare, yea and euen death, and the diuell, & all his power: then may wee boldly goe on still, to ouercome all lets that may hinder vs or turne vs aside from following God whithersoeuer he calleth vs: Let vs shut our eyes against all that euer may turne vs out of the right way, and let vs not doubt but that God wil alwayes be our guide, and worke in such wise, as he will outgoe all our desires, yea and all the hope that we can conceiue of him.

Now therefore let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs so to feele them, that being cast down in our selues, wee may resort wholly vnto him, and acknowledging our selues to bee wretched offenders that haue deserued his wrath and vengeance, (yea euen whout euer being able to recouer out of endlesse death and cursednes) flee for refuge to the redemption that is purchased for vs by the bloudshed of his onely sonne. And that seeing our Lord Iesus Christ hath payed all our debtes, to discharge vs of them, and to beare the condemnation that was due vnto vs, and forsmuch as he offereth vs daily the fruite and effect of his death and passion: we may not doubt but that he will accomplish the thing that he hath begunne in vs, and by his holy spirit make the power of his resurrection auaileable in vs, to the end that we may leade a new life, and bee stablished in him more & more, till we be quite rid of all the corruptions of our flesh, to bee taken vp into his kingdome. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely, &c.

On Saturday the xiij. of Aprill. 1555.

The sixth Sermon vpon the first Chapter.

22 Then came you all vnto me and said, let vs send men before vs to search out the land for vs, and to bring vs word by what way we shall go vp into it, and into what Cities we shall enter.

23 That saying liked me well, and therevpon I tooke twelue men among you, of euery tribe one.

24 And they departed, and went vp into the Mountaines, and came to the riuer of Escol, and searched out the land.

25 And they tooke of the fruits of the Land in their handes, and brought them to vs, and brought vs word againe and said, The Land which the Lorde our God giueth vs is good.

26 Yet notwithstanding, you would not goe vp, but were disobedient to the commaundement of the Lord your God.

27 And

27 And you murmured in your tentes and saide, because the Lorde hateth vs, therefore hath he made vs to come out of the Countrie of Egypt, to deliuer vs into the hand of the Amorrhytes, to cause vs to be destroyed.

28 How shall wee goe vp? Our brethren haue made our heartes to quaile, by saying: The people are moe in nomber and taller of stature than wee. The Cities are great, and walled vp to the skie. And moreouer we haue seene there the sonnes of the Enakims.

HEre Moses bringeth to their remembrance the things that are conteined in the xiij. Chapter of the Booke of Nombers, howbeit that there seemeth to bee some diuersitie at the first blush. For there he declareth that such as should haue espied out the land, were sent by the expresse commaundement of God: and here he maketh no mention of it, but saieth it was done at the request of the people. Now these two things may very well agree: that is to wit, that the people should desire to haue the enterraunce into the land knowen before they went any further: and also that God should allow that desire, yea or rather euen preuent it, accordingly as wee knowe that in all chinges he guided this people with a passing fatherly care, as shall bee shewed in the next Lecture. Therefore there is no inconuenience in it, that God, to shewe the people what care he had to guide them, should appoint spies to be sent: and that therewithall the people also on their part should require it. So then we see still that God bare with the people, when he graunted to send men to spie out the land. And let vs marke, that it was a condemning of the people, when the thing that should haue bene to their helpe and furtherance, did plucke them backe. And it is not reported alonely of those whome Moses speakes off, to the intent that wee should blame them: but they bee set forth as an example and looking glasse, for vs to see our selues in, and to fare the better by it. If God beare with vs and giue vs meanes conuenient for our infirmitie: let vs apply them to our vse, let them stirre vs vp to obey him, and let vs not in any wise be hindred by them. This (say I) is the thing that wee haue to marke.

But the chiefe point is this that Moses addeth, namely, *That the spies brought words against that the land was good, and that the people would not beleeue it, but were disobedient to the mouth of God.* It should seeme that Moses rehearseth not the storie as it is conteined in the place before alledged. For there it is said, that of the twelue which were sent, there were but two that hartened the people to enter into the land that was promised them, and that the other ten laboured as much as they could, to discourage those which were not verie well disposed of themselues. Seeing it is so, why doeth Moses say here, that the spies reported it to be a good land, as though they had incouraged the people to doe as God had commaunded them? Wee haue to marke here, that Moses hath not an eye to the greater nomber nor to the multitude: but to the better sort of them. Although then that there was no moe but Caleb the sonne of Iephonee and Iosua the sonne of Nun, that made good report, and trauailed to make the people to obey God: yet are they preferred as Gods hand. Thus ye see that God esteemeth more of the sixth part than of all the rest. And it is a verie notable point, as whereof wee may gather verie good and profitable doctrine. For anon Moses will adde, that the greater part of those that were sent to spie out the land, saide that the Cities were great and walled vp to the skie. But as now he speakes but of the two that discharged their duetie.

Wee see then, that whensoeuer the greater multitude of men inclineth vnto euill, we must let them alone as though they were nothing worth. They bee not worthie to come in account, and wee must rather holde with a handfull of men whom wee see to teache vs faithfully and to giue vs good counsell: I say wee must rather followe one or two such, and let a hundred, yea a thousand others goe, than cast our selues into confusion with the greater multitude. And if euer this were needfull: it is needfull now in our time. For on the one side wee see how all thinges are turned vpside downe in the worlde: superstitions are so great and vnmeasurable as is pitie to see. If wee should frame our life to the common trade, what a thing were it? For all is infected with robberie, deceite, crueltie, treason, blasphemie, contempt of God, drunkennesse, whoredome, pride, and loosenesse. Nowe then, whosoeuer fashioneth himselfe to the customs of men, must forsake God and withdrawe himselfe from all goodnesse: he must giue himselfe to all lewdnesse, and plundge himselfe into all wickednesse. Lo to what point wee bee come. What is to be done then? Let vs learne to looke vpon such as are able to guide vs aright, though they be but fewe in nomber: and let vs not be caried away by the greater multitude. For it wil not serue to shield vs before God, it will not serue to lessen or to mitigate our fault. If we say, euery man did so: when I saw such a nomber of men followe that trade, I put my selfe in companie with them: & to my seeming y thing that was so commonly vsed, could not bee but lawfull: the alledging of such fond excuses will stand vs in no stead, for we shall win nothing by them, as I saide afore. And therefore let vs follow those to whom God hath giuen the grace to shew vs y right way. Though there be but three or foure of them, let vs esteem them no lesse than if they were an hundred thousand. For God passeth not for the greatnesse of the multitude, as it is said alreadie.

Againe, on the other side, as concerning Religion: are they that sticke to the pureneſſe of the Goſpell, moe in nomber than the Papiſts, Turkes, and heathen men? No surely. Insomuch that if wee bee compared but with the Iewes which are a curſed offcouring, whom God hath ſo rooted out as there remaine verie fewe of them: yet notwithſtanding the Chriſtians which are willing to giue themſelues ſimply to the ſeruing of God according to his word, are ſo fewe in nomber, as the other may farre paſſe them. What would become of vs then, if wee ſhoulde followe the greater nomber? And yet wee ſee howe a great ſort of ignoraunt folkes doe take vpon them to ſay, Tuſh, as for them that take vpon them to alter Religion, they bee but a verie ſmall nomber, and are they wiſer than all the world beſide? Thus you ſee how moſt men gaſe vpon themſelues, and caſt a ſtop in their owne way, to barre themſelues from comming to Gods trueth. And what is the cauſe thereof? Euen their blearing of their owne eyes, by gaſing vpon the greater multitude which goeth to deſtruction,

But contrariwiſe, let vs condemne the whole world, as Noe was faine to doe in his time. And that condemning of his was not in vaine: for he and his houſhold were ſaued by it. And although they were not aboue eight perſons in all: yet durſt they ſet themſelues againſt ỹ whole world: and ſo muſt wee doe. Though all the whole world crie out with one voyce, that it is not now needefull to reſt vpon the holy ſcripture, and that the opinions of the great wiſe men of the world ſhall ſtand: let vs giue eare to that which GOD ſayeth. Albeit there were but one man that laboured to bring vs from the errours and ſuperſtitions that haue full ſcope euerywhere: yet let that one man bee more eſteemed at our handes, than a hundred thouſand others. For wee ſee the rule thereof that is giuen vs here.

And although Moſes was the writer of this Booke: yet is it the holy Ghoſtes dooing, who vſed him as an inſtrument. Now then, where it is ſaide *That the ſpies reported it to bee a good land:* wee ſee that the two are ſet downe as it were in the roome of all the twelue, and the other tenne are laid vnderfoote. For they were not worthie to bee remembred, and we knowe that God deſtroyed them for their vnruſtineſſe. Then if there bee any deceiuers that ſeduce the common people, ſo as their wicked doctrine is receiued, and men like well of them, and in the meane while there are very fewe that teache vs to ſerue God purely: let vs heare thoſe fewe, & let vs not ſticke to ſay, Theſe are the teachers that inſtruct vs rightly what wee ought to doe. Though the nomber of their aduerſaries be neuer ſo great, let vs not make any account of the, forasmuch as we ſee that God deſtroyeth them, & that they be as it were raſed out of his booke: for beholde, this ſtorie written by Moſes is the very regiſter of God. Inſomuch that whereas on the one ſide ten men had conſpired to miſcarie the people, they were all reiected, & God made no reckening nor account of them. And [on the contrarie part] whereas there were but two that incouraged the people faithfully: thoſe were put in nomber for all ỹ reſt, for they were well worthy to be eſteemed as miniſters and ſhepherdes in Gods Church, for their due performming of their charge. Therfore if we marke this text, we ſhall be throughly armed and fenced againſt all the ſtumbling blockes ỹ trouble moſt men, who when they ſee a ſort of dogges barking at Gods trueth, are vtterly at their wits ende, and knowe not what to doe nor where to become. Wherefore let vs looke to obſerue the rule that God giueth vs: & then ſhall wee euer keepe on our courſe, & neuer be turned out of the way for the troubles and diuiſions that we ſee in the world.

And hereunto alſo ought that to ſerue which Moſes adderh, *You would not* (ſaith he) *but were diſobedient.* To whom? He ſaith not ſingly *vnto God:* but *vnto the mouth of God.* This maner of ſpeache might ſeeme harſh at the firſt ſight: but yet it importeth good doctrine. Wee know that men are alwayes deſirous to excuſe themſelues whē they withſtand God and incounter his word: and yet for all that they ceaſſe not to proteſt that they meane not to be againſt God. Their intent then is, that men ſhould not thinke them to doe that which they do. But here to cut off occaſion of all ſtartingholes, the holy Ghoſt ſaith expreſly, that we muſt yeeld to Gods mouth. And what is meſt by this mouth of his? It is his vttering of his will vnto vs, when he ſpeaketh to vs by his miniſters, by his Prophets, and by ſuch as he raiſeth vp in his Church to gouerne his people. That then is ỹ thing that wee muſt take heede vnto: for God will not ſhewe himſelfe to vs in viſible maner. True it is that at the ſame time he gaue ſignes & tokens, to the end it might bee knowen that he himſelfe ſpake by Moſes: but yet in the meane while he vſed Moſes as his inſtrument, & therewithall confirmed his lawe which was publiſhed at that time. After him came the Prophets, and them alſo did God vſe as his mouth: but in the Goſpell wee haue his mouth open moſt of all. So then let vs marke well, ỹ they which proteſt that their intent is to ſerue God, & in the meane while make none account of his word, as it is vttered and left in writing: are but hypocrites, yea euen ſhameleſſe hypocrites, becauſe the deede it ſelfe proueth them liars. For whereas they on the one ſide ſay that their intent is to ſerue God: and God on ỹ other ſide intendeth to trie our obedience by ſetting his word before vs: ỹ ſame is a good triall to diſcerne whether our ſaying that we be his ſeruantes, be ſo in good earneſt or no. For thereby it appeareth, that they hearken not to his word, but rather reiect it, & preferre their owne opinions and fancies before it. And ſo ye ſee a point that ye ought to marke wel.

And hereby it appeareth how much ỹ whole world is to be condemned now adayes. For ỹ Papiſtes can well ynough ſay, ỹ their intent is to be ſubiect vnto God: yea & to what purpoſe elſe do they take ſo great paines, & martyr theſelues in their fooliſh deuocions? All the Idolatries which they commit, they terme by the name of Gods ſeruice. But yet for all that, behold, wee haue the holy

holy scripture wherein God hath vttered his will vnto vs, and he will haue men to be ruled thereby. This is alledged to the Papistes, to the end they should not followe their owne lykings, but submit themselues to the bridle in such sorte as God hath layde it vppon vs, and beare his yoke quietly. But contrariwise, they will needes serue God after their owne imaginations, as we see by the confused mingling that is among the, which maketh it manifest that they haue no care at all to obserue Gods commaundements. For their saying is, mee thinkes that this is good, thus were we taught by our fathers. Whereby we see that they doe flatly resist Gods mouth. They will not stick afterward to say, O wee worship God. Yea marie, but God will haue men to harken to his mouth, and we knowe what maner a one that is: namely euen the same wherewith he hath spoken by Moses and the prophets, and finally by the Apostles by whom he hath taught vs familiarly all that euer hee would haue vs to doe. So then let vs nowe take good heede to this doctrine, for wee cannot disobey Gods mouth, that is to say his word, but it is a manifest despising of him: for they be things that differ not, neither can they be separated asunder.

Furthermore not onely the Papistes doe prouoke God by resisting his word: but also we see that euen they which possesse the Gospell, will beleue nothing but that which lyketh theselues. For what reuerence hath the holy scripture nowadayes among a number of men? In deede the word *Gospell* costeth them nothing: but in the meane while, if a man tell them that God sayth not any thing which is not there: euery man takes vpon him to bee an interpreter: or els hee sayth, mee thinkes this is harde, and as for that, I cannot digest it. And so, after as euery man misliketh of the holy scripture, so taketh he leaue to reiect one thing or other, whereas notwithstanding, wee should in all pointes haue our mouthes shut when God speaketh, and our eares open to receiue whatsoeuer he sayth vnto vs. Forasmuch then as we see that the doctrine of the Gospell is so despised throughout the worlde, and euery of vs shooteth foorth his owne bolt, and wee will needes haue such shiftes and deuises as lyke our selues, so as if any thing seeme euill vnto vs, wee reiecte it: it may easily be gathered by the sight thereof, what horrible condemnation is prepared for all such as disobay the mouth of God. And therfore let vs learn to temper our selues with such modestie, and sobernes, that as soone as we haue any record of Gods trueth, wee may yeelde vnto it without gainesaying. Let that serue for one poynt.

And moreouer let vs extend this doctrine yet to a further vse: which is, not to be inquisitiue of Gods trueth, further foorth than it is vttered in the holy scriptures. For God will not haue vs to fall (as yee woulde say) to pulling out of his bowels, as they doe which will needes bee searching out of measure, and more than they haue leasie to doe. We shall see a number of fantastical fellowes & giddibraind persons, which cast forth fond & trysling questions, and turmoyle heauen & earth, & are neuer contented, but are alwayes busie & full of vnquietnesse. Now, this is a cursed & deadly disease. And therfore let vs learne to hearken vnto God when he speaketh to vs, & not to couet to know any more than he hath taught vs, & setteth daily before vs in the holy scripture. Let all our wisedome be to receiue ỳ which is vttered vnto vs by ỳ mouth of god. It followeth how Moses vpbraided ỳ people, *that they murmured in their tentes, saying: Beholde, because the Lord hateth vs, therefore hath he brought vs out of the land of Egypt, and brought vs hither as vnto a hatefull place. For our brethren haue made our hartes to quaile, telling vs that they saw Giants in the land, and that the townes are walled vp to the skies. And to what purpose shall we go?* Here wee see that when men begin once to doe amisse, the mischief waxeth stil worse and worse, vntill it become to the full measure. It was an euill beginning aforehand, when the people resisted God, and would not followe to enter into the land at the commaundement of Moses.

But is this all? No, behold here is yet a much more cursed blasphemie, in that the people spyteth GOD, repyning at his bringing of them out of Egypt, and charging him with hatred towardes them. And whereof came this? No doubt but hee maketh it playne: namely for that men seeke couert in dooing euill, and make no conscience to accuse God and to blaspheme his holy name, to the ende to haue some colour wherewith to hide their owne wickednesse. Thus you see how men deale, when they cannot finde in their hartes to yeeld vnto God. They will needes stil iustifie themselues in their disobedience, specially when God preseeth vppon them and holdeth them at a bay, yea and layeth in such euidence against them, as they be conuicted: for then doe they seeke startingholes to iustifie themselues euen in despite of God, accusing him and laying all the fault vppon him. Truely this is a cursed kinde of dealing, but yet we see it is common, insomuch that men doe make euen an arte of it. How many are there to be found, that wil not blame God to cleare themselues? If a man blame them for it, and charge them with their faultes: they will not graunt that their intent was so: but yet the deede bewrayeth that it is so. If a man bee rebuked for his vices, with whom hath he to doe? In deede it may be ỳ it is but a mortall man which findeth fault with him & sayth, thou hast done this or that: but yet must he vnderstand that the iudgement is Gods. When soeuer any man telleth vs that we haue done amisse: wee must not looke at him that speaketh, for Gods word is the iudge. Therefore must euery man cyte himselfe, and as oft as he is warned of any offece, he must offer himself to Gods iudgemẽt seat, & consider ỳ ỳ is the place where he must appeare to make his account. Now let vs se how euery of vs is inclined or disposed to cõfesse his faults. Nay, cõtrariwise we seeke al ỳ shifts we can, to shroud our selues, & we haue our hurkingholes, insomuch ỳ euen whẽ we be too manifestly conuicted of our sins, yet we

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ceasse not to wrangle still. But our Lord will not suffer vs to scape him so by our fond excuses. He followeth still vpon vs, and then begin wee to gnash our teeth at him. We see that these would excuse themselues. But when they fall to replying, with how soe see we not that the euill is already apparant? Therfore when men perceiue themselues to be so preached at by Gods word, they become as wilde beastes, they spit out and cast vp their poyson, they spite God apparantly, & rayle at his word. And would God ỹ examples thereof were not so common as we see they be.

Wherefore let vs marke, that this text ought to serue vs as a looking glasse, wherein to behold the frowardnesse that reigneth throughout the world. And when we haue done amisse, let vs learne to abstein from wilfulnesse. For else in the ende we shall fall into the bottomlesse pit of blaspheming God, & if we continue in that stubbornes & vnwillingnes to acknowledge our own vices, in the end we shal fal to resisting God furiously, as it befell to these wretches of whome Moses speaketh here. For when men wil needes maintaine themselues after that sorte in their wicked quarels against God, they fall not onely into disobedience, but also into sturdinesse, yea euen into most shameful & beastly sturdinesse, as we see here. It was too grosse a fault already, when the people had said, how shall we goe, or what can we do, seeing the townes are so strong and the people so giantlyke? It was too much already to resist God after that fashion. But behold, here is yet a more excessiue vnthankefulnesse. For in stead of bethinking themselues of Gods grace, in deliuering them from the thraldome of Egypt: they fal to rayling at him. What (say they?) Would God haue fetched vs out of the land of Egypt, if he had not hated vs? Now alas what hatred was it! When God pitied his poore creatures, they were euen at the last cast: they were intreated lyke wretched slaues, yea euen to the drawing of the bloud out of their vaines: they were so cruelly handled, as was horrible to see: & in the end the tyranny was growen so farre, that all their male children were murthered, of purpose to make cleane riddance of them, and to wipe out the very remembrance of them. Euen at this pinch, did God haue compassion vppon the people. Could any greater goodnes haue bin shewed? And when as he saith by his prophet, My people, what harme did I thee in bringing thee out of the land of Egypt? doeth it not appeare thereby that they were too too malitious and frowarde? I planted a vine [sayth God] and looked for good fruite: & now thou wilt choke thy maister with thy sowernesse.

Mich. 6. 3.

Now then seeing that this deliuering of them out of the land of Egypt, was a singular warrant of Gods goodnesse, loue, and mercie towardes them: must it not needes be that they were starke mad, when they twited God with his bringing of them out of Egypt, charging him that he did it of hatred towardes them? Were it possible that men should ouershoote themselues so farre, if they were not become starke deuils? No: but as I sayd afore, this doctrine is written of the Iewes that were in the time of Moses, to the intent that we should profite in the feare of God by their example, and beare in minde that they which will needes stand so wilfully in their vices, shall in the end fall to flat spiting of God, and blaspheme his name, turne good into euill, deface his mercie as much as they can, mingle heauen and earth together, and make a hell the confusion of all thinges. Wherefore let vs stand in awe, and walke on in humilitie and warinesse, glorifying God. Againe, when we haue committed God any fault, let vs be afrayd, yea and euen mourne for it, and not pretend any matter or quarell against God, but rather flee to his onely mercie for refuge, being vtterly ashamed and cast downe in our selues. And so ye see what we haue to marke vppon this text, where it is sayd that the Iewes murmured in their tents, saying that Gods bringing of them out of the land of Egypt, was because he hated them.

Now furthermore it behoueth vs to marke, that the cause of their rayling, was for that they knewe not Gods power, notwithstanding that it was apparant to them. For although they had felt it enough, & more than enough to haue confirmed them withal: yet neuertheles, as soon as they heard speaking of the talnesse of their enemies, of their walled cities, & of their strong holdes: by and by their hearts failed them and they were vtterly dismaid. And why? Surely God had giuen them proofe of his mightie power, to the intent they should haue trusted to him as I haue sayd heretofore. But what for that? They shut their eyes at all those thinges, and therewithal fell to grudging assoone as they heard of any distresse. And euen so doe we. For when God calleth vs, or commaundeth vs to goe: we will see aforehand whether there be any letres or no. How shall I goe, say wee? for there is this let and that let: and as for me, I haue no strength at all. And in the meane season we consider not that God is strong enough for vs, and that it is his power which maketh vs to walke on, and to ouercome all that euer the deuill trumpeth in our way. Now then, wee can neuer yeeld God his due honor, to trust in him, to put our selues into his hand, and to hope that he will helpe vs and giue vs the vpper hand of all thinges that may turne vs out of the right way: except we haue an eye to the benefits we haue receiued before. And so we see that Moses rehearseth not here a single storie, ỹ we might the better know what God hath willed vs to doe: but rather that he setteth before our eyes what we be, together with the vices that are but too common among among vs, to the end we should learne to put our trust in Gods strength. What is to be done then? We see our owne frailetie, howbeit not so much as were requisite: but yet, that which we se ought to make vs hang downe our heads. Neuertheless, when we knowe once ỹ there is no power in vs to follow Gods will: let vs step to the remedie, let vs not be out of hart for it, neither let vs doe as they doe which thinke themselues quit because they haue not wherwith to stead ỹ turne, saying, oh syr, I am of flesh and bloud, I am a man. And

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what is that to say, but that thou art in sin, and vncleane? but manie men say so, to the intent to wathe their handes of it. They may well say, as for me, I haue not so great strength: true it is that I ought to doe it, but I am not able. Yea marie, but is there not a God ỳ can do it for vs? yes: and therefore when we once knowe our owne weakenesse, let vs learne to seeke the remedie, forasmuch as god hath promised vs ỳ spirit of strēgth, that being grounded thereupon, wee may not doubt but that wee shall ouercome all our enemies, and all the assaultes that can be made vpon vs. Furthermore let vs also consider ỳ power of out enemies, and the greatnesse of temptations. For wee haue not to doe with flesshe and bloud, they that fight against vs are not mortall and transitorie men, but they be all the powers of the ayre, and the prince of the worlde practiseth all ỳ he can to discomfit vs. Now therefore, when we once knowe the force of Satan, and the meanes that he hath to breake vs, and to vndoo vs: let vs not faile to take courage, and to bee of inuincible constancie. And why? for we know ỳ our God hath promised vs the vpper hand of al that euer Satā shal practise against vs. And therfore it is he ỳ we must truste vnto. Thus we see generally how we ought to put this doctrine in vre.

Now haue we to goe through with the rest of the similitude which I glaunced at here before: which is, that we must consider, that seeing God doth call vs nowadayes, not to the possessing of the lande of Chanaan, nor to be lodged here in this world for a fewe dayes, but to come to the heauenly lyfe, and to the inmortall inheritance: it becommeth vs to take courage, and to acquaint our selues with this doctrine. And seeing that God hath told vs, that his reaching of his hand once vnto vs is not in vaine, and that he will goe through with his worke: wee on our part must determine fully to goe through with our course, and not to shrinke in the middes of the way. Thus ye see, first of all that we be more to blame than the Iewes of olde time, if wee hearken not to Gods mouth, considering that his intent is not only to giue vs an earthly dwelling place to lodge in, but to call vs right foorth to the kingdome of heauen, and to the immortall glorie, whereof wee bee made partakers aforehand by hope. And besides this, wee see after what sorte our Lord hath called vs. For he hath not giuen vs such Spyes as were giuen to the people of olde time, he hath not giuen vs a dooſen persons to report vnto vs what maner a land it is: but hee hath sent vs his onely sonne, who is a faithfull witnesse of the inuisible heritage, yea and he hath giue vs good hansel thereof in his rysing againe. Wee haue the twelue Apostles which were chosen according to ỳ nomber of the tribes of Israell, & they were as good as twelue trūpetters to make gods voyce heard throughout the whole world. And besides them, there hath bin a great cloude of witnesses, as the Apostle termeth them in the twelfth to the Hebrewes, whereby he meaneth that if we were not ouer dull, & worse than vnthankeful & churlish: it might well suffice vs to haue such an infinite multitude of witnesses [to auow & warrant] our faith. Now then let vs learne, that if we fight vnder Iesus Christ, who hath told vs that sin is ouercome by his death and passion, & the bondes of death are broken to the intent to set vs free: is becommeth vs now to looke vp to heauen, & so march on boldly through ỳ world, forasmuch as he being risen againe, sheweth vs that the possession of righteousnesse and lyfe is assured vnto vs, because the power of his spirit is vttered therein. Seeing we haue such a confirmation to warrant vs the kingdome of heauen that is promised vnto vs: should we be cowardly? what excuse wil there be if we play the dastards and nice cockneyes? But to the end we may obey our God and not prouoke his mouth: let vs fal to strengthening of our selues in him. For what caused this wretched people to turne away so from his calling? Euen their considering of their enemies force according to their owne nature, and their forgetting of God and his power in the meane while. Let vs learne then to make such account of the strength of our God, as that wee may by the power of his spirite geere the vpper hand in all incounters that bee bringeth vs vnto: for hee will not haue vs to be idle in this present lyfe. Hee coulde well enough set vs in quiet at the first instant, so as wee shoulde not be troubled any maner a way, nor the worlde make warre against vs, nor we be tempted at all by our owne flesshe, and that Satan should bee far of from vs. God I say could well maintaine vs in ease at the first instant: but he intendeth to tryse our patience: for he will haue vs to be men of warre. Wherefore let vs on our side fight, yea, let vs fight lustily: and if our enemies bee too strong for vs, (as wee finde that they be in deed) let vs flee for refuge to the helpe that our Lorde hath promised vs, and wee shall ouercome all lets if wee fight in the strength of God. But yet let vs marke that wee must fight vnto death, and not dye once onely: but haue death present dayly.

Rom. 4. 25.

Col. 3. 2.

Rom. 1. 4.

For what elſe is a Christen mans lyfe, than an indeuoring to renounce the worlde and all his owne affections? And therefore looke how many good thoughtes wee haue, so manie are the deathes of our owne froward nature: so as it is not possible for vs to serue God one day, but we must dy a hundred, yea and a thousand times: I saye wee must dye by beating downe the sinfulnesse of our owne nature: for wee bee full of vices. So then let vs marke well, that God is so farre of from making account of Liuer-hearted seruants, that delight in ease, commoditie and pleasure: that hee will not onely haue vs to fight, but also to be readye to dye, and to put the doctrine in vre which I come now to touch: that is to say, to bee chaunged and renued euerye minute of an houre.

Moreouer let vs note also, ỳ lyke as our Lord Iesus Christ was buryed after hee had bin crucified and suffered ỳ reproch of his death: so must we be buryed too. For it is not enough for vs to dye one day and no more, as some doe, (which haue

haue good braydes, so as ye would thinke them ready to forsake themselues vtterly, and there appeareth great willingnes in them to renounce the world: but suddenly they will needes fall to resting there, and they can no skill of entering into the graue:) But we must holde our in it, so as when wee haue once learned to dye with Christ, and to crucifie our olde man as S. Paul termeth it to the Romans: we must also be ready to goe into the graue, that is to say, all that euer is in vs as in respect of the world and of our owne flesshe, must be vtterly abolished, and wee our selues become nothing. To be shorte, wee must desire nothing but to haue our lyfe hidden with Christ, (as sayth Saint Paul to the Colossians) yea and to haue it hidden til his comming againe. But in any wise let vs beware that wee be not vnthankefull: for we shall neuer take courage, but by considering the inestimable worthynesse of ỹ good things whereunto God hath called vs. And therefore when we heare that the people considered not Gods bringing of them out of the land of Egypt: let not vs followe that trace, for it were the next way to put vs out of hart. So then, we shall neuer make anie account at all of Gods benefites which wee haue receiued alreadie, and which he shall haue made vs to feele: except we haue our eye alwayes fast set vppon the promised land, that is to wit, vppon the euerlasting lyfe. And therefore on the one part wee must oftentimes bethinke vs of Gods benefites, and call to minde his goodnesse and mercie towardes vs which we haue felt. But that is not all that we haue to doe: when wee haue once considered how God hath shewed himselfe to be our redeemer, how he hath taken vs out of the horrible blindnesse wherein we were, how he hath inlightened vs with the brightnesse of his Gospel, and how he hath done vs so many good turnes euen in respect of our bodies, as we ought well to vnderstand that he hath shewed himselfe a father and saviour towardes vs: but specially when we haue throughly weyed or rather worshipped the goodnes which he hath shewed vs in all the spirituall benefites ỹ we haue receiued at his hand: (for they be the excellentest, & we also ought to esteeme them more than al the bodily things that we could haue had at his hand:) whe we haue once considered all these thinges: then must we also bethinke our selues whereunto it is that God calleth vs, that is to wit, to the kingdome of heauen. Therefore we must alwayes haue our countenance as it were set fast vppon the heauenly lyfe, and looke thitherward, so as all our wittes, all our desires, and all our indeuors tend thither. For if we haue not an eye to the kingdome of heauen: wee must needes shrinke at euery incounter euery minute of an houre. Thus then ye see what wee haue to doe in that case. And moreouer to the intent our hartes quaile not as Moses sayth here: let vs indeuer to strengthen our selues with the power of the holy ghost, and consider that (as it is sayd by the prophet Esay, and alledged by the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrewes,) the Gospel hath this properie and nature with it, that when wee feele our knees weake and trembling, when our armes are feeble and after a sort broosed and broken, and when we be hemmed in on all sides with impediments that hinder vs from following our vocation: it maketh vs to resorte to Gods word, which ought to strengthen vs and to make our armes and legges sound and lustie againe, and specially to strengthen vs in our hearts and mindes.

Rom. 6. 6. Rom. 8. 6. Col. 3. 3. Heb. 12.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, so as we may repent vs rightly of them, and being ashamed in our selues resorte vnto him, assuring our selues that (as he hath promised to receiue all wretched sinners that come vnto him vpon trust of his grace by meanes of the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ) wee shall be accepted of him and and his wrath pacified towardes vs, though wee haue prouoked him neuer so much. And let vs pray him, not onely that wee may obteyne forgiuenesse of our sinnes past: but also to guide vs henceforth by his holy spirite, and to drawe vs from all the vanities of the worlde, so as he fashion vs according to his owne righteousnesse, and make vs feele the fruite of the victorie and triumph that is prepared for vs in heauen. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not only to vs but also to people & nations of ỹ earth. &c.

On Wednesday the xvij. of April. 1555.

The seuenth Sermon vpon the first Chapter.

29 And I sayd vnto you, dread not, neither be afraide of them.

30 The Lord your God which goeth before you will fight for you, lyke as hee did with you in Egypt before your eyes.

31 And in the wildernesse where thou hast seene how the Lord thy God bare thee (euen as a man beareth his sonne) in all the way which ye haue gone, vntill ye be come vnto this place.

32 And yet for all this, you haue not beleeued the Lord your God,

33 Who to prouide you a place to pitch your tentes in, went before you in the way, in fyre by night to giue you light in the way that you should goe, and in a cloude by day.

If Har-

IF hardineſſe were well taken, it were an excellent vertue worthie of great prayſe, and exceedingly requiſite in al a mans life. For if wee be fearefull, and haue not a ſtout courage to doe well: it will be an eaſie matter to cary vs to all naughtineſſe. But yet for all that, the worlde knoweth not how to bee hardie. And that is the cauſe why men are ſo much giuen to raſhneſſe, & ſo bold & ouerbold to aduẽture vpon fooliſh matches without aduiſemẽt. But if we aduẽture vpon things on our own head & fancie, & put not our truſt in God: it is a building without a foundation. Neuertheleſſe, it is not for vs to looke for Gods helpe, further foorth than he hath bound himſelfe to it by his promiſes. The way then that we ought to be hardy, is that when we haue once ſought out Gods will, wee obey it ſimply without attempting any thing at our owne pleaſure. Be wee once at that poynt, wee muſt examine our owne ſtrength and abilitie, and finding nothing but weakeneſſe there, wee muſt vtterly diſtruſt our ſelues and reſort vnto God. And foraſmuch as he of his owne free goodneſſe vouchſafeth to aſſure vs that hee will not leaue vs at our neede: we muſt thereupon conclude, ỹ we cannot miſcary being vnder his protection.

Now then wee ſee that the true hardineſſe which God alloweth of, is when men truſt not to themſelues, ne leane to their owne wit and reaſon, but yeelde themſelues wholy to him that ought to gouerne them, and depend vpon his grace for all thinges which they want, and thereupon goe foreward ſtoutly, without thrinking or ſwaruing one way or other. And this leſſon is ſhewed vs in the text that I rehearſed euen now out of Moſes. For there hee exhorteth the people to hardineſſe, and ſheweth them why. *The Lorde your God* (ſayth he) *will fight for you*. As if hee ſhould ſay, If you eſteeme your ſelues the more for your great multitude, or thinke to ouercome your enemies by your own power: it is but fooliſh preſumption, and God wil puniſh you for being ſo puffed vp with pride. And if ye ſhould attempt any thing without Gods leaue and without hauing his worde for it: that alſo were an ouerweening which ſhould not ſcape vnpuniſhed.

But foraſmuch as God is on your ſide, and you haue his promiſe that he will not faile you, and you be not come hither but by his leading of you with his owne hand: *Be not afraid*. Thus ſendeth he them to Gods will, to the ende they ſhould not doe any thing which is not lawfull. Againe, he will haue them to leane altogether to Gods promiſes, and becauſe they could not haue in themſelues the thinges that were requiſite: he will haue them to hope that God will aſſiſt them. Now, this was ſpoken to the Iewes whom Moſes gouerned at that time: but yet is it a doctrine whoſe vſe is euerlaſting in Gods Church, as is ſayde afore. We haue not the Chananites for our enemies againſt whome to fight: but yet doe wee knowe ỹ this preſent life of ours ſhall not be idle, but that God will haue vs kept occupyed lyke men of warre that are waged to battell. And who be our enemies? Satan with all the ſhiftes that he hath, and all the vnbeleeuers through whom we muſt paſſe. For here wee be mingled with ſuch as ſeeke nothing els but the deſtruction of Gods children, wee haue infinite temptations, and to be ſhort wee neede neuer to go out of our ſelues to finde incounters enow: for all our luſtes, and all that ſpringeth of our fleſhe, is deadly enmitie againſt GOD, as ſayth S. Paul to the Romans. Seeing then that God hath ordeyned that wee ſhould maintaine battell all our lyfe long, and wee haue a greate ſorte of enemies, yea and thoſe very mightie and ſtrong, which neuer ceaſe troubling of vs: it behoueth vs to get vs hardines: for if we ſhrink, anon we be ouercome. Therefore it ſtandeth vs on hand to be armed with inuincible conſtancie, or elſe if euery of vs followe his owne ſwinge, God wil let vs alone. So then, are we deſirous that God ſhould guide vs, & hold vs vnder his protection, & withſtand our enemies to giue vs victorie againſt them? Let vs waſte in obedience, and learne to leade our lyfe according to his will. For whoſoeuer roueth abroad at randon, forſaketh Gods helpe. Againe, let no man beguile himſelf vpon truſt of men, foraſmuch as they are commonly diſapointed of their enterpriſes. And it is good reaſon that God ſhould laugh them to ſcorne, when they fling forth ſo at al aduenture, and keepe neither way nor path. But lyke as moſt men are ſo ouerluſtie, that they can away with nothing worſe, than to beare the yoke that God layeth vppon vs: ſo euery man would haue libertie to doe what he liſteth, and it is ſeene that all men make warre againſt God and his worde, ſo as their iollitie cannot be daunted, but they be worſe than wilde beaſtes. And therefore doe moſt men abuſe themſelues with their owne deuices: for they regard not what God permitteth them to doe. When a man will aduaunce himſelfe for vaineglorie, he regardeth not what is lawfull, but pilleth, polleth, and filcheth by hooke or by crooke. He hath an eye to the ordinarie cuſtome of the world, but as for to frame himſelfe after Gods lawe, he hath no minde at all: He neuer thinketh thus with himſelfe, beholde, my God giueth me no leaue to doe this thing, and therefore I muſt forbeare it. He hath no ſuch thought with him.

Wel may men coakes themſelues for a time, and beare themſelues on hand that all the world fauoreth them: but in the end, God will make all their enterpriſes to vaniſh away, ſo as they ſhall be all confounded. And why? Becauſe they ranne gadding about, and kept not the right way. Now then, if we will be guided by Gods hand, and ſuccored by him at our neede: let vs learne to rule our lyfe aright, and to ſubmit it wholy vnto him. If wee be not at that poynt, let vs not looke for any helpe at his hand: but rather to haue him againſt vs as we bee worthie. Thus much concerning the firſt point.

But yet for all this, the matter lyeth not altogether in being deſirous to ſerue God, & to abſteine frõ the fooliſh attempts ỹ cary men away.

For there may be some that are pliable enough, & which would faine doe the thinges that God commaundeth: but therewithall they be puffed vp with a fond selfeweening, bearing themselues in hand that they be able to compasse the things that they haue to doe, and trusting to their owne reason. But our Lord cannot abide to be robbed of the honor that belongeth vnto him. For what haue wee whereof it is lawfull for vs to boast? When we haue gathered all our powers vnto vs, wee shall finde them to be nothing but a vaine and fond shew. And therefore wee must bee faine to put to the second poyne which I haue touched. Which is, that here we be warned to submit our selues to the obedience of God, so as we seeke the thinges that he giueth vs leaue to seeke, & aske counsell at his mouth what things he lyketh and alloweth: to the intent that knowing our selues to bee ouerweake, yea and that there is no wisedome, strength, nor towardnesse in vs, but that al our powers fayle vs: wee may pray him to guide vs and to giue vs good direction, and to hold vs vp with strong hand, so as wee ground not our selues vpon our owne weening or opinion, but altogether vppon the assurance of his worde. Hath God promised to helpe vs? then let vs not doubt but he will doe it. Haue we no promise at his hand? then must we needes be at our wittes ende, till he comfort vs and strengthen vs by shewing vs his wil. Thus yee see what wee haue to marke vppon this text of Moses.

And therefore although it be vnpossible for a christen man to step one step without falling: yet must wee not be out of hart. The reason is, because wee haue Gods promise, *that he will fight for vs*. Our fighting (sayth Saint Paul) is not against flesshe and bloud, behold, all the powers of the ayre are against vs. For the diuil is named the prince of the world, he is aboue vs, and holdeth vs as it were betweene his pawes and in his throate, so as he is lyke enough to swallowe vs vp euery minute of an houre lyke a lyon: and we haue neither strength nor sense to withstand him. Eph. 6. 12.

But yet for all that, we must conclude, that forasmuch as we be in the protection of our God, we be sure of the victorie, if we fight wel. Therefore let this saying be well printed in our minde, *that the Lord our God will fight for vs*. When there is any question of doing well, the Papistes cling to their own freewill, and it seemeth to the that God layeth the brydle in their necke, so as they be able to doe this and that, whereby they ouerthrowe themselues as they be worthy. But contrariwise let vs flee to our God, and hope to haue him doe the thinges that we cannot doe.

Furthermore let vs marke well, that this doctrine could not stande, vnlesse wee were vnable to fight for our selues. For were wee of power to resiste our enemies, Gods fighting for vs were more than needed. Then doth it follow, that his fighting is because wee haue no power at all, because our armes are as good as broken, and because wee bee lame from the sole of the foote to the crowne of the head. And in good sooth, if the Iewes hauing to doe but onelie with mortall and transitorie enemies, needed to haue God to fight for them: what had we need of? I pray you, when wee see Satan and all the worlde to ashe to giue assault vpon vs, yea and that he hath already gotten the forehand of vs, and in the meane while wee haue neither wall, nor banke to holde them out, but (which is worse) all our owne lustes are as dartes wherewith Satan may serue his turne to wound vs withall: can wee defend our selues, hauing so hard a barrell to beare out? No: and so wee see how the poore papistes are deceiued, in presuming vppon their owne freewill, and in bearing themselues on hand that if they haue neuer so little helpe of God, they can well enough get the vpper hand of Satan. On the contrary part, it is not sayd that God will supply some little defaulk with his power, and that wee must fight first to preuent him: it is not sayde so, but that *it is our God that fighteth for vs*. It followeth then that all that euer wee doe, is done by the onely power that hee giueth vs: so as it is borrowed of him.

True it is that wee would fayne runne, & that wee make great indeuers to serue God: but whereof commeth that, but of this, that knowing our selues to be vttrely vnable, wee presume not vppon any power or abilitie of our owne, but doe feele that we be not yet come to perfection? And so, to be short, all our fighting commeth of the meere grace of the holy Ghost.

True it is that God worketh not in vs as in logges or blockes: for his will is to exercise vs as I haue sayd already. Therefore when we should doe well, wee must haue a good mouing and a liuely affection: and although wee haue bin lerned and drawen awry, yet must wee take courage to inforce our selues, that God may worke in vs as in his instruments. To be short, the battels of the faithfull are paynfull enough: but yet for al y, we must come backe to this point, that it is God which worketh by vs, and that all that euer wee doe proceedeth of him, insomuch that without him wee could not stir one finger, no not so much as thinke one good thought. And so yee see how this saying *that the Lord our God fighteth for vs*, is accomplished. When wee be once come to that poyne, although our enemies be neuer so terrible, yet let vs not be as men dismayed, assuring our selues that God alone is strong enough for vs, and that although all the world should set themselues against vs, yet ought wee not to care for them.

Haue wee made that account once, with ful purpose to withstand all Satans assaultes: we must also put the same doctrine in vre in all the rest of our lyfe. And so, when wee see our selues beset with neuer so many wicked persons, and that they lie in wayte for vs, continually following their lewd practises and deuices: what haue wee to doe? Wee must walke on playnely and vprightly, and not hold with the hare and hunt with the hound as they say.

When wee see that the wicked labor all that they can to ouerthrowe vs, let vs not doe as they doe, but let vs looke what God commaundeth vs, & frame our selues thereafter. And besides

beſides that, let vs conſider, that we ſhall bee as a pray to them, if God had vs not in his keeping. But ſeeing hee hath promiſed vs that hee will haue a care of vs, (as in deede he is our father) and that he will maintaine vs in our iuſt quarels, and ſet himſelfe againſt all ſuch as labor to oppreſſe the right: foraſmuch as hee of his infinite goodneſſe vouchſafeth to take our caſe in hand: let vs go on hardily, and although our enemies be neuer ſo wyly, & haue the world at will, and haue a nomber of practiſes ready for vs: let not all this abaſh vs, nor make vs to ſtep out of the right way. For why? ſeeing that God is on our ſide, what a ſhame were it to preferre mortall men before him, as though they were able to get the vpper hand of him? So long then as the creatures are not able to preuaile againſt God, let vs aſſure our ſelues of the victorie, foraſmuch as it cannot but fall on our ſide. Thus you ſee how wee ought to apply this doctrine of Moſes to our vſe.

Furthermore we muſt alſo wey well this ſaying which he addeth, namely that *God had giuen them a houſe of ſtorefe in Egypt*, ſo as they had good warrant to put their truſt in him, *and that throughout the wilderneſſe he had ruled them lyke louing fathers, and borne them in his armes*. Seeing it is ſo (ſayth hee) that you haue had proofe of the power of your God in deliuering you from the handes of your enemies: and ſeeing you haue alſo perceiued his fatherly care towardes you, and that not for one day onely, but for a long time together: You be too too vnthankefull if you make not this concluſion, that he will no more faile you hereafter. To bee ſhort then, to confirme this people withall, Moſes alledgeth here the experience of Gods fauor which they had had. And although this poynt hath bin treated of heretofore: yet foraſmuch as it is repeated again by Moſes: I muſt needes rehearſe it againe and put you in remembrance thereof: for there is no ſuperfluitie in y ſpeach of the holy Ghoſt. Wherfore let vs marke well, that when God putteth vs in minde of his former helpe and grace, his meaning is that wee ſhould thinke well vppon the great nomber of beneſites which we haue receiued at his hand. And the ſame ought to ſerue vs for a warrant, that he wil continue to the end. For he is not lyke mortall men which alter and change their minde: neither is his abilitie abridged: and to be ſhort, he neuer ceaſeth to do men good: whereas on the other ſide, if a man haue done his friend a pleaſure, he will perchaunce be willing to doe as much for him the ſecond time. But if his friend make none ende, he will be wearie of him. For he may ſay he is not able to doe for al men, and that he hath other friends whom he muſt doe for, as wel as for him. Againe, wee know that men are not conſtant. But there is no ſuch thing in God, for the more good that we receiue of him, the readier are his riches for vs, and they neuer diminiſh. And as for him, he doth not thinges by fittes as creatures doe, but he continueth alwayes in one will. There is not ſo much as any ouerſhadowing in him, as ſayth Saint Iames, to ſhewe that he is alwayes lyke himſelfe, and keepeth continually at one ſtay. Thus may wee aſſure our ſelues of Gods grace for the time to come, by our former experience of his ſuccouring of vs at our needs heretofore, in that he hath reached vs his hand. To be ſhort, all the good that God doeth vs, ought to ſerue vs to confirme our faith.

But nowe let vs ſee what our vnthankefulneſſe is. For hath there paſſed any day ſince our comming into the worlde, wherein God hath not aſſiſted vs a thouſand wayes? yea and did we not finde him a father, before we knew him, yea and euen before wee came out of our mothers wombe? How ſhould the childe be nouriſhed in the mothers wombe whē he is there as in a graue, vnleſſe God vttered a wōderful goodneſſe therin? Be we once entered into the world? behold, wee be hemmed in round about with miſeries: Could we paſſe ouer one minute of an houre, if God ſhewed not himſelfe to haue a continuall care of vs? Now then ſeeing that our God hath vttered himſelfe vnto vs ſo manie wayes: is there any excuſe for vs if wee be ſtill in doubt and diſtruſt of him, ſo as wee cannot leane vnto him? Againe let euery man looke vpon himſelfe: how God hath deale with him particularly. ¶ For beſides the common courſe of this worldly lyfe, and the thinges that are ordinarie to all men, euery man ought to conſider thus: Go to, I haue bin in ſuch a daunger and in ſuch a neceſſitie, and god hath helped me. How liuith he wrought with me vnto this day? Hath it bin long of my ſelfe that I haue not bin vndone and deſtroyed a hundred thouſand times? was it through mine own power, that I haue bin preſerued? No. Then muſt it needes be that I had his helpe to ſaue me, during the time that I was as good as ſenſeleſſe. And afterward he ſhewed me the lyke fauor againe, when I had not yet any diſcretion to acknowledge it and to honor him for it. Now if I haue receiued ſo many beneſites of him; ought I not to hope that he will continue to doe ſo to me ſtill hereafter? Let euery man then bethinke him of the beneſites that he hath receiued at Gods hand, as well for his ſoule as for his body: and then ſhall wee be ſufficiently conuicted, that he hath powred out the riches of his goodneſſe vppon vs, and that in ſuch ſorte, as we may well truſt in him, that he will neuer forſake vs nor put vs out of minde. After this maner muſt wee put this text in vre, where Moſes ſpeaketh to the Iewes and ſayth thus: conſider what you haue found at the hand of your God vnto this houre. How hath hee deale with you? how mightily hath he ouercommed the land of Egypt, and deliuered you from the bondage wherein you were? And beſides this, Moſes noteth here a double circumſtance, whereby the people were conuicted of gods mighty working in their behalfe. For (ſayth he) *he hath fought for you in Egypt, you your ſelues your eyes*. As if he ſhould haue ſayd, that the miracles which God hath wrought, were not darkſome nor done in hudder muddler, but ſo openly, and apparantly, as the people could not ſay, we knowe not how the caſe ſtandeth. God then ſhewed himſelfe

1. Iam. 1. 17.

after a visible manner in that behalfe, so as yee cannot but knowe that he reached out his arme. That is the first of the two circumstances.

The other is this where hee addeth, *that from the time of the peoples deliverance, God had testified vnto them, yea and that with such kindnesse and gentlenesse, as a father that had borne his children in his armes could not have done more for him.* Now these two poyntes belong to vs. For they bee the two meanes whereby God procureth and furthereth our salvation, vntill he haue brought it to full perfection. On the one side hee fighteth for vs: for wee shall neuer bee without enemies as hath bin declared already. If wee be not acquainted with God, the deuill will reigne peaceably ouer vs, and wee shall delight to bee vnder his tyranny, as they that are naturally giuen thereunto. But if God call vs to him: then shall wee feele the deuill vtterly against vs, and wee shall see the world inflamed with deadly hatred towardes vs. To be shorte, there will be such a sorte of enemies to bidde vs battell, as wee shall not knowe on which side to turne vs. Lo in what plight Gods children are. Now then, his power must bee fayne to maintaine vs, and to fight the battell: and if he haue done it for the fewes, hee must be faine to doe it now for vs too.

Thus yee see that the first meanes whereby God sheweth himselfe to be our Sauiour: is that hee armeth vs against our enemies, or rather that hee himselfe is our shielde, our Psal.91.2. strong holde (as he nameth himselfe oftentimes in the scriptures,) our bulwarke, our captaine, and to be shorte, all that euer wee bee. Mark that for one poynt.

Now herewithal, when God hath so strengthened vs, and giuen vs the vpper hand of all assaultes that could be put vnto vs: he must bee faine to vpholde vs still within. For else shoulde not we bee able to goe one step, and wee should want all that euer belongeth to our saluation. And euen as a young childe should dye, if it were not succoured: euen so is it with vs. If a little childe be let alone, hee will cast himselfe into the fire or into the water, hee coulde not take one bit of bread to feede himselfe withall, hee must be borne in armes, hee must bee swadled, he coulde not dresse himselfe, he would starue for cold sooner than come to the fire, and to be short, wee see that a young babe before hee come to some age, is the miserablest creature that can bee deuised: and euen so is it with vs in respect of our God. Let vs set as much store by our selues as we lift, as wee see that men doe, glorying maruelously in their owne opinion: and yet is there more infirmitie in vs than in little infantes. He must be faine to rule vs, he must be faine to feede vs, he must be faine to cary vs, he must be faine to clothe vs, he must bee faine to doe all for vs. For if wee haue any witte at all, it is of his gift: if we haue any strength, it commeth of him: if wee haue any abilitie or helpes, it is he that giueth them. Thus it is, that wee could not inioye the least benefite in the worlde, but by fayth, I meane to our profite: but yet for all that, it is hee to whome wee be beholden for all. Now therefore, when wee once perceiue that God hath giuen vs strength and stoutnesse to outhand the temptacions that Satan hath stirred vp against vs: that wee haue not bin wounded to death by his venemous darts and arrowes: that we haue not wallowed in the mucke of this worlde: that wee haue not bin caughte in the snares of the wicked: that their practises and wiles haue not preuailed against vs: and that God hath succoured vs at all assayes: I say when wee haue perceiued that: let vs also consider that God hath borne vs, that he hath fed and nourished vs, that hee hath clothed vs, and if he hath as it were put our meate into our mouthes. The thing then whereupon wee must sette our mindes, that wee may well bethinke vs of Gods benefites: is that the same must serue vs for a warrant and confirmation of our fayth, both in lyfe and in death.

But yet the similitude that Moses vseth where hee sayth, *as a father beareth his children*: deserueth to be well weyed. Truely if there were no more but this, that God compareth himselfe with a fleshly father: it were a singular record of infinite and incredible loue. What a one is GOD if he be taken in his maiestie? Are wee worthie to come to him so familiarly? Now then seeing hee taketh vppon him the person of a man, and a creature, and lyeneth himselfe to them that beare their children: there in we see how he humbleth himselfe, of good wil to accept vs in like case as if we were his owne children. And what a token of loue is that? Now as for vs, wee be nothing woorth: needes then must wee acknowledge an inestimable goodnesse in our God, when he putteth off his maiestie, to make himselfe lyke a man.

Neuertheleſſe hee contenteth not himselfe with this similitude onely, as wee shall see hereafter in the song. For there he lyeneth himself Deut.32. to an Eagle, which stretcheth out his winges to cary his young ones, and to trayne them to fore in the ayre. Seeing that God putteth himselfe as it were vnder the shape of a byrde, to shewe vs the passing fatherly care that he hath of vs: I pray you, ought not wee to bee rauished with wonderment, when God stoopeth so vnto vs, to make vs perceiue the loue that hee beareth vs, and the fauour that hee meaneth towardes vs? [yes surely.] For what a maiestie importeth this worde GOD? And what are the birdes and vnreasonable creatures? [Nothing.]

And yet notwithstanding, beholde, God loueth vs so greatly, that to expresse the loue which he beareth vs, and to witnesse his goodnesse towardes vs, hee lyeneth himselfe to a byrd, and vs to his little ones. Sith wee see this, let vs learne to magnify the goodnesse and infinite grace of our God better than wee haue done heretofore, and let euery of vs awake and inforce himselfe to consider them throughly. For wherefore is it that our God transfigureth himselfe in such sorte, but to reproue our vnthankfulnesse, because we be so ouer grosse

grosse and dulheaded, as we let the benefites slip which he bestoweth vpon vs, and disgust them not to conceiue the goodnesse of them, and to take heede of them? That is the cause why he setteth them before vs after that fashion. And we see also how our Lord Iesus speaketh of himselfe, in bewayling the destruction of the Citie of Ierusalem. Howe oft (saieth he) would I haue gathered thy little ones vnder my winges, and thou wouldest not? There our Lord Iesus speaketh not as man: but sheweth that inasmuch as he is the euerlasting God, he played the part of a henne towardes the Iewes; and had his winges stretched out to haue brooded them: and that they on their side played the wylde beastes that woulde not bee tamed. When wee shall once haue knowen the fauour of our God towardes vs: let vs beware that it be not so defaced as we may iustly bee accused of vnwillingnesse to suffer our God to gouerne vs peaceably. What is to bee done then? Seeing that our GOD sheweth himselfe so louing and kinde hearted, that he protesteth himselfe to bee as a father towardes his little babes, in bearing with our feeblenesse and infirmities: and seeing that he saieth by his Prophet Esay, that although all the mothers in the world should forget their children, yet would not he forget vs: and seeing he stoopeth so lowe as to liken himselfe to an Eagle and to a Henne, to shewe that he taketh vs for his chickins and birdes: let vs looke that wee yeelde vnto him, & lay our selues as it were in his lappe, praying him to beare vs and to releeue our infirmities, that we may be comforted at his hand, as he is readie to doe, if wee flee to his mercie for succour. Thus ye see what wee haue to doe for the well putting of this doctrine in vre.

But Moses addeth yet one point more for the better confirming that God had as it were borne his people in his armes, saying *That a nightime he appeared to them as in a pillar of fyre, and a daytime hee appeared to them as in a Cloud.* Wee knowe that Gods shewing of these two visible tokens, was to the end that the people should bee assured of his presence: and those tokens were requisite for the leading of the people. For else in the night they should haue bene slighted with the wildernesse which was verie dreadfull, as I haue declared alreadie. God therefore did giue them light by night, whereby he shewed that he was continually with them. And bicause they were in a hotte and drye Countrie, he did spred a cloud ouer them in the day, which shadowed them from the burning of the Sunne. Wee see then that these two tokēs of Gods presence, serued fitly for the easing of the Iewes, and that in all these dooings they felt his fatherly goodnesse. Againe, the moe of such figures they had, the more were they conuicted that GOD had gouerned them, and that he had a continuall care of their welfare. And therefore doth Moses make expresse mention both of the fire and of the cloud, saying that neyther night nor day GOD had euer forsaken them: so as they could not but knowe that he was with them, and that his grace accompanyed them, as he sawe meete and expedient for them.

But by the way wee must note, that although wee in these dayes haue no such figures as the Iewes had vnder Moses: yet notwithstanding GOD giueth vs the thing that is of equall value, according also as Saint Paule sheweth, saying that the cloud and the fire were a kinde of Baptisme to the auncient fathers. And the chiefe thing that GOD meant to shewe vnto them thereby, was that although as in respect of their bodyes they were guided with fire by night, and had a cloud spred ouer their heades by daye: yet Gods meaning was not to haue them stay vpon these temporall benefites, but to leade them further. Then were they baptized in the cloud. And what haue wee now adayes? Doeth not Baptisme warrant vs Gods presence more certeinly & with a greater vertue, than did that auncient figure? Yes surely, if all thinges bee well considered. For wee must not stay our eyes vpon the water: but forasmuch as the bloud of our Lorde Iesus Christ was shed, which is a spirituall washing vnto vs: therein God sheweth himselfe more familiarly vnto vs now adayes, than he did to such as liued vnder Moses. True it is that wee haue not the like myracles: but in the meane while, howe excellent was the Maiestie that appeared in the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ? How excellent were the myracles that he wrought? To bee short, howe highly ought wee to esteeme the death and passion that he suffered? Againe, haue wee not a passing excellent recorde of his Godhead in his rising againe from death? Seeing then that wee haue the whole fulnesse of Gods Maiestie in the person of our Lord Iesus Christ, and that not in shadowe onely, but in very substance as Saint Paule declareth to the Colossians: I pray you were it not too shamefull a thankelesnesse in vs, if wee shoulde not bee throughly resolued that our God hath vttered himselfe sufficiently vnto vs, to cause vs to rest wholly vpon him, and to trust in his power? Thus yee see wherein we resemble the Iewes as touching the cloud whereof Moses speaketh here, and as touching the pillar of fire.

Furthermore, if wee consider well howe our Lorde guideth vs: wee shall finde that the Cloud and the pillar of fire serued not the Iewes more, than the gouernment that is stablished in the Church at this day, serueth vs. Whereas that people had the pillar of fire by night, and the Cloud by daye: wee must vnderstand that in so dooing GOD meant not to blesse them for that one time onely. For what had the Iewes bene the better for it, if it had not made them to knowe that God was their gouernour all their life long? Now then wee cannot goe one pace, vnlesse wee bee led by our God and assured of his goodnesse. For our life is like the iourney that the people of Israel made thorough the wildernesse. God therfore suffereth vs not to wander in vncertaintie, knowing not whether wee were best to goe or to stand still. For wee haue such a declaration of his will, as wee can neuer straye, except it bee wilfully.

Whosoeuer seeketh Gods good pleasure, shal be taught by him. And therefore now adayes wee haue no need of the visible pillar of fire, nor of the cloud that was spred ouer the children of Israel, forsomuch as our Lord sheweth himselfe to bee at hand with vs by another meane, and stretcheth out his hand continually ouer vs, and the way is wide and open ynough for vs. Now then we haue good cause to be contented.

And so let vs vnderstand, that Moses did not onely speake to the Iewes after all sorves: but also that he hath written these thinges for vs, that wee also might be confirmed now adayes in the doctrine which we haue of God, and not be disobedient vnto him. And seeing wee haue neede to be succoured at his hand, against Satan and all our aduersaries: let vs learne to distrust our owne strength which is none at all, and acknowledging our owne wretchednesse let vs resort to him for aide and helpe at our neede. And when we haue once gotten hardinesse to marche vnder his banner: let vs assure our selues that he will neuer suffer vs to miscarie, though we be assailed with neuer so many temptations. Wee see what threatening there is now adayes, yea euen on all sides: wee see how our welfare (as to outward seeming) is as a pray to our enemies, which seeke nothing else but to swallowe vs vp: and therewithall wee see also how weake and feeble we be to withstand them: and yet for all that, let vs not doubt but our Lord sigheth for vs, conditionally that wee walke on simply vnder the shadowe of his winges, and play not the loose colts, ne attempt any thing which he alloweth not. And so doing, let vs not doubt but he will deliuer vs, and stretch out his hand vpon our enemies to vanquishe them and destroy them, so as wee shall knowe that he hath a continuall care of vs, and that his only desire is to guide and gouerne vs, and to continue and increase his graces in vs, and to haue vs alwayes in his keeping and protection.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs so to feele them, that being ashamed of our selues, wee may craue pardon of him, and being desirous to be gouerned by his direction, seeke nothing but to submit our selues to his yoke more and more, till he haue ridde vs quite and cleane of all our fleshly corruptions and imperfections, and that we bee come to the full measure of his righteousnesse, whereunto it behoueth vs now to tend. And so let vs al say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxij. of Aprill. 1555.

The eight Sermon vpon the first Chapter.

34 Then the Lord heard the voyce of your wordes, and was angrie, & sware, saying:

35 None of the men of this wicked generation, shall see the good land that I haue sworne to giue to their fathers,

36 Sauing Caleb the sonne of Iephone, who shall see it: and I will giue him the ground whereupon he hath troden, and vnto his children, bicause he hath followed the Lord throughly.

37 Also the Lord was angrie with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not goe in thither:

38 But Iosua the sonne of Nun, which standeth with thee, shall goe in thither. Strengthen thou him: for he shall put Israel in possession thereof.

39 Your little children which ye said should be a pray, and your sonnes which at this day knowe neither good nor euill, shall go in thither, and I will giue them the land, and they shall possesse it.

40 But as for you, turne ye backe againe, and get ye into the wildernesse by the way of the red sea.

After that Moses hath rehearsed the peoples sinne: now he putteth them in remembraunce of the punishment that followed vpon it, that they might be better aduised thenceforth, & not prouoke God to wrath after that fashion. For whensoeuer God punisheth men for any offences, the same ought to serue them for a warning, and other men for an example, to beware that they doe no more so. True it is that they which had murmured after that sort against God, were alreadie dead: but yet was it expedient that their children should haue it printed in their mindes, that God had not left such vnbeliefe and disobedience vnpunished. And so wee see the intent of Moses. Wherefore let vs note, that if God haue shewed vs that he cannot away with some offence: his intent is that we should thinke vpon it, and that the chastisements which he layeth

lyeth vpon vs should turne to our profite, and that they should serue vs for the time to come, so as wee should not looke to haue him to stretch out his hand against vs: for it is good for vs to bee taught at other mens cost as the prouerb saieth. But wee must marke, that Moses rehearseth here briefely, the things that are declared more largely in the fourteenth Chapter of the Booke of Nombers, where God is so wroth with the people, that he would haue destroyed them vtterly. He saieth there to Moses, passe not thou for it: I can giue thee a greater and excellenter people than this: but as for these wicked folke, they must needes bee rooted out, I cannot suffer them any more. Hereupon Moses maketh intercession for them and saieth: Not so Lord: for if it should be heard in Egypt, that it were so come to passe, thy name should be blasphemed, & the wicked would make a scoffing at it, saying: because God could not performe his promise, therfore hath he slaine this people, and so hath he beguiled them and betrayed them. Lord, wilt thou suffer thy name to be slaundred after that sort? Thereupon God telleth him that he will not execute his vengeance vpon any other than such as had murmured, & yet notwithstanding that he would therewithall reserue a seede, on whom to perfourme the thing that he had promised to his seruant Abraham.

By the way, ¶ threate that is conteined here, importeth not that God was not determined in his owne purpose what he would doe: for if wee should thinke that he altered his mind vpon the aduertisement that Moses gaue him: it could by no meanes agree [with his nature.] Should a mortall man haue more discretion and forecast than the liuing God? No: and on the otherside wee knowe that God doeth in no wise chaunge his purpose. Neuertheleſſe, diuers times he vttereth somewhat rough threatnings, to driue vs to humble our selues before him, and to make vs feele what wee haue deserued. God then in telling Moses that he would vtterly roote out that people, so as there should not one of them bee left aliue, meant not that he was determined so to doe: but sheweth that the people was worthy to haue bene quite and cleane destroyed. And in deede there was iust cause why, to the intent that euery of them should be smitten downe and subdued on his owne behalfe, and that Moses should pray after that maner. And yet for all that, God found the meanes to make good his promise, notwithstanding the wilfull frowardnes that was in the people. And this is a point well worthie to be marked among others: that when God hath chosen any people, although his grace bee despised, so as all they whom he had called become vnworthie of such a benefite, and banish themselues out of his house by reiecting ¶ promise that was offered them: yet will God finde the meanes to chastise them in such wise, as his Church shall not vtterly perish, yea and he will euen ouercome mens frowardnesse with his goodnesse. I say it is well worthie to bee marked. For wee see that on the one side, the hypocrites, vnder colour that God hath manifested himselfe vnto them, and promised to bee their Sauiour: doe surmise that they haue him bound, and thereupon take leaue to doe euill: and if a man shewe them their sinnes, they harde themselues against it, there is nothing but pride in them, & they arme themselues with Gods name, to fight against his Prophets. And this haue they done in all ages. When the Iewes were rebuked for their wicked life, & for their turning away from God: they were inflamed with such rage against the Prophets, as to say, How nowe? To whom speake ye? Are not wee the Church? Are not wee Gods inheritance? Hath he not set his couenant among vs? Haue not wee the signe of Circumcision? Haue not wee the temple where he is worshipped? Wee see then that the Iewes did falsely abuse Gods name, to ashsurance themselues against him and his word. And this is reported of the Iewes: but yet wee may see the like in our selues. For all they to whom God hath done so much honour as to giue them his word and to manifest himselfe vnto them, doe imagin that they haue him as it were in their sleeue: & yet for all that, in stead of profiting themselues by Gods so gentle alluring of them vnto him, they set themselues against all good doctrine, they cannot finde in their heartes to beare any yoke, they will needes bee as wilde beastes, and yet in the meane while they will needes haue God to auow them to be of his flocke. But here wee see, that although God had as then set vp his seat among the Iewes, and made a couenant with them to bee their Sauiour vnto the ende: yet when he sawe they were not meete to haue him, but that they drew cleane backe, and ceassed not to spite him: he found the meanes to punishe them, yea and that in such sort, as all those things went to nought, and yet he himself abode soothfast, notwithstanding their destruction. And therfore let vs not deceiue our selues. When God hath once taken vs to him to be of his housholde, and adopted vs to be his children: let vs not sooth our selues in our vices, but consider how it stidech vs on hand to walke so much the more awefully, when God hath shewed himselfe so bountifull towardes vs, and that forasmuch as he hath vttred his goodnes in such wise, it is good reason that wee on our part being so much beholden vnto him, should looke well about vs and indeuour to giue our selues wholly to his seruice, and be so loth to offend him, as we may also be afraide to be bereft of the grace that he hath once bestowed vpon vs. Marke that for one point.

And therewithall let vs marke also, that God in punishing the hypocrites and all such as abuse the goodnesse that he hath done towards them, ceasseth not for all that, to continue faithfull stil. For if he should destroy the whole world and leaue no afterspring to call vpon him, it might bee said, in deede God hath iust cause to punish men after that maner: but in the meane time where is his promise? He hath saide that his Church shall continue for euer, & that his name shall bee called vpon here beneath, as long as there is eyther Sunne or Moone in the skie: but

Num. 14. 11

Ierem. 7. 4.

Psal. 72. 17.

nowe is all dispatched quite and cleane, the remembrance of saluation is vtterly buried among men. Although then that God should doe iustly in punishing such as had done amisse: yet should his promise bee vaine and voide, if he performed not the thing that he promised, and so would men blame him of vnfaithfulnesse. But (as I saide) he findeth meanes to punish them that deserue it, and yet notwithstanding reserueth and keepeth still a people to himselfe, and suffereth not his trueth to fall to the ground, or to die without effect. And hereof we haue a notable example in this place. For wee see that God had made a couenant with Abraham, and had promised him to giue the land of Chanaan for an heritage to his offspring. As soone as the time came, the promise was performed. Yea verily: but all the posteritie of Abraham refused and reiected the promise, whereby they disanulled it as much as lay in them. Thus you see they bee depriued of it through their owne vnthankfulnesse. But yet to the intent that God be not accused of leauing his promise vnperformed: it behoued him in punishing the fathers to preserue their race. They that come vp afterward are also the offspring of Abraham, and they possesse the land that was promised: by meanes whereof the couenaunt that God had made abode sure and fast settled to the end. And for the same cause it is said that God reserued the yong children to himselfe. Now then, as many as had murmured and were aboue the age of twentie yeeres, are cast off and banished from the good turne that was readie for them: but they that were vnder that age are preserued still, and God is glorified in them. And albeit that the accomplishment of his promise was delayed by the space of fortie yeeres: yet notwithstanding he shewed himselfe faithfull in the end. This is the matter which we haue to beare away.

So now likewise, when wee see the world so farre out of order that all is mard, and it seemeth that all men will needes spite GOD, and shut themselues out of all hope of saluation, by driuing away the light of the Gospell that is giuen them: let vs looke for some vengeaunce at hand. For though God bee patient: yet must he bee faine in the ende, to stretch out his arme to bee reuenged of such malice and contempt. On the one side, they to whom the Gospell is preached, doe growe altogether heathenish, and it is seene that a nomber waxe worse and worse, and wickednesse becomes more excessiue than it was in the time of the abominations of the Popedome, so that (to speake properly) it should seeme that men become dunlles after their hearing of the Gospell. What is it I pray you, that a man shall see, yea and that commonly? That there is now no more loue of God, no nor countenance of louing him, that Religion is let alone colde and dead, and that there is no more zeale in vs than in a timberlogge. It is apparant then that Gods word is now adayes stained and defyled with our iniquities, in so much that whereas wee should bee as burning Lampes to giue light to the sillie ignorant soules, wee giue them occasion of stumbling. Againe on the other side, we see how the faithlesse doe fight against God, seeking nothing else dayly but to ouerthrow his trueth, and to cause it to be quenched out, that it might neuer be spoken off more. Seeing then that the whole world is so malicious, and that as well the one sort as the other doe make open warre against God, continuing still in their stubbornesse which increaseth from day to day: must not God (after he hath waited for some conuersion and amendment) execute his vengeance vppon vs as wee deserue? Yee see then after what manner it behoueth vs to prepare our selues, considering that wickednesse is so great nowe adayes, and so farre past hope of recouerie. But yet therewithall let vs comfort our selues, and looke also that in punishing the offenders God will not fayle to keepe still some seed to himselfe, so as he wil alwaies haue some little flock to cal vpon him and to worship him. Let vs not doubt then but that our Lorde will alwayes maintaine his Churche, to the intent to shewe himselfe soothfast. Although all thinges seeme forlorne and brought to confusion: yet will God worke after such a fashion, as wee shall see in the ende, that he hath had a regard of his promise, and that he will shew himselfe faithfull and prooue himselfe so in deede.

But let vs marke well, that the Churche shall not alwayes be visible so as wee shall perceiue it. It shall seeme [nowe and then] that all is come to nought: Like as when God made the people to turne backe againe, he said vnto them, *Get ye into the wildernesse towardes the red Sea*, as though they should haue returned againe into Egypt. Here is such a great confusion, as it might well seeme that he minded not any more that the land of Chanaan shoulde bee giuen for an heritage vnto those to whom it was promised. Ye see then that for a time it seemed that God had falsified his promise, and that there was not any more hope that the children of Abraham should haue entered into the place that was promised them. Euen so shall it fall out with vs, as in deede it is come to passe. For when God withdraweth his light out of the worlde: it will seeme that there is no more any Church at all. If a man looke round about him, he shall see that all is gone to hauocke. And in good faith, what desolation was there in the time of Poperie? Yea and euen still at this day, a man myght thinke that all shoulde goe to ruine and decaye. But let vs marke, that it is all one as if God shoulde cause those to goe backe againe which are not woorthie to goe forwarde: and that yet notwithstanding, he ceaseth not to holde on in such wise, as his Churche shall still bee maintained and preserued. Howbeit, not that the same can bee discerned with the eye, or perceiued by man: but wee must shut our eyes, vntill our Lord doe worke after his owne maner, that is to say wonderfully beyond all our expectation, and beyond all that we bee able to conceiue. Thus you see howe wee may comfort our selues in this, that although wee see it is not possible but y God must not cast some horrible punish-

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ment, in these dayes vppon mens wickednesse: yet neuertheleſſe hee will alwayes reserue some people to himselfe, so as the thing that he speaketh by his Prophet Ioel shalbe seene continually. Though heauen and earth (saith he) do goe together, though the sunne be darkened, though the moone drop bloude, though the starres lose their light, and though the earth remoue: yet for all that whosoeuer calleth vppon the name of the Lorde, shalbee saued: GOD will preserue them whom he hath chosen to call vpon him: and albeit that their life bee hidde, yet will not God faile to heare them in the end, and to shewe them that hee neuer was vnmindefull of his promise, but that he had a regarde of him selfe, notwithstanding that men were not worthy to haue any one drop of goodnes and mercy offered vnto them. This is the matter in effect which we haue to remember in this first place.

But herewithall we must marke the othe that God made against the Iewes, as it is set downe in the Psalme, and afterwarde applyed vnto vs by the Apostle, saying: To day, if ye will heare his voyce, harden not your hearts as your fathers did in the wildernesse, vnto whom I sware in my wrath, that they should not enter into my land, was my rest. We see how it was the will of the holy Ghost, that the Iewes should in al ages be mindeful of this disobedience that had bin committed: and that thereupon they should remember that for the same, their fathers were bereft of the benefit that had beene promised them, and shutte out from Gods rest. For (as I saide afore) this serued not for the Iewes only, but the Apostle applieth it also to our time. God then directeth his speech to vs at this day. Therefore wee must haue our eares open to hearken vnto him: wee must not drine of from morrowe to morrowe: wee must seeke no delay: as soone as God speaketh wee must be readie to learne, and not harden our hearts against him. Whereby wee bee put in minde, that there is nothing which hindereth our obedience vnto God, but our own resisting of him through a certaine wilful frowardnes. For he for his part applieth himselfe in such wise vnto vs: as hee beareth with our rudenesse and infirmitie. So then, all they that are taught by the Gospell, shall obey God without gainesaying, if they poyson not themselues through a certaine wilful frowardnesse to withstande God, and to driue backe his grace. That is the cause why we be expresly warned, not to harden our hearts. Yea verily: for wee must not think that God will suffer his grace to bee so scorned, and dalyed with, and set light by. If he were inflamed with anger against the Iewes for refusing to enter into the Land of Chanaan: if we nowadayes doe playe the restie iades and fall to kicking, lest vs not thinke that such vnthankefulnesse shall scape vnpunished. And in good sooth, if the Iewes were so punished at that time, that all the sorte of them came to nought, wandering in the wildernesse by the space of fortie yeeres: God shewed yet more harde and rigorous vengeance vppon them afterwarde, in the thraldome of Babylon and other miseries that happened vnto them for the thraldome of Babylon lasted threescore and ten yeares. And at their returne, although he shewed great and wonderfull power: yet were they but a handfull which were saued, according to this saying of the Prophet Esay, though thy people were as the sande of the sea, yet shoulde but a small remnant of them be saued. And in another place hee saith, we had beene as Sodome and Gomorre, if God had not reserued a little seede; yea euen a verie little one. Wee see then that God increased his wrath against such as amended not at the example of their fathers. And why? Because they were the lesse to bee excused, for they ought to haue taken warning by the punishmentes that were prepared for them. Therefore did they double their offence. And what thinke we of the desolation that hath happened since the [first] preaching of the Gospell, [for the refusall whereof] the wretched world hath wandred so astray, as all things haue bin corrupted in the Church, so that in steede of Gods seruice there hath beene nothing but abhominations, instead of truth there hath beene nothing but diuelish lyes and errours; and all thinges haue beene put out of order there, and that the same confusion hath lasted nowe so long time? [All these thinges doe put vs in minde] that Gods voyce ought to sounde shrieker nowesdayes in the Gospell, than it did in the Lawe. For as is saide by the Prophet Aggeus, God mooueth heauen and earth to quake nowadayes, when the Gospel is preached. And besides that, wee haue all the thinges that befell to the people of olde time, which serue vs as a liuely picture. There must wee beholde Gods wrath, to restrayne our selues from doing euil, as Saint Paul sheweth vs in the tenth of the first to the Corinthians. But if wee make no reckening therof: is it not reason that God shoulde punish vs sorer than hee did the Iewes?

Psal. 95. 7. & 3. 7. & 7.

Esay 1. 9.

Rom. 9. 29.

Agg. 2. 7.

1. Cor. 10. 11

Let vs learne then to hearken to Gods voyce while it soundeth in our eares, and let vs beware that wee harden not our hearts, least God sweare in his wrath. For it is saide expresly that God sware. And whie? Because men thinke his threates to be vaine, if hee make them not to perceiue that hee speaketh in good earnest. And of a truth we see dayly, that when Gods threatnings are vttered vnto vs, a great many of vs do but shake our eares at them, and the number of those that are touched with them, is verie smal. Therefore the othe that GOD sweareth is no more than needeth, euen in respect of the blockishnesse that is in men, forasmuch as they bee so foolish as to make but a mocke of euerie thing that is tolde them. And like as God to helpe the weakenesse of our faith, vseth an othe when hee confirmeth his promises: so on the contrarie part, hee vseth to sweare when hee threatneth to punishe vs. And why? To the ende that being afraide and abashed at it, wee shoulde come to repentance. For if wee bee not made to stoope that wee may take holde of Gods iustice: our sinnes will neuer mislike vs.

Gods

Gods iustice then must become as a thunder or lightning, and we must bee abashed before him, that we may no more bee so drunken in our sins as wee were. And therefore whensoeuer Gods threatnings do not dismay vs sufficiently: let vs cal to minde the oth that Moses speakes of here, and let vs assure our selues that it is we whom the same pointeth at, according to that which I haue alledged alreadie both out of the Psalme, and out of the record of the Apostle.

And therewithall let vs also marke well the words that are set downe heere by Moses. *None of this cursed and wicked generation* (saith hee) *shall see the good land that I haue promised.* Heere GOD maketh a comparison betweene lande and the people. This lande then was a singular gift, in token whereof hee calleth it his rest: meaning thereby that he had chosen that lande to bee as a dwelling place and euerlasting inheritance for the people to rest in vnder his protection. For there is no certaintie in this worlde, and if wee bee lodged in any place, wee may bee put out of our nest againe to day or to morrowe. But God telde them that hee had assigned the lande of Chanaan for an euerlasting possessiō to the children of Abraham, to maintaine them and keepe them safe there, so as no man shoulde trouble them, nor euer driue them out againe. Yee see then that the lande was not a common gift, but a gift that deserued to bee esteemed as most excellent aboue al others. But behold, the people on the otherside, are malicious and froward. Therefore it is all one as if our Lorde shoulde say, I see wel ynough howe the worlde goes, I shall sooner make fire and water to agree, than cause this people to like of my benefits. For in my benefites there is nothing but meere goodnesse, and in this people there is nothing but meere naughtinesse.

Let vs marke well then, that to inioy Gods benefites, wee must frame our selues to his will and righteousnesse: for our naughtinesse and Gods goodnesse can neuer match together, insomuch that if wee will needes followe our owne nature, God must needes withdrawe his goodnesse away from vs. True it is that God looketh not for any worthinesse at our hands why hee shoulde doe vs good (nay rather, hee fighteth dayly against our sinnes, and vseth mercie where as hee might lawfully vse rigour against vs. But yet for all that, if hee see that we continue in our naughtinesse, hee can no longer continue in doing vs good. Yee see then that the doctrine which we haue to gather vppon this consideration: is that there must bee as it were an accorde and melodie betweene God and vs, and that when hee imparteth his benefites vnto vs, we must make such estimation of them, as wee indeuer to serue and honour him for them, and consider that he calleth vs to him, to pluckе vs backe from our sinnes. If wee doe so, the good that he hath done vs shalbe confirmed more & more. Otherwise, it must needes bee that our naughtinesse shall cut off the course of his goodnesse. Why so? For (as I haue said alreadie) when God offereth men his benefits, & they refuse them of a wilfull frowardnesse: it is as if fire and water should meete together.

But besides this, wee must also marke Gods vpbrayding of the people, with their saying that their yung children shoulde be a pray to their enemies. *They* (saith he) *shall possesse the lande*, yea euen to the intent that you may be proued lyers. Heere it behoueth vs to marke well, that when men will needes doubt of Gods trueth, they must in the ende be founde lyers, and Gods trueth shine forth the brighter to their shame. Howe hereby wee bee warned to receiue simplie the promises that GOD offereth vs. And although it seeme at the first blush that they shold neuer be accomplished, & that there be a number of impediments to hinder them: yet must we doe him the honour to beleeue that he is faithfull, and to abide patiently for the conuenient time of his performance of the thing that hee hath said. For if we gainesay his truth, and murmure, and fall to questioning and disputing, with howe can this be? is it possible? God seemeth to mocke vs: I say, if we go that way to worke: Well may hee performe his promise for all that: but it shalbe to our shame, so as wee shall alwayes bee founde lyers. Wee may well triumph for a time, as we see the vnbeleeuers doe, which malapertly despise God, spewing out their blasphemies against him: but yet in the ende God shall continue faithfull, and his trewnesse shalbe knowen spite of our teeth, and therewithall we shalbee put to shame. And therefore let vs beware of it, and that wee may beware of it, let vs marke well howe the Iewes are vpbrayded with it here. You haue saide that your children shall bee made a pray: but they shall inioy the land, and you shalbe set beside it.

Moreouer the example of Caleb the sonne of Iephone is verie notable, and so is also the example of Iosua the sonne of Nun. These two are reserued of a great multitude. And why? Because they had gone through stoutly. For this recorde is yelded to Caleb, *that hee had perfited* [or continued] *in following the Lorde.* Whereas God exempteth here but two men of an infinite multitude: therein wee see howe it is a folly to looke what other men doe. For had Caleb and Iosua done so: what had come of it? They had gone to destruction with the rest. But they suffered not themselues to bee caryed away by that horrible tempest. When they sawe so straunge a turning backe in the whole people: yet did they confirme themselues in the power of God, and although the people woulde haue stoned them, (as is declared in the booke of the numbers, and as shalbe touched againe anon): yet did they their duetie. So then, seeing that God alloweth the constancie of Caleb and Iosua, for that they did shut their eyes when they sawe the people so excessiuely set vppon mischiefe, and exhorted them to obey God: let vs note well that although thinges be out of order in the worlde, and we see stumblingblockes to ouerthrowe vs, and vices rage like a waterfloud: yet is it no sufficient cause to suffer our selues to bee caryed away, or to make vs followe the

common

common traine, for it shall not abate our condemnation before God. We may well say, all the worlde doth so: for all the worlde shall perish, and thou with it, which speakest so in contempt of thy God. What a thing is it, that men wil needs abolish Gods iustice, and giue no more eare vnto him when they giue themselues to all naughtinesse, but shut him vp in heauen, and suffer him to haue no more authoritie heere beneath? Whereto tendeth this? And yet for all that, wee see nowadayes that when the ignorant intende to shrowde themselues, the greatest sheelde that they haue is to alledge, Howe so? I see that all the worlde behaue themselues contrariwise. And in the meane season what becomes of God? God must bee faine to bee thrust vnder foote, and men must runne leaping and frisking at their pleasure. Yea and euen among our selues, if a man tell one or other of their faults: [their answere is,] I see others are as bad as my selfe. Wee beare our selues on hande, that our condemning of our neighbours will goe for good payment, and that we shal scape Gods hand by that meane. Therefore let vs thinke continually vpon the example of Caleb and Iosua. And forasmuch as GOD sheweth that hee made more account of them though they were but two in all, than of all the other howge multitude which were about seuen hundred thousande persons: forasmuch (say I) as we see that God giueth such sentence of them: let vs learne to submit our selues to him, and to regarde nothing but that which he commaundeth. And though the world runne gadding here and there in the meane while, let vs followe the way that God hath shewed vs by his pure word.

Moreouer, let vs wey this speech where it is saide, *that Caleb held out in following the Lorde.* For it is not ynough for vs to beginne well, but wee must also sticke to God through stitch, yea euen without any feining or starting, and without fainting or giuing ouer in the mids of our way. And in good sooth, it is not for nought that this recorde is giuen to Caleb. For (as I haue touched heretofore) the people were in such an vprore, as they would haue stoned him and Iosua too. Insomuch that if God had not take them away, and his glorie appeared vppon the tabernacle: they had loste their liues for it. Yet for all this, they ceased not to doe their ductie still, but cryed out against the people and rent their clothes. And after that manner stroue they against those which woulde not inioy Gods blessing. Wee see then how there was a marueilous power in Caleb and in Iosua. And therefore we bee warned by their example, not onely to enter into the way, but also to goe forwarde and forward stil, assuring our selues that we cannot holde out to the ende in seruing God, but by bearing out of many harde brunts and temptations, [and therfore we haue neede] to strengthen our hearttes in such wise, as nothing may be able to make vs to fleete. Thus yee see whereto our Lord and his holy spirite exhort vs.

Where as he praiseth here the constancie of Caleb and Iosua: is is to the end (say I) that their example should serue to our instruction. For although the memoriall of the righteous be blessed before God: yet is it declared for our profite. Therefore let vs not haue such a zeale as shall waxe colde when it commeth to the following of God: but let vs determine fully with our selues to holde out with it, whatsoeuer the diuell practise, or howsoeuer the world set it selfe against vs: like as at this day wee see many resistances, and many occasions, that might make vs start away: but yet for all that, we must holde on our iourney, not for two or three dayes onely, but all our life long. Let vs goe on therefore: and when there is any mention *of following God:* let vs marke that it is to confirme the matter better which I haue declared alredie: that is to wit, that if we followe men, we shall runne astray. For why? what els are the wais of the world but strainings, so as euery man gaddes in and out, when they once turne their backes vpon God? What is to bee done then? So long as wee looke vpon men, it will bee vnpossible for vs to goe right: but wee must followe God.

True it is that when God is so good vnto vs, as to giue vs men to accompanie vs, yea and to goe before vs and to reach vs their hande: it is a great helpe, and (as Paul telleth vs) wee must looke wistly vpon them: and when we haue good seruantes of God which teache vs and leade vs with good conscience, we must marke that, and fashion our selues like to them: and in so doing we shall not followe men: for in fashioning our selues like to them that follow God, we haue his way for our way. We grounde not our selues one vpon another, to say, Thus will I doe, for I see most men doe it. No: but forasmuch as God calleth vs to him, it behoueth vs to go, Yea though there were no mo but my selfe alone: yet ought I to follow my God. But if furthermore he beare with me so farre, as to giue me companie: then must I goe to him with so much the better corage: and whatsoeuer come of it, I must not swarue from his pure worde. Thus yee see why it is saide here, that Caleb the sonne of Iephone followed the way of the Lord, and therefore was exempted from the common condemnation. Yea and it is saide that *he followed constantly*, that is to say, he continued throughout to the vttermost. And so wee see nowe in effect that all the people were condemned, & that onely two were acquit, because they had giuen glorie vnto God.

1. Cor. 4. 16. & Heb. 13. 7.

But the circumstance that is added, namely, *that God spared not Moses because of the people*, increaseth yet more the thing that I haue saide. In deede this cannot be dispatched all as nowe: but yet must I ad this point aforehande. For if God spared not Moses, (who notwithstanding had such recorde as wee knowe), but punished him because hee helde not out constantly to the vttermost in resisting the lewdnesse of the people: I pray you what shall become of vs? Is it likelie that wee shall goe scotfree nowadayes, when euerie man suffereth himselfe to be caried away because hee seeth that naughtinesse hath the vpper hande? Then if wee happen to ouerthroe our selues so, thinke wee that

that God will let vs alone? No no: For if such punishment as we heare of, was extended vpon Moses: needes must wee feele farre sorer, when we intangle our selues in the common vices, and forsake God to followe the worlde. And let vs
Num.14.34. marke well, that in swearing that the people should not enter into the lande: he sayth, ye shal recken the yeres according to the nomber of the dayes wherein ye spied out the land. They that were sent to spy out the lande taried forty daies: and so behoued it the people to wander vp and downe by the space of fortie yeares. And so we see that when God hath vsed long patience towardes vs, he maketh vs to pay verie deere for our abusing of his goodnesse. Wherefore let vs not measure Gods punishments after our owne fancies for they be sorer than our wittes can conceaue. But whensoeuer he threatneth vs, let vs tremble at his only speech, and make hast to follow it. And forasmuch as his speech is directed to vs nowadaies, let vs not driue off til to morow, but let vs follow, and let euerie man be going on his way. Againe forasmuch as we be traile and haue a rough and thornie way to goe, yea and there be many stoppes to barre vs, so as it will seeme that there be great mountaines to make vs turne backe againe: let vs pray our God to giue vs strength to go on stil forward. For if he strengthened Caleb and Iosua: let vs assure our selues he will do the like to vs. And therewithall if we see that the world hinder vs, and that there is store of stumbling blockes on all sides: let vs pray God that he suffer vs not to be corrupted with others, but that we may beare him the honor to stick vnto him, & to yeld our selues wholly to his word, giuing them leaue to perishe that needes will perish, and in the meane while staying our selues by the promise of saluation which he hath giuen vs, accordingly also as it is his will that wee shoulde attaine thereto by any such knowledge.

Now let vs kneele down in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to touch vs better than we haue bine & that aboue al things we may bethinke vs of the vnthankefulnesse whereof we be giltie, in that we haue not obeyed his word, nor bin so willing to followe the things that he hath declared vnto vs as was requisite. And therefore let vs beseech him, not only to forgiue vs our faults past, but also to strengthen & gouerne vs in such wise by his holie spirite, as wee may ouercome al the temptations of Satan, and forsake all the lustes of our owne flesh, to the end we may obey the voyce of our God, and in such sort applie all our senses thereunto, as we may passe through all the distresses of this present world, vntill he haue gathered vs togither into his euerlasting kingdom. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not only to vs, but also to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the xxiij. of April. 1555.

The ninth Sermon vpon the first Chapter.

37.38.39.40. Also the Lord &c.

41 Then answered you and saide vnto me: We haue sinned against the Lorde. VVe will goe vp and fight as the Lorde our God hath commaunded vs. And you armed your selues euery one with harnesse of warre, and were readie to goe vp into the hill.

42 And the Lord said vnto me, warne them that they goe not vp, ne fight not, for I am not among you: least you be vanquished of your enimies.

WE began yesterday to see howe hard it is to abstaine from sinning when a man is in euill companie, specially if hee haue the charge of gouernment. For seeing it was Moses hap to be shaken downe: Howe shall they do which are farre weaker than he was? Wee knowe that God had made him to excell all men, we see also how he serued his turne by him, & what record hee hath giuen of him. And yet for all that, behold here a fal which God misliketh of so greatly, that he disappointeth him of entring into the lande for it: and such dishonour and reproch was done vnto him, that hee might not possesse the inheritance that had beene promised, as well to him as to all the people. Therefore we had neede to call vpon God when we be mingled with such as are able to corrupt vs and to thrust vs out of the way, so as we be hemmed it rounde about with euill examples. But yet they which haue the charge of gouernement, ought to stande in greater feare and dreade, and to call vppon God to strengthen them, and to giue them such constancie as they may not swarue any whit at all.

But before we goe any further, we must mark that where as Moses reporteth that God was angrie with him for the peoples sakes: hee doth it not to excuse himselfe that he had not done amisse: for then should he replie against God who had giuen sentence vpon him. In the twentith Chapter of the booke of Numbers it is sayde expressly, thou shalt not enter into the lande, because that thou and Aaron haue not glorified the Lord before the people of Israel. So then we see that God chargeth not Moses with the sinne of the

the people, as who shoulde say that he himselfe had beene giltlesse: but his meaning is that hee fell not to euill of his owne accorde and mouing, but was driuen to it as by a storme, when he saw such vprore and hurlyburly among the people, that he was at his wits ende and wist not what to doe, by meanes whereof he had not a present faith to giue glorie vnto God. The intent of Moses then is not to wash his hands, as though hee were not blame woorthy at all: but to doe the people to vnderstande that the verie mischiefe sprang of them. Neuertheles it may be thought straunge howe Moses shoulde offende, seeing it appeareth not in all the rehersall of the storie. It is laide that the people grudged against God, because they wanted drinke in the wildernesse, saying: Had it not beene better for vs that God had killed vs in Egypt? Must hee needes bring vs into this drie and barren place, that we might die heere for thirst? It appeareth well that hee hateth vs, and that his intent is to make vs to linger heere in tormentes: and in the meane while wee bee past all hope of doing well. After this manner did the people murmure. On the contrarie part Moses weepeth and resorteth vnto God, saying: Alas Lorde, oughtest thou to haue so lieder a reward for thy deliuering of this people through thine owne goodnes, as to haue thy holy name blasphemed by them? What coulde Moses haue done better than this? For he is so farre off from consenting to the wickednesse of the people, to bee any companion with them: that hee weepeth to see the offence committed against God. And Dauid likewise sheweth an excellent and wonderfull welldisposed minde, in saying that hee wore sackcloth for their sakes that blasphemed God. Moses did as much. It shoulde not seeme then that there is any fault in all this. For God commaunded him to take his staffe, and to strike vpon a rocke, and to make water to come out of it before the people. Hee obeyed. Wee see not there any replying at all: nay we see not that Moses did so much as once doubt. Moreouer when hee speaketh to the people, hee saith: Come on yee rebelles, must God bee faine to make water to come out of this rocke, which you see nowe so harde and drie? Yee see hee rebuketh the people sharpely, and a man woulde thinke hee coulde not glorifie God better. And yet for all this, it is saide vnto him, Thou hast not giuen vnto mee the honour that belonged to mee, and therefore thou shalt bee banished out of the lande that belonged by inheritance vnto thee. And did hee sinne then? As I saide afore, if we iudge after our owne fancie, it will seeme to vs that Moses discharged himselfe well in all pointes, so as hee offended not, ne had any spot or blemish in him. But what for that? Heereby wee see that it belongeth onely vnto God to iudge, and that wee may bee deceiued at all tymes, in following our owne witte and reason. Wherefore let vs kepe this rule which is verie needefull: that is to wit, that wee bee farre vnable to discerne good and euill alwayes by eye sight, for as is said in the fifteenth of Saint Luke, the thing that is highly esteemed among men, shall be abhominable before God. When we haue sifted a thing neuer so well, and setled all our wittes to vtter it well: yet shall it seeme to vs cleane contrarie to that it is indeede. Nowe then, let vs cast downe our eyes and acknowledge that none but onely God is the competent iudge.

True it is that wee haue the lawe, whereby wee may assuredly say, this is good and that is euill: and our yeelding vnto that which is shewed vs there, is not to make vs iudges: for wee take no authoritie to our selues, but onely yelde to 7 things that God setteth forth. And besides this, wee must not onely iudge our neighbours doings by the lawe, but also examine our owne liues by it. And when wee finde our selues to haue swarued from Gods commaundementes, we must willingly condemne our selues, and allowe no further of our owne doings, than they agree with Gods will. Although they seeme good to our selues, yet let vs not stande vppon that. For our eyes are so troubled and weake, that oftentimes one sinne escapeth vs and a hundred followe out after it: and that is because we be not sharpesighted ynough, to spie out the thinges that God perceiueth, and which are hid from vs. And that is the cause why saint Paul saieth, 1. Cor. 4. 4. that although he had walked purely in his office: yet was he not iustified for all that. For God requireth another manner of perfection than wee can see. So then, seeing wee haue so weake and dimme a sight, let vs learne to referre our selues vnto God: and let euerie of vs put that thing in vre in himselfe, which is shewed vs by Dauid Psal. 19. 13. when he saith, Who is he that knoweth his faltes? Lord forgiue me the euill which I perceiue not. We must not onely ask God forgiuenesse of the sinnes that sting vs, and whereof we haue proofe in our selues: but we must also acknowledge that we haue manie sinnes which wee knowe not of. Marke that for one point.

Furthermore, proceeding still herewith, let vs not be hastie in iudging, to acquite one and to condemne another: but let vs reserue vnto God that which is his, for as I haue said afore, if God had not pronounced that sentence vppon Moses, euery man would canonize him, and say hee did the best that coulde be deuised. But what for that? Seeing hee is condemned by the heauenly iudge, we must bridle our selues, and not fall to incountering against God. For wee shall winne nothing by it. And for the same cause also S. Paul Rom. 14. 10. intending to exhort vs to modestie in the 14. to the Romanes, alledgeth that wee must all come before the iudgement seate of our Lorde Iesus Christ, where we shall not allowe what we thinke good, nor reiect what we mislike in our own fancie: for that authoritie belongeth to the onely son of God. Seeing it is so my brethren (saith he) wee must abstaine from foolish ouerweening. Thus much concerning that which is reported of the sinne of Moses.

Nowe let vs come againe to the matter that wee were in hande with: Which is, that Moses meaneth not to excuse himselfe: he seeketh no starting hole to lessen his faulte: but the thing that

he alledgeth is reasonable, he setteth foorth the heynousnesse of the peoples offence, shewing that their sedition was so forcible, that euen he himselfe also was ouerthrowen with it. The meaning then of Moses was as if he should haue said thus: Beholde yee wretches, God hath chosen me to supply his place among you, and he hath gouerned me in such wise by his holy spirit, that I haue had as it were his image printed in me: & yet notwithstanding I haue done amisse, I haue offended. And what is the cause of it? I excuse not my selfe: but yet are you gilty before God, of corrupting me, your murmuring hath ouerthrowen me, for by reason thereof I haue forgotten my duetie, and not yeelded God such glorie as was due vnto him. Seeing it is so: [I may well say,] it is not long of you, that you bereft mee not of all the grace that I had receiued at Gods hande: for where as he made me your heade to guide you: you haue done ynough to carie mee away to Satan through your naughtinesse and rebellion.

Nowe then acknowledge the sinne that you haue committed, for God hath brought me low, and it is his will to shewe you in my person, that you bee well worthie to perish euerie chone of you. Therefore besides the thing that I haue touched alreadie, (which is, that we must not like it better of our selues while our faults are vnknown [to our selues,] or when we can couer them, for Gods eies are not blindfolded for all, and the thinges that scape men are inrolled before him): wee must marke moreouer, that if wee giue anie man an occasion [of stumbling or offending], although hee on his parte is not thereby discharged, yet must our offence needs be the more grieuous and heauie, according as it is in very deede. Wherefore let euery man so behaue himselfe, as hee giue not his neighbours any occasion of stumbling. For if any man sinne vnder pretence of mee, if hee be misled by my lewde conuersation, if he take ill example by my vices: all the whole mischiefe shalbe laide in my necke before God, I shalbe discharged, wo shalbe vnto mee as saith our Lord Iesus Christ, and it were better for mee that I were cast into the middes of the sea with a milstone about my necke, than to haue giuen my neighbour any cause of misbehauiour. And therefore let vs liue in such sorte, as it may not bee cast in our teeth before GOD, that wee haue beene the cause of other mens ruine and destruction. For it will cost vs very deare, if the silie soules whom God hath created after his owne image, and whom Iesus Christ hath so deerely redeemed, be lost through our fault and wickednesse. Thus we see in effect what we haue to note vpon this sentence, where Moses saith, that GOD was angrie with him by meanes of the people.

Matt. 18.6. & Mark. 9.42. & Luk. 17.2

And furthermore we haue to mark here, that Gods laying of his temporall chastisementes vppon his faithfull ones, is not to driue them to despayre, but to humble them for a time: for in the ende all turneth to their benefite, and therefore they must not bee out of heart for it. It was a verie harde and bitter punishment vnto Moses, to bee banished out of the lande that had beene promised him.

The time is come that the people shoulde bee deliuered out of the thraldome of Egypte, to bee conueyed into the Lande of promise: Moses is chosen to bee their guide, so as hee supplyeth Gods office in deliuering them: and yet notwithstanding this shame is done vnto him, that GOD shutteth the gappe against him and saieth, thou shalt not come there. Yee see then howe Moses is (as yee woulde say) bronded with a marke of reproch before God. Nowe had hee taken it in despyte: it had beene ynough to haue plunged him into some blasphemie. But hee bare this correction patiently, knowing that it shoulde bee to his benefite, because it was but temporall. And therefore let vs marke this saying of Saint Paul, that Gods punishing of vs is to the intent we shoulde not perish with the worlde. Seeing then that GOD procureth our welfare thereby, and his mortifying of vs for a time as in respect of the flesh: and his condemning of vs with such wife as we bee ashamed afore men, is to the intent that our soules should be saued at the latter day, and wee liue in his presence: seeing that that is the end & butte that he shooteth at: let not vs on our part be so headstrong, as to chafe or fume at his corrections, but rather follow the example of Moses, who (as wee see) did make no wordes against God. It might seeme hee had some occasion to say, howe falles this out, that I am driuen out of the lande of promise? What shall a man say to it? For thou hast ordeyned mee to be as a redeemer in thy steede: and nowe must I tarie heere still. It was thy will that I should serue in this office, to put the people in possession of the promised lande: and why shall I not be partaker of the benefite that thou hast purchased them by my hande? What though there haue beene some little distrust in mee, which continued not the turning of a hande? Is the offence so heynous, that I must bee so grieuously punished for that? Moses then might haue helde such plea with God: but hee holdeth his peace, and yeeldeth to the sentence of condemnation willingly. Therefore let vs followe that which is shewed vs here by example: and (as I said afore) when GOD is so gracious to vs, that in steede of casting of vs away (as he might iustly doe) he doth no more but chastise vs as in respect of the flesh, and shame vs before men, to the ende to bring vs to repentance, and to humble vs: let vs bee quiet, and let it not cast vs into sorrowe, but let vs plucke vp a good heart to follow our vocation. This is the thing wee haue to remember. For if hee spared not Moses, what will he doe to vs? Ought wee to chalenge greater priuiledge than he?

But herewith all let vs marke, that Moses ceased not to bee an heire still of the heauenly kingdome, though hee were bereft of the outwarde signe of it. And thereby wee be warned, that if God make vs not to feele his fauour and loue in this worlde so fully as wee woulde wish,

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it must not make vs to bee out of patience. For it may happe that we shall take our selues to bee miserable, yea and that when wee looke vppon our owne state, we shall deeme it had bin much better for vs to haue gone astray with the world: 1.Cor.3.1. But what for that? Of al time we haue a life that lyeth hid in God. Therefore it is no hurt at all to vs, though God cut off the blessings of this present life from vs. For he knoweth to what end he doeth it: and it is good for vs to be so exercised. Thus yee see that the thing which wee haue to beare in minde, is that God doeth diuers times hide the signes of his loue from vs, as in respect of the worlde: but hee loueth vs neuer a whit the lesse, as we see how it happened vnto Moses.

As touching that which is saide of Iosua: it is one notable point more. For beholde, hee is appointed to succeede in Moses roome, yea, and yet was he but his seruaunt. And afterward Moses is commaunded to incourage him. Heere we see that God will take the thinges that are not greatly esteemed among men, yea and exalt them aboue our opinion, as we see he hath vsed to doe at all times: and not without cause: for thereby he intendeth to pull downe all pride according to this saying of Saint Paul, that hee chooseth the weake thinges, yea euen to the end that men shoulde not glorie in their owne strength: and hee chooseth the foolish thinges, 1.Cor.1.27. to the ende that men shoulde not glorie in their wisedome: and when he taketh ỹ things that are despised, it is to the ende that men shoulde not trust in their owne credit, nor bee puffed vp with their owne worthinesse. And it is verie requisite that it shoulde be so: for we see howe euery man seekes to aduaunce himselfe, and wee leaue nothing to God as neere as we can. Nay rather if wee doe but yeelde him the tydes that belong vnto him, it is but in way of daliance: and in the meane while we would that all shoulde be in our own persons. Now forasmuch as men haue this pride rooted in them: God must be fain to shew them by experience, that all of it is but vanitie: and so doth hee, by choosing the things that are not regarded, and by seruing his turne with such as are not esteemed to be of any great renowne. If we looke howe God chooseth men somtimes, to set them in preheminence: wee will say, who woulde haue looked for this? And God worketh after that manner, to the intent that those by whom he serueth his turne, shoulde learne to acknowledge themselues beholden to him for their dignitie wherein he hath set them, and vnderstande that they obteined it not by their own power and policie, but that it is God which hath placed them in that degree. For if they thinke they haue ought of their owne purchasing: God will shewe them the contrarie. That then is the thing which we haue to marke, when it is heere declared that God preferred Iosua before Moses insomuch that although Moses had now of long time beene cladde with the grace of the holy Ghost: although hee had beene chosen to bee the Redeemer [or Ransommer] of the people: although God had set his marks vppon him: although that in executing his office, it was well seene that hee was a newe creature, and there appeared in him a maiestie surmounting the nature of man: and there withall although hee had done so many deedes worthy of memorie, as might astonithe all them that hearde speaking of them: yet notwithstanding, in the ende God ordeyned his seruant in steede, to leade the people into the lande of Chanaan, and to put them in possession of their promised heritage, and Moses himselfe is not worthy to come there. So far off is hee from cõming there euen as a common member shuffeled in among the rest of the body: that God driueth him from it: and behold, God reacheth his hand to Iosua, who had neuer looked for it.

But now besides that which I haue said, (that is to wit, that we be warned to forbeare all presumption, and to lay downe all pride): let vs bee wel assured, that it belongeth to God to aduance vs & to make vs of estimation, through his mere grace: and that when we shal haue heaped vp al that euer we can together, all is nothing. Then, besides that we haue a good warning to humble our selues: it is shewed vs therewithall, that wee must not enuie those by whom God serueth his turne. And that is another good lesson. For wee see howe euery of vs repyneth, when God hath aduanced any man, specially beyonde all worldly hope. Where as we should consider thus, beholde God serueth his turne by such a one, euerie man commendeth him, and there appeare manifest gifts of grace in him: when we see those things, we be so malicious, that we grudge & repine at it. But contrariwise wee ought to marke, that when we be so pricked with spite and enuie, it is an aduancing of our selues against God and not against mortall creatures. Therefore let vs learne to honour God wheresoeuer hee sheweth himself, & to be glad when he vouchsafeth to extend his grace to our neighbours: for if we do so, all shall fall out to our welfare. If another man haue no gracious gifts thã I: I am rich in his person. For whē we confesse ỹ communion of saints: it is to shew, that whatsoeuer God giueth to one man or to another, the same redoundeth to the benefite of all. True it is that we perceiue it not at the first push: but yet doth such diuersitie serue for the whole bodie of the Church. The mem- Rom. 12.4. bers of a bodie haue not all one operation: the eyes execute not the office of the legges, nor the hands the office of the feete: and yet notwithstanding the body is so knit together in one, that whatsoeuer is giuen to any one member, doeth benefite al the rest. Now then let vs vnderstand, that when God bestoweth the gifts of his holie spirit more largely vpon some one man than vpon others, he ceaseth not therefore to haue pitie vpon vs: For we also must be edified therby. Yea surely, so we be not vnthankfull, and that we take no pritch at it when hee listeth to holde vs lowe and to exalt our neighbours. To bee short, wee make warre against God when we cannot abide that he shoulde keepe the order which hee hath determined: ỹ is to wit, to put down ỹ things that are great to the worldward, and to aduance and exalt the things that are base and despised.

Moreouer we see that Moses is commaunded to strengthen Iosua. So litle ought Moses to be greeued at the preferring of his seruaunt before himselfe, that hee must instruct him and harten him. As if hee shoulde say, I see nowe it is Gods will to honour thee by dishonoring mee. I am worthie of it, and I must be faine to beare it, and therewithall also to prepare thee to thine office. Although thou take my place: yet will I not set my selfe against thee, but (which more is) I will helpe thee to the vttermost of my power. Nowe am I become thy seruaunt. Whereas God had erst aduaunced mee: I must nowe giue vp this prehemineнce, and thou must take my roome: and I must indeuer as much as I can, that the benefite which Gods will is to bestow vpon thee, may auayle in thee. So then, if it please God to take any man to serue him, let vs streyne our selues to helpe him, and let vs not bee ashamed to put our shoulders vnder him to heaue him vp. Let vs not haue any of these wicked respects, to say, O ho, truely as for mee, if God were so gratious to mee as to aduance me as wel as such a one, I woulde bestirre mee. But forasmuch as hee holdeth mee downe to the grounde, I will not meddle with other men. Let vs beware of such churlishnesse. Nay rather when we see that God hath chosen a man: [let vs reason thus with our selues.] I see that God hath chosen such a man, indeede hee is not the ablest that coulde bee deuised, but yet is it Gods will to bee serued by him, and wee see hee hath a good will: therefore let vs helpe him, let euerie of vs reach him his hande, and let euerie of vs consider wherin hee may succour him to his furtherance. Yee see then that the thing which wee haue to marke heere, is that although our working beare no great outwarde shewe, and that the thinges which we doe haue no great glosse to commend them to the worlde: yet wee must not therefore cease to serue God according to our power, and to linke in with those by whom it is Gods will to bee serued, and not to imagine any thing that may foreslowe vs, or make vs say, At whose whose hande shall I bee recompensed? That which I haue done is as good as lost, men make none account of it. It shall well ynough come in account before God. And therefore let it suffise vs to be allowed at his hand. These are ỹ things that we haue to note vpon this, that Moses was commaunded to strengthen Iosua.

Nowe finally it is saide, that the people perceiuing their sinne, answered: *We haue offended the Lorde, and therefore wee bee nowe readie to goe vp.* And they not onely vsed those wordes: *but also euerie man prepared and armed himselfe, and so they went vp to encounter with their enemies.* Heere wee see the nature of men. When GOD biddeth them be stil, they be too too forward. If they be as hot as fire to doe the thing that is forbidden them. But when they were bidden goe, then their legges were broken. And yet notwithstanding it is saide, that the people acknowledged their sinne, when they had beene so disobedient against GOD. Whereby it appeareth that there is such a corruptenesse in our nature, that euen in minding to doe good we doe euill, and offende God, & ouershoote our selues without reason or measure. Heere is then a faire lookingglasse for vs to discerne our owne vices by: yea verily, so wee consider in the person of ỹ Iewes, that not only they themselues are condemned, but also that God purposeth to giue a generall lesson, whereby all men may fare the better. Nowe I tolde you first of all, that when God soundeth his trumpet and commaundeth vs to march, we stirre not a whit: and that although wee haue some good liking of the matter, yet we bee so colde and slowe, as is pitie to see. And on the contrarie part, that if hee say, Tary still, wee bee lustie, and moreouer so hot and hastie, that wee desire nothing but to occupie both our armes & our legs too. When it was saide to the people, Go, for your God is among you, bee not afraide so long as yee haue such a power to defende you: The people replyed againe on the other side, nay marie, howe shall wee goe vp? They bee Gyants, they wil deuour vs with their lookes, wee shalbe vndone at the first chop, it were better yet to returne into Egypt. When the people had replyed so, and it was tolde them againe, What meane you thus to distrust your God? He hath giuen vs this lande, wee haue his promise of it: and besides that, you haue had proofe of his helpe alreadie many wayes, and he offereth it you still: howe thinke you of it, you faithlesse and rebellious people? When the people were thus laide at: did they yet returne to their right wits? Yea, for yee see they repented. What for that? It is but a false repentance. Goe to (say they) sith it is so, we will goe and march against our enemies, seeing it is Gods pleasure. Nay, yee see heere, that God meant to trie their faith and obedience another way, that is to wit, by their forbearing to doe any thing at all. Because hee sawe they had not obeyed him at the first: nowe he will haue them ashamed of it, and to tarie his leisure till hee haue pitie of them. And forasmuch as hee had sworne that they shoulde not come there: his will was that they shoulde (after the example of Moses) haue suffered themselues to bee bereft of that honour as they were worthie. Wee see then that men haue but too greate frowardnesse when GOD commaundeth them to sit at rest: and contrariwise that they bee but too colde, when he would haue them to goe forwarde: nay they will rather creepe into cranies, than goe forth when God biddeth them.

Howbeit, for the better vnderstanding of this matter, let vs marke that this people offended in preacing forwarde without promise. For as I haue saide afore, we must not be hardie any further than God biddeth vs. Therefore when wee haue but a worde of his mouth, we must take corage, and put all letres vnder foote that may turne vs away. For the thing wherein GOD will bee glorified, is that hee commaunde vs nothing in vaine. And specially when hee promiseth vs good successe to our matters, and to prosper our doings: then must we rest thervpon, assuring our selues that hee will giue vs

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good dispatch. Neuertheleſſe when God had ſworne, that the people ſhould not come there: then woulde they needes goe vp againſt their enemies, not conſidering that in ſo doing they reſiſted GOD, and aduaunced themſelues againſt him. True it is that if a man had asked them, whether they minded to reſiſt God or no, and to doe cleane contrarie to his will, or whether they minded to haue him to bee their aduerſarie: they woulde haue aunſwered, No: We beleeue that God will helpe vs. For why? Hee hath deliuered vs out of Egypt, he hath promiſed our father Abraham to giue this lande in poſſeſſion to his linage, and the time is nowe come. Yea but there is no promiſe [to you,] and therefore it is but fonde preſumption or rather ſtarke madneſſe, when men take a toye in their heades, and aduenture to doe this or that, when in the meane while God hath not promiſed any ſuch thing. So then let vs marke well, that wee muſt not be bolde vppon our owne heade, but hearken till God ſpeake: and when wee haue his promiſe, wee muſt rule our ſelues thereby, and not paſſe the boundes thereof. For elſe it may happen vnto vs, as Moſes reporteth here that it happened to this people: that is to witte that wee ſhall doe all thinges arſiuerſie, and ſo offende God. In ſo much that when wee weene to doe well, wee ſhall dubble our faultes: when GOD commaundeth vs to go, wee ſhall bee as though our legges were broken: and when he commandeth vs to tarie, we ſhall run too ſwift: and ſo, all our whole life ſhall be out of order.

Furthermore let vs beare in minde, that (as I haue ſayde alreadie) if GOD liſt to chaſtice vs as in reſpect of the fleſhe, we muſt not bee too much grieued thereat: for it is for our benefite and welfare. If this people had beene well aduiſed, they woulde haue thought thus: bicauſe wee haue offended God by our diſobedience, hee will not haue vs to enter into the land: but yet for all that he bereaueth vs not of the hope of ſalnation, let vs content our ſelues with that, and wander foorth in this worlde till he take vs hence. So likewiſe let vs learne to wander on, if wee minde to come to the heauenly life. And if God doe nowe and then caſt vs downe, let vs conſider that ſ casting downe, will make vs to go much more ſwiftlie towardes the marke of the heauenly kingdome that is ſet before vs, than if wee had runned neuer ſo faſt, and had neuer left galloping all the way. Thus ye ſee what we had to marke more, vppon this ſaying, that the people would needes goe vp to diſcomfit their enemies.

Nowe Moſes addeth, that *They made themſelues ready with their armour and weapons*. Yea forſooth, but it is all one as if ye ſhoulde put an armour vppon a ſcarecrowes backe, and take him a ſworde in his fiſte: ſurely hee were ſubſtantially well armed: but in deede all were to no purpoſe. Euen ſo is it with vs: If wee were furniſhed with all the helpes of man and with all inferiour meanes, and in the meane whyle were not ſtrengthened in our hearres, but were full of fooliſhe ſelfeweening, and as it were drunkenneſſe, by preſuming vppon our owne power: all the brauerie that wee can make, is but winde and ſmoke, bicauſe wee haue not an eye vnto God, but are rebellious againſt him. Wherefore let vs learne to leaue the arming of our ſelues, and to ſeeke ſtrength and courage at Gods hand, and then let vs take armour & weapon as at his appointment. If we go that way to worke, God will proſper the helpes that he hath giuen vs: for he will bleſſe the, bicauſe we ſought them at his hand. Beſides this, he himſelfe will ſtand by vs though all other meanes faile vs. For diuers times he will perchaunce ſuffer vs to bee made naked, and let ỹ world mock vs, as though we were vndone aforehand: but yet will he prouide wel ynough for all, at leaſtwiſe ſo that afore all things wee be furniſhed with his inward vertue. This is the thing that we had to marke, yet further vpon this text.

And here Moſes ſheweth that God ment not to deſtroy the people, when he commaunded them to turne backe. *Turne ye backe againe* ſaieth he. Here wee ſee Gods wonderfull goodneſſe, & that the threate which he ſpake off yeſterday, was not to the end that God woulde purſue the iniquirie of the people without hauing any pitie vpon them: but to make them feele their owne euill. For notwithſtanding all that, yet doeth he vſe compaſſion and kindneſſe towardes them, in forbidding them to incounter with their enemies. For although that at the firſt ſight a man would ſay that God reiected them, and curſed them: yet notwithſtanding, in ſo dooing he ſheweth them a ſigne of his mercie. For had he ſaid neuer a worde, what a thing had ỹ bin? In deede the people increaſed their offence yet more, by being diſobedient to the warning that he gaue them. But whatſoeuer they did, wee muſt conſider what God intended when he ſaide, *Goe not vp: for I will not bee with you, neither will I helpe you*. Wee ſee that when the people had once bin brought lowe, they perceiued and acknowledged a wonderfull goodneſſe in God, and therewithall became ỹ better diſpoſed to profit themſelues by the correction that was ſent them. Let vs marke well therefore, that when our Lord vſeth any token of his grace and goodneſſe towardes vs: therein he ſheweth more apparantly howe much he loueth vs, than if he made no countenance of any thing, but helde his mouth ſtuft, and ſuffered vs to do what we liſted. Why? For alas, we ſhould but throwe our ſelues headlong into deſtruction, if we followed euery man his owne fantſie. Seeing it is ſo then, whenſoeuer God ſetteth himſelfe againſt vs, whenſoeuer he rebuketh vs, and whenſoeuer he ſheweth vs our follie, yea though it be with ſuch roughneſſe as it amaſeth vs: yet is it to our benefite, & therefore let vs learne to beare his yoke.

Moreouer let this bee our rule to diſcerne good and euill by: namely to depend wholly vpon Gods mouth, and not to bee wiſe in our owne conceits, but to ſuffer him to be our guide, and not to fall to gambolding at our owne pleaſure and fantſie, but to followe the way quietly

which he sheweth vs. And then will he giue vs armes and legs, and guide all our steppes in such sort, as he will make vs to goe still forewarde, and cause vs to arriue at the good hauen. But on the contrarie part, if wee will needes bee fantasticall, and doe thinges vppon our owne head and vppon our owne liking, and therevpon fall also to foolish practises: God must needes bee against vs: And then albeit that all thinges goe well forewarde with vs to our seeming, and fall out according to our minde: yet will God turne all vpside downe, and ouerthrowe vs when we be at the highest. Those are the things which wee haue to note. And therefore let vs set all our whole mindes to obey God: And for the bringing thereof to passe, let vs beseech him to giue vs the true vnderstanding of his worde, and to keepe vs from being froward and stubborne against him, as wee see by the example that is shewed vs here, which I pray God wee may eschew.

And now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him so to touche vs with them, as wee may profite more and more in faith and repentaunce, euen vntill he haue vtterly chaunged vs: and not suffer vs to stand against his holy commaundementes, nor to dubble our misdoings when wee haue offended him: but to reforme vs in such sort, that being rid of all fleshly glory, wee may seeke nothing but to bee mortified by him, to the end that he may so frame vs to his righteousnesse, as our whole indeuour may be to rule all our thoughtes wordes and deedes thereby. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also, &c.

On Wednesday the xxiiij. of Aprill. 1555.

The tenth Sermon vpon the first Chapter.

42 And the Lord, &c.

43 I tolde you of it: but you woulde not heare mee, but rebelled against the commaundement of the Lord, and were presumpteous, and went vp into the hill.

44 Then the Amorrhyte which dwelt in that hill, came out against you and chased you, as bees doe, and smote you in Seir euen vnto Horma.

45 And when ye were come backe againe, ye wept before the Lorde: but the Lord heard not your voyce, ne inclined his eares vnto you.

46 So you abode a long time at Cades barne, as the dayes doe shewe which you haue taryed there.

WE sawe yesterday howe it is not lawfull for vs to put foorth our selues, except GOD call vs and shewe vs the way: and that although the thing which wee take in hande, bee neuer so allowable in respect of men, yet is it nothing woorth vnlesse God bee our guide, and that wee bee sure that wee aduenture vppon nothing but by his will. Therewithall wee sawe also that we haue too ticklish a nature, insomuch that when any thing is to be done (that lyketh our selues,) wee bee but too forewarde, and wee cannot tarie till GOD shewe vs his will. And that on the contrarie part, wee see what vnlustinesse is in vs when God commaundeth vs any thing: for then wee bee so lasie as is pitie to see, it seemeth that our legges are broken: and to bee short, wee bee starke lame. Nay (which worse is) when wee weene to doe well, wee marre all by our rashnesse. And this is confirmed yet better by that which Moses addeth. For he rehearseth what GOD had inioyned him. Thou shalt say vnto them, *Get me vp, ye false men, for I am not with you* (sayeth the Lorde,) *and therefore ye shall bee ouercome.* In this sentence wee see how it belongeth to God to say, Goe: and likewise to bidde vs tarrie, when he thinketh good. And if wee haue not that voyce to guide vs: we may well seeke all manner of furniture, and wee may be well ynough armed to the fight of the world: but yet shall there bee nothing but confusion in our case. Then like as wee must simply obey the thing that GOD commaundeth, and hast forewarde with all speede when wee see it is his pleasure that wee should goe: so on the contrarie part, when he will haue vs to sit still, let his forbidding suffice vs, assuring our selues that he will turne all thinges vpside downe, if wee thinke to further the matter by thrusting our selues forward. To be short, we must yeeld God no lesse honour & reuerence, in forbearing to do things when he forbiddeth them: than in doeing and executing the things that he liketh.

And he sheweth expressely, that it shall not boote vs to do any thing vnlesse God command it, according as it hath bene declared heretofore how it belongeth to him to fight. True it is that he will haue the faithfull to inforce themselues, but yet in so doeing wee must attribute all vnto him. Therefore if he be on our side we shall bee sure of the victorie: but if he shrinke from vs, we shall haue the foyle though all the world helped vs. Then is there but this one onely respect that

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may giue vs courage: which is, that God bee at hand with vs to succour vs, so as wee bee sure of his assistance, and rest wholly thereupon. Neuertheleſſe it is not for men to beare themſelues in hand that God will aide them, further than he hath assured vs by his promiſe. But it is certeine that God makes no promiſe to any, but to ſuch as walke in obedience. Whoſoeuer then ſtingeth ouer the fieldes, that is to ſay, whoſoeuer gaddeth here and there, & reſteth not ſimply vpon Gods word, doeth vtterly refuſe the benefite that God had promiſed him, & bereaueth himſelfe thereof wilfully. For the receiuing of Gods word to the end we may know what to do, and be ruled by his mouth: and to truſt in him, ſo as we be grounded vpon his grace, and reſort to him for ſuccour at our neede, are things inſeparable. He therefore that will needes daily vpon his owne head, and truſt to his owne fooliſh imaginations without ſubmitting himſelf to God: may well ſay, I hope God will helpe me: but his hope hath no reſemblance to the hope of ỹ faithfull. So then, ſeeing we perceiue what our owne imaginations are let vs looke what things God giueth vs leaue to do, and what is lawfull for vs to do by his word. And therewithall let vs be forward in doing ỹ which he biddeth vs, waiting for his bleſſing wherby he will make all to proſper. For although we ſee the contrarie to our vnderſtanding: yet ſhall we ouercome all impediments by his helpe.

But howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, let vs beare this leſſon in minde, that GOD, if wee deſire to bee his, doeth binde vs by his infinite goodneſſe to be guided by him: and that as we would bee ſhielded by his mightie power, ſo likewiſe wee muſt quietly ſuffer him to rule vs as his lambes and ſheepe, and not followe euery man his owne fanſie. And if this ought to bee obſerued in the thinges that concerne this preſent life: howe much more ought it to be ſo in going to the kingdome of heauen? I ſay that euen in all our worldly affayres, we ought to doe God ſo much honour, as not to take too much vpon vs, nor to raunge here and there, without hauing firſt aſked counſell at his mouth, (as he ſaieth by his Prophet Eſay,) and vntill he haue ordered al our deuiſes by his holy ſpirite. When we haue any buſineſſe to doe, although it bee not of any great importance: yet ought wee to call vpon God with all lowelineſſe, and not to do any thing till our conſcience bee throughly ſettled and reſolued that he alloweth our doings. Now if God looke to be obeyed in ſmall things, & which are as good as nothing: what will he doe when the matter concerneth his ſeruice? and when ỹ caſe concerneth ſo excellent a thing as is the ſaluation of our ſoules? Therefore we ſee herein, howe ſore the wretched world is blinded, ſeeing they giue themſelues to their owne follies & to mens traditions, and thinke not at all vpon the things that God hath ordained: No: that ſhall be the laſt thing ỹ they will doe. And therefore it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more on hand to ſtudie well this leſſon of Moſes, That God will not bee with vs, except we come neere vnto him, and be diligent to hearken what he will ſay vnto vs, & follow it when we haue done, without adding any thing to it, or diminiſhing any thing from it. And thus ye ſee in effect, what we haue to gather vpon this ſtreine.

Now herewithall Moſes threatneth them, *That they ſhall be ouercome of their enemies, and fall before them.* Whereby we be done to vnderſtand, that if God bee once gone away from vs, wee muſt needes periſh, yea and our enemies muſt needes haue the vpper hand of vs; according as wee ſee in another place, that God leadeth vs [into aduerſitie,] and holdeth vs as it were fettered in it. And when our foes haue ſuch power ouer vs, it is becauſe wee bee Gods priſoners. True it is that men aduaunce themſelues ynough in their preſumpeion, but yet for all that, God daunteth their courage when it commeth to the pinche, and holdeth their hands faſt tyed, ſo as they cannot ſtirre one finger. Let vs marke well therefore, that wee muſt needes fall before our enemies, if wee bee not vpholde by Gods hand. For there lyeth all our ſtrength. Nay moreouer, though no man followe vs, yet muſt wee fall before our owne ſhadowes, and be ouercome without any man purſuing of vs. For Gods wrath of it ſelfe without any other helpe or meane, is able ynough to confound vs. Neuertheleſſe the diuill ceaſſeth not to practiſe to deſtroy vs, and we be aſſailed on all ſides: therfore what woulde become of vs, if God were not our wall and bulwarke? Then if we conſider well the ſtate of our life, there is none other way for vs, but to walke in feare and to be watchfull, that we happen not to play the looſe colts. As I ſaide euen now, ye ſee that the diuell ceaſſeth not, and he hath innumerable wyles to oppreſſe vs withall: we knowe what force he is of, and he is not without cauſe termed the Prince of the world. He commeth with ſo great cruelte, as paſſeth al the force of our fleſhly enemies. On the other ſide, this worlde is full of Ambuſhes againſt vs. To bee ſhort, when wee haue bethought vs neuer ſo well of the enemies whom wee ſee: there are an infinite multitude of enemies [whom wee ſee not,] which ſeeke nothing but to ouerthwart vs when we ſhould do good. Therefore let vs ſtil in humilitie, to the end ỹ being ſtrowded vnder the ſhadow of God, wee may be vpheld and maintained by him. Let vs looke well to it then, that wee followe not what euery of vs thinketh good in himſelfe: but ſubmit our ſelues to Gods good will, as I haue ſhewed afore.

Deut. 32. 30.

Ia. 26. 17. 18

Ioh. 12. 31. & 14. 30. & 16. 11. & Eph. 6. 12.

Nowe it followeth, *That Moſes ſtoode vnto the people, & that the people would not followe his aduiſe, but were diſobedient to the mouth of God.* This maner of ſpeach hath bin expounded already heretofore. But here wee ſee yet more clearely, the proofe of ỹ which hath bin ſaid afore: ỹ is to wit, that God is deſpiſed not only when he ſpeaketh from heauen, but alſo when folke make none account of his word ỹ is preached by men. It is ſaid expreſly *That the people were diſobedient to the mouth of God.* And how? It is not ſaid ỹ God appeared in viſible ſhape, or ỹ there was any voyce heard from heauen: but it was Moſes ỹ ſpake: it is a man ỹ ſaith that ỹ people reſiſted the mouth of

of God. Now then we see that God will haue his word receiued ỹ like humilitie when he sendeth men to declare his commandement, as if he himselfe were among them. The doctrine that is set forth in ỹ name of God, ought to be of as much authoritie [in the mouth of a man,] as if all the Angels of heauen came downe to vs, or as if God shewed his Maiestie presently before our eyes: yea & it is the thing wherein he will trie the obedience of our faith. True it is that wee ought to vse good discretion when men speake. For if wee should receiue all that is put to vs: there should be no difference betweene ỹ lyers and false prophets ỹ seduce our soules, & the true ministers of God. But if we haue sure warrant that the thing which is brought vs, proceedeth of God: (as if it should be shewed vs by the holy scripture,) ỹ men should not inuent any thing of their own heads, but hold themselues to the pure simplicitie of ỹ Law & the Gospel:) it is certaine that whosoeuer maketh any resistance in ỹ case, doeth not make warre against a creature, but manifestly withstand God, who will be heard when he speaketh so by men, and seruеth his turne by them as by his instruments. Therefore let vs beare well in minde this order of Moses saying, which is, ỹ he himself is the speaker, & yet notwithstanding, ỹ the people in disobeying him disobeyed God. For why? Moses had not forged any thing of his owne braine, but shewed vnto them how it was God ỹ had sent him. And therfore it is no straunge case that God should finde himselfe grieued, & that his Maiestie should be offended, & take ỹ outrage to be done as to himselfe, when the message that he had sent by Moses was not receiued. In like-

Matt. 10, 14. & 40. wise is it at this day. And for the same cause doeth our Lorde Iesus Christ auow, that if men refuse to heare the Ministers of the Gospell, he will take that wrong to bee done to himselfe. Therefore let not men make a iest of it, when GOD causeth his worde to bee preached nowe adayes, and stirreth vp men to publishe it abroade: If any man thinke to escape by saying, they bee but men with whom wee haue to doe, and therewithall despise the doctrine: they shall knowe in the end, that it came from heauen, and that they set themselues against God and not against mortall creatures: for he will haue his Maiestie to bee knowen there. Then if men take him for their soueraigne Lorde, let them stoope vnto him, and doe him homage in his doctrine. For he hath Printed his marke in such wise there, that if any man incounter the things that are conteyned in it, it is all one as if hee would put his truth vnder foot, wherein he hath shewed himselfe openly as in his liuely image. Looke that wee beare that poynt well in minde. For if earthly Princes reuenge the despite that is done to their cote armours, and thinke themselues to bee misused therein: I pray you is it not much more rightfull reason that God should doe so, when men make no reckening of his worde? [Yes verily.] For this case concerneth not some painted picture or blasing of armes: but it is the image of God which appeared to vs in substance, yea euen with such power as we ought to be transfigured into it, as saith S. Paul. That is the thing which we haue to marke. 2. Cor.

And therefore let such as haue the office of preaching Gods worde looke well to themselues that they goe soberly to worke, & that they may alwayes be able to protest, that the things which they teache are put into their mouthes by God. When they bee once sure that it is so: let them labour to make al their hearers to feele Gods power which is after a sort inclosed in his worde, that it may be receiued as it deserueth, and euerie man submit himselfe to it, and God by that meanes bee worshipped of all men, and serued with one accord. And therewithal let them defie al rebels & despisers. Whē they see ỹ heathenish sort fall to scoffing at the doctrine which they beare abroade: let them assure themselues that the things which they haue vttered, shall suffice to send all these to the bottome of Hell, which do so set themselues against them, according to this saying of Saint Paul, that the Preachers of 2. Cor. Gods word are armed with such a sword, as is able to confound all such as will not obey the doctrine. And herewithall likewise let euerie man haue an eye to himselfe, and when he commeth hither to be taught in the name of God, let him be prepared with such lowelines and modestie, as he may perceiue that it is God which speaketh, and be moued to bow downe his neeke, to receiue his yoke patiently. And as for those that will needs play the wild beastes: let them vnderstand ỹ here is sentence giuen vpon them, so as they may well plead against it, but they shall win nothing by their shiftes, bicause it is said that all such as obeyed not Moses, were disobedient to Gods owne mouth.

And nowe Moses addeth expressely, *That the people were presumptuous*, in that they wouldе not bee at rest. And this importeth very much. For it doeth vs to vnderstand, that there was neuer yet any vnbeliefe or stubbornesse in men, but it was matched with loftinesse, and pride, which puffed them vp in such wise, and made them so farre out of patience with themselues, as they fell to checking against GOD, and to giue themselues to all euill. And that is ỹ cause why vnbeliefe is so behated afore God. Sometimes it will seeme to vs to bee ouer great rigour, when GOD punisheth them so sore which cannot [finde in their hearts to] hearken to his word. For we excuse them by ignorance, forasmuch as they were not well assured that it was God that spake: and in the meane time wee looke not to the euill that lurketh in couert, which God perceiueth and iudgeth: ỹ is to wit, Psal. 11, 7. that men are inwardly as full of poison as toads, and that they bee stuffed with pride, which maketh thē to mount vp in such wise, as in effect they refuse to obey God, forasmuch as they vouchsafe not to yeelde all superioritie to him. That is the cause why pride or presumption, is matched in this place with vnbeliefe. And it is ỹ same thing which I haue declared afore, namely that the true hardinesse must bee grounded in God, so as men must not attempt any thing vpon opinion of their owne power, nor perswade themselues

that

that they haue this or that: but onely stand vnto that which God promiseth vs. If it be not so with vs; then will our hardinesse be turned into presumptuousnesse. And in this respect ought wee to condemne mens rashnesse when they aduance themselues too much: and to commende their inuincible constancie, when they submit themselues out of hand to Gods woorde, so that hauing once his promise, they rest vpon it as vppon a rocke despising all stumbling blockes, & keepe on their pace stil, notwithstanding any trouble or storme that can be stirred vp against them, or anie threatening or menacing of them. It will be sayd diuers times, that Gods seruantes are wilfull: because they will not swarue for any thing, nor for al ȝ worldly reasons that can bee alledged. This and that shall be brought in, and wee knowe that nothing is easier than to strike sayle at euery blast of winde as they say. But wee see that such as purpose to serue God, doe shut their eyes against al daungers, insomuch that although all should goe to hauocke, yet will they not cease to doe the thing that is commaunded thē. Lo here a willfulnesse: yes verily, according to the opinion of the flesh: but yet in very deede it is the true hardinesse. Why so? Because it hath the good foundation. Heauen and earth are of great weight: and yet is all that houge building grounded vppon the onely worde of God. In what good plight then shall a particular thing be, when it is founded vppon the same? Thus yee see what wee haue to gather vpon this text, that the people was presumptuous in that they yeelded not to God, when hee commaunded them to sit still.

Now, to the ende wee may know, that when God hath once spoken, they be no threatnings to scarre babes withall as they say: he addeth for a conclusion, *You went vp, and behold the Amorytes that dwelt on the hill came out before you, and chased you as waspes or Bees doe, insomuch that they smote you in mount Seir euen vnto Horma.* Hereby Moses sheweth that the people were taught after the maner of fooles, that is to say, by their owne harme. And good reason it is that when we will not beleeue Gods single word, we should pay very deere for our experience, and be made to knowe in spite of our teeth, that he will be stedfast in his purpose, and bring the thing to passe that he hath spoken. And hereby wee bee warned not to prouoke Gods wrath, nor to tempt him. So soone then as he speaketh, let vs stand in awe: for it is a part of fayth as is shewed by the example of Noe in the eleuenth chapter to the Hebrewes. It is sayd there, that Noe beheld the flud at such time as men made great chere in the world. How so? for God had told him that the world should perish, and hee contented himselfe therewith. And therefore let vs not tary till God arme himselfe and vnfer his power against vs: but as soone as he hath spoken, let vs be afraide, that we may preuent his wrath and then shall we be taught as wee ought to be, to our welfare. But if we bee hardheaded, and thinke that all that euer is sayde is but a mocke: wee shall finde to our confusion, that God hath an effectuall worde, and that his hand and his tongue goe together, so as all that euer commeth from him shall be found to bee certaine and infallible.

Also wee haue to marke this similitude that Moses setteth downe here: namely that the *Amorytes came out lyke Bees*. For wee knowe that when Bees are angrye, they sting men: and they regard not whether men be too strong for them, but they fly vppon them with such choler and furie, as they cannot but be astonished. They seke to sting their eyes: so as there is not the hardiest of them, but he is put to his shiftes, and is faine to runne away from those little pretie fowles. Moses then hath vsed this similitude, to shewe that the enemies had Lyons hearts, because God had incouraged them. For it belongeth to him onely to strengthen men. When it pleaseth him to defend vs, though our enemies were as mad as might be, yet should they shrinke away, and be dismayed at a thing of nothing. But else, if there were but little children against vs, GOD would so stregthen them, as we should not know where to become, but bee discomfited before them. Therefore let vs not haue an eye to the strength of men, nor to their furniture. For our Lord will stirre vp folke against vs, that couldst doe nothing afore, and in whom there was no lykelyhoode at all: and wee shall be so combred to withstand them, that to our seeming, all the world is against vs: and moreouer wee shall be so dismayed, and GOD shall so bereaue vs of all sense and reason, that euen a visor shall be enough to scarre vs out of our wittes. Thus yee see what wee haue to consider in this similitude which Moses hath set downe here in the text.

Finally he sayth *that the people being so discomfited, fell to weeping, but God heard not their cry, and so they tarryed in Cades Barne according to the time that they abode there.* Some supply it here w these wordes, *according to the time that you abode in other places*, and they say that they abode there nyneteene yeeres. But that cannot be prooued by the holy scripture, & the makers of that glose were the Iewes, who haue turned all the holy scripture topsiturui, with their dreames and dotages. The meaning of Moses is farre otherwise. For his intent is to put the people in minde of their long abiding at Cades Barne, because God helde them there as it were at a baye: and to make them cal to remembrance and consider the better that his pulling down of their pride after that maner, and his causing of them to feele that they ought not to ramge abroad at random when God shutteth the gate against thē by forbidding them, was a iust punishment frō heauen. Moses then intendeth here to stablish the people the better in ȝ knowledge which they ought to haue had long agoe concerning Gods iustice, to the ende that the same may humble them, & touche them the better with repentance. That is the playne meaning of the text.

Now wee see here first of all, that men recoyle a hundred paces backe, when they weene to goe forwarde but one, at leastewise beyonde the will of God. This people was neere

neere their enemies, they did but put themselues in a readinesse, and as soone as they were armed, they gaue charge vppon them. They needed not to retyre for the matter, that is to say, they needed not to remoue: for wee see how they be chased, and not onely beaten downe there in the same place: but that God also dryueth them before the winde, as chaffe or dust is driuen. Ye see then here is a fayre lookingglasse to shewe vs that when men presume to make themselues redoubted, they doe no sooner set one foote foreward, but God plucketh them an hundred leagues backe, and that to their great confusion. What is to be done then? Obedience must alwayes be as a cresset vnto vs to shew vs the way, so as we may first and formost knowe what God hath appointed, and thereupon take courage to goe, when we be sure that he guideth our footesteppes. For thereupon wee may boldely conclude, that the ende thereof shall bee good, and that there shall followe nothing of it but prosperitie. But contrariwise, if wee will needes be leaping out, when God will haue vs sit still at home: it will coste vs very deare. Thus yee see what wee haue to remember vppon this text of Moses, where hee sayth expressely that the people were chased euen vnto Horma, and that they came vnto Cades.

As touching the weeping that is spoken of here, it should seeme that there was some repentance in them before, and that now the same was doubled: and yet notwithstanding it is said that it was but lost time, and that the peoples weeping booted them not at all. This at the first blushe might seeme contrary to other texts of the holy scripture. For it is sayd that as soone as sinners acknowledge their faultes and doe but sigh for them, God receiueth them to mercie, yea and euen preuenteth them. It is sayd that hee taryeth not till wee cry, but that he preuenteth our crying: or at leastwise that whensoeuer wee pray, he is ready to heare vs. But here it seemeth that the people repented, and yet that God letteth them alone, so as they languishe still without faring any whitte the better for their repentance. As touching the thing that wee haue seene, it was set downe to shewe vs that the people had a false repentance, as men cõmonly haue, soothing themselues through hipocrysie, and bearing themselues on hand that they bee well sorie for their sinnes, when there is still some backe nooke behinde, so as they consider not the mischiefe so deepely as it were meete to be searched. True it is, that God will not suffer vs to be plunged in [sorrowe for] our sinnes, so wee bethinke vs of them earnestly: but all our seeking is to couer them, and to forget them quite by our good will. Now then, wee haue so much the more neede to pray God to worke so in vs, as wee may not bee double hearted to flatter our selues. And for the same cause the holy scripture telleth vs, that he which knoweth not how hard it is to come to repentance, deceiueth himselfe.

2. Chr. 6. 24. & Isa. 65. 23

Iere. 17. 23. & Rom. 2. 5.

The Papistes imagine, that they can helpe themselues and further themselues to repentance by their owne freewill. Loe what their ouerweening is. But let vs vnderstand that it is a singular woorking of the holy ghost, when it pleaseth him to leade vs to repentance. For what else is it than a renewing of the man? Is it in any mans power to create himselfe? No: but God fashioneth vs newe againe, and therefore that prayse is to be giuen vnto him. Againe, our wittes are vtterly dulled or rather starke blinde, God must bee faine to inlighten them. And is that in our power? Whereas there is nothing but corruption in our hartes: whereas there is nothing but secrete rebelliousnesse and malice: God must be faine to rid and clense away euery whit of it.

And therefore let vs marke well that there was no repentance in this people, although they were touched before. It might well bee a signe that God had compassion of them: but true repentance requireth not onely an acknowledgement of our faultes, but also that wee shoulde be sorye for them, and that vppon the feeling of our owne euill, wee should goe vnto GOD, referring our selues wholy vnto him, and seeking nothing but to bee gouerned thencefoorth by him, forasmuch as we haue nothing but frowardnesse in our selues. But the people were not yet come to this poynt: and so wee see they were not ripe to repentance. And as touching their weeping, true it is that they had some feeling and vnderstanding: but that was not enough yet.

Furthermore let vs marke well, that Gods refusing to heare the cry of the childrē of Israel, was not to shake them off vtterly. And there is not a text better worthie to be noted than this. For it importeth great instruction for all our whole lyfe. I say then that God harkened not to the peoples weeping, and yet notwithstanding that he did not vtterly shake them off, nor was altogether deafe to their request. And how may that be? For sometimes God heareth vs not to outward appearance, and yet howsoeuer the case stande our prayers are not vnauaileable, but doe vs good.

As for example: When a man hath played the vnthrift, GOD plucketh him backe, (there are examples enowe to be seene thereof commonly:) and when another hath bin giuen to gluttonie and excesse: another hath bin a whoremonger or a drunkard, and another hath bin a blasphemer: very wel, God seeing men become such beastes, subdueth them by force, hee sendeth them afflictions which laste not for a day or a moneth only, but linger vpon them a long time: whereupon the one sorte take the bridle in their teeth, and chawe vppon it with fretting and chafing against God, continue still sturdy and stubborne in their sinnes: the other sorte graunt that they haue offended, and are sorie for it before God, beseeching him to vouchsafe to moderate his rigor, & to aswage ye paines which they indure. And yet in the meane while, their miserie abateth not, but they continew in the same stay that they were at before. It should seeme then ye their prayers are lost, & that God

gaue

gaue deafe eare vnto them. Now although ſuch folke pray hartily: yet let vs marke that Gods hearing of them is not to outward appearance. And why? Becauſe he knoweth that it is good for them to be ſo vnder his rod ſtill. Euen ſo was it with this people: it was to their benefite for them to be put in minde of their lewde dealings euery minute of an houre. But yet for all that, he fayleth not to haue compaſſion of them: for he giueth them patience, and afterwarde maketh their afflictions to doe them good: inſomuch that although they were irkſome to them, yet did they ſtand them in ſtead of medicines. Ye ſee then that God doth ſometimes heare vs, and yet notwithſtanding it appeareth not ſo to any mans thinking, yea and euen wee our ſelues may ſuppoſe that wee haue loſt our time. True it is that God will ſurely reiect the yellings of the wicked when they cry out vnto him, and that he will laugh at their weepings: and it is not to bee marueiled at. And yet in ſo doing he fayleth not to accomplish his promiſe, which is, that he will heare all them that cry vnto him. And why? For this promiſe belongeth to none but ſuch as cry vnto God rightly, and come not to him with windlaſſes and feining, according to this expreſſe ſaying of the pſalme, that God is neere to all ſuch as call vpon him, yea, as call vpon him in trueth. Then if wee will be heard at Gods hand, wee muſt firſt and formoſt haue our affections cleanſed. And therefore his reiecting of the hipocrites when they cry vnto him, is no counterworking againſt his promiſe: For they bee vncleane. In deede they houle, and they will not ſtick to ſay, alas my God, they will make lamentation enough: but foraſmuch as they ſeeke not God of a deſire to come vnto him, but in ſtead of comming to him, would recoyle backe from him if it were poſſible: their crying out, my God, is as though they were vpon the racke. Now then, this howling of theirs is bruitiſh, and hath no affinitie with faith to doe them good withall. But the thing that I tolde you of euen now, hath another maner of thing in it: that is to wit, that [diuers times] God will not heare vs to deliuer vs from the bodily puniſhmentes that he ſendeth vs: and yet in the meane while he ceaſeth not to be mercifull and well minded towardes vs. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that when our Lord ſendeth vs manie diſeaſes, ſo as one is ſtriken with pouertie, another is ſmitten after another faſhion, and euery man hath his griefe: if we pray vnto him, and the miſerie is as though it were tyed to our ſhoulders, and he maketh no countenaunce to heare vs: it is not to be ſayd therefore that God letteth vs alone therin, to driue vs to deſpaire. But if wee beare the aduerſitie patiently which hee ſendeth, let vs looke to be deliuered of it in the ende: and in the meane while let it ſuffice vs to be comforted by his holy ſpirit, and let vs hope that he will not ſuffer vs to be tempted aboue that which we be able to beare. Thus ye ſee how God heard not the peoples cry, and yet that they which haue ſought him with a true and right meaning heart, haue not loſt their labor. God ſhewed not by outward deed, that he heard them, and yet in the meane while he made their bodily puniſhment to ſerue to the welfare of their ſoules: inſomuch that albeit they lingered there by the ſpace of fortie yeeres: yet were they not diſinherited of ỹ kingdom of heauen. Whereas they were diſappointed of the land that was promiſed them: therein they felt Gods wrath: but yet did they ouercome that temptation through fayth: I meane them that came againe into the right way, and grew not hard hearted as the moſt part did, which did nothing elſe but chafe vpon the bit, as we haue ſeene afore. And herein wee ſee, that if we haue true repentance of our ſinnes, we ſhall finde that God is not vnmindefull of our requeſtes, though he heare vs not ſo ſoone as wee would: and that yet notwithſtanding our repentance muſt keepe vs ſtill vnder, ſo as although that (to our ſeeming) the gate vnto Gods goodneſſe is ſhut againſt vs, and he will not admit vs in: yet neuertheleſſe, our prayers ſhall not be in vaine. For God will ſhewe in the end, that he was not deaf to our requeſts, but that he heard them to giue vs ſuch aſſwagement of our afflictions, as he knew to be meete and expedient for our welfare.

And finally let vs marke wel that if God haue puniſhed vs, yea & that the affliction hath indured a long time: ỹ remẽbraunce thereof muſt bee well printed in our mindes, that we become not lyke thoſe which forget Gods chaſtiſementes vnto a day or twaine. And ỹ is ỹ cauſe why Moſes ſayth to ỹ people, *according to the dayes which you haue ſeyed there.* As if he ſhould ſay, yee ought to beare it well in remembraunce. For it ſeemed to you that ye ſhould neuer haue come ſoone enough into the lande of bleſſing: but God made you to retyre from it, & it ought to haue bin yet longer time ere ye had come there. Thinke vpon it, & conſider how it was Gods hand ỹ held yee there as it were ſhut vp in cloſe priſon. Now then, although God haue deliuered you from it: yet muſt you beare it in mind ſtil, according as we ſee how king Ezechias ſpeaketh thereof in his ſong, ſaying ỹ he will bethinke him of the yeeres paſt with heauineſſe and griefe of heart, and call to minde ỹ chaſtiſemẽtes that he had receiued at Gods hand, thereby to holde himſelfe in awe, ỹ hee fall not backe againe into the ſame faultes for which he had bin puniſhed. Thus ye ſe how wee ought to thinke vppon the corrections that God ſhall haue ſent vs, that we may profite our ſelues by them. And therefore let vs not reſemble this people that are ſpoken of hereafter whiſſoeuer we be chaſtiſed at Gods hand, let our ſorrowing be in ſuch ſorte, as we may haue wherewith to comfort our ſelues in his grace. And therwithall let vs holde our ſelues thenceforth in his obedience, neuer to prouoke him as wee had done before.

Iſa. 38. 15.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to touch vs with them more and more, in ſuch wiſe as wee may not only aske him forgiuenеſſe for our tranſgreſſing of his commaundementes ſo many

wayes

wayes: but also desire to be reformed by his holy spirit, that by his power wee may fight against al our owne lusts, and against al the temptations of the world, and quietly goe through with our calling, vntill such time as being deliuered from all fighting, wee be receiued into the heauenly rest that is promised vs. And so let vs al say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xxv. of Aprill. 1555.

The eleuenth Sermon which is the first vpon the second Chapter.

THen turned wee and drewe to the wilderneſſe by the way of the red Sea, as the Lorde had ſayd to mee: and wee compaſſed about mount Seir many a day.

2 And the Lorde ſpake vnto me, ſaying:

3 Yee haue gone long enough about this mountaine: turne yee towardes the North.

4 And warne thou the people, ſaying: yee ſhall ſhortly paſſe through the borders of your brethren the children of Eſau which dwell in Seir, and they ſhall be afrayd of you: but take yee good heede to your ſelues,

5 That yee prouoke them not: for I will not giue you ſo much as one foote of their land.

6 Yee ſhall buy vittels of them for mony, and eate: and lykewiſe yee ſhall buy water of them for mony, and drinke.

7 For the Lorde thy God hath bleſſed thee in all the workes of thy handes. He knewe that thou ſhouldeſt iourney through this great wilderneſſe, The Lord thy God hath bin with thee now theſe fortie yeeres, and thou haſt wanted nothing.

HEre wee ſee more fully the proofe of the matter that I treated of yeſterday: for God in chaſtiſing men, doth teache them to obeye him, & by that meanes holdeth them in awe by force, becauſe they would not ſubmitte themſelues to him willingly: And ſecondly that he tryeth their obedience, by reyning them backe, whereas wee of our owne nature are deſirous to preace forewarde, and to purchaſe our ſelues eſtimation. Moſes then ſayth, *how the people turned backe after they had bin ſo beaten by their enemies*: For before they could not bee tamed by no meanes. God had commaunded them what they ſhould doe: but wee ſawe they rebelled for all that. When he ſayd, be ye ſtill: they were in a heate and would needes be running vpon their enemies: And when he ſayde, goe not: they would needes runne faſter than before. But were they once taught to their coſte, and had God once performed his threatning, by making them to be ouerthrowen by their enemies: then were they plyable enough: But it was all too late, as we commonly ſay in the prouerb, a foole is neuer wiſe till he be well beaten. Now hereby we be taught how greatly it is for our behooſe to bee ſo deale with. For except God bring vs home to him by correction: it would be vnpoſſible for vs to bee ſuch as we ought to be, ſo as we would harken to his voyce and followe him whitherſoeuer hee commaundeth vs. Therefore wee muſt be faine to be prepared with ſtripes of the rod.

Furthermore, let vs learne well the thing that hath bin declared heretofore, according alſo as Moſes ſheweth it to the eye: that is to wit, that God will ſuffer vs to languiſh: and that although he bee mercifull to vs, and haue forgiuen the ſinnes that we haue committed: yet muſt wee be faine to ſuffer for a time. We ſhall ſigh vnto him, and yet will he let vs alone in our miſerable ſtate and plight: but in the ende, all ſhall fall out to our benefite. For had God ſet open the gap to the children of Iſrael, and giuen them enterance into the promiſed land: within a day or two they woulde haue forgotten that horrible cryme of theirs in murmuring againſt him, yea (& as much as in the lay) euen in forſaking their heritage: they would neuer haue thought vppon their vnthankefulneſſe and diſobedience. Therefore it behooued them to bee chaſtiſed a long ſeaſon, ſo as they might neuer forget the offence that they had committed. Now then, whenſoeuer wee haue prouoked God to anger by our diſobedience: let vs not thinke it ſtrange though he doe not at the firſt daſhe

deliuer

deliuer vs from the aduerſitie that he ſendeth vs for a chaſtiſement. For our ſinne would not bee printed ſo throughly in our remembraunce at the firſt day as is requiſite. God therefore muſt be faine to worke after ſuch ſorte, and to make vs to languiſh, as I haue touched before. And in good faith, what elſe is all this preſent lyfe but ſuch an exerciſe? Wherefore hath God made vs ſubiect to ſo many miſeries? wee be no ſooner ſcaped out of one miſchiefe, but anon there commeth another in the necke of it, ſo as there is neuer any ende. And all is to teach vs this leſſon, which wee cannot remember if wee be not inforced to it. Beſides that, we would forget it by and by, if our Lord did not (as yee would ſay) incorporate it into vs, ſo as wee may bee prepared and led of nature to ſay, ſee how our God exerciſeth vs with many miſeries, and hee doth it becauſe wee be wretched ſinners. And yet for all this, can wee frame our ſelues to his lure, and not rather drawe cleane contrarie to his will? Therefore is he faine to teach vs, that ſpyte of our teeth wee be in his hand, and he hath all ſouereine dominion and Lordſhip ouer vs.

Againe to come to particularities, whenſoeuer God ſendeth a man any affliction, let him bethinke himſelfe, that beſides the common miſeries of this ſlipperie lyfe, god intendeth to giue him a particular inſtruction. And let vs not ſay, why doth not this man or that man deſerue to be chaſtiſed as well as I: according to the common maner, which is that euery man woulde be priuiledged aboue others? nay let euery of vs yeelde to receiue the rod patiently at Gods hād, aſſuring our ſelues that hee chaſtiſeth vs meaſurably, & as he knoweth to be for our profit. Thus much concerning ỹ retyring ỹ is treated of here.

Furthermore if our Lord plucke vs backe, and whereas things were in good forewardneſſe, and there was good lykelyhoode that all ſhould haue floriſhed and bin in great proſperitie: if we ſee a ſuddeine confuſion, and that the ſame continueth afterward, and things goe on from worſe to worſe: let vs vnderſtand that it is for our ſins ſakes, & becauſe wee haue peruerted the courſe of Gods goodneſſe. For he [for his part] neuer fayleth to goe foreward with the good that hee hath begunne to doe for vs: but wee cannot abide that hee ſhould continue it, wee hinder him as much as in vs lyeth. And therefore is he faine to handle vs as we deſerue.

Beſides this, let vs aſſure our ſelues that when we obey God, then hath he made his corrections auaileable in vs. True it is that a great nomber doe harden when God goeth about to ſubdue them: yee ſhall ſee them growe wilfull and full of venim againſt him. But God worketh after ſuch a ſorte in his choſen, that when hee ſmiteth them with his hand, he doth alſo touch the inwardly with his holy ſpirit, ſo as their harts become ſoft that they may obey, by reaſon whereof the corrections doe them good. Although then that the miſeries which we indure are hard and contrary to our nature: yet muſt wee thinke them good, becauſe God maketh them to ſerue for our welfare after that faſhion.

Now Moſes ſayth expreſſely, *that after the people had ſet a while and reſted about the mountaine Seir, they came to the north ſide, euen as God had commaunded him.* Wherein wee ſee the thing more clearely which I haue touched: that is to ſay, that there is a pliableneſſe in the people which was not in them before: they bee now become tractable. And although they wandered a long time, ſo as they might haue bin out of patience euery day, and haue taken occaſion to murmure, and to haue made ſedition: yet notwithſtanding they went ſtill foreward. And why? for the corrections which they had receiued, had wrought a chaunge in them. Wee ſee then that Gods reforming of men by puniſhing them for their ſinnes, is as a fornace to melt them and caſt them newe againe in. And therefore if God haue let vs alone here at our eaſe, and wee fall to kicking againſt him: let vs aſſure our ſelues it is more for our behoofe to bee corrected by ſome chaſtiſement. And therewithall let vs beware that we profite our ſelues by it, and that wee become not worſe than they were which are ſet forth to vs as an example of diſobedience and ſtubbornneſſe. Harden not your hartes as your fathers did, ſayth the Lord. And yet notwithſtanding wee ſee that this people (how ſtubborne and froward ſoeuer they were) miſſed not to goe about the mountaine a long tyme, after God had ſo chaſtiſed them: that is to ſay, they were driuen to knowe that it was in vaine for them to reſiſt the hand of God. Howbeit we ſee yet ſome obedience, in that it is ſaid, *that they waited to haue a new commaundement*, ſo as they durſt not remoue one ſtep, [till they had it.] It might ſeeme that God mocked them to goe round about after that faſhion. They might haue ſayd, what ſhall become of this in the end? If God will haue vs to tary, why lets he vs not alone? Or if he will haue vs to goe, why ſheweth hee vs not the way, to ſay, goe forewarde? He holdes vs here lyke little children, ſo as wee doe nothing but fetch a circuit without departing out of one place, and when wee haue tyred our legges neuer ſo much, wee are neuer the further onwarde on our way. The people might haue deſcanted after that faſhion. But what? They tary till God ſay to them, *Turne yee this way.* Wee ſee then yet ſtill howe this chaſtiſement had done them good in that behalfe. And heereupon let vs marke what true repentaunce bringeth with it. Where as wee were deafe when God ſpake to vs, and gaue no eare to his voyce: wee muſt holde our ſelues in awe vnder him, and looke what hee ſayth, that muſt wee doe, and no more. That is the chiefe fruite of repentance. And if it appeared vnto vs in this people which was ſo ſtubborne and vntamable: what excuſe will there be for vs, if wee will not receiue the thinges that are ſpoken to vs in the name of God: but rather will be ſtill replying, and haue not the witte and diſcretion to ſuffer our ſelues to be guided by him who onely can leade vs aright? So much the more then ought wee to reſtraine our ſelues from attempting any thing, vnleſſe God commaund it.

1. Pet. 1. 6.

Pſal. 95. 8. & Heb. 4. 7.

Moreouer it is sayd *that the people shall passe through the countrye of Edome, without preuailing of the inhabitantes*. First of all it is sayd, *They bee your brethren, the children of Esau*. Wee knowe that Esau was the brother of Iacob, who was the Patriarke, and (as yee would say) the welspring from whence this people descended. And for asmuch as Esau came of the line of Abraham: a part of the land of promise had belonged vnto him, but that hee was cut off from the inheriting thereof, howbeit not by the pleasure of man, but by the heauenly ordinaunce vttered by God yea euen while their mother Rebecca was with childe of them, inasmuch as hee sayd that the elder should serue the younger. But yet for all this, Esau ceased not to bee Iacobs brother still. And their children ought to haue continued the same brotherhoode & kinred betwixt them afterwarde. Marke that for one poynt.

Gen. 25. 23. & Mal. 1. 2. & Rom. 9. 13

Another poynt is, *That God gaue mount Seir in possession to Esau*: it was his lot. When he had excluded him out of the land of Chanaan, hee gaue him the other countrye for himselfe and his successors. Forasmuch then as it was assigned him of God: it was not for men to attempt to deprive or bereaue him thereof. Now as touching this brotherhood, God will haue it to moue vs, and to be as a certein bond to knit vs together, so as nature may perswade vs to bee kindehearted one to another, and restreyne vs from doing wrong or harme to any man. True it is that there is not fleshly kinred betweene all men, to make them so neere of bloud as they might call one another cousins, and name themselues be any linage whereof either other were descended: but yet is there a certain cõmon kinred in generall, which is, that all men ought to think how they be fashioned after Gods image, and that there is one nature common among them al. Euen the heathen men knew that very wel. So then whereas we haue some discretion to maintaine peace and concorde, and to yeelde euery man his right without taking away of any mans goods, & without committing of any extortion or outrage: and wee peruert the order of nature, and are worse than the wilde beastes which make countenance one to another when they be al of one kind. For the woolues are not at such variance among themselues as men are. And therefore let vs learne, that although there be not any neere kinred among vs, yet notwithstanding in asmuch as we be men, there ought to be some cõmon bond betweene vs, and a certain brotherly loue. But there is yet another consideration among Christians: for God hath adopted them to bee of his housholde: and that ought to auaile more than all the kinred on the earth. For seeing that God hath tolde vs that he intendeth to take vs to himselfe, because that being of his Church wee bee as it were his owne children, and call vpon him as with one mouth, saying our father: if wee neuertheless agree as cattes and dogges among our selues: may it in any wise be borne withal, (specially considering that wee cannot clayme him for our father, vnlesse we be gouerned by his holy spirit? [No surely:] For either his spirit must cry in our hartes or else we shall haue our mouthes shut. Againe on the other side, by what title can wee clayme so great a benefite and honor as to be the children of God: if we be not members of Iesus Christ? But wee be not of his body, but vppon condition aforesayd. Whosoeuer then hurteth his neighbor, whosoeuer is voyde of louing-kindeneſse and pitie, whosoeuer layeth to catching and snatching on all sides: the same (as much as in him is) rendeth Iesus Christ in peeces. And therfore let vs marke well, that when God alledgeth kinred: we be warned to consider in what degree God hath put vs, and what vnion hee hath set among vs, & euery of vs to discharge himselfe faithfully thereof, to *y* intent *y* whereas God hath set vs together to maintaine vs in good agreement and loue: wee make not a confused disorder. Let that serue for one poynt.

But if wee consider the common trade of the worlde, how it should seeme that men haue conspyred to doe cleane contrary to Gods commaundement: it is so farre of from neighbors to thinke that Gods placing of them neere together, is to the end that euery man shoulde serue his neighbors turne, and all imploy themselues to the common profite, without hurting or greeuing one another: that euen brothers thinke it lawfull to shift euery one for himselfe, and there is none other lyfe with them, but to drawe still to themselues without any pitie or compassion. How then shal the neighbors be brethren, which haue but some acquaintance a farre of: seeing *y* they which were borne all in one belly, and are all one mans children, beare no more friendship one to another than wilde beastes, but rather much lesse? Truely it should seeme that some will needes be brethren, euen in spite of God. For if it be to doe some mischiefe, or to playe some diueliſh pranke to the ouerthrowe of all goodneſse: then they can skill to alledge, wee haue this, and wee haue that, wee be countrymen, wee be neighbors children borne all in one towne. Loe how the wicked can finde themselues to be cousins and brothers. And what to doe? To rise vp against God, to put all thinges out of order, to make quarels and frayes, to maintaine themselues in all looseneſse, and to procure all manner of stumblingblockes, that Gods name may be blaspheamed and all honestie peruerted. These are the brotherhoods and cousiningships of the worlde, as is to bee seene too much. But when it commeth to the poynt that euery man should helpe his neighbor, and absteine from doing him harme or annoyance: men be so farre of from absteining, or from thinking that God vnited them together, or that God hath created thẽ after his own image, and gayne, that they be bound yet *w* a straiter bond, inasmuch as he hath adopted them by his Gospel to be members of his sonne Iesus Christ, and heires of the kingdome of heauen: men (I say) are so farre off from thinking any such thing, that they peruert the whole order of nature, with

with worse than beastly furie. But yet is this text sufficient to condemne men if they walk not in all mildenesse, and be not more kindhearted one to another than they be.

Now let vs come to that which is added here in the second place: which is, *That God had giuen Mount Seir in possession to Esau*. True it is that when he compareth Esau and Iacob together, he sayth by his prophet, Is not Esau Iacobs brother? And yet haue I placed him in a hillie countrie, in a stonie and barrein countrey: and I haue giuen you a fruitefull and fatte lande. Hereby the people of Israell are put in minde, that God had bestowed many mo benefites vppon them, than vppon those that went afore thē. For Esau was the elder sonne, and yet did God disherit him of the land that he had promised to his graundfather Abraham, and to his father Isaak. And why did God so? wee see none other reason, but for that hee listed to vse his free goodnesse towardes Iacob and his linage. The people of Israell coulde not say, wee were the more noble and excellent: for the byrthright belonged to Esau. They could not say, wee were better. No: for we see they were a people set altogether vppon malice and vnthankefulnesse. Now then, their inheriting of the promised land befel them not for any worthines of their owne, but through Gods meere mercy. And besides this, God had also prouided for Ismael who was halfe a bastard. For the matching of Abraham with Agar was not a lawfull mariage. And although it was no aduowtrie: yet was not that mariage altogether allowed of God. But yet did God prouide for Ismael, in asmuch as hee sayd, I haue heard him. If the case stoode so with Ismael, much more reason was it that Esau shoulde haue some place, and that God should extend his blessing euen to those that were of his linage. And for that cause did hee giue him mount Seir. Now therefore, in this consideration the people of Israel ought not to trouble him, but to let him alone with the portion that was assigned him from heauen.

Here wee haue a good lesson to gather, which belongeth to vs all. Although mention be made here precisely of the linage of Esau, which were called Edomites and Idumæans: yet notwithstanding, as we shall see hereafter in the song, God declareth that according as he made the partitions and stretched out his meeteline, so were the realmes and countries deuided. Let vs not thinke that the world is ruled by fortune, and that thinges are so intangled, but that God guideth all by his prouidence and power. Hee then hath stretched out his meeteline to appoint euery people their countrey to dwel in. But yet for all that, wee see how men haue transposed those boundes. They will not sticke to confesse that boundes are a very holy thing. And truely [the transgressing in that behalfe] shall be more punishable, than if a man had offended in any other deede. Lykewise mony because it is a thing whereby men intercōmon among themselues, is a priuiledge and (as yee would say) a sacred thing. In lyke case is it with the bounds [meeres, and buttels] of fieldes: for without them, all woulde goe to hauocke, so as men would cast vp one another. Wee will well graunt this as in respect of a field or a medowe: but wee see that the pride, Ambition, and vnsatiable couetousnesse of men haue so caryed away their mindes, as they haue not bin ashamed since to transpose the boundes that God had set. For as touching such as haue enterprised warres against their neighbors, to increase themselues: haue they not all broken the order which ought to haue bin inuiolable? yes: So then wee see how men are made to spyte God through their ambition and couetousnesse. And yet this mischiefe commeth still at this day, and is inflamed more than euer it was.

But yet for all that, this rule shall holde for euer: that is to wit, that looke what landes, what kingdome, what Lordship, what principalitie, what state, or what free citie soeuer there bee: wee may assure our selues, that the distributing of them after that sorte, is done by God: and that whosoeuer wageth battell against them, doth as much as in him lyeth to breake the boundes which God hath set. I meane here such warres as are taken in hand through ambition, or couetousnesse, or pride. Otherwise, wee see here, that the children of Israell ought to make warre: for God auoweth their doing, because he had ordeyned thē to be owners of the land, and will haue the former inhabiters driuen out as they deserued.

But are warres made nowadayes by the authoritie of God? Haue men an eye to the thing that is lawfull? Yes, or doe they tary till they haue commandement from God? Nay, they go to it in despite of him, the diuell driues them forewarde. True is is that if a man reason of Realmes and Principalities as they bee nowadayes: it may be alledged, how hath this realme bin inuaded, and how hath that country bin conquered? Yea, but yet for all that, it is not for men to remoue boundes. Although they haue bin confounded: yet is it not for vs to enterprise any thing. For our Lorde hath not giuen vs commission so to doe: hee hath reserued that to himselfe.

But let vs marke lykewise, that when men haue once altered the order that God hath set, hee must needes ouerthrowe them. And that is the cause why there happen so many changes, and it is marueil that there are not seene yet a hundred times mo. Surely if God had not a speciall regard to the preseruation of mankinde: no doubt but wee should see alterations of kingdomes euery day, so that within two or three dayes, hee that is now a king should bee but as one that were dresst in a players apparell, to play an enterlude vppon a stage. But yet for all that wee must marke well, that the alterations of kingdomes which happen, doe serue to punishe the chaunges that were made afore, when men remoued their boundes at the beginning, and would needes peruert the order that God had set. Neuertheless, howsoeuer the case stands, let vs beare this lesson in minde,

that God hath limited realmes and countries: and that wheras it is his wil that there should be principalities stablished euery where, forasmuch as the same commeth of his prouidence: it behoooueth vs to holde our selues contented and not to alter any thing, vnlesse we haue good warrant that he openeth vs the gate and armeth vs. As for example, if violence be offered vnto vs, then is it certein that if God giue victorie to him that was wrongfully assayled, so as he ouercome his enemie and put him to flight: that is a chaunge that commeth of God. But as for to assaile [vnprouoked:] that (as I sayd afore) is not to fight against creatures, but against the liuing God.

And let vs wey well the wordes that are set downe here: *Thou shalt not prouoke them* (sayth he) *and they shall be afraide of thee*. And hee addeth afterwarde, *Thou shalt buy the bread that thou must eate, yea and euen the water that thou shalt drinke*, so as thou must alwayes haue thy purse open to pay and content them. Here wee see that when God intendeth to maintaine a people in their possession, he prouoketh them not to make thē misbehaue themselues, for euen therefore did he cast that feare vppon the Edomites, to the end that the children of Israell shoulde not haue any occasion of warre. Wee shall see hereafter how God hardened the hart of Sehon, and inflamed the other inhabitants of the countrie, so as they armed themselues against the people of Israell, because he was minded to driue them out. And so did he shewe the children of Israell by effect, that they had iust cause of warre. But whereas he held the Edomites in awe, and inclined their hearts in such wise as they gaue passage to the children of Israell, and bought and soulde quietly with them: therein wee see (as I touched before) that when our Lorde purposeth to maintayne a people in their possession, hee will giue thē such a minde as they shall not prouoke their neighbors, nor open them any gap by stryking vp the drumme, or by sounding the trumpette first themselues. To be shorte, the warre shall not spring on their owne side. Therefore wee must conclude, that when a people doe put forth themselues, or when a prince will needes attempt foolish enterprises, and be medling here and there: wee may perceiue it is Gods doing, of purpose to ouerthrow him and to bereue him of the countrye that he had giuen him. So much the more then ought wee to pray God to maintaine vs and to make vs milde and peaseable, that we may not followe those whome we see to haue their heads full of vnquietnesse, so as they must needs be medling with one thing or other. Let vs abstein from such thinges, that our Lord may mainteine vs in peace: for that is the true meane, as I saide afore.

Herewithall also wee be taught, how men should behaue themselues in their warres (prouided alwayes that the warre be righteous and holy, and such as God alloweth of:) that is to witte, in such sort as no man be vexed, and that there be no pillage, no saccage, nor no extortion committed. For it is sayd, *yee shall buy the bread that ye eate, yea and ye shall pay ready money for the water that ye drinke*. If God commaund the people of Israell to buy water to drinke: howe much rather should they that make warre, pay for wine and victuals, & such other things as cost ready money, to those that are not their enemies? For the thing that is sayd here, is spoken of the Edomites. But how is this obserued nowadayes, I pray? In deede there are Edictes and proclamations inow made: but the world seeth how they be kept.

Deut. 2. 24. & 32.

Yea and who bee most troubled with the warres, but such as beare the burthen of it? And that is euē the countrie. When a king or a prince is about to make war, it seemeth to be for the cōmon weal: & so are men made to beleeue. But in the meane while, when the poore subiectes haue payed a sorte of tallages, taxes, and impostes for the maintenance thereof: yet must they be still bitten to the bone, so as the enemies shall not be more vexed, thā they vnder whose name and title the warre is made. They can well enough make markets for men to sel their wares in, and beare them in hand they shall haue ready money. But what? the thing that is woorth three shillings, shall bee esteemed at one. And most commonly they take vp victels and pay for them as they list. And so wee in effect, that all the warres which are made nowadayes, are but robberies: and that the crueltie and vnnaturalnesse is so excessiue, as tendeth to vtter confusion: so as it should seeme that men are bent to banishe all equitie, and that warre cannot bee made without the forgetting of all vprightnesse, that there may be no more lawe, but that men may become wood beastes. Loe to what poynt the world is come.

But yet for all that, lyke as this doctrine cannot be wiped out of the holy scripture, so can it nor also be blotted out of gods booke of records, that he should not iudge the worlde according as he hath pronounced thereof already: that is to wit, that the men of warre which will needes inrich themselues with other mens goodes, are condēned at his hand, whatsoeuer they alledge for themselues, notwithstanding that they haue taken it vp of custome to spoyle and rob, because they haue not sufficient wages, or whatsoeuer color else they can pretend. They may well appeale to kings and princes for to bee their warrant: for they shall leade the daunce, and be driuen to answere as capteines of theeues: and all their souldiers shall followe after them, as parteners of their wickednesse. Now forasmuch as wee see such disorders in the worlde, wee be warned thereby to pray vnto God, that hee suffer vs not to be wrapped in the same. And when we aske him our dayly bread, let vs haue consideration to thinke this: Ah good Lord, graunt vs the grace that euery of vs may liue of his own labor, and be in peace: and that when the drum is striken vp, wee may not play the maddē bedlems, nor giue our selues to spoyling & robbing, but holde our selues in quiet, so as we may take paynes and yelde the thankes for thy susteyning of vs, & suffer euery man to inioy his owne,

without

without offering of violence to any man.

Beſides this, if they that make warre bee expreſſely commaunded to pay for their bread and water: I pray you what ought wee to doe in peace? For many miſorders may ſeeme halfe excuſable when there is open warre; and it may ſo fall out, that they which would faine bee gentle, ſometimes cannot, but are inforced to doe thinges which they be loath to doe, yea euen to their enemies. And yet for all that, it is apparant, that if a man take any thing without paying for it, ſo as the owner or partie bee grieued, GOD condemneth it vtterly, and giueth ſentence here againſt it, yea euen though thinges hee neuer ſo farre out of order, whereby ſome colour might bee giuen to iuſtifie their doinges. Nowe then I praye you what will he doe in peace, when wee haue no cauſe to grieue one another, but that they which can ſkill of huſbandrie may finde themſelues thereby, the ſhoppes are open for marchauntes and handicraftes men, and there is common policie [for men to be ordered by:] Seeing that God induceth vs [by ſuch meanes] to withholde our ſelues from all outrage and extorſion: if we then goe about to robbe other men of their goods, if euerie man ſeeke to ſpoile his neighbour to inriche himſelfe with his goods, if we be ſo ſpiteful as to eate vp one another without any cauſe: muſt we not bee condemned dubble? Yes certainly. Now then, ſeeing that men of warre are commaunded to paſſe without making ſpoile, & without offering any trouble or extorſion: let vs learne that we are much more commaunded to walke vprightly & iuſtly, without doing any outrage or any pilling and polling, ſeeing that God giueth vs greater meanes to auoide it. Thus ye ſee the effect of that which wee haue to beare in remembrance.

And nowe for a concluſion here is made a rehearſall what GOD had done for this people. *The Lorde thy God* (ſaieth Moſes) *hath led thee in the wildernesse*: he hath fedde thee with Manna: thou hadſt not any naturall water to drinke, but God gaue it thee out of the drie rock: thou neededſt not any money to buy thee clothes withall, or to paye for thy charges as thou wenteſt: and is it not reaſon now that this goodneſſe and iuſt dealing ſhould cauſe thee to deale reaſonably with thoſe by whom thou paſſeſt? For the people might haue replied, Yes marrie, but wee haue not wherewith, wee haue bene a long time in the wilderneſſe, there were no mines of golde or ſiluer there, we earned not a penny there, neither haue wee had any trade of marchaundiſe whereby to get any thing. But Moſes anſwereth hereunto, Conſider howe the Lorde thy God hath gouerned thee. As if he ſhould ſay, ye haue none excuſe at all: for ye haue wherewith to pay and content euery man. And why? For in the wilderneſſe ye ſpent not any whit of the ſpoile that ye brought with you out of Egypt: ye were not driuen to buie bread, victelles, apparell, or any other thing. So then, nowe that you are at the point to poſſeſſe the land that God hath promiſed you, ye ſhoulde bee too vnthankefull towardes God, and too churliſh towardes men, if ye ſhould refuſe to content thoſe by whom ye paſſe. And of a trueth, although yee had not wherewith, yet ſhould it not bee lawfull for you to rob them. For our Lord chaungeth not the order that he hath ſet, for any pouertie that is in men. But if a man that hath no neede, doe rob or fleece his neighbour of his goods: therein appeareth ſo much the lewder and outrageouſer naughtineſſe. And therefore let vs marke well that Gods alledging of this reaſon to the people, was to the end they ſhould bee the better perſwaded and diſpoſed to do the thing that was commaunded them.

And herein wee ſee firſt of all howe God beareth with vs: for as a father flattereth his child, and vſeth great gentlenеſſe towardes him, & although he might cõmand him at one word, ſaying, doe this or that, without alledging any reaſon at all: yet he dealeth ſo gently with him as to ſay, my childe, marke, this is the reaſon why I would haue thee to doe ſuch a thing, inſomuch that he falleth euen to flattering of him: euen after ſ same maner doth God of his infinite goodneſs beare with vs. So much ſ more then are wee to blame on our part, if wee ſuffer not our ſelues to be ouerruled by him, ſeeing he ſheweth himſelfe ſo gentle and amiable towardes vs.

And for the ſecond point let vs marke, that although no neceſſitie can excuſe our ſinnes: yet notwithſtanding theſe are the more to bee condemned, which offend vnconſtrained by any extremitie. As howe? If a poore man deale vnconſcionably when he hath not wherewith to liue, ye knoweth where to become: yet ſhall he bee condemned: (and if a theefe be puniſhable before men, much more reaſon is it ſ he ſhould be ſo before God:) And what ſhal the man bee to whom God hath giuen wherwith to maintaine himſelfe, if he fall to pilling & polling, and be neuer ſatiſfied, but is catching and ſnatching on all ſides, and hath no regard of Gods bleſſing, but is alwaies thecuing, filching, & deceiuing? Such a mã is the more to be abhorred, & wee muſt conclude ſ a horrible vengeance is prepared for ſuch as haue offended ſo wilfully. Nowe then let vs marke, ſ when God giueth vs wherw to ſuſtaine & maintaine our ſelues, his wil is to lead vs therby to be the louinger to our neighbours, & to do no man any harme or wrõg. And ſo ye ſee that Gods bleſſinges ought to be inſtructions to vs, to make vs liue vprightly, without attempting any thing againſt our dutie, or without troubling of any bodie. This is it that we haue to remember in the ſecond place. The reſt cannot bee diſpatched as now, and therefore it ſhalbe reſerued till to morrowe.

Now let vs kneele downe in ſ preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as wee may returne to him with true repentance. And againe foraſmuch as he vouchſafeth to maintein vs nowe in peace, let vs praye him to continue the ſame fauour towardes vs, and not ſuffer vs to bee aſſayled, leaſt wee doe wrong or harme to any bodie, and ſo open a gap to ſuch as

ſeeke to ſwallowe vs vp, by prouoking them againſt vs: but rather that our mildneſſe may make them to ſit ſtill though they were willing to bee doing with vs. And therewithall, our good God graunt vs alſo the grace to fight in ſuch wiſe againſt our ſpirituall enemies, as wee may get the vpper hand of them by his power. Lex vs then bee giuen wholly that way, and therwithal let vs ſeeke to ſerue men to the vttermoſt of our power, ſeeking peace & friendſhip with all men, till our good God haue rid vs from all beaſtes of this world, to take vs into ſ endleſſe reſt which he hath promiſed vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace; not onely to vs, but alſo, &c.

On Fryday the xxvj. of Aprill. 1555.

The twelfth Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the ſecond Chapter.

8 Then paſſed we by our brethren the children of Eſau, that dwell in Seir, by the way of the wilderneſſe of Elath, and of Aſion-gaber: then turned we, and went in the way of the wilderneſſe of Moab.

9 Then ſaide the Lord vnto me, trouble not Moab, neither prouoke him to battell: for I will not giue thee any peece of his land to poſſeſſe, becauſe I haue giuen Ar in poſſeſſion to the children of Lot.

10 The Emians dwelt there before, which were a great people and many in nomber, and tall as the Enakims.

11 And likewiſe they were counted Giantes as the Enakims, and the Moabites called them Emins.

12 Likewiſe in Seir dwelt the Horians aforetimes. But the children of Eſau draue them out, and deſtroyed them before them, and dwelt there in their ſtead, like as Iſrael hath done in the land of their poſſeſſion, which the Lord hath giuen them.

13 Then ſaid I, now then, get ye vp, and goe ye ouer the riuer Zared. And wee went ouer the riuer of Zared.

14 And the time wherein wee trauailed from Cadesbarne vntill wee paſſed the riuer of Zared, laſted eight and thirtie yeeres, euen vntill the whole generation of the men of warre was conſumed from among the hoſte, as the Lorde God had ſworne vnto them.

15 For the hand of the Lord was againſt them, to deſtroy them from among the hoſte, vntill he had conſumed them.

16 And it came to paſſe, that when all the men of warre were conſumed from among the people,

17 Then the Lord ſpake vnto Moſes, ſaying:

18 This day ſhalt thou paſſe the borders of Moab by Ar,

19 And come to the children of Ammon, whom thou ſhalt not beſiege, nor prouoke them: for I will not giue thee any poſſeſſion in the land of the children of Ammon, becauſe I haue giuen it in poſſeſſion to the children of Loth.

20 This land alſo was counted a land of Giantes: for Giantes dwelt in it aforetimes: and the Ammonites called them Zomzomins:

21 A great people and many in nomber, and tall as the Enakims. But the Lord deſtroyed them before them. And ſo they poſſeſſed it and dwelt there in their ſtead:

22 Like as he had done for the children of Eſau that dwell in Seir, when he deſtroyed the Horims before them: by reaſon whereof they poſſeſſed their land, and dwelt there in their ſtead euen vnto this day.

23 Alſo the Caphthorims that came out of Caphthor, deſtroyed the Euims that dwelt in Hazerim euen vnto Gaza, and dwelled there in their ſtead.

Like

Like as yesterday wee sawe that the children of Israel were commaunded to passe by the Countrie of Edom without doing any wrong to the inhabitaunes, bicause there was kinred betwixt them, inasmuch as they descended of Esau Iacobs brother: so nowe they be willed to passe by the borders of Moab and Ammon, without dooing them any hurt or harme, bicause that they also were of kinne to them. For the Moabites & Ammonites came of Lot: and God would haue the children of Israel to acknowledge it still. And herein wee haue to note, that here againe God tried the obedientnesse of his people. For the children of Israel had languished nowe a great while alreadie: and although they had bene fed by Gods free goodnesse, inasmuch as Manna was giuen them dayly from heauen: yet notwithstanding if wee looke vpon their trauell, the time thereof might seeme verie long to them, & they might haue bene exceedingly wearie of it. Nowe againe God commaundeth them to passe on their way, paying for their meate and drinke, and not to take any bootie nor so seeke any profite or aduantage, but to goe by intreatance notwithstanding that they could haue vsed force. This might haue bred a newe hartburning among them. Howbeit forasmuch as they had beene wel tamed with afflictions: they yeelded themselues the more plyable as was declared yesterday. And therein wee see what the fruite of chastisement is. When God hath once pulled downe our pride, and taught vs to beare his yoke: wee can stoope to obey him, and wee will make no great a doe of it. But vntill that time, our necke is so stiffe as wee can no skill to yeelde to any right or reason. Ye see then that one point which we haue to marke, is that God tried here the obedience of his people, by forbidding them to make warre vppon the Ammonites or Moabites. And here Moses alledgeth the selfe same reason again, which I expounded yesterday intreating of Mount Seir and of the Countrey of Edom. *You shall not prouoke the Moabites*, saith he. And why? *For God will not giue you their land to possesse.* As if he should say, it is not lawfull for you to attempt any thing, which God doeth not allow, and giue you leaue to doe. Nowe it is certaine that he will not suffer you to prosper, if you assaile the Moabites, and therefore forbeare them.

And so let vs marke well, that such as make warres wrongfully and frowardly, consider not that their ambition and couetousnesse shall bee cursed of God in the ende, and that all their preparation must come to ruine & confusion. True it is that such as take warres in hand vpon a braverie, shall diuers times haue great victories and winne many Countries: howbeit that is not bicause God beareth them any fauour, but bicause he meaneth to punish men, sometime the one and sometime the other, so as euery one of them shall haue his turne. And in good sooth wee see that the warres which are made now adayes, are like the game of the Barriers, wherein he that winneth to day looseth to morrow. And this is not done by haphazard, but our Lord giueth Satan the bridle, who prouoketh and inforceth the wicked to kill one another, and to knocke one another vpon the heades. For God vseth them as Smithes, as he saith by his Prophet Zacharie. Zach. 1. 20. But yet herein wee haue a good lesson, which is, that when a Prince moueth warre, he must consider wel against whom he doeth it, and whether God do giue him entrance or no, or else the end of it must needes be cursed of God.

And hereunto Moses addeth the cause why the people of Israel might not take any thing frō the Moabites. *For it is the Lorde* (saieth he) *that hath giuen them the land to possesse.* Yesterday it was declared, that God did cast out his lynes ouer all the world, and that the partitions were made by him: insomuch that Principalities, Kingdomes, & Common weales haue not any thing of themselues, but for that he will haue the world to bee so gouerned. Therefore when any man goes about to chaunge the borders that God hath set: he doeth as much as he can to violate the order of nature, and the end thereof must needes bee cursed. Were this marked throughly, wee should not see so many gartioyles as are in the worlde. For men thinke not that they ought to yeelde any account vnto God. And in very deede they thinke not that God medleth with the gouerning of men. When they haue gotten any victorie, they make bonfires for ioy, & they thanke God with solemne procession: but it is not for that they thinke so, or for that they be fully perswaded of it: it is but for vainegloriе that they do it. For if they meant to shewe that God was on their side: they should lay downe their pride in fathering all things vpon their owne power, or vpon their good fortune. Yet notwithstanding it would bee thought a very straunge thing nowe adayes, if a man shoulde say to them that take warres in hand, Be well aduised: for if your cause be not iust, lawfull, and allowed of God, so as you haue sure and infallible witnesse that you were inforced to make warre, and that God hath reached out his hand vnto you and shewed you the way: all your furniture must needes turne to your owne ouerthrowing. If a man should say so to them, they would thinke he did them great wrong: but yet were it for their behoofe to marke that lesson well.

Further let vs marke, that this must serue vs for a comfort. For if wee bee sure that God hath called vs into the place where wee bee, and that wee liue there in his seruice: we haue here a promise, that if any man come to assaile vs, howe great force so euer our enemies bee of, although they come as a tempest that were like to destroy and marre all: yet notwithstanding wee shall be maincained by the hand of God. Nowe then if our Lord take vs so into his protection, and teacheth vs that wee dwell in any countrey at his appointment: ye see we may wel assure our selues, and defie all our enemies. Contrarwise, if God list to forsake vs: wee bee vndone, there shall needs no great force to ouerthrowe vs. Therefore let vs learne to submit our selues continually

to the tuition of our God, and to pray him to bee our defence. And when wee see great forces prepared against vs, let vs flee to his promise, and waite to bee succoured of him at our neede. Thus ye see that the applying of this doctrine to our vse, consisteth not in thinking that only princes are taught thereby what they should doe: for the meane people also are to be comforted thereby, forasmuch as they may see thereby that God defendeth them as his flocke.

Also let vs call to minde what was rehearsed here, concerning kinred. In deede it was treated of at length yesterday: howbeit forasmuch as Moses speaketh of it againe, in making mention of the children of Moab and of their brethren the Ammonites: and seeing that God setteth before his peoples eyes the kinred which they had with these nations: Let vs marke, ỹ wee must liue peaceably and brotherly one with another, because God hath knit vs together. In deede wee shal not all be kinsfollke in respect of the flesh: but yet is there such a[generall] vnion among mankinde, as wee ought not at any time to bee such straungers one to another, ỹ there should not be some communicating together: & specially forasmuch as we be all created after one likenes, & we see as it were our own flesh & bones in other folkes persons, in respect whereof it behoueth vs to practise this saying of the Prophet Esay, that we must not hate our own flesh. But besides this, there is an image of God which shineth in all men: and is it not reason that wee should doe it so much honour, as to reuerence it wheresoeuer it sheweth it selfe? Againe seeing God hath called vs to the knowing of him, and will haue vs to call vpon him as our father, and hath vouchsafed that wee shoulde bee marked with Baptisme, and be graffed into the bodie of our Lord Iesus Christ, and that he openeth vs his kingdome, to take vs in thither as into our common inheritaunce: must it not needes be that wee be worse than beastes, if yet for all this, wee will not bee kinde hearted one to another, to bee as brethren, and to abstaine from all anoyance and extorsion? And herewithall let vs marke also, that the neerer God bringeth men together, and maketh any neighbourhood between them: the more readie ought they to be to doe seruice one to another: and that if they doe it not, it is as a defying of God and nature.

Esa.58.7.

But nowe let vs see what kinred there was betweene the children of Israel, and the Moabites and Ammonites. Truly the original of these two peoples was of incest, so as they could not boast of their Pedegree. And in deede the verye names of them were euerlasting marks of their shame. For what is Moab to say? *Of my father:* What? that the daughter had conceiued childe by her owne father? Yea: and that (ye see) was a beastly and cursed deede. And againe, what is meant by Ammon? [It is as much to say, as] *Of myne owne people*, that is to saye, of mine owne bloud: for he also was borne of the other daughter, who had made her father drunken as her sister had done, and so conceiued by him likewise: and all this was against nature. Ye see then that these nations are no better worthie than to bee counted Harlotes birdes born: in a brothelhouse? but that they were yet in more horrible plaghe, because their begetting was against all order and humane honestie. And yet notwithstanding, God will haue the children of Israel to acknowledge their kinred w̃ them, not for any honor or worthinesse false, but onely because of Lot. For although he were so beastly drunken, as to be bereft of discretiõ, yet did God continue his goodnes towardes him, and therefore vouchsafed he to fauour his linage & the childrẽ that came of his race. And therein we see ỹ God had not an eye to the excellencie of those nations to whom he shewed himselfe so beneficiall, but ỹ he did all of his owne free mercie. Likewise also as touching the children of Israel, if God had looked for noblenesse to moue him to shew himselfe so gratious towards them, and to deale so friendly with them: what would haue come of it? For ỹ chiefe stocke among them was ỹ tribe of Iuda. And whence came Phares and his brother Zare? Euen of incest too. For Iuda thinking to haue medled with a harlot as common as a Colmanhedge, had to do with his owne daughter in lawe, & played the beast as dogs and buls doe. Ye see then it was so great a villanie, ỹ euen the Heathen men would haue bene ashamed of it. They that neuer knewe of God nor of Religion, could not haue done worse. To bee short, it was ynough to haue made al his offspring to haue bin quite rooted out. And yet nowithstãding we see that Dauid came of the same race, and that it was Gods will to stablish the state of a kingdome in his tribe, yea & that not of an earthly & transitorie kingdome onely, but of such a one as should bee a figure of the euerlasting kingdome that bringeth vs to heauen, insomuch that euen our Lord Iesus Christ came of the same stocke. And so wee see (as I said afore) that God sought not any worthines in this behalfe, as who should say that this people was of more dignitie and noblenesse than all the rest of the worlde, and therefore he would make much of them. No no: but he powred out the infinite treasures of his goodnesse vppon them. Yea and the basenesse of the children of Israel, caused Gods inestimable goodnesse to bee perceiued the better, and gaue the greater glosse vnto it. Then let vs consider, that whereas here is mention made of the Moabites and Ammonites: GOD alledgeth them not as in waye of exalting the thing that is in man, or to put in ballaunce, their desertes, their qualities, or any renowne of theirs which they haue gotten by their owne trauell. He meaneth no such thing. But forasmuch as it pleased him to loue Lot, and to continue his mercie towardes him & his linage, notwithstanding the foule and outragious fault that he had committed: Therefore is it his will that ỹ Moabites and Ammonites shall still inioy the landes that he had giuen them.

Gen.19.

And let vs note further, that although God bestowed his blessinges so largely vppon these two Nations: yet they were neuer the better for it, but became so much ỹ more vnexcusable in

in the ende. For surely their vnthankefulnesse shewed it selfe in that they knewe not that God spared them. Let vs marke well then, that Gods preseruing of vs in this worlde, and his defending of vs with his hande, and his making of vs to scape our enemies handes, and his susteining of vs through his fauour, is not all [that wee ought to desire]. For the hauing of all this will boote vs nothing at all, if wee want the principall: which is, that God bee mercifull to vs, that wee call vppon him, that wee referre our selues wholly vnto him, and that we knowe him to bee our father, not to maintaine vs heere for a two or three dayes onely: (for this life is but a little shadowe that glideth away out of hand): but to bee our euerlasting Sauiour, and that wee walke in such wise vnder his awe, as wee not only look to be guided by him for a little while: but also that hee should gather vs to him in the ende, so as when hee hath made vs to passe through this worlde, at the last wee shall haue a much better inheritance which is prepared for vs in heauen. When wee once knowe this, wee haue all. And that will make vs to inioy these earthly blessings to our welfare. Otherwise they shall bee turned into a curse: Insomuch that they to whome GOD hath done most good, shalbe founde most blameworthie before him. And why? Because they haue abused them. For wee doe wickedly corrupt all Gods benefites, when wee bee not ledde and prouoked by them to honour him for them, and to put our selues wholly into his handes, to flee to him for refuge. Let vs then put this doctrine in vre: and while wee passe through this worlde, let vs not deuour the benefites that God sendeth vs, to become brute beastes here, pooring with our muzzels vppon the grounde: but rather let vs lift vp our heades to heauenwarde, and consider that God calleth vs to him, and that it is to no purpose to haue had some earthly prosperitie, except wee goe further, that is to witte vnto our GOD, to bee knitte vnto him for euer. Thus yee see what we haue to beare in minde.

Yea and let vs marke also that the two nations which are spoken of heere, shewed themselues too too vnkinde, in yeelding farre other rewarde to the children of Israel than was to be looked for. Wee see that the children of Israel passed by them [quietly,] paying readie monie for all thinges, yea euen for the water that they dranke. The Moabites therefore and the Ammonytes not onely had no cause to complaine, seeing they were not greeued nor troubled by the children of Israel, nor receiued any harme or losse by them: but also ought to haue considered thus, Beholde, Gods will is to stablishe the brotherhood that is betwixt them and vs, and that ought wee to print well in our mindes. In so much that although they had had neither stories nor Chronicles, yet ought that to haue beene a thing of renowne among them, and the report of it ought to haue beene common from father to sonne, to the ende they might haue applied and indeuoured themselues to maintaine one another. Though there had beene none other alyance nor promise: yet ought that to haue sufficed to maintaine peace and agreement betwixt them. But contrariwise they became Scorpions to sting the children of Israel: and when they coulde not make warre against them themselues, they linked in with their enemies, and procured them manie quarrels. And whensoeuer any aduersitie befell them, they playde the barking curres and made hew and crie after them, as wee see is spoken of them by the Prophetes and the Psalmes: For it is saide, Lorde remember the children of Edom, which were the neerest of kinne vnto them: for they came of Esau and were circumcised as well as the children of Israel, they bore the badge of Gods couenaunt, as householde folkes of his Church: and yet for all that, in the day of Ierusalem they cryed out, vppon them vppon them, roote them out so as one stone may not abide vpō another. Thus see ye so greate a crueltie, that euen the enemies woulde haue beene more courteous, than these which had cause to haue beene so, and ought to haue beene as brothers. As much is to bee saide of Moab. For when the poore Iewes were put to any afterdeele and fledde vnto Moab, in hope to haue some refuge there: they were betrayed by these to whome they had conueied themselues. And therefore doth God complaine of such cruelties saying: Moab, thou wast the couert of my people, but when they came to thee, thou draueſt them away, yea and delteſt more cruelly with them than their enemies. That was the recompence which those nations yeelded whom God had so greatly borne with all, and to whom hee had shewed so great kindnesse: but yet ought not that vnkindnesse of theirs, to make the children of Israel to shewe themselues vncurteous towardes them. For their sparing of them after that sort, increased their condemnation the more, I meane them that had so ill acknowledged the benefite. And therfore GOD failed not to punish such trecherie.

Nowe then wee bee taught, first not to passe whether men acknowledge y good that we haue done them or no. For albeit that wee may seeme to lose the thing that wee shall haue done: yet let it suffise vs that GOD alloweth our obedience, in that hee saieth, bee kinde harted towardes all men. And when wee shall haue indeuoured to doe good to all men, without hurting of any man: if men acknowledge it not, but doe the contrarie vnto vs: verie well, let vs not passe for it, but let vs beare their vnthankefulnesse patiently. For why? Wee haue serued GOD, who will not forget what wee haue done. Therefore if the worlde bee set vppon such frowardnesse, as wee may bee occasioned to feele some griefe and impatiencie: yet must wee still keepe on our course, which God hath commaunded vs. Marke that for one point.

And it is a verie needful lesson in these dayes. For if we should fal to reckning of our cards, before we would shew any kindnes one to another;

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Ezec. 35. 12. Abd. 11.

Psal. 137. 7.

Esa. 16. 4.

what a thing were that? When should a man begin to doe good? [neuer:] for we see how al the world is so corrupted, as is pitifull to thinke. It seemeth that wee cast our good turnes into the throtes of woolues or madde dogges, and that it is nothing else but a prouoking of their malice more and more, which seeke to abuse our simplicitie. But yet for all that, it behoueth vs to haue an eye to that which God commandeth.

Nowe whereas men on their side are so malicious and frowarde: let vs marke, that as God took vengeance of the Moabites, Edomites and Ammonites, for misusing the children of Israel after that sort: so will he doe the like nowadayes. I tolde you euen now that the Prophets doe oftentimes make mention of the slender recompence, that these nations yeelded to the children of Israel: but did God let them alone from heauen? No. For although the children of Israel coplained not: yet did God take their case in hand, and set himselfe as counterpartie against those nations. He taryed not till the crie of the afflicted did come vp vnto him, and vanish away in the aire: but he sendeth them his Prophets, and telleth them that forasmuch as he had taken the people of Israel into his protection, he wilbe reuenged of the outrage that is done vnto them. For although that they on their side did suffer it iustly, for shrinking from their subiection to God: yet notwithstanding, the Edomites, Moabites & Ammonites ought to haue pitied their brethrē. And therfore did God set himselfe against them and saide, You also must flee when your turne comes about, and no man shall receiue you: yee shalbee scattered throughout the worlde, and not finde any place to rest in. Againe, when hee speaketh of the Edomites: wee see hee curseth them, and in the meane season comforteth his owne people. There shalbe a horrible spoile (saith he) through the whole countrie of Iewrie: but yet will I bring home my people againe in time. But as for Edom, cursed shall hee bee that buildeth it againe, or that goeth about to builde it and set it vp againe. Hee shall lay the foundation of it in his first borne, that is to say, all the preparation that shall bee made to set vp this people againe, shall fall downe in the ende, and they that helpe him shall perish: for there shalbe no helpe, but it shall fall out against him. Nowe then, sith wee see this, let it suffise vs that wee haue indeuoured to doe our duetie. For our God will take the case in hande for vs, and bee on our side. If men bee malicious towardes vs, and render euill for good: GOD will make himselfe the counterpartie against them, and although wee sit still and make no countenance to reuenge our selues: yet will GOD put to his hande. Thus yee see what wee haue to beare in rememberannce concerning these nations.

Abd. 17. Ioel. 3. 16.

But there is yet this point to bee noted where it is saide, *That there had beene Giants in all the Countries of the nations afore mentioned, and that God had driuen them out*. For Moses intended to doe vs to wit, that the successours of Ammon, Moab, and Esau, had beene brought into those countries by the hande of God. As if he should say, there was no force in themselues to conquer the countries that they possessed: for they were too farre ouer matched. And therefore as touching their bringing of their matters to passe: it must be concluded that it was god which wrought that chaunge. Mark that for one point.

And hee addeth, that it was to be considered that the children of Israel had gotten the possession of their land after the like maner. He speaketh here as of a matter alreadie come to passe. As if hee shoulde say, Goe to, looke about yee my friendes, see how God bringeth you into the lande that he promised to your fathers for an inheritance. When yee be come thither, and that hee hath setled you there: thinke yee that hee woulde maintaine you there, if he had not compassion vppon you, according as you shall haue good neede thereof? For yee shalbe hated of all the worlde: and therefore your God must bee faine to maintaine you. Nowe if you be desirous to bee preserued by him, attempt not any thing against his hande, and you shall perceiue that hee will set himselfe against all such as shall goe about to hurt you. Therefore must you bee gentle towardes them that are in the same case that you are. Nowe wee see what Moses meaning is. Wherfore let vs learn to come home to our selues when wee consider not Gods benefites towardes other men, as in deede oftentimes wee haue our eyes blindfolded. If a man tell vs that wee ought to consider the good that God hath done to our neighbour: wee passe not for it. But when wee enter into our selues, then are wee conuicted, and wee learne what it is to forsake others. That is the common lesson which is giuen vs heere. As howe? for it would bee darke still, if it were not set out plainlyer by example. If it bee saide vnto vs generally, God hath giuen euerie man that which his pleasure is that hee shall haue and possesse: thereuppon such as pille and polle their neighbours, & vse violence and extortion, notwithstanding that they make their quarel against creatures, do in deed match themselues against God, who wil haue order kept in the world. Whē any man tels vs heereof, wee are not perswaded of it that it shoulde bee so. For wee haue euer some fonde toye or other to bleare our owne eyes with all. What, say wee? Is such a man rich by the will of God? And howe knowe wee that? Nay rather, I see hee is inriched by euill meanes. We make no bones in construing the thing the cleane contrarie way. And why? Because wee consider not Gods grace in our neighbours. But if a man say vnto vs: See what God hath done for thee: thou must doe him homage for it: if thou acknowledge it hee will make thee to inioye it, yea and thy inioying of it shall bee for euer.

Againe, looke that thou succour thy neighbours according to the abilitie that hee hath giuen thee: and if thou goe that way to worke, all shall turne to thy benefite. Now then we see to what purpose Moses hath alledged this admonition: and after what manner wee ought to

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practise it.

And besides this, let vs marke in generall, that the chaunges which happen, come not but by Gods hand and prouidence. When wee see a mightie people, when wee see strong and well manned Cities, when wee see all other meanes that may serue to the maintenance of a Countrie, and yet the same is conquered by enemies: it must needes bee thought that God wrought therein. And therefore let vs learne to behold Gods iudgementes in al the alterations, that are seene in the worlde. And although all things bee on a broyle: yet let vs vnderstande that God holdeth the sterne aboue. True it is that men will make vprores, and runne into disorder, and when they keepe a greate stirre, to their seeming God is shut out of doores. But when they haue practised what they can, yet shall it not stoppe God from turning all things to such ende as hee hath purposed in his minde. And therefore as I saide afore, let vs not imagine that fortune beareth any sway in the worlde: but let vs assure our selues that God hath reserued the souereintie to himselfe, to bring euen all the turmoyles that men rayse vp, to such ende as hee hath ordeined, of purpose to punish the sinnes of such as offende him, to pull downe the pride of such as are too lostie, and to cut off his blessings when he seeth them mysused. That is the thing which we haue to note.

And euen these manner of speeches, *That God drawe out the Gyantes before the face of the Edomites and before the face of the Moabytes*, doe yet better confirme the things that are saide alreadie, according as wee haue seene heeretofore, that it is hee which putteth men in feare. For if it please him, although men haue no courage at all, but bee fearefull and henharted: yet will hee make them strong and stout, so as they shall bee as vnmoueable as rockes when other come to incounter against them. And on the other side although they bee Gyantes and carie the countenaunces of Lyons: yet can God weaken them in one moment, so as they shall runne away from their owne shadowes, though no bodie else pursue them. Forasmuch then as Moses vseth such manner of speeches: let vs assure our selues that men haue not their heartes in their owne handes, to strengthen them as their neede. And therefore let vs take warning thereby, to trust that GOD will discomfit our enemies without the power of man: and that if they rise vp against vs with neuer so violent rage: yet shall they bee beaten downe, and not bee able to doe any thing against vs. And why? For GOD which when hee listeth doeth put to flight not only men of smal courage, but also euen Gyants which are so howge that they astonish men euen with their looke: can well ynough skil how to put them backe with all their boldnesse.

And therefore let vs learne to call vppon GOD, that hee may vouchsafe to giue vs courage at neede, and that wee may bee strengthened by him: for else what will become of vs? Wee shall bee as weake as water, though no man preace much vpon vs. And this must teach vs to walke the more warely, considering the weakenesse or rather brittlenesse that is in vs: to the intent wee bee not so foolish, as to ground our selues vppon our owne strength and courage, but pray vnto GOD to holde vs with his mightie hande, and to giue vs inuincible constancie. Nowe if wee bee so vnable to incounter with mortall men: howe much more vnable are wee to incounter our ghostly enemies? Are wee able to withstand Satan and all his assaults? Alas, wee come farre short. And therefore let vs followe the counsell that is giuen vs heere: let vs pray GOD to driue away Satan, and to cut a sunder all the cordes which holde vs heere fast tyed, and therewithall to giue vs such power to resist him, as wee may haue victorie euen vnto the ende. Thus yee see what wee haue to remember vppon this text of Moses.

Furthermore where as hee saith, *that God led his people about by the space of eight and thirtie yeeres, vntill such time as all those that were able to beare armour at the time that the people murmured, were consumed*: it serueth still to bring to remembrance the thing that hath beene spoken: namely that God executed the vengeance which he had threatened to his people. And (as wee see) it is a verie profitable lesson, to teach vs to tremble at Gods threatenings, as well as to bee mooued at his promises. Such is our nature, that when GOD promiseth vs any thing, wee fall to scanning and disputing of it, so as wee cannot rest vppon it, to say it shall bee so: wee cannot conclude that it is Gods will. True it is that we will confesse it with our mouth: but as for to bee fully resolued of it, wee will none of that, vnlesse his trueth bee well sealed and warranted in our heartes by his holie spirite. And yet euen then too, we be so inclyned to distrust, that we draw still backe from the thing that God promiseth vs: so brutish and dulheaded are we.

And this appeareth yet more when he threateneth vs, So much the more then ought wee to thinke vppon his iudgementes, and to consider that if hee bee prouoked, the threatenings that hee hath vttered with his mouth shall not fall to the grounde, but haue their effect and performance.

Thus ye see to what purpose Moses rehearseth again, that all they which were aboue twentie yeere olde at the time that the people murmured, were consumed, and that not by casualtie, *but according to the Lordes owne saying*. And this was to assure the people yet more, to the ende they might perceiue that Gods threatening of them was in good earnest.

And herewith all let vs also call to remembrance, that God cannot abide that men shoulde despise and refuse the benefite that hee offereth, and let occasion slippe: for if hee open the gate, and men will not enter, hee cannot beare with that negligence of theirs matched with disobedience. For what was the cause that God was so prouoked to anger, that hee sware that

all

Num.14.31. all the carkeiſſes of the people ſhoulde rotte in the wilderneſſe, and that hee vſed ſo ſharpe wordes vnto them? It was for that they had refuſed to enter into the lande that hee had promiſed them. Wee ſee then, that vnthankefulneſſe prouoketh Gods vengeance againſt vs to the vttermoſt, ſpecially when wee refuſe the benefite that hee offereth vs, and that ſuch refuſall proceedeth of wilfulneſſe and malice, which happeneth in manner continually. For what maketh vs ſo loath to receiue the good turnes that GOD woulde doe vs; but our owne vnbeleefe, foraſmuch as wee thinke not that he will keepe touch with vs, but rather fall to reaſoning what will become of it? And therefore let vs marke well that men ſhall neuer bereaue themſelues of Gods benefits, but through their owne diſtruſt. Wherefore it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more on hande to indeuour to beleeue al the promiſes of our God, and to receiue his ſayings purely and ſimply, and to yeeld vnto them without any gaineſaying. Lo wherupon it behoueth vs to reſt.

Nowe as concerning the time, true it is that God coulde haue deſtroyed them all at the firſt day which prouoked him ſo to angers he coulde haue ſent an Angell to haue made cleane riddaunce of them, and yet haue preſerued the young folke by myracle, ſo as they ſhoulde haue come into the lande the firſt day: but hee ledde them vp and downe by the ſpace of fortie yeares. And why did hee ſo? To the ende that others ſhoulde take example by them. For God ſeeth, that wee profite better by his corrections and iudgements in proceſſe of time, than if hee ſhoulde puniſh vs out of hande and away. Indeede, in our owne imagination wee had lever that God ſhoulde thunder downe at the firſt daſh, and wee thinke wee ſhoulde perceiue his power much better, if hee wiped them quite out of the world which haue offended him, and that wee might ſee the wicked conſumed at once. And what woulde become of it, if hee ſhoulde out of hande deſtroy and take away all thoſe out of the worlde, which are not worthie to liue in it? If it were ſo, wee woulde within a day or twaine forget the thinges that he had ſhewed vs before our eyes. Wee may well weene the contrarie, but God knoweth that it is ſo. For hee leaueth the wicked heere in this worlde, where they haue their delightes, ſportes, and triumphes at their pleaſure: and that is to trie our patience. Neuertheleſſe ſometimes God ſetteth them languiſh as well as other folkes, ſo as a man may ſee them dragge their legges after them, and they bee as it were vppon the racke, and God ſetteth them before vs as lookingglaſſes, ſo as we may well perceiue, that it is more for our profite to ſee his iuſtice ſo prolonged, by making the wicked to languiſh after that manner: than if hee ſhoulde ſende them their puniſhmentes out of hande. This (ſaye I) ſtickes faſter in our remembrance. Yee ſee then howe wee be better taught by the delay of Gods iuſtice, than if it were executed at once and out of hande. And that was the cauſe why it behoued God to bee fortie yeeres ſpace in conſuming the people, to ſhewe them that they were not worthie to enter into the promiſed lande. For thereby the younger ſort were occaſioned to thinke, why did not God giue vs the fruition of the lande at the firſt day? It is becauſe our fathers murmured againſt him. And ſo are wee depriued of the inheriting thereof from our childhoode, and that not for a day or two, but it was Gods will that we ſhoulde wander in this wilderneſſe a long time, to the end that the ſinne of our fathers might be the better printed in our minds, to beware that wee followed them not in that behalfe. Yee ſee then that by this meanes the younger folke were taught to liue in the feare of God, and to be better aduiſed than their fathers were. And therefore whenſoeuer God executeth not his iuſtice vppon the wicked, to make cleane riddance out of hande, but conſumeth them by little and little: let vs learne to hold our wittes alwayes tied vp and as it were in ſuſpenſe. And in the meane time let vs take the inſtruction that God giueth vs thereby, & learne to beare them wel in mind, and neuer to forget them: for his intent is to put vs in minde of them vntil we haue throughly digeſted them. After this manner muſt wee practiſe this doctrine, concerning the time that is ſet downe heere by Moſes, wherein God led his people vp and downe by the ſpace of eight and thirtie yeares, whereunto two yeares moe were added afterwarde, to make vp the full number of fortie.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to vouchſafe to bring vs more and more to ſuch repentance, that wee mourning for them before him, may acknowledge that there is nothing but curſednes and deſtruction in vs, wherein wee ſhould dwell ſtil, if he pitied vs not, and that in the meane while we may not be ſo froward and malicious, as to turne heade againſt him, though hee handle vs roughlier than wee would bee, but that acknowledging it to bee rightfull that hee ſhould touch vs with his hande, wee may bee ſo reformed, as our whole ſeeking may bee to mortifie all our affections and luſtes, and to pleaſe him and to obey his righteouſneſſe: and that therewithall he ſtrengthen vs in ſuch wiſe, as wee may fight ſtoutly vnder his enſigne, & by that meanes be mainteined vnder his protection, vntill we haue finiſhed our race in this worlde, and bee taken vp into his euerlaſting reſt, after wee haue outſtoode the battelles that wee haue to indure here. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not onely &c.

On

On Wedneſday the j. of May. 1555.

The xiij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the ſecond Chapter.

24 Afterward the Lorde ſaid, Vp, get ye hence, and go ouer the riuer of Arnon. Behold, I haue deliuered Sehon King of Heſebon the Amorrhyte and his land into thy hand. Begin to take poſſeſſion, and prouoke him to battell.

25 This day will I begin to ſend the feare and dreade of thee vppon all people that are vnder the whole heauen: ſo that when they heare the fame of thee, they ſhall tremble and bee in anguiſh for thy preſence.

26 Then ſent I meſſengers from the wilderneſſe of the eaſt, to Sehon King of Heſebon, with wordes of peace, ſaying:

27 Let mee paſſe through thy land, keeping on the high way, without turning to the right hand or to the left.

28 Thou ſhalt ſell me meate for monie, to eate, and thou ſhalt alſo giue mee water for monie, to drinke: let me but onely paſſe through on foote,

29 (As the children of Eſau haue done which dwel in Seir, and the Moabytes which dwell in Ar) vntill I be come ouer Iordan, and bee entered into the lande which the Lord our God giueth vs.

HEere Moſes confirmeth yet better the thing that I treated of before: that is to wit, that men muſt not giue themſelues to foliſh enterpriſes, as euerie mans fancie leades him: but wee muſt haue an eye what is lawfull. And thereof there is none other triall, than to hearken what God cõmaundeth and promiſeth vs. For his will muſt be our ſure rule. Whoſoeuer thruſteth himſelfe forth to doe what he liketh beſt, although he be able to iuſtifie his doings before men, and can ſet neuer ſo many faire colours vppon them: yet ſhall he alwayes be condemned before God. Therefore let vs beare in minde, that to liue as it becommeth vs, we muſt haue this ſoberneſſe and modeſty with vs, that we aduenture not any further than his worde will beare vs out. True it is that the talke heere is onely of warres: but wee muſt applie the doctrine thereof to our generall vſe. For like as God choſe his people of Iſraell to make them as a lookingglaſſe for his Church: ſo muſt wee applie all the thinges to our ſelues which are written of them. For the perfection of the things that are conteined here, belongeth to vs as ſheweth ſaint Paul. Nowe were this wel obſerued wee ſhoulde not haue ſuch diſorder in our life, as wee ſee. For euerie man hath his liking by himſelfe, and according to his liking, ſo flingeth he forth to attempte thinges, and we neuer ſtande to inquire what God commaundeth, but our owne affections carrie vs away, and inflame vs in ſuch wiſe, that euerie one runnes after the thing that he lighteth vppon: and ſo wee doe but gadde vp and downe all our life long. But heere it is tolde vs, that men muſt not reach out their handes to aduenture vppon any thing at all, further foorth than GOD hath giuen them leaue. When hee ſaith, goe: our going is not at all aduenture, but it is matched with a promiſe, *Beholde* (ſaith hee) *the Lord hath deliuered Sehon king of Heſebon into thy handes*. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, men muſt not haue an eye to any thing that may drawe their deſire to it afore hande, as wee ſee that our nature doeth driue vs thereunto: for ſcarſly can wee tell howe to open our eyes, but ſome lewde liking will tickle vs. And what is the cauſe thereof? It is for that wee bee not fully perſwaded of this principle, that wee muſt let all thinges alone which are not graunted vs of God. If wee followed this doctrine, ſuch as are poore would be contented with their ſlenderneſſe, and craue no more of God but to bee ſuſteyned: and the rich ſort would not be ſo blinded with vnſatiable couetouſneſſe, as to increaſe themſelues ſtill by adding peece to peece. And therefore it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more on hande to beare this doctrine in minde, ſith we ſee howe ſore our life is diſordered, and we cannot rule our luſtes according to Gods will, which onely can and ought to maſter them.

Againe on the other ſide, wee ſee howe wee picke out enemies: whereas it belongeth to GOD to appoint vs them. In good faith what is the cauſe that men heaue one at another, that they ſeeke to eate vp one another, and that there is ſo much ſtriſe, trubble, and quareling? It is for that as ſoone as any man is greeued, by and by hee will needes bee reuenged: and wee cannot abide that any man ſhoulde touch vs in our goods or our perſons, but incontinently wee will be at open warre with him. As for patience, there is none at all in vs. But our Lorde will haue vs to ouercome euill with good, that in ſo doing wee may be as his ſheepe. But no man will bee brought to ſo much reaſon. Men then arme themſelues where God commaundeth them to bee quiet and peaceable: and they will needes haue them enemies,

whom God would haue them to labour to winne by loue and gentleneſſe.

Contrariwiſe, if there bee a iuſt quarell that ought to bee mainteyned, euery man ſhrinkes away. The name of God is blaſphemed, and wicked deedes are committed: there ought ſuch as haue courage and manhood, to ſhewe that they feare not the hatred or anger of men. For GOD will haue vs to vndertake warre in his name: and euery man doeth ſhunne it. And therein wee ſee howe frowarde and vntowarde wee bee. Againe, it is ſaide that our warring Ephe.6.12. muſt bee, not againſt mortall men, but rather againſt Sathan and all his wyles. Loe howe GOD ſoundeth the trumpet and ſtriketh vp the drumme, and telleth vs that wee muſt enter into battell againſt our ghoſtly enemies. But that will not ſinke in our ſtomackes: wee be wedded to our owne luſtes: if any man anger vs, if any man doe vs wrong, wee muſt bee reuenged: and wee conſider not that in ſo doing Satan winneth greatly at our handes.

Nowe then (as I ſaide afore) wee ſee that this doctrine was written for our vſe and inſtruction, ſo as wee muſt alwayes beare in minde the likeneſſe that is betweene vs and the people of olde time.

Wherefore, firſt of all let no man couet to poſſeſſe any thing which hee hath not receiued at Gods hande, according to our dayly aſking of him our ordinarie breade. Then let vs not goe about to inrich our ſelues by vnlawfull meanes, craftes, and violence, neither let vs practiſe one thing or other by ſuttleties: but let euerie man followe his trade ſimplie, and meddle with nothing but that which GOD giueth vs leaue to doe, and let vs learne to rule our liues according to his worde, wayting for ſuch bleſſing as it ſhall pleaſe him to giue vs. And let ſuch as haue goods, be alwayes readie to forgo them, whenſoeuer it ſhall pleaſe him: and let ſuch as haue not the worlde at will, beare their pouertie patiently. That is the thing which wee haue to marke in the firſt place.

Secondly, when the caſe ſtandeth vppon aduenturing, let our hardineſſe bee, that wee dare bee bolde to doe whatſoeuer GOD commaundeth vs, ſpecially when wee haue his promiſe, as is ſaide afore. That is the thing (as I haue declared alreadie heretofore) which putteth difference betweene the true wiſedome of the faithfull, and the raſhneſſe of ſuch as playe the looſe coltes and runne galloping aſtray. For the faithfull doe waite for warrant from GOD, and that the ende of the thing which they take in hande ſhall bee good: and when they once haue his promiſe, then goe they forwarde without attempting any thing to the contrarie. But the vnfaithfull take a toy in their heade, and when they haue laide their platte, they conclude to doe whatſoeuer ſeemes beſt to themſelues, without inquiring of Gods will, and thereupon they ſticke at nothing. In ſo doing there is nothing but preſumptuouſneſſe to ouerthrowe themſelues. But the true foundation is to haue God promiſe, and to reſt vpon the ſame, doing the things that hee commaundeth vs. And if wee haue that regarde with vs: then ſhall wee take the contrarie way to that which I haue ſpoken of. For where as nowe wee be fearefull in the good quarrels that God allowceth, and wherein wee ought to hazarde our ſelues: wee ſhall haue an inuincible conſtancie, and euerie of vs ſhall haue an eye to his duetie, to ſay, beholde, my God commaundeth mee to doe ſo in deede I ſhall haue many aſſaultes and manie incomberances, and I may perchaunce bee greatly hindered by men: but it is ynough to mee that God is my warrant: ſeeing he hath appointed mee to doe it, it is not for mee to ſticke at it.

Beſides this, we haue alſo a promiſe: God neuer ſaith to vs, *Doe this*, but he telleth vs alſo that hee will be with vs. Nowe then ſeeing we know that hee is able to mainteine vs euen in ſpite of all the wicked and of all them that are in a chafe againſt vs: what neede wee be afraide to do well? And if wee bee afraide, doe wee not wrong vnto God as though hee were not of power to defende vs? So then wee ſee nowe howe bolde and hardie wee ought to bee in mainteining of good quarels, foraſmuch as wee bee ſure that GOD will not faile vs, ſpecially when wee bee to incounter againſt Satan, and againſt all the things that hee practiſeth, as well againſt our ſelues, as againſt the whole Church. Therefore if wee play the daſtardes and ſhrinke away when wee ſhoulde enter into ſuch incounters, as wee ſee moſt men doe, who ſeeke ſtartingholes, and cannot finde in their hearres to beare any burthen for the honour of God: is it not too ſhamefull trecherie? yes: for wee cannot ſtep out of the way, but our vnbeleefe bewrayes it ſelfe. What cauſeth vs to bee ſo colde in performing our dueties? It is for that wee beleeue not God. For were wee throughly perſwaded that hee will keepe touch with vs, and that wee ſhall not bee diſappointed in wayting for the thing that hee hath promiſed: it woulde make vs to forget all feare, and all the goodlie ſhiftes that wee deuiſe to turne the carte in the panne. And therefore let vs learne to glorifie our GOD in yeelding to him the title of ſoothfaſtneſſe: and then ſhall wee bee hardie ynough, not to followe our owne fancies, but to obey his commaundementes. Wee ſhall haue a holy preſumptuouſneſſe, if wee holde vs to this line and rule of truſting in God, and of hoping that hee will performe whatſoeuer he hath ſaide or vttered with his mouth. Thus yee ſee howe this leſſon is to be put in practiſe.

Furthermore let vs marke heerewithall how God addeth heere, *that hee will ſtrike ſuch a feare and terrour into theſe peoples hearts, as they ſhall be diſmayed when they doe but heare of the fame of the Iewes.* Heere wee ſee that God holdeth mens heartes in his hande, to weaken them or ſtrengthen them at his pleaſure.

True it is that men imagine themſelues to haue this vertue of manlineſſe in themſelues. And the verie cauſe why they deſpiſe God, is that euerie of them makes his account to com-

compasse his matters by his owne power. But so farre off are the common people from hauing any stoutnesse or manhood in them, without that God giue it them: that God holdeth euen the heartes of kinges and princes in his hande, and although they seeme to themselues to haue much more strength and courage than others: yet doeth God make them to slip away like water, when hee thinkes good. So then let vs marke well, that it is not in any mans power to bee valiant, vnlesse GOD strengthen him. And therefore wee may applie this doctrine to double vse. The one is that although a man see himselfe to be weak, he must not be out of heart for it: for there is a remedie readie for it, if we list to seeke it. I say we must gather strength of mind by seeking it in God, yea euen whensoeuer we be hindered to do our duetie for want of courage. As for example: God perchaunce calleth vs to glorifie his name, hee sholeth vs out from this worlde, accordingly as it is his will that euery man shoulde renounce himselfe, and that wee shoulde forsake our owne lustes. Nowe wee see howe possible it is to obey, yea and wee knowe howe farre all our abilite stretcheth. Againe, we see also a great number of hazards, and the diuell will face vs with this inconuenience and that daunger, where at we shalbe as good as dismayed, so as we shall not dare to stirre one finger to obey God and to execute his commaundement. And what is the reason? It is for that we be too faintharted. Now it is not for vs to sticke still in this myre: but wee must seeke for strength where we can finde it. Let vs consider (say I) that God is able ynough to amende the faintnesse of heart that holdeth vs backe, yea & which maketh vs to shrinke back from his word, and to turne heade from it. Yee see then how wee ought to take warning to flee vnto GOD and to seeke succour there, forsomuch as hee hath mens heartes in his hande, and doth both fashion and bowe them as hee thinketh good. Likewise again, whē we feele a good disposition in our selues, so as wee would faine giue the onset (as they say), and wee haue no feare at all to holde vs backe: yet must wee not stande vppon that, for wee heare howe saint Paul warneth vs to worke out our saluation with feare and trembling, that is to say, to followe and drawe that way which God sheweth vs. And after what maner? Fearefully, and as it were with trembling. Why so? For it is God (saith he) which giueth vs both the will and the performaunce, and all through his owne freebestowed goodnesse.

Seeing it is so then, albeit that wee haue the spirite of courage and stoutenesse: yet let vs not cease to resort vnto GOD, and to humble our selues continually, and to pray him that hee forsake vs not, but rather continue the grace that hee hath put into vs, and confirme the same vntill wee haue finished our course. And thus yee see that wee bee warned to seeke continually for newe strength, notwithstanding that we feele that our Lorde hath strengthened vs alreadie.

Nowe the seconde vse is, that when wee see our enemies fearefull and dismayed, wee must consider howe it is GOD that hath discouraged them, and not impute any whit to our owne prowesse, or to aught else that in vs: but yeelde the whole prayse thereof to him that ought to haue it. And on the contrarie parte, when wee perceiue our enemies to bee like fiendes, so as there is none other likelyhood but that wee shalbe swallowed vp: when we see a desperate boldenesse in them so as they goe forwarde still whatsoeuer come of it: [finally] when wee see them, all on flaming fire after that sort: yet let vs not bee dismayed thereat. For why? God will make them to soke away like water when it commeth to the pitch. Psal. 58.8. & 90.5.

Nowe then, as for this diuelish geerishnesse which the wicked haue to ouerthrowe Gods children withall, and to cumber and trouble them euerie where: let it not put vs out of hearte, though they pursue vs neuer so deadely. For why? GOD will prouide for vs in such wise, as hee will make those afraide of our shadowes, which seeme as nowe to haue their throates open to swallow vs vp, and to bee as gulfes of hell. God will worke after such a fashion in that behalfe, as they shall not bee worthie to be compared with little babes.

Let vs marke then, that seeing it is tolde vs that God holdeth mens hearts in his hande: wee must alwayes rather looke to him, than rest vppon any thing heere belowe, whensoeuer wee see any stoppes that may put vs in feare. And in so doing wee shall neuer bee confounded.

Moses addeth moreouer, *That hee sent to Sehon with wordes of peace, saying: Let vs passe through thy countrie, wee will pay for our breade and water, wee will doe thee no harme, wee will passe as thy friendes, as wee haue done to our brethren the Edomites.* It shoulde seeme heere at the first sight, that Moses did against that which was commaunded him. For these are two diuers things, [namely,] God saith] goe giue battell to Sehon king of the Amorrhytes: and that Moses in steede of giuing him battell, and in steede of incountering him in the fielde, sendeth an Ambassade vnto him, and prayeth him to giue him leaue but onely to passe through his Countrie, promising to doe no harme, and to paye for all thinges that hee tooke. It might seeme then that heere is some contrarietie: and if it were so, then was Moses disobedient vnto God.

Let vs marke, that where as God commaunded him to offer battell to Sehon king of the Amorrhytes: his meaning was, that the warre shoulde in all respectes bee lawfull, and that Sehon shoulde well perceiue, that hee was iustly assayled by the people of Israel. This therefore is no impediment, but rather a meane whereby God ordeyned his people to haue lawfull warre with Sehon and all his subiectes. Where as God had saide, *I will giue you the lande in possession:* it was requisite that the malice of Sehon shoulde bee discouered and bewrayed, that it might appeare to the worlde, that the

people of Israel had iust tytle to discomfite him. For where as GOD promised the lande of Chanaan to his people: this was no parte of that Countrie: hee gaue them this as an income or ouerplus, and extended his liberalitie further than the promise made to Abraham did conteine. And therefore Sehon was not as yet declared to bee an enemie to the people of Israell. And if they shoulde haue defied him as an enemie at the first dash, without giuing him knowledge of the warre: it had beene a disorderly kinde of dealing. These thinges then, agree verie well: that is to wit, that Sehon was condemned aforehande by God: and that the children of Israel hauing chased out all the inhabitaunts of his countrie, shoulde possesse the same themselues: and also that these thinges shoulde not bee done, vntill the wilful stubbornenesse of Sehon were disclosed that hee might dispossesse himselfe, and bee the cause of the warre, so as the fault might iustly bee imputed to himselfe. Wherefore let vs marke well, that Moses hath not swarued heerein from Gods commandement, to play the wise man after the manner of the worlde, which is to haue some politike deuise by themselues, so as they muste needes inuent some toy or other of their owne heade, as though they were better aduised than GOD. And surelie that is the common fashion of all. But such forecast is cursed, when we thinke to amende the things that God commaundeth vs, by our owne policies and inuentions. Moses went not that way to worke, he followed simplie Gods will.

But by the way it may seeme verie straunge, that GOD doeth sende a message of peace vnto Sehon, and yet notwithstanding had determined afore hande that it shoulde not auayle him. In this case all worldly pride must stoope, and consider Gods manner of dealing towardes vs with such humilitie, that where our wittes cannot reach vnto it, wee may honour his incomprehensible secretes. And certes it is a text worthie of remembrance when it is saide, that GOD (or Moses by Gods authoritie) sendeth vnto Sehon to desire him to suffer the people to passe, gently intreating him and shewing him the thing that was for his welfare: and yet notwithstanding that GOD had fully determined aforehande, that Sehon shoulde make none account of it, but that hee shoulde bee discomfited and destroyed. This may seeme straunge geere to our imagination. When men will needes scanne of Gods workes and prouidence according to their owne reason: they shall finde thinges to grudge at, euerie turning of a hande. And that is the cause why venemous tongues rush out nowe adayes, and are not ashamed to blaspheme God. When there is any talke of Gods secrete ordinaunce, and of his disposing of thinges in this worlde, after a manner vnknowen to vs, so as we shall not comprehende it vntill wee bee ridde of this flesh of ours: they storme at it, and repyne against GOD. And why? Because the same surmounteth their capacitie. But if Gods iustice be too high for vs: ought it to bee abased therefore? If his ordinance bee aboue our vnderstanding: shoulde it therefore bee hidden from himselfe, and shoulde it haue no authoritie ouer vs? Yes: And this text is ynough to stoppe the mouthes of all such rascals. For one of the common obiections that such beastes doe make, is this: Howe so? If men had not free-will to take or refuse the thing that GOD sayeth to them, and that the thing it selfe were not vndetermined: it were in vaine to preach, or to make exhortations, or to profer the choyce of good and euill: for the matter were dispatched aforehande.

Thus doeth it seeme in deede to these seelie fooles, which attribute more to their owne braine, than to Gods doctrine, and which by reason of their slender exercise in the holy scripture, are the more presumptuous to iudge at all aduenture of the thinges that they knowe not. But let vs looke vppon that which Moses rehearseth here. The message that hee sent to Sehon king of the Amorrhytes, came of GOD, and must not bee taken as the message of a mortall man, as I haue declared before. But yet is Sehon disposed to receiue the message? Or is there any casuall vncertaintie in this behalfe, so as a man might thinke it might as well not happen as happen? [Nay:] Moses was well assured that Sehon woulde not obey it: and I enter not yet so farre as to discusse whereof that proceeded. It shall bee declared in the nexte Lecture, that God had hardened Sehons hart, and that it was his will that it should be so. Lykewise also it is sayd in the psalme, that God turned away the hartes of such as otherwise had bin the peoples friends, and that hee hardened them in such sort, as they could not abide to spare them. But I will not enter yet so farre. I treate as now but vppon this poynt, that GOD sendeth messages to men in his owne name and authoritie: which notwithstanding shall not preuaile to reclaime them. And why? Because that those to whom hee speaketh, are set vppon euill aforehande: and there is none other thing to bee looked for, but that they shall bee the more inflamed and waxe woorse, at the hearing of Gods commaundement. And therefore (as I haue saide alreadie) although it bee not seemely to our humaine reason: yet must wee humble our selues and honour Gods secretes. When wee finde thinges contrarie to our naturall reason, is it meete that wee shoulde giue libertie to our owne witte, to say, Oho, I take it to bee otherwise, and therefore it must needes be so? Noe: Let GOD rather haue the maisterie, and let vs become fooles that wee may bee wise in him. For at that ende muste wee beginne if wee will profite well in GODS schoole.

Wee muste followe that which Saint Paul telleth vs, whiche is, that wee must bee fooles in our selues, that is to say, wee must not couet the cursed wisedome where with men are puffed vp, when they thinke themselues

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to bee sharpe witted and wise ynough to iudge of [diuine] matters. Let vs beware of such imaginations, and ridding our selues quite and cleane of all selfeweening, let vs profite our selues by Gods shewing of the thinges vnto vs which he liketh, and which are good in his sight. Let vs then learne to frame our selues wholly to his good will, for if wee be counted to be fooles and witlesse before men: it shalbe but of such as iudge after their owne mother wit.

Furthermore let vs marke, that when wee haue searched things throughly, wee shall finde that Gods sending of his worde dayly vnto such as receiue it not, and are alreadie condemned afore him: is not without cause. Then is it vncertaine to vs, that when Gods worde is preached, it is to the ende to blinde the reprobates and such as are vncorrigible: and yet for all that, that it is Gods will to make them vnexcusable. For commonly God reserueth that knowledge to himselfe, and when we bee sent of him and doe preache in his name: wee cannot tell whether our labour shall doe good or no. Hee then which is appointed to preache Gods word, knoweth not (when he hath done as hee was commanded) whether his preaching shall turne to the saluation or damnation of his hearers. But yet for all that let vs labour still, and pray GOD to vouchsafe to giue effect to his word, that it may so profite, as the wretched worlde may bee plucked backe from the destruction whereunto it goeth. That is the marke which wee must shoote at, and the thing which wee haue to doe. Neuertheleſſe sometime GOD will shewe vs before our faces, that his worde serueth to condemne the hearers, and to bereaue them of all excuse. Wee see it was once saide vnto Esay, Goe to this people. And what to doe? It was in deede to carie them the word of saluation. But yet therewithal it is saide vnto him, Goe to harden this peoples hearties, goe to stoppe their eares, goe to shut their eyes, and to thicken their hearties, to make them vtterly past recouerie: for I will not haue them conuert. Seeing then that the Prophet is sent with such commission, as he knoweth well that those to whom he speaketh, shall but waxe the worse for it: in what case is he? But what for that? Yet must he execute his commission with all obedience. It is not for men to enter into counsell, and to take aduice in this behalfe according to their abilitie: no, but they must submit themselues to GOD as I saide afore. Looke what was saide to the Prophet, doeth shewe it selfe dayly in effect. It might put vs oftentimes out of patience, to see that the more that Gods worde is preached, the more doeth the worlde rush foorth into all licentiousneſse. For they that conspire among vs against GOD and his Gospell: are in comparison farre worse than the Papistes. The Papistes haue some deuotion with them: and although they bee growen brutish, yet neuertheleſse their chiefe intent is to serue GOD. But as for the other sort, they bee starke Diuels: and although they knowe and see it sufficiently prooued, that they warre against God and not against mortall creatures: yet doeth their furie carrie them away to proceede still. Wee see it. Wee see that whereas in the time of blindneſse there was some ciuill order, and men were more bridled: nowe it seemeth that all thinges are set at libertie. This were able to make Gods seruauntes quite out of patience. But what for that? We must take courage as Saint Paule comforteth vs. Hee saieth that whether Gods worde bring life or death to men, yet is it alwayes a good and sweete sauour before GOD. True it is that Gods worde of it selfe (as shall bee declared more fully hereafter) is alwayes the sauour of life. For what is it that God aimeth at, if wee consider his worde in it owne nature? The calling of men backe to the ende they might be saued. And yet for all that, wee see by experience that it is an odour and sauour of Death, insomuch as the wicked are strangled and choked with it, as soone as they doe but take the sent or smell of it. They needs not to taste of it nor to eate of it: if they doe but take the sent of it a great way of, it is poyson to them, so that the diuell carries them away, and they fall to fretting and chafing against GOD and all to their owne destruction. And do we see that Gods word turneth into occasion of death, to a great number of men? Yet must wee bee of good cheere, saieth S. Paul. And why? Because it is a good and sweete sauour vnto God, when men are made vnexcusable.

2. Cor. 2. 15, 16.

But nowe let vs come to declare how Gods worde tendeth vnto life, and howe it hath that propertie: notwithstanding that men through their owne wickednesse, doe turne it to their deadly condemnation. This is sufficiently expressed in that it is saide, *That Moſes sent a message of peace to Sehon King of the Amorites*. His desire then is to abstaine from all anoyance, if Sehon coulde abide it. Nowe let vs see to what ende the Gospell is preached, and after what manner. What else is contained in it, but that God intendeth to bee reconciled to the world, as saieth Saint Paule in the fifth of the seconde to the Corinthians? In as much then as GOD sendeth vs tidinges of peace, so as his desire is to shewe himselfe a father to all such as yeelde themselues teachable vnto him, and our Lorde Iesus Christ is offered vs as the meane to bring vs againe into the loue and sauour of our God: it is surely a message of peace. And in deede the Gospell is so intituled, and not without cause. True it is that the lawe also was a message of peace, as in respect of the promises: If wee looke vppon the lawe strictly, as Saint Paul speakes diuers times of it: it will be a very message of wrath. But if wee looke vpon the promises that were made to the fathers of olde time: [wee shall finde that] euen from the beginning of the world, Gods will was that sinners should knowe his mercie, and come vnto him. And for that cause is it saide that Iesus Christ bringeth peace, both to them that are a farre off, and to them that are neere hande, as saieth Saint Paule to the Ephesians: and he will haue it to bee preached through the whole worlde,

2. Cor. 5. 20.

Ephes. 6. 15.

Rom. 4. 15.

Eph. 2. 17.

that Gods onely desire is to holde vs in his loue. Thus ye see howe wee may finde saluation in the Gospell. Nowe then wee see, that Gods worde considered in it selfe, is a commission of peace, furthering vs to be ioyned and made one with him, so as wee may call vpon him and rest in his goodnesse. And the meane to haue this worde to redounde to our saluation, is this, if wee can receiue it as wee ought to doe, according as Saint Paul treateth thereof in the first to the Romanes. And therefore the Ministers therof must haue this consideration with them: Beholde, GOD sendeth mee: and what puteth he in my mouth? Peace, to offer it vnto all men, and to the ende that euen the wickedst should bee partakers of the same message and vnderstand that GOD seeketh them. But yet for all that, wee knowe that this message cannot profite all men. What must it doe then? It must make men vnexcusable. For what can bee saide to it, if God handle men out of hand as they deserue? Wee bee all damned by nature, we bring such an inheritaunce of cursednesse from our mothers wombe, as God might sinke vs at the first day, and wee coulde lay nothing at all for our selues. And forasmuch as there are a great nomber of people, which seeme to perishe but through simplicitie: therefore it is Gods will to conuict the whole worlde, to the end to take away all scapes. Wee see that when the Gospell is preached, those whome a man woulde haue thought to haue bene well disposed, doe burst foorth, and their malice is discouered and laide open, which was hidden before. The worlde seeth howe fewe are willing to stoope to take the yoke vppon their neckes: Nay, which worse is, the world sees that they become enemies to it, so as they can not bee ouercome by any warnings: or else they become so wilde headed, as a man can not tell on which side to catch holde of them. Seeing then that when GOD hath sent men the message of peace after that sort, they on their side desire warre and seeke it, and can not finde in their hearres to yeelde and submit them selues vnto God, but will needes bee enemies vnto him: wee see that the preaching of the Gospell to such as are vtterly past recouerie, is not vnauailable. And why? For else their malice had bene vnknowen, and Gods Iustice shoulde not bee so apparant, nor haue so great brightnesse, as when the wicked abide still vnconuerted and coulde not bee subdued for ought that could be done.

Rom. 2. 16.

Nowe hereupon what haue wee to doe? This doctrine belongeth not onely to such as are ministers of Gods worde, to make them to goe through with their calling, so as they shut their eyes when God is to bee obeyed, and proceede still in preaching his worde though it bee misused, and turned cleane contrarie to Gods intent, but also wee bee all warned generally, in what wise wee ought to receiue the message that God sendeth vs: namely that for as much as he sheweth himselfe so gracious towardes vs, that in stead of being our enemie, as he might most rightfully and iustly bee, he is contented to bee at one with vs, and taryeth not till wee seeke peace at his hande, but seeketh atonement with vs, notwithstanding that he perceiue vs to bee mad to make warre against him: wee should not bee so wretched and malicious as to dragge backe from him, and to forsake that passing loue and fatherly kindnesse of his. Marke that for one point.

Yet notwithstanding, when we see that God hath drawen vs to him, and that wee can finde in our heartes to let him vse his mercie and goodnesse towardes vs: then must wee knowe that the cause why his worde hath had such entraunce into our hartes, and why wee haue bin subdued to his obedience: was for that he hath reformed vs by his holy spirite. Let vs knowe that. And on the contrarie parte, when wee see the rebelliousnesse of the worlde, and howe men doe rancle against the Gospell, and are puffed vp with pride to aduaunce themselues against God: let vs consider that they bee looking glasses which God setteth before vs for our instruction, and that we also should be in the same taking, if God had not pitied our frowardnesse to correct it. Neuertheless, let vs vnderstand, that God dalyeth not with vs in sending vs his worde now adayes. And why? For it holdeth men so much the more conuicted, inasmuch as they become worse than wilde beastes, in that they woulde not by any meanes bee tamed for all his calling of them to him so familiarly, by meanes whereof their shame is so much the more discouered, so as the worlde knoweth what was hidden within them, which coulde not haue bene perceiued otherwise. Seeing then that we see this: let vs learn to say euer, that Gods worde is good and holy, and that it shoulde bee the very foode of life, if men turned it not to venim and poison through their owne naughtinesse their owne naughtinesse: by reason whereof their fault is such, as the blame thereof can in no wise be fathered vppon God.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea euen so farre as to bring vs to true repentance, that being subdued by his corrections, wee may learne to be sorie for our sinnes, and for the imperfections y are in vs, vntill he haue throughly clensed vs of them, and deliuered vs quite from all the temptations of the flesh and the world. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On

On Munday the vj. of May. 1555.

The xiiij. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the second Chapter.

26. 27. 28. 29. Then sent I messengers, &c.

30 But Sehon King of Hesebon would not let vs passe, for the Lorde thy God had hardened his spirit, and made his heart stubborne, to the ende to deliuer him into thy hand, as it appeareth at this day.

31 And the Lorde saide vnto mee, beholde, I haue begunne to giue Sehon and his land before thee; goe to, take possession, that thou mayest possesse his land.

32 And Sehon came out against vs, he and all his people to fight in Iasa:

33 And the Lorde our God deliuered him before vs, and wee smote him, and his sonnes, and all his people.

34 And at the same time wee tooke all his Cities, and destroyed the men, women, and children in them, and we left him nothing remaining,

35 Sauing the Cattell which we tooke to our selues, and the spoyle of the Cities, which we tooke.

36 From Aroer which is vppon the banke of the Riuer Arnon, and the Citie which is vppon the Riuer, and vnto Galaad, there was not any Citie that could defend it selfe from vs. For the Lord our God had giuen them all into our hands.

37 Onely thou shalt not come neere the land of the children of Ammon, nor vnto any place of the Riuer Iabok, nor vnto the Cities on the hill, nor vnto any of all those places which the Lord our God forbad vs.

WEe haue seene heretofore howe God being determined to harden Sehon, letted not for all that to cause him to be summoned, to the end he shold haue let the children of Israel passe without dooing them harme, and without shewing himselfe to be their enemie. And therewithall it hath bene shewed, that GOD will sende message of peace vnto men: & yet notwithstanding knoweth that the same shall stand them in no stead, but to make them vnexcusable. After the same maner, the Gospell is preached to a great nomber, who notwithstanding doe but become the worse for it, and God knoweth right well that no profite shall come thereof, but that they shall bee rebellious still. Why then doeth hee call them to him? To bereaue them of all excuse, and to lay open their malice and vngodlinesse. For so long as men abide vndiscouered, GOD seemeth after a sorte to doe them wrong. But when he sendeth them his worde, then bewray they themselues what they bee, and their vnbeliefe is manifestly prooued. And so let vs vnderstand that our Lorde knoweth well what the end of the preaching of his word shall be: ỹ is to wit, that it shall become the sauour of death to a great sorte: but yet will he not cease to appoint his worde to bee preached still: and that doeth he for good and iust cause, namely to the ende that men should bee the more condemned. But yet for all this, it is the preachers ductie to offer peace vnto all men, according also as our Lorde Iesus Christ saith to his Disciples, whersoeuer yee come, offer peace: and if they that heare you bee vnworthie thereof, your peace shall returne to you againe. As if he should say, There shall be no losse at al, you shall trie what is in men, and the friendlye greeting which you shall beare vnto them, shall be as a touchstone, to the ende they may not be able to say, that God hath not visited them nor had no care of them: and so shall they be proued to haue reiected his grace.

And herewithall wee bee warned, to seeke peace with all men as much as in vs lyeth, accordingly as it is saide in the Psalme that wee must euen followe after it: so as it is not ynough for vs to bee friendly, and to indeuour to liue without anoying of any bodie, and without vexing or troubling any of our neighbours: but wee must labour yet further to seeke peace. If wee see there bee any vnrulye folke, wee must pacifye them as much as is possible. If wee see that Satan procureth vs strife and contention, wee must labour to remedie them as much as wee can: accordingly as our Lorde Iesus Christ requireth of the faithfull, not onely that they shoulde bee peaceable themselues, but also that they shoulde indeuour to set peace euerywhere. That then is one thing which wee ought to doe. And therewithall wee must bethinke our selues how S. Paul saieth, that wee must seeke peace, as much as in vs is. And by that saying he comforteth vs. If it so happen that wee can not make men our friendes, but ỹ although they haue no cause to complaine of vs, nor can say that wee haue done them any harme or wrong, yet they cease not to be malicious & bitter towards vs: we haue wherewith to comfort our selues, in ỹ we haue done the best we can to seeke peace. And therefore although

Pſal. 34. 15. 1. Pet. 3. 11.

Rom. 12. 18.

wee bee faine to line among ſuch as ſeeke all the meanes they can to trouble and vexe vs: yet muſt not wee followe their malice to be like vnto them, but wee muſt alwayes doe our duetie
Pro.25. 22. & Ro.12. 20 to maintaine peace and friendſhip. And if men will not bee wonne by vs: then ſhall our mildeneſſe and gentleneſſe turne to burning coales againſt them, wherewith they ſhall bee conſumed. Beſides this, the Lorde will maintaine our innocencie, and when he ſeeth that wee haue not aſſailed thoſe at whoſe handes we demaund not any thing, but rather haue laboured to ouercome euill with dooing good: let vs not doubt but he will aſſiſt vs with his ſuccour.

There is this further, that Moſes termeth it *The word of peace*, when men abſtaine from all euill dooing, and offer all right and reaſon: which wee ought to marke well: for many will ſay that they deſire nothing but peace: howbeit, that is but to their owne profite, and to their neighbors loſſe: and that is no meane [of peace in deede.] Deſire wee then to bee at peace? Deſire wee to haue agreement with them that dwell with vs? Let vs on our ſide deale vprightly: let vs abſtaine from all wrong dooing: let vs greeue no man, let vs drawe no mans goods to our ſelues, let vs yeeld euerie man that which is his due. Lo what peace is. And herein wee ſee that all the faire proteſtations which they make that are giuen to rauine and extorſion: are but lyes. For the holy Ghoſt hath tolde vs here, that there is no word of peace, but where vprightneſſe and iuſt dealing is obſerued, ſo as no man is vexed in any wiſe. And like as wee muſt indeuour to bee reaſonable towardes our neighbours, to maintaine friendſhip with them: ſo if they offer vs reaſon, wee muſt looke that we refuſe it not. For if wee bee vnmeaſurably hard to bee contented: the thing muſt needes be performed in vs which
Pſal.109,17. is written in the Pſalme: that is to wit, he refuſed bleſſednеſſe, and it is farre off from him: therefore ſhall curſednеſſe couer him as a cloake, and it ſhall ſticke faſt to his fleſh and to his ſkinne. Would wee then that God ſhould bleſſe vs, and cauſe men alſo to beare vs fauour and friendſhip? Let vs on our behalfe ſeeke bleſſednеſſe to the vttermoſt of our power: and when wordes of peace are offered vs, let vs not goe ſeeke occaſions of controuerſie, to ſtirre vp ſtrife and debate. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to marke vpon that text.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moſes addeth. He ſaieth *That Sehon King of Heſebon wouldde not giue the children of Iſrael leaue to paſſe.* And why? *For the Lord* (ſaieth he) *had hardened his ſpirit, and made his heart ſtubborne.* I haue told you alreadie, that although God forcſee that the meſſage of peace ſhall not preuaile: yet he ceaſſeth not to ſend it. But here Moſes expreſſeth yet a further matter: that God hardeneth mens hartes. And in the ende he addeth moreouer, that he doeth it of purpoſe to ouerthrowe them and deſtroy them, which is much more. Nowe this is verie ſtraunge geere at the firſt ſight. And that is the cauſe why men haue gone about to alter theſe textes: but in ſo doing they haue marred them, for it is all one when they would ſet ſuch a gloſe as this vpon it, that Gods hardening of Sehons heart, was no more but his promiſing that hee ſhould become hard hearted, and that he letted not the hardneſſe and ſtubbornneſſe of his hart, that is to ſay, he did let Sehon alone when he ſhewed himſelfe ſtubborn. Theſe are too feeble ſhiftes. For when as the ſcripture ſaith expreſſely that GOD hardened: it fathereth the verie worke it ſelfe vpon him. Againe, wee ſee how it ſaieth, Thou Lord haſt done it: and that in mo places than onely in this. Thinke wee that the holy Ghoſt wanted wordes wherewith to vtter his meaning, when he ſaide, I will harden Pharaos heart, and beholde, God hath hardened him? And againe when he ſaieth in the Pſalme that the Lord turned & conuerted their hearts vnto ſtubbornneſſe, when they roſe vp ſo againſt Iſrael? If men ſhould flee alwayes to this gloſe, God ſaieth that he will harden, that is to ſay, he will not hinder or impeache the hardening: to what purpoſe were that? Wee ſee it is a fond kinde of dealing, and the word *Turne* ſheweth it well. Behold, God turneth the heart. Whereas mens heartes were plyable and diſpoſed to courteſie, God turneth them and maketh them to be inflamed with hatred, ſo as they be the firſt that begin the warre. And what meaneth that? So then vnleſſe wee meane to dally and mocke with the holy ſcripture, we muſt not ſeeke ſuch ſhifts, but rather conſider after what ſort it is that God hardeneth mens heartes: and yet notwithſtanding is not guiltie of the hardneſſe that is in me, nor can or ought to bee charged with the euill. Wee muſt come to that point. For let vs marke, that although God harden mens heartes, yet men faile not alſo to harden themſelues. And theſe two things may agree very well: that is to wit that a man ſhoulde harden himſelfe in his owne naughtineſſe, and yet not without Gods working in ſuch wiſe as the euill proceedeth not of him, ne ought to bee imputed to him, as I ſaid afore. And to proue that men themſelues ought to beare the blame and condemnation of their hard heartednеſſe, there needeth no long diſcourſe to bee made: for euery man carieth his owne inditement readie framed in himſelfe. As howe? Euen the wickedſt ſort doe giue euidence againſt themſelues: and although all the world would excuſe them, and that both great & ſmall did acquit them: yet haue they a hartbiting within them, which maketh them to perceiue, that whenſoeuer they offend or ſinne, they doo it willingly of their owne accorde, of a certaine lewdneſſe, and with their owne wil. There is not that man which knoweth not this. Euen the greateſt deſpiſers of God that are (ſay I,) euen they that are become as bruiſh as is poſſible to bee, haue the ſaid brondingyron ſearing within them, ſo as they knowe that their ſinnes round of nothing elſe than their owne ſelfemouing, and of their owne curſed and wicked affection. Seeing then that men doe feele themſelues guiltie there needeth no more diſputing vppon that point.

But now let vs come to the ſecond point that

is to wit, how it is that God hardeneth men, without being partaker of their sinnes. Let vs marke, that sometimes the causes shall be apparant. And whensoeuer God punisheth men, wee must needes confesse that hee doeth it iustly: marke that for one poynt. Now one of the meanes which he hath to punishe men with all, is that hee blindeth them, that hee hardeneth their hartes, that hee sendeth them the spirit of giddinesse, that hee deliuereth them vp to Satan. These then are signes of Gods wrath and vengeance.

And therefore if there were any cause going before: wee must glorify him. And why? for hee doeth the office of a iudge: and for so doing there is no cause to carp and snap at him. It is 19.24. sayd that God will send the spirit of drowsinesse 2.28. vppon men. And why? Because they haue misused his goodnesse, and the instruction that he gaue them. When wee see that this cause went afore: that is to wit, that men did wilfully shut their eyes, that they would not heare, and that they would not receiue any instruction, but rather labored to abolish Gods truth vtterly: is it not reason that they should bee giuen vp to the spirit of giddinesse? Nay moreouer, they will needes be wittie to mocke God: and we see a nomber of these skoffers, which are alwayes frumping, and to their seeming, God is but a babe. By reason hereof hee shaketh them vtterly of, in such wise as they become brute beastes. Now then, when that cause goeth afore: wee see that God executeth his Iustice and punisheth men in such sort, as wee can not but glorifie him. Marke that for one poynt.

2.29. True it is that sometime there shall be speciall causes: but the saying of Saint Paul in the first chapter to the Romans extendeth yet further. For there wee see that God hath iust reason to blinde all the world, and that if hee should doe so he should doe but the office of a iudge. For why? although the heathen had no doctrine preached vnto them: yet doe the heauens and the earth speake sufficiently vnto them, inasmuch as God doth shewe himselfe there. But who are they that honor and serue God, for all their inioying of the benefites which he bestoweth vpon them in this world? All are vnthankefull, all are malicious, wee cobble vp Gods riches here, and in the meane while regard not how much we be beholden to him, at leastwise to doe him homage for them. And therefore it 1.24. is reason that he should giue vp men into a leude 28. minde, (as sayth Sainte Paule) and that hee should deliuer them into wicked lustes, so as they should forget themselues, and ouershoote themselues, and giue ouer themselues to all vnrighteousnesse, and to all maner of shamefull and horrible dealings. And why? For they honoured not their creator that made them, & had shewed himselfe so bountifull and mercifull to them. And therefore whensoeuer God hardeneth men, wee must thinke he hath iust reason to doe so, because our leawdnesse and vnthankfulnesse are to be found euery where.

But yet neuertheleſſe, if there appeare no apparant cause, and that when we haue sought neuer so much why God hardeneth men, wee finde no cause at all: yet let vs not therefore cease to glorifie him, though wee see not the reason of his doings. As for example, a man might aske why Sehon was hardened rather than the Moabites, Edomites, and Ammonites? Ye see here foure nations betweene whom there was no oddes, I meane as in respect of naughtinesse. For if wee thinke that the Ammonites and Edomites, were better than the Amorrhits: it is but folly and a deceiuing of our selues. Then were they all as infidelles, and coulde haue found in their hartes that Gods people had bin vtterly sunk. But God boweth the hearte of the Ammonites and such others, to the end that they should not enter into warre. Hee meeketh and suppleth them, as if a wilde beaste were tamed: and in the meane while he hardeneth Sehons hart, pricking him and inflaming him foreward, to the ende he should come to giue battell. Whence commeth such diuersitie? Wee cannot alleadge any reason, our wit is too rawe and weake thereto. And againe, God concealeth his purpose from vs in that behalfe. What shall wee doe then? although wee be at our wits end in this case: let vs learne to doe God so much honor, as to acknowledge that hee is iust and vpright in all his doinges. And although the thing be straunge to our vnderstanding, and it seeme to vs that wee might speake against it: yet notwithstanding let vs forbeare to reply, and let vs humble our selues vnder the maiestie of our God. For truely the thing wherein he will try mens humilitie, is that wee should glorifie him in al his works, yea euen though they agree not ne match not with our natural reaso. There is not a truer obedience of faith than that. And if they which babble so much nowadayes against Gods prouidence, had learned but this one principle of honoring GOD by confessing that hee is righteous, and measured not his Iustice or righteousnesse by their owne brayne: there would be no more difficultie. But what? There are a sorte of proud beggers, which set themselues against GOD, and swelle at him lyke Toades. Insomuch that if they haue once taken a toy in their head, although GOD haue spoken the flat contrary: they passe not for that, neither will they surcease their rage for it. But as for our part, to the intent wee may be Gods true disciples, let vs bridle our wittes and hold them as prisoners and captiues vnder the doctrine of the holy scripeure: which is, that God holdeth mens hartes in his hand, and turneth them to gentlenesse when hee listeth, as we see he did in Egypt. Behold, the Egyptians were ful of spite and cruelte, so as they ment nothing else but to haue vtterly destroyed the people of Israel. But yet in one minute of an houre, and euen in the turning of a hand, God wrought in such wise that they were chaunged. They yeelded vp all their vessell of golde and siluer at the cõmaundemẽt of ỹ people. To be short they

Rom.1.5.26. 26.

Exod.11.3. & 12.36.

did

did more for the children of Israel, than the fathers would haue done for their owne children. And whereof came this? Euen of Gods changing of their hartes when hee thought good. Also on the contrary part, God holdeth mens hartes in his hand, to harden them as he listeth. And if this seeme straunge vnto vs: let vs acknowledge the weakenesse of our vnderstanding, and let vs alwayes first and formost confesse God to bee righteous, and therewithall reuerence his high and deepe secretes, sith wee cannot atteine vnto them. Thus yee see what we haue to remember in the first place.

Also wee haue to note the ende for which this was done. *God* (sayth Moses) *was determined to destroy Sehon:* GOD had already assigned him his iudgement: that was the cause why hee hardened him. It is not in this text onely, that the holy Ghost speaketh so. But when God sendeth his Prophet Esay, and telleth him that the people shalbe hardened and blinded, yea euen the more after their hearing of all the matters and warninges that should be giuen them: he addeth I will haue this people blinded, to the ende they conuert not and I should heale them. As if he should say, this people is not worthie to bee pitied at my hand, or to haue any mercy shewed them: and therefore they must dwell still in their destruction. And that they may doe so, I will harden their hartes, stop their eares, and blinde their eyes, so as they shall be past all amendement. Let vs vnderstand, that in so doing God hath alwayes iust reason: but yet is it not to be said, that therefore it is lawfull for vs alwayes to know it. If the reason be apparant to vs it is well, and let vs wey it throughly, acknowledging (as I tolde you before) that God executeth his iust vengeance vppon the sinners that haue offended him too much, and abused his patience and goodnesse. But howsoeuer the case stand, if wee see no reason at all, let his onely will and ordinance suffice vs, and let it content vs that he knoweth why hee dealeth so, though it be not his will to reueile it vnto vs, at leastwise till the day wherein the thinges that are
1.Cor.13.9. now hidden from vs, shal be discouered vnto vs. For (as sayth Saint Paul) as now wee see but in part and darkely. And if wee knewe that: namely that wee be here as in a darke prison, so long as we be closed in with our mortall flesh: and againe that wee be earthly and must be faine to bee renewed ere wee can comprehend Gods secretes perfectly: it were enough to allaye the cackeling of such as nowadayes blaspheme the doctrine of election, so as they should humble themselues before God, to imbrace with all reuerence whatsoeuer is contained in the holy scripture. But doe what we can, yet must wee passe that way. And therefore when wee heare that Gods will was to destroy Sehon, and therefore he hardened him: let vs assure our selues, that when it pleaseth God to drawe men to saluation, he turneth their hartes to make thē repent them of their sinnes, that they may bee sory for them and seeke to obey him. After that maner doth God alter the hartes of such as were malicious and froward, and reformeth them to his obedience, yea euen when he intendeth to saue them. Lykewise on the contrary part, when he hath vtterly appoynted them to destruction: he hardeneth them, so as there is no meane for them to admit any amendment, or to come neere it, but they repine against him and his doctrine, whereof they make as it were a deadly poyson. Lo after what sorte God worketh. True it is that mans naturall reason can neuer well brooke his doctrine: but wee must submit our selues with such humilitie in this behalfe, as wee 1.Iohn gainesay not the thinges which the holy scripture teacheth. Againe, whereas it is sayd, that the children of Hely hauing bin warned, receiued not correction at their fathers hand: it followeth immediately, because the Lord was purposed to slea them. By the setting downe hereof, wee see that God gaue them not the grace to conuert, because he left them in the destruction, wherein they were by nature: And that he so purposed, it was through his rightfull iustice. Here is no talke of I wote not what permission or sufferance, so as God should play the blinkard, or shut his eyes as these fantasticall fellowes imagine, which haue as much experience in the holy scripture as dogges: but it is sayd, that Gods will was to haue it so. Wherefore let vs learne, that when God hardeneth men, it is a signe that hee hath deliuered them to Satan, as past recouery. True it is that on the one part God serueth his turne by Satan and by wicked men, to deceiue the vnbelecuers, ac- 1.Iohn cording as wee see that when it was sayd, who will be my messenger to deceiue Achab? the diuill offereth himselfe, and God sendeth him. Go (sayth God) and ouerrule thou all his false prophets, and let them bee all there to blinde this wretch that hath bin so rebellious against me. We see how God serueth his turne by Satan, & that all false prophets are sent by him. But yet should not this preuaile: for if men were well disposed, Satan should win nothing by his illusions, and al his wiles should be withstood: But 2.Thes it is sayd that God giueth effectuall or workefull error: it is euen Saint Paules owne maner of speach.

Now whereas he termeth it effectuall error, it is as much to say as men shall be so sorted, that they shall not be able to discerne any more, nor to perceiue the deceites, but shall become so brutish, as they shall fling and cast themselues headlong into destruction, and not iudge of any thing. It is God that blindeth them so, sayth Saint Paul. And why? Because he is minded to ouerthrowe them. Now I haue tolde you already, that sometimes the cause shall not be apparant as it is in that place of Saint Paul, who auoucheth it concerning such as hauing heard the Gospell, receiued it not, ne became the better for it, but reiected it, as wee see these wretches doe nowadayes, which trample the doctrine of saluation vnder their feete, through their vngodlynesse. And Saint Paul sayth it is good reason that God should so blinde them, as darknesse might reigne ouer them, forasmuch

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as they listed not to receiue the light. But sometimes the cause shall be incomprehensible: wee shall not perceiue why God worketh so; [wee shall not discerne] why hee will haue one to perish rather than another. [In that case] let vs content our selues with his only goodnes, and confesse that he is righteous howsoeuer the worlde goe. Besides this, let vs learne to call vpon God, that it may please him to turne our hartes to good, so as when hee sendeth vs the message of peace, and offereth vs his fatherly goodnesse, wee may not onely heare it as the voyce of a man: but also be touched with it by him in our hartes. And in so dooing, let vs not doubt of his mercie, for hee witnesseth thereby that he hath pitie vppon vs, and prepareth vs, and chaungeth our hartes, to bowe them to his obedience. Thus yee see what wee haue to remember as in respect of this sentence.

Now Moses sayth, *that Sehon came forth to battell & was ouercome, both he and all his people, because God had deliuered him to the children of Israel.* Here Moses sheweth that the victorie which the people had of Sehon and the Amorrhytes, was of Gods meere grace. And it was meete also that the people should bee put in mind thereof, that they might perciue how God had gouerned thē. And this rehearsall is made, to keepe the people in awe, and to make them vnderstand, that if they did not serue and honor him all their lyfe long, and teach their children to doe the lyke: it were too wicked an vnthankefulnesse. And here wee haue two poyntes to marke. The one is generall, that wee must learne to yeelde God the honor of all the victories that hee giueth vs against our enemies. I meane not onely of Princes when they haue made warres, or woonne a battell in the field: but [euen of our selues also] when wee haue bin assayled by some peculiar person, and be escaped from his handes. When a man hath done vs any wrong, or put vs to some trouble, and wee bee deliuered from it: Let vs assure our selues it is God that hath giuen vs that vpper hand, to the end we should alwayes haue our mouthes open to yeelde him thankes for it: and that we should not onely doe it with the mouth: but also and specially shewe forth by our whole lyfe, how much wee bee bound vnto him. Yee see then that the thing which wee haue to marke, is that whensoeuer and how oft soeuer we scape from the malice of our enemies, God hath reached out his hand to succour vs, and by that meanes hath bound vs to him, to the intent wee shoulde haue the more courage to serue him and honor him.

The second poynt is, that looke what Moses spake to the people of Israel, the same doth hee say at this day vnto vs. For wee haue neede to be put in minde of Gods grace and benefites, that wee may bee the more moued to magnify his name and to giue our selues wholy vnto him, so as wee may neuer forget his benefites, to runne into any disorder. For wee see howe men doe easily sotte themselues, specially when GOD dealeth fauourably with them. Because our God dealeth gently with vs: wee thinke we may conspire to forsake him and forget him. And truely this prouerb which is common among men, namely that wee cannot away with our owne ease, is put too much in practise. And therefore it is for our welfare to be put in minde of Gods benefites, and to haue the remembraunce of them refreshed. And why? To the intent wee may be holde in awe of him, and serue him, & take courage to keepe our selues altogether vnder his subiectiō, assuring our selues that that is our souereigne blisse, and that forasmuch as hee neuer forsaketh his faithful ones, and those that leane vnto him, wee suffer him to be our protector, and play not the loose colts, so as wee should be forsaken of him at our neede? Yee see then that this declaration is directed to vs nowadayes.

As touching that it is sayd, *That GOD had deliuered Sehon before them*: it serueth to shewe the better, that inasmuch as they had an easie victorie, GOD gaue the greater brightnesse to his grace, as wee haue seene alreadye heretofore. I note this briefly, to the intent that this streine may bee layd to the other, which wee haue seene and expounded alreadie.

Had the people of Israell had much a doe to ouercome their enemies: they might haue imputed it to their owne force. O wee haue fought well, [might they haue sayd.] O there was great prowes in vs: for our enemies were very valiant.

But when as their enemies were driuen lyke chaffe with the winde, when they that we earst both strong and stout were dismayed, so as they had no more hart than women, but scattered away at the first shocke, and became so cowardly, as they might smite vppon them at their pleasure, so as the people were euen weary of sleaing them that were lyke enough to haue eaten them vp: What is to be sayd of it, but that God deliuered the enemies of his people; that is to say, that hee brought them thither as it were of purpose to take vengeance on them? Yee see then that the thing which is imported by this maner of Moseses speach, is the amplifying of Gods grace, to the ende that it might bee the better knowen of the children of Israel.

And whereas it is sayd, *that all were put to the swords, euen little children and all:* It might at the first blushe seeme a poynt of great cruelty, that the children of Israel spared not euen the little babes. And what an outrage was that? For what though the king and the men had bin so froward as to deny them passage? Ought the women therefore to haue borne the smart of it, and their little babes too? We see and are warned hereby, that wee must not deeme of Gods iudgements after our owne fancie. For if wee will needes runne a head when God telleth vs that hee hath disposed a matter, and that wee will needes shoote foorth our bolte at euery turne: wee take vppon vs the office of GOD. For it is his right to iudge of vs, and not ours to iudge of him. And what

will

will come of it, but that wee shall be confounded in our rashnesse and malapertnesse? What a trayterousnesse is it, that mortall creatures shoulde climbe so high, as to giue iudgement vpon their maker? Therefore when there is any speaking of Gods iudgementes, let vs learne to restreine our wittes from such rashnesse as to say what we thinke good: and let vs consider that all that euer commeth from God, is good and rightfull, though it seeme contrariwise to vs. And in very deede, sith wee see not a whit into the bottomlesse deepes of Gods iudgementes: let vs assure our selues that wee doe but bewray the infirmitie that is in vs, and that in the meane season God hath wherewith to maintaine his iustice, although he shewe it not to vs. And were the thing wel weied ỳ is written in Genesis: we should know that it was not without cause ỳ our Lord commanded the children of the Amorrhytes to be rooted out of the world. For euen in the time of Abraham, the Chananites were come to the full measure of all iniquitie, as it seemed: and we see examples enow thereof, in that they troubled Abraham so much. And yet for al that, God sayd that their iniquitie was not yet full ripe. Albeit that men had condemned them: yet is God patient, and taryeth, and beareth with them, yea euen foure hundred yeeres after. Yee see then that God did beare with the wickednesse of that people foure hundred yeeres: and shall wee say now at the foure hundred yeeres ende, how happeneth it that God dealeth so roughly with them? Wee would faine be pleading against God. If he vse patience, wee say he is too slowe: and if he vse extreme vengeance, wee blame him of cruelnie. But contrarywise, if God execute not his iudgementes out of hand: let vs assure our selues ỳ therein he sheweth his goodnesse. And on the other side if he extend such rigor as maketh vs abashed and afraide: let vs assure our selues that he doth it iustly and vpon good cause, although the same cause be not euer apparant vnto vs. So then, first of al, whereas here is mentiõ made of such a slaughter of the Amorrhites as extended euen to the infantes: let vs assure our selues that seeing GOD telleth vs that hee hadde commaunded the people of Israell to doe it: wee must imbrace it without gainsaying, & it is not for vs to checke against it, vnlesse we will be condemned for our diuelish pride, in presuming to pleade against our iudge, yea euen against our souereine iudge.

Gen. 5. 16.

Finally wee must not iustifie men when they aduenture any thing vpon their owne heades and for their owne pleasure: but wee must put a difference betweene the things that concerne God, and the thinges that concerne men. For in the end of the chapter, Moses saith expressely, *According as the Lord our God had commanded.* The if any thing come in our way, let vs inquire whether it concerne God or no. If wee perceiue that it concerne God: then must wee submit our selues thereto, saying, Lord thou art righteous, let thine onely will suffice vs, without looking to haue any other reason: let it not be lawfull for vs to goe beyond that rule, forasmuch as it is the rule of all right. Now then if we haue the discretion and skill, to discerne betweene God and men: then shall we not fayle to honor and glorify God, and to yeeld him the prayse of Iustice and vprightnesse: [and so shall wee lykewise] if wee indeuour to trye mens doings by Gods word as we be taught it. For good reason it is that the same should ouerrule vs, yea and that all our deedes and thoughtes shoulde be so measured, compassed, and directed thereby, as wee may consider thus with our selues: Hath God forbidden it? then is it a wicked thing, and therefore I must forbeare it: but doth God allow it or permit it? then let vs confesse that it is well done, without inquiring any further. Thus yee see what wee haue to remember for the conclusion of this text.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better, and to teach vs to condemne our selues vtterly, (as in very deede there is nothing in vs but cursednesse, and none but onely God deserueth to haue al praise of righteousnes & vprightnes yeelded vnto him) and ỳ euery of vs may not only confesse it with our mouths, but also sigh for our sinnes through true repentance, so as wee may returne againe vnto him, praying him to chaunge our wicked hartes in such wise, that whereas now they be plunged in al naughtines, and stonehard: hee will vouchsafe to bring them to his obedience, and to write and ingrose his lawes and commaundementes in them, so as we may seeke nothing but to please him, and to frame our selues wholy to his good will. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people, &c.

On Tewsday the vij. of May. 1555.

The fifteenth Sermon which is the first vpon the third Chapter.

THen turned wee and went vp by the way of Basan. And Og the king of Basan came out against vs, he and all his people, to fight in Edray.

2 And the Lord sayd vnto me, feare him not, for I haue deliuered him into thy hand, with all his people and land, and thou shalt doe to him as thou diddest to Sehon king of the Amorrhites, that dwelt in Hesebon.

3 So

3 So the Lord our God deliuered Og King of Basan with all his people into our handes, and we smote him, so as nothing remained of him.

4 The same season we tooke all his Cities, and there was not anie Citie which we tooke not: that is to wit, threescore Cities, all the Countrie of Argob, which is of the kingdome of Og in Basan.

5 All his Cities were fenced with high walles, Gates, and Barres, besides the vnwalled townes which were manie in number.

6 And wee destroyed them as wee had done to Sehon King of Hesebon, in rooting out all his Cities, men, women, and children.

7 But all the cattle and the spoile of the Cities, wee made a pray for our selues.

8 So at that time we tooke the land out of the hand of the two kinges of the Amorrhytes, which were beyond Iordan, from the riuer Arnon vnto Mount Hermon:

9 (Which Hermon the Sidonians call Sarion, and the Amorrhytes name it Sanir:)

10 [Euen] al the cities of the plaine, and all Galaad, and all Basan, vnto Selcha and Edray: which are cities of the kingdome of Og in the countrie of Basan.

11 For onely Og king of Basan remained of the remnant of the Giants, behold, his bed which is a bed of yron, is it not at Rabbath among the children of Ammon? The length thereof is nine cubites, and the bredth foure cubites after the cubites of a man.

IF we should take by thinges that I haue read, but as a simple reporte of a storie: there would be no profite at all in the reading. But if we be able to apply it to such vse, as God meant by his holy spirit: it is a very profitable lesson for vs. It is declared here, that the people of Israell smote Og king of Basan, as they had done Sehon king of the Amorrhytes. That (as ye see) is the story. But wee must consider to what purpose GOD meant to haue it registred in his lawe, and published by Moses, and brought againe to the peoples remembraunce. It was to the ende that the people should knowe, that they had bin guyded by the hand of God, and that when they were deliuered out of the land of Egypt, they wist not where to haue become, vnlesse GOD had continued his fauour towardes them, to put them in possessiō of the land which he had promised them for their inheritance. But now wee must marke also, that the people were not yet entered into the land of Chanaan: there was yet great hardnesse in the matter. And if they had not trusted in God, they might haue bin so feared, as would haue caused them to turne head, and to murmur against God, and to forsake the land that had bin promised them. Therfore it was for them to be confirmed. And Moses hath respect thereunto, in that he setteth before their eyes, the power where through they withstoode their enemies: which was Gods assisting of them, and his ouer throwing of their enemies. And now that I haue noted that it was Gods wil to haue this story published and confirmed, to the end aforesayd: it behoueth vs lykewise to come to our selues, and to apply it also to our owne vse. For all was written for our learning. 1.Cor.10,11.

Then let vs marke, that whereas Moses hath sayd here, *that Og king of Basan was ouerthrowen*: the people should haue thought thus: Behold, God hath deliuered vs from a second and a third death. For it had bin to no purpose to haue scaped out of Egypt, to haue bin set free from the bondage of Pharao, and to haue passed through the red Sea: all this had bin nothing, if our God had not strengthened vs, seeing wee haue bin assayled by so mightie and strong enemies, whome we had not bin able to resist. And in good sooth, wee ought to call to minde what hath bin declared before, that is to wit, that the people ran away as soone as their enemies came against them. And why was that? For it was not for them to looke for any succour at Gods hand, because they ran foorth at aduenture with such fooolish rashnesse. God had sayd vnto them, yee shall not goe to battell: and yet would they needes hazarde the incounter.

Therefore it was meete that they should bee made to knowe their follie to their cost. Yet notwithstanding, the people of Israel knewe wel enough by experience, that they were not of sufficient power to withstand their enemies. But now, for asmuch as nothing was able to

ſtand before them: therby it appeared that their obteining of the victorie was not by their owne ſtrength, neither coulde they boaſt thereof: but it was God that had wrought in that behalfe. And it behoueth vs alwayes to make the ſame compariſon, if wee wil well perceiue Gods grace and fauor towardes vs. For what is the cauſe that wee take our ſelues to be ſtrong and ſtoute, and yeede not God his due prayſe? It is for that wee bee bleared: when hee hath reached vs his hand, and when hee hath ſuccoured vs at ſome pinch, wee conſider not from whence that commeth. What remedie then? Let vs bethinke our ſelues thus: Go to, haue I not found my ſelfe ſore combred in very ſmall thinges? Haue not I bin daunted and ſtriken out of hart? And what was the cauſe thereof, but that God made mee to feele mine owne frailtie? Surely I ſhoulde bee neuer a whit valeanter now, than I was then: were it not that God gaue me his helpe. So then it is ſome where elſe than of my ſelfe, that I haue my ſtrength: and therefore it is not for mee to aduaunce my ſelfe through ouerweening: for God hath giuen mee a ſure knowledge of my feeblenеſſe. Now then, I muſt thinke continually how to humble my ſelfe: and when he hath vpheld me by his ſtrong hand, I muſt acknowledge that that benefite came of him, and that hee will be glorified for the ſame. Yee ſee then that the intent why Moſes ſpake ſo to the people of Iſrael, was that they ſhould acknowledge that their ouercomming of their enemies, was not by the power and ſtrength of man, but by Gods fighting for them.

Neuertheleſſe, this ought to haue moued them, not onely to honor God, but alſo to truſt in him, as I haue touched before. For it was not enough for the people of Iſrael to haue conquered the land of Baſan: for they had not yet paſſed the riuer of Iordan where their inheritance lay. Therfore it ſtood them on hād to be armed with newe truſt, and to proceede with full purpoſe to incounter their enemies againe. And whence might they haue ſuch hardineſſe? If they had taken it in themſelues, it had bin but a rage that God woulde haue condemned: but they muſt haue imboldened themſelues with truſt that God would not faile them. And how might they be ſure of that? By their owne experience which they had had therof. Why was it that God ouerthrewe as well Sehon, as Og king of Baſan? Becauſe he was the leader of his people, and had taken them into his charge and protection. And that was not to leade them onely to the banke of Iordan: but to performe the promiſe that he had made to Abraham. And therefore the people might conclude, that the victories which they had obtained already, were but an enterance to a further paſſage, whereby they might fully perſwade and aſſure themſelues, that God would continue with them euen vnto the ende. Euen ſo muſt we doe. If we perceiue any change in our ſelues, wee muſt acknowledge it to be the hand of God.

For ſometimes, yea oftentimes the faithfull ſhall finde themſelues aſtoniſhed and abaſhed vppon the ſudden, yea euen though there bee no great cauſe why. But thereby God warneth them of their infirmitie, to the ende they ſhould walke in awe and feare of him, calling vpon him, and vtterly diſtruſting their owne ſtrength. Agayne, when they ſee themſelues ſtrengthened they knowe that that commeth not of themſelues, neither are they ſo fooliſh as to be proud of it: but they magnify Gods goodneſſe and grace towardes them, and take courage vppon the ſame.

True it is [ſay they] that wee be wretched and filie creatures: but yet hath our God helped vs, to the end that wee ſhould truſt in him. Therefore let vs on forewarde as he commandeth, and let vs not doubt but hee will be the ſame man to morrowe that he is to day. The remembrance of his promiſe laſteth longer with him than for a day: and ſeeing he hath auowed himſelfe to be our father, it is not to ſhake vs off as the baſtes doe that forget their young ones, or as the fowles doe which forſake their byrdes whom they bred: but our God is a father to vs both in lyfe and death. Now then, let vs alwayes flee vnder the ſhadowe of his protection, and aſſure our ſelues that his power ſhall neuer bee diminiſhed towardes vs.

But wee haue alſo to marke how Moſes ſaith, *That Og king of Baſan came flinging foorth to giue battell*. wherein hee ſheweth that the people [of Iſraels] warre was iuſt and lawfull. For although they had expreſſe commaundement from God, to arme themſelues and to put Og king of Baſan to the ſword, not at their owne pleaſure, but vppon the authoritie of him that hath all power: yet was it Gods wil to miniſter a iuſt cauſe thereof vnto them, that they might be the more aſſured in their conſcience: And thereby wee bee warned (as I haue ſayd heretofore) not to attempt any thing againſt right and reaſon. If we will haue GOD to bleſſe our doinges, and to make them proſper, and bring them to good ende: let vs beware that wee ſtirre not ſo much as one finger vnaduiſedly, or contrarily to that which is ſhewed vs by Gods worde. For what is it that can make vs rightly hardye in all things? The hauing of a good warrant in our owne conſciences, that wee haue walked according to Gods commaundement, and gone no further than equitie and right will beare. If wee be ſure of that: then may wee looke for helpe from aboue, and wee ſhall not bee diſapointed. But if wee neglect the difference betweene good and bad, and runne to thinges vppon a head: it is good reaſon that God ſhoulde beguile vs, and that wee ſhould be confounded in our doinges. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke here, when Og king of Baſan came foorth as an enemie to prouoke the children of Iſraell, in ſuch wiſe as their warre became iuſt. For no doubt but this enemy was offered him of Gods hand, as wee ſawe that Sehon was yeſterday, whome God hardened becauſe hee was minded to ouerthrowe him. After the ſame maner happened it to Og the king of Baſan.

Now then, let vs learne to beware that wee pro-

prouoke not one man nor other, by giuing them cause to vexe and molest vs: but if wee haue any enemies, let them beginne the warre, and let vs on our side keepe the peace. Let that be a point for vs to beare away. For if wee begin the fray, by doing them wrong or violence: can wee looke for helpe at Gods hand? Can wee hope that he will fauor vs, when we be so out of order? Nay and therefore let vs not goe about to purchase vs enemies: (the diuil wil raise vs vp but too many of thé: and God also on his side may chance to exercise vs, and worke in such wise as wee shall haue enemies enowe, that will seeke all the meanes they can to persecute vs:) but let vs for our part seeke to haue peace, to the vttermost of our power.

And besides this, let vs alwayes hope that GOD will assist vs, if the quarell that wee maintaine bee good and rightfull, and such as hee alloweth. These are the thinges which wee haue to remember in that it is said that Og aduaunced himselfe, and came forth to assaile the people of Israell, without demaunding any thing at their hand, euen to stop them of the passage that God had giuen them.

Furthermore let vs beare in mind that which hath bin sayd afore, namely, that the chiefe warre which wee haue, is against our spirituall enemies. Therefore whensoeuer Satan assaileth vs, and practiseth all the mischiefe that hee can against vs: let vs vnderstand that GOD is minded to exercise vs: but yet shall wee haue wherewith to beare out the brunt, forasmuch as wee shall be strengthened by the power of the holy Ghost. And for the bringing thereof to passe, let vs marke howe it is added here, that God sayth vnto Moses, *Be not afraide: for I haue deliuered Og king of Basan into thy hand: therefore shalt thou doe to him as thou diddest vnto Sehon the king of the Amorrhytes*. Yee see then that here is a promise giuen, to the ende that the people should rest vppon it, and not doubt any more of the victorie, inasmuch as God telleth them that hee will fight for them. And it behoueth vs to marke well this text, because that if wee be destitute of Gods promises: though wee protest neuer so much that wee trust in him: it is but a vaine and fond imagination. And it is not in men to promise themselues any thing. For by what right or title may wee holde God bounde vnto vs, so as wee may say, God shall help vs, we shall not faile to be succoured at his hand? It would be to fõd an ouerstatelynes, if men should forge hopes of their owne head after that sort. Nay wee must waite quietly that God shewe vs his wil, and when we once haue the word of his mouth, then may wee stand vppon it. Let vs marke then that there is an inseparable bond, betweene Gods promises and the trust that wee haue in him. The world doth in deede vse the wordes *Faith* and *Trust*: Howbeit vnrightly. For men knowe the cõtrarie to that which they protest, because euery man conceiueth what hee listeth in his fancie, and considereth not what is the will of God. Therefore it behoueth vs to come backe to the order that Moses sheweth vs here: which is, that wee attempt not any thing before God haue first spoken it. For else, our meaning is but to transfigure him after our own pleasure, and looke as euerie man inuenteth follies in his owne heade: so woulde hee by and by haue God at his commaundement, to make him performe the things that hee himselfe hath conceiued. And what a dealing were that? What maiestie more woulde there bee in our God? Againe wee see our lustes are so outrageous, as is horrible: and yet shoulde God bee faine to daunce attendance at all houres, to doe the thinges that our imagination hath dreamed or doted vpon? Therefore let vs haue the modestie to looke vnto that which God promiseth. And when wee once haue that promise, we must no more reply against it, but bee contented with his speaking of the worde, and goe on boldly. *Be not afraid* (sayth the Lord) *I will deliuer him into thy hand*. And when our Lorde had sayd, *I will deliuer him into thy hand*: he added for a conclusion, *therefore be not afrayd*. But how must wee apply this doctrine to our instruction?

First and formost let vs looke that God promise. If wee were combred with any perplexitie or anguishe, and knewe not whether God would leaue vs in the mire or no: wee might well bee afraide: and if wee would not be afraide, wee should be too blockish. But when God sayth vnto vs, my children, it is true that you be weake, you can doe nothing of your selues, and you haue too strong an enemie, by meanes whereof yee coulde by no meanes withstand him if yee were not helped and vpheld by me: but I tell you, your temptations shall not bee greater than you shall be able to beare, I knowe what your power is, I will giue you strength and courage at your need, I wil mitigate ỹ tẽptations ỹ might ouerthrow you, and although the world and the deuill be starke mad against you, yet wil I bridle them, so that although you be roughly assayled, yet shall you ouercome them: trust thereunto. Hath God spoken as this man telleth vs? let vs neuer doubt of it. Not that wee can be vtterly exempted from all feare, so long as we liue in this world: Insomuch that although wee haue Gods promises, whereby we be assured that hee will neuer leaue vs, but that wee shall euer feele his helpe at our needes: yet must wee not thinke that wee shall be vtterly voyde of care and doubt, or that wee should not beware of the daungers that inuiron vs round about. No, but yet must not this feare so ouerawght vs, as wee should not take hart to call vppon God, and to rest vppon him, and to goe on still forward. Therefore when as it is sayd, *I will helpe thee, be not afraide*: our Lord will haue vs to fight in such wise against all feare, as it may not so ouermaster vs, as to make vs giue ouer, and turne head, and start away, so as we should be vtterly dismayd: but rather ỹ in stãding in aw, we should also hope & take courage to go forewarde, forasmuch as we haue God on our side. Thus yee see what is to bee remembred here.

And let vs chiefly apply this doctrine to our

ſpirituall battels which wee haue againſt Satan.
Iohn 14.30 & 1.Pet.5.8 For if the children of Iſraell could not vanquiſhe their enemies which were but men: how ſhall wee ouercome the prince of the worlde, and the infinite nomber of diuils, which are as ramping Lyons readye to ſwallowe vs vppe out of hand?

What is our force to beate backe ſuch enemies? Againe on the other ſide, we neede neuer to ſeeke out of our ſelues wherewith to be ouercome. For euery of vs doth nothing elſe but labor to ouerthrowe our ſelues. All the affections
Rom.8.7. & Col.1.21. and all the thoughtes that wee haue, are enemies to God and to our own ſaluation. Therfore although wee had no enemies to aſſaile vs without vs: yet are wee ouerthrowen already by our ſelues within. Yea verely, but when as our Lord telleth vs that his ſtrength ſhall dwell in vs: that is the thing whereat wee muſt take courage. And it ſhall be no preſumption to proceede after that ſorte, as the Papiſtes [beare men in hand: which] ſay it is a follie for men to aſſure themſelues, and that wee muſt alwayes hang in doubt. By meanes whereof they ſet vp their owne freewil, and al the other dotages inuented by themſelues, which are no better thē illuſions of Satan wherewith he hath bewitched them. And hereuppon they ſay yet ſtill, O, God will helpe vs. Yea but they haue not his promiſes: or at leaſtwiſe they regard them not. And in good faith they be forepoſſeſſed with this diueliſhe imagination, that they are able to doe much, and that they haue ſuch ſtrength in thē, as they may well bee Gods fellowes. And yet for all that, their hoping is but off and on at aduenture. But in the meane while they accuſe vs of preſumption, when we reſt allonely vpon Gods promiſes, aſſuring our ſelues that we can doe nothing at all, and that there is not one whit of ſtrength in vs. Whereas wee wayte for the thinges which our good God hath promiſed vs of his owne free goodneſſe, euen without preſuming any whit at all of our ſelues, but onely hoping for the performance of that which hee hath ſpoken, accordingly as he hath vouchſafed to binde himſelfe by his promiſes: muſt it not needes be that the diuill hath put out the Papiſtes eyes quite and cleane, when they terme ſuch beliefe preſumptuouſneſſe, whereas it is grounded vpon nothing but Gods promiſes? [yes verily.] But as I ſayd afore, let vs goe on boldely, and not doubt but that God can deliuer our enemies into our handes. Although it ſeeme that they ſhould catch vs in their pawes, and vtterly deſtroy vs: yet hath God deliuered them into our handes before the battell: and with ſuch certeintie doth it become vs to fight alwayes againſt Satan. Truely if wee looke vpon the ſtate of the faithfull: it may well ſeeme that they be left as a pray, and that there is no way for them to ſtand againſt their enemies. But what for that? God hath already determined what he will doe. As for the execution thereof, it doth not appeare at the firſt: but when as the faithfull haue this promiſe giuen vnto them, *I will deliuer thine enemies into thy hand*: they muſt haue an eye to the thing that is yet hidden. And for the ſame purpoſe doth Saint Paul ſay, GOD Rom. wil ſhortly put Satan vnder your feete. And for the ſame purpoſe alſo doth he ſay in another place: that Satan hath his power and dominion in the aire. It ſhould ſeeme by this, that Satan Epheſ. is ouer our heads, and that he ſhould ouerwhelme vs. But beholde here on the other ſide, how God auoweth that hee hath put him vnder our feete; and that for all the skirmiſhes which he can make againſt vs, and for all the alarums that he can giue vs, yet ſhall he not get the vpper hand of vs, no nor once prick vs in the heele, Gen. but we ſhal tread vpon his head. Loe howe God hath aſſured vs of victorie. What is to bee done then? Let vs looke at Satan and all our ghoſtly enemies, as already vanquiſhed, and aſſure our ſelues aforehand that God will make vs to triumph in the middeſt of our battels, ſo as wee may glory in our God as though our enemies were already diſpatched, and wee rid quite and cleane of them. And why? For the inſight of our faith muſt reſt vppon his promiſe where it is ſayd, *I haue deliuered thine enemies into thy hand.*

Moreouer, whereas Moſes reporteth, that *the people did to Og king of Baſan, as they had done to Sehon king of the Amorrhytes*: it is to ſhewe that the people were not cruel in putting the young infantes to the ſworde, and in leauing neither man nor woman aliue: though a man might imagine them to haue bin cruell at the firſt ſight. And why? Becauſe it was done by Gods commaundement. Now then, let vs come backe againe to that which hath bin touched alreadie: that is to wit, that when we paſſe not the bounds which God hath ſet vs, ne doe any thing vppon our owne heades, but onely obey his will: then although all the world accuſe and condemne vs, yet ſhall wee be quitte in heauen. And that Pſal. ought to ſuffice vs. Why ſo? For God can well skil to maintain his authoritie againſt the pryde of all men: Though all the world were ſo fonde as to goe to lawe with God, and to finde faulte with his ſayings and doings: Let vs let them all alone. For as I ſayd, it ought to ſuffiſe vs, that God doth iuſtify vs. and if he acquit vs, we may laugh all the fooliſhe verdites of the worlde to Pſal. skorne. But herewithall let vs beare away this leſſon, that is to wit, that God doe auowe all our doinges. And how ſhall wee be ſure that he will auowe them? [verely] if wee haue not followed our owne fleſhly reaſon, nor taken leaue to doe thinges vppon our owne head: but haue waited for Gods commaundement. Now then, if God haue giuen vs his warrant, and wee haue walked in his obedience: then are wee ſure that all ſhall goe well with vs, though the world finde neuer ſo much fault with vs.

But wee on our ſide alſo muſt take warning that wee riſe not againſt God, as wee ſee theſe fantaſtical fellowes doe, who will needes bee ſcanning whether a thing be good or no, without inquiring whether it be of God or no: and ſo ſhould God be faine to reſigne his maieſtie. For hee cannot be GOD, if he bee not righteous. And if men might put his righteouſneſſe

to triall of inquest, so as it might bee lawfull for them to giue their verdit vpon it: then if they condemned any of Gods workes, his glorie were like to goe to wreche, and he shoulde bee quite bereft of it. Wee see then what a treacherie it is, when men will take such libertie to discourse of good and euill at their owne pleasure, without asking counsell at Gods mouth. And on the contrarie part, although thinges seeme straunge to our naturall vnderstanding: yet must we so dispose our selues, that if our Lorde doe once say, this is good, it is my pleasure so to haue it: as soone as we haue that determinatiō from Gods mouth: we on our part must hold our peace, not onely to forbeare all replying or grudging against him: but also to submit all our owne reason thereunto, and to glorifie him with a good will, in this wise. True it is Lord, that if I shoulde iudge after mine owne fansie, I might speake frowardly and vntowardly: but I must haue mine eye vppon thee: and forasmuch as I knowe thy will to be so, I must submit my selfe to it, and acknowledge it to bee good and rightfull, yeelding thee this praise therewithall, that thou canst not doe amisse. Surely this present example ought well to suffice vs. For who is he which would not at the first sight condemne the children of Israel, for killing the little babes after that sort? Did they any thing without Gods appointment? No: for Moses saieth the contrarie. Therefore in condemning them, a man should set himselfe against God: And so fareth it commonly with vs. Wherefore if wee iudge of our neighbours, let vs not doe it vpon our owne braine, but let vs giue that authoritie vnto God, without replying against his worde, so as if he allow of any thing, wee receiue it immediately: for wee must haue this modestie of ruling our selues in all cases according to his good will. And therewithall, if God now and then doe thinges which seeme ouer rigorous, yea and euen doe touch our selues very neere: let vs stoope to them. As for example, if wee be afflicted out of measure to our own seeming: yet must we not murmur nor fret at it. For in good sooth what shall wee gaine by it? It will turne to our dubble confusion. Nay, let vs pray God to frame vs to such obedience, as wee may patiently receiue ỹ afflictions that he sendeth vs, in such wise as the thinges which seeme straunge to our owne appetites, affections, and thoughtes, may bee deemed of vs to bee good, iust, and rightfull, bicause he willeth them. That is the point which wee must come vnto. To bee short, let vs learne, not to bee wise in our owne conceite, nor to giue head to our affections: for those two things are requisite, if we inted to glorifie God in all his doings.

Nowe here is also that which Moses addeth, concerning the Cities and the greatnesse of them, and concerning the Countrie, and the great strength of Og King of Basan. *Wee tooke* (saieth he) *threescore Cities, which were very well fenced*, and furnished in such wise, as there was no likelyhood that they should haue bene easily taken. Moses addeth these circumstances, of purpose to magnifie Gods grace the more, that the people might perceiue ỹ their strength came not flying in the aire, but that it was GOD that gaue it them. And that is a point well worthie to bee noted. For if it bee to vaunt of our owne proweſſe, we can skill well ynough to gather the thinges that may serue for the purpose. O (say wee,) I had such a thing and such a thing: I haue compassed my matters trimly: such a crink was practised against mee a great way off, and I remedied it with such a shift. See my cunning, see my policie: there were such matches and such against me, but I shifted well ynough with them all, so as I dispatched them euerychone, and mine enemies wonne nothing at my hand. To bee short, wee can skill to alledge all things that may giue a faire glosse and showe to our owne vertues. But if it bee to glorifie God, for the reliefe that wee haue had at his hand: wee runne ouer it as it were vpon home coales (as they say) wee remember not the distresse that wee were in, the daunger that wee bee scaped out of seemeth to bee a thing of nothing. See what our lewdnesse is. So much the more therefore doeth it stand vs on hand, to mark what is told vs here, that is to wit, that in all the benefites which wee haue receiued of God, we must consider in what taking wee had bene, if wee had gone without them: and wee shall haue matter good store wherewith to doe that, if we be not wilfully blind as wee are wont to bee. For was not the least daunger that euer we fell into, ynough to abash vs? But when a thing toucheth vs any thing neere: ye shall see vs as sore dismaied as may be. In deede if wee bee once out of it, it is nothing with vs: but that is for want of minding it. Yet notwithstanding if wee see but a mote or a flie whisking by our eyes: by and by wee bee dazeled. But yet for all this, out of howe great things doeth God deliuer vs? He will suffer vs to goe downe as it were into our graue, and to be there as it were in a gulfe of death, so as which way soeuer we looke, we shal finde no way to scape out at, so deepely shall wee bee sunk therein. And to what ende? Euen to the ende that God may make vs perceiue his power the better, when it pleaseth him to succour vs. So then, wee haue matter ynough and ynough to giue glosse vnto Gods grace, if wee bee not minded to shut our eyes maliciously of set purpose, or to thrust the things vnder foote, which are too too manifest and apparant. Therefore let vs put this doctrine in vre which is shewed vs here by Moses: that is to wit, that God will giue vs incredible victories, as he doeth alreadie, and that when wee haue them, wee must bethinke vs thus: Goe to, came this of our owne policie? came this of our owne strength? No: it is God that hath done it. For when wee haue well examined all that is in vs: wee shall finde our selues to come shorte in all pointes, and that euen from the one ende to the other, our Lorde must bee faine to doe all in man.

And looke what Moses reporteth here concerning the bodily enemies of the children of Israel, as in respect of the power of this world: that must wee apply to the power of Satan, and

to all the shiftes that he hath against vs. If wee haue that discretion with vs, then shall we haue wherefore to magnifie Gods grace towardes vs, if wee consider well whence wee bee deliuered, that is to wit, out of the pit of hell. For which of vs was able to breake the barres and bondes of Satan? which of vs was able to abolish the souereigntie of death? It stoode vs on hand that God should worke there. Nowe it is so, that we were all shut vp in the bondage of sinne, and consequently that death reigned ouer vs. Satan had possession of vs, so as none of vs could scape frō him. Wee could stirre neither arme nor legge, but it was to thrust our selues still further, and to sinke our selues still deeper. Seeing it is so: let vs vnderstand, that when God brought vs out of the curse, wherein all of vs are by nature: it must needes be that his meere grace wrought in that behalfe. And that is moe times than once, as Moses speaketh here of the threescore Cities. Wherefore let vs vnderstande, that as soone as we be come to the end of one battell, strait ways wee must enter into another: God helpeth vs to day: and if he hold not on dayly, yea if he make vs not to feele his ayde euerye minute of an houre: what will become of vs? If wee had had a thousād victories, yet were one assault ynough to ouerthrowe vs. Therefore let vs learne to magnifie Gods grace towardes vs.

Ro. 3. 9. & 5. 12.

Eph. 2. 3.

And herewithall let vs marke also, that Moses speaking here of the strength of Og King of Basan, saieth: *Behold, he had a bed like a Giant*: and againe he saieth *that he came of the race of the Rephaims*. Which serueth to shewe more and more, that the people were as a sheepe in a Wolues mouth. And if it were so with them at that time: what is it nowe with vs? For wee haue enemies which are much stronger and stouter in comparison of vs, than had the Israelites when they were to enter into the land of Chanaan. It should seeme that they might eate vs vp at one bit (as they say.) Wee see what treasons and conspiracies they make: wee see that the more gratious and fauourable God sheweth himselfe to vs, the more doe wee seeme to take pleasure in grieuing him, and in reiecting of his grace. And therefore let vs looke to it, that wee minde well this doctrine, if wee will haue God to giue vs victorie against Satan and all his assaultes. And besides this, when wee haue concluded that God will strengthen vs against all temptations: let vs not doubt but that he hath a care of vs also for this transitorie life. And if men goe about to roote vs out, let vs put our selues to his protection, and let vs looke to bee preserued and defended by him: and no doubt but that if hee reached out his mightie arme in olde time, to succour the people of Israel: his power is not abated, nor his goodnesse diminished, to doe the like for vs at this day. Thus ye see howe wee shall bee safe both in life and death, and as well in body as in soule, if our Lorde bee readie to succour vs. But without that, wee must needes bee worse than forlorne. Wherefore let vs looke that wee profite our selues by this doctrine, by putting away all pride and foolish presumption, so as wee rest wholy vppon God, and learne to exercise our selues in his promises earely and late, and to renew the rememberance of them, to the end that by that meane wee may bee armed against all temptations. Let not the diuell finde vs vnprouided when he commeth to assaile vs: but let vs haue wherewith to resist him. And that we may so, let vs take to vs Gods worde, for when we bee armed with that, wee bee well ynough fenced to beate back Satan, and al y euer he can practise against vs. And therefore it behoueth vs to be so much the more watchfull, that we may giue eare to this doctrine.

1. Tim. 4.

Eph. 6. 13. & 1. Pet. 5. 8.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs so to feele them, as wee may bee vtterly cast downe by them, at leastwise to mislike of them and to forsake them, so as our whole seeking maye bee to frame our selues altogether to the righteousnesse of our God, and to proceede more & more in his feare and obedience, vntil he haue ioyned vs fully and perfectly to himselfe, beseeching him to beare with vs in the meane while, and that forasmuch as it is his will that wee should bee in continuall warre in this worlde, he vouchsafe to strengthen vs with his power, vntill he haue taken vs vp into his heauenly rest, to make vs enioye the glorious immortalitie that hee hath promised vs. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people, &c.

On Wednesday the viij. of May. 1555.

The xvj. Sermon which is the second vpon the third Chapter.

12 The same time wee tooke possession of the land, From Aroer which is vpon the Riuer Arnon. And I gaue one halfe of mount Galaad with the Cities thereof to the Rubenites and Gadites.

13 And the rest of Galaad and all Basan, which was of the kingdome of Og, I gaue to the halfe tribe of Manasses: that is to wit, all the Countrie of Argob, and all Basan, which is called the land of the Giantes.

14 Iair the sonne of Manasses tooke all the Countrie of Argob, vnto the bor-

ders

ders of Geſſuri, and Machati: and called them after his owne name, that is to wit, Baſan Hauoth Iair, vnto this day.

15 And vnto Machir I gaue Galaad,

16 And vnto the Rubenites and Gadites I gaue from Galaad vnto the riuer Arnon, the middes of the riuer and the end, and vnto the riuer Iaboeke, which is the border of the children of Ammon.

17 And the plaine, and the Iordan, and the borders thereof from Kenereth to the ſea of the wilderneſſe, that is to wit, the ſalt Sea vnder Aſdodphaſga towardes the Eaſt.

18 And the ſame time I commaunded you, ſaying: the Lorde your God hath giuen you this land to poſſeſſe. All you that are ſtrong men, goe armed before your brethren the children of Iſrael:

19 But your wiues, your children, and your cattell, (I know ye haue much cattell) ſhall tarie in your Cities which I haue giuen you,

20 Vntill the Lord haue giuen reſt to your brethren as well as to you, and that they likewiſe poſſeſſe the land which the Lorde your God giueth them beyonde Iordan. Then ſhall yee returne euerye man to his poſſeſſion which I haue giuen you.

21 And the ſame time I commaunded Ioſua, ſaying: Thine eyes haue ſeene all that the Lord your God hath done to theſe two Kings. So will the Lord doe to all the kingdomes through which thou ſhalt paſſe.

22 Feare them not: for the Lord is your God: it is he that fighteth for you.

HEre Moſes continueth ſtill his matter, to ſhewe the people of Iſrael the great good that God had done them, beyond their hope. For as I haue declared heretofore, the kingdomes of Baſan and Heſebon were as an ouerplus, beſides that which had bene promiſed to the fathers of olde time. God then ſhewed himſelfe more liberall than he had promiſed to bee, in that behalfe. Therefore it became the people to haue ſignified Gods grace, according as Moſeſes intent alſo was. Furthermore, to the intent the people ſhould not thinke that they had gotten and conquered that Countrie by their owne power and ſtrength: it is tolde them howe it was of neceſſitie that God guided them, conſidering that their enemies were much ſtronger than they, in reſpect whereof here is mention made of their ſtature, and the land is named ỹ land of Giants, to put the people in remembrãce and to make them conſider, ỹ they could not haue compaſſed thoſe things, vnleſſe God had gouerned them. And ſo the whole matter is to be referred to this ende, that the people ſhould knowe Gods goodneſſe in deliuering them from the thraldome of Egypt, not onely in that he had giuen them the land which he had promiſed them for their inheritance, but alſo had added more than they looked for: that is to wit, ỹ two kingdomes that were beyond Iordan.

And nowe herewithall Moſes ſaieth, *That hee gaue that Countrey to the Children of Ruben, and to the children of Gad*, that is to ſay, to their Tribes, *and to the halfe Tribe of Manaſſes*. Not that Moſes offered them that Countrie in partition: but they did ſue for it, as is written more plainely in the two and thirtie Chapter of Numeri. In ſo much as it is ſaide there, that Moſes was angrie when he ſawe them ſo haſtie to bee aforehand, for it was reaſõ that the whole land ſhould firſt haue bene conquered, ere any partition had bin made. But therewithall it is ſaide, that the two Tribes of Gad and Ruben, excuſed themſelues for ỹ they had much Cattel, & it was a Countrie fit for graſing: & their deſiring to be ſetled, was not to ſeparate thẽſelues frõ their brethrẽ, or to be in better taking thã they. For they proteſted that they would goe with the reſt of the people, to fight with them againſt all their enemies, and that they would neuer reſt in the land that was aſſigned them, vntil all the reſidue were ſetled as well as they. Vpon the making of this promiſe, Moſes agreed vnto them. For before, he ſaid vnto them, behold, ye increaſe the heape for your ſinne. For heretofore when ye ſpied out the land, ye wouldnot enter into it at ſuch time as the way was opened for you. And nowe ye bring new lets: it ſhould ſeeme ye ſeeke nothing but to reſiſt God, and to ſhut his grace out of the doore. Moſes then ſpake ſharpely after this ſort againſt the children of Ruben and Gad, vntill they had ſhewed that their meaning was not to forſake their brethren, but to holde themſelues ſtill in the vnitie of the bodie, and in the meane while to leaue their Cattell at a ſtay, to the ende they might not bee too much combered with their waues and children. And euen in this wee haue to marke the goodneſſe of God. For had not he beene the defender of them that were to dwell in that Countrie, what had come of it? Behold, a ſort of women and yong children are left behinde with their Cattell. Nowe we know that al the neighbours thereaboutes were deſirous to deſtroy the people of Iſrael, and a generall hatred or rather burning fire was kindled euery

where against them. Therefore if the women and children had not bene preserued vnder the hand of God, and vnder his protection: had they not perished a hundred times? And yet being so forsaken, they were not troubled by any man. Nowe then the people ought by all meanes to haue acknowledged Gods grace herein, to strēgthen themselues thereby against the time to come, and therewithal to vnderstand that there was nothing of their owne to boast themselues of, but that it was good reason that God should be praised, and they acknowledge that all that good came of God. Thus ye see what the intent of Moses was in this text.

And wee also in these dayes may well apply this lesson to our instructiō. For seeing that God did so preserue the women and little children, which were destitute of defence and succour, & inuironed with enemies that were their nexte neighbours, and which were able to haue swallowed them vp at one chop, as I haue tolde you before: let vs assure our selues that our safetie consisteth not in the multitude of worldly defences. Though we haue neither wall nor bank, nor any thing else to defend vs: yet if God haue the leading of vs, and take the charge of our safetie, wee haue ynough, so as wee may defie all our enemies. Contrariwise, if wee bee destitute of Gods tuition: we may well prouide all the defences in the world: and yet wee shall bee neuer the neerer, all of it must needes tumble downe vpon our owne heades. Therefore let vs learne to call vpon our God, and to put our selues into his handes. And forasmuch as he saieth that he will receiue the poore that are in aduersitie: so as he promiseth to support those that are destitute of all helpe and succour of the world: let vs goe to him, assuring our selues that wee shall not haue the gate shut against vs. Be we once come thither: wee may boldly trust that he will maintaine vs. And although wee be hemmed in with enemies on all sides, and it may well seeme that we cannot escape their handes: yet will God be our defence, though there bee nothing but vtter weakenesse in vs. Thus ye see what wee haue to remember vpon this example.

Yet notwithstanding it is not to be doubted, but that herewithall Moses doeth couertly vpbraide the children of Ruben & Gad, with their ouer great hast. And although he accept their protestation, and thereupon doe graunt their request: yet were they not to bee commended in that they sought to haue their possessiō so soone in that Countrie. In deede their pretence was honest: but yet should they haue helde themselues still vnder Gods prouidence, and not haue attempted any thing. So then, as wee haue seene here before, if wee will haue God to blesse vs, we must hold our selues simply to his word, without attempting any thing at all, so as wee steppe not one pace foreward to doony thing that he liketh not, ne swarue to the right hand or to the left. But the Rubenites would needes bee shifting aforehand, and sought to settle themselues before it was meete for them. They asked not whither it were lawfull for them or no: they came not to Moses with submission, saying, let it bee considered by generall aduise whether it be good or not but they would needes determine the case themselues at the first dash. Wee haue great store of Cattell say they: this Countrie is fit for vs: therfore it is meete that it should be giuen vs in partition. Herein they are not in any wise to bee excused. True it is that they were made owners of that fat and fruitfull soyle: but yet did not God blesse them in al points. It had bin better for thē, specially for the halfe tribe of Manasses, to haue bene ioyned with their brethren, than to haue had a possessiō so by themselues. For by ỹ meane they were cut off from the tribe of Iuda: & they were bereft of ỹ preheminēce of being matched w their brethren ỹ children of Ioseph. And therfore if they had taried with the rest, and waited Gods leisure as they ought to haue done: it is certaine that they had bene blessed much more abundantly than they were, & consequently the others to. Wee see how the Prophets speake of thē: The fat Buls of Basan (say they) haue their eys stopped w greace. Because they liued at their ease in a fruitful & abundant Country, there was nothing but pryde and stubbornesse in them. Let vs learne therefore to forbeare the seeking of our owne commodities, and not be selfwilled in seasing vppon one thing or other: but let vs tarie for the blessing of God. Wee see howe it fell out with Lot: for he had the like respect in choosing to dwell in Sodom. That plaine was as an earthly Paradise: there was nothing but pleasure, there was nothing but fruitefulnesse in it. Lot gate him thither: but our Lorde made him to pay verie deare for his shotte. Although he was one of his chosen, although GOD pitied him euen to the ende, and although hee made his children to feele his grace notwithstanding that they were begotten of incest: yet was hee chastised as he deserued, for his tendering of his owne ease and commoditie too much. Hereby wee bee taught to brydle our desires, and not to be ouergreedie vppon any fleshly commoditie when wee see we may haue it at aduauntage. If God giue it vs, let vs accept it: but let vs beware that our affections be not too inordinate, as they cōmonly be. Thus much concerning the wordes wherewith Moses vpbraided the children of Gad & Ruben and the halfe tribe of Manasses.

Now herewithall we haue to note this saying of his, *That he gaue them the Countrie in possession.* for it should seeme that he taketh vpō him here to doe that which belonged to God. What was Moses? Was the land his to giue? By what title could he bee named Lord of it? He is in that respect but as a member of ỹ body. True it is that God honoured him so much, as to make him the head of his people: But in the meane while how is the Land named? *Gods rest*, that is to say, the land that God had assigned his people to rest in. It is not sayde to bee the rest of Moses, but the rest of GOD. Seeing then that this land was in the hande of GOD: shoulde Moses boast himselfe of the giuing thereof? Wee must not thinke this straunge: for when Gods

seruants

seruauntes speake so, they chalendge not aught to themselues, but shewe in what trust they be put, and what charge is committed vnto them, by meanes whereof they separate not themselues from God. If a man be sent from a prince with authoritie to doe the thinges that hee hath in commission: hee taketh vppon him the name of the Prince as in way of borrowing, and saieth, I ordeine this, I appoint this, I commaunde this, I will haue this executed. And he that speaketh after that manner, meaneth not to derogate his masters authoritie. Euen so doe Gods seruauntes: for they knowe that hee hath ordeined them as his instrumentes, and imployeth them in his seruice, so as they doe nothing of themselues, their master is hee that ouer ruleth them. That is the cause why Moses saieth, that hee hath giuen them their portion: yea verily, not taking himselfe as another mortal man, but as one whom God had set in his own place, and which did all thinges in the name of God. And so yee see what wee haue to beare in minde.

It is a verie profitable doctrine for vs: for it extendeth further than so. And for proofe therof, if wee had not the same rule: what woulde become of the gouernement of the Church? Wherefore are wee baptised, but to bee washed from all our spottes, that wee may bee pure and cleane before God, that wee may be members of Iesus Christ, ỹ we may be clothed w̃ his righteousnes, &(to be short) that we may be renewed by the holy ghost? Nowe, lyeth it in ỹ mortall man that baptiseth vs, to giue vs al these things? No, if we consider him but as a man in his owne peculiar person. But sith it is Gods will that the ministers of his word should baptise in his name: baptisme must needs haue that vertue notwithstanding that it be deliuered vs by the hande of a man. And againe, as touching the Lords supper, we see howe our Lorde Iesus Christ doeth shew himselfe there to be the foode of our soules. Nowe is there any creature that can make vs partakers of so great a benefite? No surely. But it is certeine that the supper is not a vaine thing: therefore when we come to receiue it, wee must consider that the [minister though he be a] man is not separated from Iesus Christ. And in the preaching of Gods worde wee see the like. It is saide that the ministers are sent to inlighten the blinde, to deliuer prisoners, to forgiue sinnes, and to turne mens heartes. Howe so? for those are thinges that belong all onely vnto God. And in verie deede if a man shoulde goe about to bereaue him of the least part of those thinges, it were an vtter defacing of his maiestie. For nothing is more peculiar to him than the forgiuing of sinnes. Likewise doeth he reserue to himselfe the turning of mens heartes. Yet notwithstanding hee communicateth all those titles to such as he hath ordeined to beare abrode his worde: telling them that he separateth not himself from them, but rather that hee vseth them as his handes and instruments. And in this case men must not muse vpon the thing that they see, but they must lift vp their eyes aloft by faith. We see then what rule wee ought to drawe out of this text, where Moses saith that hee gaue the lande in possession. Namely that he treateth not of his owne person to vaunt himselfe; but onely sheweth, that hee had put the tribes of Gad and Ruben, and the halfe tribe of Manasses, in possession of those two kingdomes by Gods authoritie, according to the commission that he had giuen him.

Howbeit to the ende that the profitablenesse of this doctrine may bee the better knowen: let vs marke in one worde, that it expresseth vnto vs the power that is in Gods worde: namely that it is not a fleeting sounde, but that it hath speedy execution, accordingly as we see that when the Prophets threaten the citie Ierusalem, they say they haue besieged it and beaten it down alreadie. And howe is that? By dreames and visions. This should seeme to be a plaine mockerie. Yea, but in the ende it appeared, that it was not a rolling of their tongues onely, but that they should not haue had a greater meane or power to rase the Citie of Ierusalem, though they had had a great hoste of men. For by what meanes did the enemies bring it to passe? By vertue of the Prophesies. So on the contrarie parte, when they speake of making the people to prosper: their manner of speeche is, that all impedimentes are remooued, and their enemies ouercome. And howe is that? Because Gods worde is vaine. So then, let vs vnderstande that it is greatlie to our profite, to bee tolde that when Gods ministers speake, they cast not foorth a fading sounde, but such a one as is matched with effecte: and therefore let vs bee edified thereby to our saluation. Sith wee knowe that the remission of sinnes is not preached vnto vs in vaine: it ought to assure vs. Come wee to a Sermon? Is Gods grace offered vs? Is it tolde vs that Iesus Christ hath made amendes for vs, to ridde vs out of the cursednesse wherein wee were? When wee bee certified of these thinges, it is all one as if they were put into our handes. Why so? For when GOD sendeth messengers to tell vs his will: hee matcheth such force therewithall, as that the effect is ioyned to the worde.

Likewise when hee threateneth vs, let vs assure our selues that vengeance is in a readinesse, as saith Sainct Paul. Let vs not thinke it a sport and daliance when wee bee tolde of Gods curse and wrath against the despisers of the Gospell, and against the disobeyers of the same. Heereby wee see with what reuerence wee ought to resort to Sermons. Also wee see in what taking all these heathenish sort are, which come to Sermons as it were in scorne of God, with such brutishnesse as euen little children are ashamed of them, insomuch that there is neither feare of God nor honestie in them. Let vs be well aduised to shunne such mens companies, and to abhorre them: assuring our selues that if wee learne not to mislike of them, wee shall be intangled with them by becomming like them. These (saye I) are the thinges which wee haue to remember, in that Moses went not to exalt him-

Ier. 4. 5. 16. and 32. 2.

Isa. 37. 33.

Rom. 1. 26. Gal. 4. 9.

Luke 6. 31

Act. 26. 26

Gen. 1. 26. Psal. 72.

Psal. 97. Esay 5. 21. Esay 18. 17. Psal. 82.

1. Cor. 10. 8.

himselfe to deface Gods glorie: but shewed that God wrought by him and by his meanes.

Furthermore, whereas hee saieth that the children of Manasses, that is to say the halfe tribe, together with the whole tribes of Ruben and Gad bounde themselues by the promise
Num.32.27 that is rehearsed in the booke of Numeri, *to goe before the Lorde* that is to say in his presence: it is well woorth the marking: for it serueth to expresse the better, with what loyaltie they went to it. For if wee set not our eye vppon God: there will alwayes bee some feynednesse in our promises, and in all our dealings, so as wee shall neuer goe to worke soundly and substantially. Wee knowe that naturally men are double harted, and that they paint and disguise their doings, insomuch that if it were possible for them, they woulde keepe no touch in any thing that they promise, longer than it were for their owne profite, or at leastwise vnlesse they were driuen to it for verie shame. To bee short, there wil bee no faithfulnesse in vs, except GOD ouerlooke vs, and wee looke vp to him in all our doings. And that is the cause why the men that were assigned their possession, did sweare to their brethren, euen in Gods presence, that GOD might bee a witnesse to punish their lewdnesse, if there were any guile, feyning, or treacherie at al in their case.

Hereby wee bee warned, that whensoeuer wee make any bargaine or couenant: wee muste not onely haue ame to the partie with whome wee haue to doe: but wee must also as it were set GOD among vs, and keepe our faith and promise to him that wee haue bounde our selues, as though GOD watched vs at euerie steppe, and that wee coulde not so soone worke deceite towardes any man, but that by and by GOD woulde steppe before vs to withstande it. That is the thing which wee haue to doe: but there are verie fewe of vs that thinke vppon it. For although the name of God bee called vppon, and solemne othes taken, and promises made autentically ynough, yea and that there bee order of Lawe to make vs feele his maiestie: yet doe most men shut their eyes, and in all the promises and othes that are made, [commonly] there is nothing sought but to deceiue one another. He that is surtleleast and fullest of shiftes, is the handsommest man: and such kinde of dealing is esteemed as a vertue. And why? For euerie man runnes gadding after his owne lustes and likings, yea & that in such wise, that they bee as blindfoldings to keepe vs from seeing God. Though wee thinke not vppon it nowe: yet will not God forget any of our deceites, spytes, trecheries, and falshoodes which wee commit against men. For hee hath tolde vs, that when an oche is taken
Exo.20.7.& Leuit.19.12. & Deut. 23. 21. & Ios. 9. 19. & Matt. 5.33. betweene man and man: his glorie is defaced and himselfe openly mocked, if the promise be broken. Therefore let vs bee wel assured that he wil not put vp such wrong, & that although wee bee neuer so blinde, yet will not hee play the blinkarde on his side, but will note and marke euery whit of it to bring it to account. And so yee see what wee haue to marke heere for one point.

By way wee see, that none but such as make lawful couenats can make thē as in Gods sight. For as many as doe lewdly linke themselues together to helpe one another in naughtinesse, (as to confounde all right, to make wicked shiftes, to worke outrages, to oppresse men, or to maintaine themselues in their vnthriftinesse): as manie (I say) as conspyre after that fashion, are all faine to seeke lurkingholes: they are loth to shewe themselues to God or to come in his presence: nay they must rather shrinke away from him, but they cannot. Yet notwithstanding, the wicked sort doe fall asleepe, when they make those shamefull and detestable confederacies of theirs: they bee faine to holde themselues there as it were in the darke, and to shunne Gods presence as much as they can. So much the more then doth it stande vs on hande to remember this text, that in all our promises and in all our doings, wee may deale as in Gods sight, assuring our selues that hee is euer at hande to take notice of our couenaunts, and to beare witnesse of them, yea and to gouerne and direct all thinges aright, if wee proceede vprightly and soundely. And so yee see what wee haue to marke.

Nowe heere is yet moreouer a certaine vprightnesse to bee kept, whereof Moses speaketh when he commaundeth the Rubenytes and Gadytes to goe conquer the rest of the lande with their brethren, notwithstanding that they had their portion alreadie beyonde Iordan. Hereby wee be warned, first that if God haue vnyted vs in one bodie or corporation: one part of vs must not withdrawe our selues from the charges [of the common weale,] as if wee woulde say, let vs exempt our selues, and let the rest shifte for themselues: but it behoueth euerie man to imploy himselfe to the benefite of the whole state, and that hee which coulde shift for himselfe alone, shoulde not forbeare to take part with his brethren, and to put vnder his shoulder (as they say) to beare a peece of the burthen. This might bee declared more fully: but a glaunce will serue our turne well ynough, and the cheefest matter is, that wee must put it well in practise. Then let vs marke well, that if GOD haue knitte vs into one bodie, wee must all doe the office of members, as we see howe the foote serueth the hande, the hande the eye, and euery other part imployeth it selfe according to his seuerall propertie and power, so as all redoundeth to the benefite of the whole.

Likewise muste wee obserue the same rightfull and reasonable order of dealing, when GOD hath set vs in one common weale. It was well knowen of the wretched Paynims, that there coulde bee no good ciuill order in the worlde, if euerie man were giuen to his owne profite. If the hande shoulde separate it selfe and refuse to serue the rest of the bodie, and the rest of the members also: Yee see there woulde bee a good sort of pieces: but in the meane while they should all die and of necessity perish.

periſh. In like caſe is it with men when they will needes draw backe from the communion of life, which they ought to obſerue, and no man think vpon the common profite, but take it to be ſufficient that hee can profite himſelfe: for in the ende all muſt needes goe to hauocke. But this is chiefely to bee obſerued in the ſpirituall gouernement of the Church; as Saint Paul ſheweth it vs. For in the Church there is not onely a reſemblance of mans bodie, but the ſonne of God is our heade in verie deede. It is of him that wee bee, and of him haue wee grace and power, in ſuch portion and meaſure as it pleaſeth him to beſtowe vppon vs. Seeing it is ſo: let vs learne to maintaine peace and brotherlineſſe among vs. And that wee may ſo doe: let euerie of vs yeelde himſelfe to his neighbours; and let vs not be ſo wedded to our own peculiar aduantage, that we ſhoulde not take paine to pleaſure all thoſe with whome wee bee vnited. Neither let vs alledge, what haue I to doe with the bearing of ſuch a burthen as ſhoulde bee too heauie for mee, and which I cannot well away with? Let vs beware that wee holde not backe after that ſort, to maintaine our ſelues in ydleneſſe. For according to the abilitie that God giueth vs, ſo doth hee binde vs to ſerue our neighbours therewith. And why? For wee be al members of one bodie: there needeth none other reaſon to moue vs than that. So then, to be ſhort wee cannot be of our Lord Ieſus Chriſts flocke, vnleſſe wee conſider what he hath giuen vs, that wee may make the ſame profitable, and put it to the common edifying of the Church, as ſaieth Saint Paul.

As touching worldly converſation, let vs liue in ſuch wiſe with men, that as wee receiue good by them, ſo wee alſo on our ſide may looke to do good to them: ſo as there may be a mutuall anſwerableneſſe on both ſides. Nowe it is certaine that none of vs can forbeare his neighbours. Let a man bee of as good abilitie as he can wiſh, and yet neuertheleſſe he muſt ſtande in neede of other mens ſeruice in many thinges. Nowe, when hee knoweth that hee hath ſuch neede and neceſſity of other mens helpe: ſhould he drawe backe from his neighbours, or bee ſo nyce that hee will beare no burthen, but be loth to take any paine for the common weale? [It is no reaſon.] For if they that ſerue him ſhould bee at the ſame point, and bee as peeuiſh and proud as hee: muſt it not needes bee that all ſhoulde goe to wrecke? Yes: and therefore let vs learne, that in aſmuch as euen in the Church wee haue this bonde of ſeruing our neighbours: it behoooeth likewiſe in reſpect of this preſent life and of all worldly affaires, to conſider with our ſelues, inaſmuch as God maketh others to do vs good, and to profite vs diuers wayes, ſo as wee be ſuccored by them: we alſo ought to render the like againe on our ſide.

Now as concerning the people of Iſraels caſe, there was a ſpeciall conſideration in their conquering of the land of Chanaan. Why ſo? For it was not promiſed ſeuerally to the tribe of Iuda, or to the tribe of Beniamin, or to any of the other tribes alone: but generally to the whole ofspring of Abraham. Therefore it behoued this lande to bee conquered by them in common, and that afterwarde lottes ſhoulde bee caſt for it, as was done in the ende by Ioſua. But nowe that God commaundeth vs to follow one common trace, wee muſt applie this example to our ſelues, and conſider that the ſame rule which is ſet downe heere, is giuen to vs alſo. As howe? Doeth God commaunde, that we ſhould but euerie man ſeuerally for himſelfe reſiſt Sathan, and proceede more and more in the Goſpell? Is it not a common leſſon? [Yes.] Seeing then that God calleth vs ſo one with another, and will haue all to agree in one accorde, like good melodie: it is not for vs to ſeparate our ſelues any more a ſunder. Wherfore let vs conſider, that to aduaunce the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt and the ſaluation of all his: to builde vp his Church; and to make his Goſpell to proſper and floriſh: euerie man muſt not onely worke alone by himſelfe: but wee muſt alſo agree all in one, and drawe all by one lyne, and euery of vs ſtreine himſelfe to ſerue ſuch as haue neede of his helpe. And ſo wee ſee, that all ſuch as will needes builde ſo alone by themſelues, doe but worke confuſion. Of which ſort there are that thinke themſelues very able men, and that they coulde worke wonders to their owne ſeeming, inſomuch that they deſpiſe their neighbours, and woulde euen beare downe all other men before them to ſhew themſelues valiantfellowes, and that they doe a hundred fold more than all the reſt. And what commeth of ſuch pride, but ouerthrowe and confuſion? Let vs marke well therefore, that wee ſhall neuer ſerue God by furthering of the gladdidings of our ſaluation: vnleſſe we haue the ſaid concord, that we be readie and well diſpoſed to helpe euerie man his neighbour, and that there bee one common eaſing one of another. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember further vppon this ſtreine.

Now in concluſion it is ſaide heere, *that Moſes incouraged Ioſua to be of good cheere, and to go through with the thing which he himſelfe might not do*, that is to wit, to conuey the people ouer Iordan, and to conquer all the lande of Chanaan. But firſt of all hee ſetteth before him the victories that the people had had againſt Og king of Baſan, and Sehon king of Heſebon. *Thou haſt ſeene* (ſaith he) *how the Lord hath deale with thoſe two kings.* He ſaith not, As you haue done to theſe two kings, [but as the Lorde hath done]. For as hath bin declared, here is no flattering of men, nor no tickling of their eares: for they bee but too forwarde alreadie in taking more vpon them than belongeth to them. Seeing then that men are ſo naturally giuen to ſelfeweening let vs vnderſtand that it is expedient for them to be mekened, and to bee bereft of all their pride and loftineſſe, to the intent they may knowe that they haue nothing of their owne. But this cannot bee done, without making them to vnderſtande, that whatſoeuer they haue, they are beholden to Gods meere grace for it. That is the

Ca.12.17
1.Cor.12.5.
Pſal.147.16.
1.Cor.14.12
Eph.4.12

the cause why Moses saith expressly, *Thou hast seene with thine eyes, what God hath done vnto these two kings.* As if he should say, If yee knowe not the power that God hath shewed you: of whom is it long? The matter is not darkeome of it selfe, it is altogether visible and apparant. Therefore it must needes bee that your owne vnthankefulnesse hindereth you, and that your malice blindeth you. Seeing then that God hath made you to perceiue his goodnesse, euen as it were by eyesight: bee you mindfull of it continually.

But let vs marke, that Moses in incouraging Iosua, doth not onely exhort the whole people to giue thankes vnto God, and to praise him for the benefites that they had receiued of him alredie: but also harten them for the time to come, to the ende they should not doubt but that God woulde goe through with the thing hee had begonne. And the manner of his speech sheweth it sufficiently. *Thou hast seene* (saith he) *howe thy God hath succored & holped thee against these two kinges. As much shalt thou doe to all the kingdomes through which thou shalt passe.* As if he should say, Yee haue seene trials enowe alreadie of Gods goodnesse: and therefore ye cannot distrust him, but you must be too too vnthankfull. For he hath shewed you what his power is, it is not for a pang and away, hee hath shewed you that he is faithfull in all his promises. Nowe yee knowe what he hath promised to your fathers: therfore looke you for the performance of the things towardes you, which your fathers hoped for, and bee yee constant in it. Think not that your God is weary of doing you good, or that in processe & length of time hee waxeth vnable to bring the things to passe which he hath begun: no: but reach out your trust to the vttermost, & assure your selues that hee wil likewise continue his goodnesse and power towards you. Thus see wee what Moses meant.

Howbeit forasmuch as the incomberances were greate: hee saith expresly to the people, *Be ye not afraid:* and vnto Iosua, *Feare not.* Wherin hee sheweth that wee must not measure Gods grace by our owne vnderstanding. For when thinges shall seeme to vs vnpossible: God will finde meanes to ouercome all thinges that are against him to the worldward, so as they shal not hinder him to bring al his matters to perfection, and to execute his determination.

But to the intent to gather the summe of the doctrine that is contained in this texte: let vs marke howe it is not without cause, that Moses directeth his speech to Iosua. For albeit that the doctrine belong to the whole bodie of the people: yet was it meete that Iosua shoulde bee incouraged, as heade and Captaine of the people: For it may happe that a people shall be well disposed: and yet marre all for want of good guiding, accordingly as wee see howe al things goe to hauocke and to wracke, when the heades and gouernours are not such as they ought to be, yea euen although there appeare good disposition in the people: insomuch that when things goe amisse, a man shall heare sighings and groanings, and euerie bodie seekes to goe the right way, so that if it lay in priuate mens powers to remedie disorders and vices, they woulde surely doe what they coulde. Two or three vnthriftes are ynough to trouble a whole common weale when they once set vppon it and the diuel driues them forward, if the gouernours set not stay in the matter. And therefore it is not for naught that Moses directeth his speech precisely to Iosua. For (as I saide) it importeth so much the more, ỹ such as are in publike authoritie should bee well disposed, that they may the better guide the whole bodie. But for asmuch as it shal bee spoken of yet more at large hereafter: I doe but touch the thing briefely, to haue a short conclusion of this text.

Furthermore whereas it is saide, *That God which smote Sehon king of the Amorrhites and Og king of Basan, will doe the like to all the kingdomes of the lande that he promised to Abraham:* let vs marke (as I saide afore), that when God hath made vs to feele his gracious goodnesse: hé will still giue vs courage for the time comming, to the ende wee may not doubt but hee will holde on continually: And that as we haue founde the force of his power by experience heeretofore: so we may assure our selues of it to the ende: not doubting but that if wee doe as hee commaundeth vs, he will bring all our enterprises to good and happie issue, so long as they bee according to his will. For without that, wee shoulde become too vnthankefull and churlish, burying his goodnesse towardes vs, and shutting our eyes, that wee might not see it. And if wee see such chaunges as may abash vs: let vs returne to that which I haue saide: that is to wit, that we must not measure Gods power by the worldly meanes that trouble vs, neither must we stande scanning after this sort, and saye, howe can that come to passe, how may that be possible? Let vs not put forth any such allegations: for wee must yeelde this praise vnto God, that although thinges be vnpossible to vs, although wee haue neuer so great daungers to passe, although thinges bee farre out of order as wee wote not where to become: yet will God prouide for them. Then let vs resort vnto God in that behalfe, acknowledging such power in him, that although all our wits faile vs, yet wee put the matter into his hande, assuring our selues that hee can bring it to passe. That is the thing which we haue to marke here. And without that, what woulde become of our saluation? True it is that God hath shewed himselfe heretofore to bee our guide and king, and therein wee haue the more cause to magnifie his grace. Neuertheless, when wee come to the point that we shoulde hope for Gods helpe, and that his succour shall not faile vs at our neede: wee must shut our eyes at all stoppes, and refer all thinges into his hande, waiting for the accomplishment of his promises. Seeing he hath bound himselfe to vs of his owne free goodnesse: let vs put him in trust with the euentes of the thinges that seeme vnpossible vnto vs. And if we doe so, then may wee certainely thinke our selues safe against all the assaultes of Sathan and all his champions. And though they practise all

that

that euer they can to ouerthrow vs: yet shal we not be as men discomfited and forlorn, but God will worke in such sort for vs, as wee shall not neede to feare but that he will bring our saluation to perfectnesse: and albeit that to our seeming it bee vnpossible to bee done, and that we cannot finde any way out by reason of the hinderances that let vs: yet will he alwayes make vs to ouercome them. Thus yee see how we ought to put this lesson in vre.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to doe them away, and to correct them immediatly that we may obteine forgiuenesse of them: and that for asmuch as wee cannot yeelde our selues so wholly to him, as hee might guide and gouerne vs according to his holy will: it may please him to ridde vs of all our wicked affections, and of all the lustes of our flesh, that wee may frame our selues vnto his righteousnesse, and in the meane while be borne withall in our infirmities, vntill he haue taken vs hence to himselfe. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the ix. of May. 1555.

The xvij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the third Chapter.

23 And at the same time I prayed vnto the Lord, saying:

24 O Lord God, thou hast begun to shew thy seruant thy greatnesse and thy mightie hand. For what God is there in heauen or earth, that can doe according to thy workes, and according to thy mightinesse?

25 I beseech thee let me goe and see the good lande that is beyond Iordan, and this goodly mountaine, and Libanus.

I Tolde you heretofore that Moses made mention how God had bereft him of the benefite and honour of entering into the land of promise, for the sinne of the people. Nowe he rehearseth the same matter againe, howbeit to another ende. For it was conuenient that the people should be done to vnderstande, that they shoulde not alwayes haue such a leader. To the intent therefore that the exhortations which Moses maketh, might be the better receiued, and the people take the better heede to them: hee telleth them that he must leaue them, and that he shall not haue leaue to passe ouer Iordan. That is his meaning, wherof I shal speake more fully hereafter. In the meane season, let vs see what he saith here. First of all he reherseth that *he besought god, that he might enter into the promised lande.* But hee had alredie had the sentence of condemnation, that hee might not goe. It shoulde seeme then that he resisteth God as much as in him lyeth, and that hee cannot finde in his heart to admit his sayng. And in deede wee cannot vtterly excuse him that hee did not amisse. For we cannot bee tickled with so small a desire contrarie to Gods will: but wee bee by and by blameworthie. But when wee be so bolde as to come vnto God, to make a request cleane contrarie to his will: then is the offence double. And why? For the foundation of all our prayers is faith. But there can bee no faith without Gods promise. Who so then commeth to cast out his pangs, & desireth of God the thing that hee knoweth shall mislike him: doth he not passe his bounds? Doth he not goe cleane contrarie to that which the rule of praying will beare? Yes. Now, this was seene in Moses, and therefore it followeth that hee did amisse. And indeede the aunswere sheweth it. For like as God was angrie with him before, because he had not glorified him in the strife that the people moued for want of drinke: so is hee angrie with him nowe againe. Though we had none other witnesse, euen this ought to suffice vs, that God doeth expresly shutte the gate against him for the time to come, that he shoulde no more returne vnto him. Heereby wee bee done to vnderstande, that wee must bee earnest in repressing our desires, and in bridling them. For hardly is there any man to bee founde, that euer yeelded himselfe so pliable to obey God, as Moses was, Let vs seeke on all sides, [and yet shall we not finde one.] It is certaine that Moses was an excellent mirrour of meekenesse, and such a one as had his minde vtterly brought downe, so as he sought not to followe any thing which was not commaunded him from aboue. And yet for all that, it appeareth that he coulde not so restraine and ouermaster himself, but that there was some excesse in his affections. If this befell to Moses who had beene accustomed to obey God in all pointes: howe shall we do which haue profited so euill in that behalfe? So then, we see heere a deede which sheweth vs what the cheefe exercise and studie of Gods children is: namely to subdue their affections, that it may not befall them to desire any thing, but such as they knowe doeth please GOD. For that is the onely rule whereby to discerne good from bad. Marke that for one point.

Deut.3.27. Num.20.12.

Moreouer wee must not staie vppon the outwarde apparance. If wee haue a desire to a thing, although the same seeme good and iust, yet must wee not thinke that it is therefore lawfull. For if wee looke vppon Moses desire, euerie of vs will say it was holy. Yea and wee

maruell howe it was so refused, considering that hee spake not so much for himselfe, as for the common profite of all the people. For his desire tended to none other ende, but that the people might haue beene the better stablished and confirmed in Gods grace. Hee sawe the vocation wherevnto hee had beene ordeined, to bee most excellent: hee had executed it alreadie by the space of fortie yeeres: hee sawe the hardest was yet behinde: hee was acquainted with the peoples vices: hee knewe the power of mind that was giuen vnto himselfe: hee was sure hee had purchased greate credite nowe long agoe: Loe heere the causes why hee wished to haue entred into the land. For being a man of fiue-score yeeres olde, hee was not wedded to this present life. And besides all this, wee knowe that inasmuch as hee had beene taken vp heeretofore into the mountaine, and had tasted there of Gods glorie: he was not intangled with transitorie delightes, nor with any worldly thing. Yee see then that Moses had no respect to himselfe, but woulde faine haue accomplished his office, in setting the people in possession of the heritage that had beene promised them, and by that meane haue stablished the seruice of God in the holy lande. Who woulde not say that this was a good desire, considering howe it tended to the glorifying of GOD, and to the procuring of the welfare of the whole people? Loe heere the two principall endes where vnto the whole life of man shoulde tende. And yet notwithstanding, Moses did amisse. Why so? for hee resisted God. It ought to haue suffised him, when hee had once hearde that GOD woulde not bee serued by him in that case. Albeit therthat the desire that hee purposeth bee excellent in it selfe, and ame at a good and rightfull ende: yet doeth it not faile to bee worthie of blame. The reason is, because hee submitted not himselfe to God.

Nowe then, wee see the thing that I saide afore: that is to wit, that wee may nowe and then haue faire colours to desire this or that: but in so doing wee may goe too farre, yea and indeede wee shall not obtaine our requestes. Why so? For obedience must goe before: and without that wee cannot builde, but to our ruine and confusion. And it is a thing verie requisite. For men cannot bridle themselues from being wise in their owne conceites: insomuch that if wee take a thing to bee good: wee cannot bee perswaded to the contrarie, GOD cannot winne so much at our handes as to gette the masterie of vs. So much the more then behoueth it vs to take paine to holde our selues wholly in awe, to the end we build not any thing which God alloweth not, but that wee alwayes haue that marke before our eyes, and rest wholly vppon it.

Nowe if it bee so that the desires which of their owne nature are good, holie, and commendable, doe neuertheless become sinfull and blameworthie, when they aduaunce themselues against God: what are they when wee conceiue euill thinges, and giue heede to our fleshly lustes? Wee see that the thing which GOD hath forbidden vs is euill, and yet notwithstanding wee take leaue to desire it: is this to bee excused? Nowe then, to the intent wee may take profite by this doctrine, let vs marke that although our desires to see to, are as good as can bee: yet must wee absteine from them vnlesse God doe like of them. For at that ende muste wee beginne. And furthermore, that if wee ought to correct our desires, though there bee no likelihoode of euill in them: we ought much more to bee well aduised that wee cast not forth our bubbles when wee bee tempted to euill, and when wee be caried away to fleshly lustes. All that geere must bee killed starke deade, seeing it is not lawfull for vs euen to wish the thing that is good, except wee haue leaue of God. But we must then specially obserue this lesson, when wee goe about to pray: for as I haue saide alredie, the foundation of all our prayers is faith: and what importeth that? Euen that we should heare God speake. If wee pray at all aduenture, doubting whether wee shall obtaine the thing that wee require or no: it is but hypocrisie and it shall not boote vs at all, saith the holy scripture. It standeth vs then in hande, to bee well assured when wee come before God, so as we beleeue certainly that our praying is not in vaine, and that wee shall not bee disappointed of the thing that wee require. And that is the point where in the prayers of the Christians doe differre from the prayers of the infidelles. For the infidelles and vnbeleeuers may well flee vnto God, and craue this and that at his hande: but what for that? they bee euer wauering, and wote not whether they shall obteine or no. For they depende not vppon the promisses. But as for vs, wee must assure our selues of the loue of our God, & that he is much redier to graunt than wee bee to require, yea and that hee is so pitifull and hath such a respect of our miseries and necessities to relieue them, that he euen preuenteth vs. Wee must bee throughly perswaded of this when wee pray. But how shall we knowe it? Wee must not beare our selues on hande that wee holde God bounde vnto vs, and that wee shall make him to graunt all our desires: for what a malapertnesse were that? And what an honouring of God were it, if euerie man shoulde say, I trowe God will do whatsoeuer I list to commaunde him? But we must rest vppon his promises. Yee see then that faith is requisite in our prayers: that is to wit, that no man thrust forth himselfe vpon his owne heade, but that hauing the promise whereby God alureth vs vnto him, wee goe vnto him boldely, not doubting but that hee will keepe touch with vs. Seeing it is so: wee must note nowe that al our praiers are faultie, if they bee not ruled by the wil of God. For when wee presume to aske of him whatsoeuer comes in our heade, there is no promise for vs to trust vnto in going to it so without aduise. And therefore for asmuch as we passe our bounds, wee be neuer a whit furthered by it. Thus ye see that in praying we must alwayes consider what god permitteth vs, & what his will is, we

we shoulde aske of him: and that wee must euer haue this modestie and soberneſſe with vs to aske counsaile of him, as though his spirit spake in vs, and indyted vnto vs the verie forme of our prayer. And for that cause hath our Lorde Iesus Christ made as it were a summe of all the requestes which wee ought to make vnto God. For although wee bee not tyed to those words, to say hollowed bee the name of God, his kingdome come, his will bee done, &c. yet must we referre all our desires, wishes and requestes to those fixe articles, which are conteyned in the praier that our Lord Iesus Christ hath giuen vnto vs. And although the Fathers of olde time had not the same rule; yet were they alwayes gouerned by Gods spirite, to keepe them from wandering from the thinges that are taught vs at this day, so as all their prayers were conformable to the rule that our Lorde Iesus Christ hath giuen vs. Nowe then we see, that all such as take leaue to pray what they list, doe not direct themselues to God as they ought to doe, and therefore are they likewise disappointed of their desires. And for the same cause is it, that I haue tolde you, that in all our prayers wee must be well aduised, that the thinges bee lawfull according to Gods worde. But nowe there are some thinges which God hath promised without exception, and those wee may demaunde without condition. Whensoeuer wee haue offended him, (which thing wee neuer cease to doe) wee must resort to the remedie, praying God to forgiue vs our sinnes and to shewe vs mercie. God hath assured vs that hee is redie to doe it. And seeing he hath promised it, our comming to him to seeke fauour must not bee as though we wist not what woulde be the ende of our request: but wee must bee fully resolued that hee will shewe vs fauour indeede. Yet notwithstanding, if therewithall wee desire him to release his chastisementes: that is nowe another thing. For hee may well pardon our faultes, but yet in the meane while hee wil not cease to subdue vs, vntill he perceiue that our vices are corrected. I meane not as the Papists doe, namely that God pardoneth the fault, and reteineth the punishment still, as they haue surmised, saying that when God forgiueth men their sinnes, hee ceaseth not in the meane while to execute his rigor vpon them as a iudge. It is nothing so. But God chastiseth vs for our sinnes after hee hath forgiuen them, howbeit, not in way of punishment, but to make vs looke better to our selues & to be warer hereafter, so as we become not so vnconstant as to returne to the selfe same fault againe. Then if God perceiuing vs to haue neede to be tamed, doe list to chastise vs: if wee require of him simply & without condition, that he should by and by withdraw his hand: that request were out of square. For why? He perchãce sendeth vs some sicknes or some other crosse, & hee knoweth that it is not ynough for vs to bee sicke a two or three dayes: and therefore the disease must continue and increase, vntill wee bee throughly clensed of it. Therfore when we make any requests vnto God, he must haue the moderating of them. Why? For we know not his will: I knowe not what is meete for mee, neither hath God giuen me any promise of it: nowe must I in this case stay my selfe, and referre my selfe to God in praying to him, I must patiently waite for such issue as he shall thinke good, and I must yeelde my selfe as a prisoner wholly to his will, vtterly forsaking all mine owne affections. Now then we see that where wee be not sure of Gods will: wee must not warrant our selues any thing vppon our owne heades, but wee must goe to it with condition, that God shall doe to vs as hee listeth. And therewithall wee must pray him to make vs thinke wel of al his doings, and to deale so with vs as wee may agree there vnto: howbeit, not as inforsed, but of our owne accorde.

Thus yee see what we haue to remember vppon this example of Moses. Sith it is so: let vs beware that we pray not for any thing, which we knowe doth displease God and is condemned of him. As howe? If we should desire him that we might liue euer in this worlde: we knowe we be created to another ende, yea and we cannot be his children, but we must be as pilgrims in this world, as saith the Apostle. Seeing it is so: he that shoulde desire to liue alwayes here, should renounce the kingdome of heauen, separate himself from god, and barre himselfe from all accesse vnto him. So then yee see heere a thing that were cleane contrarie to the manner of praying aright: as much is to be saide of all our sinfull lustes. Wee knowe what God hath forbidden vs: if we deale to the contrarie, is it not as if wee shoulde play the chafed bulles or wilde beastes? And suppose wee that such manner of praying prouoketh not Gods vengeance against vs? Is it not a heynous treason to him, seeing wee cannot deuise to abuse his name more falsly? Therefore wee must alwayes looke wel about vs. Seeing the case standeth vppon the finding out of the will of our God: wee must (I say) be well aduised what he promiseth vs, & then shall we haue our requests graunted vs.

Heb. 11. 13. 16

Yet notwithstanding wee haue to marke, *that when Moses desired God that hee might goe ouer Iordan*: hee did it not wilfully of purpose to disobey God. For hee had humbly receiued the condemnation that wee sawe, whereby GOD had banished him from entering into the lande of promise: but as nowe he forgetteth himselfe, and this escapeth from him. When as wee see this, let vs marke that wee had neede to bee so much the more diligent in examining our owne wishes, to witte whether they bee conformable to Gods wil, and squared throughout by the rule of his worde or no. For wee may well protest that our intent is to bee subiect to God, and wee may well say it without dissimulation: but yet in the meane time wee shall not cease to bee intangled in wandering imaginations, and our wittes shall vanish away. If Moses being a man wholly bent to obey GOD, were so farre ouerseene, as to confounde himselfe in his owne request: what shall wee doe? For wee haue a great sort of thicke and darke cloudes, which dimme our

sight that wee cannot see cleare. And therefore let vs sharpen our wittes, that we may consider what is lawfull for vs to demaunde with godlinesse, and what liketh God according as hee shall haue declared it vnto vs. Thus yee see what wee haue to beare in minde. And if wee chaunce at any time to ouershoote our selues through heate, and to require the thing which wee cannot tell whether wee shoulde obtaine or no: let vs by and by correct it with this addition, My God, thy will bee done. As for example, A man hath his childe or his wife sicke, or he is in some other perplexitie: Alas my God (saith hee), and hee casteth forth some vehement affection. ah my God, wilt not thou pittie mee? must I bee thus afflicted with extremitie? Well, when hee hath made this request, he must acknowledge that there is a fault in it. And let vs not excuse our selues by saying, As for me, I neuer meant to withstand God or his will: but when wee once knowe the fault, let vs goe and adde this correction. Alas my God, indeede such is my desire, that thou knowest to what end it is: but yet for all that, it becommeth me to yeelde thee thy principall seruice which thou preferrest before all others: that is to wit, obedience, so as I humble my self wholly in this case vnder thy hande. Euen so Lorde, dispose thou of mee and of all mine at thine owne pleasure. Ye see then that in examining our requests, when we doubt whether God like of them or no: we must enter into this consideration, that God ought to ouerrule vs, that we may yeeld him his deserued honour, and all our affections bee so bridled, as he may haue the masterie of vs. That is the true manner of praying, if we intend to be hearde.

But by the way we must also marke the thing that is set downe heere. Moses to the intent to obtaine his request, saith, *Lorde thou hast begun to shewe thy seruant the highnesse of thy mightie hande.* When Moses speaketh after that fashion, it is a kinde of protesting that his putting of himselfe forth to pray, is not for any seruice that he hath done to God: hee alledgeth not any such thing. No: but he protesteth that God had shewed him fauour alreadie, and therefore he desireth him to continue it still. And it is a point that wee ought to marke wel, namely that when we come vnto God, the best reason that wee can alledge vnto him, to winne our requests at his hande, is to say, alas Lorde, wee be exceedingly bound vnto thee alredie. If a mortall man haue done vs a good turne, wee may well bee ashamed to be alwayes hanging vpon him: but it is not so towards God: For he neuer ceaseth to do vs good: neither can hee bee dreined drie in doing good, as creatures should. And yet notwithstanding, if wee should return three or foure times to a man that hath done vs good or pleasured vs, we might say: Sir, the goodnesse that you haue shewed mee heretofore, for the which I think my selfe greatly bound vnto you, maketh me bold to repaire vnto you againe, euen to increase my dette to you the more. If wee might say so to mortall men: much more ought wee to say it vnto God, for vnto him wee can alledge no deserts, nor any thing else of our owne. Therefore wee must followe that which is shewed vs heere, saying: Lorde, seeing thou hast begunne to do vs good, goe through with it. For God bindeth himselfe to vs in doing vs good: not that he is tyed to it of necessitie, we must not step to him with such lustinesse as though hee owed vs any thing: but after as we haue felt the experience of his goodnesse and grace towardes vs: wee may bee so much the more familiar with him. And that is the thing whereon wee must cast our eye: and it is also the thing wherein GOD is rightly glorified by vs. When I come vnto him and say, Ah Lorde, true it is that nothing I am, nor nothing I can: I haue nothing in mee but vtter naughtinesse: neuertheless, forasmuch as I haue found thee bountiful to me heeretofore, & thou hast shewed thy selfe good to me so many ways: therefore doe I resort vnto thee still. Beholde, by my so doing, GOD (say I) is glorified, both for the time present and for the time to come. And it is not onely Moses that hath vsed this manner of praying: Wee see it was common among all the auncient fathers. Howe often see wee it vsed in the Psalmes: and wee see also that Iacob did the like. Lorde (saith hee) I am stuffed full of thy benefites: when I consider the good that thou hast done mee, I cannot but acknowledge that thou hast vsed wonderfull mercie towardes mee: and yet for all that, I am faine nowe to repayre to thee still. Wherefore let vs learne, that if Moses being a man of GOD, yea and such a one as had so excellent recorde of the holy Ghost, alledged not any deserues of his, ne vaunted of any worthinesse of his owne parte, in his praying vnto GOD: much more ought wee to confesse that wee bee not worthie to open our lippes vnto him: and to stoope and to discharge our selues of all selfestimation when wee come vnto him, so as wee presume not vpon any thing that is in our selues. Marke that for one point.

But though wee bee vnworthie to pray: wee haue well wherewith to imbolden vs, by reason of the greate number of benefites that wee haue receiued at Gods hande. For his reaching out of his hande vnto vs, is not to doe vs good for one day, but to continue, and to giue vs accesse to resort to him againe to morrowe. In so much that when GOD hath once beene gracious to vs, thereby hee sheweth that hee woulde haue vs to come still to him, seeing hee hath shewed vs the way and opened vs the gate.

So then, let vs learne to call to minde the great number of benefites, whereby GOD hath vttered his loue towards vs, to strengthen our selues withall, that wee may take heart to warrant our selues by true faith, that hee will heere vs at our neede. And surely, as for them that minde not Gods benefites: they bee at their wittes ende when they come to the pinche. And the same is the verie cause why we be so colde in praying, and why we

goe

goe to it so vnlustily, not knowing whether wee shall obtaine aught or no, or whether our prayers shall bee in vaine and vnprofitable or no. Why so? For wee bethinke vs not of the promises that GOD hath made vs; and (as yee would say) of the hansels which he hath giuen vs. He hath assured vs oftentimes that wee shall neuer come vnto him amisse: and we thinke not vppon it at all. Our owne vnthankfulnesse therfore, is the let that wee haue not a true and right trust in him, and that wee cannot repaire vnto him to say, Lorde, I doubt not but thou art mercifull to mee, and admittest mee alwaies vnto thee, but not for any worthinesse of mine: Neuerthelesse I beseeche thee remember the benefites that I haue receiued at thy hand: for it is vpon that trust that I come vnto thee: hoping that as thou hast shewed thy selfe gracious and bountifull to mee heretofore, so thou wilt continue still vnto the ende. Thus ye see what wee haue to remember in that Moses saieth, *Lord thou hast begun to shewe thy seruaunt the bigmesse of thy mightie arme.* Mat. 7.7.

Now Moses speaketh here expressely of Gods highnesse and greatnesse, and of the mightie power of his hand. As if he should say, that God had made him to feele an extraordinarie working, and that the grace whereby hee was induced to pray vnto GOD, was a speciall one aboue that which euerie man feeleth. For God had vttered an vnaccustomed maner of power, so as they were no common thinges which he shewed vnto Moses. That then was ỹ cause why he desired to bee brought into the lande of promise. As if he had saide, My God, thou knowest that thou hast chosen mee, not as some other person among vs, but as an elect vessel: & therefore forasmuch as thou hast vsed mee in thy seruice, nowe vouchsafe to bring me into the land. And herein wee see, that Moses desired this, not so much for his owne sake, as for the whole peoples sakes, that all of them might haue fared the better by it. For it was a thing that might haue troubled ỹ weaklings, to see the leader of ỹ people die. Ye see they were a people that were ouerbold, at least wise in rashnesse: but yet when they should obey God, they were seene to be cowardly ynough: and when Moses died, it was ynough to haue made them vtterly vnweeldie, insomuch as it might haue caused great offence among them. What meaneth this [might they haue saide?] The Lorde was determined to put vs in possession of the lande: and why doeth he nowe bereaue vs of him whom he had ordeined to bee our guide? Moses hath bene his lieuetenant vnto this houre, and nowe he goeth away to die. It should seeme then that God had altered his minde, and intended not to goe through with the thing he had begun. Moses had an eye to all this. And therefore, if we looke no further, we see so much ỹ more, that his desire was good and holy: but his fault was, that being condemned of God, whereas he ought to haue held him to it and not to haue gone any further to reply against it: he did it not.

Moreouer he addeth therewithall, *What God is hee in heauen or earth, that hath dont according to thy workes, and according to thy mightie power?* This manner of speache to say, *What God is he in heauen or earth*, seemeth perchaunce to be fond. For is there any other GOD, than hee that had published his lawe by the hand of Moses? If hee alonely bee God; then is this comparison superfluous, yea and euen fonde, and to no purpose. But wee haue to note that in speaking so, Moses meant not that there is a multitude of Gods, so as euerie of them wrought according to his owne abilitie and power, and that the GOD of Israel surmounted all the rest, and was mightier than they all: Moses had no such diuelish superstitiõ in his head. For he knew well ynough ỹ there is but onely one God, euen he that had reuealed himselfe to their father Abraham, the verie same which had shewed by his deedes, that he is ỹ euerlasting & vnchangeable God: but he spake so as in respect of men. Although men do generally confesse that all good commeth of God: yet ceasse they not to forge idols after their owne fansie: insomuch ỹ in sted of resorting to the true God that made heauen & earth, which reuealed himselfe to the fathers: they wander away after their own imaginations (as saith S. Paul,) and fal to deuising of they wote not what. As soone as we conceiue any whit of the diuine Maiestie: by and by wee bee gadding after idols, and turne away from the liuing God. And thereupon came it that euerie nation had his God; If man had asked them, what intende ye to doe, yee wretched soules? [they woulde haue answered,] wee intende to serue God. But yet for all that, they worshipped idoles. And why? For they turned away from the simple essence of God, and worshipped the things which they had set vp in their owne dotages and fooliish conceites. According whereunto, when any of thẽ had any welfare or prosperitie, they would say, God be praised, God hath donne vs this good turne: but in the meane while they fathered all vpon their idols. If a mã had said to the Egyptians in the time of Moses, now sirs ye haue had a fruitefull yeere, yee haue gotten in good store of Corne and Wine, and whence comes all this? [They woulde haue answered,] it is GOD that hath helped vs. And yet notwithstanding they worshiped an Oxe, they worshipped bruite beastes, yea and euen Serpentes and the herbes of the earth. It was as brutish a kinde of dealing as might be. Although this people was sharpe witted and fiirle aboue all others: yet were they become so brutish, that they gaue ouer themselues to all the abominations of the worlde. To bee shorte, when they had either peace, or health, or abundance of wealth: they woulde say *God, God*: the worde *God* ran trotting euerywhere: But in the meane while euerie man had a God by himselfe. Such a one was Baal Peor (of whom wee shall speake hereafter) which was the GOD of the Ammonites. Thus did Idolatrie reigne euery where, and euerie man had his Patrons and gods by himselfe. In consideration whereof Moses saith, Of a trueth Lorde, man abuse thy benefites, Rom. 1. 21.

and when thou doest them good, (as in deede all proceedeth from thy hand:) they do vtterly forget it, or marre it, or beelie it. For they beare themselues on hande that they receiue those things of their Gods, that is to say of their idols, which are but leasinges and dotages. And so are men vtterly ouerseene. But Lord, howsoeuer the world fareth, thou hast vttered such a power towardes vs, as all the Heathen must needes haue their mouthes stopped, so as they cannot saye, These are Gods that haue wrought as great miracles as the God of Israel. If thy deliuering of thy people bee compared with all the benefites which thou hast bestowed vpon men: it will appeare that thou art the souereigne God, & that thou hast shewed forth thy mightie arme in such wise, as all other Gods must needs be cast down. Thus ye see what Moseses meaning was. And the Scripture speaketh often after that maner, as though it graunted men their errour. As if we should say, put the case, or admit: not that it is so in deede, but to come by degrees, to the thing that is to be proued. As for example: if we haue to doe with some Papist: to the intent wee may teache him according to his rawenesse, wee will say: Go to, in praying vnto God, let the one side haue Iesus Christ for their aduocate, and let the other side haue the Virgin Marie with the rest of their Heesaints and Sheesaints: and let vs see which is the better. For when a man comes vnto God, and setteth Iesus Christ before him: he is assured by the holy scripture, that it is Christs office to bee the meane betweene God and him, and to make intercession for him. And so, hee that prayeth in the name of Iesus Christ, is thoroughly sure that he goeth not to worke at all aduenture. But as for him that takes the Virgin Marie or any other patrone, he shall bee beguiled when he thinkes himselfe most sure to be heard: for why, he hath no warrant. Now then, which is best? Wee speake after that maner to the Papistes, not that wee meane it is lawfull to haue patrones: for then should we abuse Gods name. It is said, that in praying wee must bring nothing of our owne head, but faith must be our foreleader, and it is as the key to open vs ỹ gate. Neuertheleſſe wee vse such maner of speache to the vnbeleeuing and ignorant sort, to draw them by little and little. So then, Moses maketh not comparison of the God of Israel, as though hee had conceiued in his imagination that there was a swarme of Gods, and that euerie of them wrought according to his abilitie: No: he knew well ynough that there is but onely one God: but forasmuch as he sawe men ouershoote themselues in that behalfe: he saieth that although all other Nations imagine themselues to receiue benefites at the handes of their Gods: yet notwithstanding, the God of Israel had vttered himselfe with such power, as he onely ought to bee worshipped, and men might well vnderstande that none reigneth but onely he, and that the gouernment of heauen and earth belongeth to none but onely to him, and all men might see by the myracles which he had wrought, that all creatures are in his hande. That then was the meaning of Moses.

Deut. 10. 17. & Psal. 50. 1 & Esa. 45. 21

Let vs marke further, that when the fathers of olde time, did by reason hereof despise idols and all those that worshipped them: God did shewe himselfe to them also, after a mightie fashion. Their saying is, where are the Gods that can doe like the God of Israel, which hath vttered such a mightie power? And in deede wee see no visible substaunce of God: but his will is to haue vs knowe him by his shewing of himselfe in his workes: that is the way that he will haue vs to conceiue him. Seeing then that God hath vttered his mightie power: it is our duetie to magnifie him and to worship him in such sorte, as wee defie all the idols that men haue forged to themselues, and laugh all the things to scorne that haue bene brought in by the worlde. For why, there is nothing but vanitie and leasing in them. But forasmuch as wee be not of sufficient capacitie to iudge of Gods workes, though they be present afore vs, ne can come right vnto him, except he guide vs thither by his worde: let vs learne to hold our selues to this doctrine. Therfore whensoeuer God maketh vs to perceiue his mightie power: let vs bethinke vs of our owne rudenesse and infirmitie, and by and by take his worde to vs, to exercise vs therein. And let vs not play the Paynims and wretched Infidels, who are harping vpon ỹ word *God* with their mouth, and in the meane runne trotting vp and downe knowing not what God is in deede. Let vs then followe the infallible trueth. And seeing that God hath reuealed himselfe vnto vs, yea euen in such sort as wee can not be deceiued nor beguiled: let vs learne to stay thereupon, and to holde vs to it throughout. Let vs not bee so fond headed, as not to profite our selues by the benefites that God bestoweth dayly vpon vs, and by the which he will be glorified: let all superstition and Idolatrie bee beaten downe, and let Gods trueth haue full scope: let all inuentions of men ceasse, and let the world know which is the liuing God. Thus ye see after what manner wee must proceede: that is to wit, when wee once know God, wee must worship him, wee must goe to the perfection, which is onely he, and whatsoeuer is set vp on the contrarie side against him, it must bee brought to naught. For it is not possible for vs to worship God as wee should doe: except wee put all things vnder foote, which men haue forged and imagined in their owne braine. Wherefore let vs learne to exalt him in such wise, as nothing may impeach or darken his preheminence. And forasmuch as wee knowe not of our selues howe wee should glorifie God to yeeld him his deserued honour: let vs take his worde for our guide, and fetch light at his trueth which is in the holy scripture, to the ende wee may knowe that there is none but onely God to whom we ought to resort, and that it is onely he to whom wee must yeeld all praise and thanksgiuing.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done heretofore, that we may returne vnto him with true repentance: and that for-

forasmuch as our nature is so corrupted, we may fight without ceassing against our owne desires, and holde them in such awe, as wee may seeke nothing at his hand but that which wee knowe that he alloweth and liketh off: not doubting but that in the meane while he will shewe himselfe bountifull towardes vs in prouiding of all things for vs which are meete for vs and necessarie to our saluation, so as we may learne to submit our selues to him, glorifying him, and giuing him thankes for all his benefites, in such wise as his bounteousnesse be not buried, but euery of vs acknowledge more and more howe much he is bound vnto him, and yeelde him praise for the same. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also, &c.

On Fryday the x. day of May. 1555.

The xviij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the third Chapter.

26 And the Lord God was angrie with mee for your sakes, and heard mee not, but said vnto mee, be contented, speake no more to mee of this matter.

27 Get thee vp to the top of Phasga, and lift vp thine eyes towardes the West, the North, the South and the East: and beholde with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go ouer this Iordan.

28 But charge Iosua, and strengthen him, and imbolden him: for hee shall goe ouer before the people, & put them in possession of the land which thou shalt see.

29 And so we abode in the valley against Beth-phogor.

I Told you yesterday, how it was not any fleshly lust that moued Moses to desire to goe into the promised land, but a holy zeale, to the ende that y people might haue bene the better confirmed in the grace of God. And that it is so, a man may gather by this speache, where he desireth expressely to see the good Mountaine and the Libanus. For it is verie certaine, that Ierusalem & the Countrie about it, were neither the best, nor the fairest, nor the fruitfullest of all Iurie. There were other soyles, which were both richer and pleasanter also. And yet doeth Moses preferre Libanus and the good Mountaine before all the rest. And no doubt but he meaneth the Mountaine Morea. Wee see then that he rested wholly vpon the thinges that were spirituall, bicause God had reuealed vnto him that the Temple should bee builded there, & that it was the place which God had chosen to bee worshipped and called vpon there. That was the cause why he set all his minde vpon it. And therefore let vs marke, that Moses desired not to enter into that land, to fill his belly there, or to liue in delight and pleasure there: but onely to stirre vp himselfe the more to knowe Gods grace, which he had tasted alreadie in spirit, and likewise to help the people by his example. Yet for all this, he is refused, howbeit not in such wise as if God had vtterly reiected him: but as in respect that hee intended to chastise him by depriuing him of a temporall benefite. And thereby we be yet more confirmed in the thing that was treated of yesterday: that is to wit, that albeit our affections be not alwaies wicked, yet they shall not alwaies be graunted vs, when God intendeth to humble vs, For sometimes we may haue offended him: and he must be faine to cut vs off from his benefites. True it is that our saluation abydeth alwaies certaine: but as for our present state, it appeareth so farre as wee can see, insomuch that whereas God made vs to feele his fauour most abundantly and in verie large measure: we haue but a small peece of it. If this befell to Moses: let not vs thinke it straunge if God deale after the same maner with vs.

Nowe whereas Moses saieth *That he was not heard*: it is to be referred to this speciall suite of his. For God doeth neuer quite shake off his faithfull ones when they call vpon him, at leastwise generally: for he is alwayes mercifull to them, and their praying to him is not in vaine. Matt.7.7 But yet for all that, he graunteth them not euery particular thing that they aske of him. It may so happe that a faithfull man, shall make some request in his prayer vnto God, (yea, for as was said yesterday, there is not a harder thing than to bridle our selues in such sort, as wee passe not our boundes:) there may some such request (I say) slip from a faithfull man, as shall bee good in it selfe, and yet notwithstanding, God shall not vouchsafe to graunt it. Then is he not heard in that behalfe: but yet shall not his prayer bee vaine and vnprofitable. For though he obteine not in that point: yet ceasseth he not to bee in Gods fauour, neither doeth God faile to regarde his necessities. So then let vs note, that all the prayer of Moses was not reiected at Gods hand, as though he had obtained nothing at al of him: but onely as touching that point, wherein it behoued him to haue denialL at Gods hand. That is the thing which he meant here.

But it is said expressely, *That the Lord was angrie with him for the peoples sake*, as we haue seene Deut.1.37 alreadie heretofore. Wherein he meaneth not

altogether to iustifie himselfe: but he doeth it to the end that the people should finde their owne fault, and humble themselues vnto God. If Moses had meant to vphold that he was not in any fault, nor blame worthie: he had couertly accused God. For is it written, that he that sinneth shall beare his owne punishment. Then must it needes bee, that Moses was not cleare: or else that God did him wrong in punishing him for the peoples sake. But I haue declared heretofore, that he glorified not God as hee ought to haue done. In deede this appeareth not by the storie: for it should seeme there, that he did his duetie as well as could be wished: but only God is the competent iudge thereof. Although Moses could not be condemned by his wordes, nor by any outward signe: it is ynough that God findeth fault with him, and auoweth that he yeelded him not his due honour. Ye see then that Moses was faultie: and that Gods banishing of him out of the lande of promise, was for his offences sake, so as he coulde not say that he had not deserued such punishment.

Exec. 18, 20

Why then doeth he lay the blame vppon the people? As I saide afore, it is not to cleare himselfe, but to make the people to knowe their own euill dealing: yea and also to consider, that seeing Moses being so excellent a man, and a man chosen of God, did suffer such reproch and dishonour: they themselues ought to be the more cast downe. Thereby then the people is warned to thinke the better vppon their owne faulte. And in verie deede this offence of theirs was verie grieuous and exceeding great. For we knowe that Moses had an earnest zeale to serue God, and that it was his whole seeking. Neuertheless the murmuring that rose among the people for want of water, was as a tempest to carie Moses away. Beholde, Moses is as a rocke, he is wholly setled in Gods seruice: and therefore it must needes be that the peoples rising in vprore was with horrible violence, euen as if a rocke were shaken with some tempest. And so wee see that the people were vtterly destitute of all patience and as good as starke mad, and that it could not be but that the diuell possessed them, seeing that the fire of it did euen sindge Moses. Also this punishment of his sheweth how great the peoples offence was. What had Moses done? For his owne part he desireth nothing but to liue & die in glorifying God. And yet notwithstanding, God setteth a marke of infamie vpon him for all ages to see, in restraining him out of the promised land. Sith it is so: what punishment doe the people deserue, which were the cause of the mischiefe and the chiefe authors thereof?

Nowe to apply this doctrine to our vse, let vs take good heede that we driue not others to doe amisse, least the whole blame light vppon our owne neckes. Not that our thrusting of any man out of the way can quit him: for God will neuertheless correct him for it: but howsoeuer the world goe, we shall be guiltie of al the sinnes that wee haue occasioned. This ought well to bridle vs, to the ende that no cause of stumbling proceede from vs. And besides this, let vs consider that if God haue giuen vs gouernours that labour to discharge their duelies: if we vexe them in such sorte as they swarue or start aside from the right way: wee shall yeeld account of it before God, and at the last his curse will light vpon our heades. Hereby all folkes are warned to liue simply & peaceably in obedience to their superiors, specially when they see them disposed to serue God: to the ende that they may take courage, and continue & increase in goodnesse. And if we fall to raising of trouble and disorder: surely if they that haue committed but halfe a fault be corrected, wee shall bee dubble punished, and answere for all the inconuenience, as of a trueth wee deserue well to bee charged with it before God. Thus ye see what wee haue to marke vpon that speach, where Moses telleth the people againe, how it was for their sakes that ỹ Lord was angrie with him.

Nowe let vs returne to the matter which wee beganne withall: that is to wit, that although GOD chastised Moses by bereauing him of a temporall benefite: yet was that no impeachment to his saluation. And so meaneth he by these woordes, *Bee contented, and speake no more to mee of this matter.* In saying *bee contented:* he doeth him to vnderstande that he hath wherewith to content him, forasmuch as God is still mercifull to him, & acknowledgeth him for one of his, and taketh him still as of his housholde, & casteth him not out of his kingdome. Seeing that all these thinges abide vnto him still: hee sheweth him that he ought to rest without greeuing of himselfe ouermuch. And it is a very notable and profitable point: namely, that we ought not to be too sorrowful and grieued out of measure, so long as GOD bereaue vs not of the substaunce of our saluation. Wee heare what answere Saint Paule had, when he was afflicted, yea and euen buffeted by Satan, and God had cast him downe in such sorte, that he was as one at the point to bee troden vnder foote. Now he besought God to be deliuered from such temptations: but answere is made him at Gods hand, Let my grace suffice thee. GOD telleth him hee will assist him, but as for the comberance, he must beare it still. Therefore let vs learne to put a difference betweene the thinges that are of the substaunce of our saluation, and the appurtenances which are in deede the tokens of Gods loue and goodnesse, but yet may bee forborne of vs whensoeuer God thinketh good, whether it be to chastise vs, or to trie our patience, or to any other purpose, that he deale so with vs. As for example: the things ỹ are of the substance of our saluation are these: that God forgiue vs our sinnes, that he keepe vs vnder his protection, ỹ he dwell in vs by his holy spirit, ỹ the light which he hath giuen vs by his Gospel be not quenched, & that we may take him for our father, to call vpon him and to flee to him for refuge. So then, the substaunce of our saluation, is ỹ the seede of faith abide continually in vs, that God guide & gouerne vs by his holy spirit, and that he make vs feele his goodnesse, so as wee rest thereupon. But yet for all this, many temptations may befal

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vs, yea euen such as may pluck vs back from calling vpon God. Not that they can shut vs quite out from him: but yet they may so combet vs, as wee shal not be able to resorte to God so freely as wee woulde. Againe, wee shall be tossed with many sorrowes and many hartbytings. On the one side wee shall haue sickenesse, and on the other side pouertie: besides these, men shall doe vs wrong, and diuers other inconueniences, and to be shorte, wee shall in effecte doe nothing but pyne and languishe. In deede if God delt so mildely with vs, as wee might alwayes haue our mouthes open to prayse him, so as there were nothing but myrth and ease in our lyfe: wee should perceiue his loue the more playnely. But yet in the meane while, although wee be afflicted, although wee haue much anguishe and griefe: yet doth the substance of our saluation continue still. What is to be done in this case? Let it content vs that GOD is our father. Although he handle vs not as wee woulde wishe, but rather cleane contrariwise: so as in steade of sweetenesse, wee finde bitternesse, and hee graunteth not our requestes at the first choppe, but hideth himselfe from vs in our afflictions, as if hee had forsaken vs, and giueth vs not meate and drinke at our pleasure: [finally] when all thinges faile vs: yet let it suffice vs that wee haue stil the warrant of our adoptiõ, & that God ceaseth not to take vs and auow vs for his children. These (say I) are the thinges wherewith we must content our selues, in such wise as all thinges else must bee borne patiently by vs. And that is it which wee haue to marke vppon these wordes where GOD sayth to Moses, *bee consumed.*

But the vnbeleeuers haue not this prerogatiue: God shaketh them off quite, if they cry he giueth deafe eare to them, neither saith hee to them for their comfort, bee contented: but hee letteth them chawe vppon the bridle, so as they bee in horrible vnquietnesse and vexation, and haue not wherewith to asswage their sorrowe. For they beleeue not that God beareth them a fatherly good will, nor that hee receiueth them into his fauour. So, now wee see more clearely the thing that I touched briefly before: that is to wit, that Gods refusing of the faithfull, is not an vtter reiecting of their prayers, as though their calling vppon him had not booted them at all: but hee graunteth them generally that which is good for their saluation. And as for in the rest, he cutteth them out their morsels, so as hee graunteth them not whatsoeuer they wishe, neither were it for their welfare that hee shoulde so doe.

Therefore must wee beare this lesson so in minde, as wee may bee able to put it in vre: that is to wit, that if wee obteine not all that euer wee faine would at Gods hand: but that when we resort vnto him, he suffreth vs to linger stil in our miseries & easeth vs not of our troubles at the first, so as we dragge our winges after vs as they say: we must bethinke vs of this, that wee must be contented. And why? for it is good reason that wee should yeelde to the good pleasure of our God, seeing hee reserueth this inestimable benefite and priuiledge to vs, that wee be still mustered in the array of his children.

And besides this, let vs assure our selues that God furthereth our soules health, in refusing to graunt vs the thinges that he knoweth to be vnmeete for vs. Wee see that diuers times hee granted ỹ disobedient their desires: but that was not to their benefite. It had bin much better for them to haue gone without them, and that God had sayd them flat nay of them. Contrariwise, when hee denyeth our requestes, and maketh vs to perceiue that it is not reason that our lustes shoulde raunge vnbrideled, and wee haue all that our fancie runnes vppon: his making of vs to perceiue all this, is to our benefite. As for example, if a childe haue a fickle head, (as commonly all children lacke discretion) and desire his father some fond or euill thing: if his father let him haue his swindge lyke a goose: hee putteth the halter about his neck, by cockering of him too much. But if hee shewe him a grim looke, and make him perceiue that he is a lighe-headed boy, without wit or discretion: his child will be the better for it afterward, and this correction whereby his foolishe appetite is repressed, wil do him good. Euen so doth God towards vs: for hee knoweth it is much better for vs to haue our lustes subdewed, than to giue them too much libertie. And that is ỹ cause why he did so precisely deny Moses request. Num. 11. 18.

Wee knowe that if euer man obteined fauor in Gods sight, it was Moses inespecially aboue all other. For God did him the honor to shewe himselfe familiarly vnto him face to face, as a friend doth to his companion: for so doth the scripture it selfe report: and yet yee see his request was refused: [for it was sayd vnto him,] *Speake no more to me of this matter.* Hee doth [as it were] threaten him. Now if Moses were thus dealt with: let vs vnderstand that wee ought not to take it too much to hart, if God deale roughly with vs nowadayes, and make no haste to succour vs, but rather that to our seeming the miserie increaseth dubble; after wee haue prayed vnto him. Let vs not thinke the matter strãge: for it shall turne to our benefite. To be short, let vs learne to beare all temporall corrections patiently which God sendeth vnto vs. Although our condition waxe woorse and woorse to the worldward, although wee haue a heauy burthen to beare, although wee haue many harde and grieuous thinges to indure: yet notwithstanding wee must come to this poynt, that forasmuch as they bee but temporall chastisements, wee may well holde our selues quiet, for our saluatiõ abideth stil vnappayred. And although wee obteine not some thing which wee aske: yet must wee not thinke our selues vtterly barred from it, vntil our Lord shewe vs by some euident signe. As how? When a man is in trouble, he repayreth vnto God, and craueth mercie, and yet he findeth no reliefe, but in sted of easement he findeth himself tormeted dubble. All ỹ he gaineth by his calling vpon God, is that Exod. 33. 11.

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his miserie is increased. But yet for all this hee must not be discouraged, but continue still in praying vnto God. And therewithall wee must consider thus: God knoweth to what end hee doth it. And his delaying to grant vs our request, is to shewe vs that although hee suffer vs to languish in our aduersities: yet doth he not forget vs nor disdayne to be our father still, but onely teacheth vs to obey him and to bee subiect to him. After that manner then must wee behaue our selues in praying. When it shall seeme that wee haue lost our time in calling vpon God: yet must wee still come backe to this comforte, saying: No, God sheweth mee that it is not meete for mee to aske whatsoeuer I thinke good, but that I must come and put my selfe into his hands with all humblenesse, to receiue what hee thinks good, and to holde all my desires in obedience vnto him. Seeing that hee sheweth mee this, it behoueth me to frame my selfe thereunto, and to take that to bee best for mee which hee shall vouchsafe to send mee. Thus ye see what wee haue to remember in the text where God telleth Moses that hee wil not haue him to speake any more of his going into the lande of Chanaan.

But yet for all that, he shewed him the land a farre off. And no doubt but that the sight of Moses reached beyond the ordinarie sight of nature, and beyond all that hee coulde conceiue within kenning. True it is that in the end of this booke it is said, that euen in his old age, although hee was then sixescore yeeres olde, yet his senses were not appaired, but continued stil in their full strength. Neuertheless, when as it is sayd, that he extended his sight so far, as that he could view al the countryes of the lande of Chanaan: [it is euident] that God gaue him sight aboue the power of nature. And all this tended to this ende, that Moses might bee assured, that Gods deliuering of the people was not to the ende to leaue them in the midway, or to leaue his promise vnperformed which hee had made to his seruaunt Abraham. And his assuring of Moses thereof, was not onely for Moses owne sake, but also for all the peoples sake, to incourage the weaker sorte, that they might take hart to enter the more boldely into the possession of their inheritance after his decease, not doubting but that God would still reache them his mighty hand. That was the cause why this great sight was giuen to Moses. And wee must not maruell that God shewed him the land of Chanaan after that sorte: seeing he had already reueiled mount Sion & Morea vnto him in spirite. Moses then was confirmed by all meanes, not for himselfe onely, but chiefely for the edifying of the people. Here by the way wee bee taught, to receiue such taste of his grace as hee giueth vs, though wee haue but some little feeling of it, and inioy it not yet to the full. Moses standing vppon the toppe of the mountaine, saw the land a far off: it behoueth him to stay there, and to thanke God for that sight. Lykewise sometime God will make vs to feele his grace very slenderly, at leastwise in respecte of our desire: for we would fayne haue our fill of it, wee would haue him to giue it vs more plainely: but that would not bee good for vs. Why? Sometimes wee might not call vppon him: but all thinges ought to be submitted to his will. Yet notwithstanding, wee may chaunce to see some little sparke of Gods grace a farre of, or else perhaps hee will make vs to feele it: but that shall bee so slenderly, as it shal seeme that his intent was but to prouoke our appetite, and to whette our wit, and not to content vs.

But yet must wee bee contented to receiue whatsoeuer hee giueth vs. Although our flesh woulde cary vs further: yet must wee restraine our selues as prisoners, and in so doing followe the example of Moses. For if Moses had bin lyke to such as are impatient and fall to stryuing against God: hee would haue held skorne to go vp into the mountaine. It is to much purpose (would hee haue sayde) for mee to goe breake my shinnes in climbing vp this hil, to goe see the mooneshine in the water. I can forbeare such a sight. After that fashion would they deale, which are not yet come to such meekenesse, as to bee as lambes and sheepe. But Moses shewed well, that notwithstanding that he was the shepheard of the people, yet was hee also a very sheepe in deede, so as GOD might guide and gouerne him as hee lifted. When hee sayd to him, get thee vp into the hill: hee knewe hee should haue no more but a sight of the land, and that the same sight should be a renewing of his griefe, so as hee should sigh at it and might say, Alas I am banished from the possession of this good land, which I see before my face: my desire is but to make a steppe ouer this Iordan, and I am forbidden it. He knewe this. Yet notwithstanding forasmuch as God had commaunded him, hee receiued his grace, yea and hee receiued it with such affection, as hee replyed not to the contrary. Not that hee coulde not haue founde in his hart to haue had it otherwise but for that hee did thrust his owne will vnder foote, to the ende that GOD might haue the whole maisterie of him. Therefore let vs learne to bee meeke. When our Lord is so minded to bring vs vnder awe, and graunteth not the thinges that wee coulde lyke of: let not vs on our side refuse or disdeine the small taste of his grace which hee giueth vs, waiting till hee giue vs a larger discouerie and fruition thereof. For in this worlde wee must bee exercised after that maner: and we must apply al our indeuer thereunto. Insomuch that if GOD giue vs not such knowledge of his grace as wee may holde it (as yee would say) in our handes: or as wee may haue our fill of it: or as wee may triumph in it: yet must wee call vppon him still. And if he giue it vs droppe by droppe, and therewithall wee haue store of griefe and sorrowes, [so as we might say,] what will become of this? why doth not GOD admitte me more familarly vnto him? Why doth hee not inriche mee with his goods? why doth hee not bestowe his benefites vppon mee in greater measure? when wee bee in such case, wee must come to this poyne,

Deut. 34.7.

[that

[that wee may say.] hee dealeth no worse with mee than he delt with Moses. So then let vs patiently accept this maner of Gods dealing, which he vseth to humble vs: and in the meane season let vs not forbeare to hope further. For if wee perceiue not out of hand whither wee tend: let it suffice vs that God sheweth vs a farre off, the good which hee hath prepared for vs. And if wee haue not the fruition of it in this world: let vs be contented that he hath layd it vp for vs in heauen, and that it can not faile vs there: as in very deede the land of Chanaan was vnto Moses as a signe and sacrament of the kingdome of heauen: and yet hee did but see it a farre off. Neuertheless, howsoeuer the case stoode with him, hee had still a warrant that God woulde not bereaue him of his inheritaunce in heauen. That was the poynt that hee rested on: and so must wee doe too.

Hee addeth *that he must instruct, strengthen, and incourage Iosua, for is is hee that must leade the people of Israell*. Hereby the obedientnesse of Moses is yet better warranted vnto vs. For how many are there to bee seene, which woulde bee loth to imploy themselues in dooing the thinges that God commaundeth them, vnlesse GOD giue them the honor as well as the charge? But Moses resigneth the honor and dignitie that hee had receiued: God putteth him out of office. Hee should haue bin the leader of the people, to bring them into the land of Chanaan, and ye see hee is deposed from his office with dishonor and shame. Now had hee bin as one of these worldlings which know not what it is to giue ouer themselues playnely vnto God: or had hee bin as a nomber are, who being caryed away with ambition and vainglory, wil alwayes needs be had in estimation: hee woulde neuer haue yeelded to doe any thing to Iosua. But behold, God telleth him here, thou must resigne thy state to Iosua, and thou must instruct him, to the end hee may bee set in thy place: and knowe thou that hee is worthie to bee my lieuetenaunt, to leade my people into the possession of their inheritaunce. Sith wee see that Moses was ready hereuppon to giue ouer his authoritie, so as God should bereaue him thereof, and yet hee himselfe not onely bare no grudge to Iosua his seruaunt when hee sawe him exalted in his roome: but also instructed him, and sought to surrender his owne gratious giftes vnto him, as if hee should haue plucked al the good out of his owne hart, to haue sayd vnto Iosua, take here that which belongeth vnto thee, to the intent that all may redound to the welfare of the people, and I hencefoorth become as a poore naked man: sith wee see (say I) that Moses was at that poynt: haue wee not an euident proofe that hee regarded not himselfe? and that hee sought not any thing else but that God might be glorified? and that when hee had finished his course, the people might still haue a faithful man to guide and gouerne them? Specially seeing that euen in his lyfetime, when hee sawe God's grace florishe and increase in a meane person which was set in prehemінence ouer him, he not onely enuied him not, but also was willing to helpe & further him, that hee might be able to execute his charge when hee were succeeded in his place? This verily is written in commendation of Moses: but it serueth also for our instruction, to the ende wee may learne to submit our selues to our God: that whensoeuer he listeth to exalt others in our place, wee may be glad of it, wishing that the same may redound to the benefite of ỹ people, and indeuoring to helpe those whome God hath chosen and elected, so as hee may alwayes reigne & gouerne, and that whensoeuer it pleaseth him to exalt men, it may suffice vs that hee be glorified in them, and none of vs be selfewilled in that behalfe, but all in generall seeke the maintenaunce of the whole body of the Church in her state, and the benefite, welfare and prosperitie of the same. Thus yee see what wee haue to remember vppon this text.

Furthermore let vs mark also, that whereas Moses is commaunded to strẽgthen Iosua therein God sheweth vs the effectuall woorking and force of his worde. The incouraging of a man, specially to so excellent a worke, is no small matter. And by what meane is that done? By good teaching, and by holy exhortations. Thus are there two thinges to be noted in effect. The one is ỹ such as are set in authoritie haue neede to be instructed and strẽgthened, that they may be able to doe their duetie. The second is, that Gods word hath this vse and propertie to frame those which els should be vnmeete, and to strẽgthen them when they be weake: and to be short, to make them fit in all poyntes to execute their office, and whatsoeuer is appoynted them by God.

Therefore let them that are called to any charge or authoritie looke wel to themselues. For they be not abler men than Iosua was, who had done a notable act already now forty yeeres agoe, in outstanding the rebellion of the whole people, notwithstanding ỹ they would haue stoned him, and that he sawe so great, and (as ye would say) so infinite a multitude against him, which was not of an hundred men, neither of rascalles, or of no estimation, but there were moe than fiue hundred thowsand men that did set themselues against him: and yet for all ỹ he bare out the brunt, with inuincible constancie, and maintained Gods quarell. Iosua had done this deede fortie yeeres afore: and yet notwithstanding he is faine to be incouraged stil, he is faine to receiue newe instruction, hee is faine to be confirmed yet better and better. Now thẽ, what shall those do which are as sillie beastes, & can doe nothing? If a man examine them thorowly, although there bee some good seede of vertue in them, alas, they come farre shorte of the perfection that was in Iosua. Then if they cannot finde in their hartes to be taught, and to be strengthened that they may the better serue God: are they not worthie to be put to reproch, so as they may not discerne what vprightnesse and iustice meane, but commit so grosse crymes as euen little children may laugh them to skorne, and all the worlde bee

ashamed

ashamed of them? Thus much concerning the first poynt.

Deut. 17. 1. Wherfore let them ỹ are called to any charge, whether it be to ỹ ministring of Gods word, or to the executing of Iustice as touching earthly gouernment, or to be maisters or fathers: let them all (euery one in his owne vocation) vnderstand, that they haue neede to bee instructed, or else that they cannot furnishe out the place to performe their duetie. Let that serue for one poynt. Now were this well obserued: wee should not see so many skorneful persons as there are. For vnder color that a man is aduaunced to some authoritie, he may no more be spoken to: for hee cannot bee but wise ynough, seeing he is in authoritie. But it is cleane contrary, as we see here, and as God hath also well shewed, in that hee hath giuen Kings a speciall commaundement to haue the bookes of his lawe about them, as wee shall see in due place hereafter.

And now must we also note the second point, which hath bin touched already: that is to wit, that if we purpose to be wel taught, if we purpose to bee confirmed, if wee purpose to be wholy disposed to doe the things that our dutie requireth: we must repaire to Gods schoole. For hee hath giuen the power and efficacie to his worde, not onely to teach vs to knowe what is good, and to giue vs wisedome and skill: but also to make vs strong to goe through with our affaires as wee ought to doe, so as we be able to withstand all euill, and to ouercome all the stoppes and lettes which the diuill shall thrust in our way. To bee short, to the end wee may bee able to compasse all thinges well, and to goe through with the thinges that God commaundeth vs: let vs bee ready to harken vnto God, and be willing to receiue instruction by his worde. And it is certain, that if wee haue that, it will neuer faile vs, for it is a good scholemaister. But (as I said) it is good reason that men should continue in their beastlynesse, and that GOD should discouer their shame, when they will not submit themselues to him, but are so stately that they thinke it a needelesse thing to be taught, because they be no young children any more. Alas, that is euen the very cause why god withdraweth his blessing from them. But contrarywise, let vs doe as Iosias did. If God bee so gracious vnto vs as to teach vs: let vs bee ready to receiue instruction, and then shall we be inuincible. Albeit that Satan doe practise all that euer he can against vs: and albeit that the wicked bee as barres to stop vs, so as by all lykelyhoode wee can not set forward one step, no nor stirre one finger: yet shall wee bee strengthened by the power of God, so wee followe the order that is shewed vs here.

Now for a conclusion, it is sayd of Moses and the people, *that they abode in the valley ouer against the Temple of Pheor*. For *Bethphoor* is as much to say, as the house of ỹ Idole Pheor: and the word *House* is put for a *Temple*. This is not set downe for nought: for it was Gods will to ad this as the vpshot of condemnation vnto Moses, that hee was fain to haue the Temple of an Idol continually before his eyes, He was chosen to leade the people of Israell into the land of Chanaan. And it is certaine that hee himselfe murmured not against God, ne letted the people from comming there: but yet for all that, when it came to the poynt that hee should haue made the water to come out of the rocke, he went not to it cherefully, but was (as yee would say) ouergreeued in his minde, so as he gaue not glory vnto God. By meanes wherof whereas Gods seruice should haue bin set vp in the lande, and whereas there should haue bin such a melodie in calling vppon his name, as al superstitions should haue bin rooted out, and as all the thinges that had bin shewed him in the mountaine should haue bin put in practise, that Gods maiestie might haue bin seene shining in the middest of the people: in stead of hauing so goodly and (as ye would say) angelicall order: he is faine to tary hard by a temple of Idols, he is faine to see himselfe as it were defiled with it, he is driuen to beholde the abhominations that were dayly committed by the heathen as it were in despite of God, he is driuen to see the true religion ouerthrowen: and this could not bee but a great hartbreaking to him, and worke a terrible vexation in his minde. Now vppon this example wee haue to gather, how it is not for naught that our Lorde causeth vs to see thinges that ought to offend vs and to cast vs into great heauinesse. And why? For we be not worthie to see his seruice throughly in good order, and to see his religion purely and soundely obserued, so as he might bee worshipped with one common consent throughout all the world. We bee not worthie to inioy such a benefite. For the full perfection of all felicitie that wee can haue in this world, is that GOD be serued and honored, and that in such wise, as all superstitions, al abuses, and all other things that may corrupt his seruice, bee layde downe. But for examples sake, wee see at this day how God mingleth many of his faithful ones among the Papistes, where they be faine to behold abhominations dayly with their eyes, and are held in so strait bondage, as they dare not open their mouthes to speake against them. They see Gods temples turned into no better than brothelhouses, and fraughted with so fowle and filthie baggage, that it were much better that Temples or Churches were neuer spoken of, than to haue such as are in the popedom. But yet this are ỹ poore faithful ones driuen to behold. And why? For they be not worthie to see such reformation as they desire, God intendeth to humble them, and hee knoweth to what ende. And leaste wee should perke vp aboue other men to say, heere is no corruption: alas, what are we? Though there be not open Idolatrie among vs is there not a horrible cõtempt of God by swearing, and a rebelling against his worde? Is there not such a beastlynesse to bee seene in a great nomber, as it were much better for them to become Turkes and Heathen men, than to pretend the name of Christianitie which they abuse so shamefully? Are they not seene to bee manifest despisers of God, and to bewray themselues in such sorte, as euen little children may discerne

cerne it? Now then ſith wee ſee ſuch corruptions among vs: let vs vnderſtand that they bee the rewards of our ſins. And therfore let vs bewaile our caſe, aſſuring our ſelues that Gods ſuffering of ſuch minglemangle among vs, is to make vs perceiue that wee deſerue well to be ſo intangled. Yea, which woorſe is, wee ſee this come to paſſe, euen where the Goſpel was purely preached. Is not the belliſh corruption of the *Interim* returned againe? Doth not the worlde ſee how idolatrie is ſet vp againe by it? And think wee that this is happened without Gods iuſt puniſhment? Now therefore let vs looke well to it, that lyke as it was Gods wil to humble his ſeruant Moſes and al the people, by facing them with the temple of a curſed idoll: ſo lykewiſe nowadayes, ſith wee ſee ſo great corruptions, ſith wee ſee religion diſguyſed, ſith wee ſee on the one ſide idolatrie, and on the other ſide loſeneſſe and occaſion of ſtumbling: let vs vnderſtand that all this commeth through Gods iuſt vengeance, by reaſon of our ſinnes. Wherefore let vs humble our ſelues and mourne, vntill it pleaſe God to ſet al thinges againe in ſuch order and plight, as wee may all call vppon him with one common accord, foraſmuch as the ſame is the ende whereunto hee hath ſet vs together, and for the which hee hath redeemed vs ſo deerely with the bloud of his ſonne.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him to mortify them more and more, that wee may learne to be ſo ſubdued, as our whole ſeeking may be to obey him, and to glorify him in all thinges that hee lifteth to doe, and that in the meane while we may not be wedded to our owne affections and fleſhly luſtes, but that although wee haue neuer ſo many incomberances in this world, & neuer ſo many meanes to turne vs from the right way: yet notwithſtanding wee may goe through with the courſe of his calling, vntill hee haue deliuered vs from all Satans trappes, and from all thinges that hee ſetteth afore vs to make vs turne head, and to hinder vs from going forewarde to our ſaluation, euen till wee bee come thither. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo &c.

On Wedneſday the xv. of May. 1555.

The nineteenth Sermon which is the firſt vpon the fourth Chapter.

NOw then O Iſrael, hearken to the ordinaunces and Lawes which I teache you to doe, that yee may liue and goe in and poſſeſſe the lande, which the Lord God of your fathers giueth you.

2 Ye ſhall not adde anie thing to the word which I command you, neither ſhall yee take anie thing from it, to intent yee may keepe the commaundementes of the Lord your God which I commaund you.

THe concluſion ỹ Moſes maketh here, is wel worthie to be marked: for it maketh for the matter which hath bin expounded heretofore: that is too wit, that wee haue neede to bee prepared to the obeying of our God, becauſe wee bee diſobedient of our own nature, and our affections drawe contrarie to his will, inſomuch that whereas hee will haue vs to walke vprightly, there is nothing but vtter lewdeneſſe in vs. Againe, if wee happen to haue any good diſpoſition & deſire to walke after Gods commaundementes: wee ſtart away incontinently in the turning of a hand, and there is no conſtancie in vs towardes any good. On the other part, wee haue a ſorte of fooliſhe dotages, which cary vs away, ſo as wee will needes bee euer diſputing with God, yea and be wiſer than hee. Therefore haue wee neede to be ſubdued and humbled by al meanes, or elſe God ſhall neuer be able to welde vs. For this cauſe it is ſayd, that the people heard not the lawe publiſhed vnto them one day onely, but that they were often times put in minde of it. And that foraſmuch as they were ſtubborne, GOD had ſubdued them by many chaſtiſementes, as by leading them about in the wilderneſſe the ſpace of fortie yeeres, to inure them to obedience: and by trying them diuers wayes, to teach them that it was no reſiſting of ſuch a maiſter.

After that Moſes hath treated of all thoſe thinges: hee ſayth, *Harken now O Iſraell, vnto I tell thee in the name of God*. As if hee ſhould ſay, it is time now or neuer for you to begin to walke in obedience, that yee bee no more lyke wilde folke as yee haue bin, that yee giue not head to your wicked luſtes, that yee bee not ſo fierce as to ſhake off Gods yoke, and that ye ſtick not to your owne fond inuentions which make you to runne aſtray: but that yee beare well in minde what yee haue indured. For if yee cannot yet bowe your neckes to ſubmit your ſelues

to your GOD: in the ende hee must be faine to breake you, if ye will not bowe. *Now heare yee his voyce*, sayth hee. And wee must apply this to our vse. That is to say, Seeing it is now a great while agoe since wee began to heare the worde of God: wee must not bee still as young nouices, we must not bee lyke the young bullockes or Steeres which cannot yet skill what it is to beare the yoke: but wee must bee throughly acquainted with obeying. If they that neuer were taught Gods trueth bee wilde-headed and cannot finde in their heartes to stoope at the first, but runne gadding heere and there after a number of worldly vanities: it is not to bee wondered at. True it is that that shall not serue to excuse them: no surely: for seeing that God hath created vs to the ende to serue and honor him: wee ought to giue our selues wholy vnto him, euen from our mothers wombs.

Neuertheless if wee be somewhat straunge for want of teaching: it may bee borne withall among men. But if at the end of twentie yeeres, when wee haue had our eares continually beaten with the Gospell, so as GOD hath spoken vnto vs earely and late, and [cryed out vnto vs] to waken vs: wee abide still at our Absie, and wot not what rule or doctrine meaneth: must it not needes bee sayd that wee bee of too vntowarde a nature? Yes: and that is it which
1. Cor. 3. 2. the Apostle meaneth in saying, yee ought by this time to haue bin great doctors in respect of the time that yee haue gone to schoole: and beholde yee bee still rawe and vnlearned, so as it shoulde seeme that GOD neuer spake to you. According then to the time that God of his grace shall haue bestowed in teaching of vs by his worde: let vs learne to yeelde our selues the more teachable, and to shewe that he hath not lost his labor, but that we haue profited well in his schoole. And this poynteth at vs inespecially. For howe long time hath the Gospel beene preached among vs? so as wee heard nothing else euery day, but what Gods will is. Nowe then, it is good reason that wee on our side should not bee so straunge, but that wee shoulde consider, that wee ought not to bee still newe to beginne, in the things that haue beene tolde vs so often alreadie. And againe wee must profite also as well by chastisementes as by teaching. If GOD haue humbled vs in any wise, becatise hee seeth that wee cannot otherwise bee subdued vnto him, so as hee hath tamed one with sickenesse, and another with pouertie, after what fashion soeuer GOD hath made vs to feele his hande: let vs looke well to it that wee profite our selues thereby, and that this word *Now* which Moses vseth here, be wel printed in our hearte and minde. So that if wee haue bin ouerseene, if wee haue not at the first bin so well disposed to liue as it becommeth vs, if wee haue not bin so forewarde as wee ought to haue bin in running to our God when hee hath called vs: at leastwise let vs not continue so hardharted and stubborne to the vttermost.

But nowe let vs see in effect what Moses requireth here. *Hearken O Israel* (sayth he) *to the ordinances and statutes which I teach thee to day, that thou mayst liue and enter into the land which the Lorde thy God giueth thee, and possesse it*. Here Moses declareth that our lyfe shall alwayes bee full of disorder and confusion, vntill wee haue yeelded so much authoritie vnto God ouer vs, as to haue the [whole] guyding of vs, and that wee haue made our account to rest simply vpon his worde. To bee shorte, wee bee taught heere, to rid our selues of all selfeweening, and that when the case concerneth how to liue well, wee must not step to it vppon our owne head, and after our owne fancie, to say, this seemeth good to mee. Whereat must wee then begin? At learning, as Moses declareth. And therefore hee that giueth eare vnto God, to receiue whatsoeuer is tolde him from him, shall bee well learned. But on the contrary part, vntill such time as wee haue heard our GOD speake, and that hee haue performed the office of a teacher towardes vs: it is certeine that our life shall be quite out of order. Wee may well flatter our selues as ignorant wretches doe, who beare themselues in hand that the worlde goes as well with them as is possible, when in the meane while they be no better than bewitched, so as there is neither wit nor discretion in them. Ye see then that the thing which wee haue to marke vppon this text, is that if wee meane not to leade a disordered lyfe, and such a one as God vtterly mislyketh: wee must hearken vnto him. And heere it appeareth of what valuwe good intents (as they terme them) are: whereof I will treate more at length anon. For if it behoue vs to heare God speak, before we lift vp one foote to goe foreward: what will become of vs when euery of vs is wedded to his owne fancie, and when our lustes are so wilde? Doth it not appeare that God refuseth all such thinges in one worde? Againe, Moses telleth vs that God on his side, will teach vs faithfully, soundly, and perfectly: conditionally that we refuse not to be ruled by him and to obey him. And hee vseth mo wordes than one. For he could haue sayd, hearken to the Lawe, or hearken to his commaundementes: but hee sayth, hearken to his statutes and ordinances. And in other places he setteth downe *Statutes*, *ordinances*, *commaundementes*, *and rules*. This is not a superfluous speach, but it serueth to expresse the better, that it is long of none but our selues that wee be not well and faithfully taught. But what for that? Men are so lustie, as they cannot temper themselues to ỹ simplicitie of Gods worde, to say that it shall suffise them to be gouerned by God, and to receiue whatsoeuer is set before them in his name. Men cannot abide such modestie: but are alwayes itching after their owne inuentions, and yet in the meane while doe still arme theselues w startingholes: according as we see nowadayes ỹ a number doe graunt ỹ holy scripture to be good, but they say also ỹ it is expedient to supply ỹ wantes ỹ are in it & ỹ is a cursed

cursed blasphemie, inasmuch as it accuseth God of ouersight, or else of enuie, for not setting downe all that is requisite to our saluation. But yet shall this saying holde, spyte of all the world, that the lawe of God is a full and perfect doctrine wherein there wanteth not any thing: and that if our lyfe bee ruled thereafter, it is certeine that there shall no fault bee able to bee found in it: and that wee cannot walke after that manner, but that if the worlde condemne vs, God will not faile to allowe of vs: and that ought to bee enough for vs.

But herewithall Moses sheweth the ende also why hee taught the people: not to the end that euery man should knowe what was good, and then make no further account of it: but to the ende that their liues should bee answerable thereunto. God then setteth vs downe a doctrine of practise as they say. And therefore it is not enough for a man only to knowe Gods word, but hee must also be transformed into it by beholding it as Gods image, as Saint Paule speaketh thereof. To what ende then doth God speake vnto vs? not to the end we should but nod at it or listen with our eare to it, to ratify his sayings by speach or by signes: but to ỹ end we should giue proofe by our whole lyfe that hee is our father and maister, and that hee hath all preheminence ouer vs: and that whereas wee bee his creatures, we bee his children too. Let vs marke well then, that our comming hither to heare Gods worde, must not bee to goe away as wee came: but if our life bee chaunged, and that wee haue learned to frame our selues according to that which God hath tolde vs: that is the very right vse of it. Otherwise wee doe but vnhallowe Gods worde, and wee shall be found guiltie of high treason towards him, for disappoynting of the operation thereof. But what? So little is this obserued nowadayes of such as name themselues Christians: that in stead of performing the thinges that are commaunded them, they vouchsafe not to come where they may bee taught one worde, but which woorse is, doe shunne all learning.

There are to be seene which can brag well enough that they be faythfull: and yet there needeth none other tryall to knowe what they bee, than their manifest despising of Gods woorde more than the Turkes or Iewes doe. For these haue yet some reuerence of religion, but the diuells that are among vs, come to sermons lyke dogges and Oxen, without any honestie or modestie.

Othersome come thither to sleepe, so as it should seeme that their meaning is to spite God openly and to spit in his face: it should seem that they be desirous to shew some signe of their lewdnesse and beastlynesse, how detestable they be. To be short although they speake it not, yet doe they beare a marke in their foreheades for all men to beholde with their eyes, that they seeke to deface Gods glory to the vttermost of their power. Another sorte doe make countenaunce to hearken, and yet make but a slimflamme of it (as they say). For what shall a man finde in all their life? Nothing but desperate disobedience. But yet for all that, Gods worde hath not chaunged his nature. Wherefore if wee looke not about vs to frame our selues accordingly thereunto, wee must needes come to account, for defyling so holy a thing, which GOD hath ordeyned to so worthie and noble an vse.

And herewithall Moses addeth, that God requireth not any thing at our handes in respect of himselfe, or for any profite that he shall haue by it, but for our owne welfare. *To the ende (saith hee) that thou mayst enter into the land that is giuen thee for thine inheritaunce, and possesse it.* Herein Moses protesteth, that God looketh not for any reward at our handes, for hee hath no neede of any thing: but it is for our profite, that hee would haue vs to serue him. Hee could well ynough forbeare vs: but yet is hee desirous to haue vs, and hee woulde that wee shoulde suffer him to gouerne vs. Seeing then that God in all respectes sheweth such loue and regarde of our welfare: are wee not woorse than wilde beastes if wee bee still hard to yeelde, and cannot finde in our hearts to come to him but against our willes? If God should but onely commaund vs after a precise fashion, yet were we bound to do what soeuer he biddeth vs: yea and although hee should vse the greatest rigour that could bee, yet might not wee refuse to doe our duetie towardes him. But hee forbeareth that authoritie of his, as though hee yeelded vp some part of his right, and vseth another maner of speach, [as if hee shoulde say,] you owe mee all thinges, for yee bee mine: and yet for all that, the seruice which you doe mee shall bee accepted in so good woorth, as yee shall perceiue that I take yee for my children, yee shall feele my gratious goodnesse and benefites in all sortes, and to bee shorte yee shall not loose your labor. Seeing then that God stoopeth thus vnto our rudenesse: ought not wee to bee rauished at so great goodnesse? And although we had all the letters in the world against vs: ought it not to ridde them all quite away? Otherwise, what an vnthankefulnesse were it?

Therefore let vs learne, that whensoeuer God matcheth promises with his commaundementes: it is to win vs by gentlenesse, because hee seeth vs so slowe as is pitifull, and therefore he allureth vs as a father that flattereth his children as ye would say. That is the ỹ thing which wee haue to gather here.

Now if wee consider this lesson well: wee shal not say as the Papists doe, That seeing God promiseth reward to such as shall haue serued him, it appeareth thereby ỹ we deserue, and that God is as wel bound vnto vs, as we to him. But cleane contrariwise, Gods promising vs, to doe vs good, is not for that our seruice can deserue aught at his hand, nor for that hee is or can be beholden to vs for any thing: but his shewing of himselfe so freehearted towardes vs as to forbeare his owne right, proceedeth of his owne free bestowed goodnesse, as I haue declared

afore. Surely the Papistes doe well shew themselues to be puffed vp with diuelish pride, when they presume after that sorte to abuse Gods fatherly goodnesse. He could doe no more, except he should make vs cockneyes as I haue sayd already: and yet notwithstanding, mortall men which are but carion and dung, fall to aduauncing of themselues and say it is a token that God is bound vnto them. Now then let vs beare in minde, that the promises which GOD setteth afore vs to prouoke and incourage vs to doe him seruice, serue not to shewe that he oweth vs any thing, or that we can deserue aught at his hand: but they be a record vnto vs of his free bestowed goodnesse, inasmuch as hee byndeth himselfe to vs of his owne good will, notwithstanding ỳ hee can not be any way indetted vnto vs.

Moreouer it behoueth vs to marke that in speaking, Moses setteth ỳ lawe in the first place, to the ende to leade the people yet further. For by the lawe wee knowe our duetie and how wee ought to liue: that is to wit, that wee ought to loue God with all our heart, with all our minde, with all our affections, and with all our powers: and that wee ought to loue our neighbors as our selues. Now when we once know this: we must see whether wee bee able to doe it or no. But so vnable is any man liuing to discharge himselfe thereof: that wee cannot so much as stirre one finger to begin it. Therefore are wee all guiltie before God. And what is there to be done? We must flee for refuge to his grace, and therewithall beseech him to be mercifull to vs in forgiuing vs our sinnes: and moreouer to vouchsafe to reforme vs forasmuch as hee seeth that wee be not onely weake but also vtterly vnable to doe any good, because there is nothing but corruption in vs: And finally that when he hath made this lawe to bee preached vnto vs, hee vouchsafe also to ingraue it in our hartes, and to giue vs such a minde as wee may seeke to serue him. This is the maner of proceeding which wee haue to beare in minde, in that it is sayd that the lawe is preached vnto vs, to the ende wee should serue our God: as in deede the ende whereto it tendeth is to shewe men what they ought to doe.

Matt. 22. 37

Nowe herewithall let vs examine all our owne abilities, and wee shall finde our selues ouerwhelmed, and that wee bee all of vs cursed and damnable, if God added not a remedy to drawe vs out of the curse which the lawe bringeth vppon vs. And therefore Saint Paul sheweth that if men will needes holde themselues to the lawe, they shall bee damned without any further hope of saluation. And why? for it is written, hee that doth these thinges shall liue in them. Now then (sayth Saint Paul) let euery man looke into himselfe, and examine his whole lyfe: is there any man that is able to vaunt that he hath fulfilled Gods lawe? No, wee be all disobedient. Seeing the case standeth so, there is no more life in the Lawe: but wee must rather flee to the free forgiueneſſe of sinnes, and specially beseech God to giue vs power to doe that which we can not. And so whereas the Papistes doe make themselues drunken with their diuelish imaginations of meritorious works and such other like thinges: let vs vnderstand that after our Lord hath allured vs by gentleneſſe, he addeth a second grace: which is, that albeit we be not able to performe his commaundementes throughly in all respectes, yet he beareth with vs as a father beareth with his children, and imputeth not our sinnes vnto vs, but receiueth our halfe seruices as though they were whole and perfect, not for any worthineſſe that he findeth in them, but because he purposeth to play the father with vs. Marke that for another poynt.

2.Cor.15.56 Ro.3.19.& 4.15.& 6.14

Leuit.18.5. & Ro.10.5.

Rom.3.9. Rom.6.2. 3. & 10.4.

Besides these, there is a third grace which hee vseth: which is, that hee ingraueth his lawe in our hartes, insomuch that whereas he seeth our hartes to bee as harde as stone or stithies, hee maketh them as soft as flesshe, and meeketh them ỳ they may be obedient. And hee not onely prepareth vs after that maner to serue him: but also giueth vs discretion, power, and performance. Sith wee see this, let vs put all merites or deserues out of minde, and let vs not be so presumptuous as to aduaunce our selues any way: but as wee haue iust cause to abase our selues, so let vs w all humblenes giue the glory vnto god. Thus ye see what we haue to do, ỳ we may take profit of ỳ doctrine cõteined here.

And immediately hereunto Moses addeth, *That men must purely and simply followe the doctrine that hee commaundeth, without putting any thing to it or taking any thing from it. To the intent* (sayth hee) *that yee may keepe the commaundements of your God which I inioyne you.* Before wee proceede any further, wee must marke the authoritie that Moses taketh to himselfe in this text. Hee had sayd heretofore, *I teach you*: and now hee sayth, *I inioyne or commaund you*. And why is that? To shewe that hee speaketh not in his owne name, but as sent frõ a greater master, in respect whereof it is meete that euery man shoulde wholy submit himselfe to him without gainesaying. And here wee see how all true shepheardes ought to behaue themselues, and all such as haue charge to preach Gods worde, or haue the gouernment of the Church: that is to wit, they must be sure that God hath sent them, so as they attempt not any thing of their owne head, but speake as in the name of God, and vtter all their sayinges as on his behalfe. Being once at that stay, then must they also maintaine Gods maiestie, and deale in such wise as the doctrine may be receiued with all reuerence, and no man step vp to incounter it. To bee shorte, there are two thinges requisite in all good shepheardes. The one is, that for their part they must not burthen men with any tyrannie, nor inuent lawes to tye their consciences, thereby to bring them in bondage, nor forge any doctrine vppon their owne head, but faithfully deale foorth the thinges that are committed vnto them. Haue they that? Then let them aduaunce the thing which they know to proceede of GOD, so as they suffer not the heauenly doctrine to bee skorned, but shewe men that they ought to reuerence GOD, and to submit them-

themselues to his word, and let them withstand all loftinesse that vaunteth it selfe against him. After which maner we see how God strengtheneth his Prophets, telling them that they must not passe for any mans greatnesse, nobleneſse, or ought else, but rebuke the Mountaines and set themselues against the Hilles: that is to say, let them not shrinke for men, but let them shewe ỳ the word which they bring, and which is committed to them, is as it were Gods royall mace, at the which all creatures ought to stoope and to bow their knees. Ye see then that all ministers of Gods word ought to seeke those two things.

But yet for all that, wee see the cleane contrarie. For such as raigne with roughnes and churlishnesse (as Ezechiel termeth it) passe not to keepe this rule of Moses, which is, to serue God purely. For wee see that the Pope and all the filthie rable of his Clergie (as they terme themselues) are euer thundering, and would not haue men in any wise to open their lippes against any point [of their doctrine,] but that they shoulde without any gainesaying obserue whatsoeuer they list to ordaine. Yea marie, but in the meane while whence haue they their stuffe? whence do they preach it? It is ynough for them that they may lorde it, & they beare themselues on hand that they may hold the poore soules vnder their tyrannie, which were redeemed with the bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ. But neither Moses nor any of ỳ Prophets did euer giue themselues such libertie, for they spake in Gods name, without setting foorth any thing of their owne. Let vs then learne to hearken to such as come in the name of God, and discharge their duties vnfeinedly. Againe we see that such as should maintaine Gods trueth, doe let all slippe, and though they see neuer so much disorder: it greeues thẽ neuer a whit, neither doe they passe though all goe to hauocke. And why? Bicause they haue no zeale at all to aduaunce the Maiestie of Gods word. Also on the other side wee see a nomber that vaunt themselues to bee Christians, which can as much skill of the reuerence that Moses speakes of here, as if they had bene brought vp in a swines stie or on a dunghill. Are there not a nomber to be seene which will say continually, tush, you haue nothing to doe to command mee? Yes: and you my friend are a verie brute beast in so saying, for if I haue not to doe to command you, you haue no more Christianitie in you than is in a dogge. For when wee preach Gods word, to what end is it? That God should bee the seruaunt? or the maister? Let that be well considered. Speake wee in our owne names? Or set wee foorth any thing that is not giuen vs in commission by God? Now, he will haue vs to represent his person: and yet we must neither command, nor beare any sway at all for these rascalles and vnthrifters, which aduaunce themselues with exceeding vnshamefastnesse to fight against God. But what? Ye see what the Christianitie of Geneua is, where the Gospell hath bene preached this twentie yeeres, insomuch that ỳ verie walles ought to ring of it, and the verie pauing of the streetes ought to beare some marke of Gods trueth: and yet these wood beastes continue still in their grosse and barbarous rebelliousnesse, so as they be worse than bulles with their hornes, or I wote not what other beastes. Yet notwithstanding it cannot be wyped out of Gods Register, but that whensoeuer Gods worde is preached, both great and small must receiue it, at leastwise if we acknowledge it to be Gods truth. Yea and we must receiue it with such reuerence, as to thinke thus with our selues: beholde, it is our God that speaketh: and if he be our maister, doe not we owe him all reuerence? If he bee our father, doe not we owe him all honour? What is to bee done then; but onely to shewe by our deedes, that our whole seeking is to bee ruled quietly by him? Thus yee see what we haue to remember here, in that Moses speaketh not as in the person of a mortall man, but taketh vpon him the authoritie to commaund: howbeit not as chalendging any thing to himselfe, but as being desirous to be heard, because he was a faithfull setter forth of Gods lawe: shewing also that he had vengeance readie prepared for all such as would checke against him, or reiect the doctrine that he did set forth.

Mal. 1. 6.

He saith yet further, *that men must neither adde any thing to that which he commandeth, nor take any thing from it, to the ende they may keepe Gods commaundements*. Whereas he saith that nothing must be added nor diminished: it is to shewe the thing that I touched euen nowe: that is to wit, that God mindeth to try our obedience, by restreining vs from fetching our windlasses, and from scoterloping ouer the fieldes, to raught at euerie thing that we like off: and to hold vs fast tied and bound vnto his word. Then is it not ynough for vs to receiue that which God sendeth vs, and to allowe it as good: but wee must acknowledge it to be our whole wisedome, (as shal be added hereafter in this Chapter) so as wee be not skilful to mingle any thing with Gods word, but conclude thus with our selues: Seeing God hath spoke it, it is not lawful for mortal mẽ to interlace any thing w it, but they must be contẽted with ỳ which they haue heard of such a maister. This is in effect the meaning of Moses. And this is not said in this place onely: wee shall see it repeated againe hereafter in the twelfth Chapter, and in other places, and the scripture is full of it. And yet we see there is not any thing worse kept, than this present exhortation. And what is the cause thereof? That men doe take it for a principle, that they haue alwayes some reason with them, and that they bee of sufficient abilitie to gouerne themselues as they ought to doe. Thus then doth pride take the first place, when men will needes discerne betweene good and euill after their owne fansie. Contrariwise Gods will is to be wise for vs, & that we as sillie sheepe should hearken to our shepeheardes voyce, and quite forget the sufficiencie which the vnbeleeuers imagine themselues to haue. Let vs thinke, there is nothing in vs but errour and follie, there is nothing but vanitie and leasing, vntil our God haue taught vs. That is the point that God wold bring vs to. But it is exceeding hard for men to

Deut. 5. 32. & 12. 32.

restaine them selues continually from being puffed vp with this fond ouerweening of selfe-wisedome. And therewithall is mingled curiositie: Our eares itch to heare this and that, wee make discourses, we haue our imaginations, and a nomber of things do runne in our heads. Why should not this be good, say we? Why should not that bee lawfull? Bicause then that curiositie hath taken so deepe roote in our mindes: therefore cannot God hold vs to the pure simplicitie of his worde. Besides this, wee haue a sorte of naughtie affections, which turne vs away from God, and are al of them enemies to make warre against God, so as wee cannot so much as thinke a good thought, but we bee full of vice and corruption. That is the cause why wee cannot hold our selues in obedience vnto God. And yet notwithstanding, when wee haue offended him a thousand wayes, doe wee fall to amending of any whit of it? Yea marie, but after what fashion? After our owne guise. Wee lay on plaisters that make the sore worse, as wee see hath befallen in all ages. For the Prophets fought against these same vices without ceassing. Although the people of Israel had the lawe with such strait restraints as ye see here: yet were their fingers alwaies itching to intermingle some inuentions of their own therewithall. The Prophets cried out, how now? Shall your God neuer ouerrule you as his flocke? He hath purchased you by deliuering you from the bondage of Pharao, he hath giuen you his lawe, hee hath helped you a nomber of wayes besides: and yet ye cannot finde in your hearts to liue as he will haue ye. And wherefore was this people so vnruly? First bicause of pride, (which, as I told you, hath reigned in men in all ages) for that the Iewes would needes be able to rule themselues. For they were of opinion, that whatsoeuer seemed good to themselues, ỳ same ought to haue bene allowed of God. The verie ground frõ whence they tooke their boldnes, to make al the chãges [of Religion] ỳ happened among thẽ, was their gasing about them, [& their thinking w themselues] wee see that our neighbours do thus. Hereby superstition gat ful scope, so as they ran gadding after the idoles of ỳ heathen. And when they sawe that they had troden Gods lawe vnder foote: Oh (said they) this must be amended. And howe? By dubling ỳ mischiefe from time to time. Wee see the like in the Popedome: and would God wee had the wit to profite our selues by such examples and lookingglasses. For what is the chief point that troubleth Christendome at this day? Wee demaund that men should heare God speake: and that thereuppon there should no doctrine be receiued that is deuised at the pleasure of men, but that the world shoulde submit it selfe to God, that the holye scripture should be taken as the doctrine of perfection: and that wee should acknowledge it to bee Gods trueth, whereunto it behoueth our whole life to be framed, wout adding or diminishing. That is our demand. On the cõtrarie part, it is certaine that all Poperie must needes fall to the ground, except mens inuentions may haue their full course, so as Gods word may bee mingled, turmoiled, stuffed, yea and euen falsified w mens deuises. And yet notwithstanding the Papists are so shameless still, as to vpbraide vs that we will needes be too wise in our owne conceits. Yea marie, but wherein? When it comes to the triall, wee desire no more but that Gods worde may not in any wise be diminished, and that the thinges which wee thinke good of our selues should not be admitted, but that wee should forsake whatsoeuer is of man, and thrust it vtterly vnder foote and abolish it, so as onely God may bee exalted. Is it our intent to be ouerwise, when we confesse, first of all that there is nothing but foolishnesse in men, and that such as will needes be skilfull and wittie [of themselues] are starke mad, inasmuch as they can not put themselues wholly into Gods hand, to bee gouerned by him as he listeth? And yet notwithstãding, that is the thing wherein wee differ. And that is it that ingendreth most strife in these dayes, bicause the Papistes cannot yeelde to this reason, that God should bee obeyed according to his worde, and that men should be contented to bee taught by him in his schole. In deede they will not bee so bolde as to denie that Gods lawe is holy and rightful: but yet to their seeming, God hath spoken but by halues, & men had neede of a higher and profounder doctrine, and of straiter lawes. But it is not said here, that men should but onely heare what God saith, & afterward do what they list themselues: No, God giueth them no such choise. For what a thing were that? He shoulde not onely admit vs to bee his fellowes, but also giue vs superioritie ouer him. And ỳ were euen a turmoiling of heauen & earth togither, & a hellish cõfounding of al things. Yet notwithstãding, such hath it bin, & such is it still among the Papists at this day. For notwithstanding that they graunt Gods Law to be holy and righteous: yet they ceasse not to turmoile it with whatsoeuer seemes good to themselues. O (say they) this is the commandemẽt of our mother holy Church, this is a doctrine of hirs ỳ must be obserued, this is a good deuotion, this is a law of hirs, this is an ordinãce. To be short there is no ho. And is this an obeying of ỳ which Moses saith here? So then let vs learne to giue attentiue eare to this exhortation, seeing it is not for nought ỳ it is so often repeated vnto vs. And if ỳ Prophets in old time had so hard hold w the people for this vice: let vs assure our selues ỳ we also shall euer be vnruly & wildheaded, vntill our Lorde haue tamed vs by long handling, & made vs to sticke to this grõd, That it is no more lawfull for vs in any wise to adde any thing to his law, than it is lawfull for vs to take any thing from it. Now in deede the Papists alledge ỳ this was spoken to the Iewes: but ỳ as for vs, we be now vnder the law of libertie. But they speake like beasts. For when the Gospell is named the Law of libertie: it is not ment ỳ God layeth the bridle in our neckes, and that we may henceforth followe our owne swindge; but (as I said afore) it is bicause it beareth with vs, & continueth not the extreme rigor of cursing vs, whẽ wee haue not performed Gods commandemẽts in all poinctes to the full. In that respect is ỳ Gos-

Rom. 8. 7.

pell

pell named the lawe of libertie. Neuertheleſſe foraſmuch as God hath more fully reuealed the things vnto vs, which were hid for a time: & foraſmuch as wee bee taught much more largely now adayes, than the Iewes were: there is much more reaſon why wee ſhoulde holde our ſelues more in awe, and walke reuerently before God. For in compariſon of vs, the Iewes had a verie ſlender teaching: and yet notwithſtanding, they bee forbidden to put any thing to it. And ſhall we then preſume now adayes to adde any thing to that which God hath left vs, when he hath reached out his trueth farre and wide, and that beſides his lawe and Prophets, we haue this further perfection, that he hath ſpoken to vs with open mouth by Ieſus Chriſt? What a preſumptuouſneſſe were that? Beſides that we ſhould offer wrong and diſhonour to the lawe: we ſhould alſo blaſpheme the Goſpell. And therefore let vs vnderſtand, that Gods ſpirit hath not ſpoken it for any one time onely: but that he meant to deliuer it for a rule to continue to the worldes end when he ſaide, *Put not any thing to that which I commaund you, neither take any thing from it.* When he ſaieth, *Put not any thing to it*: It is to ſhewe vs that onely God muſt bee wiſe, and haue authoritie to gouerne vs, ſo as we muſt not ſticke to our owne fooliſh deuotions, which wee had in the time of our ignorance, when wee were wretched blind Papiſtes. Then let vs learne to holde vs to the ſimplicitie of Gods worde, and let our onely wiſdome bee to obey that which he ſaieth, that he may haue all preheminence. And like as God forbiddeth vs to adde any thing to his worde, ſo doeth he forbid vs to take any thing from it: and not without cauſe. For if wee will needes obey God but in part, & in the meane while exempt our ſelues from whatſoeuer wee liſt: it is ſuch a partaking, as ſhall neuer bee admitted. Accordingly as now adayes wee ſhall ſee many, which will bee contented to obey, ſo farre foorth as it pinche them not ouer neere: but if it be a thing that trouble them, they ſeeke to bee rid of it, and fret and chafe againſt it. But it is not for vs to proceede after that maner. For as I ſaide, like as God forbiddeth to adde any thing to his doctrine: ſo forbiddeth he to take any thing therefro. He that ſaide, Thou ſhalt not commit adulterie (ſaieth S. Iames) hath ſaide alſo, Thou ſhalt not ſteale. And therefore let vs bee well ware, that we rend not Gods lawe in pieces. For it is not for mã to put the things a ſunder, which God hath put together. And let vs aſſure our ſelues we can not breake Gods law in any point, but we violate Gods Maieſtie which is contained therein. That then is a thing which we haue to remember vpon ỹ text. For otherwiſe we ſhall not be able to keepe Gods commandements, ỹ is to ſay, we ſhal not yeeld God ỹ authoritie which he deſerueth. As for example, when the Papiſtes obſerue Gods lawe: how go they to work? They leaue it behinde them, & in the meane while reſt vpon the commandemẽts of their Mother holy Church. And wherevpõ ground they theſelues? Behold, there comes mee an idole, euen a ſtinking carion, & he loades them with a law. A Papiſt imagins himſelfe to bee a little Angell, if he keepẽ ỹ ordinance of a worme ỹ is but dung: and he will ſay it is Gods law. Nowe I pray you, in ſo dooing what preferment yeeldeth he more to God, than to creatures? Is it not apparant, that in that caſe God is as it were raſiged in aray, to be but companion with men? Now ſurely ſuch obedience of ỹ Papiſts is diueliſh, bicauſe it ſetteth vp mẽ in Gods ſted. Therfore let al ſuch dealing be done away, yea and let vs abhorre it vtterly.

Finally let vs marke, ỹ whereas Moſes ſaieth, *That thou mayſt enter into the lande & liue*: it is not meant ỹ God giueth vs any payment or wages, as though he were bound vnto it: but ỹ he muſt euermore haue the ſouereigntie of vs, & we bee ſubiect to him, forſaking all our wicked affectiõs which may turne vs away frõ following his commandements. And although he ſpeake to vs by the mouthes of men: yet let not vs ceaſſe to honour him in the Maieſtie which he vttereth by his woorde, but let vs learne to holde our ſelues wholly thereunto, without ſwarning one way or other, & let vs giue ouer all our owne wit & reaſon. Againe, let all our luſtes be ſo beatẽ downe, as wee attempt not in any wiſe to ſtand againſt God, but walke before him in ſuch reuerence & lowelineſſe, as we may giue proofe that wee bee his people in deede, and that we take him for our father and ſoueraigne Prince.

Now let vs kneele downe in ỹ preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to makẽ vs feele thẽ more & more, yea euen in ſuch wiſe as we may come to ſubmit our ſelues to him with true repentance, & proceede therein more and more, vntil ſuch time as being quite rid of all our fleſhly corruptions and clothed againe ỹ his righteouſnes, wee be made partakers of the immortall glory whereunto he calleth vs dayly by his word. And ſo let vs al ſay, Almightie God heauenly Father, &c.

On Munday the xx. of May. 1555.

The xx. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the fourth Chapter.

3 Your eyes haue ſeene what the Lorde did to Beelphegor, for the Lorde thy God hath rooted out all the men from among you, which walked after Beelphegor.

4 But you which haue cleaued to the Lorde your God, are all aliue at this day.

5 Beholde, I haue taught yee ordinances and lawes as the Lorde my God commaunded mee, that you ſhould doe thereafter in the land which you are entering into to poſſeſſe it.

6 Keepe them [*therefore*] and doe them: for that is your wiſedome and vnderſtanding in the ſight of the Nations, who hearing of all theſe ordinances ſhall ſay, ſurely it is a wiſe and vnderſtanding people, it is a great Nation.

GOd ſheweth his great goodnes in labouring to drawe vs to him by gentleneſſe: and great alſo is his grace if he draw vs to him by force, when he ſeeth that wee cannot otherwiſe bee ſubdued. And that is the cauſe why he not only ſetteth his promiſes before vs, but alſo addeth threatnings, ſhewing vs his rigour, and making vs alſo to feele it: euen to the ende to win vs by ſome meanes or other. But yet doeth all this redound to our welfare, and God ſheweth howe much he tendereth vs, euē in that he is ſo ſharp and rough towardes vs. For if wee coulde ſuffer our ſelues to bee led gently by him, ſurely ſuch is his nature that he would deale that way with vs, according to his owne ſaying that he is a kinde hearted and pitifull God, forewarde to ſhew mercie, and of long ſufferaunce. When God intendeth to ſhewe what good will he beareth vs, he alledgeth all the properties of a good Father. Then will he neuer vſe any roughneſſe, vnleſſe he bee inforced, becauſe he ſeeth vs dul vpon the ſpurre, and is faine to prick vs, or elſe wee would neuer goe on our way. Therefore when we come to reade the holy Scripture, let vs alwaies haue this before our eyes, that our Lordes deſire is to drawe vs to him by gentleneſſe, if wee bee plyable: and therevpon let vs humble our ſelues vnto him, and not looke to haue him deale roughly with vs, but followe him quietly as ſoone as he hath ſhewed vs that he is willing to receiue vs. And if we haue bin ſo farre ouerſeene as to haue giuen deafe eare to all his promiſes, and not to come at his call: at leaſtwiſe it were not meete for vs to bee drowſie ſtill, when he addeth his threatnings to waken vs. Therefore let vs vnderſtand that it is time for vs to yeeld our ſelues to God then or neuer. And that is the cauſe why that in this text, Moſes putteth the people in remembrance, of the puniſhments that God had laide vpon ſuch as worſhipped the idole of Ammō which was called Beel-phegor. But we haue yet one point more to mark, which is, that God ſpareth vs and puniſheth others, to the intent wee ſhould learne wit at other mens coſt, as they ſay. If God ſhould ſtep to vs at the firſt daſh, and correct vs as ſoone as wee haue done amiſſe, or tell vs that we ſhould looke for vengeance at his hand: yet ought we to take it as a token of his fatherly goodneſſe, as I ſaid afore. But his will is to beare with vs, and he ſetteth the ſaide chaſtiſements before vs, to make vs knowe that his puniſhing of offenders is not without cauſe, & that wee ought to take the ſame for a warning to our ſelues. And ſo doth Moſes vſe it here. For he ſaith not, God will puniſh you if ye offende: but hee ſaieth, *Ye haue ſeene howe they were puniſhed which worſhipped Beel-phegor.* Nowe therefore, preuent Gods wrath, and tarie not till he be angrie with you, & ſet on fire: but cleaue ſimply to his word, and let the corrections that he hath ſhewed you auaile you, & not bee ſhewed you in vaine. Thus ye ſee the third point which wee haue to marke: that is to wit, that our Lorde vttereth not his threatenings vnto all men, but ſheweth vs howe he puniſheth the vnbeleeuers, to the intent that wee ſhoulde not bee of their nomber, leaſt wee ſhould be wrapped in the ſame condemnation with them. And it is the ſame thing that S. Paul ſheweth. For after he hath tolde the faithfull, that they muſt abſtaine from couetouſnes, theft, whoredome, drunkenneſſe, and ſuch other like things, yea and euen from all manner of looſeneſſe and wantonneſſe: he addeth, be not deceiued, for Gods wrath commeth vppon the vnbeleeuers for ſuch things. He ſaieth not that Gods wrath ſhall come vpon them: but he tempereth his ſpeach and ſaieth, Conſider that God puniſheth the vnbeleeuers for ſuch cauſes, and therfore ſeparate your ſelues from their nomber and companie. After the ſame maner ſpeaketh he likewiſe in the tenth of the firſt to the Corinthians. After he had tolde them how God had puniſhed idolaters, rebels, and ſuch as had coueted vnlawfull things: he addeth that thoſe thinges are written for vs, that we might ſee and behold Gods iudgements as in a liuely picture, & keepe our ſelues from falling into the like puniſhment. Nowe therefore let vs come to that which Moſes rehearſeth here: *Your eyes* (ſaieth he) *haue ſeen what the Lorde did in the caſe of Beel-phegor.* In ſaying ſo, he telleth not the people a tale that ſhall doe them no good: but he doeth them to vnderſtand, that Gods vttering of his vengeaunce againſt ſuch as had worſhipped that idole, was to giue a generall leſſon to all men: and therefore that they ought to thinke themſelues worthie of dubble blame in that behalfe, foraſmuch as they had fared neuer the better by Gods ſcourges, but had ſhut their eyes all the while that he was about to warne them to their benefite and welfare.

Exo. 34.6. & Deut. 1.31. & Eſa. 49.15. & Matt. 7.9.

Rom. 1.24.

1. Cor. 10.

Nowe remaineth to apply this geere to our vſe. When God ſendeth any trouble vppon the world: let vs vnderſtand that it is not without cauſe that he is ſo ſore diſpleaſed. For if we conſider the offences and miſdeedes that haue bene committed: wee muſt needes conclude that God ſheweth himſelfe a iudge in puniſhing ſinnes. But doeth that ſerue onely for them that feele the ſtrokes? No: Gods will is to ſhewe his iuſt vengeance generally, that men may learne to ſtoope to him, and to walke in feare of him, and to giue theſelues no more to prouoking of him. To be ſhort, all the chaſtiſementes that wee ſee

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in the worlde, ought to serue for our learning: according to this saying of the Prophet Esay. O Lorde, when thou executest thy iudgementes, the dwellers of the earth shall learne righteousnesse. For when God winketh, and punisheth not the wicked and vnrighteous: men take leaue to doe euill, it seemeth that all thinges shoulde scape vnpunished, and euerie man beareth with himselfe, accordingly as all of vs are naturally too much inclined to flatter our selues in our sinnes. But when wee perceiue that GOD calleth mens sinnes to account, and that all thinges are inrolled before him, he sheweth himselfe a iudge in punishing men, whereas they thought they had beene forgotten: then behold, wee be wakened, so as euerie of vs beginnes to bethinke himselfe, or at leastwise it were good reason that he should do so. True it is that Gods iudgementes doe sometimes passe before our eyes, and wee make none account of them, by meanes whereof wee can fare neuer the better for them: but vnhappie are wee when we bee so blinde. And why? For (as I saide) Gods intent is that other men shoulde take example, by his chastising of those that haue offended. Yea and euen the worldly iudges obserue the same order, insomuch that when they punish a theefe, or a murderer, or any other euill doer, they doe it not alonely to be reuenged of y euil that he hath done as in respect of himselfe: but also to set him forth as a lookingglasse, to the intent that all other folkes shoulde set a watch ouer themselues, and abhorre such crimes, and not suffer them to haue their full course and scope. And thinke wee that God goeth yet any further? So then, let vs suffer our selues to bee amended at other mens cost, and let vs haue our eyes open to beholde the punishmentes that he sendeth. And nowe in these dayes, must it not needes bee that wee be worse than asleepe, if wee bee not mooued at the great number of corrections that God sendeth? Wee see howe the whole worlde is in maner past recouerie, and (as the Prophet Esay saieth) there is not one whit of soundnesse from the crowne of the head to the sole of the foote: Gods scourges runne abrode euerie where: euerie man complaineth, great and small lament: On the one side wee see warres, famine, and pestilence, (and those thinges happen not by casualtie:) and on the otherside euerie man bewaileth his owne priuate case. And why so? Wherfore doe wee not knowe the hande that striketh vs? Wherefore doe wee not consider that God sheweth himselfe a iudge towardes vs, to make vs returne vnto him? For mens sinnes are not vnknowen, we see well that the whole worlde is out of order, and that God must bee faine to put to his hand. And yet in the meane season wee abide still blockish, but wee shall be holde the lesse excused for it in the ende. And why? For it may bee tolde vs to our shame, that our eyes haue seene howe God warned vs: it was long of none but our selues that we were not brought to repentance. Seeing that GOD did laye his iudgementes open to our sight, and wee marked them not: wee must needes bee punished the sorer for such negligence, because we haue played the deafe and blinde folkes, when GOD went about to bring vs gently to him. And so the thing that Moses spake to the people of Israell, is written to our vse in these dayes. For it is as much as if the holy Ghost shoulde tell vs, that when God punisheth men, bee it generally or particularly: we must not be purblinde, in that case, but bethinke vs well and see whether wee our selues haue not deserued the like: and thereuppon bee sorie for our sinnes, and not tarie till God drawe his sworde against vs, but hye vs apace to him seeing hee warneth vs to returne. And for the performing heereof, let vs vnderstande that the calamities which light vppon the worlde, come not by haphazarde, but from heauen, and are corrections for the offences where into the worlde hath ouershot it selfe.

Isa. 26. 9.

Nowe Moses speaketh heere by name of *Baalphegor*, which was the ydoll of the Ammonites, as is saide afore. And the worde *Baal* betokeneth *a Principal, a Master, or a Patrone*: which thing is well worthie to bee marked. For when wee heere speaking of the ydolles of the heathen, they seeme to vs to bee farre other thinges than those that wee see nowe adayes. But the Scripture sheweth vs that they bee in manner all one. And why? For the heathen were not so grosse and dulwitted, but that they knewe there was a certaine soueraine maiestie which had created heauen and earth, and holde soueraine Dominion ouer all thinges. But therewith all they woulde needes haue vndergods and meane gods whom they termed their Patrones, as they doe nowadayes in the Popedome. Againe there was another sort of gods, whom they thought to haue the charge of seuerall Countries: for euerie countrie had his ydol. And so also this worde *Baal* was the name as yee woulde say of a God that had the gouernance of a whole countrie, and serued to get men fauour at the great Gods hand. Nowe it may seeme at the first blush, that this was no defacing of Gods glorie, nor any impeachment to the continuall seruing and worshipping of him: and yet is it such a corruption as he cannot abide. For he will haue all preheminence to himselfe, and hee will not haue men to giue him or assigne him any companion, as we shall see hereafter where Moses will say, *The Lorde thy God is the onely God*. Againe, when men make such mingling, and will needes haue a multitude of gods: we see how god speaketh of it in the twentith of Ezechiell. Goe your wayes (saith he) I giue yee ouer, seeing yee haue other Gods than mee go serue the diuel altogether, for I will haue nothing to do with you. Let vs marke wel then, that Gods seruice can neuer be kept in his purenesse, except all superstition be laide downe, and men holde themselues simply to his worde, without inuenting of any thing, & without intermingling of any thing deuised of their owne braine. Thus yee see that the true and pure religion is the exalting of the only one God, so as his glorie is not darkened by adding any companion vnto him.

Deut. 4. 35

Ezec. 20. 31.

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And nowe hee ſayeth expreſly, *You that haue cleaued vnto your God are all aliue this day*. This ſerueth not ſo much to make the people gladder as to ſhewe them that ſeeing they bee ſo greatly bounde and beholden to their God, they ought to ſerue him with the greater zeale. Moſes then telleth the people thus: Yee haue ſeene Gods wrath: and what hath preſerued you from it hitherto? For yee might haue beene ouerthrowen and deſtroyed as well as they that worſhipped Beelphegor. Knowe yee therefore that your continuing vnto this day, is through the free fauour of your God. And therefore looke that yee ſerue and honour him as hee deſerueth, ſeeing hee hath mainteined you after ſuch a faſhion, and againſt all hope. Nowe this warning belongeth vnto vs, becauſe we liue not to any other ende than to ſerue our GOD, and woe bee to them which being in this worlde doe rauen vp Gods benefites, and knowe not to what ende, but are heere as brute beaſtes. So then let vs marke well, that as long as we bee in this worlde, God will haue vs to doe him homage for our life, and [to vnderſtande] that we bee bounde to him [for all thinges,] and to make that our marke to ſhoote at, according to this ſentence often ſpoken in the ſcripture, I ſhall liue and goe into the temple of the Lorde. Yea & when Ionas was come out of the Whales bellie, and euen when hee called vppon GOD being there as in a gulfe of hell: hee ſaide not I will liue and make good cheere, but hee ſaieth that hee ſhal yet againe ſee the temple of God. And what to doe? to giue him thankes for prolonging his life after that ſort. Therefore let vs marke, that in al the benefites which we receiue at Gods hande, he bindeth vs ſo much the more ſtreictly vnto him, to the intent that we ſhoulde indeuour to ſerue him, and to giue our ſelues wholly vnto him, and to walke in the obedience of his righteouſnes. This is it in effect which Moſes meant to note.

Pſal. 3. 8. & 118. 17. Ionas. 2. 5.

And hee ſetteth downe afterwarde, *that hee had giuen them lawes and ordinances according as God had commaunded him*. Wherein hee proteſteth that hee had beene a faithfull deliuerer of the doctrine which hee did ſet forth, to the end that the people might not receiue it as the doctrine of a man, but conſider howe it was God that had ſpoken it, and ſo imbrace it with all reuerence. And heereby wee ſee that GOD doeth euermore reſerue to himſelfe, the right of gouerning vs as in reſpect of the ſpirituall gouernement of our ſoules. True it is that God woulde there ſhoulde bee ciuill policie in this worlde, and hee hath put men in commiſſion for the ſame: but in the meane while hee will haue none but onely himſelfe to haue power to lay lawes vppon vs. When the caſe concerneth his owne ſeruice, and religion, and ſpirituall thinges: then muſt onely he himſelfe bee heard, and no man muſt vſurp his office or meddle in it, nor no man ſteppe in to adde one word. For if euer any man in the worlde was worthie to bee heard: was not Moſes ſo excellent, that hee might well bee formoſt and chiefe? Yes: for wee ſhall ſee heereafter, that there neuer was ſuch a Prophet in the worlde, neither before him nor after him, euen to the comming of him that is aboue al Prophetes, that is to wit, the ſonne of God. And yet for all his worthineſſe, Moſes holdeth himſelf in the number of thoſe which ought to herken vnto God without ſetting forth any thing of his owne deuice. Seeing it is ſo, whoſoeuer taketh vpon him to make lawes to rule mens ſoules, ſhall goe to confuſion with his diueliſh preſumptuouſneſſe and ouerweening. To bee ſhort, when any doctrine is to bee followed, let vs on our ſide looke that wee bee ſure that it proceedeth from God, & that our faith be grouded on him alone, ſo as wee hang not vppon mortall men, nor vppon any creature. For there woulde bee no ſtedineſſe. Thus yee ſee that the firſt point which wee haue to marke vppon this text, is that Moſes proteſteth that hee commeth not in his owne name, nor ſetteth vp Lawes at his owne pleaſure, but receiued the thinges at Gods hande, which hee taught. And for that cauſe he ſaith, *the Lorde my God commaunded me*. True it is that the people might haue ſaide ſo as well as Moſes, according alſo as Moſes addeth oftentimes, *The Lorde your God*. But here hee appropriateth the title of God to himſelfe, ſaying, *The Lorde my God*. And whie? It is like as in a Countrie where there is a Prince, euerie man may well ſay, yondſame is the king, yondſame is the Prince: and yet notwithſtanding, they that are of his houſholde or beare any office may adde theſe wordes ouer, the King my maſter, or they may ſaye, the Prince my maſter. And why? For they bee his officers or his houſeholde ſeruaunts. After the ſame manner dek the Prophetes. As for example, Eſay in his ſeuenth chapter ſpeaking to Acaz, ſaieth: Yee houſe of Dauid, is it not ynough for you to [greeue men, but yee muſte alſo] tempt my GOD? Heere yee ſee howe Eſay ſetteth himſelfe alone. And why? for hee is Gods officer, and hath his commiſſion to bee his Prophet. We ſee as much in Helias. And Saint Paul likewiſe incrocheth vppon the tytle that is common, and ſayeth, The Goſpel which I haue receiued of my God. Whereby hee ſheweth that hee was ordeyned to be an Apoſtle. Euen ſo is it in this text, where Moſes declareth that hee was not a Prophet of his owne making, ne came foorth at auenture, but that GOD had called him to that ſtate, and committed that charge vnto him. The reaſon then why wee muſte giue eare to men that teach vs, is becauſe they bee ſent of God, ſo as hee diminiſheth not his owne authoritie, ne diſchargeth vs to goe where wee liſt, but will haue vs alwayes ruled by his word.

Deut. 4. 1. Pet. 4. 11

Nowe Moſes addeth immediatly, *that he had ſet forth the ſtatutes and ordinances, to the ende that the people ſhoulde doe them, when they were come into the lande to poſſeſſe it*. Wherein wee ſee the ſame that hath beene ſhewed heeretofore; that is to wit, that God wil not haue mē to dally with his

Ier. 2.

1. Kin. 18.

Rom.

his doctrine, but to imbrace it with all reuerence, and to obey it by framing themselues thereafter. Wherefore let vs bee well aduised, that if wee will bee well taught at Gods hande, wee must serue him all our life long. For without wee doe so, wee shall be condemned of false abusing the doctrine, which was giuen vs to kill our vices and to alter our lewde and inordinate lustes. As often then as we come to heare Gods worde, let vs alwayes haue this before our eyes, that his will is to bring vs home to himselfe, and not to haue vs wander after our owne wicked lusts and likings, but to bow down our necke vnder his yoke to yeelde him obedience. And heereby weesee howe the Gospell is vnhallowed nowadayes. For wee haue our eares sufficiently beaten with the thinges that wee ought to doe: but who is hee that doeth but so much as lifte vp his finger, to streine himselfe to serue God? The number of them is verie small. But there is great store of them that take greater libertie to doe euil vppon the preaching of the Gospell, and in their opinion God is much beholden to them, in that they suffer his worde to bee preached, themselues holding scorne of it. But needes must such vngodlinesse and diuelish pride bee horriblie punished. Why so? For the worde that GOD sendeth vs, is the seede of life which ought to yeelde fruite in vs: and yet for all that, wee make no reckening of it, but trample it vnder our feete, and wee become starke blockes. And it is not ynough for vs to bee a barren grounde that beareth no fruite: but wee doe also bring forth the fruites of bitternesse, as God complayneth by his Prophet Ieremie: insomuch that yee shall see a great number that doe euen spite God and rancle in malice against him, seeking nothing else but to kindle his wrath more and more. Such folke must needes looke for dreadful damnation and mercilesse vengeance.

Ier.2.21.

And truely like as Moses hath declared here that hee came not in his owne name: so also, his protesting that hee had inioyned them the lawes and ordinances as GOD had vttered them vnto him, sheweth that men cannot deuise to spite God more openly, than by striuing against his worde. Indeede they will alledge that their intent is not so, like as wee see in these dayes that these scorners of God which make none account of any doctrine, doe dosse with their hornes like madde bulles against all good gouernement and policie, and would faine that there were nothing but vtter desolation in the Church: and yet notwithstanding to couer themselues, they will [not sticke to] say, what, doeth the matter concerne the Gospell? who is he that woulde not mainteine it? Yea if the diuels of hel maintain it. We see some such among vs, yea euen which shew themselues much wickeder than the Papists. And the diuel also must needes be faine to shew his furie, and the libertie that God hath giuen him against such despisers. But all is well if they can couer themselues alwayes with this faire excuse, that they mind not to fight against the Gospel, but against the preachers. Nowe seeing they bee at that point, wee must fall to scanning of the matter, to wit whether the preachers doe set foorth any straunge doctrine, whether they haue put forth any forged dotages, or whether they haue set vp any lawes at their owne pleasure. If it be found that the ministers preach Gods worde purely: that they are glad and faine to aduaunce the kingdome of our Lorde Iesus Christ: that they procure the same to the vttermost of their power: and that they seeke to haue such order in the Church, as God may alwayes be worshiped, and good policie bee maincined among men: with whom haue they to do, which striue here against? And we must bee fainte to come to the protestation that Moses made, saying: What are wee Moses and Aaron? What haue wee set foorth, which wee haue not receiued of God? What cause haue you to mooue this sedition and vprore, in saying that yee cannot abide that wee shoulde reigne ouer you? What is the souereintie, what is the dominion which we woulde haue ouer you? Wee desire nothing but that God bee obeyed, and that hee haue the authoritie and prehemineence that belong vnto him. Loe howe Moses spake of his time: And after the same maner speake wee nowadayes to these roysters, which seeke to bring all to confusion, vnder shadowe and pretence that they intende to mainteine the Gospell, whereas it appeareth that they make a flatte mockerie of it, and raile against it. Yet for all this, they that haue any taste of Religion, wil defie such plagers, and separate themselues from them, least God wreppe them vp with them in the same condemnation: and they will looke to make the knowledge profitable which they haue receiued, yea and with all humblenesse receiue the thinges that are taught them by men, so they bee sure that they come from God. Thus yee see what wee haue to remember vppon this sentence:

Exod.16.7.

Nowe afterwarde hée commaundeth them *to keepe theese thinges and to doe them*. And why? for (saith hee) *Beholde your vnderstanding and your wisedome in the sight of all Nations, is that you bee taught of your God*. Whereas he saith, *ye shall keepe them therefore and doe them*: it is a conclusion well worthie to bee noted. For must it not needes be that men are starke madde, when they haue no minde to heare God at such time as hee teacheth them? What are wee that GOD shoulde take the paine to doe the office of a teacher towardes vs? Is it not a great stooping downe from his highnesse? But seeing that God doth so lessen himselfe, as to stoope to our rudenesse to teach vs: shoulde wee let his worde fall to the grounde and despise it? So then let vs vnderstande, that whensoeuer wee bee spoken to in Gods name, we ought to tremble vnder his maiestie, yea and to imbrace his worde with all reuerence, truely, hartily, and zealously. For it is but a counterfait worshipping of God, if we be not as Lambes, suffring our selues to be led by his onely voice: and it is certaine that if we followe not after him as soone as hee doeth

but

but make a signe, wee be wilde beastes, and hee will not knowe vs for any of his. And so wee see what authoritie the name of God carieth with it: insomuch that when Gods worde is set afore vs, wee must all cast downe our heades, and bowe downe our neckes to receiue the yoke that is laide vpon vs, and seeke by al meanes to please him and to be obedient to him.

Nowe Moses returneth to that which I touched at the beginning: namely, that God indeuoureth to drawe vs to him by gentlenesse: and hee sheweth it heere to the people of Israel, in telling them of the excellent prerogatiue that had beene giuen them. For *behold heere* (saieth God) *this is thy wisedome and thine vnderstanding in the sight of all nations*. Wee knowe that naturally it is a griefe to men to be counted beastes. And why? For they knowe that the thing wherein they differ from beastes, is that they haue discretion and reason in them. God to the intent to make vs excell Oxen, Asses, Dogges, and Swyne, hath printed his image in vs. And wherein consisteth this image, but in the hauing of discretion to descerne betweene good and euill? And therefore it is not to bee marualled at, though men couet to bee skilfull, and to haue wisedome and abilitie to iudge. But yet for all that, there are verie fewe that seeke righdly to haue a true iudgement, insomuch that al doe rather turne away and wander after their owne fancies, and become brutish in themselues. Yet nevertheleſſe, (as I saide afore) wee make great account of the hauing of discretion and wisedome to iudge betweene good and euill. But heere Moses sheweth, that men are vnable to rule themselues. In deede wee weene yes: but it is but a weening, yea and an ouerweening. For our life is vtterly out of order, and there is nothing well ruled in it, vntill GOD haue shewed vs the way, and that wee haue profited in his schoole. That is the thing where vnto Moses leadeth the people as nowe. All men [sayeth hee] are desirous of knowledge, and loath to bee as brute beastes. Because they bee shaped after the image of God, they woulde faine haue discretion, that they might know how to liue.

Nowe it is so that GOD giueth you discretion and wisedome, by vouchsafing to set his worde before you. So then, bee not so vnthankefull towardes him, as to misuse so inestimable a benefite. Suffer GOD to make you profite in such wise by his worde as yee may bee skilfull and wise, and not wander any more. Wee see now in effect the meaning of Moses.

Nowe haue wee to gather vppon this text, what the weakenesse of mans minde is. True it is that our father Adam receiued vnderstanding and power to discerne betweene good and euill in his creation: but after hee had sinned hee was after a sort blinded. And wee likewise are corrupted, so as wee discerne in a manner nothing at all. Wee take white for blacke, as it appeareth by our corrupting of the whole seruice of GOD by our superstitions. True it is that God hath left vs some discretion, so as we knowe it is euill to commit theft, whoredome, murther, &c. but yet notwithstanding, wee be daseled in such wise, that our insight is not so cleare and sure as to make vs walke aright. Yee see then after what sort men are marde, and it is the thing that the scripture sheweth vs, insomuch that the wretched Paynims and such as knew not God, could not but be plunged in darknesse and so destitute of reason, as they coulde not discerne any more. That is the first point which we haue to marke.

And when as Moses inuyteth Gods worde and his lawe to bee our wisedome: thereby hee sheweth that wee haue no wisedome in our selues, ne knowe howe to behaue our selues, but are as brute beastes, vntill such time as our Lorde haue taught vs. That is another point. And were the same well borne in minde, surely men woulde not bee so bolde to inuent things after their owne liking, but woulde hold themselues soberly and meekely vnder Gods worde. And so much the more neede haue wee to mind this texte, because wee knowe there is no other wisedome in vs, than to submit our selues teachable vnto God, and to harken what hee saith to vs, to sticke thereto quietly, refusing all thatreuer we can conceiue of our owne head. According wherevnto Sainct Paul saieth, that wee cannot bee wise before God, vntill wee be become fooles in our selues: that is to witte, vntil we know that there is nothing but vanitie & leasing in our owne vnderstanding, and therefore that wee must giue ouer all that we thinke good, and not knowe aught but that which God commaundeth. And therewithall, as Moses ment heere to bereaue men of all selfeweening, to the intent they shoulde stoope and submitte themselues vnto Gods worde: so on the contrarie parte hee ment to shew that when men haue Gods Lawe for their rule: they shall want nothing, but all shall bee well and perfect. That is a seconde point which we haue to note. I haue told you alreadie that men must vnderstande, that there is not one droppe of sounde iudgement in them, but that to become wise, they must yeeld themselues wholly vnto God. It is not ynough to knowe this: for wee might partly heere GOD, and afterwarde adde thereto of our owne, as we see the Papists haue done. They will not saye that the Scripture is false, (howebit that they themselues doe falsifie it moste wickedly: and yet for all that they bee inforced spite of their teeth to say still, it is the worde of God:) But they woulde faine mingle their owne lawes with it: whereby it is euident that they haue made such confusion, as a man cannot discerne betweene the holy scripture, and their fancies. And why [haue they done so]? Because that to their seeming there is some want in Gods worde, and hee hath not taught thinges perfectly ynough: but that is a cursed blasphemie. For Moses, to giue due authoritie to Gods worde, saieth expresse that it is the wisedome and vnderstanding of such as heare it, and taste of the doctrine that is conteyned in it. As if hee shoulde

say,

Deut. 2. 14. 15

say, couet not to knowe further than your God sheweth you. Holde yee there: for those are your boundes and listes, and whosoeuer passeth them confoundeth heauen and earth together. So then let vs learne, that when God is so gratious as to teach vs, it behoueth vs to yeelde simplie to that which he saith. And how may that bee done? Verily if wee take thinges whole as hee telleth vs them, and not by halfe as wee see these braue laddes doe, which would cut off Gods authoritie from him by the waste. Well, say they: Let the Gospell be preached: but if there bee any thing that wee mislike, let that be laide away, such doctrine must bee let alone. Yea? Shall God then be subiect to mens fancies, so as they shall receiue nothing but what they thinke good themselues? What a madnes is that? Now when we see y these rascals aduaunce themselues after that sort: let vs on our side learne to giue eare to God in all points, and to make no exception to restreine his authoritie, but to receiue obediently whatsoeuer proceedeth from his mouth. Let that serue for a principle. And againe, when we once know what is in the holy scripture, let vs reiect all the rest as straunge and bastardestuffe. For our Lorde hath not taught vs as it were an Apsie, to sende vs to a greater and excellenter master than himselfe: For what a presumptuousnesse were it [to think,] that God hath shewed vs but onely the first enterances, and that men must leade vs higher? What a comparison were that? And yet notwithstanding it is the thing that is done in poperie. For the Pope saith, that the lawes which hee hath made, are the reuelations of the holie Ghost, whereof our Lorde Iesus spake when hee saide to his disciples [I haue many thinges to say vnto you,] but yee cannot beare them all away as nowe. Verily as who shoulde say, that God had giuen but some small enterances in his Lawe and his Gospell: and that the Pope were inspired aboue the Prophets and aboue Christ himselfe to bring a much more exquisite doctrine than theirs. Wee see then that the diuell hath passed all measure in this behalfe. Wherefore let vs learne to knowe nothing but that which we receiue from aboue, and which it pleaseth God to shewe vnto vs. Take that for a principle. Moreouer, if this was verified of the lawe of Moses: let vs assure our selues there is much more reason that it shoulde properly be iustified and verified of the gospel, so as they which haue profited therein, may assure themselues that they haue perfect learning, wherein to beholde euen the heauenly giftes, as Saint Paul speaketh of it. And therefore let vs humble our selues when we see our Lorde so gratious to vs, as to teach vs familiarly as it were with his owne mouth. This is it in effect, which we haue to remember vpon this streine. In deede it deserueth well to be laide foorth more at length, and I must touch it againe hereafter: neuertheisse I will now conclude with a complaint. I see walkers yonder, & I knowe for what their comming is, except it be to shew a contempt of God and his word, which is an intollerable lewdenesse. They come babling heere to the doore, and that not twise or thrise, but more than a dooseu times. It sheweth well that they despise God manifestly. Such is the honour of Geneua, that when the Gospell is a preaching, men come euen to the Church doore to make a flatte mockerie of it, and after the same manner also is baptisme honored heere: and it is too common a dealing.

1. Cor. 3. 18.

Therefore let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God, with acknowledgement of the innumerable faultes which wee haue committed against his maiestie, and for the which wee bee woorthy of eternall death if hee pitie vs not. And therfore let vs pray him to shedde out his mercie vppon vs: and that we may the better feele the same, let vs beseech him to vouchsafe to traine vs so vnto him henceforth as hee subdue all our stubburnesse and all the wicked lustes of our flesh, and reforme vs in such wise to his obedience, as wee may fare the better by the chastisements that he sendeth vs: and therewithall graunt vs the grace to receiue our Lord Iesus Christ for our guide and shepheard, and to heare him as our teacher and master, like as hee speaketh to vs daylie by his worde. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onelie to vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the xxj. of May. 1555.

The xxj. Sermon, which is the third vpon the fourth Chapter.

6 Which you shall keepe & c.

7 For what Nation is so great, that hath Gods comming so nie it, as the Lord our God commeth vnto vs, in all thinges that we call vpon him?

8 And what Nation is so great, that hath so righteous ordinances and lawes as all this lawe is, which I set before you this day?

9 Therefore take heede to thy selfe, and keepe thy soule diligently, that thou forget not the thinges which thine eyes haue seene, nor let them depart from thy heart all the dayes of thy life, but teach them to thy sonnes, and sonnes sonnes.

10 Forget not (say I) the day that thou stoodest before the Lorde thy God in Horeb, when the Lorde saide to me, gather me the people together.

IT was declared to vs yesterday, that forasmuch as GOD seeth that we know not howe to liue: hee taketh paine to teach vs, and doth it in such sort, that as manie as list to obey his doctrine, haue a perfect rule to deale by. And at this day it is long of none but our selues, if we be not wise and well aduised to guide our selues. For wee haue a God that will not faile vs, and his worde is a sure rule for vs. But heere in wee see mens leawdnesse and vnthankefulnesse, in that they cannot finde in their heartes to submitte themselues vnto God, but will needes bee wise in their owne conceit, and still follow their owne inuentions. Yet notwithstanding this maxime cannot bee rased out by men: namely, that wee haue neither wisedome nor discretion, except wee haue profited in Gods schole. And therefore we be warned heereby, to holde our selues simplie to Gods commaundementes. For as soone as wee fall to adding of any thing to Gods worde, it is by and by but corruption: and when wee bee out of those boundes, wee can doe nothing but stray. Neuertheleſſe, a man might make a question heere, howe Moses coulde say that the people of Israel should bee counted sage and wise among all Nations: seeing, wee knowe that the heathen did glorie in their owne follies and superstitions, euen in despite of the lawe. Seeing the Infidels were so proude that they reiected the good learning [of the Lawe,] and rested vppon their owne fonde toyes, it shoulde seeme that this was not accomplished in such wise as Moses speaketh of it heere. But wee must wey well the speech that is set downe heere: that is to wit, *that the nations which shoulde heare the Lawes in such wise as God had giuen them, shoulde say, Beholde heere an excellent and noble people:* Nowe as for those that held scorne of Gods law, and were caried away with pride and ouerweening, did they euer vnderstande what Moses had saide vnto the people? No. So then, yee see that the question is resolued in this wise: namely that as many of the heathen, as had knowen and tasted well the doctrine that God had deliuered to the people of Israel, confessed (as truth was) that Gods chosing of a certaine people for himselfe, was a great and singular priuiledge. But verie fewe of them vouchsafed to consider that: for all of them lay weltring still in their owne dung. And although it was apparantly seene that the people of Israel had a seuerall lawe and Religion by themselues: yet did all men shut their eyes and stoppe their eares. And that was the cause why they made no reckening of so great a benefite.

Rom. 1. 22.

Now herewithal Moses sheweth in two things, how greatly the people ought to haue esteemed of the grace that was giuen vnto them. For let vs (saith he) bee compared with the rest of the worlde: and it shall not bee founde that those which worshippe Idolles doe finde such power among them as to bee succoured at their neede, or that their Gods whom they call vppon, bee so familiar with them. There will no such thing be found. For as soone as we pray vnto our God, and resort vnto him: wee feele him neere vs by and by. Yee see then an inestimable benefite. Againe, wee haue his lawes and Statutes which hee hath giuen vs, wee haue his righteous ordinances: all others doe but goe astraie. True it is that they weene they do well but in the meane while they haue no certaintie in their religion: for they haue no trueth concerning God. Therfore let vs consider the good that hee hath done vs, to the ende wee may inioy it. For all this is treated of by Moses, to the intent it shoulde bee applyed vnto vs, and we learne to serue our God with greater zeale, and to holde our selues in awe. For the setting of his benefites and gratious giftes afore vs, is one of the wayes whereby God intendeth to winne vs to him. And it is a shame for vs if wee serue him not, seeing hee hath chosen vs and adopted vs to bee his children. Thus much concerning the first part, where it is saide *that other nations haue no Gods that come so nigh them.*

Psal. 9.

Psa. 1

This saying (as I haue touched afore,) is meant of Gods helping of his people of Israel as ofte as they called vppon him: yea and oftentimes also euen before they required it, after which manner wee see that hee dealeth with vs also. Hee thinketh vppon vs whyle wee bee asleepe, hee watcheth for vs, and hee maketh vs to feele his succour at our neede. Neuertheleſſe, in telling them that God will succour vs, euen in all thinges that wee require at his hand: this intent is also to incourage folk to call vppon God, and to make them to blame themselues for their owne negligence whensoeuer they bee destitute of helpe and succour at Gods hande: and to doe vs to vnderstande that Gods forgetting of vs, is for that wee flee not to him for refuge as wee ought to doe, ne seeke vnto him, who is alwayes readie to helpe vs at our neede. Thus yee see that the intent of Moses was to exhort the people to prayer and supplication, and therewithal to shew that God had alwayes shewed himselfe at hande vnto such as had returned to him.

Psal. 14.

It is not so with any of the Gods of the heathen. If this saying were well obserued, the wretched worlde woulde not ouershoote it selfe so farre as it doeth. Wee see what windlasses men make to seeke saluation: but there are very few which goe right forth vnto God, and yet doeth hee allure all of vs: the way and the gate is open. Whereof is it long that wee goe not on? It is for that euen of nature wee desire to bee deceiued. Wee see howe all men doe deuise patrones and aduocates to themselues, and

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it seemeth to them that they cannot bee disappointed, when they haue their owne deuotions after what sort soeuer it bee. Thus doe men wilfully beguile themselues, and runne gadding vp and downe. But when they haue toyled themselues neuer so much, in the ende they finde themselues ouer wearied, & yet y they haue gained nothing by all that euer they did. Wee see then howe it is not without cause saide, that if wee looke well to our selues, none of all the wretched vnbeleeuers which torment themselues to atteine vnto God, and holde not the right way thither, haue such aduauntage as wee haue. For whensoeuer we call vpon God simplie and according to his worde, wee be neuer disappointed. Psa.145.18

But now let vs come to that which Moses addeth concerning statutes and lawes, which is the principall point of this sentence. *What people is there* (saith he,) *which hath so righteous statutes and ordinances as we haue?* Truely if a man would haue beleeued the heathen, they thought verie well of themselues in their owne dotages, and they bare themselues in hand that there was nothing but sounde perfection in them. But yet for all that, it is a wonder to see howe they became so dull. They that otherwise were of great skill and sharpewitted, were become so brutish in their superstitions, as euen little children might iustly haue beene ashamed of them. But the light must be faine to shine in the darke: or else it will neuer bee possible to discerne a right. And for proofe thereof, what is the cause that the heathen are so hardened in their owne dotages? It is for that they neuer knewe Gods Lawe, and therefore they neuer compared the trueth with the vntruth. But when Gods lawe commeth in place, then doeth it appeare that all the rest is but smoke: insomuch that they which took themselues to be maruelous wittie, are founde to haue beene no better than besotted in their owne beastlinesse. This is apparant. Wherefore let vs marke well, that to discerne that there is nothing but vanitie in all worldly deuises, we must knowe the Lawes and ordinances of God. But if we rest vppon mens lawes, surely it is not possible for vs to iudge rightly. Then must wee needes goe first to Gods schoole, and that will shewe vs that when wee haue once profited vnder him, it will be ynough. That is all our perfection. And on the otherside wee may despise all that euer is inuented by man, seeing there is nothing but fondnesse and vncertainty in them. And that is the cause why Moses termeth them *righteous ordinances*. As if he shoulde say, it is true indeede that other people haue store of ceremonies, store of rules, and store of Lawes: but there is no right at all in them, all is awrie, all is crooked. True it is that they perceiue it not: and what is the cause thereof, but for that it is not possible for them to discerne good from euill, without Gods worde which is the trueth? Howe soeuer wee fare, wee cannot do the thing that is iust or right, except wee haue first learned it at Gods hande. And if wee haue beene so farre ouerseene as to allowe our owne doings, let vs not goe on still, for God will disallowe euerie whit of it, because wee must take all our rightnesse at his trueth. In this case it is not for euerie man to bring his owne weightes and his owne balance: but wee must hold our selues to that which God hath vttered and doth vtter: True it is that Moses doeth greatly magnifie the people of Israell heere: but yet neuertheless we must vnderstande, that the priuiledge which is so greatly magnified heere, did nothing aduantage those which reiected the lawe and profited not themselues thereby. The Iewes are termed heere a wise and skilfull people, a noble people, a people that hath nothing but excellency and worthinesse in them. And why so? Because God had chosen them, and vttered his iudgementes and righteousnesse vnto them. But yet for all that, on the other side they be termed blinde and deafe. And why? Because they did what they coulde to haue quenched the light that God had kindled for them. We knowe that they were taught by the doctrine which contained their whole wisedome. And therefore when they despised it, they coulde not be but dubble blinded insomuch that the ignorance of the heathen and infidels, was nothing in comparison of theirs that had so reiected Gods grace, when it was put into their handes: And that is a point well worthie to bee weyed. The Iewes do arme themselues yet still at this day with the same texte, when they list to commende themselues. Tush, say they: it is saide that wee bee men of vnderstanding, a people of great wisedome, a people of passing nobilitie and worthinesse. This is true, if they had holde fast the treasure that God gaue them, and kept it well. But seeing they bee fleeted away from the law, or rather a veyle is cast before their eyes, because of their reiecting of Iesus Christ: yea and seeing that euen before his comming, they disobeyed the Prophetes and became hardharted against the doctrine of saluation that was brought to them: it coulde not bee but that (as I saide afore) they must needes become more ignoraunt than all the rest of the worlde. For if the heathen bee as good as destitute of reason, because they haue not beene in Gods schoole: needes must they to whome GOD hath spoken, and yet are disobedient thereunto, needes must they (I say) bee striken with the spirite of dulnesse, and bee caried away by the deuell, and become as wilde beastes, so as they shall not offende of simple ignorance as they doe which neuer hearde any thing, but of wilfull rage more than beastly. Euen after that manner is it happened to the Iewes. And it is the verie same thing wherewith the Prophete Esaye vpraideth them in his two and forteeth chapter, saying: Hearken ye deafe, see yee blinde. And why speaketh hee to the deafe and blinde, to heare and see well? Hee addeth the reason by and by, saying: yee haue seene ynough, and yee haue hearde ynough: but yee haue not regarded it. 2.Cor.3.14 15. Eph.4.18. Esa.42.18. 19. 20.

Also God complayneth of his paines taken in teaching of his people, and of losing his labour therein. For (saieth hee) haue not I done

workes ynowe among you? Yes, but what for that? You haue had neither eares nor eyes. And nowe if yee bee compared to the reſt of the worlde, yee paſſe all the heathen and vnbeleeuers in blindneſſe. And why? For yee haue had teaching ynough and too much. And his vpbraiding and blaming of them, is not for that they had not ſufficient experience whereby to haue beene dewly taught: but for that they did ſhut their eyes, and woulde not profite themſelues by the thinges that GOD ſhewed them.

Seeing that the Iewes are thus blamed by the Prophet, notwithſtanding that Moſes had reported them to bee a people of wiſedome and vnderſtanding: let vs come to our ſelues, and conſider that if this bee happened to the naturall braunches, what ſhall become of the impes [that are graffed into the tree,] as Saint Paul ſpeaketh of it in the eleuenth to the Romanes. It is certaine that the Iewes went before vs in preheminence, or at leſtwiſe they had the birthryght in Gods Church, and haue it yet ſtil. And which more is, at ſuch time as wee were ſtraungers vnto God, they were his houſeholde folke, and in his houſe and Church. Yet notwithſtanding, euen after they had beene inlightened as wee ſee heere, they were condemned of greater blindneſſe than the wretched Painims that neuer had any taſte of the trueth, nor any one ſparke of good knowledge. And why? for they had made themſelues vnworthy of ſuch a benefite. But God in theſe dayes ſheweth himſelfe more familiarly to vs than he did to the fathers in the time of the lawe. For in the Goſpell his face ſhineth foorth in ſuch wiſe, as wee may beholde it to be transfigured into his glorie. Is not our Lorde Ieſus the liuely image of God his father? And doeth not hee ſhewe himſelfe in ſuch wiſe in his Goſpel, that we may diſcerne him as well as if he dwelt among vs? Nowe then, if wee haue not our eyes open to receiue this doctrine, nor bee diligent to profite in the ſame: muſte not the vengeance which the Prophet Eſaye ſpeakes of, light vpon our heads? that is to wit, that wee ſhall be more blinde and brutiſh than the heathen, for as much as wee haue ſeene and woulde not ſee? And in good ſooth wee knowe it without his telling vs thereof. Looke me vpon the Turkes: they haue ſome reuerence to their religion, and ſo haue the Papiſtes alſo, & yet are both of them cut off from the Church of God through their own fault, but yet are they not ſo much to blame as wee. Therefore when men ſlide backe againe after they haue once knowen the Goſpell, yee ſhall ſee them become like dogges, ſo as there is no more honeſtie nor feeling of God in them, but they bee vtterly bewitched, and growe into the ſenſleſneſſe of minde which Saint Paul ſpeaketh of, namely that they make no remorſe of conſcience at any thing. And wee neede not to goe farre to ſeeke examples hereof. For euen among vs there are diuers to bee ſeene, who hauing vnhallowed Gods word after that ſort, are become ſtarke madde and fall at defiance with GOD, being poſſeſſed with ſuch diueliſh rage, as there remaineth not any more ſhamefaſtneſſe in them. Therefore when wee ſee this geere, we ought to quake at it and to ſay, Loe howe GOD reuengeth the contempt of his worde. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that when God hath beene ſo gratious to vs as to doe the office of a ſchoolmaſter among vs, and to teach vs by his word: it behoooueth vs to followe the light thereof. For if it bee put out through our naughtineſſe: it muſt needes bee that wee ſhall become more dull of vnderſtanding, than all the reſt of the worlde whiche neuer wiſt what GOD or true Religion is. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke as in reſpecte of this ſentence.

Rom. 11. 17.

Exod. 4. 22.

Ep. 2. 12, 13.

Rom. 9. 4.

2. Cor. 3. 18.

Eſa. 42. 20.

1. Tim 4. 4.

Nowe Moſes addeth immediatly, *Take heede to thy ſelfe and keepe thy ſoule diligently, that thou forget not the thinges which thine eyes haue ſeene, nor let them euer depart from thy heart*: that is to wit, *the day wherein thy God made thee to appeare before his Maieſtie in the valley of Horeb. There hee taught thee his lawe, when hee willed mee to make you all to appeare together before him. Therfore be mindfull of that day, and let it neuer be forgotten*. Nowe when as Moſes ſaith *take heede to thy ſelfe & keepe thy ſoule*: Hee ſheweth that hee cannot ſufficiently expreſſe the care which wee ought to haue to walke in the feare of God, and to make and keepe good watch, for feare of ſtarting from him, leaſt the diuell harrie vs abrode and make vs become as ſtray ſheepe. Nowe if this bee not ſuperfluous, what needeth any more to quicken vs vp withall? See howe God ſpeaketh heere: hee ſaieth not onely, take heede to your ſelues: but alſo, take heede to your ſelues and take heede to your ſoules. That is to ſay, vppon perill of your liues take heede to your ſelues and watch well, that yee bee not taken vnwares. And this is not ſaid without cauſe: for wee ſee howe frayle wee bee. Although God haue giuen vs ſo ſure a foundation, as wee can neuer be ſhaken downe if wee holde vs to it: yet doe wee nothing but totter, and euerie thing of nothing maketh vs to reele. Seeing then that our nature is ſo vnconſtant, and wee ſwarue ſo eaſily from Gods trueth: let vs aſſure our ſelues that this exhortation is not ſet downe heere without cauſe. Againe, wee ſee alſo howe wyly the diuell is, and howe many meanes hee hath to beguile vs, and wee are eaſily ledde to giue eare to ſuch as ſeduce vs. Alſo there is great policie vſed to deceiue vs: inſomuch that the couſiners doe ſhroude themſelues euen vnder the name of GOD, in their fuiſting in of their falſe doctrines and errours: and the diuell diſguiſeth himſelfe by transforming himſelfe into an Angel of light (as S. Paul ſpeaketh of him): and hee aſſaulteth vs not ſome one way onely, but when hee perceiueth that hee hath miſſed on the one ſide, hee runneth ſtreight to the other, ſo as wee haue no ſooner withſtoode one aſſault, but wee muſt by and by come to another. Seeing then that wee on our ſide are ſo fraile, and the diuell hath ſuch ſhifte of wyles and ſlyghtes to beguyle vs: we may well aſſure

2. Cor. 11. 14.

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our selues it is not for nought that Moses willeth vs here to beware, euen vpon perill of our soules. But what for that? Wee see neuertheless how ill this doctrine is put in practise. For wee bee carefull ynough for the thinges that concerne this earthly life: insomuch that wee stande alwayes vpon our gard for feare of being taken vnwares, and on what side so euer a man come to assaile vs, he can not enter vpon vs, for wee are euer armed: but as concerning Gods worde, wee forget that out of hand. True it is that men will come to some Sermon nowe and then for fashions sake: but when they come home againe they neuer thinke more of it, it is quite out of their remembraunce, it goes in at the one eare and out at the other, as saieth the prouerb: so that [in the ende] they finde themselues emptie and hungerstaruen, bicause they made none account of the warning that is giuen vs here. So then, let vs learne to bee more watchfull and to keepe better warde: and let vs weigh well this saying, *That we must take heed to our selues.* Why so? For if wee doe not keepe good watche and looke well about vs: wee shall wonder to see how soone the Diuell will haue snarled vs in his snares. Moreouer forasmuch as it is very harde for vs to doe so, and wee see that at one time or other wee bee quickly thrust out of the way: let euerie of vs take good heede to himselfe, and rowse vp all our wittes, and gather them about vs, applying them earnestly to this care & wareness which Moses speaketh of here.

And he saieth purposely, *Take good heede that thou forget not the things which thine eyes haue seene, and beware that they neuer depart from thy heart.* Whereas he saith, *The things which thine eyes haue seene:* thereby he meaneth that the people are vtterly without excuse, if they regarde not the thinges that God had shewed them, according to his former vsing of the same maner of speach. Deut. 3. 21. And whereas he saieth that our eyes haue seene, it serueth to expresse the things which our Lord hath shewed vs too too euidently, so as wee cannot alledge ignoraunce, nor say, this or that was too high or too darke for mee. *Thine eyes haue seene it,* saieth Moses. As if he should say, No no, ye neede not to bee great Clerkes nor Doctors in this behalfe, ye neede not to bee verie surtle headed: our Lordes manifesting of himselfe vnto you hath bene in such sorte and so euidently, that euen the veriest idiotes and rudest sorte of you haue perceiued the things that he told you. And in good sooth, although Gods worde containe wonderfull secretes: yet notwithstanding they bee so manifest vnto vs, as wee may bee able to conceaue them, at least wise if we our selues bee not in the fault. For wee see howe God lowlieth himselfe and stoopeth to our rudenesse, bicause he knoweth what wee bee able to beare. Nowe then seeing it is so: let vs but open our eyes, and when God hath once shewed himselfe to vs, let vs take good heede that wee forget him not: for [if wee doe,] wee shall bee vnexcusable, and our vnthankefulnesse will bee manifest and sufficiently prooued. Againe he sheweth that it is not ynough for vs to haue some light remembraunce of it swimming in our braine: but it must bee well rooted in our heartes: And after that manner ought Gods worde to bee sowen in vs. It is not ynough for vs to haue skill to talke of it, and to bee able to say, I knowe this & that: but wee must holde fast the thinges inwardly which wee haue heard outwardly. Nowe then, if Gods woorde bee setled in our heartes, and raigne there: there haue wee good remembraunce of it. But if wee bee not touched with it, nor haue any willingnesse to keepe it: it is all one as if wee had neuer heard of it. Thus ye see what we haue to marke concerning this speach of Moseses; where it is saide, that the thinges which wee haue once knowen must neuer out of our mindes.

But forasmuch as God had vttered himselfe diuers wayes to the people: it behoued Moses to shewe his meaning more particularly in this text. And therefore he addeth, *The day wherein thou wast before the Lorde thy God, when thou didst appeare before God in the valley of Horeb, at which time he commaunded me to assemble you, and to call you all together.* Albeit then that God had shewed himselfe to the people of Israel by diuerse myracles, by sundrie kindes of sightes, and also by diuerse reuelations as in respect of his worde: yet doeth Moses bring backe the people here, chiefly to the lawe, and to the solemne day wherein the lawe was published. And that is according to the matter that wee haue seene. In so much that if wee haue not that grounde, wee shall but builde in the aire, and all that euer can bee saide vnto vs will slippe from vs. The grounde that I meane is the submitting of our selues vnto God, to bee guided by his worde and to bridle our selues thereby, so as he alone may haue the whole authoritie and maistership ouer vs, and wee become his true Disciples in sticking to his pure doctrine. That then is the cause why Moses doeth make speciall mention here of the solemne day wherein the lawe was giuen to the people of Israel. For he sawe well that it would not haue booted at all to haue vttered neuer so many thinges by parcellmeale, if he had not set downe the chiefe groundwoorke, which is that men must suffer themselues to bee gouerned by Gods lawe. Likewise at this day, when wee shall haue disputed at large of a number of pointes, if wee doe not first and formost winne that men should obey God, and make them to knowe that his woorde is the right truteth whereunto they must holde themselues: to what purpose is it? They will bee still wauering and vnconstant, accordingly as wee see howe a great number will bee talking of this and that, and can finde nothing whereon to rest. And why? For they know not the first point of Christianitie, which is, that the holy Scripture is our whole wisdome, and that wee must hearken to God speaking there, and not adde any thing thereunto. Nowe then, vntill such time as wee bee come to that point, wee shall bee euer chaunging, and doe nothing but totter and waue like Reedes. And for the same cause doeth the Prophet Malachie saye, Be mindeful of the Law that was giuen you by Mo. Col. 2. 18. Mal. 4. 4.

Moſes in Horeb. For it was Gods will that thenceforth there ſhoulde bee an intermiſſion, ſo as a certaine time ſhoulde paſſe wherein the Prophetes ſhoulde ſpeake no more till the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Nowe in the meane while the Prophet Malachie ſaith, Bee mindefull of the Lawe that was giuen. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, yee cannot doe amiſſe if ye hearken to your GOD, and ſuffer your ſelues to bee taught by him: but you ſhall haue perfect learning, for it is vttered there. Now therefore wee ſee what the meaning of Moſes is, and howe wee ought to apply the ſame to our owne vſe: that is to wit, that aboue all thinges wee muſt aſſure our ſelues, that our Lorde hath vttered himſelfe vnto vs in ſuch wiſe, as he will be a good and faithfull teacher vnto vs, if wee bee good ſchollers vnto him. And therefore let vs ſettle all our wittes to the obedience of faith, ſo as wee preſume not to adde any thing to that which GOD telleth vs. When wee bee once come to that point, then ſhall wee bee guided foorth from point to point, and from degree to degree to our perfection: but yet muſt we haue the foreſaid groundworke, before wee can build well.

Nowe let vs come to this ſaying of his, *Call as vnto the day wherein yee were before the Lorde.* This ſaying importeth much. For although that GOD did then teſtifie his preſence in the valley of Horeb, as wee ſhall ſee hereafter: yet notwithſtanding whenſoeuer hee ſpeaketh vnto vs, wee appeare before his iudgement ſeat, though wee haue no viſible myracles. And it is all one as if a Prince being ſet to hold a Court of eſtate, ſhould cauſe his ſtatutes and ordinances to bee proclaimed by the ſounde of a trumpet, to the intent that all men might haue knowledge of them. After the ſame manner doeth GOD deale in this caſe. For when he vouchſafeth to haue his worde preached vnto vs, it is as much as if he ſummoned vs to him, and called vs to his throne, there to appeare euerie man for himſelfe, to yeelde account as before our iudge. And (as I told you) this importeth much. For wee bee greatly deſtitute of wit and reaſon, if this mooue vs not to heare Gods worde with other reuerence than wee haue done. If we conſidered well, that when wee come to a Sermon, or when wee take the Byble in our handes to reade, God citeth and ſummoneth vs, ſo as wee cannot caſt our eye vppon his word, nor receiue ſo much as one worde that is vttered to vs in his name, but that his Maieſtie is preſent there with it, and wee our ſelues are preſent in his ſight. If wee thought well vppon that: I pray you ſhould wee not bee otherwiſe prepared and humbled to yeeld our ſelues teachable? Should wee not bee in another manner of forewardneſſe than wee are ſeene to bee? Therefore if wee come hither with ſuch coldneſſe, as it were but for orders ſake, or when in reading of the Byble, ſome of vs are caryed awaye with fonde curioſitie, ſome thinke them ſelues diſcharged to Godwarde with the hauing of two or three ſentences, and otherſome make but a paſtime of it: doeth not this dealing of ours ſhewe well, that wee neuer taſted of this ſaying? Namely, that if GOD ſpeake vnto vs, wee muſt come before him and feele his Maieſtie, to be as it were beaten downe vnder it, to the ende to ſubmit our ſelues the better to his woorde. That is one principall point.

Beſides this there is alſo an aſſemblie that Moſes ſpeaketh of, howe he was commaunded to gather the people togither. For it hath bene Gods will to keepe that order from the beginning for the better exerciſing of vs in the vnitie of faith. True it is that he could well teache vs euerie one alone by himſelfe: and in deede he vſeth that way too, ſo that whether he inſtruct vs by teaching, or giue vs grace to profite by reading, it may well bee done by our ſelues alone: but yet therewithall there is the common order, which he will haue to continue inuiolable. And why? Foraſmuch as wee haue all one faith, and haue neede to bee tyed and knit togither in one: GOD vſeth this meane of teaching vs all as it were by one mouth, and maketh vs to meete togither as it were in one bodie: and that, not onely to the ende that a great multitude may take profite at one mans mouth, but to the ende wee ſhoulde knowe that there is but one rule, one trueth, one God that ſpeaketh, and which cauſeth vs to bee of one accorde and one melodie in that behalfe, in ſo much that when euerie man holdeth in with his neighbour, it is bicauſe there is a right conformitie. That then is the thing whereunto Moſes had reſpect, in ſaying that God commaunded him to aſſemble the people, as he that was his Leiuetenaunt. Hee gaue the Lawe generally to the intent that the people might by that meanes bee taught to thinke thus with themſelues: beholde, our God will haue vs to bee of one accord in him, and to bee one bodie wholly conformable to his worde, ſo as euerie man ſhift not for himſelfe like bandes that were ſcattered and put to flight in battell, but linck togither in one right and holy vnion. And this is not for one time onely: but it muſt be put in vre vnto the worldes ende. For it is Gods will that his Goſpell ſhould bee publiſhed. And how? Not in hudder mudder and in folkes eares: but he will haue men to bee taught openly, and to meete togither, yea and their meeting to bee to the ende that he bee preached, ſo as there may be a good vnitie of faith, & that the mark whereat all of vs doe ſhoote, may bee to bee gathered and knit togither in our head Ieſus Chriſt, who is the bond whereof S. Paule ſpeaketh, which proceedeth of the common preaching. Wherefore let vs learne that wee can not bee rightly of Gods houſholde, nor of his flocke, vnleſſe wee meete togither, and that our meeting be not only a comming togither in the Church, but alſo a continuall linking togither in vnitie when we be gone thence, and when euery of vs is alone by himſelfe from companie, ſo as wee ſhewe that Gods gathering of vs togither vnto himſelfe is not in vaine, but that there is a right brotherhood among vs, to come all vnto him in y name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For the diuell ſeeketh

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by all meanes to breake that bond, as wee see he hath laboured in all ages to stirre vp seches to rend asunder the bodie of the Church, and it is the thing that he striueth to doe in these dayes more than euer he did erst. And if hee cannot obtaine that false doctrines may haue their full scope to make hauocke of all thinges: yet will he sowe darnell among vs, so as in stead of being vnited, wee shall bee hewing one at another, or at leastwise as good as drawen a sunder, so as our bond shall not bee straite and well knitte togither. When wee see the matter in that taking, let vs vnderstande that it is a practise of the deuels driuing. And why? Gods intent is that we should bee gathered togither before him, yea euen before him. For the wicked wil wel ynough make leagues and confederacies: howbeit, that is but to spite GOD: and in verie deede they turne their backes vppon him, and hide themselues from him, and by all meanes possible eschew to come at him, for they haue no liking at all of him. But wee on our side must come togither in the presence of our God. Sith it is so, let vs bee afraide to shrinke a sunder, and let not the Diuell separate vs as wee see hee laboureth to doe: and he knoweth that hee shall haue ouerthrowen the principall poinct of our saluation, if he may winne that at our handes. And therefore let vs abhorre all such sowers of discorde in the Church of God. Wee see nowadayes, that in stead of assembling togither, there are diuerse which seeke nothing but to scatter Gods flocke: and wee needе not to goe any further than to this present place. We perceiue howe these rascalles doe nowadayes serue the diuell as though they tooke wages of him, or were vtterly solde to bee his seruauntes. A man may see whereat they shoot. There needeth no gessing or coniecturing, there needeth no great inquirie of the matter: let a man but looke vppon their doings, and he shall finde that their whole seeking is to breake al vnion, and to pluck asunder the things that haue beene knitte togither in the name of God. If GOD did euer worke myraculously in any place: he woorketh here as myraculously as in any place of ſ world, and hee sheweth the power of his woorde as mightily as may bee. Goe whither ye will, and such as are scattered from all other places, resort hither to shrowde themselues as it were vnder Gods winges, and to bee as it were one flocke gathered togither in his name. And what doeth the Diuell on the contrarie parte? There is nothing else but banding, that the wicked may shed abroade their venim and poison. And howe? Euen by vnioyning the thinges that GOD had ioyned. In deede they will not say it: but the thing it selfe is too apparant, and there needeth no long disputing or discoursing of the matter, if a man doe but open his eyes he shall see it. And it is a great shame that it is suffered and winked at: for the matter is too open and manifest. Yet notwithstanding it is not our Lordes will that the thinges which he hath knitte togither shoulde bee so vnhappily rent a sunder, and all bee put out of order after this sort. Wherefore let vs abhorre such plagues, and beseeche GOD to rid his Church of them & the world too, by powring out his vengeance vppon them, seeing it appeareth that they bee vtterly reprobate, and that there is no meane to reclaime them againe. God so thunder downe vppon them, as men may knowe howe highly hee esteemeth the vnitie of the faith, and his Church be maintained in true brotherhood and concord. And in the meane season let vs labour to bring this to passe: and if wee bee true members of Iesus Christ, let vs doe the cleane contrarie to that which wee see the wicked doe. For sith that they doe straine themselues so to put all thinges to hauocke: let vs on our side walke on in good vnion, and looke that wee come togither in the presence of our God, and that in such wise as his woorde doe maintaine vs in good agreement, and cause vs so to serue him, and wee being conuersant one with another in good brotherly friendship, may bee followers of the fatherly goodnesse of our GOD, whereby he gathereth the thinges togither which were scattered asunder before.

Matt. 19. 6.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the presence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him so to make vs so to feel them, as wee may repent vs of them aright and seeke the remedie of them, which is, that he cleanse vs from all our affections and lustes, making vs to renounce all our owne desires in such wise, as we may no more bee giuen to our owne fancies and likings, but seeke altogither to bee ruled by his woorde, and to profite therein after such a sorte more and more, as our whole wisdome and perfection may be to be ruled altogither by ſ same. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but also to all, &c.

On Wednesday the xxij. of May. 1555.

The xxij. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the fourth Chapter.

and I will make them to heare my words, which they shall learne, to the end they may feare mee all the dayes which they shall liue vppon the earth, and that they may teach their children.

11 Then came yee and stoode vnder the hill, which burnt with fire vnto the middes of the skie, and there was darkenesse, cloudes, and mist.

12 And the Lorde your God ſpake vnto you out of the middes of the fire. Yee heard the voyce of his wordes: but you ſawe not any image beſides the voyce.

13 Then declared he his couenant vnto you, which hee commaunded you to doe, that is to wit, the tenne verſes, and hee wrote them vppon two tables of ſtone.

14 The ſame time the Lorde commaunded mee to teache you the ordinaunces and Lawes, to the ende yee ſhould doe them in the Land which you goe into to poſſeſſe it.

I Declared yeſterday after what maner wee muſt come together in the name of God, to appeare before him. For the meeting of the wicked is to make confederacies, and it is apparant that their ſeeking is but only to conſpire againſt God and all goodneſſe: but yet their meeting is by hiding themſelues from Gods preſence, & they would faine turne their backes vppon him, ſo as he ſhoulde not ſee them. Truely they doe but looſe their time: for all things muſt needs come to account before God. And if mortall men eſpie their wicked practiſes, ſo as they perceiue that their banding of themſelues is but to ouerthrowe all order: the ſame muſt needes bee knowen to the heauenly iudge, from whom nothing is hidden. If their lewdneſſe appeare euen to little children: thinke they that God hath his eyes ſtopped? But it behoueth vs on our ſide to preſent our ſelues before God in all our meetings, to the intent that he may ſit among vs, & wee bee taught as it were by his mouth and gouerned by his hand. Furthermore foraſmuch as wee ſee that the wicked ſeeke altogether to rend a ſunder the vnion of the Church: let vs indeuour ſo much y more to come togither in Gods name. For wee can not proue our ſelues to bee his children, if wee haue not the marke whereof Moſes ſpeaketh here. And thereby it may bee iudged, that ſuch as paſſe not to haunt the companies of Chriſtians, when they meete together in the name of God to heare his worde and to pray vnto him: are but as dogges, and deſerue not to bee reckened in the common aray of ne, but are to be abhorred as dung and filth, bicauſe they haue cut off themſelues from Gods houſe. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember concerning that text.

Ecclo.12.14. Hebr.4.13.

And nowe Moſes addeth, that if we minde to fare the better by the meetings that are made in the name of God: *Wee muſt hearken to the things that he telleth vs*, and that muſt bee *to the ende that wee may feare him*, that is to ſay, to the ende wee yeeld him al reuerence, and it may appeare that wee take him for our Father and God. For if we thinke to content God with ceremonies, we deceiue our ſelues, as they doe which could finde in their heartes to haue no Religion at all, and therefore reſort hither, ſome but once a moneth, and otherſome as ſeldome as may bee. There are alſo which come hither vpon the Sundayes and Wedneſdayes as it were for faſhions ſake: but in the meane while doeth it appeare that they bee any whit edified in the feare of God? Doeth it appeare that their comming hither to crowd themſelues into the flocke, doeth any whit amend them or make them the better? Nay rather they become the more venemous againſt God, & therefore their comming to infect Gods houſe, is to their greater condemnation: for they bee vnworthie to come here, they bee no better than ſwine. Therefore our comming to the Church muſt be to another ende: that is to wit, that wee may profite in the feare of God. Nowe (as I haue touched alreadie) this feare importeth that he ſhoulde ouerrule vs, and that wee ſhould bee ſubiect vnto him. And for the ſame cauſe alſo doeth Moſes match theſe two ſayings together, namely *that wee muſt doe the things that God commaundeth vs*, and alſo, *that wee muſt feare him*. Many men thinke they feare God well, whē they haue ſome fond deuotion towardes him, as wee ſee in Poperie, where euerie man ſayes that his intent is to ſerue God: but after what faſhion? Euen euerie man after his owne fanſie. But y obedience which God requireth at our hands in yeelding our ſelues wholly to his worde, and the reuerence which wee owe him as to our Father and King: are things vnſeparable. Wherefore let vs marke well that if we be minded and deſirous to come together as wee ought to doe: Gods worde muſt haue all authoritie ouer vs, ſo as our receiuing thereof bee not onely to confeſs it with our mouth, but alſo to frame our liues wholly thereafter. For if wee will needes liue after our owne ſwindge, and euerie of vs doe what ſeemeth good to himſelfe: God holdeth ſcorne of vs and diſclaimeth vs, though wee proteſt to feare him and ſerue him [neuer ſo much.] For it is no reaſon but that he ſhould be heard, ſpecially ſeeing he taketh paine to teach vs. That therefore is the firſt point.

Againe let vs vnderſtand that our keeping of Gods Lawe, and our walking according to his will, doe not aduauntage him at all: for what can he receiue at our hands? But it is to the end that the world may know that we feare him, that is to ſay, that wee take him for our maiſter, & that we would faine be wholly his, and that he ſhould gouerne vs. That is the effect of the matter that Moſes ſheweth here. Howbeit foraſmuch as Churches are oftentimes defiled with hypocrits and wicked folke which crowde in couertly, who notwithſtanding are worthie to bee euen thruſt out of the world: Let vs marke what is ſaide in the fiftieth Pſalme, where God declareth that he ſeparateth his [true ſeruantes] from ſuch as falſely abuſe his name: ſo as his voyce thundereth to ſummon thoſe that feare him aright, and

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haue not couenanted with him vnfeynedly, nor ſerue him onely with Ceremonies, but alſo in very deede: them will he aſſemble together. And on the contrarie part, hee vpbraydeth thoſe that take his name in their mouth, and yet notwithſtanding doe take part with robbers, murderers, theeues, and traytours. Therefore when men will needes match GOD and the diuel together after that faſhion, as it appeareth that moſt men doe: God complaineth of it, and proteſteth that it ſhall not ſcape vnpuniſhed. Now if he ſhewe ſuch a ſeparation aforehand: Let vs Matt. 25.33 bee well aſſured, that when the day commeth wherein the Goates ſhalbe put aſunder from the Lambes, the ſhame of ſuch as haue preaced after that ſorte into Gods Church ſhall then bee diſcouered, and they ſhalbe abhorred of all creatures as they deſerue. But in the meane while let vs ſee that wee ſeparate our ſelues from them as neere as we can: and when we ſee ſuch vncleanneſſe, at leaſtwiſe let vs beware that wee miſlike them, and let vs pray God to rid and cleanſe his Church of ſuch infections. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, let vs be mindefull of the thing that Moſes ſpeaketh in this text, whenſoeuer we intende to meete together in the name of God.

Afterward hee addeth, *that when wee our ſelues haue walked in the feare of God, euery of vs muſt teach his children to do the lyke.* Wherein we ſee that it is not enough for euery man to diſcharge his duty in liuing orderly himſelfe: but that we muſt (to y vttermoſt of our power,) procure the cõtinuance of Gods honor and ſeruice after our deceaſes. And in good fayth, is it reaſon that Gods name ſhould be buryed with our death? We know how Iſa.40.6. 1.Pet.1.24. Iude.25 flightfull our lyfe is: but Gods glory muſt indure for euer without decaying. Therfore let vs learn our owne ductie: that is, to walke righteouſly all y time of our lyfe, and to indeuer to traine vp our children aright, ſo as religion may floriſh and proſper when wee be dead, and God be alwayes honored in the world, that his name may be called vppon purely. And that is the very cauſe alſo why God commaundeth fathers ſo ſtraightly to teach their children. For he coulde well ſend his creatures into the worlde, though no man had any ſpeciall care of them: but hee chargeth fathers to bring vp their children. And why? To the ende they ſhould knowe that they muſt yeelde an account of them. And for the Iſid.2.10. ſame cauſe alſo doth he communicate his name vnto them. For the title of father belongeth to himſelfe alone: but yet hee honoreth men ſo much as to grant them the name of fathers. And Matt.23.9. to what ende? That they ſhould be the earneſter and carefuller in teaching their children their dueties.

So then, let vs doe our indeuour, that there may remaine a good afterſpring after our deceaſe, ſo as Gods Church may floriſhe ſtill, and his name be worſhipped from age to age. And wee ought to labour ſo much the more in that behalfe, becauſe wee ſee how the diuil practiſeth to ouerthrow all that euer is builded in the name of God. So farre of is it that the fruite which ought to come of the Goſpel doth ripen; that men doe labor to plucke it vp, or elſe to marre it and to turne it out of the owne kinde. Sith wee ſee this, ought we not to bee the more prouoked to doe the duetie that is commaunded vs here? Without going any further, what is to be ſeene heere among vs? The Goſpell hath bin preached to vs now a long time: and yet for al thar, what maner of ones are they which haue bin borne of all this time, to whome God hath graũted the grace to be ſuckled with Gods word euen from the teate, and to bee brought vp in it lykewiſe, ſo as they being then but little babes, did neuer ſee any of the diueliſh abhominations of poperie, and therefore ought to bee euen throughly ſoked in the doctrine of ſaluation? what maner of ones are they? doth it not appeare that moſt part of them are ſo frowarde, as if they were the brood of Serpents? The world may ſee that they deſpiſe God openly, and commit ſuch wickednеſſe and lewdeneſſe, that there is much more honeſtie and more ſhewe of Religion among the Papiſtes, than there is among theſe. Seeing then that thinges are ſo farre out of order, and the diuill indeuoreth to put all to hauocke, ought we not to be the more inflamed to doe our indeuer, that there may remaine at leaſtwiſe ſome little ſeede after our deceaſe, ſo as the remembraunce of the Goſpell be not vterly aboliſhed, nor the thing that hath bin ſet vp ſo happily in the name of GOD and by his wonderfull power, be decayed and pulled downe againe by the enemies? Now then, ſeeing that God hath graunted vs the grace and priuiledge to bee called to the hearing of his worde, and to haue it ſet forth in the pure ſimplicitie among vs: let vs vnderſtand that we be the more bound to ſerue and honor him, not onely ſeuerally for our owne partes, but alſo by teaching our children, and by taking paynes to make them alſo to liue vertuouſly, ſo as the doctrine which they ſhall haue heard in their youth bee not loſte nor marde, as wee ſee too much by experience. And generally let vs all haue this regarde, that ſuch as come after vs may agree in the true religion, ſo as there may be no chaunge. But ſo far off is that from being done, that the enemies of the trueth, (I meane the houſholde enemies and not the Papiſtes, for they bee farre woorſe than the Papiſts,) think they ſhall neuer come time enough to ouerthrowe all order and to pull downe all that GOD hath ſet vp here. Sith wee ſee it is ſo, let vs vnderſtand that wee ought to bee as earneſt in building vp to the Lorde as the diuill is in pulling all downe. For let vs not miſtruſt but that Gods power is ſtronger than al the fiendes of hell. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to note vppon this ſtreyne: but the chiefe matter is the putting of it in vre.

And now Moſes addeth, that GOD ſhewed himſelfe to his people with dreadfull tokens, which were able to haue aſtoniſhed them. For *hee ſpake to them* (ſayth he) *from the middes of the fyre. And therewithall there was a great clowde, darkneſſe, and miſte.* By theſe wordes Moſes ſheweth that the lawe was not brought without good warrant: for it was accom-

accompanied with wonders that were able to astonish the whole worlde. And to what purpose serued that, but to make it certainly knowē that the lawe came from heauen, and that God was the author thereof? According whereunto it is sayd in Exodus, that when God appeared after that sorte in a thicke cloude, and a flaming fire, making the ayre to rore and the mountaine Sinay to shake, and the sound of trumpets to be heard: all those thinges (sayth he) were done of purpose to make you hearken to your Lorde God, and to knowe that it was hee that spake, and that whosoeuer receiueth not the doctrine that I haue brought you, must fight against the maiestie of God. But [if he doe so:] he shall finde God too strong for him. Thus yee see what belongeth to this text. And so wee see now wherfore Moses made mention of the cloude, darkenesse, and mist: namely to the ende it should be knowen, that the lawe was not put forth but by the authoritie of the liuing God, and that men might be fully assured that it came from heauen.

Exod.19.16 18.

And let vs mark by the way, that Gods chosing of the signe that is mentioned here, was to do vs to vnderstand, that we must not inquire of his maiestie further than he giueth vs leaue. GOD shewed not himselfe in any visible shape, least it might bee thought that his essence or being had some shape, whereof we will treate to morrowe by Gods leaue: but hee did set a cloude, darkenesse, and mistinesse before him. And why? To the ende that wee shoulde learne to be humble, and to know that hee dwelleth in vnapprochable light. Wee knowe howe curious and ouerbolde men are, for they woulde faine knowe what Gods being or substance is, and searche out euery whit of him by inchmeale, and that so presumptuously as though they would pushe vp their hornes into heauen. Such is their nature. But God will haue vs to worship him in feare and humilitie, as good reason is it should be so. And he withdraweth himselfe the further from vs, when wee inquire further of him than hee commaundeth vs. For otherwise were it not all one as if we would make him our vnderling? What preheminence should he haue if he were so shut vp within mans conceit? Therefore to expresse so great and so excessiue rashnesse, hee did set a darke clowd before him. But wee must marke, that whē God did set darknesse before the eyes of the people, it was not to the intent to be vtterly vnknowen, but to hold the people in awe, that they should not preace nie the hill where the fire and flame appeared that are spoken of in Exodus as is said afore: and therefore was there a great and thick clowd hard by the people. That then was the meane which God vsed to shewe himselfe to the people. Marke that for one poynt.

1.Tim.6.16

The other poynt is that God did vtter himselfe in such maner, as the people sought no further than was lawfull for them, but helde themselues contented with such discouerie as was giuen vnto them. And these two poyntes are well woorthie to bee marked. For many men when they list to excuse their ignorance, will say that wee ought not to be inquisitiue of Gods secretes: No truly, but yet is it not meant that we should bee brute beastes. Wherefore hath GOD created vs after his owne image, but to the intent that his trueth should shine forth in vs? And yet notwithstanding, it is as a common prouerbe that hath reigned and doth reigne still in the popedome: insomuch that the foundation whereon they haue grounded their implyed faith, is that they must not knowe any thing, but that it is enough to beleeue as the Churche beleeueth. And in the meane while they wote not at what marke they shoote, nor what God they worship, nor how his name is to be called vppon. But as I touched afore, Gods meaning is not that men should so abolishe and destroy the grace that hee hath put into them, for it were an vtter defacing of his image in dispite of him: but rather after as hee cōmeth neerer vnto vs & we vnto him, so wil he haue his Image ỹ more knowen in vs & his trueth ỹ more shine foorth there. Let vs vnderstand then that Gods intent is not that men should be ignorant of him, but to vtter himselfe in such wise, as we may be able to discerne him from the idols that haue bin forged, so as wee may take him for our father, and assure our selues ỹ we be called to the knowledge of his truth, and ỹ we may boldly resorte vnto him to call vppon him, and to seeke succour at his hand. After that maner was it Gods will to manifest himselfe to the people of Israell at the setting foorth of the lawe: and after ỹ same maner continueth he still at this day.

But yet for all that, the clowde is still before his face, to make men knowe their owne rudenesse. Againe forasmuch as wee be ouerfickle and would knowe dubble as much as is lawfull for vs, insomuch that wee attempt to knowe the things that are vnpossible to bee knowen: therefore did God cast a great and thicke clowde betweene himselfe and the people. And if wee were throughly perswaded hereof, it would be as a key to open vs the vnderstanding of ỹ whole holy scripture. For why? Whensoeuer we came to the reading or hearing of it, we should be sure that our Lord iesteth not when hee speaketh after that maner, and when hee protesteth this by his prophet Esay: I haue not spoken it in secrete, neither haue I sayd it in vaine, that men should seeke mee. Therefore whosoeuer heareth mee, and receiueth the trueth that I tell him, shall not bee disappointed in seeking mee. Thus ye see that wee shall profite, if wee beare well in minde that GOD manifesteth himselfe vnto vs, so farre foorth as is behoofefull for our soules health. And besides this, wee shoulde with all singlenesse reuerence the thinges that we comprehend not, wee should euery of vs walke according to the measure of his faith, and wee should continually indeuor to come neerer and neerer vnto him and to gather strength. And moreouer if the thinges were too high for vs: very well, wee would (as Saint Paul warneth vs in the third to the Philippians) tary till God shewed them more playnely, and yet in the meane while not cease to glorifie him.

him. But we see the clean contrarie. For vnder pretence that Gods word seemeth dark, many shrinke from it, and make a defence of it to excuse their ignorance withall. Othersome againe doe rush forward with diuelish presumptuousnesse, to seeke out thinges that God hath not reuealed, and through vnsatiable desirousnesse of knowledge, doe picke out newe questions euery minute of an houre, and if they may not see all thinges at will, they bend their hornes against God as wee see these rascalls doe, which spewe out their blasphemies when Gods secrets seeme strange to them after their owne fancie. If they conceiue not Gods eternall election, if they perceiue not how he choseth the one sort & refuseth the other euen according to his will: if they vnderstand not how hee disposeth of his creatures, and that nothing happeneth but by his good will: by and by they fall to fretting and chafing, yea and they dare euen murmure against God and would haue all thinges rased out of the holy scripture, which agree not with their fantastical braine. So much the more therfore doeth it stand vs on hand to remember well what is tolde vs here: namely that God casteth a clowde before our eyes. And why? To the end wee should be sober in inquiring of him, and indeuour to profite according to his teaching of vs: for it belongeth him to knowe what is for our behoofe: and moreouer that wee shoulde alwayes walke according to the measure of the faith which he shal haue giuen and imparted vnto vs. Thus much concerning the clowde.

Rom.12.3.

And now seeing the Lawe was giuen with record that God is the author thereof: Let vs in these dayes learne to rule our selues thereafter, and not call the thing any more in question, which wee ought to bee most assured of. Secondly if wee compare the lawe with the Gospell, let vs vnderstand that there is much more reason why wee should humble our selues, and reuerently receiue all that is conteyned in the Gospell. For although the lawe was ratifyed with so many miracles: yet did it not fayle to stryke the people in feare, and to bring them in greate vexation of minde, insomuch that they sayd, Let not the Lorde speake vnto vs, for then are wee all dead. And why? For if a man looke no further but to Gods commaundements, there is nothing but cursing. By reason whereof men beholding themselues bound to things vnpossible, and perceiuing that God wil be their iudge: must needes be cast downe, yea and driuen to vtter despaire. After that manner was the lawe deliuered to the people. But ỳ Gospell nowadayes is friendly vnto vs. For there God calleth vs to bee of his household, not for any desert of ours in performing the thinges that he commaundeth, but of purpose to beare with vs as with his children, forasmuch as he hath adopted vs in our Lorde Iesus Christ. Seing then that God allureth vs to him so louingly, haue wee not the more cause to receiue the doctrine of saluation with all reuerence, considering that it is the message of lyfe, whereas the lawe was a recorde of death to terrify the people, I meane the people of the Iewes?

Exod.20.19.

Deut.5.25.

2.Cor.3.7.8

And as in respect of miracles, wee are sure ỳ the Gospel hath bin warranted w moe, than euer ỳ lawe was. And besides the miracles ỳ haue bin wrought, behold, Iesus Christ in whom dwelleth all glory and maiestie, is come into the worlde to beare witnesse thereof. Seeing then ỳ we haue the Gospell & the doctrine of Iesus Christ, who hath ỳ fulnesse of ỳ Godhead in him: ought not we to be more humbled vnder the obediẽce of ỳ Gospel, than ỳ people of olde time were vnder the subiectiõ & bondage of the lawe? yes: and therfore is it sayd, ỳ heauen & earth were both shaken, as ỳ prophet Aggeus speaketh of it, saying that ỳ earth was throughly shaken at ỳ publishing of the lawe. And the Apostle alledgeth ỳ same text in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, saying: but now must all be shakẽ, & the power of God must vtter it selfe farre greater in the Gospell. So then let vs learne that if the clowde and darkenesse which appeared at ỳ time to ỳ Iewes, ought to haue taught them to obey God & to submit themselues to his lawe: much more ought the same to preuaile w vs at this day: specially seing wee haue not a darke clowde: for (as sayth S. Paule) there is not so much as any veile before vs, but wee haue ỳ image of God shining forth, and wee see him as it were face to face. Seeing then ỳ God doth nowadayes appeare to vs after another maner than he did to ỳ fathers, so as he sheweth vs his liuely image in our Lorde Iesus Christ, to the intent we should beholde him for our father and Sauiour, and in stead of the dark clowde we haue nowadayes the great light of ỳ Gospel: Let vs assure our selues that we ought to be ỳ more desirus to obey him in al things. That is the thing which we haue to remember here.

Agge.2.7.& Heb.12.26.

2.Cor.3.13. 18.

Herewithall let vs also wey this saying that is set downe here: namely, *that the people ought to haue rested altogether vppon the voyce that was vttered vnto them*, as the very marke whereby God will be knowen. To morrowe it shall be declared more at length, why God would not haue any visible image: but yet notwithstanding wee must at this present, wey well this poynt, that GOD did vtter foorth his voyce. And why? To the intent that thereby the people shoulde bee restreyned as with a bridle, and consider with themselues that their eyes must not be wandering and gasing about, to seeke any shape of God, but that their eares must be attentiue to heare his voyce, so that whensoeuer God speaketh, men must be as it were imprisoned to it, and content themselues to be taught by him. Therefore when we come before the Lorde, accordingly as it is sayd that they which meete together in his Church doe appeare before him: let vs note that wee must make account of his voyce, [and think thus with our selues.] What come we hither to doe? Whereas the Papistes gase vppon their Church walles, and stake about after their foolish ceremonies and after murlimewes of their own making: insomuch that although they thinke they please God, yea and hold him bound vnto them, yet they doe but play the brute beastes in ỳ behalfe. Let vs haue Gods word as ỳ certaine marke that he sitteth in ỳ middest of vs, & is [alwayes]

at hand with vs. After that maner must wee thinke, if wee will not erre: for the true marke for all the faithfull to shoote at, when they assemble together in the name of GOD, is to haue his voyce as a warrant of the presence of his maiestie. And of a trueth, lyke as the eare was the cause of the withdrawing of the first man from God: so must it drawe vs to him again at this day. What was it that banished our father Adam out of Gods kingdom? What caryed him away from the hope of lyfe, but his eares which receiued the voyce of Satan, and the falshoode that was put to him? Now then, lyke as wee be separated from God by that damnable voyce, when wee haue yeelded vnto euill: so now wee knowe that the onely meane to bee called vnto God and to enter into his house, that wee may be of the number of his children: is to heare Gods voyce and therby to be vnited vnto him. Thus muche concerning that worde.

Gen. 3. 17.

Moses addeth thereunto, *that at the same time God published his couenaunt which hee had made afore, and commaunded Moses to bring them the ten articles in two tables, charging him to teach the people his lawes and iudgementes, that they might doe them.* Hereby wee see againe that which I haue touched heretofore: that is to wit, that God will not haue his doctrine to be as a dead thing, but to bee of power to reforme vs, so that whereas naturally wee be frowarde and giuen to all naughtines, wee must be subiect to him in such wise as his righteousnesse may raigne in vs. To that intent was the lawe set foorth. True it is that the lawe being writte in two tables of stone, could not be kept vnlesse God subdewed the hardnesse of mens hartes by his holy spirit: and therefore it serued as a figure to shewe that the lawe ought to be written in mens hearts, though they be neuer so hard. Those stones then were as an image of our heartes. For as God auoweth by his prophet) wee haue such a hardnesse in vs, as hee can neuer bow vs till wee be softened. Neuertheless lyke as hee ingraued his lawe in the stones: so also doeth hee print the same in vs when it pleaseth him to touche vs by his holy spirit. And this was done at the same time that the lawe was put foorth. And here yee see why comparison is made betweene the Gospell and the lawe. God tolde the people how it behoued thē to know thēselues, for such as they were in deed, that is to wit, y they were hardned in naughtinesse, stubborne, and ful of all corruption, so as there was no concord nor agreement betweene the thoughtes and affections of them, and the righteousnesse of himselfe. And for proofe thereof, let vs marke that there are two thinges betokened by that which Moses rehearseth here. The one is the goodnes that GOD hath shewed in setting forth his lawe. For it is not enough for men to be taught: that will not boote them vntill such time as he subdew them. Wee may haue our eares beaten long enough with the doctrine of the Lawe, but wee shall continew still giuen to our owne naughtinesse: and therefore it shall be but labor lost and mispent to preach Gods word vnto vs. And why? For it will slip our againe, and so shall wee continewe alwayes lyke our selues. That is one thing that is betokened vnto vs.

2. Cor. 3. 3.

Iere. 31. 33.

Rom. 8. 6. 7. Colos. 1. 21.

And therewithall God hath shewed, that yet notwithstanding, the setting foorth of his worde in that wise by the mouth of a man, is not in vaine, for it serued to put the people againe in hope of thinges that were yet hidden, wherof wee haue not onely a full sight, but also the effect and accomplishment, by the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ, according as it is sayd by the prophets Ieremie and Ezechiel, that God will make a newe couenant, after another maner than that which he made with the fathers of olde time. For that couenant (sayth he) was soone broken, because they had no holde of themselues: but I wil ingraue my lawe in your heartes. God then did testify this newe couenant by Moses in mount Sinay, which our Lord Iesus Christ hath performed by his comming into the worlde, and which is offered vnto vs till euery day. And therefore let vs learne that when wee come to be taught, it must not be to any other ende than to be renewed by God, so as hee put away the hardnesse that is in vs, and soften our heartes after such a sorte, as wee may stoope vnder him to receiue his yoke, and hee holde vs in awe, because wee be so fickle that we would start away from him euery day, if hee gaue vs not steddie constantnesse to goe through with our vocation. That is a thing which wee ought to marke well. And why? Euen to humble vs, and to make vs knowe that although GOD spare our liues yet should they bee turned into death, if hee should let vs alone in our owne plight, and not adde a second grace in reforming vs by his holy spirite. And therewithall let vs be of good comfort, forasmuch as wee see that nowadayes wee haue not onely the auncient figures, and the tables of stone wherein God wrate his lawe: but also that hee worketh effectually by his holy spirit, as Saint Paul sheweth in the thirde to the Colossians. Seeing then that God worketh after such a sorte, as wee perceiue that our heartes are no more stony, forasmuch as wee be willing to stoope vnder him, and desirous to honor him, insomuch that although there be many lettes and hinderances in vs, (as wee see that the flesshe striueth continually against goodnesse:) yet notwithstanding our Lord giueth vs the grace to be sorie for our infirmities and sinnes, being desirous to eschewe them, indeuoring to withstanding, and inforcing our selues with all our heartes to serue him: Let vs acknowledge the singular grace that hee vouchsafeth vppon vs, and therewithall let vs learne to preace boldely vnto him, and not to stand aloofe vnderneath the hill as is sayd heere. And it is the same thing that the Apostle sheweth in the Epistle to the Hebrewes when he sayth, that wee be not come to the mountaine where there was nothing but fire, where nothing was heard but thundering and tempest, where lightninges flashed, where trumpets sounded, and where there was nothing but terriblenesse: wee be not

come

come to that mountaine: we bee not nowadaies called to bondage: but wee bee heere in the presence of our God, where we haue friendly felowship with the Angels: wee be matched and knitte in companie with the holy fathers, and with the soules whom God hath already taken out of the world: and we be all called to the end we should with open mouth call vppon God as our father. Then if we bethink our selues hereof, let vs goe boldly to our God.

Moreouer let vs alwayes beare in minde how it is tolde vs here, that Gods inioyning of vs to keepe his lawe, is by way of couenanting with vs. And that ought to giue vs the more courage. True it is that if God did simply vse his authoritie, euen in shewing vs our ductie towards him, and deale with vs by playne rigor, saying, yee must obey mee spyte of your teeth: yet ought wee to doe it, and it were not meete for vs to gainesay him. But now when wee see that Gods subdewing of vs vnto him is in such wise, as hee vouchsafeth therewithall to be our sauiour and father, couensunting as it were by mutual consent with vs, and binding himselfe to vs in requiring vs to come to serue him: ought it not to moue vs greatly, if wee were not woorse than blockishe? Ought it not to prouoke vs to giue our selues ouer to our GOD, seeing that hee vouchsafeth to ioyne with vs? yea: and therefore let vs alwayes marke well this word *Couenaunt*. And that worde ought specially to touch vs to the quicke in these dayes, when wee compare the lawe with the Gospell. For if God in those dayes made a couensunt with the people of olde time: it is in farre other taking with vs nowadayes, that is to say, infinitly better. And for proofe thereof, the pledges of those times were earthly, and serued to keepe folke alwayes in feare. True it is that God did alwayes set to his mark, so as the auncient fathers had an eye to the Lorde Iesus Christe, and were not destitute of this warrant, that hete of his free goodnesse was their Sauiour: howbeit that was done but (as yee would say) aloofe. But nowadayes God vttereth his couenant vnto vs so largely, that wee be sure of the forgiuenesse of our sinnes: and that although there be many thinges amisse in vs, although wee haue a number of intumberances by reason of our infirmities, although wee limpe and hang our winges, yea and although wee stumble and take many a fall: yet shall not all this let him to vse that inestimable goodnesse of his till towards vs, whereof hee speaketh by his prophet Esaye. Iere. 31. 36
ly that hee will not deale roughly with vs, no more than a father doeth with his children. Seeing then that wee perceiue that our Lord of his free fauour accepteth our seruice though it bee vnperfect and full of faultes: wee ought so bee the more willing to giue our selues vnto him euen with all our power. And sith wee see it hath pleased him to stoope so lowe, as to shewe himselfe to be our father and teacher, dealing more familiarly with vs than hee did in old time with the fathers vnder the lawe: let not vs on our side be slothfull in comming to him, but let vs labor the more earnestly in his commaundementes, and striue to withdrawe our selues so from the worlde, as nothing may keepe vs from atteining to the holy vnion, which is contained in the couenant that God hath made with vs on the behalfe of our Lorde Iesus Christ.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better, that wee may mislyke of them in such wise as after wee haue condemned our selues for the, our whole seeking may be to feele the mercie that hee hath promised vs, not onely in not imputing our faultes to vs, but also in correcting them by the power of his holy spirite, that wee may all liue in his obedience. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xxiii. of May. 1555.

The xxiij. Sermon, which is the fifth vpon the fourth Chapter.

15 Therefore shall yee take good heede for your selues, that yee saw no maner of image in the day that the Lorde your God spake vnto you in Horeb, from the middes of the fire:

16 That you marre not your selues, ne make you anie grauen image, or representation of anie portraiture, bee it the likenesse of man or woman,

17 Or the lykenesse of any beast vppon earth, or the lykenesse of any byrd that hath winges, which flyeth vnder the skye:

18 Or the lykenesse of any thing that creepeth on the ground, or the lykenesse of any fishe that is in the water vnder the earth.

19 Also that when thou liftest vp thine eyes vnto heauen, and beholdest the Sunne, and the Moone, and the starres, with all the hoste of heauen: thou bee

not deceiued and bowe downe before them, and serue them, seeing the Lorde God hath imparted them to all people that are vnder the whole heauen.

20 But as for you, the Lord hath taken you and drawen you out of the yron fornace of Egypt, to be vnto him a people of inheritance, as you be this day.

WE haue seene already heretofore the care that God had of his people, in willing them to take heede to themselues, and to watch well for their soules. For by those words he sheweth howe deare & chare our soulehealth is vnto him. Here we see the like againe. *Take heede to thy selfe* (saith he) *and keepe thy soule.* If God did not beare a singular good will to men, he would not speake so. And therefore wee haue a sure and infallible warrant that God seeketh our saluation, to the end that we on our side shall thinke vppon it also. But wee must marke therewithall, whereof he treateth here: that is to wit, of the worshipping of God purely without disguysing of his maiestie. Then is it a token that the same belongeth chiefly to our saluation, and that wee runne to ruine and destruction when we swarue aside from the pure religion, and fall to deuising of any thing that beseemeth not God. If wee doe so, the diuell reigneth among vs, and GOD must needes forsake vs. Wherefore let vs learne that the holding of religion purely & in such sorte as God alloweth it, as a thing of no small importance: For this kinde of speach were vnexpedient, if to make images were either lawfull or but a small and light fault: and surely God would not speake so vehemently as he doth. And therefore whensoeuer the case concerneth the worshipping of God, let vs marke well that it is one of y principall poyntes of our saluation, & that men must not presume in this behalfe to take leaue to doe what they themselues thinke good, but rather this warning that is set downe here must induce vs to walke in feare and carefulnesse. For what a shame is it, that our Lord shall tell vs wee must stand vpon our garde: and we in the meane while shall runne at rouers, as though wee needed not to passe greatly for the matter: And that God should so procure our welfare, and we make none account of it? And so ye see what we haue to marke vppon those termes.

But now let vs come to the chiefe matter of this sentence. *You saw not* (saith he) *any image or portraiture, in the day that the Lord spake to you in Horeb. Take heede therefore that you marre not your selues, by making you any carued image, or the likenesse of any thing, whether it be of male or woman, bird or beast, worme or fish:* Beware of al such thinges. For your God hath shewed himselfe to you in such wise as was expedient, and not in any shape. So then let vs beare this lesson in minde, namely to worship him in spirit, because hee hath not a body, nor any thing in him that can be represented by the things that are seen with our eyes. Now this doctrine is cleare enough of it selfe, if men would followe it, and that the world would not wilfully resist so certeine a thing. But this pride hath bin in all ages and reigneth yet stil at this day, that men will needes haue a presence of God after their owne fashion and deuice. But surely their wittes are fleshly, by reason whereof they conceiue and imagine of God after their owne nature, and thereuppon make images vnto him. Neuerthelesse it is not for vs to counterfeit God, or to attribute any thing vnto him but it belongeth to him to vtter himselfe: and therefore we must but onely receiue that which hee sheweth vs, and hold vs wholly thereunto.

Now let vs marke the grounde that Moses taketh here: that is to wit: *Sith such time as God spake vnto you in mount Horeb, hee shewed not himselfe in anie visible shape.* In speaking after that maner, Moses sheweth that we must not be hastie aforehand to conceiue what wee our selues thinke good, but must tary till God shewe himselfe. Take that for one poynte. For if men will needes giue way to their owne fleshlie reason in that behalfe, they shall ouerthrowe themselues and breake their neckes with their ouer much haste. But on the other side Moses sheweth, that GOD did manifest himselfe in such wise to his people, as there is no cause why men should any more say, how shall wee knowe God? How shall wee be sure that hee is neere vs? How shall wee worship him? How can wee call vppon him? God therefore hath cut off all occasions of fond curiosities, by shewing himselfe to his people. And the same agreeth now fully vnto vs. For when God published his lawe in mount Horeb although he had then chosen the ofspring of Abraham: yet was it his intent to giue foorth a doctrine that should continue to the worlds end. Then let vs vnderstand, that God in manifesting himselfe by voyce, meant to barre all images, not onely in respect of the Iewes, but also in respect of vs too. And therefore wee see that their beastlynesse is so much the greater, which nowadayes maintein this corruption concerning images in the Popedome: for they alledge that this was spoken for the Iewes & not for vs: Verily as who should say that Gods manifesting of himselfe by voyce, and not in shape of man or of any other liuing creature, serued not for all ages, but onely for the people of olde time.

Againe, what is to bee sayd of the reasons that are alledged through the whole holy scripture? serued they but onely for a time? or rather ought they not to stand fast for euer? Beholde, Esay vpbraideth the Iewes, that they had disfigured the maiestie of God. And why? To whome haue yee likened me, sayth he? The complaint y God maketh is this: dooth wood or stone resemble me? As for them, they be but dead & corruptible thinges. Doth it not wel appeare then, that dishonor and wrong is offered to my being, when men goe about after that sorte to represent mee vnder suche shapes?

Exod. 32.2.
Rom. 1.23.

Now is God chaunged since that tyme? Is hee not the same that he was? Then if hee had no lykenesse to wood and stone in olde tyme: neither is hee lyke them now. And therefore it followeth that this neither ought to be nor can bee restreined to any one time, but must continue, for euer: Furthermore whereas the Papistes alledge, that Gods restreyning of idolatrie so straitly, was because the Iewes were so much inclyned to superstition: I would with all my hart that it were in their power to amend men and to drawe them from their error. But what? The world sees it is all one still. For if euer the Iewes were fleshed in their foolishe vanities: the world is neuer a whit amended now, but rather become woorse. As soone as men doe thinke vpon God, by and by they wil needes haue somewhat that resembleth their owne kinde, and thereupon they fall to making of images. And when they once haue any thing to gase at, they cling to that, and their deuotion is tyed to it, so as they neuer goe about to lift vp their heartes to heauen, to worship God and to call vppon him. Wee see this with our eyes. What a beastlynesse then is it to say, that onely the Iewes were forbidden to worshippe images, that it is lawfull for vs nowadayes to doe it? Yea, but we see how the new testament also doth speake of it. For the reasons as well of Moses as of the prophetes which wee haue touched already, are alledged by Saint Paul, who saith that men went astray or rather vanished away in their owne imaginations, and turned al things vpside down, and falsifyed Gods trueth, whēsoeuer they made any counterfeit of him, whether it were in the lykenesse of man or of beast. Doth Saint Paul speake there but onely of the Iewes? Yes: and euen in the Sermon which hee maketh in the seuenteenth of the Actes, hee speaketh not to any one people alone, but to all the heathen vniuersally. And to the same purpose he alledgeth them a saying of their owne heathen wryters. For it is written by a heathen Poet, that wee bee Gods generation. Saint Paul reasoneth hereuppon, if wee be the generation of God, is it either comely or reasonable that wee shoulde make him any image either of woode or stone, golde, or siluer? None of these thinges can resemble him. But wee must marke that when this poore heathen man spake after that fashion, he meant not that wee resemble God either in eyes, or in nose, or in eares, but in soule, forasmuch as wee haue reason to discerne between good and euill, vnderstanding to conceiue and comprehend thinges, and are so excellent aboue all brute beastes, that there is no creature in the world so noble as man. That is the thing wherein we resemble God. But now, with what paynting can mans soule be expressed? Seeke all the cunning that can be, & what portraiture can be made thereof? And yet for all that, what are our soules? They be but as little sparkes in comparison of the infinite brightnesse that is in God. Our soules are created, and God is without beginning: He is the ground and welspring of all thinges. Our soules are weake, subiect to ignorance, subiect to sin, and subiect to many wicked lustes. But God with his infinite being and maiestie is the perfection of all vertues. To be short, as oft as we thinke of him, wee ought to be rauished into wondering and astonishment. So then, is it not apparant that men are worse than mad, when they wil needes take vpon them to shape out Gods being, seeing that no shape can be made of their owne soules, which are nothing in comparison of him? For seeing that S. Paul speaketh so to ỹ heathen, I pray you do not the Papistes shewe that their meaning is to reproue him of ignorance, and of the misapplying of Gods lawe? Or else must they not needes be confounded in their blasphemies? Yes: and therefore let vs marke well, that this doctrine ỹ God will not haue any maner of image made of him, serueth not for two or three dayes, but for all euer. And there is euen one reason which ought to suffice vs, which I alledged euē now out of the prophet Esay. How now, sayth God? consider who I am. If I listed to gripe ỹ whole world, I need not to stretch out my hād for the matter, For though I kept my hand shut, yet could I hold all the world close in it, as a litle grayne of dust. It is true that God hath no handes, for he hath no bodie: but his speaking so is by a similitude. As if hee should say, doe yee thinke me to be like any creature? No: for all the world is nothing in comparison of me. It is but as a grayne of dust in a mans hand: & you your selues are here beneth as a sort of frogges and grashoppers. Now then, if yee will needes make some puppet to represent me, is it not as good as a defacing of my glory, & a spyting of me to ỹ vttermost of your power? Wee see that God is a spirit as the scripture declareth: & shall wee then goe about to make him a bodie? It is he that giueth lyfe to all thinges: & shall we go take a dead thing to represent him thereby, and say: There is God? When we haue shaped out a stone or a peece of wood, and made it a nose, eares, and all the rest of mans limbes, yet hath it no feeling at all: and shall wee neuertheless say, Behold, there is God? What a dealing were that? For the same cause is it sayd in the psalme: Are idols remembraunces of God? In deed men make them mouths, and they haue feete, handes, noses, & eares, but yet haue they no power to goe, nor any other abilitie, they be but corruptible & dead things. And is there any remembrance of God in thē? Serue they not rather to leade men into error & beastlynesse, so as they should make no more account of God? The very heathen men thēselues could skill to say it: not that they did practise it in deede: but God wrested such woordes out of their mouthes, to ỹ intent they might all be conuicted. And albeit ỹ neither Moses nor ỹ prophets spake vnto them: yet was it Gods will to condemne thē by themselues. Ye see then how it is a sufficient peremptorie reason, that inasmuch as there is no lykenesse betweene God and any of all the shapes that can be made to represent him withall: hee hath wrong done vnto him, and it is an abacing of his maiestie and glorie, when men doe make images of him after that sorte.

Iohn 5. 21. Act. 17. 24. Rom. 1. 25.

Act. 17. 28. 29.

Arat. Cleanthes.

Psal. 115. 5.

Esa. 40. 15.

Iohn 4. 24.

And therewithall lex vs also beholde mens madnesse. Is it in mans power (as sayth the prophet Esay) to take a logge of wood, and with part thereof to goe heate his oueh, or to seethe flesh in a potte, or to bake his bread, or to warme himselfe: and to take another parte of it, and to fashion a nose and eares vppon it, and to say vnto it: Thou art my God, and thereupon to worship it? Now when men make Gods, that is to say remembraunces or representations of God, at their owne pleasure, because they list to put a difference between two or three peeces of wood [to preferre one before another,] and say, behold, this is GOD: is it not too great a beastlynesse? yes, and the very heathen men themselues haue affirmed it, as I haue declared. Behold, a Paynim, a blinde wretch that was before the comming of Iesus Christ, sayth: Since the time that images came into the world, there hath bin nothing but errour, and it hath bin the meane to make men brute beastes, and to turne them away from the truth. Seeing that euen blinde men knewe this, or rather that God did cast foorth those words by their mouth: is it not a horrible condemnation to suche as terme themselues Christians, if they take not heede to it? Another heathen man bringeth in an idoll speaking thus: The Carpenter or Caruer (sayth hee) was in doubt what to make of mee: in the ende hee thought best to make me a God, and so am I now worshipped. See how this blinde wretch skoffeth at the beastlynesse that was among men, and yet hee himselfe ceased not to worship idols still. But what? God wrested this acknowledgement from him by force, to the ende that all mankinde shoulde bee condemned, and that there shoulde bee no more excuse. But as for vs, wee will vaunt our selues to be taught by Gods word: and yet we will not knowe so much as the fillie infidels haue spoken. And truely, are not wee warned by them? If wee heare not the Prophets and Apostles: at leastwise yet ought those heathen men to teach vs to our shame. Therefore it muste needes be that wee bee woorse than bewitched by Satan, if wee consider not all these reasons, specially seeing they be of Gods owne alledging, who will haue men to receiue them euen with all reuerence, as at his maiesties hand, and that for a further confirmation hee addeth the sayings of the infidels which I haue alledged. And therefore let vs forbeare to take that vppon vs which belongeth not to vs, that is to witte, the choice and libertie of making images of God, for men to worship, or to cast the wood into the fire to make the potte seethe, and such other lyke thinges. For it is too much against reason.

Furthermore, let vs also take heede to our selues. For assone as we begin to intangle our selues in our own imaginations: by and by there foloweth a sea of foolish thoughts, which make vs to run gadding heere and there, so as they carry vs quite & cleane from God. If men knew their owne nature: surely they durst neuer aduenture to make any image. I told you at the first, that wee ought to know God, & that the same knowledge would be a good bridle to holde vs in simplicitie, and to make vs to preuent all superstitions. And when wee enter into our selues, that also ought to teach vs well, that it is a turning of all thinges vpside down, when wee make any Image of God. For what is the cause that men are so eagre to haue some representatiō of God: but for that they cannot mount vp into heauen, for asmuch as their wits goe groueling downeward, and are alwayes wedded to the earth? And therefore would they haue God to come downe vnto them. Now it is true ỹ God commeth downe vnto vs: howbeit, that is after his owne maner, and not at our appoyntment. And he must bee faine to stoope vnto vs, because we cannot mount vp vnto him: but yet he keepeth such a fashion & measure, ỹ therewithall he lifteth vs vp to him. We for our part could finde in our hearts ỹ God were (as ye would say) vnder our feete, so as wee might treade vppō him: And ỹ is the cause why we haue idols. For ỹ beginning of idolatrie sprang of this, ỹ men feeling their own infirmitie, would needes haue God in such wise as their owne wit was able to brooke. Now their wit stayeth not high, but rather rucketh beneath vpon ỹ grosid. And therefore although men had no idols at all yet is idolatrie in them, & they haue ỹ seede of superstition, inasmuch as they would haue God to fashion himselfe to their lyking. Nowe then seeing ỹ this naughtinesse is rooted in vs already: must not ỹ mischiefe become dubble, whē we meete w an obiect? that is to say, when we haue any thing to set vs foreward, & whē any new occasiō is ministred? So thē, if there be any idols or images to portray or represēt God: it cannot be but ỹ men shalbe dubble seduced. Seing they be to much inclined thereto of nature: it is a great inforcement whē they be further driuē foreward by ỹ thing ỹ they beholde. Therefore if we wist it were such a vice, surely we would abhorre idolatrie, knowing ỹ it turneth vs quite away from God. And for the same cause doth the prophet Ieremy say, that there is nothing but doctrine of falshood in Idols: and the prophet Abacuck verifying the same, & comparing idols with the liuing God, sayth that they be a schoole of lyes.

But yet for all this, the Papistes will affirme that images are laymens bookes: and that because all men cannot reade nor are clearkes, there must be some helpe for the ignorant. Very well: if a representation of God be made, that is a booke, that is as good as the Byble, say the Papists: and it is their chiefe ankerholde that they flee to in this case. True it is that this shifte is not of their owne deuising: it was deuised by a man not wicked of himselfe, notwithstanding ỹ he was somewhat attainted with the corruption of papistrie. For he was a Pope himselfe, howbeit not when the Popedome was in such plight as it is nowadayes: but yet when it had already bin greatly corrupted, and the world was sore degenerated. Nowe then, this good man Gregorie thought it good to haue images, and that they would be as books for the vnlearned: & this haue the papists receiued as if it were ỹ oracle of some Angel from heauen. But contrariwise ỹ Prophet Iere-

Esa. 44. 15.

Varro. Aug. lib. 4. de ciu. Dei. 9. and 31.

Horace. 2. Ser. Sat. 8

Iere.

Ieremie auoweth that all the doctrine of idols is meere falshood, and likewise Abacuck in the second Chapter saieth that they teache nothing but lyes. Were it lawfull for a man to coine false money on his owne head, bicause he can get none of the right stamp? No: but yet hath God giuen his word to all men, so as he hath vouchsafed not onely to speake to great Clerkes; but also to stoope to the rudenesse of the little ones. And for all this, men stoppe their eares, and say they can not knowe God but by a Puppet: and vnder that pretence they will needes haue it lawfull for them to beely the thinges that God hath reported of his owne being. Forasmuch then as wee haue warrant that there is nothing but falshood in images: let vs send home such Bookes to the diuell: for it is certaine that he is the author of them, and that they came all out of his shoppe. And herein we see how that cursed Counsell which allowed images, was first carried away. For these were the worshipfull reasons that they alledged for the hauing of images. It is not ynough (saide they) that men bee taught by the eare: but their eyes also must haue some instruction too. And thereunto they wrested this saying of the Psalme, Wee haue heard and seene: that as wee haue heard Gods worde, so must we also haue some thing to looke at: and (as I said) they referre this looking vnto images. But contrariwise the Prophetes meaning is, that God (besides his vttering of himselfe to his people by his word) had bestowed so many and so apparant giftes of grace vppon them, as they might well say, Our God hath sufficiently assured vs that he was our Sauiour, not onely by his promises, but also by the deede it selfe whereof we haue had experience. And yet notwithstanding vnder colour of that text, these rascals will needes beare men in hand, that God must be represented by puppets.

But if they will needes that there must be visible images: our Lord hath giuen vs as many of them as he knewe to be for our behoofe. When we haue Baptisme, is it not a visible image of the thing that is spirituall? that is to wit of the washing which we haue by the bloud of our Lorde Iesus Christ, when wee bee renewed by his holy spirit? And haue we not a representation of the heauenly mysterie set foorth to vs in the Lordes supper? Yes: but yet for all that wee must not make any image at all of Gods being. And why? for it were not for our profit as I haue declared afore: but it would rather turne vs away to lyes and besotte vs in all manner of superstition. God therefore knowing that the hauing of images is an vntoward thing and as a deadly plague: hath not lifted to giue vs any, but rather holdeth vs back to this, that hauing such signes as may conuey vs vpward, we should trauell towardes him, howbeit without hauing any representation of his being. Thus ye see that the thing which wee haue to remember in effect, is that although the scripture did not expressely forbid vs to haue any image or bodily representation of God: yet the reasons are such as wee ought to worshippe God in spirite, and to flye vp aloft into heauen, and not to sticke fast here belowe. Why so? For in knowing God, we must consider his Maiestie, how there is no proportion or likenesse between him and the creatures. Therefore it is but a misshaping of him when we make any bodily image vnto him: he that is the welspring of life cannot be represented by a dead thing. If wee goe this way to worke, then shall wee neuer bee marred nor imbaced, but rather wee shall seeke God in such wise, as he hath vouchsafed to vtter himselfe vnto vs, and we shall not bee so shuttlebrayded as wee bee. For as soone as wee haue taken any toy in our heades, wee bee so doted and intangled, that wee thinke the ground beares vs not. If wee knewe this (I say,) wee should be soberer. But what? The world must shewe it selfe blind as it is, and be serued with this drunkennes of Idolatrie, to bee caried away thereby, that it may euer turne away from God. For although men be naturally contented to haue some Religion: yet seeke they by al meanes not to come at God, I meane in trueth. They will well ynough say alwayes, God is to be worshipped, and our intent is to doe so, wee must resort vnto him. But how? Whereas they should seeke God in heauen by faith: they will needes goe about the bush. Verie well say they, wee will haue some image of God. And that is all one as if they shoulde say, Behold, here is a God that shall not trouble vs: for wee will deale well ynough with him at all times, he shall not speake a worde, he shall but onely make a mowe. See how the world making countenaunce to seeke God, doeth drag backe from him as much as is possible, shrouding themselues vnder this pretence, that it is ynough to haue a representation of God, & that his power shall neuerthelesse be infinite still. But nowe we haste to marke, that God is not contented with such reasons, forasmuch as he hath tolde vs that it is not lawfull for vs to haue any image of him to represent him withall. And shall wee reply against him when wee haue the woorde of his mouth? What shall we win by it? When wee haue pleaded our fill, suppose wee that wee haue any deuises in our braine, that can make God beleeue that he considered not all thinges well? No: and therefore (to be short) as many as couet to haue any image of God, bewray themselues to bee ranke rebels against him, they bewray a diuelish malapertnesse, in that they presume to forge and set vp Gods after their owne fansie: yea and they bewray their owne beastlinesse also, in that they doe against nature. For they would allow God such a representation, as agreeth as fitly to him, as if they shoulde liken him to a sticke, or I wote not what else. Men therefore doe in all respectes sufficiently shewe themselues to be vnexcusable, when they turne so away after their images.

But by the way wee haue to marke further, that all manner of images and representations are not meant here. For our Lord saieth expressly that he shewed not himself to his people any otherwise than by his onely voyce, and therefore that it is a corruption to make images. If this should be drawen to conclude, that it is not

lawfull to make any picture at all: it were a misapplying of Moseses testimonie, as some doe, who being too simple in this behalfe, doe say it is not lawfull to make any image: that is to say, it is not lawfull (to their seeming) to paint any storie or to make any portraiture. But when the holy Scripture saieth, it is not lawfull to shape any resemblaunce of God, bicause he hath no bodie: it extendeth not so farre: for it is otherwise as concerning men. Now then looke what wee see, that may wee represent by picture. And therefore let vs see that wee apply the textes against the Papistes as wee ought to doe, that we may bee armed to proove our case iust. But yet must wee bee fully resolued of this, that if any man goe about to expresse Gods Maiestie by any shape: he doeth him wrong, and it is high treason to him, because he is vncomprehensible in his glorie. Marke that for one point. Now wee see that the Papists haue gone about to expresse God by shapes: therefore it followeth that they haue marred all Religion. And whereas they alledge that there were Cherubins painted vppon the vaile of the Temple, and that two likewise did couer the Arke: it serueth to condemne them the more. When the Papistes pretended that men may make any manner of image: What, say they? Hath not God permitted it? No: but the imagerie that was set there, serued to put the Iewes in minde that they ought to abstaine from all counterfeiting of God, insomuch that it was a meane to confirme them the better, that it was not lawfull for them to represent Gods Maiestie, or to make any resemblance thereof. For there was a vaile that serued to couer the great Sanctuarie, and againe there were two Cherubins that couered the Arke of ỹ couenant. Whereto commeth all this, and what is ment by it, but that when the case concerneth our going vnto God, we must shut our eyes and not presse any neerer him, than he guideth vs by his word? Then let vs hearken to that which he teacheth, and therewithall let vs bee sober, so as our wits bee not ticklish, nor our eyes open to imagine or conceiue any shape. That is ỹ thing which God meant to betoken in his Law. And so are we the more confirmed in the doctrine that I spake of. But as for the images which the Papistes make of their Heesaints and Sheesaints as they terme them: there is other reason to condemne them. For GOD hath forbidden two things. First the making of any picture of him, bicause it is a disguising and falsifying of his glorie, and a turning of his trueth into a lie. That is one point. The other is, that no image may bee worshipped. But nowe, doe not the Papistes worship images? If they say, it is requisite so to doe, for it is a continuall stirring vp of the peoples deuotion: that is too fond a reason. For first of all, when we come to the Church, it can not be but that we shall be caught in some errour, if wee haue neuer so little occasion offered vs. For (as I saide) although there bee no image at all to drawe our eyes: yet are wee inclined to earthly imaginations euen of our selues, and wee nourish superstition in vs of our own nature. Now then if we be furthered and thrust foreward vnto euill, so as wee finde as it were spurres to pricke vs foreward: I pray you shall wee not bee as good as maidde? Therefore the setting vp of images in Churches is a defiling of them aforehande, and can serue to no purpose but to drawe folke from the pure and true knowledge of GOD. Againe, to what end doe the Papistes set vp images in Churches? Is it to haue knowledge of their Histories? No: but there standes a sort of puppets with demure countenances, as it were to summon folke to come to doe them homage: insomuch that an image is not so soone set vp in a Church, but by and by folke goe and kneele downe to it, and do a kinde of worship to it. And can a man deuise to eclipse the Maiestie of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and to deface his glorie more, than by ỹ thinges that the Papistes doe? Beholde, they paint and portray Iesus Christ, who (as wee knowe) is not onely man, but also God manifested in the flesh: and what a representation is that? Hee is Gods eternall sonne, in whom dwelleth the fulnesse of the Godhead, yea euen substantially. Seeing it is said, substantially, should wee haue portraitures and images whereby the onely flesh may bee representedr Is it not a wyping away of that which is chiefest in our Lorde Iesus Christ, that is to wit, of his diuine Maiestie? Yes: and therefore whensoeuer a Crucifix stands mopping & mowing in the Church, it is all one as if the Diuell had defaced the sonne of God. Ye see then that the Papistes are destitute of all excuse. Againe wee see howe they behaue themselues: the images are worshipped among them, as if God were present there in his owne person. Where say they their Pater nosters, but before some puppet? And yet are they not contented with that: for they will needes make idoles of al things, yea euen to the verie Sacramentes: insomuch that they haue falsified them, to drawe the worlde from the right Religion. Is there a more abhominable idol, than that which they haue inuented vnder pretence of ỹ Supper of Iesus Christ? No: for they say, that GOD is there, and there he must bee worshipped. So then, no marualle though they abuse their puppets and pictures after that fashion, seeing they haue bene so bolde as to peruert the thinges that God hath appointed to the furtherance of our faith.

Exod. 25. 18.

a. Tim. 3. 16.

And by the waye let vs marke, that the true meane to seeke God after such sorte as he vttereth himselfe, is, that after we once knowe him, wee doe also consider that bee stoopeth to our rudenes, and yet ceasse not to seeke him by mounting vp higher, and by conceiuing the thinges spiritually which the Sacramentes doe shewe vs. It is true that by them God commeth downe to vs: howbeit, that is not to hold vs downe here beneath still, but to make vs flie vp aloft vnto him. It is all one as if hee shoulde reache vs his hand and say, Come to me, and worship me spiritually. Wherefore let vs learne to seeke GOD euermore aboue vs, and not to tie him to our fleshly and earthly vnderstanding.

Now finally Moses sheweth the vnthankfulnesse of the worlde in seeking new Gods, and in

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conueying ouer of the Maiestie of the liuing God to dead creatures. It was a verie common thing in the East Countries, to worship the Sun and the Moone and the Starres, bicause that to their seeming they were not as the earthly creatures are, nor had any corruption to be seene in them, nor were subiect to such changes as men, beasts, trees and waters are, for we see howe all things vnder the skie are chaungeable: but seemed to bee things immortall and incorruptible. Yea verily, so seemeth it to men that are become brutish, and haue not the wit to goe to the creation, to knowe that God hath giuen the Sunne, Moone & Starres such nature and proprietie as he listed: but yet for all that, howsoeuer those creatures fare, they bee liueleſſe. But here Moses rebuketh the wicked fantasticalneſſe of men in worshipping the Sunne. They sawe there a kind of Maiestie. Oh (said they,) these lightes of the skie are excellent thinges: surely there is some Godhead in them: therefore must wee needes worship them. But in so doing (saieth Moses) they became vnthankefull towardes God. For why? What is the Sunne? Our Seruant: & the Moone is our Handmaide. And for proofe thereof, was not the Sunne ordained to giue vs light? Is not he our Candlestick? Yes and besides that he is the Candlestick, he is also the Candle it selfe, euen to doe vs seruice. It is true that God coulde well giue vs light without the meane of ỹ Sunne: but hee meant to shewe howe greatly he esteemeth and loueth vs, in that he hath put such seruants vnder vs, and aduaunced vs so high as to make the Sunne, the Moone and the Starres to doe vs seruice. Now then, sith wee see that God hath made his heauenly creatures subiect to vs after that fashion: are wee not too churlish and vnkinde if wee worship him not? Is it not a refusing of the good turne that God hath done vs, and a shutting of our eyes to reiect his gracious fauour, as if they would say in despite of him, wee will not acknowledge the good that thou hast done vs? In deede we see ỹ the Sunne & Moone doe serue vs: but yet will wee not take them for our seruants. Must it not needes bee that men are become starke diuels, when they bee so froward & malicious, as to refuse the receiuing of so great a benefit at Gods hand? That then is the thing that Moses sheweth here.

Moreouer he addeth for a conclusion, *that the people of Israel excelled all other Nations.* It is true (saith he) ỹ God hath vouchsafed to make ỹ Sun & Moone seruants to the whole world: but thou excellest all other nations of the earth, inasmuch as he hath chosen thee for his inheritance. And seeing it is so: ỹ ought est at leastwise to worship him as thy God, & to feare him and reuerence him as thy father, & in any wise to beware that thou defile not thy selfe w the abhominations of idolatrie. For what a thing were it, if a Kinges sonne should refuse to be in his fathers palace, & go keepe company w some swineherd, yea or go wallow abrode w brute beasts, & fall to wrooting vp of the ground to eate filthy things like ỹ swine thẽselues? What a thing were it? But Moses telleth vs, ỹ those whõ God hath chosen to bee his people, do the like, whẽ they go to cast thẽselues downe before creatures. Therefore let vs learne to worship our God in spirit & truth, and to doe him homage; & to acknowledge the good ỹ he doth vs, specially for that it hath pleased him to adopt vs to bee his children, through frõ bestowed adoption in our Lord Iesus Christ. Iohn 4.24.

Now let vs kneele down in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him so to open our eyes, as wee may no more addicture to deuise any thing after our own fleshly vnderstanding, but resort altogether to his holy word whereby he hath reuealed himselfe vnto vs, & alsõ receiue his Sacraments wherby we be yet better confirmed in his knowledge, so as our whole seeking may be to follow the pureness that is set forth in his doctrine, ỹ no error may lead vs away frõ him nor from the pure religion ỹ hath bin taught vs: And in ỹ meane season, ỹ as we do him homage in spirit, so likewise wee may serue him w all our heart, assuring our selues ỹ wee can not serue nor worship him by any Ceremonies or outward things, wout yeelding him the honor & praise ỹ he requireth. And finally that it may please him to correct all ỹ idolatrie & superstitiõ in the world, & to rid it in such wise frõ the earth which he hath appointed to ỹ vse of men: as his name may be purely called vpon there. For the performãce wherof, it may please him to raise vp true and faithful ministers of his word, &c. Gen. 1.15.

On Fryday the xxiiij. of May. 1555.

The xxiiij. Sermon which is the sixth vpon the fourth Chapter.

19. 20 Also that when thou liftest vp, &c.

21 And the Lorde was angrie with mee for your woordes, and sware that I should not passe ouer Iordan, nor goe into the good land which the Lord thy God giueth thee to inherit.

22 For I shall die in this land, without passing ouer Iordan: but you shall passe it, and possesse that good Land.

23 Beware that ye forget not the Couenant of the Lorde your God which he hath made with you: and that ye make ye not any grauen image, nor the likenesse of any thing which the Lord your God hath forbidden you.

24 For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire and a ielous God.

YEsterday I began to shewe mens vnthankefulnesse, in that they cannot finde in their heartes to profit themselues by the benefits that God putteth into their handes, as this present example sheweth sufficiently. Beholde, God hath ordained the starres of the skie to doe vs seruice. There ought wee to espie his infinite goodnesse towardes vs, howe greatly he loueth and esteemeth vs, in that he hath made so noble creatures our seruaunts. But in stead of magnifying our God, and of worshipping him as wee ought to doe, we cleane contrariwise fall to deuising of some errour and idolatrie in our heades. After which manner the Gentiles tooke occasion to worship the Sunne and the Moone, bicause they sawe the great benefites that were receiued by them. Yea, but therewithall they shoulde haue mounted vp higher, and haue considered ỹ God is the author of them, and that the Sunne and Moone and the Starres are but instrumentes of Gods fatherly loue towardes vs, and haue not any power which proceedeth not from him. Furthermore let vs marke that men sinne not in this behalfe through simple ignorance, but through wilfulnesse, bicause they can not finde in their heartes to yeeld themselues to God with a single minde. For if we intend to serue the liuing God, we must not goe to it by windlasses, but we must go right forward. But when men see themselues so pinched: they seeke startingholes, and deuise new fashions of seruing God on their own head, so as they neuer come neere him. And that is the cause why the worlde hath euer gone astray, and loued better to followe lawes of their owne inuenting, than to cleaue to Gods pure doctrine, and to rest vpon the same, as wee see is done still at this day in Poperie. What is ỹ cause that the superstitions which reigne there, doe seduce men so much, and make them to bee so farre ouerseene? Euen for that it is easier for me to ouerrunne a fewe gay Ceremonies, than to serue GOD righdly and with a single meaning heart. Behold, God will not bee outfaced with a sort of pelting trifles, but commaundeth vs to walke soundly before him, so as wee forsake our owne imaginations and desires, and seeke to bee gouerned by him & to haue his holy spirit reigne in vs. Surely it is a verie hard thing to forsake our owne reason, so as we should not bee wise in our owne conceites, to behaue our selues after our owne liking, but yeeld that there is nothing but vanitie and vntrueth in vs, and learne to humble our selues. That (say I) is a thing contrarie to our nature: for we haue a fond beliefe that we bee wise of our selues. But God on the contrarie part will haue vs to be bereft of our selfe-wit and selfreason, and to giue ouer our selues to be gouerned by his spirit. Also our affections do carrie vs away, in so much that mé would faine haue the bridle laid loose in their necke to do all maner of euill, and that God should giue them leaue to doe what they list. Nowe our affections are sinnefull, and God will haue vs both to condemne them and to restraine them, so as wee may bee as prisoners in that behalfe, and with maine force withstand whatsoeuer carieth vs away to euill. But ye see that men list not to serue God with that condition. Againe wee bee commaunded to loue our neighbour as our selfe. Whereas we bee giuen to seeke euerie man his owne profite: God pulleth vs from it, and contrariwise will haue vs to procure the welfare of our neighbours. And whereas wee bee giuen to fickletie, to shifting, and to all maner of naughtinesse: he will haue vs to deale plainely, and to lay aside all desire of reuenge. If any man doe vs harme or wrong: the world sees how hotte wee bee to acquite like for like. But Gods will is that in such cases we should yeeld him such seruice, as to forgiue the wrongs quietly that are done vnto vs. Againe whereas we bee desirous to runne at rouers in taking our delightes and pleasures: Gods will is that we should but waifare through this world, still hauing our eye vpon the euerlasting life: that we should mortifie whatsoeuer is earthly in vs: and that although he giue vs some commodities and ease, yet our vsing of them shoulde bee but as it were in running by them. Moreouer he will haue vs patient in all our aduersities. If it please him to keepe vs occupied with neuer so many crosses, he will haue vs to beare them meekely. These thinges are good & holy: but mās nature striueth altogither against them. And what doe men in stead hereof? It is a much easier matter to haue a sort of gawdies & gewgawes. Churches are fraught full of idols, and they be worshipped with great pompe, so as they bee throughly perfumed, besenced, & painted, and a nomber of ceremonies are done vnto them: there is great solemnitie, with goodly chaunting on the one side, and with ringing of peale vpon peale vppon the belles on the other side: there is scudding frō aultar to aultar: there is fasting on this day, and forbearing of flesh on that day: there is trooting to shrift, and gadding on Pilgrimage: men found Yeeremindes, and cause Masses to be sung by note. Thus ỹ world raunging away from GOD, will neuertheless needes seeme to be ductiful towardes him. [And all is]bicause we be so froward, that we couet nothing but to mocke God with our hypocrisie, and that he should hold himselfe contented with our dooings, which are no better than rattlebagges to please babes withall. So then let vs mark, that in stead of worshipping God, the world is giuen to fondnesse and superstition, and yet notwithstanding that it doeth it not so much of meere ignorance, as for that it cannot abide to be obedient as were requisite, and therefore it goeth to worke by windlasses, and seeketh by all meanes to stray from the right way. To be short, we shall finde that men are alwayes guiltie of wilfulnesse in committing idolatrie, and that it is vaine for them to shrowd themselues vnder pretence of simplicitie. For contrariwise they bring it with them of nature, and they will needs be deceiued, and so they be. And therefore doeth God blind them also. For (as saieth S. Paul) it is reason that such as list not to serue their maker, should bee vnderlinges to the creatures: and that such as

Rom. 1. 6. & 6. 11.

cannot

cannot finde in their hearts to beare the yoke of God, should indure the tyranny of the diuel, as is come to passe, and as we see accomplished stil at this day in the vnhappie Popedome. Now therfore let vs mark wel the thing ỳ I haue said alredie: ỳ is to wit, that mẽ instead of being thankfull to God for the good ỳ he hath done thẽ, do turn his creatures to their own decay & condẽnation, & falsely abuse them: for they peruert ỳ vse of thẽ cleane contrarie to Gods meaning. And this is seene to be done, not only in the Sunne and the Starres according to that which Moses saith here: but also in all other things whatsoeuer. So much the more therefore behoueth it vs to watch and to stand vppon our garde, as it is saide heere, to the end that in vsing of gods benefits, we may euer haue our eyes vpon him to doe him homage for them, and neuer be turned away from him.

Moreouer let vs marke the saying that Moses setteth down here, namely, *Least thou fal, least thou be prouoked*. Hereby he sheweth ỳ wee haue in vs the seede of falling: that is to say, ỳ we haue such a crabbednes in vs, ỳ as soone as we haue neuer so smal an occasion, by & by we be downe, yea & we do euen seeke occasion when none is giuen, as I said afore. Wheras god hath ordeyned his creatures to do vs his seruice, and the same should be a help to guide vs vnto him, so as we shold be the more prouoked to loue him, because he sheweth himself so good & louing a father towards vs: we take occasion therat to stumble. His dealing is as though he should set vp a ladder for vs: or make a paire of stayers for vs to goe vp vpon: & we fal to fustling against it. Greeces & stayers are made to helpe vs: but if a man fal to rushing & dashing against thẽ, he may hap to break his legs & to hurt himself, & he shal rather be hindered thã helped vp by them. Euen so deale we. For gods meaning is to draw vs to him by his creatures, and we fall to rushing against them wilfully and as it were in despite. Now then it stãdeth vs on hand to mark will this saying, ỳ we may looke the better about vs, to profite our selues by the thinges that God giueth vs for our helpe and furtherance to bring vs vnto him. Thus ye see what we haue to beare in mind. But now we see that Gods goodnes extendeth euen to the vnbeleeuers & infidels, according as it is written, that hee maketh his Sun to shine both vppon good and badde. Likewise in this place Moses saieth, *that God hath imparted the light of the Sunne and the Moone, together with their influences and properties, not onely to such as vse them well, but also to all folke vnder the cope of heauen*. Nowe wee knowe that at that time all Nations were ydolaters, and there was no truth nor knowledge of God among them: and yet notwithstanding God ceased not to do thẽ good for al that. And it is an excellẽt token of his goodnes aboue all ỳ he sendeth them the light of the Sun, & maketh the starres to do them seruice. Thẽ let vs marke wel that although god was neither worshiped nor knowen of the heathen: yet failed he not to do the office of a father towards them, and alwas to their condemnation. For inasmuch as they abused his benefites in such wise, & could nor finde in their hearts to looke vp vnto him: it must needs be ỳ they were ỳ more vnexcusable.

Matt. 5. 45.

But yet herewithal let vs mark wel the condition ỳ Moses setteth downe here, *As for thee* (saith he) *thy God hath rid thee from the yron furnace of the bondage of Egypt, to the intent that thou shouldest be vnto him a fine people & an inheritance*. Although ỳ Moses haue declared that the vse of the sun & of the starres is common to al folke: yet doth he shew that they bee specially appointed to the people whom God hath chosen. As if he should say, that the order of nature is common to al ỳ world: we see that both great & smal are partakers of ỳ benefites that God bestoweth: the earth bringeth forth corne wine and al other things, to sustaine both ỳ faithful & the vnfaithful: the wicked & the despisers of God do eat & drink as wel as we may (which more is) we se they abuse gods creatures with al excesse, & haue more abundance of them than ỳ faithful: for he that knoweth ỳ God sustaineth him, wil vse his meat & drinke and al other things soberly & measurably, & he wil consider ỳ he must not vnhallow the things which god hath ordeined to a good & moderate vse. But what do the wicked? There is nothing with them but cramming, as if they were minded to spyte God of set purpose. But yet for al ỳ, it is Gods will that the propriety of his creatures shoulde belong to vs. And after what sort? Euen to vse thẽ as his true & lawfull heires, and to haue them so warranted as we may auow ỳ the things which he giueth vs are our own, & belong vnto vs of right, & that we possesse thẽ by iust title. And soothly there is not a more singular benefite than this. For although ỳ wicked do cram themselues with gods benefits til they burst, as I said afore: yet haue they always a hartbyting within, so as they know not by what right they eat & drink, nor can skil to desire God to sustaine them. Nay verily, we see they coulde find in their harts, ỳ al remẽberance of god were abolished. For when they make good cheere (as they terme it), they must minde nothing but to play the brute beasts. But contrariwise when we cõsider in our eating & drinking, ỳ it is god which feedeth vs: it is a warrant vnto vs ỳ hee is our father, and that he taketh vs for his children. And surely (as I said) there is not a treasure that deserueth greater estimation, thã ỳ growing of corne, and wine in the world, & the increase of cloth & other things ỳ serue for mans vse, together with the fruition of al the other creatures wherof god hath giuen vs the sight & hearing, to inioy them al in such wise, as we may say, ỳ the world is created for vs, & that our God will not haue vs destitute of any thing at all, but hath prouided for all our neede, and sheweth himselfe so liberall to vs, as we haue indeede iust cause to magnifie him, & to be rauished with wonderment at the sight of so great goodnes. This thẽ is the cause why Moses saith here namely, *but as for thee*. After he had generally declared ỳ god causeth his mercie to extende euen to the infidels & vnbeleeuers: nowe speaking to the chosen people, O (saieth he) you haue a state of preheminence. you haue a much more singular priuiledge then ỳ ignorant & blind wretches haue. For why? They wote not by what title they possesse the good thinges which they haue. But your God wil haue the world to belong by right vnto you: for as all the faithfull are his chil-

children, ſo bee they heires of his good thinges likewiſe. Therefore we muſt conclude, that if the vnbeleeuers be to be condemned for abuſing the benefits which God hath beſtowed vppon them: much leſſe excuſe is there for vs that are taught in his lawe and doctrine. Thus yee ſee what we haue to marke.

But withal let vs alſo beare in mind the leſſon is ſet downe here: that is to ſay, to know and feele this, that when we inioy Gods creatures, we poſſeſſe them as our heritage, & yet that this is not for any worthines of our owne: (for we muſt not here imagine any deſert of ours,) but becauſe our God hath choſen vs, as it is ſaide expreſly here. Moſes ſaith not, Thou thy ſelfe haſt gotten this priuiledge: but he ſaith, *Thy god hath taken thee.* He referreth all to that free election of God, at what time that it pleaſeth him to chooſe vs to himſelfe: that he ſheweth himſelfe to be our father, & he adopteth vs to be his children, and will haue vs to be of his houſhold and that we ſhould be as it were his flocke. Therefore let vs marke wel that we haue not any thing which we can ſay is our owne for any deſert of ours, but onely becauſe it hath pleaſed Gods goodneſſe to haue it ſo.

Moreouer Moſes ſetteth downe two thinges here: *Thou waſt taken from the yron furnace, & now thou art become Gods people and his inheritance.* Here he ſheweth what the ſtate of the people was before God choſe them to himſelfe: and alſo to what dignitie they were exalted afterward. Now although we haue not ben fetched out of Egypt: yet doth the thing that Moſes ſpeaketh here belong to vs. For in what caſe are wee, as long as God letteth vs alone? Are wee not accurſed, if we continue the children of Adam? And if God ſhake vs off, are wee not vnder the tyrannie of Satan? Doeth not ſinne reigne in vs? Doe wee not ſee here a furnace much worſe than the furnace of Egypt? And he vſeth here a ſimilitude in calling it *an yron furnace*, as a place that was ſo to conſume the people, as there was no remedie for them to get out of it. If a furnace be once inflamed, and that the ſame be made of yron, muſt not a man needs periſh out of hand if he be caſt into it? If a furnace be but of bricke: yet do we ſee howe ſore it burneth. But here is mention made of a furnace of yron. Therefore it is all one as if God ſhoulde ſay, Thou haddeſt no hope to get out of that thraldome, thou waſt as a people vtterly forlorne: and yet haue I deliuered thee from it after a wonderfull manner. And now at this day, coulde wee ſcape out of that bondage vnto Sathan, vntill ſuch time as God deliuered vs out of the ſame? Muſt not that curſe haue altogether lien vppon vs ſtill, if we had not remedie from elſe where, that is to wit, from the mercie that God hath ſhewed vs in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? So then let vs marke, that here we be warned to thinke vppon our beginning, that ſo we might alwayes know from whence God hath deliuered vs, and in what taking we were when it pleaſed him to chooſe vs. [Which thing if we do,] we ſhalbe aſhamed of our owne wretchednes, yea & we ſhalbe euen aſtoniſhed to ſee how we had bene vtterly damned, if our God had not pitied vs. And thus much for one point.

Rom. 5. 12.

Eph. 2. 5. 1. Pet. 1. 18. Ro. 5. 8. 10.

Secondly let vs conſider againe, that our God thought it not ynough to haue deliuered vs from ſuch a bottomleſſe pit, and from ſo horrible confuſion: but hee hath alſo made vs his heires, and likewiſe vouchſafed to take vs for his heritage. What are wee, or what can God receiue at our hands? [Nothing:] and yet doth hee call vs his heritage, to ſhewe howe dearely hee loueth vs. Like as a man loueth a peece of grounde that findeth and maintaineth himſelfe and his houſholde, and ſetteth as it were his heart vpon the ſame: ſo doeth our Lorde ſhewe that he delighteth in vs, yea euen in vs that are but wormes and rottenneſſe, and which haue nothing but al manner of ſinne and corruption in vs. Wee ſee then hereby that Moſes ment to magnifie Gods grace, to ſend that being humbled in our ſelues by beholding the miſeries wherout of we be waded, we might againe and againe magnifie Gods goodneſſe, in that hee thought it not ynough to rid vs out of the bondage wherein we were, but alſo hath ſet vs in ſo high degree, as to chooſe vs to be his children. And beſides, by terming vs his owne heritage, he ſheweth that he will haue his hart as it were faſt tied vnto vs. Thus ye ſe what we haue to remember vpon this text or place.

1. Pet. 1.

Immediatly herevnto Moſes addeth, *that the Lord was angrie with him, becauſe of the peoples words, and that he had ſworne to him that he ſhould not paſſe ouer Iordan to get into the lande of promiſe. But as for you* [ſaith he] *you ſhall paſſe ouer, and inioy the poſſeſſion thereof.* Moſes doth ſtil vpbraide the people with Gods bereauing of him of the inheritance that was promiſed to all their tribes, not ſo much for his own fault, as for the common fault of them all in murmuring againſt God: but yet hath Moſes a further meaning. He ſpeaketh this as it were by the way, yea as hauing reſpect to this, that he ſhould ſhortly die: and foraſmuch as he himſelfe might not inioy the lande, hee had a care to inſtruct the people, to the end that they might abide in Gods couenant, and continue ſtedfaſt in it, without ſwaruing aſide, or without any changing of religion to peruert the doctrine that had beene giuen them. The effect then is, that Moſes being at the point of death doth as it were make his laſt will, & hath ſo much the more care of the peoples welfare, for feare leaſt they ſhould ſtart away after his death, as he had ſeene them doe oftentimes in his life. And he interlaceth this particular matter that I ſpake of: namely that their words were the cauſe that he ſhould die before he paſſed ouer Iordan, and before he entered into the lande of promiſe. For as I haue touched heretofore, Moſes ment not to iuſtifie himſelfe: for indeede he was greatly blameworthy before God, & ſurely God neuer vſeth any crueltie towards ſuch as are his. Now, the caſe is ſo, that Moſes is ſhut out of the land with an oth: therfore muſt it needs bee that he had offended. But his doing of this, is to the intent that the people on their ſide ſhould think the better vpon the fault that they had committed. And in good ſooth, ſo ought all faithful teachers to do: that is, they

1. Cor. 12. 31. 13.

they ought to touch sinners to the quicke, that they may haue remorse of their sinnes, that they may crie to God for mercie & aske pardon therof, that they may be sorie for thē, that they may mislike of themselues for them, that they may hate them, and vtterly forsake them. For when men are flattered in their vices: first they bee hardened in them, and take alwayes greater libertie to do euill: secondly they thinke not that euer they shal come to account before God: and finally they neuer forsake the world that so they may glorifie God, & consider or feele how much they be bound & beholdē to him. By this meanes thē is Gods mercie defaced, & his grace slippeth away and is vtterly abolished. Besides this, there is yet a greater enormitie, namely that men goe on still from euil to worse, vntil they be falne into vtter confusion. Now then for this cause it is the duetie of such as haue the bearing abrode of Gods word, to exhort their hearers continually to consider their sins and to search thē throughly. And to what end? Not only to make them bare ly ashamed of them: but also to make them hūble themselues before God, & to goe forward continually in repentāce, ỳ so they may learne to mislike of their faults, & to glorifie God when they wholly repaire to him for refuge, by asking him forgiuenes of the offences that they haue committed. But what? There are very few that can away with this order of teaching: for there is not so wicked a man, but he would be flattered. And the world seeth that as soone as a man speaketh, some gnash their teeth & seeke nothing else but to bite him: and othersome though a man do but by the way glaunce at their faults which are too too farre out of al square, feare not to check him, or to stand with him face to face in the maintenance therof. But yet for all that, the rule which God hath appointed vs, vs I say which haue the charge to beare abrode his word, is that we must dayly labor in warning our hearers, to cal themselues to account, and to examine well their owne faults, that they may be sorie for them.

When as he speaketh of hearers: we our selues are comprehended in ỳ number: for we must not condemne others, & exempt our selues: but he ỳ speaketh to others, must first stick & look to himself & cite himself before God. But yet neuertheless we must proceede in this order. ỳ we must al of vs be summoned before God, & haue our indictement redy framed & made, and not tarie til God pronounce the sentence of condemnation vppon vs: but euery of vs play the iudge against himself, & that, not by saying in a word or two, I haue done amisse: but by being throughly wounded within, so as we be ashamed of our misdeeds. After this fashion must wee deale. In the meane season if we perceiue ỳ the wicked cannot away with any correction, but conceiue rancor against Gods word, as we see these despisers of al religiō do, who cannot abide that any mā should rebuke them, let vs not maruell at it, for if they bee pinched, by & by they spit out their poison like toads as they be: But if we purpose to shewe our selues to be Gods children, let vs learne to suffer correction willingly, & to haue our sins laide afore vs, ỳ we may cōdemn them. For our acknowledging of thē, wilbe a mean to haue them buried before god. Thus ye se what we haue to note vpō ỳ text.

But now let vs come to Moseses chiefe intent which I haue touched afore. *I shall not go into the good land*, saith he. *And therfore I warne ye continuallye stedfastly in the couenant of God, so as yee neuer forget it, ye waxe slipp'ry & fals in his statutes*, but serue him, seeing he hath once chosen you, & vouchsafed to shewe himselfe your god & father. Here we see ỳ Moses was not out of hart, though God chastised him roughly. And here we see how the faithful ought to behaue themselues. That is to say, if God punish them, yet must they not therefore cease to loue him, and to go forward in their course still, yea & to giue ouer themselues wholly vnto him. As soone as the wicked feele but one yerke of the rod with Gods hand, and by and by they kicke against him, and if they may scape from him, they play the horse that hauing shaken of the bridle casteth his rider downe, & afterwards becōming as if he were mad, he stormeth as though no mā were able to lay hold on him, or to restrain him. Euen so play the wicked, which can neuer abide ỳ God shold chastise thē and tame them, to hold thē in obedience to him. If he make thē to feele their sins, they burst out into impatiēcie, & thervpon fal by and by to rebellion & furie. But contrariwise, when our Lord visiteth vs with afflictions: we know it is not for vs to stray far from him, nor to take occasion to scape his hands: but rather to submit our selues quietly to his seruice, & to keepe our selues from these temptations ỳ run oft times in our heads. If we fal to examining, so as we say to our selues, how now? must I for seruing of god haue so hard & cumbersome a condition? It should seeme ỳ he is minded to discourage me? Let vs beware of such conceits, & rather follow ỳ example of Moses. He saw himself bereft of ỳ inheritance ỳ had bin promised to ỳ whole people, he saw he had as it were a marke of reproch for euer, as though God had withered him for whē as God had chosen him to bee the leader of his people, & to supplie his roome in bringing to the that welfare that they had loked for so long time: now towards his death he must bee disgraded at Gods hand, and be banished from the possession that was as a pledge of the kingdome of heauen. True it is that Moses continued and doth continue still an heire of Gods kingdome: but he had not that earthly pledge of it, that was set before the people. He saw, that of six hundred thousand persons, (for the whole multitude was so manie) there was not one among them al that was worthier to enter into the land than himselfe. Therfore he might haue stormed thus with himselfe: Howe nowe? I see I haue taken great payne in leading this people, God hath wrought so manie miracles by my hand. I haue yet stil such zeale to the honor of God and to ỳ welfare of his people as I neuer cease to procure the same, & therwill I may well say God hath granted me ỳ grace to walke more roundly than al ỳ resist and yet notwithstanding must I be barred out of ỳ land, & the residue enter into it, which haue not taken so much paine as I nothing neere? Moses might haue bin in a chafe & chawed vpon his bridle saying: wel, seeing

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seeing I haue taken so much paine, & God ment to serue his turne by me heretofore: it is ynough for me, I am contented with that which I haue done, but notwithstanding I will giue ouer my roome, and seeing that he will not set me awoorke any longer, let him serue his turn by some other. Moses might wel haue entred into such fancies. But what? Notwithstanding y God lifted to abace him so before men, by bereuing him of the benefite that he esteemed aboue al other, and to preferre the meaneſt and miſerableſt of the people before him who was so excellent a Prophet: yet ceased he not to discharge his duetie, and to goe through with it still. And we see with what carefulnes he goeth about it. My friends (saith he) although I must dye here, and God cutteth me off from you as touching the bodie: yet notwithstanding I will discharge my selfe both towards him and you, and seeing it hath pleased him to make me his minister to teach you his doctrine, I will neuer faile to doe my duetie. In deede he might haue twytted the people, as them that had caused God to lay such punishment vppon him: but yet for all that hee ceaseth not to serue God and to loue the people still, which (as I said) had caused him to be disinherited of the Land that was promised to Abraham.

Therfore hath Moses good right to say, *Because of your words God sware that I should not go ouer Iordan to enter into the good land.* Neither murmuring nor blaspheming proceeded from Moses: Nay (which is more) we see he crucified himself whē he saw that god was not honored as he ought to haue beene: whereas on the contrarie part there was a froward & wilfull people, which could not be brought into order by any meanes. It seemeth then indeede y Moses had iust cause to be angrie with the people, seeing that God had punished him so grieuously for their disobedience. But yet for all that, a man may see hee sheweth himselfe still a father towardes them, and taketh them as his children, for hee knewe to what state he was called. True it is that he vsed sharpneſſe and rigour in due time and place, specially when it behooued him to shewe the people their offences. We see that Moses was [in that behalf] as a burning fire: we see howe vehemently he rebuketh the despysers of God and the Rebels. But when y was once ouer, he shewed himselfe alwayes to beare an affection of loue, towards such as could abide it. As for example, God had now punished the people by the space of fortie yeres, insomuch that they which had brought punishments vpon the people, and had beene the authors of sedition, were alreadie dead and their carkeſſes were rotten in the wildernes: & yet now behold, Moses pitieth the children that were descended of them, and ceaseth not to loue them. So then let vs marke, that if God call vs to the preaching of his word, the vnthankfulneſſe of such as ought to heare it, must not stay vs from procuring their saluation as much as in vs lyeth. Moreouer let vs not forbeare to pronounce Gods iustice against the wicked. And though there be some that are vtterly wilful & past hope of recouery, whose diseases are vncurable: wel, yet let vs do our duetie towardes them: let vs cite them to Gods iudgement, & let our doctrine serue for their condemnation to sende them to hell. And in the meane while, looke where we can reclaime them that haue done amisse: let vs giue good heede therto and bestow our labor thereon. Behold yet what we haue further to remember out of this place.

And herewithall wee see also, that when Gods seruants perceiue themselues to bee neere their ende, they must be the carefuller to stablish the doctrin which they taught in their life time. And why? For we see how men do easily slip away, & that euen such as haue shewed some good signe, will anon after start aside, if they be not holde in with a dubble reine as they say. And when a seruant of God seeth y in his lifetime he was greatly hindered in the maintenance of Gods seruice, and had much adoe to represse enil: what should he thinke but that the diuell will take possession after his death, if God remedie not the matter? Therfore such as haue felt and found by experience in their lifetime, how painefull a thing it is to maintein the church, ought euē for this cause to take so much the more paine & trauell when they draw towards their death, to cause the syncere religion to be maintained in his pureneſſe, that men being once set in a good course, may not swarue away from it. Beholde the example which Moses sheweth vs.

And besides this let vs mark also that he doth not only discharge himselfe here at his death, by vttering some sodaine speach, or by shewing some signe of zeale onely: but that he stood vpon this, and did most vrge it, to wit, all his life long that the people might bee edified in the feare of God. For yee shall see a number that are negligent all their lifetime: and yet they thinke that if they do but once exalt God and make a faire protestation at their liues end: it is ynough. But Moses dealt not so. For hee neuer forgate the commission that was giuen him, but continued throughout in preaching to the people. Neuertheleſſe, whatsoeuer he did all his life long: yet when he sawe his death at hande, hee inforced himselfe the more, and burned the whotter in earneſtneſſe of zeale, because of the vrgent neceſſitie aforesaide. Wherefore let those whom God hath ordeined to preach his worde, looke well that they discharge their duetie al their life long. And that when they shall haue done their indeuer to stablish the true religion, and brought to paſſe that God is honoured, and that they haue builded Gods Church as much as they coulde, and taught those to walke in the feare of God which were committed to their charge: let them indeuer to seale vp al the same doctrine, & to cause it to continue after their deceaſe. This thē is another thing which we haue to remēber.

Also let vs marke further, that seeing Moses was so carefull for the people of Israel: wee also haue neede to bee vpon our watches. Do we see that God taketh away a man that hath serued faithfully in his time? Then let vs bee sure that ation after, the diuell will indeuour to marre al, and that he will soone make some breach to enter vpon vs, if we be not hastily vpholden & kept.

And

And there is not a more profitable lesson than this same. For wee knowe not how great a good turne God doth vs, when he giueth vs such men as seeke nothing elsse but to hold vs in aw of him, and to bring to passe that hee may reigne ouer vs, and we liue vnder his obeysance: On the contrarie part, when our Lord taketh such out of the worlde as are able to builde his Church: wee bee careleesse of it, and this careleesnesse is the cause, that the diuell findeth a gappe open amongst vs, that so hee may vtterly make hauocke of vs. So much the more therefore doth it stande vs in hand to be watchful in this case, & to know that wee bee well fenced when God giueth vs men to guide vs in his feare. Contrariwise if he leaue vs destitute of such: it is as if a man were without munition in a towne, wheras were no power nor meane of defence. Ye see then how it standeth vs in hande to bethinke our selues, and to pray god that when it pleaseth him to take away those that haue taught vs faithfully, that then the doctrine which wee shall haue receiued by them, may not die anon after them, but liue stil & continue alwayes fast setled in our hearts, and that it may haue full force and strength, and we be fenced by it against al Satans temptations, neuer to turne away from it, but euermore to remember what we haue learned & always to set our minds vpon it, that it may serue vs for a shield to warde all Satans blowes withal, and that wee may be so armed with it from top to toe (as they say) that Gods worde may bee a sworde to vs, our hope a helmet, & our faith a buckler, so as the diuel may not bee able to foile vs in any wise whatsoeuer: that when the meanes shalbe taken away wherwith Gods will was to haue vs edified, yet neuertheless he may stil continue with vs, and we likewise keepe on our way to him. 1. Pet. 5. 8. Eph. 6. 13.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgemẽt of our sins, praying him to make vs perceiue them better than wee haue done heretofore, so as we may learne to mislike more and more of our selues for them: And that in acknowledging the great benefits which hee bestoweth vpon vs, wee may call vpon him as our father, seeking nothing elsse but to giue our selues wholly vnto him, to be gouerned by his holy spirite as his teachable and meeke children: & seing that he doth vs this honor to take vs for his heritage, & to giue himselfe to vs, that we may also remember, sith he taketh delight in vs: to be vnto him such a possession, as may serue to his glorie, & that hee would neuer cut vs of although we wel deserue it. That it may please him to grant this grace, not only to vs but also to al people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xxix. of May. 1555.

The xxv. Sermon, which is the seuenth vpon the fourth Chapter.

23 24 Beware that ye &c.

25 When thou shalt haue begotten children, and childrens children, and shalt haue dwelt long in ỹ land: if then ye shal corrupt your selues, & make carued Images after the likenesse of any thing, and worke wickednesse in the sight of the Lord thy God, to prouoke him to wrath:

26 I call heauen and earth to record against you this day, that out of al doubt ye shall soone perish out of the land whither ye go ouer Iordan to possesse it: and yee shall not prolong your dayes therein, for ye shalbe vtterly destroyed.

WE haue seene heretofore the exhortation that Moses made, to the intẽt that Gods seruice might not bee corrupted. Hee shewed that to worship GOD purely, there must no image at all be made, because it is not in any wise agreeable to his nature: but men must worship him after another fashion. His seruice (say I) is spiritual: and therefore wee must rest wholly therevppon. For as soone as we swarue one way or other: it is but presumption, which God condemneth. That is the thing which Moses hath treated of hitherto. Now to confirme this doctrine the better: he setteth before the peoples eyes, the couenant that God had made with them: for when God manifesteth himselfe vnto vs, it is the principall meane whereby to hold vs in the pure religion. Naturally we be blind wretches, and therefore it is verie easie for Satan to beguile vs. And although there were none to deceiue vs: yet doth euery one of vs wander away in our owne conceites and imaginations. Therefore there is nothing in vs but darknes: and Gods maiestie is so high and incomprehensible a thing, as it is no maruell though we be at our wits end, before we can come nigh vnto it. Then if we were not duly taught, ne had a grounded doctrine to shew vs ỹ right path: what could we do but go astray? But now seing ỹ God hath shewed himself vnto vs, & that so familiarly as we may discern him from al the ydols that haue bin forged in ỹ worlde, & we are able to say ỹ it is he whom we ought to worship: there is no more excuse for vs if we be caried to and fro. And our vnthankfulnesse is the more shamefull, if wee shut our eyes against the doctrine of saluation, and turne our backs vpon God when he hath shewed himselfe to our face, and vouchsafed to bee knowen of vs familiarlie. Now we see what Moses ment. For his meaning

Iohn 4. 24.

is to set forth the greeuousnesse of the peoples sin, if it should so fall out that they shoulde turne away from the purenes which they had learned in the lawe. As if he should say, True it is that euen from the creation of the worlde most men haue not ceased to ouershoote themselues into a number of errors and follies: but that came to passe because they had not so special a teaching, as you haue, whereby they might haue had certeinetie of faith to rest themselues vpon. Therefore the wretched infidels went astray: but yet was not their sin so greeuous and outragious. For although they were vnexcusable: yet had they not any such teaching as you. But as for you, yee haue had Gods couenãt, wherby ye were brought into his house: hee hath shewed himselfe as a father towards you, & taught you as his childrẽ: this is that holy band wherby god hath tyed himselfe to you: now then if you should turne backe againe, and become like those wretched beastes which neuer knew nor tasted of gods truth, what a thing were it? Might you pretende them for a shrowdingsheete and say, other men do so as wel as we? Yea, but yet had not those othermen such teaching as you haue had. Nowe therefore acknowledge the grace that God hath bestowed vppon you, in shouling you out from all nations of the earth, & in cõming so nigh vnto you. And in deed ỹ same is the very cause why ỹ when the heathen are condẽned in their superstitions: it is said on the contrarie part, that ỹ Lord dwelleth in Sion, & his maiesty is knowen there. After Abac. 2. 20. that manner doth the Prophet Abacucke speake in his second chapter: and it is a doctrine that is rife ynough euery where. As if it were saide, The world runnes at randon, and euery man forgeth and setteth vp some God priuately to himselfe: but as for the God which hath shewed himself to bee the true liuing God: his voyce soundeth in mount Sion where the temple was builded. Thẽ sith it is so: although the whole world bee caried away & go wandering in the darke: yet must not we be remoued, forasmuch as he hath set vp his seat among vs, and we know him by his voyce & by his word. And here we see why it is said in the Psal. 97. 1. 3 Psalmes where Gods kingdome is spoken of in 5. & 115. 3. 4. such wise as it was to bee stablished in the person of our Lord Iesus Christ, as wel in the fourescore and sixteenth psalme as in other psalmes: The Lord reigneth, Let ỹ far countries reioyce therat, let all ydols be confounded, and let all that is set vp by men be throwen downe. For when wee haue the truth, which driueth away al darknes & ignorance, then haue we the verie meane to destroy al superstition. And to the same purpose also is there this like saying in Esay: when the Lord Esa. 19. 1. reigneth, then shal al the ydols of Egypt fal. And why? For the wretched Infidels weene they doe well, and thinke they do God good seruice in following their fond superstitions. But when God is once set afore them: then his maiestie bereaueth them of all excuse, and he must needs as then be magnified. And that is ỹ cause why it is said in Esa. 25. 9. another place, This is the Lord, this is the Lord. The prophet in the person of all the faithful, defieth the ydols with their abuses, because GOD should be knowen, accordingly as al things were accomplished at the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ. Now then the thing ỹ we haue to gather vpon this text, is that when we once knowe God by his word, wee must be so fully reiolued and assured thereof, that although the whole wretched world run rouing after their owne abuses and superstitions, yet we must keepe on our way still: & that seing we haue a sure foundation which cannot be shaken, that is to wit gods infallible truth: wee must let those blinde wretches breake their necks, sith we cannot remedie it, and in ỹ meane while we must go forward still as the Lord commaundeth vs, seing he hath reached vs his hand to draw vs to him. And although this was spoken to the Iewes by Moses: yet it pertaineth euẽ now vnto vs. For wee see what fauor God hath shewed vs aboue others. All the worlde is full of error and diuelish imaginations, & wretched men are become brutish in their ignorance. But what? Neither hath the doctrine of life bene preached vnto them: neither haue they euer in good earnest vnderstood what God is. Indeede they can speake of him, but that is but at randon & without order. But wee haue the scripture declared vnto vs, and by that mean God communicateth himself to vs, and allureth vs so sweetly vnto him, as he could not doe any more for vs, except hee should take vs into his lap, and yet we see he applieth himselfe to our infirmitie, he chaweth our morsels to vs, he feedeth vs with papps, & speaketh to vs like a nurse. Now when we see that our God manifesteth himselfe so familiarly vnto vs, there is no more excuse for vs, wee may no more mingle our selues in the order or rancke of vnbeleeuers. For our state is cleane contrarie. God is Rom. hidden from them: and yet shall they not faile to perish in their ignorance as they be worthie. But as for vs, if we be so stubborne against God, that euen of a spitefull malice wee will not obey the things that he sheweth vs, but wil play the wilde beastes with him, so as hee cannot reclaime vs to himselfe: and that euen when we knowe him and do vnderstand that it is hee which ought to be honored, yet wee be so vnconstant and wauering still, as to turne away after our owne dotages: shall we not bee doublie condemned? Shall not horrible vengeance hang ouer our heades? Then let vs beare in mind, that in asmuch as our Lorde hath made a couenant with vs, that is to say, hath called vs into his Church to be taught by his worde: that this is the onely meane, wherewith wee may bee armed and fortified against all superstitions. This is one point. And let vs also marke therewithall, that horrible condemnation hangeth ouer our heades, if we wander away, and hold not our selues to the simplicitie of Gods doctrine, but bee carried away hither and thither by our owne lusts. These are the two pointes which we haue to marke vpon this text. Wherefore let vs learne to make our profite and commoditie of the worde that is preached vnto vs for the same purpose. That is to wit, albeit that all bee full of corruption and errour, yet let not vs bee shaken downe, nor bee wauering as manie men are, to saye,

yea.

yeamarie, but there is so much disagreement [that I wote not what to doe]. Let vs not alleage this: but let vs say with the prophet Esay, Behold, this is our God: behold, this is our God. And by that means let vs defie all that the diuell can set before vs to turne vs aside. Yea let vs not make any reckoning at all of it. And why? Because the light that God giueth vs, is strong ynough to drive away all darknesse, and the truth is strong ynough to beate backe all lies. Thus see yee I say what the power of faith ought to be: When wee haue well printed in remembrance the doctrine that is preached vnto vs, and yet notwithstanding continue still for all that in blindnesse, and bee still as reedes shaken with euerie winde: Let vs vnderstande this that we knowe not God, nor yet euer vnderstood of what great value his couenaunt towardes vs was, nor euer were knitte to him as we shoulde be: but that there was hypocrisie insteede of that protestation that we made to followe his worde. But let vs marke herewithall, that our condemnation shalbe doubled, if wee runne astray after wee haue knowen the truth. For if Gods couenant cannot hold vs in obedience: must it not needs bee that wee bee as cloudes? And what an vnthankefulnesse is that? Indeede many will say, I haue not beene sufficiently confirmed, I vnderstande it not: but those are fonde shiftes. We neede but to open our eyes and our eares seing wee haue Gods worde preached, and our Lorde will certeinely make it of power and force, so as we shal haue sufficient instruction by it, seeing he regardeth vs especially, and therefore wee must needes be founde blameworthy if we swarue one way or other, after that God hath shewed vs his truth. And this much then concerning the couenant that Moses speaketh of here.

Esa.35.9.

Howbeit, to set forth the heynousnes of their crime the more, he addeth *that hee taketh heauen and earth to witnesse, that if the people turne away from the lawe, and inuent orfas vp any newe Religion, they shall perish out of hande, and not possesse the lande any long time, which should be giuen vnto them.* Now this serueth to waken such as are puffed vp with vaine presumption, vnder colour that God is gratious vnto them, and hath giuen them some priuiledge aboue others. And it is well worthie to be noted. For although we cannot exceede measure in trusting in God: yet doe wee see that a greate number doe falsely abuse Gods name. If they bee once baptised and taken into the companie of the faithfull: it seemeth to them that God is greatly bounde vnto them. Whereas they shoulde consider that they bee called of his free goodnesse, and ought to giue ouer themselues to walke in feare and warenesse: beholde, they be puffed vp with pride and vaine ouerweening, and beare themselues in hande through fond hypocrisie, that they bee scaped out of Gods hande, and in the meane while they doe but dalie with him. Ye see then what the pride of men is, howe that when God sheweth himselfe bountifull towardes vs, and vttereth the great and infinite treasures of his mercie: they thinke still that hee is greatly beholden to them, and therevppon doe ouershoote themselues, and take leaue to doe amisse. According as wee see that the greatest strife which the Prophetes had against the Iewes, was for that they bragged of their hauing of Gods Temple, and of his sacrifices, and of such other thinges. Nowe according hereunto Moses saith in this place, It is true ý ye doe now enter into possession of the heritage which God promised to your fathers: it is true that therein you haue an excellent warrant of his preferring of you before al other nations: Surely it is a great and inestimable dignitie, that your God should purchase you with his owne hande, and driue out the inhabiters of a countrie to set you in their place, yea and that when you bee in that lande, you shalbe sure to be of his housholde, and that he dwelleth among you, and that his so doing is to take you vp into his euerlasting kingdome: Surely it is a singular benefite which your God hath vouchsafed vppon you: but yet for all that, deceiue not your selues to despise and reiect his worde, or to shrinke away from him, & to corrupt his seruice. For like as now he performeth the promise that he made to your fathers: so can he also driue you out againe, when he hath setled you there: and he can well ynough weede you againe out of his heritage, & so scatter you abrode that you shalbe dispersed euery where. Now then, the more that your God doth presently increase his goodnes towards you: the more diligẽt be you in seruing and louing of him, and hold your selues vnder his shadow, and beware that ye alter not any thing in the religion that hee hath ordeined for you. Marke that for one point.

Ierem.7.4.

And now furthermore, whereas Moses *calleth heauen and earth to witnes:* it importeth yet a greater vehemencie. True it is, that some take this for Angels and men. But ý is not the meaning of Moses, as we shal see by the like maner of speach hereafter in the 32. Chapter, where he will say, Hearken O yee heauens what I say, and let the earth here the words of my mouth. And so saith the Prophet Esay, Hearken ye heauens, and let the earth giue audience vnto mee, for the Lorde hath spoken. Beholde I haue nourished children & brought them vp, and they haue despised me. When God calleth heauen and earth to witnes after that maner, it is to rebuke mens brutishnes so much the more. For we be created after Gods image, to haue reason & vnderstanding: & where to shoulde wee applie such giftes, but to knowe God and to giue our selues wholly vnto him? Shall men haue wit ynough to comprehend the whole order of nature, and shall they in ý meane season despise the Lorde? It is all one as if a man shoulde thinke himselfe well forwarde, when hee hath toyled in traueiling and running all daylong: and hath wandered all the while without keeping any path. And is not the knowledge of our God the finall ende of all our perfection? Yes, and therefore when God intẽdeth to shew men that they bee more than blockish, and that they bee so marred as they bee not worthy to be taken any more for reasonable creatures: then doth hee direct his speech to heauen and earth.

Deut.32.1.

Esa.1.2.

As if hee shonlde say, I haue not nowe any more witnes in ỹ world: for I chose these to be knowen of them: but herken you to me yee heauen and earth, hearken yee to me I say nowe yee that are vnreasonable creatures: for I shal finde more reason in you, than in those to whom I haue giuen witte and knowledge to discerne betweene good and euil, and to haue skil not only of this present life, but also of the immortalitie of heauen. So then, Moses calleth heauen and earth to witnes here, to doe vs the better to vnderstand, that if men flatter themselues and play the brute beasts when they haue offended God, and think by that meanes to go quitte: they beguile themselues: for when men shall haue conspired together in naughtines, and that euery man may say, I haue done as all others haue done: so as there remaineth no more but heauen and earth, although they haue no vnderstanding in them, yet shall they be sufficient witnesses. Why so? For shall they not bee able ynough to bewray our naughtines without speaking, seeing they were ordeined for our seruice? We haue seene alreadie what Moses saide herctofore of the Sunne, Moone and Starres. What is the Sunne? A right noble creature. And yet notwithstanding, what is he in effect, but our seruant? And the Moone that mounteth so high, is our handmaid, & God hath appointed al these thinges to our vse & commoditie. Seeing then that these creatures being without vnderstanding, doe knowe that the end whereto God hath applyed them, is to do vs seruice: what a dealing is it, ỹ when we shal haue inioyed so many benefites, as namely that we shal haue receiued the light of the Sunne and the Moone, that the earth shal haue fed vs with her owne bowels, and that we shall haue bin fraught full of a number of other good thinges: yet notwithstanding we fal to defiling of the world with our filthinesse and infection, so as Gods glorie is darkened by vs, and wee ouerthrowe his seruice, and set vp ydols against him to deface and discredite his maiestie? Whither go we in so doing? Shall not the creatures aske vengeance against vs, when wee shall haue so abused them, and defiled and berayed thē with our filthines as much as we could? Yes: and so we see nowe what the meaning of Moses was.

Nowe remaineth that we applie it further to our selues: And first and formost let vs marke well, that if wee haue beene receiued into the Church, and God for a time haue admitted vs to bee of his people and flocke, and haue bestowed many benefites vppon vs, specially if we haue had any excellencie or preheminence aboue others: we must not be proude of it. For if we abuse Gods grace, hee can well ynough roote vs out: and if we follow not his calling, hee can as well cut vs off, as hee coulde adopt vs. And in good sooth, if this befell to the Iewes which were the naturall branches (as Saint Paul termeth them) and which came out of this stocke of Abraham: if that holy and high exalted linage was neuertheless so cut off vppon the sudden, and disinherited of the possession that God had giuen them: what shall become of vs which are graffed in as it were against nature? For wee were wilde impes: wee came of the Gentiles, which were enemies to God, & separated from his Church, & had not any acquaintance with him. Seeing then that our Lorde gathereth vs to him, not onely by Baptisme but also by the holy supper, and wee haue his worde daily, wherein hee assureth vs that hee is our father, that he will bee the keeper of our soules, and that he will take vs for his people: let vs learne to looke diligently about vs, that we abuse not so great a benefite. But if wee minde to inioy it for euer: let vs feare our God and walke in his obedience: and that (I tell you) is a thing which wee ought to beare in minde. For if wee thinke to holde God in our sleeue, and imagine him to bee bounde vnto vs because he hath once chosen vs: hee will easilie shewe vs that as hee came to vs, so will he goe againe from vs, if we will needs be ouerlustie. Wil wee then haue our Lorde to continue our shepherd still? Let vs be pliable to him, so as wee liue quietly vnder his subiection. To bee short, let vs alwayes beare in minde the threat which our Lorde Iesus Christ vttered: That is to wit, that the kingdom of God shalbe remooued far from vs, when wee cannot profite thereby, and that it shalbe taken away from vs, and giuen to a people that shall glorifie their God, when they haue bin taught by his word. Thus ye see what we haue to remember vpon this point.

Rom. 11. 17.

Furthermore let vs marke well, that whereas it is saide here, *that heauen and earth shall beare witnesse against vs*: it is to put vs to the greater shame, in that the Angels neede not to come downe from Paradise, nor the Prophets and Apostles to rise from the deade, to giue euidence against vs before God: but only the liueles creatures are sufficient witnesse for God to vse to condemne vs withall. It is true that GOD coulde bring other witnesses also, as we see, that sometimes hee calleth foorth the heathen and infidels to make vs the more ashamed. For (as saieth the Prophet Ieremie) goe euerie where, and yet yee shall not see that the ydolaters bee so fickle, as those that haue beene duely instructed in the pure worde of God. Looke me vppon the wretched infidels, which bee headstrong in their follies. Although they haue no certainte to leane vnto (as also they cannot indeede haue any) & (which more is) their minds be so intangled in their owne dotages as they cannot winde themselues out: yet notwithstanding, say what a man can, they sticke still to the things that they haue learned. And although they keepe one course stil: yet doe they nothing but goe astray, without keeping either right way or path: & yet notwithstanding they be held stil to it w this perswasion, ỹ they must not chaunge their God. But yet they neuer knew him for al that. And shal we thē be caried away at the first dash, which know the liuing God and haue bene taught his truth, and haue had so good warrant therof, as it is not for vs to wauer any more? Shall we start away after wee haue beene trained vp in the pure doctrine of the Gospell? O what meaneth this? Looke mee vppon the Turkes, Paynims, Papistes, and Iewes. Notwithstanding that al these

bee

be bewitched at this day in their errours: yet shal they rise vp and bee found sufficient witnesses to make vs ashamed before God, and to disappoint vs of all starting holes. And why? For they go on still in their superstitions, whereas wee for our partes fall to reeling at euerie blast of winde, and the diuell plucketh vs out of the place wherein wee were planted. Thus ye see what we haue to remember vpon this place.

But aboue all thinges let vs marke, that in as much as God hath bestowed infinite benefites vpon vs, and displaied his liberalitie towardes vs after so many fashions: all that he shall haue bestowed vppon vs shall serue to our condemnation, if wee doe him not homage for the same. To bee short, both heauen and earth shall be armed against vs, and aske vengeaunce vppon vs. And how shall we bee able to finde any excuse, when our Lorde shall raise such a crie to confounde vs and put vs to shame? Therefore let vs nowe looke well to our selues, and let vs walke in the way that he hath shewed vs.

Now here is expresse mention made of *Images and other likenesses*: but vnder one kinde, Moses comprehendeth all. For it is a maner of speache rife ynough in the holy scripture, to marke out some one kinde of superstition, thereby to warne vs that wee must keepe our selues from all superstitions in generall. And Moses himself doth euer obserue the same maner of speaking, as wee Deut. 5. 8. shal see in the next Chapter, where he vseth to speake of the heinousest things, to the intent we shoulde the more abhorre them and mislike of them, to keepe our selues from them. And yet for all that the holy Ghost meant in this place by the mouth of Moses shortly to shew that whē God hath once made his couenant with vs, wee must hold vs in the simplicitie of his word, without mingling any superstition with it. Now that wee vnderstand the naturall sense of this text: let vs looke that we make our commoditie thereof. For although we haue no images either carued or molten: although wee haue no puppets either ingrauen or painted: yet faile wee not to be idolaters, if we sticke not to our God to keepe his worde throughout. For the matter that the Couenant it self importeth is not that we should confesse in wordes, that the God which gaue his Lawe by Moses is alonely to bee worshipped: but that wee should vnderstand his will, after what manner he will bee serued, that wee should haue his promises printed in our heartes, that wee should knowe howe and by what meanes wee ought to worship him, and that we should keepe on our way to the inheritaunce whereunto he calleth vs. That is the thing that Gods couenāt importeth. And without that, in what case were wee? If wee should say, verie well, there is but one God which hath created heauen and earth, he hath reuealed himselfe vnto vs, and he hath giuen vs his Lawe: and yet notwithstanding we knewe not his will, but euerie of vs shoulde behaue himselfe as he listed: to what purpose were this? It were better for vs neuer to haue knowen Gods word, than after the knowing of it to despise it, and to take leaue to doe what wee list. Therefore let vs beare well in minde, that Moses meant here to shewe the people generally, that seeing they had bene taught in the trueth, it behoued them to keepe themselues from all errours and leasings. And this is that which I haue said alreadie, that Gods word ought to suffice to gard vs in such sort, as the diuell may not seduce vs, doe the worst he can. Nowe then will wee be exempted from the threate and condemnation that is contained here? Let vs giue ouer our selues wholly in all respectes to our God, let vs hearken to his worde, and let vs obey his voyce without any exception or gainesaying, so as his seruice remaine in such sort among vs, as hee hath commaunded by his word. But let vs compare the crime that Moses reproueth here, with other crimes that are lesse to bee excused. For although there was vnthankfulnesse and rebellion at ỹ time in all such as suffered themselues to be misled, after they had bene taught by Gods word: yet cōmitted they not so cursed sacrilledge against God, as ỹ caitifs do in these dayes, which to the vttermost of their power do blocoure al religion, and are so full of wickednesse, that they could finde in their hearts to confound heauen and earth togither, in working spite to the whole Maiestie of God. Take mee a man that hath bin taught in the Gospell, and afterwarde through lightnesse ouershooteth himselfe and turneth away from well dooing, howbeit with a minde to doe well againe: truely such an one is not to bee held guiltlesse, as I haue saide alreadie: but yet is he not worthie of so much blame, neither in his fault so heinous before GOD, as another that outrageth so farre as to scoffe and scorne at God and all his doctrine, and to play the mad bedlem, of purpose to thrust all Religion vnder foot, so as he could finde in his heart that men should liue like beastes: and for the bringing thereof to passe, speweth out blasphemies not onely against the maner of the superstitions in Poperie, but also euen against the word of God. For is not such a one farre more horrible, than the ignorant wretch that is still snarled in some imagination, and thinkes he serueth God, though the same be but vanitie, as I said afore? But nowe let vs looke to our owne time. God telleth the Iewes here, that he would not beare with them if they happened to ouershoote themselues in any superstitions, but would bereaue them of the inheritance that he had promised them. Wee at this day haue a more excellent benefite than that people had, and therefore shall we be the more to blame, if wee yeeld not homage to our God, which hath esteemed and honored vs so much, as to call vs into his Church. But nowe how doe most men behaue themselues, after they haue bene taught by the Gospell? In deede wee meddle not with the superstitions of Papistrie, wee passe not for shrifte, nor for Masses, nor for such other like trash: but what for that? Wee coulde finde in our hearts plainely and stoutly to defie God, and that he shoulde haue no further audience among vs than we list our selues. After this maner doe a great sort deale euen to this day, who neuertheless will needes bee taken, not to

be of the common sort of the faithfull, but as the pillars and vpholders of the Church: And yet haue they gone about to stoppe Gods mouth when any thing hath misliked them, or fallen out otherwise than they woulde haue it. O this must bee taken away. And wy? Beholde, GOD not onely speaketh here of the things that haue beene inuented by men: but also holdeth vs in awe, so as it is not lawfull for vs to incounter him. He passeth not for them. And againe, let vs see what their life is. We see that they mocke GOD to the full, and that their desire is to haue their owne swindge in all thinges. And yet notwithstanding when the diuell raiseth vp such plagie folke to infect the whole flocke with their poison: wee see a great nomber, whose whole desire is to mingle themselues with them. For as soone as some leawd fellowe, or two or three maintainers of wickednesse, (which shewe themselues to bee readie to vpholde all disorder and offences) doe but steppe vp: it is as good as the displaying of a banner, and by & by al vnthriftes runne after it. And would God that the experience of it were not so great as it is seene to bee. But what? When wee bee tolde of it, we must repent yea and we must mourne before God, praying him to keepe vs from such deadly plagues as are seene intermingled among vs. And so let vs marke well howe it is said here, that it can not bee that such as doe so peruert themselues, did euer know what Gods couenant is, or of how excellent value. For if his trueth ought so to restraine vs that we be not led away by any of the wyles and slightes of Satan: how were it possible that men should so cast themselues into destruction, if they had knowen God in good earnest, & bene strengthened in his word? Although then that such folke professe the Gospel, yea and haue taken some smacke of it, as saieth the Apostle: yet may we perceiue that it neuer entered into their hearts in good earnest. They be but hypocrites, which make countenance to serue GOD for a time, and afterward doe fleete away, as wee see these roisters doe which band themselues together. As soone as they see any aide or support to vphold their wickednesse, they fall to practising and confederating, and they contriue all the drifts that they can possibly, to ouerthrow Gods Church. Therefore let vs vnderstand, that although the Gospell be preached among vs: yet are there many deafe folk which heare not what God saith to them: not that that shall seeme to lessen their fault, for they shall not faile to be taken for guiltie as wel as others.

Heb. 6. 4. 5.

Now here a man might demaund a question, wherfore Moses saith that they shal not liue in y land that is giuen them, but shall be shortly rooted out of it: for wee see that God is patient: and in deede it appeareth sufficiently. And therfore it seemeth at the first sight that the thing which Moses saieth here, shoulde not come to passe. God spared his people a long time. Although they gaue themselues to idolatrie and superstition: yet did God vse long patience towards the, insomuch that the Prophets laboured to bring them backe againe whe they were reuolted. Although they were wilfull and hard hearted, yet did God assay to win them to him. Notwithstanding all this, it is said here that they shall soone be rooted out. Yea, but this *soone or shortly* must agree with that which is written in many other places: that is to wit, that although Gods wrath light suddainly vpon offenders, & ouerwhelme them as a storme that commeth vnlooked for: yet doth he not faile to be patient, and to delay his vengance till mens wickednes bee growen ripe, yea and euen till it be starke rotten. Therfore it is to be vnderstoode that God punisheth not offenders out of hand, for he saieth that he is slowe to wrath, and he must needs keepe his owne nature. Neuertheless in vsing patience, and in bearing with them that haue doone amisse: he ouerthroweth them sooner then they would. Ye see then that this *soone, shortly, by and by*, or *out of hand*, must be referred to mens carelesnesse, who make their account that all shall go well with them, and beare themselues in hande that they haue made a couenant with death (as saith the Prophet Esay,) and they be as drunken folkes in that behalfe, so as if God winke at them for a time, they thinke they bee scaped from his hand. See how the hypocrites abuse Gods goodnesse, bearing themselues in hand y they shall neuer come to account for it. For this cause doth Moses say here *soone* or *shortly*. Not y God forgetteth his owne nature (as I said,) or tarieth not a long time for the amendment of offenders: but that when all is done, his vengeaunce is alwaies in a readinesse, & there needeth no more but to kindle it, and by and by without any further tariance, yea before one finger eā be stirred, there needeth no more but to shewe forth his wrath, and we shall bee euerie one of vs ouerwhelmed as it is saide in another song of Moses, or in the XC. Psalme. Sith it is so, let vs not thinke it straunge that Moses threatneth the people here, that they shall soone be rooted out.

Deut. 31.

And to the same purpose, (that is to say, for a further declaration thereof) serueth this also which he addeth: namely, *When ye shall haue begotten children, yea euen a two or three descentes: if superstition doe then raigne among you, thy God can vtterly roote you out.* Hereby Moses sheweth, that long possession will stand vs in no stead. For though we beare our selues on hand, that it is betweene God and vs, as it is betweene man and man, yet it wil not preuaile. If a man haue bin a long time in authoritie & estimation, so as he be wel friended or of great kinred and aliance: he beares himselfe on hand that hee shall neuer bee put from it. But we see how the world passeth away, and small occasions will serue to ouerthrow euen them that are mounted highest. And therefore the Prophetes vpbraide them with their pride, which glorie in their owne credit and authoritie, saying vnto them: ye beare your selues in hand that ye bee so fast seeled, as ye can neuer be shaken downe: and yet if God doe but blowe vppon you, by and by you bee gone in the turning of a hand. Now according hereunto it is saide here, that if we thinke to claime any title against God by prescription (as they terme it,) that is to wit,

time,

bicause wee haue possessed his benefites a long time, imagining that we can neuer bee dissessed or dispossessed of them, but that they must continue still in the same state, not onely to vs, but also to our children, euen to the third & fourth generation: both they and wee shall for all that bee bereft of them, and God will withdrawe his hand which he had erst stretched out to doe vs good. So then let vs mark, that whensoeuer God shall haue bin patient towardes vs, it is not to be saide that he hath forgotten our transgressions: but his bearing with them, is for that it is not yet conuenient time to punish them. Therefore let vs not trust to that: but let vs alwayes beare in minde howe it is said here, that if wee serue not God, we shal soone be cut off. Although it please him to wink at things, and to tarie a time for vs: yet shall his wrath come suddeinly vppon vs, though it seeme not so to vs. And when we shall 2. Pet. 3. 3. say, all is whist and still, imagining our selues to be safe and sure: then must we be ouerwhelmed by his hand. Let vs consider this, that wee may walke warely and keepe good watch, and not tarie till the fire be kindled.

And for ỹ same cause is this saying set downe: *Thy God is a consuming fire and a ielous God.* When Moses speaketh after that maner, specially when he calleth him a ielous God: he sheweth that God cannot abide that men should mocke him and despise him; but that he will maintaine his owne honour, as good reason is that he should and in so doing he sheweth vs how dreadfull his wrath is. Behold then, here are two poines which we must mark for a conclusion. Not ỹ we can lay them forth at length as at this time: but that it shall suffice to haue some foretaste of them. Let vs marke then that the cause why God vttereth himself vnto vs, is ỹ hauing once knowē his goodnes, & that he hath chosen vs & called vs by his word: we should couet nothing but to be quietly gouerned by him, and acknowledge ỹ it is he to whom al honour & praise belongeth, & therevpon apply our whole indeuours to the glorifying of his holy name. That (say I) is the end why our Lord hath once called vs to his knowledge, and why he calleth vpon vs daily, and exhorteth vs still to come vnto him. But yet let vs consider therewithall, that if wee doe not serue and glorifie him as he deserueth, and as wee bee bounden, wee shall feele him a consuming fire: that is to say, wee shall feele that it is no dalying with such a Maister: not that this is saide to make Gods Maiestie terrible vnto vs, so as wee shoulde bee afrayde to come at him: but rather that wee shall not bee a whit dismaied, if we take him for our Father. But if wee will not behaue our selues as children towardes him, but continue vnamendable: he will lay away the person of a Father, and shewe himselfe to bee our iudge: and that, not such a iudge as needeth to make long inquirie, & to call the hangman to put his iudgementes in execution: but if he do but cast forth the fire of his spirit, or but his breath, by and by the fyre is kindled as sayeth the Prophet Esay, Esa. 3. 25. so as wee must needes bee consumed by it. So then, if wee will not haue the Maiestie of our God terrible vnto vs, but rather that wee may goe vnto him: let vs looke that wee glorifie him in all our life, and not giue him cause to kindle his wrath against vs, nor prouoke him vnto ielousie. For then doeth he tell vs that he will prouoke vs to ielousie likewise, by casting vs frō him & by taking another people in our place. Wherfore let vs looke that wee persist in the vocation whereunto he hath called vs, and that wee kindle not his vengeance against vs. And seeing he hath once vttered his goodnesse and manifested himselfe vnto vs in our Lord Iesus Christ: let vs not doubt but that he on his side will continue to make vs feele the same still, if wee on our side continue in glorifying him.

Deut. 32. 21. Rom. 10. 19.

Now let vs kneel down before ỹ maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, so as wee may bee sorie for them and depart from them by the power of his holy spirit. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the iij. of Iune. 1555.

The xxvj. Sermon which is the eight vpon the fourth Chapter.

27 And the Lorde God shall scatter you among the Heathen, and ye shall remaine fewe in nomber among the Nations whither the Lord will bring you.

28 And there ye shall serue gods which are the worke of mans hand, wood & stone, which neither see nor heare, eate nor smell.

29 And there thou shalt seeke the Lorde thy God, and thou shalt finde him if thou seeke him with all thy heart and with all thy soule.

30 And when thou art in tribulation and all these thinges are come vpon thee: in the end thou shalt returne vnto the Lord thy God and obey his voyce.

31 For the Lord thy God is a merciful God: he will not forsake thee, nor destroy thee, nor forget the Couenant of thy fathers which he sware to them.

WE haue saide heretofore, that Gods vsing of the similitude of fire, is not to dismay vs in such sort as we should not come vnto him: but contrariwise to make vs come to him with reuerence. For what shoulde it boote men to bee striken in such terrour, as shoulde make them shrinke away from GOD, and loth to haue any thing to do with him? Againe we know that our Lorde hath not any other marke or intent, than to winne vs to him and to drawe vs to saluation. Nowe the onely meane thereof, is to goe right foorth vnto him, and to bee ioyned vnto him. Wherfore let vs beare well in minde this lesson, that Gods intent is not to scare vs in such wise, as we should shun him: and that is the thing which we haue to gather at this time vpon that which is rehearsed here. For the threate that Moses giueth here, is hard: but yet it serueth to bring the people backe to God. *If thou disobey the voyce of the Lord thy God* (saieth he,) *thou shalt bee scattered.* Flatter not thy selfe w his choosing of thee from among all other Nations to bee his inheritance, nor with his giuing of thee this lande in possession: for he can well ynough bereaue thee of all these benefites. Yet notwithstanding, hee addeth that if God see repentance in his people, after he hath chastised them: he will bring them againe & deale fauourably with them, so as they shall feele him to bee a mercifull God, and such a one as powreth not out his rigor with extremitie vpon offenders, when he seeth that they bee not vtterly past amendment. What is to be done then? First of all, when wee heare this sentence which God gaue in olde time vppon his people: let vs learne to beware that wee abuse not his goodnesse. Let vs goe to him with all humilitie while he alloureth vs by gentlenesse, as the Apostle declareth in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. For there he saieth that wee bee not come to Mount Sinay where there was nothing but flashes of Lightening, and Thundercraks: and where the people were so amazed, as they looked for present death. What remaineth then? Behold (saith he,) God calleth vs by his Gospell, to the intent wee should bee fellowes with the Angels, & with the spirits of the faithful, and that we should bee verie Citizens of his kingdome. Seeing it is so (saieth he:) let vs enter into the heauenly Ierusalem, for our God is a consuming fire. It should seeme at the first sight that there is some contrarietie in these two sayings, That wee should come boldly and after an assured maner to our God: and also that he should bee a consuming fire. But both these agree verie well togither. For first the Apostle sheweth that wee ought not to be so afraide of the Maiestie of our God, as that wee should shunne him, but rather consider that there is nothing in him but gentlenesse. But yet therewithall wee must knowe also, that wee must worship him vnfainedly: or else wee must learne that he can well reuenge himselfe of such as shal haue abused his grace, and of such as shall haue held scorne of it. Therefore let vs receiue Gods goodnesse when it is offered vs, & that with such reuerence and lowlinesse, as wee prouoke him not to wrath against vs, ne make him to arme himselfe as he doeth against the despisers of his grace.

Exod 28.23.

He.12.18,22.

But nowe let vs come to that which Moses saieth here. *The Lord thy God* (saieth he) *will scatter thee among the Heathen, and there thou shalt bee fewe in number, and thou shalt serue strainge Gods that are made with mans hand.* Here Moses setteth Gods curses against all the benefites that he had promised to his people. It was a singular benefite that the people were gathered into one bodie, that they had a land alone by themselues, that they were settled quietly there, and that euerie man had a house of his owne. But here he saieth that they shall be driue out of it. The first threat then betokeneth that the people of the Iewes shall bee thrust out of the land that God had giuen them. And let vs mark herewithall, that the bringing of the people into that lande, was not onely to the intent they should liue at their ease and in rest: but to the intent they should also be sanctified vnto God. The Land of Chanaan was as a mirror of the heauenly life, so that by dwelling there ỹ people were assured that they were the children of God: and therefore this threate that they should be driuen out among the heathen Nations, was not to bee esteemed lightly. Also it is said *that there shall bee a small number left of them.* But we knowe that among other things, God had promised Abraham to multiplie his seede as the Starres of the skie, and as the sande of the Sea. It is said here that they shall be fewe in nomber: yea, and wee see they had bin euen as Sodom and Gomorrhe, so as they had perished euerichone, if God had not vouchsafed to reserue some little seede to himselfe, as is said in the Prophet Esay. Lastly it is said *that they shall serue strainge godds which are made with mans hand.* This is the grieuousest punishment of all, that the Iewes which had Gods Lawe, should neuertheless bee subiect to such tyrannie, as to bee faine to worship the idoles of the Heathen, so as they should haue no Religion among them but such as should defile them, and that all their toyling of themselues should bee but to their greater condemnation. Thus wee see in effect what this text comprehendeth. Now remaineth that we apply it to our instruction.

Gen.15.5. 22.17. Esay 1.9. Rom.9.29.

First therefore let vs learne to vse well the benefites that God bestoweth vpon vs, and to submit our selues vnto him seeing he sheweth himselfe so friendly and louing towardes vs, assuring our selues that he can well take away the things that he hath giuen vs. Nor that wee must bee afraide that God will not continue his goodnesse still towardes vs, yea and also increase it if we on our side walke aright, and continue in the possession of ỹ things that he hath put into our hands: but that such as despise God, shal feele that he is not bound to them, nor vnable to plucke ỹ things out of their fistes which he had giuen them. Let vs therefore possesse Gods benefits in feare and carefulnesse. This is the thing in effect, which we haue to gather vppon the said saying of Moses. True it is, that wee haue not nowe adayes a

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land of Chanaan, so as Gods Church should be separated into some one countrie, where it pleaseth him to haue his name called vppon: but yet notwithstanding if wee haue a place where wee may serue him vncorruptly, hee graunteth vs a speciall grace, and wee ought to set great store by it. And if wee know not that: we shall feele that Moses hath not sayd in vaine, that we shall become lyke other nations. How many nations see wee in these dayes, that inioye the lyke benefite as GOD hath bestowed vppon vs? Nay contrariwise, they ỳ haue any tast of the Gospell, doe languishe among the enemies of the faith, and are there as sheepe in the woolues mouth, wandering vp and down as in a wildernesse, while in the meane time our God keepeth vs as in his flocke. Seeing then that wee haue such an aduantage: is it not reason that wee shoulde streyne our selues to serue God, and that wee should liue peaseably vnder his hand, seeing hee doth vs the honor to receiue vs, as in deede it is he that gouerneth vs, and the thing is as apparant as any thing may be? Now then if wee will needes bee ouerlustie, the threate that was vttered in olde time against the Iewes will light vppon our heades. And as it is sayde here that they shall bee fewe in number: so although GOD haue gathered a greate sorte of vs together, hee can well enough diminishe our number, if wee misbehaue our selues: and in the end, ỳ thing that is most of all to bee feared will come vpon vs, that is to wit, ỳ we shall serue straunge Gods. And in deede if we cannot finde in our heartes to beare Gods yoke, but are loth to be subiect vnto him: is it not reason that wee should be vnder a cleane contrarie gouernment, that is to wit, that we should be bereft of the true and pure religion, and be plunged in idolatrie? We heare what hee sayth by his prophet Ezechiel. For hauing blamed ỳ Iewes for their vnthankfulnesse, he addeth ỳ his deliuering of thé into ỳ handes of tyrants, is rightfull. I haue giuē them (sayth he) a good & holy lawe, yea euen ẏ promis, ỳ if they walked in it, they should finde lyfe and welfare therein: and I cannot tel what I might haue done more for them. What a thing is it, that God doth vs the honor to rule vs, and to take the paine to guide vs all our lyfe long? Againe, seeing he addeth a promise, that his teaching of vs is for our welfare: if we will not yeeld our selues teachable vnto him, but shake off his yoke lyke wood beastes: is it not reason that we should be cast into most vile slauerie, seeing we cānot abide such a master as our God, specially sith he desireth not to rule vs otherwise than to our welfare? [yes, and therefore] the creatures, yea and euen the diuell himselfe in the end must reigne ouer vs. For that is the thing which Ezechiel meaneth by the Tyrannie of Babylon.

Deu.30.12,13

For there (sayth he) they shall haue lawes giuen thē for their own tooth, and such lawes as they can finde in their heartes to keepe: but they shall not liue by them. When they haue toyled themselues to the vttermost, and payde impostes and tributes to the infidels: yet shall they bee faine to serue their idols too, so as they shall defile and beray themselues with all superstitions. And what shalbe their reward? Euerlasting death. That is the payment of all such as cannot finde in their heartes to serue God quietly, and to keepe his law and his word. But to the intent wee may not thinke that this serued but for that one time: Moses sheweth that the lyke should befall to all such as misbehaue themselues and withdrawe themselues from the Church. And this vengeance of God hath bin accomplished vppon the greater parte of the world, as we see already. For whence came the hellish confusion of poperie? Euen of gods iust punishment for the rebellyousnesse of the world, because men were hardharted and would not stoope. For when God caused his Gospel to be published: then was the trumpet sounded, to the end that all men both great and small should haue bin brought vnto him. But we see what befel on mens behalf. They would in no wise stoop: they were very loth to doe that. And not that onely, but also some defied God openly when hee would haue brought them to his lure: and othersom made countenāce of obediēce through hipocrisie, but it lasted not: for they were vnconstant and fled touch anon after. Therefore it behoued him to punishe such spiteful wickednesse, and so he did. Because they would not obey the trueth: therefore did lying get the maisterie of them. God gaue Satan the bridle, so as his errors wrought effectually, in besotting such as had wilfully shut their eyes, against the doctrine of saluation when it was offered them. Now then sith we see that God offereth vs great good nowadayes in gathering vs into his flocke, and in giuing vs his worde whereby we haue life and saluation: let vs learne to inioy so greate a benefite. For God mocketh vs not when hee telleth vs that he is our father and Sauiour. Hee taketh not the thinges with the one hand which he gaue vs with the other. Onely let vs be contented to continue still in the possession of his grace. 2.Thes.2.11

But yet besides this, let vs stand in feare of this horrible curse of seruing straunge Gods, and of being bereft of the pure religion, for refusing to make our commoditie of the honor and priuiledge that God giueth vs in drawing vs to him, and in shewing vs that hee is willing to reigne among vs. And Moses speaketh here expresly of the vanitie of idols, to the ende that the people may bee the better touched therewith. For the wretched Paynims in worshipping a peece of woodde or stone, could not conceiue what an abhomination it is to worship a dead thing. But they that knew the liuing God, euen the GOD that giueth lyfe to all thinges, ought better to perceiue that it is against nature, yea and a detestable thing, to worship a puppet so, whether it were made of woodde, or cast of mettall either golde or siluer. For they bee all of them corruptible creatures: and without GOD there is no lyfe, without his power there is no mouing.

So then Moses hath set downe these circumstances, to ỳ end that the people might knowe Act.17.28.

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that they shoulde not be punished lightly, but that in disobeying God and in refusing to keepe themselues holy vnto him: they shoulde defile themselues. And it is good reason that when God hath shed foorth his grace vppon vs, wee should bee punished the more grieuously, if wee cannot profite our selues by it. The more then y euery of vs hath made proceedinges in Gods grace: the more earnest let him be to loue him and serue him: vnlesse we will haue him on the contrary part, to vse the extreme rigor that is spoken of here.

Howbeit herewithall (as I haue touched already) Moses sheweth that God will not so punishe his people as to leaue them in despayre: but that hee intendeth a cleane contrary ende, that is to wit, to bring them to tepentance. And surely this is a very notable place. For although God thunder against vs, so as to our seeming we may iudge by all lykelyhood, that he is minded to make cleane riddance of vs without any mercie: yet notwithstanding hee seeketh our saluation by that meanes, and giueth vs alwayes space of repentance: at leastwise so long as his word is preached vnto vs. For sometimes the gate is shut vp, and we must euer beare in minde how the prophet Esay sayth, Seeke the Lorde while hee may be found. And againe in another place correspondent vnto this, he sayth, I haue heard thee in conuenient time, I haue succored thee in the day of saluation. Hereby it is shewed vs, that there is still space of repentaunce, and the gate is still open for vs to come vnto God, so long as hee giueth vs his worde. But if wee passe not to enter while GOD giueth vs the meane: wee shall bee bereft of his worde, and then may wee well seeke after him, howbeit but as blinde folkes that grope in the darke: for the Lorde will haue shut vs out from him. But here Moses teacheth, that although God seeme vnmeasurably sharpe in chastising his children yet notwithstanding he giueth them space of repentance, and ceaseth not to haue a care of their saluation. For hee sayth, *When thou art so scattered, if thou seeke thy God: thou shalt finde him: yea verily, if thou seeke him with all thy heart and with all thy soule.* Now, that wee may the better vnderstand the thinges that are conteyned here: let vs note first of all, that when men are once gone away vnto wickednesse, it is very hard to fetch them backe againe, vnlesse they bee subdewed by maine force. And that ment Moses to expresse in saying, *Then shalt thou seeke the Lord thy God.* When is this *then*? not when the people are ful fed, nor when they haue store of al Gods benefites: for wee shall see in the song, how the people are lykened to ouerpampered horses, which are kicking and wincing against their masters, and will not suffer thēselues to be handled. Moses then meaneth that the people should be faine to bee reformed after a forcible manner: for (as I sayd afore) that is our nature. If wee be once gone astray, GOD shall neuer get vs home againe, till hee haue throughly tamed vs. True it is that hee coulde goe another way to worke, and it is not for that he is vnable to reclayme vs by his holy spirite, if hee listed: but hee intendeth to shewe vs what our lewdenesse is, and that is the cause why he vseth these inferiour meanes. This is the first poynt which we haue to marke vppon this place.

Hos.2.5.

And hereunto aunswereth that which is written in the second of Osee: for there our Lorde complayneth of the Iewes, saying that they bee lyke a harlot that hath forsaken her husband, and giuen ouer her selfe to all commers, bearing her selfe in hand that she is best at ease when she may receiue rewardes, and bee catching and snatching on all sides: so that (to her seeming) if shee were an honest wife, she should bee faine to be contented with a little, whereas now being a strumpet, shee eateth of the deyntiest morsels, and hath store of presentes brought her. God therefore sayth that the Iewes were in the same taking, when they were in loue with their idols, and in the meane time fathered all their good thinges vppon them. What shall I doe now, sayth the Lorde? When yee say, it is our idols that giue vs meate and drinke: ye be vnthankefull vnto mee: for yee haue receiued all these thinges at my hand. Now therefore I must be faine to bereaue you of them. I will take away the bread and wine wherewith yee haue bin susteined, and your wool and flaxe & all other thinges. I will bring you out (sayth he) into the wildernesse, I will make you to pine away there, yee shall be lyke a wretched harlot, which after she hath played the naughtipacke, and hath runne gadding here and there, and in the ende hath bin driuen to eate her owne dung and filth, is reiected of all men, and dyeth for hunger and thirst, not hauing wherewith to couer her shame. Thus will I handle you (sayth he:) and then shall ye finde that there is nothing better than to sticke to me. Yee shal say, Alas where is my husband that deale so gently with me? I must be faine to returne to him. By this similitude the prophet doth vs to vnderstand, y when men giue themselues to lewdnes, and doe not serue and honor GGD, after he hath giuen them his worde: they must bee reformed by force. And why? For as long as they liue at their ease, they forget themselues, they flatter themselues, they be proude, and thinke they may euen despise God. For when God pincheth vs not, nor maketh vs to feele his strong hand: we take occasion thereat to sooth our selues in our vices, so that wee haue needē (as I said afore) to be reformed by Gods striking vppon vs with maine blowes. For if hee dally with vs, it will breede our destruction and decay. And surely there is not a notabler poynt than this: For wee thinke it straunge, that God should vse so sundry sortes of rigor in this world: but in the meane while wee consider not the hardnesse of mens hearres. For although Gods curses haue their full scope, so as we see warres on the one side and famine on the other, and euery man cryes out alas: yet notwithstanding, who is hee that looketh to the hand that smiteth? Howe many returne to GOD for all that? doth it not rather seeme that sinners haue

Esa.55.6.

Esa.49.8.

Deut.32.15.

Ier.36.5

Ezech.33.

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conspired to resist God still? Nowe seeing it is so, let vs marke that Gods shewing of himselfe so rigorous, is not without cause, and let vs impute it to our owne selues. Then if any of vs bee afflicted alone, or all of vs in common, so as we bee smitten with Gods scourges: let vs vnderstande that wee haue neede of it, and that it serueth to stoppe our mouthes, that we grudge not against God, assuring our selues that his nipping of vs after that fashion is not causeless.

Besides this, let vs also learne to comfort our selues sith wee see the ende that God aymeth at. For like as hee sheweth himselfe rough and sharpe: so will he also haue vs to tast of his loue and care towardes vs: that is to wit, that forasmuch as we haue forgotten him & turned our backes to him, & not sought to him, but rather indeuored to flee from him: his intent is to drawe vs to him by that meanes, and to induce vs to seeke him againe. Ye see then that the true comfort of wretched sinners when God scourgeth them, is to consider thus with themselues: yet GOD hath pitie vpon vs: in deede wee remembered not him: but yet for all that, hee hath not forgotten vs, and that doeth hee shewe by the effect. Nevertheless, the cheefest [comfort] is in this that Moses addeth, namely, *that they shall finde God if they seeke him.* For if wee goe to seeke God, being onely in distresse and trouble: can wee haue any courage to come vnto him? True it is that when the wretched vnbeleeuers are distressed, they toyle themselues and doe all that they can to seeke God. We see that euen in the Popedome, when men are in sorrowe and haue their sinnes laide afore them, [their saying is,] goe to, let vs see if wee can pacifie God. But as for them, they haue no warrant that God will receiue them, neither trust they to his free promises, neither pray they in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ. They can well speake of repentaunce: but (to their owne seeming) God should receiue them for their owne worthinesse, and not otherwise. And so wee see they come thither as it were doubting: for it is certaine that such repentance is ful of hipocrisie. For why? They be not sure of Gods goodnesse: nay they neuer wist what it ment. But as for vs, let vs put the thing in vre which is sayd in the psalme, Lord, thy mercy is euer ready in thee. Hereby it is shewed vs that we can neuer returne vnto God, to submit our selues vnto him: vnlesse wee taste his mercie, that wee may trust to it and rest vppon it. That is the cause why I tolde you that wee must marke the text where Moses sayth, *If thou seeke the Lorde thy God, thou shalt finde him.* Will wee then be prouoked to repentance when we haue sinned? Let vs hearken to the promises that GOD hath giuen vs. For there hee assureth vs that as soone as wee open our mouth to pray, he will stretch out his hand to succour vs at our neede: yea and that he will preuent vs, so as wee neede not distrust him that hee will not receiue vs to mercy, seeing we haue such a warrant.

Psal.86.5.

Psal.32.5.& 130.5.and 145.19. Esa.65.23.

Howbeit forasmuch as men would alwayes pacify God with countenances and ceremonies Moses addeth purposely, *that we must seeke him with hearte and with soule.* I sayd that men are euer desirous to content God with trifling thinges: and wee see it too much. For when they speake of repentance or penaunce in poperie: what meane they by that worde, but that men must vse much liplabour, and make a sorte of Apes toyes? But the heart must abide stil locked vp, and men must in no wise rid themselues of their wicked affections, nor clense them away. They will alwayes keepe a backe shop behinde, and in the meane season if they shewe some good outward signe, they thinke it is enough, and that God ought not to presse them any further. They be dubble hearted: and therfore they would haue God to receiue but the one halfe of that which he requireth: and the other halfe they would pay him as it were in way of raunsome. But as for vs, let vs on our side learne to vnderstand, that to finde him, and to be receiued of him, wee must seeke him with al our heart, and with all our soule. Not that wee can come vnto him with such perfection as were to bee wished: but yet must we haue this soundnesse with vs, that wee seeke no lurkingholes, but rather examine our sinnes throughly, and when wee haue condemned them, seeke the remedie with sighing and groning, that it may please our God to reclayme vs to him, so as wee condemning our owne sinnes, may desire nothing so much as to be reformed according to his righteousnesse. Thus yee see what it is to seeke God with all our heart and with all our soule. And when wee go so to worke, let vs not thinke that wee shall bee disappointed of the promise which hee made to the fathers of olde time. And so yee see that the thing which we haue to marke vppon this place is that forasmuch as wee come not to God of our owne good wil, we are faine to be driuen to it by force, and that is the cause of the afflictions that God sendeth vs.

Furthermore we must also cõsider his fatherly goodnes in striking vs: for he doth it to bring vs home againe to him by that meane. And how come we thither? It would behoue vs to be stripped starke naked out of all selftrust, and to be vterly cast downe in our selues: but wee cannot away with ỹ, because our nature driueth vs ỹ clean contrary way. But yet for al ỹ, we see we haue wherwith to cõfort vs in our afflictions: For our Lorde seeketh not our destruction, but bringeth vs home againe to himselfe: and ỹ not doubtefully: but assuredly warranting vs that if wee come vnto him, it shall not be in vaine, neither shall we be disappointed. Why? For if wee seeke him, wee shall finde him. But therewithall let vs looke well to it, that there be no feining nor dubblenesse in vs: for God cannot away with such hipocrisie.

1.Pet.4.12. Ezech.18.23

And now it is immediatly sayd, *When these aduersities are come vppon you, yee shall returne to your GOD and obey his voyce. And because the Lorde is mercifull, hee will not forget you nor caste you out of his presence, nor out of the couenaunt*

of

of your fathers. This serueth to expresse yet better the doctrine which I touched where Moses saide, *When these miseries are come vpon you, then shall you seeke your God.* For he sheweth that men play the drunken folke so long as God dealeth gently with them: and that they cannot perceiue their sinnes, except they be made to smart. *When these miseries haue caught hold of you, then* (saith he) &c. By the miseries ỳ he speaketh of, he meaneth the punishments wherewith he had threatened the people before. To be short, God must be faine to shewe vs his wrath to our faces, and to make vs to feele it: or else we conceiue it not. And we see it is so. For when we be daily told of Gods wrath, we make but a sport of it, it moues vs not a whit. And why? Because wee be earthly and fleshly, and therefore God is faine to make vs feele his wrath and vengeance according to our rudenesse. Yet notwithstanding we bee still nice and tender, insomuch that if wee feele any thing amisse in our bodies, and that we haue not our owne desires: we be by and by vexed & greeued, and by that meanes God amendeth vs. Not that we be humbled at ỳ first stripe: but we come to it by litle and litle and as it were by degrees, so as in the end God maketh his corrections auayleable. And whereas I say that God bringeth vs home to him by the chastisements that hee sendeth vs: that is not generall to all men. Wee see that the vnbeleeuers become the frowarder, insomuch that when God chastiseth them for their sinnes, they storme against him, they gnash their teeth, and in the end they fall to despaire. But this saying concerneth those that are rightly of Gods Church: those when they bee chastised are willing to returne to God in their aduersities. Thus ye see what Moses meant to expresse in saying, *When these miseries shal haue caught hold of thee.* As if he had said, so long as your God suffreth you to liue in rest, so long as hee setteth not your sinnes before you, so long as he calleth you not to a reckoning: you thinke your selues out of daunger, and that no man can hurt you, and (which worse is) your faults neuer come to your remembraunces. But if yee be once pinched with aduersitie, then will yee cling to your God. Hereby wee be warned againe, to beare the corrections patiently which God sendeth vs: for they doe vs good: whereas prosperitie blindeth vs and breedeth our destruction. True it is ỳ gods gentle handling of vs, ought not to cause vs to despise him nor to neglect him. Whē God sheweth himselfe louing towards vs, surely wee ought to be the more inclined thereby to loue him. But what? Our dragging cleane backward, bewrayeth that prosperitie is not good for vs. And therefore our Lorde must be faine to scourge vs. Wherefore let vs learne not to bee greeued out of measure when God beateth vs so with his roddes: but to beare his stripes meekely, forasmuch as wee see that the ende thereof is to our welfare according as it is sayd here, *when thou art pinched with aduersitie.* Yea and if our Lord hauing smitten vs after one sorte doe dubble his stripes: let vs not murmure against him as we be inclined to doe. For [sometimes] they that haue bin patient in some one aduersitie, fall to storming and chafing against God whē it commeth to the second or the third. But wee must not doe so. For on the contrarie part, wee see our Lorde withdraweth not his hand at the first as soone as he hath chastised vs once: and wee abide by it still. In deede when wee feele any aduersitie, we will set a good face vppon it at the first, and say, very well, seeing that God chastiseth mee, I must returne vnto him. But let him turne his hād on the other side: and we fal to fretting and chafing by and by. Therefore we must be chastised throughly: that is to say, God must let vs alone in distresse, & aduersitie must so ouermaister vs, as we may be throughly tamed, & it may so stick by our ribs, that when he shall haue withdrawen his hand, we may remember it al our lyfe after. Then let vs learne that wee must be patient in our aduersities, not onely for a day or twayne, or for some affection: but so as we holde out quietly vnder the hand of our God, euen when he dubleth and increaseth his stripes. That is the effect of the thing which we haue to marke.

Now when Moses sayth, *The Lord thy God is mercifull, and therefore hee will not forsake thee nor cast thee of:* he bringeth back the people to the nature of God that they might hope to be receiued to mercie, if they repented them of their sinnes. And it is another very notable poynt. In deede I haue touched it heretofore: neuertheless, Moses maketh a larger declaratiō thereof, and not without cause. For lyke as hee had earst sayde that GOD is a fire which consumeth all thinges: so it behoued him to shewe on the contrarie part, that Gods nature is louing and gentle, and that he is ready to forgiue the faultes of such as acknowledge them. And that also is the cause why God telleth vs so often of his mercie. But whatsoeuer bee sayd to vs concerning his goodnesse: yet can we not trust in him as wee ought to doe. There is not any thing harder to vs than to assure our selues of the goodnesse and fatherly loue of our God. It is a great thing, that whē God shal haue auowed a hundred thowsand times, ỳ he loueth vs & wil be fauorable to vs: yet we continue still in a wauering, and stand disputing vppon the matter, & feede our owne distrustfulnesse, as though we would needes disable the record ỳ God giueth vs of his goodnesse. Now then, it is not more than needeth, when Moses telleth vs that God of his owne nature is pitifull. It is a propertie ỳ is euermore attributed vnto him, and that not onely in this text, but also in other places as we shal see hereafter: and the Scripture is full of the same doctrine. And why? Because that else it were not possible to assure men, forasmuch as they be so giuen to vnbeliefe, as they still martyr themselues, and are alwayes in perplexitie and vnquietnesse, bearing themselues in hand that God will neuer be at one w̄ them. True it is ỳ (as I haue sayd already) we be but too hardy in doing euil: but whē we should assure our selues ỳ God wil haue pitie vpon vs, & when we should seeke him: then doth our vnbeliefe bewray it selfe. Not without cause therefore doth Moses say here ỳ God is merci-

ful,

full, to the end that the people might conceiue Gods nature and take holde of it, which is altogether contrarie to their owne, as God himselfe auoweth in other places. My thoughtes (sayth hee by his prophet Esay) are not lyke yours. Esa.45.8. For if a man bee offended, although the wrong that is done him bee but small: yet if there is no meanes to pacify him, there will alwayes remain some roote of displeasure in his heart. Now we imagine God to be lyke our selues, if we measure him by our owne yard. For this cause hee protesteth thus: looke how farre heauen is from the earth, so farre are my thoughts from yours. Esa.45.9. And therefore assure your selues I seeke nothing else but that all such as haue offended mee should be at one with me. Yea & although your misdeedes be neuer so greeuous & heinous: Yet so it is, I am ready to forget them out of hand. So then let vs hearken to the rules of holy scripture, where God telleth vs that he is slowe to wrath, patient, and ready to forgiue the faultes that are committed against him. Let vs beare this in minde, that it may bee as a foundation for vs to builde vpon, when the case concerneth the forsaking of our sins, that we should be sorie for them, and obtain the mercie that God hath promised vs. Thus much concerning that poynt.

But it were not enough for vs to knowe Gods nature, except wee had his promise, and that hee shewed vs his will there. For the Papistes, the Turkes, and the Paynims also can well enough say (as they haue alwayes sayde) that God is mercifull: but they cannot see elles it to taste thereof. And the reason is, because they doe not sticke and leane to his promises. True it is that when they haue once imagined that God is mercifull, they enter into many questions. Yea but in deede (say they:) what woteth, whether this mercie serue for mee or no? And afterward they put Gods mercy into the ballance with their sinnes, and stand as folke distrusted of it. Then is there a certaine confused imagination of Gods mercy in all men: but yet can they not trust to it, neither can they returne vnto God, with ful perswasion that hee will reach them his hand to succor them. And why? for they haue not his promises. So much the more therefore doth it stand vs in hand, to marke well this text of Moses when hee addeth: *The Lorde thy God will not forget the couenant of thy fathers which hee sware vnto them.* And so besides the knowledge which wee haue that God is mercifull, and will receiue sinners when they come vnto him: let vs marke well that is behoueth vs also to haue his promises to rest vppon, so as our comming vnto him may bee because hee calleth and allureth vs, because hee hath shewed vs his will, because wee needs not feare that wee shall loose our labor. And why? for wee haue a warrant that GOD will heare vs. But Moses sayth expressly here, *the couenant of thy fathers which hee hath sworne vnto.* And why [hath hee sworne vnto it?] Because it is not enough for vs to knowe that God hath promised to receiue wretched sinners & to pardon them: except wee knowe also that his promises are directed specially vnto vs, and can apply them to our vse.

True it is that his promises stand not vppon mens doings, neither is it in euery mans power to warrant himselfe that God will shewe him fauour. For doe wee thinke him bound to vs? Vppon what assurance shall I conceiue in my head, that God will accept me? That were a diuelish presumption. God then must be faine to promise vs: hee must be faine to promise vs of his own free goodnesse, & although wee be wretched & miserable: yet neuerthelesse he will haue pitie vppon vs. So then, if we will obtayne forgiuenesse of our sinne, we must begin at Gods promises.

But it is not for naught that Moses sayth, *the couenant of thy fathers.* That is to say, the couenaunt that was made with thy fathers, which is as their peculiar inheritaunce. Now then we see how Moses meaning is, that to come vnto God, wee must not onely consider that hee hath promised to bee mercifull to sinners: but also euery of vs must apply it peculiarly to himselfe, so as he can say, in deede I am a wretched creature, I am plunged in cursednesse, there is nothing but despaire for mee. No verily, if thy God should not shewe thee mercie. As how? It is to thee that hee speaketh when hee sayth, Come vnto mee all ye that are weary and ouerloden, and I will refreshe you. Thou art of that number. Nowe then assure thy selfe that thy GOD giueth thee his promises, to the intent that thou resting vppon them, mightest be sure of his goodnesse, that it cannot faile thee. Wherefore let vs note doue but that the promises which God hath made to his Church are ours, & that euery of vs ought to apply them particularly to his owne vse and benefite, so as when any man is in perplexitie, that he wotteth not what to say, hee must alwayes come backe to this poynt, how now? hath not thy GOD promised that hee will pitie such as call vpon him? Yea in deede: but I knowe not whether I be of that sort or no. Why? haue I not bin baptized in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ? Haue I not his holy Supper as a second pledge, whereby hee sheweth mee that hee receiueth mee into the number of his children? Be thou out of doubte therefore seeing thou hast so many recordes, that thy God will be fauorable to thee, and feare thou not but hee will shewe thee mercie. Thus yee see the cause why Moses speaketh here expressly of the couenaunt of the fathers, as it was made with their father Abraham, and to all his seede after him. For otherwise it woulde not haue boted at all in the time of Moses. But forasmuch as GOD had sayd, I will bee thy GOD to a thousand generations: his offspring is comprehended in it after his decease. And therefore the Iewes ought to haue assured themselues by the vertue of the same couenaunt, that they shoulde bee receiued so oft as they repented them of their sinnes, they shoulde alwayes finde the mercie that they had needes of.

Mat.11.28.

Psal.145.19.

Gen.17.7.

And now let vs vnderstand, that seeing God vouchsafed to extend his goodnesse to the children of those with whome he had made his couenaunt: and that although they were sliddes

backe and vtterly turned away from him, and had quite forsaken him, yet notwithstanding he ceased not to shew them mercie. Now seeing he speaketh nowadays vnto vs, and the voyce of our Lorde Iesus Christ soundeth lowde in calling vs, to reconcile vs to our God, and that the forgiuenesse of sinnes is preached vnto vs in his name, and tidings is broughte vnto vs that God desireth to be friendes with vs, and that all warre should be layd aside betweene him and vs: let vs assure our selues I say, that it is not for vs to bee wilfull and stubborne, but that is behoueth vs to submit our selues to our God: and therewithall to assure our selues throughly, that this promise of his is not deceitefull. Why? for the couenant is ours, so as our God intendeth not that his promises shall vanish into the aire, but that they shall bee stedfast towardes vs, so as euery of vs may fare the better by them. Thus much cõcerning this saying of *the couenant of the fathers*.

2. Cor. 5. 18. 19. 20. Eph. 2. 17.

But yet herewithall Moses faileth not to shew, that it was not men that did first make the couenant with God, but that God did preuent them: and that it is hee, that of his owne free goodnesse hath bound himselfe vnto them. And for that cause is it sayd *that God sware to that couenant* and both of them are right necessarie. For as I haue told you, if wee take not Gods promises as peculiar to our selues, it is vnpossible for vs to be so grounded vppon them, as to call vppon him with a stedfast heart, but wee shal bee euer wauering. Therefore wee must be fully perswaded, that God maketh vs partakers of all the benefites that hee promised to our auncestors. And when wee be once at that poynt, we must also consider on the otherside, that it is not for vs to be oute the forehand with God, neither doth our Lorde tarie till wee come to seeke him: but it is he ✠ hath preuented vs w̄ his mercie. To be short, it is he ✠ hath vouchsafed to take vs for his children: and although we were straungers vnto him, & had nee in any wise deserued to haue any acquaintance with him, yet notwithstãding he hath vouchsafed of his owne accord to linke himselfe with vs. It behoueth vs to thinke so. For if wee knoore not that Gods promises are of free gift: wee will fal to seeking of some deserte and worthinesse in our selues, and wee will say, that was the meane whereby to come vnto God: he bestowed such a benefite or gratious gift vppon vs, because wee deserued it: wee haue gotten such a thing by the meanes of our own vertues. Let vs beware of such fantasticall imaginations, and let vs not thinke to doe our selues any good ✠ way. So then let vs beare in mind, that whereas God hath declared his couenant vnto vs, & calleth it ours: yet notwithstãding he wil haue vs to know, ✠ his vouchsafing to vtter himself vnto vs, & so giue himself vnto vs, is of his owne accord without being bound thereto, insomuch that wee did rather deserue to be vtterly reiected at his hand. And Moses thinketh it not enough to say singly that God made the sayd couenant: but hee addeth also *that hee sware to it*: and not without cause doth he set that further here. For as I haue declared already heretofore, when GOD speaketh, wee inquire whether the thing be so or no. Truely such manner of inquiring is very wicked. But what for that? Our vnbelief beareth such sway with vs, as we cannot stay to rest vnto GOD. Therefore doth he supply our want, and sweareth to warrant his worde the better which hee hath giuen vs. If wee beleeue not a man vppon his bare worde, wee doe him wrong. And therefore are mortall men put to their oothe, because they bee inclined ouermuch to vanitie. But when God sweareth at our request, what a thing is that? For seeing he is the vnchangeable truthe: why should not men trust him as soone as the worde is spoken with his mouth? But hereby we see how frowarde wee bee, and on the otherside we see also how God beareth with vs in humbling himself so farre as to sweare for our sakes, because hee seeth that wee would else be alwayes vnquiet, and that we shoulde still bee tempted to doubt. Therefore vouchsafeth hee to confirme vs by swearing, to the intent wee might bee the better assured of the hope of our saluation, and not doubt any more of his promises. Thus much concerning Gods swearing.

Now againe Moses sheweth after what maner men ought to seeke GOD: and hee sheweth it by deede. Hee had sayd afore that such as seeke God with all their heart and with all their soule, shal find him. And now he sheweth by what meanes men shall yeelde good proofe thereof, that is to wit of their true and vnfeined repentance: that is to wit, *by obeying the voyce of God*. For men will make bragges enowe that they beare a good heart to Godward: and we see dayly this shamelesnesse, that such as haue not one veine that tendeth to Godward, cease not for all that to protest with full mouth, that they loue God, and they beare the worlde in hand that they bee wonderful zealous. But here Moses bringeth vs backe to the tryall. Wee must shewe whereby, (sayth hee,) so as it may appeare by our fruites that our sinnes misliye vs in deede, and that we bee desirous in very deede to seeke God, to sticke vnto him. And howe may that bee done? Euen by obeying his voyce, according as wee knowe also that obedience is the thing which God preferreth before all other sacrifices. And that is a thing worthie to be well marked. For Moses here setteth out two things. The one is, that when men bragge of their willingnesse to seeke God, if they shewe it not in good earnest by their whole lyfe, so as it may bee knowen by their fruites: a men may well tell them that they lye, and that they doe but mocke with GOD and the worlde when they say, wee bee sorie for our sinnes. That is the thing which wee haue to marke for one poynt. Therefore let vs try our repentance by the said rule. When wa seeme to our selues to seeke God: let vs looke that it bee with liuely repentance, not in feete, hands, or eyes: but in ✠ reformation of all our affections, so as they may be giuen ouer all wholy to follow God & his worde. If it be not so with vs all ✠ euer we can say of repentance, is but mockery. Marke that for one poynt.

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The other is the obeying of Gods voyce. When as hee speaketh of the obeying of Gods voyce: it is to exclude all the fond deuotions of mans owne inuenting. For when men intend to serue God well, how goe they to worke? Mee thinkes (say they) that such a thing is good: and thereupon they set vp goodly gay seruices. Moses therefore excludeth all these thinges, in saying that we must obey the voyce of our God. Wherefore let vs see that wee submit our selues vnto him. Because wee see the world is so greatly giuen to inuent fond deuotions: let vs for our part learne to know, that whatsoeuer is of mans deuising, is playne deceit, and euen the high way to leade vs to destruction: and that the onely way to please God and to make our lyfe allowable before him, is simply to obey his worde, & to submit our selues to him, who he prouoketh vs to repentance, assuring our selues that it is the very meanes also whereby we may obteyne saluation, though wee haue deserued to perishe a hundred thowsand times.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our sins, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done heretofore, yea euen in such wise, as hauing condemned our selues for them, wee may not forbeare to rest vppon his promisses, and to resorte vnto him, and to pray vnto him, that hee may haue pitie vppon vs, as hee that desireth not the death of sinners, but that they should come home againe to him, for asmuch as hee is ready to admit them to the saluation which hee hath promised to his children. Wherefore let vs repayre vnto him, euen in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ, and if wee conuert not at the very first as soone as hee chastiseth vs, let vs pray him to make vs to proceede in true repentaunce from day to day, by forsaking the vice that is in vs, so as he may gouerne vs by his holy spirit, and the worlde may perceiue that Gods word hath such authorise ouer vs, as we desire nothing but to fashion our selues all wholly thereafter. That it may please him to grant that grace, not onelie to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the iiii. of Iune. 1555.

The xxvii. Sermon, which is the ninth vpon the fourth Chapter.

32 For inquire thou nowe of the daies past, which haue beene before thee, since the day that God created man vpon the earth, and from the one end of heauen vnto the other, if euer there were done so great a thing as this, or if euer the like thing haue beene heard of.

33 Was there euer anie Nation that hath heard the voice of God speaking out of the middes of fire, as thou hast heard and yet continuest aliue?

34 Or was there euer anie God, that assaied to goe and take him a people from the middes of another people, by temptations, signes, and wonders, by warres and strong hand, by stretched out arme and great terriblenesse, as the Lord your God hath done in Egypt before your eies?

35 He hath made thee to see them, to the intent thou shouldest knowe that the Lord is God, and that there is none other but onelie he.

ALthough that all the thinges that euer God did, ought to serue for our learning, & wee knowe not any thing but by auncient stories: yet the later that thinges were done, so much the better ought they to touch vs. And although wee ought to profit our selues by Gods workes when wee beholde them a farre off: yet ought they to moue vs much more, when they touch our selues and concerne our owne persons. If a thing be tolde vs, which wee neuer sawe: yet ought the storie to serue to waken vs. But if wee bee able to beare witnesse of it our selues, so as our eyes haue seene it, and wee haue not had it by other mens report, but euery of vs is able to auowe it by his owne experience: ought wee not to bee much better and muche more assuredly taught by it? In like case is it when any of vs shall haue seene or perceiued any worke of God: for he ought to be touched so much the more to the quick. In the selfesame respect doth Moses now speake vnto the people, *Looke about thee, inquire of the auncient ryuers, for whether thou canst finde that euer there haue bin any such wonders wrought since the creation of the world, as God hath done in thy sight.* Seeing it is so, thine vnthankfulnesse shalbe the more vnexcusable, if thou acknowledge not so great a benefite, by perswading thy selfe fully, that there is none other God than the same that hath vttered himselfe to thee, & hath giuen thee so euident and infallible tokens of his maiestie. Therefore haue a regard to serue the God that hath purchased thee: for thou canst not henceforth alledge any cause of ignorance. Now by the way we haue to marke, ỹ the intent of Moses is, to put a difference here betweene ỹ God of Israel, & all

those that were worshipped [for Gods] in the world: and not without cause. For when men haue forged any God to themselues, they may well royle themselues to serue him, but it shall turne to their condemnation. Why so? Because they rob God of the honor that belongs to him, to giue it to a creature or rather to a shadowe. For if wee make idols, they bee not worthy to bee reckoned among Gods creatures. If wee imagine of God after our owne lyking: it is but vanitie and leasing. So then, when men worship the thing that they haue conceiued in their own fansie: they conuey the glory of ỹ liuing God, not
2.Cor.3.4. only to creatures, but also to that which is nothing at all. Therefore it is very expedient for vs to knowe which is the true God, that wee may worship him. For euen at that time the world was peruerted, so as al men went wãdring in their owne superstitions. Although God manifested himselfe so many wayes: yet notwithstanding, lyke as the world was blinde and ceased not to intangle it selfe in all errors: so euery man forged idols to himselfe. True it is, that all men sayd, wee haue a religion, and our intent is to serue God: but yet for all that, there was no soundnesse, there was no vnderstanding among them. Behold, God gathe-
Gen.17.7. Exod.19.6. 1.Pet.2.9. red his people together, accordingly as he had chosẽ ỹ house of Abraham, and according to his saying ỹ the same should be to him a holy linage and dedicated to his seruice. Seeing then that the Iewes were not mingled with the other nations of the earth: they should haue considered that they ought not to haue had any fellowship with the vnbeliuers, so as their religion should haue beene intangled and doubtfull: but that being sanctifyed to the maker of heauen and earth, they should haue worshipped him purely, and submitted themselues vnder his obeysance. Now then wee haue here the counsell of Moses, or rather the counsel which ỹ holy Ghost intended to vtter in speaking here by his mouth. And (as I haue told you) that this doctrine is very profitable, so ought wee to be the more heedfull in marking it. For naturallie wee be inclined to goe astray. Insomuch that although wee had no occasions before our eies: yet would euerie of vs deceiue and beguile himselfe. And againe, the diuell ceaseth not to offer vs many illusions, to dazle our wittes withall, and to make vs swarue from the right and pure religion. Seeing then that there is such vice in vs, and that wee bee hemmed in on all sides with so many daungers: let vs learn to make our profit by his doctrine.

True it is that the thing cannot bee sayd to vs nowadayes, which Moses telleth the people of Israel here: for Gods shewing of himselfe to vs, or his stretching out of his arme to deliuer vs, hath not bin of any late continuance of time, as was his speaking to that people from the middest of the fire: but yet neuertheleſſe the same exhortation belongeth vnto vs also. And why? For Gods choosing of the people of Israell to himselfe, and his declaring of his wonderfull power for the recouerie of them, was not to the end that they shoulde knowe him and worship him as the true God, by the space of a hundred yeeres onely: but to the intent that the remembraunce of the same redemption shoulde continue to the worlds end. Then let vs marke well that Gods deliuering of the children of Abraham from the bondage of Egypt, was to the ende that wee also in these dayes shoulde take him for our true GOD which hath all power in his hand, which disposeth of his creatures, and which created the worlde and gouerneth it. Sith it is so, although our eyes haue not seene the miracles that are rehearsed here: yet ought wee to make our profite of them, and to bee edifyed by them, so as wee may bee sure that wee haue not an vncertaine GOD, nor a religion forged at aduenture, or at the pleasure of men: but that it is the very true GOD, who hath giuen so good proofe of his power at once already, as wee haue no cause to doubt of him, or to think his maiestie darksome, or to stand skanning whether hee ought to haue superioritie and preheminence or no. For hee hath shewed that all the world is his, and that all that euer was worshipped at that time in the world, was but idols. Thus yee see how this text is to bee taken that wee may apply it to our owne profite. For it is not enough for vs to knowe what Moses meant in speaking to the people of Israell: but we must vnderstand lykewise, whereto the same doctrine serueth vs at this day, so as we may receiue instruction by it.

Now before wee passe any further, let vs marke the wordes that are set downe here. *Inquire* (sayth Moses) *of the dayes of olde time, since God created man vppon the earth*. Here hee sheweth vs that our negligence is partly the cause that wee knowe not God. True it is that wee cannot atteyne to his high maiestie by our owne wit: for our sight is too shortt. Nay (which more is) not onely Gods highnesse is incomprehensible to vs: but also when we think to come neere him, it ouerwhelmeth vs. We be blind wretches that haue nothing but darkenesse in vs: and God in respect of himselfe dwelleth in vnapprochable lyght. But yet for all that, if it bee well and throughly considered and looked to: it will appeare that men make none account of seeking GOD, but forsloweth it as a thing of no profite. So then let vs marke the exhortation that is made here, that at leastwise when God worketh, wee may apply all our wittes earnestly to consider it, and that if there be the lyke indeuour in vs as wee make reckoning of, wee may preferre that before all other thinges. For what a thing is it if wee knowe not him that made vs and fashioned vs, and by whose power we haue our being still? When wee shall haue raunged about heauen and earth, and yet know not God: must wee not needes bee wretched? Now then let vs learne to bee more diligent to know God and religion than wee haue bin. And this stretcheth very farre. For we see how we be sharpesighted and forecasting in worldely thinges, and we spare no paines in ỹ behalfe. If ỹ case cõcerne our own cõmoditie or profit: we neede no great calling on, for nature leadeth vs thereunto.

But

But when wee ſhould go to Godward, and ſeeke his will: then wee haue no leaſure, euerie of vs findeth an excuſe, wee bee letted about other things. And is not this a token of great naughtineſſe? So much the more therefore ought wee to come backe to that which is tolde vs here: namely that wee bee ſo farre of from being excuſed now adayes: that if wee bee negligent and ſeeke not after God, nor inquire how things goe, nor what God hath done, nor what he teacheth in his Church wee ſhall bee condemned by this text. For it is ſaid, *Inquire of the dayes of olde time, ſince God created the world.* True it is that all can not bee ſo great Clerkes as to knowe all thinges that were requiſite: but yet ought wee not to ſleepe in that behalfe, as though the knowing of God were a thing of no value. Therefore let vs learne to place it in higheſt degree, ſo as all the reſt of our cares and buſineſſes may bee put vnder it as inferiour to it, as good reaſon woulde that they ſhould be. Now Moſes ſaieth expreſſely, *ſince God created man vppon the earth*, bicauſe that that people had bin taught concerning the creation of the world. But that was not knowen eueriwhere: inſomuch that when thoſe which tooke themſelues to bee verie wiſe, were demaunded how long it was ago ſince the worlde was created: ſome woulde make it ſix times as long ago, and otherſome thirtie times. Wherein it appeareth how God puniſhed their ſhameſull negligence. And whereof came it that mẽ knew not when the world was created: but that they were contented to ſhut their eyes, and to knowe nothing that had bene done? Wherefore ſeeing that men do wilfully ſhun inſtruction: it is good reaſon that God ſhould giue them ouer to ſuch beaſtlineſſe, as they ſhoulde not knowe from whence they came, nor what their original was, but bee vtterly dulled. And for the ſame cauſe Moſes ſpeaking to the people whom God had reſerued to himſelfe, did put them in rememberaunce of the day wherein man was created vppon the earth.

Nowe he ſaieth, *Inquire from the one end of heauen to the other, to wit if euer there were ſo great a thing, or if euer man heard of the like.* After he hath ſpoken of the time, nowe he ſpeaketh of the places. As if he ſhould ſay, If folke will make good inquiſition, it is not ynough for them to knowe what thinges God hath ſhewed to themſelues: but it were meete for them to ſeeke about euery where, and to marke well what they finde, and to call to minde the things that haue bene done in farre Countries. Therefore conſider well (ſaieth he) what hath bin done from the one end of the heauen to the other. And this is it that I ſayde afore, namely that wee muſt profit our ſelues by all Gods workes, and although we behold them not with our eyes, yet if wee doe but heare of them, and tidings is brought vs of them from a farre, wee muſt honour God in them. In deede if wee bee witneſſes of them, they ought to touche vs ſo much the more. But yet howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, wee ought to doe our indeuour to knowe the things that haue bin done in ſtraunge Countries, according as is ſaid here. And when as Moſes ſaieth, *ſo great a thing*: thereby he ſheweth that the more that God manifeſteth his power: the more ought wee to be rauiſhed with wonderment. In deede there is no worke of God ſo ſmall, which ought not to moue vs to acknowledge ſome token of his Maieſtie therein. If wee doe but looke vpon a flie: ſurely wee haue there wherefore to magnifie God. If wee ſee but the ſlip of an herb, or any other thing bee it neuer ſo little: wee haue therein whereby wee ought to acknowledge the wonderfull workemanſhip of God. But if he doe moreouer worke much more euident myracles, ought not all our wittes to be much more occupied or ſpent about them? Whẽ God doeth after a ſort alter the order of nature, and worketh after a new and vnaccuſtomed maner: is it not all one as if he ſhould rebuke vs for our negligence and ſay vnto vs: Seeing you knewe mee not for God by the accuſtomed order of nature, at leaſtwiſe thinke vpon mee now when I goe to worke after another ſtraunge faſhion, and conſider ye whether I bee God or no. Thus ye ſee what Moſes meant by ſaying, *There was neuer yet ſo great a thing, neither was there euer the like heard of.* Let vs marke well therefore that to attaine to the right knowledge of God, when wee haue raunged vp and downe through the whole world, and ſpent all our wittes in looking vpon al things whether they be great or ſmall: if God giue vs any ſuch inclings of his Maieſtie as may moouie vs more than ordinarie, we muſt be wholly rauiſhed thereat, and yeeld him the honour that is due vnto him. And how that ought to be done, it ſhall be declared more plainely anon: for as nowe I doe but goe through the wordes of Moſes ſeuerally as they lie.

He ſaieth afterward, *Was there euer any people that heard the voyce of their God ſpeaking out of the middes of fire, as thou haſt done, and yet continueſt aliue?* Here among other things Moſes alledgeth y God had ſpoken to his people out of the mids of fire. For it was a viſible ſigne of Gods Maieſtie, ſo as it was not for them to doube any more whether he were y liuing God, ſeeing they heard his voyce thundering from heauen, and therewithall ſawe a great thicke cloud and a flaming fire. Nowe ſeeing that this appeared to them: was it for them to inquire any more whether it were God or no? No verily: for the thing was moſt euident. And furthermore, here Moſes vpbraideth the people couertly with their leawdneſſe, if they continue ſlowe ſtill in doing homage to the liuing God, ſeeing that all the heathen were inclined yea and wilfully wedded to their ſuperſtitions, and yet knewe no cauſe why. For had the Heathen men bene asked by what warrant they worſhipped their idoles: they would haue anſwered, by reaſon of their myracles. Yea, but what maner of miracles were they? fantaſticall imaginations, diueliſh illuſions, and inchauntmentes. But beholde, Moſes ſpeaketh here of a thing that was knowen: the hearers of it were preſent to beare witneſſe of it. For he ſaieth, ye heard the voyce of your God from out of the middes of fire. Seeing that your GOD hath ſhewed himſelfe to you ſo familiarly: there

remaines no excuse for you, if you worship him not as your GOD. Either ye must forsake him through wilfull rebellion, or else ye must needes graunt that there is neither power, Maiestie, nor glorie in the whole worlde, other than that which was shewed vnto you, when the lawe was giuen you.

But let vs marke by the way, that Moses matcheth here the worde with the myracles. For the myracles had booted them nothing at all, if doctrine had not bene matched therewith, as hath beene touched heretofore. But yet is it good for vs to bee put in minde of it againe, and it is not for nought also that the holy Ghost repeateth it in this text: and wee shall see it mentioned yet againe hereafter. If the people of Israel had but onely had some visions, to doe them to vnderstand which was the liuing God that had brought them out of the lande of Egypt, and in the meane whyle had bene let alone in their ignoraunce, so as they had had no lawe, no rule, no promise of saluation, no instruction of Religion: all the rest had beene to no purpose. It is true that they might haue liued, being once deliuered from bondage: but what had the end of it bene? They had become but a barbarous people, and they had corrupted themselues with superstitions as the Gentiles did. But when as God, (after his declaring of himselfe vnto them, and after his shewing of his Maiestie vnto them as it were in a myrrour or rather a liuely picture) did also teache them and giue them a sure Lawe: he ledde them into a Religion that was sacred and holy. And so yee see that God gaue them such an euidence as was fitte for their saluation.

Deut. 4. 33. 13.

Deut. 4. 36.

Now remaineth how Moses addeth, *That the people hauing heard Gods voyce, continued still alyue.* Whereby he doeth vs to vnderstande: that it is a speciall grace of God that wee bee not consumed by his presence and by his worde. It is saide that the mountaines melt at the sight of him. And againe, that if he doe but cast his eye vpon the whole earth, it quaketh. For Gods Maiestie in it selfe is so terrible, as it were ynough to sink the whole worlde. When he speaketh, his voyce doeth not onely scare all creatures, but also vtterly dismay them, yea and euen bring them to nothing. Therefore it is a great myracle, that mortall men being so frayle and brickle, and being no better than a shadowe: are inabled to heare Gods voyce, and yet are not consumed thereby. So then, Moses sheweth here, ỹ God did not onely make the people of Israel to perceiue his Maiestie & heauenly power: but also gaue thē a louing taste of his grace and goodnesse therewithal, to the intent they should not be too much dismaied at it, but rather haue their wits at libertie and well setled to acknowledge, Beholde, my God hath shewed himself to mee, & therefore it is good reason ỹ I shoulde serue him and submit my self wholly vnto him. Thus in effect wee see two things: wherof the one is that God shewed not himselfe to his people without teaching thē by his word: & the other is, ỹ the same word was not only so warranted as they might know it to be the word of God, and submit themselues vnto it: but also was made sweete & amiable so farre forth as was requisite. The people could not but bee partly afraide (as I haue declared alreadie) when they perceiued the Maiestie of God: but yet howsoeuer they fared, God did so moderate his rigour, as they perceiued him to be their father in that he shewed them such reason.

Psal. 68. 9. & 97. 4. 5. and 114. 7.

Psal. 5. 3.

Moses addeth immediatly, *Was there euer any God that tooke vppon him to bring a people from among other people, by temptations, signes, wonders, warres, and a stretched out arme, as thou knowest that thy God hath done in bringing thee out of Egypt?* Here Moses purposeth expressely to confirme the people in the Religion that had bin giuen them, to the intent they shoulde not yeeld themselues to any of the great nomber of superstitions that raigned euerywhere at the same time, as wee bee commonly wont to doe. Truely if a people haue auncient customes, they bee loth to forgo them. And why? Bicause pride maketh vs to like well of the thinges that growe in our owne gardine, (as they say:) and to our seeming, all that euer other men haue is nothing in comparison of that [which is our owne.] But if God call vs to him, and teach vs faithfully what we haue to doe: we be so wildheaded as we cannot abide the things that are shewed vs. We fall to seeking of this & that: behold (say we,) in such a Countrie there is such a custome & such a fashion: & why should not wee haue the same as well as they? Also wee see howe the vnbeleeuers vpbraide Gods children that they will needes bee too wise, if they hold themselues in awe vnder Gods word. What is it that the Papists do cast vs in the teeth withall now adayes? These are the men (say they) which take vpon them to renew the world, they will needes be singular by themselues, as though they had nothing at all to doe with the rest of mankinde. For this cause doeth Moses say here, Passe not you for it though you see so many Nations haue diuers fashions, so as euery of thē hath a Religion contrarie to yours, and that you be alone by your selues. For why? Your God hath chosen you in such sort, as he hath shewed you that ye may bee bold to defie all other nations. For hath it euer come to passe, that any god hath taken vppon him to conuey a people from out of the mids of another people? Seeing then that you are so shooled out, haue yee not a sure warrant that GOD will not haue you to mingle your selues with other Nations? Therefore if ye haue an eye to Gods bringing of you out of the lande of Egypt, ye shall alwaies bee put in minde, that the Religion which ye hold of him is good and holy, and ye may hold scorne of all other religions in the world. And moreouer, although other nations bee greater than you: yet may ye be bold to spit at their superstitions. For God hath sufficiently shewed, that he hath not giuen you his Lawes and Ordinances in vaine. And why? For he hath brought you out by your selues: which neuer befell to any people of the world but you.

And to the end that these things should bee the better esteemed: Moses sheweth here, that

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the ſaid deliuerance had no common thing in it. *For it was wrought* (ſaieth he) *by temptations, ſignes, wonders, warres, ſtrong hand, and ſtretched out arme.* When as he ſaieth, *by temptations*: he meaneth that the proofes were ſo notable, as the matter ought to be out of all crie. Seeing then that God had giuen them ſo many tokens: was it not ynough to lay it wide open to them, that the idols of Egypt were nothing, and that Pharao with all his power was vnable to doe any thing againſt ỹ God of Abraham? True it is that the woordes *Signes and wonders* import the ſelfe ſame thing: but yet is it not without cauſe that Moſes vſeth ſuch diuerſitie of termes: And why ſo? For wee ſee howe lightly men ouerpaſſe Gods woorkes, and make verie ſlender reckening of them. Therefore was it requiſite that Moſes ſhoulde vſe ſuch termes and ſpeeche, to ſet the more eſtimation vppon the excellent greatneſſe of the thinges that God had done in Egypt. Beholde, (ſaieth he,) thy God hath giuen thee ſignes and wonders, he hath vſed his ſtrong hand & ſtretched out his arme, in deliuering thee from ſuch bondage: and therefore know thou thereby that he hath ſufficiently warranted his Lawe, and the rule whereby he will haue thee to liue, & whereunto he hath put thee in ſubiection.

Now he preſently addeth thereunto, *That this was done before their eyes*, ſo as they were certified ỹ GOD was their maker, and that he onely was the true GOD, and that there was none other God before him. Here againe Moſes intendeth to prooue the people the more vnthankefull, if they profited not themſelues by the things that they knewe by experience. *Thine eyes* (ſaieth he) *are witneſſes of it.* As if hee ſhoulde ſay, If God of his gratious goodneſſe did but ſend thee meſſengers to tell thee of ỹ things that he had done: yet ought'eſt thou to receiue the thinges that were told thee. But now it is not any other bodie that maketh report of them vnto thee: but euen thy God himſelfe hath ſhewed them vnto thee, and therfore there is no further excuſe for thee, for it hath bin ſhewed euen to the ſight of thine eye: and what more? *that the Lord is the true God*, (ſaieth he) *and that there is none other but onely he.* Here wee haue the ſame thing to marke which hath bin touched alreadie: namely that Moſes ſpeaketh not ſimply of myracles or wonders, as it were to make a rehearſall of them: but alſo ſheweth the ende whereto they tend, which is ỹ God ſhould be magnified. And it is a verie profitable leſſon, [to vnderſtand] that when we haue ſuch thinges, wee muſt learne in any wiſe to glorifie our God by them. And had this point bene well obſerued, the wretched world had not bene turned aſide to ſo many ſuperſtitions as it hath bin, vnder colour of falſe myracles. Whereof commeth it that creatures are worſhipped in Poperie, but vnder the colour of falſe myracles? O (ſay they) ſuch a Saint hath done a myracle. And vnder ỹ colour Gods glory muſt be diminiſhed, inſomuch that looke how many myracles there are, ſo many ſtops are there to whold the wretched world from comming vnto God, and they be euē fond gaſingſtocks alſo to make men ſtand poring vpon ỹ creatures. Therefore doth it ſtand vs on hād to mark the things ſo much the better, which are told vs here by Moſes: that is to wit ỹ by myracles God wil haue himſelf only to be knowē without matching of any companion w̄ him. He will haue his glory to ſhine foorth in ſuch wiſe, as men ſhall ſtoope to him alone, and yeeld him all ỹ preheminence. To bee ſhort, (as Moſes ſaith here) he will haue men to know that there is none other but he, neither aboue nor beneath. According wherevnto he forwarneth vs here to make any vndergods or meanegods, and doeth vs to vnderſtand that the ſoueraigne God will keepe his ſtate ſtill, ſo as he will not abyde that men ſhall in any wiſe abaſe it, nor diminiſh his Maieſtie, nor part his offices among his creatures, to allot any peece or portion of it, bee it neuer ſo ſmall, to one or other: No no, he will continue alone by himſelf. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke in effect as concerning thoſe wordes of Moſes.

But nowe let vs come backe againe to make a ſhort concluſion of the chiefe matter which I haue touched: which is, that Gods declaring of his ſtrength and power in ſuch wiſe, was to the intent he might be diſcerned from all the idoles of the world, and that his people might be tyed to the religiō that he had deliuered thē. Neuertheleſſe it belongeth to vs alſo, and in verie deed it behoueth vs to apply it to our ſelues. And ſurely ſeeing that God hath authorized his lawe by ſo many myracles: let vs aſſure our ſelues ỹ he deliuered not a doctrine of two or three dais, but ſuch a one as ſhould continue for euer: in ſo much that the ratifying which he added vnto it, ought to haue full force euen among vs at this day. Is Gods Lawe abated, I meane as in reſpect of the ſubſtance? It is true that the Ceremonies are no more in vſe: they were all laide downe at the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. But as for the doctrine of the Lawe, which containeth the promiſes of ſaluatiō, the couenant wherby God hath choſen thoſe whō he will haue to be of his Church, ỹ records of ỹ forgiuenes of our ſinnes, and finally his will to ſhewe vs the true rule of good life: all this continueth ſtill, and ſhall continue to the worldes ende. Wherefore let vs marke well that all the myracles and wonders ỹ were wrought in deliuering the people of Iſrael out of Egypt, doe ſerue vs at this day for a confirmation to cauſe vs to receiue Gods Lawe with all reuerence, and to aſſure and warrant vs that it is not a doctrine of mans deuiſe, but of Gods owne thundering down from heauen. Let that ſerue for one point.

Eph. 2. 15. Col. 2. 4. Heb. 9. 10. 15 Mat. 5. 17. 18

But yet notwithſtanding, wee haue a greater confirmation giuen vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For God hath appeared more viſibly in him, than he did to the fathers in the time of the Lawe. Wee knowe that the whole fulneſſe of the Godhead dwelleth in Ieſus Chriſt, and that the ſame hath bene knowen wel ynough in him. Sith it is ſo then: we may better aſſure our ſelues now adayes, than the Iewes could in their time, that wee haue one God, of whome wee ought not to doubt, and that we haue ſuch a Religion as was

1. Cor. 3. 18 Hebr. 1. 2. 1. Iohn 1. 1. Coloſ. 2. 9.

not inuented by man, and that wee ought not to goe at all aduenture, but that wee haue a moſt ſure way to walke in. And here ye ſee whereof wee ought to glorie. For ſurely it is an ineſtimable benefite, that wee ſtand not in a mamering, to ſay, I would faine doe well but I wote not how: but are fully perſwaded that God alloweth our doings, and that wee haue to doe with the liuing God: and may take vppon vs to compare our ſelues with all the wretched idolaters and infidels throughout the whole world. True it is that the Papiſtes pretend to worſhip the ſame God that wee doe: but wee ſee how they ſwarue from Gods worde. And therefore it ſtandeth vs on hand to put the thing in vre which I haue ſpoken of heretofore: that is to wit, that it is not ynough for vs to conceiue ſome Maieſtie of God, but we muſt alſo learne which is he, to the intent wee wander not away in our owne imaginations. For that is the thing wherein we differ from the Papiſtes and the Iewes. The Iewes can ſay well ynough that they worſhip ỹ God of Abraham, and that they haue the lawe that was giuen by Moſes: but in the meane while they haue renounced Ieſus Chriſt who is the end of the law, and they haue the vaile that blindfolderh their eyes, & moreouer they haue ſo peruerted Gods ſeruice, that they be ſtraied quite and cleane frō the right way. Likewiſe the Papiſtes will ſay that they worſhip God, and him whom he hath ſent to be the Redeemer of the world: but yet for all that, men ſee how they haue tranſfigured God, and aboliſhed his ſeruice, & made a hotchpotch of all the ſuperſtitions of the Heathen, with the Religion that God ordained. To be ſhort, there is nothing but vncleannes among them in that behalfe. In reſpect whereof, ye ſee wee ought ſo much the more to acknowledge the infinite grace of our God towardes vs, in that he hath ſo ſhooled vs out frō among the vnbeleeuers. And wee muſt alſo marke the meane: which is, that wee haue not onely the myracles to proue that there is a God in heauen: but alſo that doctrine wherein God ſheweth himſelfe fully to vs, to the intent wee ſhould knowe him, and not haue our eyes bleared any more, nor runne rouing here and there: but follow the doctrine that our God hath giuen vs, and whereby it is his will to draw vs to him.

Rom. 10. 4. 2. Cor. 3. 15.

Thus yee ſee that the meane for vs to put this ſaying of Moſeſes in vre, is not to looke onely to the myracles that haue bene wrought for the ratifying of the Lawe: but to goe to the Goſpell, and there to perceiue that God hath ſhewed himſelfe to vs againe in farre greater perfection than he did to ỹ fathers of olde time. Beſides this, let vs beare in minde the warning that I ſpake of afore: namely that when we once knowe the myracles whereby God vouchſafed to confirme his Maieſtie: we muſt repaire to his worde, aſſuring our ſelues that that is the verie meane whereby God draweth vs to him. Therefore whenſoeuer we haue Gods word preached vnto vs, let vs vnderſtand that it is a confirmation to aſſure vs that he raigneth ouer vs. And therefore let vs take heede that wee make our profit thereby, ſeeing he graunteth vs this grace and priuiledge, which (as we ſee) is not common to all men. And let vs pray him to ſeale the doctrine in our heartes by his holy ſpirit, which we heare with our fleſhie eares, that ſeeing he hath once called vs to the knowing of him, he will increaſe the ſame more and more, and ſo guide vs as we may rather looke vp to heauen than pore vpon the creatures and things that are mortall. Therefore let vs haue a conſtant and inuincible fayth in God which hath once manifeſted himſelfe to vs, ſo as wee may defie Satan and all the abuſes and errours that haue bene brought in by men.

According to this holy doctrine wee will caſt our ſelues downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as it may bring vs to true repentance: and wee therewithall acknowledge the grace and benefites which he hath powred out vpon vs, ſo as we may know better to make our profit by them than we haue done, and not bee negligent in conſidering his workes, but diligent therein as becommeth vs and moreouer ſo receiue the doctrine ỹ is dayly preached vnto vs, as wee may apply our eyes to the diſcerning of the things that are dayly ſhewed vs, and our good God make vs to finde his power and goodneſſe by experience, as he hath done to others in all ages, that we may bee the better confirmed in the loue and obedience which wee owe him, ſo as wee may neuer be turned from it whatſoeuer the Diuell practiſe to turne vs away from it. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the v. of Iune. 1555.

The xxviij. Sermon, which is the tenth vpon the fourth Chapter.

36 He made thee to heare his voice from heauen, to inſtruct thee withall: and on earth he ſhewed thee his great fire, & thou heardeſt his words out of the middeſt of the fire.

37 Becauſe he loued thy fathers and choſe their ſeede after them, hee made thee to come out of Egypt in his preſence, by his great power:

38 To driue out Nations before thee, greater and mightier than thou, to bring thee in, and to giue thee their lands to inherit, as is ſeene this day.

I tolde

I Told you heretofore that if God had but only wrought myracles when he brought his people out of Egypt, it would haue beene to small purpose: for they had had no instruction to leade them to right knowledge. But in asmuch as his word was matched with them, now there wanted nothing at all. And that is the cause why Moses exhorteth the people yet againe, to consider howe it is long of none but themselues that they know not God, yea euen to attaine to the heritage, not onely of the land of promise, but also of the kingdome of heauen. Furthermore he telleth them that Gods word had such maiestie, as the people had no cause to doubt but it was God that spake it. Assure thy selfe (saith he) that the voice which thou herdest was not a humain or earthly voice: but thy God spake as it were from heauen. It is true that the voyce sounded from the middes of the fire that was seene vpon the mountaine: but here Moses meaneth that the doctrine was not darke, forasmuch as God gaue certaine signes of his maiestie, to the ende that the peoples faith might bee assured throughly. And for the same cause doeth he vse the worde *instruction*, which signifieth not onely to teach with words, but also to traine on with often chastisement. As if he should say, thy God in this case hath as it were holde thee in awe, so as it is not nowe lawfull for thee to despise his lawe as though it came from an vncertaine place. For why? It hath soueraine authoritie, thou canst not but thereby perceiue that God hath declared himselfe to thee, to the ende thou shouldest worship his maiestie and do him homage. Now then we see that the effect of the thinges which Moses declareth heere to the Iewes, is that God had giuen them visible signes at hande, and as it were familiarly, to the ende that his worde shoulde haue due reuerence, and bee receiued obediently, and all things bee done to the instruction of the people. And although Moses rehearse but the things ỹ were done in mount Horeb, where the lawe was put forth: yet may we gather a general doctrine thereof. For wee see howe God stoopeth to our infirmitie. Because we cannot mount so high as to come vnto him, he cõmeth down to our slender capacitie. Seing that he doeth so, ought not we to bethe more prouoked to submitte our selues to him? and if wee doe it not, shall it not bee cast in our teeth, that there was no lette in him that wee had not meanes and helpes to instruct vs with all? But what for that? In steede of comming to God, we haue turned our backe vppon him and rebelled against him. Wherfore let vs consider after what manner God applieth himselfe to our rudenesse, that wee may bee the more moued to resort vnto him. And besides that, let vs referre all thinges to the same ende that Moses noteth heere: which is, ỹ forasmuch as God is so gracious to vs as to shewe vs his truth: wee must imbrace it, assuring our selues that it groweth not in the worlde, but commeth from heauen. Therefore let the doctrine of saluation be receiued among vs with al obedience. For else it is to no purpose for vs to protest that we call vppon God and are willing to honor and serue him. For the proofe that he requireth therof, is that we should hearken quietly to his wordes and that our faith should bee setled, so as wee resemble not the vnbeleeuers, who are alwayes doubting: but stande vpon this sure foundation, that it is God which speaketh it, & therefore it is not lawful for vs to reply against it, but wee must submit our selues wholly in all points to ỹ which he saith. Thus yee see what we haue remember vpon this place.

And herewithall let vs marke when this was treated of. For it is not without cause that Moses speaketh of this instruction. Why so? For if wee bee not subdewed, it is hard for vs to submit our selues to God: nay rather we draw cleane backe from him. Therefore must our Lorde bee faine to correct this loftinesse in vs: and when he seeth vs after that sort, either rebellious, or stubborne, or that wee bee dull vppon the spurres hee must vse such meanes as hee knoweth to bee fit to reclaime vs withall. Wee see howe Moses saieth heere, that the wonders which were wrought at the publishing of the Lawe, serued as it were for a nurturing, to the intent that the people shoulde no more be so vnruly as they had beene before, but become more fitte to be taught. But this vice reigned not among the Iewes onely: it is to be found continually among al men. Therfore let vs learne to make our own profite of the thinges that our Lorde hath giuen vs for the authorising of his word, that we play not the wood beastes, but behaue our selues as meek sheepe and lambes, to hearken to the voice of our shepherd. This is the thing in effect, which wee haue to gather vpon this place.

And now he saith, *Because God loued thy fathers, therefore hath he chosen their seede after them:* howbeit that he say, *thy seede after him.* Moses chaungeth here the number, and not without cause: for after he had spoken of the fathers, hee returneth to one alone, that is to wit, to Abraham, because it was he with whom God made the couenant. And againe it serueth to magnifie the grace that is mentioned here, as shalbe declared anon more at large. The effect of ỹ thing ỹ Moses intendeth to tell ỹ people, is that it is a great shame for thẽ and ỹ they be vnexcusable, if they know not the goodnes of their God. And why? Because God of his owne free mercy chose thẽ, not for that they were better than other nations, (as shalbe shewed more at length hereafter) or for that there was more noblenes, worthines or vertue in them: but for that it pleased him to loue their fathers. Nowe we see that the meaning of Moses was as if he shold haue said thus: You haue heere an inestimable benefite aboue all people, namely that God vouchsafeth to reigne among you, that he hath sanctified you to himselfe, that you bee his Churche, that you bee his flocke, that you bee his children, and (as it is saide in another place,) that you be a kingly priesthood. Assure your selues this is not giuen you for any desert of yours, for haue you deserued aught at Gods hand? Are ye better than al ỹ rest of the world?

Exod. 19. 6. & 1. Pet. 2. 9.

worlde? No: why then hath God giuen you such priuiledge? Not for any thing that he hath foũd in you: but because it pleased him of his owne good will. And whereof came that? Euen of his choosing of your forefathers. You were chosen of him before you were borne. And what was the cause that he chose your forefathers? Euen his owne loue, (saith he): that is to say, because hee marked them of his owne free mercie, to shoule them out from the rest of the world: yea euen at such time as Abraham was barren, and alreadie striken in yeeres, and as good as decayed and halfe deade, when as yet hee had no issue at all. And yet for all this, God chose him, so as that poore old fellowe became the welspring of your forefathers. Seeing then that God hath chosen you after such a sort, yee see there is none other cause of the comming of saluation vnto you, but onely his meere goodnesse. Now therefore consider how much you be bound to your God, and bee not vnthankfull to him, neither suffer such a benefite to slip from you, so as yee should be bereft thereof through your owne lewdnes and vnthankfulnes. This in effect is the doctrine that is contcined in this place.

Rom.4.19. Hebr.11.12.

Nowe, that we may fare the better by it, wee haue to marke first of all, that when God calleth vs to be of his Church, so as he maketh vs partakers of the Gospell, and of the things depending vpon the same it is n ot for y we went to him aforehãd, but because he hath chose vs. The word *Chose* is set down here to expresse the better that that thing came not of the people themselues, but that God was the first beginner therof. That is one point which wee ought to marke wel. For it is not onely here that the holy Ghost speaketh thereof: but all the whole scripture is full of that doctrine: namely, of telling vs that we must not seeke the cause of our saluation in our selues, as who shoulde say wee were better than other men. Wee see that God giueth not his graces indifferently to all men: but that to set the greater shewe vppon his goodnesse, hee giueth that thing to one man which hee denieth to another. Wee see that most men are destitute of the Gospell at this day: and we see that euen where it is preached, most folke are as good as blinde and deafe still. Nowe when the Gospell is preached in any place, it is a kinde of choosing, and it is the verie same that Moses speakes of here. Seeing then that God causeth his worde to raine vppon vs, so as we haue our fill of it euerie day: and in the meane season other much greater, richer, and nobler Cities want it and are destitute of it: let vs vnderstande that this so great benefite commeth not of our owne seeking, neither haue we obtained it by our owne trauell or policie: but it is GOD that hath chosen vs to it of his owne mercie. Marke that for one point.

1.Cor.1.4.

Againe, whereas it pleaseth him to giue vs faith, so as we tast of his word, and are throughly fed with it, and it toucheth vs inwardly at the very heart: let vs vnderstand that y is a second sort of chosing which god maketh of vs. So then, let vs yelde him his deserued praise, for in withholding it from him we bee traitors to him, and wee bereaue him of the thing that belongeth alonely vnto him: and in so doing wee set vp our selues as Idols in his steede. For a man cannot take a greater honour to himselfe, than to beare himselfe in hand that he is the author of his own saluation, and that it is he that preuenteth God. If wee imagin so, it is a defacing of Gods glorie. And therfore let vs beare this lesſõ well in mind.

Eph.1.8.

Howbeit forasmuch as men are malicious, & when they cannot abolish Gods praise altogether, they darken it as much as they can: Moses excludeth here expressly all worthinesse of persons, and all desert of workes, in saying, *It is the loue of God*. For it is not ynough for vs to knowe that God hath chosen vs to himselfe: but we must also know what it is that moued him thereto, and how he was induced thervnto. Did hee seeke the cause of it out of himselfe? No: but his owne loue was the cause that he chose vs. Nowe when the scripture speaketh of Gods loue: it meaneth that free fauor which he beareth towards vs, so as he respecteth not our persons nor seruices, nor aught else that wee can bring. Sith it is so, let vs consider here Gods goodnes two wayes. For first of al when we haue his Gospel preached among vs, and his Sacraments, whereby he gathereth vs as it were into his fold, and sheweth himselfe to be our shepherd: it is (say I) a choosing of vs, for the which wee be greatly bounde vnto him; in so much that our maliciousnesse must needes be cast in our teeth, and bee called to account to receiue horrible vengeance, if we make no reckoning of so great a grace as he hath bestowed vpon vs. Therefore let vs make much of the benefite that we inioy, that is to wit, of Gods gathering vs heere together in his name, to bee as his houshold folke.

Eph.1.5. Rom.8.16. Gal.4.6. Eph.2.13.14

But there is yet a seconde choosing which is when euerie of vs perceiueth that God hath inlightened him by his holie spirit, and made vs to tast his worde, so as wee sticke to it by faith, and that hee hath grafted vs into the bodie of Iesus Christ, to the ende we shoulde bee taken & held for members of him: which thing wee must vnderstand commeth not of our selues, nor of our owne power: but of Gods will, which vouchsafed to marke vs our. And why? Let vs not make long circuits to finde some reason in our selues: but let vs holde vs contented with the free loue of our God, for hee is not bounde to any man. Hee might destroye all mankinde by his iustice: but yet for all that, he hath pitie vpon vs. And whereas he pitieth not all alike, but letteth whom hee list alone: therein he intendeth to giue the greater shewe of his goodnesse (as I haue said alredy) to the ende that wee shoulde compare our selues with others and say, Wherfore am I one of gods elect? wherefore hath God chosen mee to himselfe? I shoulde haue beene as other men are, if God had not reached me his hand. And what moued him to do it? His owne meere goodnesse. This comparison then must induce vs to glorifie our God, when we see that he hath stretched out his mighty arme ouer vs. And so we see, that that doctrine was not vttered onely for the instruc-

Ioh.3.16.

Gal.3.13.

Rom.

on

on of the people of old time: but that the same is common to vs also at this day.

Remember (saith Moses) *what thy God hath chosen thee.* And why? Because *hee loued thy fathers.* And the same also is the cause why that in that high and excellent redemption which was made by our Lorde Iesus Christ, the scripture sendeth vs to the loue of God: for that is the onely welspring. God so loued the worlde that hee spared not his onely sonne. What is the cause then that Iesus Christ is come to bee our Sauiour? What is the cause that the saluation which he purchased for vs, is preached nowadayes vnto vs? What is the verie cause that faith is giuen vs, and that God inlighteneth vs by his holy spirit? We must alwayes resort to this grounde, that it is because God loued vs. It is true that Saint Iohn saith generally, that hee loued the worlde. And why? For Iesus Christ offereth himselfe generally to all men without exception to be their redeemer. It is saide afterwarde in the couenant, that God loued the world when he sent his only sonne: but he loued vs, vs (I say) which haue beene taught by his Gospel, because he gathereth vs to him. And the faithful that are inlightened by the holy Ghost, haue yet a thirde vse of Gods loue, in that he reueileth himself more familiarly to thē, and sealeth vp his fatherly adoption by his holy spirit, and ingraueth it in their hearts. Now then let vs in al cases learn to know this loue of God, & when we be once come to it, let vs goe no further. Thus we see three degrees of the loue that god hath shewed vs in our Lord Iesus Christ. The first is in respect of the redemption that was purchased in the person of him that gaue himselfe to death for vs, and became accursed to reconcile vs to God his father. That is the first degree of loue, which extendeth to al men, inasmuch as Iesus Christ reacheth out his armes to call and allure all men both great and small, and to win them to him. But there is a speciall loue for those to whom the gospel is preached: which is, ỹ God testifieth vnto them that he wil make them partakers of ỹ benefite that was purchased for them by the death and passion of his sonne. And forasmuch as we be of that number, therefore are we dubble bound alreadie to our God: here are two bonds which hold vs as it were strait tyed vnto him. Now let vs come to the third bonde, which dependeth vpon the thirde loue that God sheweth vs: which is, that he not only causeth the gospel to be preached vnto vs, but also maketh vs to feel the power therof, so as we know him to be our father & sauiour, not douting but that our sins are forgiuen vs for our Lord Iesus Christes sake, who bringeth vs the gift of the holy Ghost, to reforme vs after his owne image. When as God doth so imprint in our harts the doctrine that is preached vnto vs by the mouthes of men: let vs vnderstand that he sheweth vs a third loue. True it is, that to speake properly, God hath not diuers affections; wee must not imagine so: but I handle these matters according to our capacitie, and wee must consider of Gods loue according to our slendernesse, because wee cannot attaine to his high maiestie as is saide afore, and therfore euen he himselfe also vttereth himselfe to vs according to our abilitie. And so wee see now that Gods loue is vttered and shewed vnto vs euidently three wayes in our Lorde Iesus Christe: the cheefe whereof are when wee haue the gospell preached, and that faith is added vnto it therewithall.

And as I saide, when wee once haue this free loue of God, we must goe no further. For we see what hath happened to all such as haue not held themselues in such soberneſſe. And surely when men are inquisitiue why God loueth some more than other some: it proceedeth of a certain pride and spyte, in that they cannot abide that the whole praise of their saluation should rest in god alone. Men seeke alwayes to challenge somwhat to themselues. And therefore when it is tolde them that God calleth those whom he hath chosen, and that he chooseth whom he listeth of his owne free goodnes: they will needs fall to scanning, how so? Why doeth God prefer one before another? When they debate after that maner, it is not a simple inquisitiuenes, but a pride as I said, because they would faine be esteemed and finde somewhat in themselues wherewith to deface Gods meere mercie: And therfore it is good iustice that Satan shoulde afterwarde bleare their eyes, & set many fancies before them. And that is the verie cause that maketh them to goe alwayes seeking, that God choseth those whom he foresawe to be such as would become worthie of his grace. Againe, such as dare not alledge altogether their owne deseruings, doe say that they attaine to faith because God foresawe that they would be faithfull, and therefore reserued them to himselfe. So then, by that meanes faith shoulde proceede of mens workes. But such men doe in deede shewe that they be as it were blockish, when they make such conclusions: and yet notwithstanding a great part of the worlde standeth vpon that point, and is still blinded therewith. But as for vs let vs learne that whensoeuer Gods loue is set afore vs we must wholly hold vs to it and rest vpon it, so as it must suffice vs that God is righteous, and yet notwithstanding not bounde to any person, but at his free libertie to choose whom he listeth, because hee receiueth them to mercie. For it is to the same purpose that he saith to Moses, as S. Paul alledgeth, I will haue mercie on whom I will haue mercy, and I will haue pitie on whom I haue pitie. As if hee should say, let not men fall to controlling of me in this case, nor bee so malapert as to aske why I shewe not mercie to all men: or why all are not dealt with alike, or why I choose one and leaue another. Let them not dispute so with mee: for I haue power to vse my free goodnesse where I list, and they must stoope to me: And whosoeuer dareth repyne at it, shall finally be confounded in his owne pride. Therefore to bee short, let vs learne to glorifie our God. After what manner? Euen for his choosing of vs. As for the castawayes, it is certaine that they will doe nothing but grinde their teeth, to blaspheme GOD, and wee see it to bee so. But whereunto doeth Moses bring vs backe? He saith not ỹ they which

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Iohn 3.16.

Eph. 1.5. Rom. 8.16. Gal. 4.6. Eph. 3.14

Col. 1.13.

Col. 1.18.

Exo. 33. 19. Rom. 9.15.

are chosen shall glorifie God for any thing that they haue of their owne. Howe is it then that God wilbe glorified at our hands? Euen in this, that we beholding the benefites which hee hath bestowed vppon vs, shoulde not exalt our selues aboue others, thinking our selues to be better or more noble and excellent than our neighbors: but acknowledge that hee doeth all those thinges of his owne free goodnesse. This is the doctrine which wee haue to gather vppon this text.

And it is said here *that God chose Abrahams seede after him, because of the loue that had gone long time before.* And this serueth for a larger proofe of the thing that I haue touched: accordingly to Saint Paules saying, that if God shewe mercie to men before they be borne, & before they haue done either good or euill: it is an excluding of all deserts. And that is well worth the marking. For God hauing chosen to himselfe the seede of Abraham because of the adoption that had beene made: hath yet a narrower choyce, as hath bene declared alreadie. For Esaw was of Abrahams linage as well as Iacob: and so was Ismael as well as Isaac: and yet yee see that both of them were cut off from Gods couenant, and his adoption abideth in the house of the others. What is the cause thereof? Gods choice, which I termed a testimonie of a more strait and deare loue, which is the first, and which also I placed in the redemption made by Iesus Christ: and I placed the preaching of the Gospel in the seconde degree, and faith in the third degree. But forasmuch as here is no speaking but of the couenant that God made with Abraham: it is a generall couenant that extendeth to all his linage. Therfore all they that came of Abrahams seede are comprehended vnder that couenant which god had made. God in respect of himselfe knew who belonged to his election: but yet for all that, anon after, hee shooled out those whom he thought good, and took whom he listed to be of his household. Forasmuch then as wee see it is so: Let vs beare in minde that God continueth his mercie to a thousande generations, as hee himselfe saith. And yet notwithstanding let vs assure our selues that in so doing, his minde altereth not. When he setteth vp his Church in any place, he doeth it not vppon some sudden braide, but because he loued our fathers. Likewise nowadayes when we haue the Gospel preached and the Sacraments ministred: whence shoulde we thinke that that commeth? First we must vnderstande, that the gospel was preached through the whole world, and that our forefathers were gathered into Gods flock, to be made partakers of the saluation that was brought by Iesus Christ. Neuertheless by reason of their vnthankfulnesse and wicked dealing, the deuell got the vpper hande of the worlde, so as there insued horrible darkenesse and all thinges were put out of order. But nowe God hath as it were raised vp his worde againe: and what hath moued him to it? Euen the performance of his promise. For when hee had once extended his couenant through the whole worlde: it was his will to renew it againe, because of the promise that hee had made afore. And if it be demaunded wherefore God woulde haue his Gospel preached after that sort: it was for that it pleased him to come neere to such as liued at that time, because he had chosen them before they were borne. Againe we must vnderstande that the accomplishing of the fulnesse of time wherof the scripture speaketh, is not grounded vppon men, but vppon the good pleasure of God. We must come to this point, that God had ordeined the preaching of his Gospel in his own euerlasting purpose: and that our attaining to the possession of so great a benefite at this day by the vertue of that vnchangeable ordinance, is because he had called our fathers before we were borne, & that when they had made themselues vnworthie of the kingdome of heauen, and banished themselues from it as much as in them lay: yet notwithstanding God vouchsafed to cal vs againe, and all through his owne free goodnesse. Thus yee see what wee haue to marke where it is saide, that God chose the seede of Abraham after him.

And by the way let vs call to minde the thing that I haue touched alreadie, that is to wit, that Abraham was alone as the Prophet Esaie vpbraideth the Iewes. The rueth is that he exhorteth them to be of good cheere, though they be scattered abrode and cast downe. Haue an eye (saith he) to the quarrie whence ye were taken, and vnto your originall. What was it? was it a great and infinite people? No: It was a fillie olde man al alone without child or issue. Behold, your mother Sara was barren all the time of her life, and her age was a further let that she might not conceiue: and yet hath God taken ye out of that quarrie, that is to say, of one man alone. Why then should yee bee afraide though yee were vterly consumed? But yet for all this, hee vpbraideth them with their vnthankfulnesse, because they trusted still in their owne greatnesse, and if there were any likelihood at all, by and by it puffed them vp. And therefore let vs learne by this text, first that Gods choosing of our forefathers was not for any worthinesse or nobilitie in them selues: but because he had pitie on them, which pitying importeth that they were in wretched case, and had beene vtterly forlorne, if God had not gathered them into the hope which they coulde neuer haue conceiued of themselues. Marke that for one point.

And secondly if wee see Gods Church scattered, so as wee be fewe in number, and it seemeth that there is no certaintie nor assurance for vs, but all is like to goe to hauock in a turning of a hande: Let it not dismay vs. And why so? For God hauing once chosen Abraham did also multiplie his seede, notwithstanding that hee was a man stricken in yeares, drooping, and childlesse. So likewise nowe, although there be but a handfull of vs, and we be despised and without power or strength to maintaine our selues: yet can God increase vs, and hauing increased vs he can preserue vs. Wherefore let vs learne to looke wholly to his goodnes, when the state of the Church lieth in hazarde, and let vs not be out of heart

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but although that to the worldwarde wee see it cast downe, and so diminished as it seemeth as good as nothing at all: yet let vs not cease to be of good courage still, and to waite till God performe that which he hath done in all ages. For the manner of setting vp of the Church in good state againe, and of the preseruing thereof, must be wonderfull to the sight of men.

Now after that Moses hath spoken so, he addeth, *Thy God chose thee, euen of purpose to bring thee out of the land of Egypt, before his face.* He sheweth that the deliuerance of the people out of the lande of Egypt, proceeded of the said election, and consequently of Gods free loue. And it is a point which wee ought to marke well. For it behoueth vs to be led from one thing to another. As for example, when God doeth vs any good, we doe indeede perceiue his goodnesse: but wee must mount yet higher. Wherefore hath GOD prouided so for vs? not for any worthines or desert of ours: but because he had chosen vs. And when or wherefore chose hee vs? Wee must not range any further, but holde our selues to this grounde of Moseses. But in any wise let vs marke whereof hee speaketh, that wee may the better make our profite thereby. *Thy God deliuered thee out of the lande of Egypt, because he had chosen thee before, yea euen before thou wast borne.* In so saying hee sheweth, that although this redemption was (to see to) but a deliuerance of the bodie: yet was it a figure of ỹ saluation that God had promised afore in the person of the Redeemer: and although the deliuerie of the people of Israel out of the lande of Egypt, was but as a temporall redemption: yet doth Moses say that it depended vpon Gods freebestowed adoption. Seeing it is so in that case: what is to bee thought nowe, when wee bee to be brought out of the gulfes of hell to bee conueyed into heauen? (For by nature wee bee cursed, and plunged in the gulfes of hell:) are wee able to get thence? Doeth it not belong onely vnto God to deliuer vs thence? And if it were meete that God should choose the people of Israel to deliuer them from the tyrannie of Pharao: let vs conclude, that by a more strong reason it was meete that when he shoulde deliuer vs from the bondage of the diuell and from the bottomles pittes of hell: hee shoulde declare this vnto vs: that he had chosen and adopted vs. Wherfore let vs not onely take holde of the death and passion which our Lorde Iesus Christ suffered for vs, and of his sauing of vs by his grace: but also let vs come to the meane degree, namely that the cause why wee bee made partakers of the saluation that Iesus Christ hath brought vs, is for that GOD hath adopted vs. And when did hee that? After hee had founde some vertue or some good forwardnesse in vs? no: but before wee were borne, and before wee had done either good or badde, yea euen at such time as wee were alreadie vowed and giuen vp to endelesse destruction. This is it which we haue to note in the first place.

Neuertheless it is not for nought that Moses saieth also, *that God brought out the people before his face*: as if hee shoulde say, hee was their guide. For had GOD reached out his hande to his people but for once, and thencefoorth haue let them alone: to what purpose had that beene? It is not ynough for a mother to helpe vp her young childe when hee is falne downe: for hee may fall a hundred thousande times, and in the ende breake his necke: but shee must holde him vp still. Euen so our Lorde declareth that it was not ynough for him to haue shewed himselfe to bee a deliuerer of his people for a day or two: but hee helde on still, and conueyed them before his face, as a man that hath his eye continually vppon his childe. To bee short, hee sheweth heere that his goodnesse abode with the people euen to the ende, so as hee helde on in helping and succoring them, and maintened them throughout. And why? for else his bringing of them out of the lande of Egypt had beene in vaine.

And afterwarde hee addeth, *To destroy people mightier and stronger than they, thus their lande might bee giuen them to inherite.* Hee sheweth that God ceased not to goe through with his fauour towardes the Iewes, till hee had performed the promise that hee made to their fathers: that is to wit, of putting them in possession of the lande of Chanaan as hee had promised. But (as I haue saide alreadie) wee must compare our selues with the state of that people. And therefore let vs learne, that God not onely draweth vs out of the gulfe of hell, and out of the cursednesse wherein wee were borne, and which would holde vs alwayes locked vnder his wrath: but also holdeth on and continueth his goodnes towards vs, so as hee will not misse but haue his eye still vpon vs, to watch ouer vs vnto the end. And if our Lorde had not such a care to defende vs: in what taking were wee? Should not the diuell snatch vs vp euerie minute of an houre? We see he trotteth vp and downe seeking euer to deuour, and hee hath meanes to doe it. And could we scape his pawes if we were not defended from thē by ỹ goodnes of our God? So then let vs vnderstande, that God doth not onely beginne our saluation, and then let vs alone to shift for our selues: but that he goeth through with vs as long as we haue nede, and performeth the thing that he hath begunne. Thus *doth he keepe vs alwayes in his sight*: that is to say, hee neuer forgetteth vs, but considereth our necessities, to prouide for them and to remedie them in due season. Now if God haue his eyes so open to thinke vppon vs, that hee may succour vs at our neede: Let vs on our side also walke as before his face. And let vs marke that wee cannot hide our selues from him: and therefore seeing he yeeldeth vs such fauour and honour as to haue a care of vs: it is good reason that all our life should bee answerable thereunto. And so, Gods goodnesse ought so little to make vs negligent, that it shoulde rather spurre vs forward to repaire to him with an earnester minde. In deede a man shall see some dogges and swine that will defame this doctrine of Election. When it is tolde them that God knoweth which are his, and that he wil neuer suffer them to perish: very wel (say they), then wil I

Iph.2.3 6. 1.Pet.5.8. Psal.118 9. Esa.29.15.& 40.27.

are chosen shall glorifie God for any thing that they haue of their owne. Howe is it then that God wilbe glorified at our hands? Euen in this, that we beholding the benefites which hee hath bestowed vppon vs, shoulde not exalt our selues aboue others, thinking our selues to be better or more noble and excellent than our neighbors: but acknowledge that hee doeth all those thinges of his owne free goodnesse. This is the doctrine which wee haue to gather vppon this text.

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Ro.9,11.12

Gen.17.1.

Deut.5.10.

1.Cor.1.
Gal.1.15

Eph.1.4

And by the way let vs call to minde the thing that I haue touched alreadie, that is to wit, that Abraham was alone as the Prophet Esaie vpbraideth the Iewes. The trueth is that he exhorteth them to be of good cheere, though they be scattered abrode and cast downe. Haue an eye (saith he) to the quarrie whence ye were taken, and vnto your originall. What was it? was it a great and infinite people? No: It was a fillie olde man alalone without child or issue. Behold, your mother Sara was barren all the time of her life, and her age was a further let that she might not conceiue: and yet hath God taken ye out of that quarrie, that is to say, of one man alone. Why then should yee bee afraide though yee were vtterly consumed? But yet for all this, hee vpbraideth them with their vnthankfulnesse, because they trusted still in their owne greatnesse, and if there were any likelihood at all, by and by it puffed them vp. And therefore let vs learne by this text, first that Gods choosing of our forefathers was not for any worthinesse or nobilitie in them selues: but because he had pitie on them, which pitying importeth that they were in wretched case, and had beene vtterly forlorne, if God had not gathered them into the hope which they coulde neuer haue conceiued of themselues. Marke that for one point.

Isa.51.

Eph.2.

And secondly if wee see Gods Church scattered, so as wee be fewe in number, and it seemeth that there is no certaintie nor assurance for vs, but all is like to goe to hauock in a turning of a hande: Let it not dismay vs. And why so? For God hauing once chosen Abraham did also multiplie his seede, notwithstanding that hee was a man stricken in yeares, drooping, and childlesse. So likewise nowe, although there be but a handfull of vs, and we be despised and without power or strength to maintaine our selues: yet can God increase vs, and hauing increased vs he can preserue vs. Wherefore let vs learne to looke wholly to his goodnes, when the state of the Church lieth in hazarde, and let vs not be out of hearte

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but although that to the worldwarde wee see it caſt downe, and ſo diminiſhed as it ſeemeth as good as nothing at all: yet let vs not ceaſe to be of good courage ſtill, and to waite till God performe that which he hath done in all ages. For the manner of ſetting vp of the Church in good ſtate againe, and of the preſeruing thereof, muſt be wonderfull to the ſight of men.

Now after that Moſes hath ſpoken ſo, he addeth, *Thy God choſe thee, euen of purpoſe to bring thee out of the land of Egypt, before his face.* He ſheweth that the deliuerance of the people out of the lande of Egypt, proceeded of the ſaid election, and conſequently of Gods free loue. And it is a point which wee ought to marke well. For it behoueth vs to be led from one thing to another. As for example, when God doeth vs any good, we doe indeede perceiue his goodneſſe: but wee muſt mount yet higher. Wherefore hath GOD prouided ſo for vs? not for any worthines or deſert of ours: but becauſe he had choſen vs. And when or wherefore choſe hee vs? Wee muſt not range any further, but holde our ſelues to this grounde of Moſeſes. But in any wiſe let vs marke whereof hee ſpeaketh, that wee may the better make our profite thereby. *Thy God deliuered thee out of the lande of Egypt, becauſe he had choſen thee before, yea euen before thou waſt borne.* In ſo ſaying hee ſheweth, that although this redemption was (to ſee to) but a deliuerance of the bodie: yet was it a figure of ỹ ſaluation that God had promiſed afore in the perſon of the Redeemer: and although the deliuerie of the people of Iſrael out of the lande of Egypt, was but as a temporall redemption: yet doth Moſes ſay that it depended vpon Gods freebeſtowed adoption. Seeing it is ſo in that caſe: what is to bee thought nowe, when wee bee to be brought out of the gulfes of hell to bee conueyed into heauen? (For by nature wee bee curſed, and plunged in the gulfes of hell:) are wee able to get thence? Doeth it not belong onely vnto God to deliuer vs thence? And if it were meete that God ſhould chooſe the people of Iſrael to deliuer them from the tyrannie of Pharao: let vs conclude, that by a more ſtrong reaſon it was meete that when he ſhoulde deliuer vs from the bondage of the diuell and from the bottomles pittes of hell: hee ſhoulde declare this vnto vs: that he had choſen and adopted vs. Wherfore let vs not onely take holde of the death and paſſion which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſuffered for vs, and of his ſauing of vs by his grace: but alſo let vs come to the meane degree, namely that the cauſe why wee bee made partakers of the ſaluation that Ieſus Chriſt hath brought vs, is for that GOD hath adopted vs. And when did hee that? After hee had founde ſome vertue or ſome good forwardneſſe in vs? no: but before wee were borne, and before wee had done either good or badde, yea euen at ſuch time as wee were alreadie vowed and giuen vp to endeleſſe deſtruction. This is it which we haue to note in the firſt place.

Neuertheleſſe it is not for nought that Moſes ſaieth alſo, *that God brought out the people before his face*: as if hee ſhoulde ſay, hee was their guilde. For had GOD reached out his hande to his people but for once, and thencefoorth haue let them alone: to what purpoſe had that beene? It is not ynough for a mother to helpe vp her young childe when hee is falne downe: for hee may fall a hundred thouſande times, and in the ende breake his necke: but ſhee muſt holde him vp ſtill. Euen ſo our Lorde declareth that it was not ynough for him to haue ſhewed himſelfe to bee a deliuerer of his people for a day or two: but hee helde on ſtill, and conueyed them before his face, as a man that hath his eye continually vppon his childe. To bee ſhort, hee ſheweth heere that his goodneſſe abode with the people euen to the ende, ſo as hee helde on in helping and ſuccoring them, and maintened them throughout. And why? for elſe his bringing of them out of the lande of Egypt had beene in vaine.

And afterwarde hee addeth, *To deſtroy people mightier and ſtronger than they, thus their lande might be giuen them to inherite.* Hee ſheweth that God ceaſed not to goe through with his fauour towardes the Iewes, till hee had performed the promiſe that hee made to their fathers: that is to wit, of putting them in poſſeſſion of the lande of Chanaan as hee had promiſed. But (as I haue ſaide alreadie) wee muſt compare our ſelues with the ſtate of that people. And therefore let vs learne, that God not onely draweth vs out of the gulfe of hell, and out of the curſednеſſe wherein wee were borne, and which would holde vs alwayes locked vnder his wrath: but alſo holdeth on and continueth his goodnes towards vs, ſo as hee will not miſſe but haue his eye ſtill vpon vs, to watch ouer vs vnto the end. And if our Lorde had not ſuch a care to defende vs: in what taking were wee? Should not the diuell ſnatch vs vp euerie minute of an houre? We ſee he trotteth vp and downe ſeeking euer to deuour, and hee hath meanes to doe it. And could we ſcape his pawes if we were not defended from thé by ỹ goodnes of our God? So then let vs vnderſtande, that God doth not onely beginne our ſaluation, and then let vs alone to ſhift for our ſelues: but that he goeth through with vs as long as we haue nede, and performeth the thing that he hath begunne. Thus *doth he keepe vs alwayes in his ſight*: that is to ſay, hee neuer forgetteth vs, but conſidereth our neceſſities, to prouide for them and to remedie them in due ſeaſon. Now if God haue his eyes ſo open to thinke vppon vs, that hee may ſuccour vs at our neede: Let vs on our ſide alſo walke as before his face. And let vs marke that wee cannot hide our ſelues from him: and therefore ſeeing he yeeldeth vs ſuch fauour and honour as to haue a care of vs: it is good reaſon that all our life ſhould bee anſwerable thereunto. And ſo, Gods goodneſſe ought ſo little to make vs negligent, that it ſhoulde rather ſpurre vs forward to repaire to him with an earneſter minde. In deede a man ſhall ſee ſome dogges and ſwine that will defame this doctrine of Election. When it is tolde them that God knoweth which are his, and that he wil neuer ſuffer them to periſh: very wel (ſay they), then wil I

1. Pet. 5. 8.

Pſal. 118 9. Eſa. 29. 15. & 40. 27.

ceaſe to doe well: and ſo they mocke at God and his doctrine, ſhewing indeede that they neuer wiſt what the worde *Election* or *Chuyes* meaneth: But as for vs, wee muſt take aſſurance by Gods grace, to liue warely and circumſpectly: and good reaſon haue we to humble our ſelues, conſidering that we were damned and forlorne, and our God hath deliuered vs, and moreouer ſhewed himſelfe ſo bountifull towardes vs as to make vs heires of his kingdome, euen vs that were the bondſlaues of Satan. And on the otherſide it ſtandeth vs on hande to walke in feare, ſeeing wee can do nothing at all of our ſelues, further-forth than Gods grace vttereth it ſelfe in vs. Againe it behoueth vs to pray vnto him, foraſmuch as if he ſhoulde let vs alone from the one ende to the other, wheras we be now aduaunced vp aloft, we ſhoulde tumble into the pitte euerie minute of an houre. Therefore wee haue cauſe heere to call vpon our God, and to reſort vnder his protection. Furthermore ſeing it is ſaid that hee guideth vs and keepeth watch for our welfare: it becommeth vs to bee the more wakened to walk as in his preſence, knowing that he marketh, not onely all our doings, but alſo our affections and thoughts. Beſides this, ſeeing that Moſes knitteth here the deliuerance of the Iſraelits out of Egypt, with their poſſeſſing of the lande of Chanaan: Let vs marke well that God will haue all his benefits linked together which he beſtoweth vpon vs, vntil we be brought to the full perfection of our ſaluation. For it is not to be thought that God letteth vs alone when he hath once called vs vnto himſelfe, ſo as we ſhoulde be in daunger of being left vp to the ſpoyle: but contrariwiſe let vs mark, that he will go through with the thing that he hath begunne, as S. Paul declareth in the firſt to the Philippians, where hee ſaieth that this his calling of vs, importeth a warrantiſe that wee ſhall neuer bee left deſtitute of his defence, vntill hee haue brought vs to euerlaſting ſaluation. Thus yee ſee that the thing which we haue to beare in mind, is that as God is the beginner of our ſaluation, ſo is he the finiſher thereof alſo.

Phil.2.12.

Eph.2.5. Col.2.13. 14.15. Phil.2.13.

Deut.11.21. Ier.16.17.

Act.1.24.

Phil.1.5.6.

And as touching Moſeſes interlacing *of Gods deſtroying and driuing out of people that were ſtronger and mightier than they*: it is true that God vſed an extraordinarie manner of dealing, in his rooting out of the Chananites and ſuch other like as dwelt in the countrie which the Iewes poſſeſſed: but yet haue wee cauſe to thinke vppon the like at this day. For whither is it that wee ought to goe? whither doth our Lorde call vs? To the heauenly life frō whence euen the verie Angels are falne. For wee know that the diuels, which as nowe are not onely baniſhed from the glorie of the heauenly kingdome, but alſo appointed to horrible damnation, were ſometime as the children of God; and helde the roome whereinto our Lorde calleth vs at this day. And nowe, are wee worthyer than the Angels which fell in that ſort from aboue? Moreouer, if wee come but to men: were not the Iewes a holy lynage? Sprang they not of the roote of Abraham? Yes: and what are we on our ſide? did the kingdome of heauen belong to vs? No: no more than to the wilde Canniballes. But yet thoſe natural children and as it were lawful heires by adoption of their fathers, are caſt off and baniſhed from the ſaluation wherevnto God calleth vs at this time. They be driuen out, and we ſucceede as it were in an emptie place. Haue not wee cauſe then to magnifie the grace that God ſheweth vs in theſe dayes? Doeth it not appeare that this text ſerueth not onely for the Iewes, but alſo ought rather to be applyed to our vſe at this day? Then let vs vnderſtande, that ſeeing God hath choſen vs to himſelfe, wee ought in any wiſe to be wholy his, & to continue ſetled in the poſſeſſion of his grace, howbeit not by walking in ſtatelines & preſumptiō, ſo as we ſhould be proud of it: but by acknowledging with all lowlineſſe, that wee hang wholly vppon the free goodneſſe of our GOD. And let vs not ceaſe to aſſure our ſelues that he will go through with the thing that hee hath begunne in vs, at leaſtwiſe if wee abide vnder the guiding of his hand, to ſuffer our ſelues to be ruled by him.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to rid vs of them by forgiuing them for our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes ſake: and therewithall to worke in ſuch ſort as wee may daily labour to renounce all our wicked luſtes, and whatſoeuer elſe hindreth vs to ſerue him, and altogether to rule our ſelues according to his commaundements. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xvj. of Iune. 1555.

The xxix. Sermon which is the eleuenth vpon the fourth Chapter.

39 Vnderſtand therefore this day, and lay it vp in thyne heart, that the Lord is God in heauen aboue, and vppon the earth beneath, and there is none other but hee.

40 And keepe his ordinances and commaundements which I command thee this day, that it may goe well with thee and with thy children after thee, and that thou maieſt prolong thy dayes in the lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee for euer.

41 Then Moſes ſeuered three Cities beyond Iordan towards the ſunnriſing,

42 That

42 That the manslaier might flee thither, that had slaine his neighbour vnwillinglie, and not hated him before: who by fleeing to one of those Cities, should bee in safetie.

43 Namelie, Bozor in the wildernesse in the plaine countrie, among the Rubenites: and Ramoth in Galaad among the Gaddites: and Golam in Basan among the Manassites.

IT was shewed yesterday, that wee must assure our selues that God will continue his goodnesse towardes vs, and that when hee hath once begunne, wee must not doubt but hee will shewe himselfe a Sauiour vnto the ende. When wee haue founde him such a one, wee must walke on in the saide trust, that we may call vppon him all our life long: for else wee shoulde bee saued but for a day, and that were all one as if God had neuer shewed himselfe to vs at all. Therefore our hope must extende to the time comming, and when God hath ridde vs from Satans tyrannie wherein wee were to make vs inioy his heritage, we must holde on still as Moses saith here. True it is that God hath not brought vs out of Egypt, but hee hath deliuered vs from the bondage of the diuell and of death. And therefore let vs trust that he will leade vs to the place that he hath promised vs, that is to wit, to the immortall life. But in the meane while we must consider to what ende he calleth vs, and to what end he bestoweth so manie giftes vppon vs: namely to the ende that we should serue him all our life long. And that is the thing which Moses addeth as nowe, and which was touched also as yesterday: namely that our trusting in God must not make vs ydle and slothfull, but rather the more inflame vs to loue and feare him.

Ebr.9.14.

Luk.1.74.75 Eph.2.4.

Therefore he saith here, *vnderstande thou this day, and thinke well vppon it in thine heart, and beare it in remembrance, that there is none other God but the euerlasting, neither aboue nor beneath.* The cheefe intent of Moses is to shewe, that Gods reaching of vs his hand vnto vs, it not to the ende that we shoulde haue no care to honour him: but rather that we should bend our selues wholly therunto, and that wee perceyuing howe hee hath honored vs so highly as to choose vs for his people, should shewe in verie deed by our seruing of him as our God, that his so doing is not in vaine. That is ỹ meaning of Moses. But yet therewithall he doeth vs to vnderstande, that we shall neuer be able to yeelde God his due honour, vntill we knowe him. For if we imagine newe Gods of our owne heade, we disguise the liuing God, and bereaue him of his chiefe honour. I say hee is disguised, when we attribute that thing to the creatures, which is peculiar to him alone, and it is al one as if we did make ydols, though we confesse it not with our mouthes, as a great number do deale, which cā protest welynough that their intent is to haue no moe but the onely God, and yet notwithstanding faile not to robbe him of the thinges that are peculiar to his maiestie, dealing them to the creatures at their owne pleasure, as though it were some bootie. When GOD is so spoyled, it is all one as if men shoulde set vp ydols in despyte of him. And so yee see wherefore Moses saieth, *Vnderstande that the Lorde is God both aboue and beneath, and that there is none other.* Heere is the foundation where vppon wee must grounde Gods seruice: namely to knowe that hee cannot abide any companion, but that wee muste discerne him from all mens deuices and imaginations, to saye, This is the GOD that hath reueiled himselfe vnto vs. And Moses exhorteth the people to thinke vppon it that they might beare it in minde. For if wee haue not that care with vs, we shall wonder to see howe soone some wicked fancie will take place in our heade. If such as knowe the trueth doe not sticke to it, and walke warely and carefully, they shall soone let themselues runne at rouers. And why? For naturally wee bee inclyned to lesings, and thereto wee bee so wauering as is pitie to see. Therefore it is not ynough for vs to haue knowen the true liuing God for a time: but wee must dayly thinke vppon the thing that is tolde vs, and wee must continually renewe the remembeirance of it. For otherwise wee shall bee at our wittes ende to see what superstition will steppe in our way. Then let vs marke well, that it is a continuall exercise for vs all our life long, to knowe which is our true GOD that hath manifested himselfe vnto vs.

Pſal.116.11. & Rom.3.4.

And nowe that Moses hath spoken so of knowledge: hee sheweth that our confessing with our mouth and our feeling also with our heart that there is but onely one GOD is nothing woorth: vnlesse wee shewe by our deedes that wee take him for our father, our master, and him, to whome wee belong. And for the same cause hee saieth *that he hath giuen vs his lawes, commandements, and statutes.* So then, wee see that the knowing of God is not a deade and vneffectuall thing: but that it ought to preuaile with vs, so as wee may shewe that wee haue beene schooled by Gods worde, by keeping his lawes and commaundementes. The ende therefore whereunto God hath chosen vs of his owne free goodnesse, and the ende whereunto hee mainteyneth vs, and continueth his grace towards vs is this: that we shoulde glorifie him not onely with our mouthes, but also with our whole life. But heere is yet one worde more to be noted: which is, that Moses addeth, *that he setteth before Gods people his lawes & commaundements* wherin he bereueth them of al excuse of ignorance. As if he should say, ye cannot alledge ỹ yee know not how to serue God: for I do shew

Deu.23.25.

Luk.1.74.75 Rom.14.8.

you his will, and therfore striue not against him. So then after as our Lord graunteth vs the grace to be taught purely by his word, let vs mark that we be the more bound vnto him, and the lesse to bee excused; so as it is not for vs to vse any shifting. For wherof is it long that we yeeld him not his due praise, and that wee liue not as we ought to do, seing he teacheth vs what to do, and sheweth how we ought to liue? Wherfore let vs labor to make the doctrine powerfull which is dayly preached vnto vs, assuring our selues that the preaching thereof is to the end that God should be the better honored among vs. This is the effect of that which is set downe here.

Now it is set down consequently, that *before they passed Iordan, Moses did seuer out three Cities in the land that had ben conquered from the Amorrhits,* (as we haue seene heretofore) *& from their neighbours, as the land of Basan, and those three Cities, were appointed for such to flie vnto as had slaine any bodie through vnadui sednes.* This Law is declared more fully in other places: and thence must wee fetch the exposition of this present text. God had said and ordeyned, that if a man bearing no hatred to another man, did slea him vnaduisedly, that is to say by chaunce medly (as they term it) without preconsed purpose: hee shoulde not be punished. For why? the manslaughters that are punishable must either be wilful, or else proceed of reuenge, or of spyte, or of lying in wait which is worst, & greatest fault of al. But if a man seing no bodie did shoot an arrow & hit a man, & the man dyed: this manslaughter was not punishable as a felonie. Neuertheless God woulde not haue it simplie pardoned: and that was for two causes. The one was to the ende that men shoulde in any wise mislike of any murder and the shedding of mans bloude: and the other was, that the kinsfolke of the partie that was slaine shoulde not be prouoked to reuenge: And therefore God had ordeyned that hee which had giuen the stroke shoulde get himselfe out of the way, and keepe himselfe as a prisoner till the death of the high Priest: And then had hee as it were a Iubilee, so that when there was once a newe high Priest, then the partie that had so fled to the place appointed, whether it were at the ende of tenne, twentie, or thirtie yeeres, might returne to his owne house if he listed: but vntil that time, it behoued him to be as a banished man. That is the thing which is spoken of here as nowe. Moses rehearseth not the Law as it was giuen of God & as it is set down in the booke of numbers: but yet in reporting the storie, therewithall hee giueth an incling of the foresaide lawe and ordinance as we haue saide. Nowe for the better vnderstanding hereof, we must first marke the thing that I touched afore: that is to wit, that God abhorreth murther, insomuch that although he punish not vnaduised manslaughters rigorously: yet he chastiseth them: wherby hee sheweth that he misliketh of bludshed. This is a thing well worthy to bee noted. For first wee see thereby, how greatly God loueth vs: & he sheweth the cause thereof in the ninth of Genesis, to be for that we be created after his image. Hee saieth that the sleaing of a man is the doing of wrong to himselfe. Yee see then that God beareth vs such loue, that he taketh himselfe to bee wounded and misused in our persons, because he hath made vs after his owne image. And that ought to bee a warrant of his great goodnes and louing kindnesse towards vs, to make vs to trust wholy vnto him & to honor him. And so ye see whereat we ought to beginne, when it is tolde vs that God hateth murther and cannot abide it: and therefore that when a man hath slaine his neighbour wilfully, that is to say, either through malice, or in quareling, or for reuenge, or by laying waite for him: hee is so detested of God that he is not worthy to liue in the worlde. And in good sooth wee see the same by another Lawe, where god curseth whole countries for suffering of murders. For it is saide there, that if a deade bodie bee founde, search must bee made with all diligence, to finde out the murtherer. Why so? To the intent (saieth hee) that the lande bee not defiled therewith. Wee see hereby that if Magistrates and Iudges shut their eyes and make no reckoning to punish a murder: it is as a cõmon defiling, which prouoketh Gods vengeance vpon the whole land. And therefore it standeth them on hande to consider that God setteth great store by mens liues. Againe if the doer of the wicked deede bee not founde: let the Iudges (saieth hee) make solemne protestation, in this wise: We haue inquired diligently whence this murther shoulde proceede, but wee cannot finde the doer thereof, and therefore are wee cleare and guildesse of it before God. And moreouer Gods will was that they shoulde offer sacrifice for the same. Nowe then wee see howe lothsome wilfull murthers are before GOD. I call them all wilfull murthers which are committed through trecherie or in rage, or howsoeuer else it bee where there was any enmitie or variance afore. Yea & although it be lawfull for men to kill their enemies in the warres that are good and holie: yet doeth the Scripture vse a manner of speech to shewe vs that GOD hath alwayes misliked of murthering. For there it is saide of a valiaunt man, howbeit without blaming of him, that hee defiled his handes. Is it so? Nay rather it is worthie of praise that a stoute fellowe being inured to the warres, shoulde goe through with his duetie. For if hee offer no man any wrong, but behaue himselfe valiantly when hee commeth to the incounter, doeth that deserue blame? No: but as I saide afore, Gods meaning is to shewe vs, that wee ought to tender our neighbours liues in such sort, as not to wishe their death, nor to further the same, vnlesse wee intende to violate his image. That is the thing in effect, which is heere set our vnto vs. Nowe then if God doe so abhorre the manslaughters that are committed when men assaile vs, so as we seeme to haue iust cause to defend our selues: I pray you what is to be said to it whē men fall to quareling with their neighbours, & will needes shed bloud of set purpose? What meaneth this? Suppose we? Gods curse is not doubled vpõ the lande,

Num. 35.13 22. Deut. 19.4.

Num. 35.25

Gen. 9.6.

Num. 35. & 33.

Zach.

2. Chron. 8. and 16.

1. John 3.

land, when such crimes are borne withall and maintained? It is said that if a murther bee let passe, and the doer of it scapes vnknowen, Gods wrath is thereby prouoked: and if the murtherer be knowen, then is it a more heynous crime to let him scape vnpunished. But if a theefe lye in waite for a mã that mistrusteth no such thing, and setteth vpon him: is it not a plaine spiting of God, if that bee suffered? And if it be not any one man that is assaulted, but there are such outer lustie mates as will say, let vs kill and slea, & when they haue their swordes out, they care not against how many they drawe, but make a common hauocke, and such slaughter as all is on a gore bloud: are not the folkes that stirre vp such broyles, worse than the theeues and robbers in the woode? Men wil at leastwise mistrust theeues in a forest: but [who woulde thinke] that where there should be ciuill order, where Lawes [ought to] raigne, where there is a seate of Iusticenbere men would fill all things with bloud, and violate so many images of God as come in their way, & that the same should be suffered? I pray you is it not a bewraying that wee bee loth that GOD shoulde raigne among vs, or haue vs vnder his protection? Yes. Therefore let vs marke well what is said here concerning wilfull murthers, how there is no pardon for them, but God will haue them rooted out of the worlde and extirpated by Iustice, which haue violated his image. And why? To the intent wee shoulde alwayes beare in minde the thing that I spake of before, that is to wit, how greatly he loueth vs, and that forasmuch as he hath adopted vs to be his children, he will haue a continuall care of vs, and keepe vs as charely as the Apple of his eye, as he speaketh by his Prophet Zacharie. Now if it bee so that wee desire God (as the holy Ghost teacheth vs) to keepe vs as the Apple of his eye, that is to say, as the tenderest and delicatest part of him: I pray you ought not we to gather thereby, that seeing he loueth vs, he will haue vs also to loue one another, yea euen with more than brotherly loue? Yes: and therefore let vs learne to abstaine from all wrong and outrage. Moreouer whensoeuer any murther is committed, or whensoeuer any folke are so wicked and cruel as to goe about to shed mans bloud: let vs make account of them, not onely as enemies to men, but also as deadly enemies to God, for as much as he sheweth himselfe to bee their aduersarie, and telleth vs that he taketh it as an assaulting of him in his owne person, and in his owne Maiestie. That is the thing which wee haue to marke.

Zach. 2.8.

And herewithall wee must passe yet further. For wee knowe how S. Iohn saieth, that whosoeuer hateth his neighbor in his hart, is a murtherer before God. True it is: wee must in any wise keepe our handes cleane from all iniurie and outrage: but yet must our heart also be pure and cleane before God. If it bee not so: we shall bee blamed, not for drawing of our swordes, but for desiring to ouerthrowe our neighbour, and for labouring, so much as was in vs, to bring it to passe by ouerthwart meanes. Albeit that men can not blame vs, yet doeth God condemne vs for murtherers, yea though our hatred were so secret as wee neuer made countenance of it. For whereas S. Iohn saieth, *he that hateth his brother in his heart*: it is all one as if he saide, although the hatred appeare not, nor men can beare witnesse of it: yet are wee faultie, if our hearte be infected with any rancour, or enmitie. Sith it is so, let vs beare well in minde, that our Lordes intent is to perswade vs to brotherly loue among our selues, and to agree together, indeauouring to helpe one another. For all mankinde is knit together as it were into one bodie. And therfore let vs learn to abhorre all murther, as well which is committed against other folkes, as which is meant against our selues. Howbeit let vs learne to hate (that is to say to condemne) continually all murder, without laying little or much in excuse of it: in so much that although wee were guiltie of it, yet wee should iudge against our selues if wee would iudge rightly. Will wee then condemne murther in another man? Let vs condemne hatred in our selues, by abstaining from all malice and reuengement, that our hearetes may be rid of it. If we deale with such vprightnesse, then wil God dwell with vs and make vs to prosper.

1. Iohn 3.15

But for all this, it is saide that the manslaughters which are not committed through malice, nor in rage, nor by quarelling, shall be pardoned: and not without cause. For as I tolde you, the crimes that are punishable, must bee committed with a will and intente. Then if one shoote, and meaning to hurte an hurte doe hit a man by the way, he is not punishable: for euen the Lawes of man haue ordained so, and there is an example of it set downe in another place of this booke, where it is said that if a man bee stopping of a tree, and his Ax fall downe vpon one that is vnder the tree, he shall not bee guiltie of the falling of his Ax vpon the head of him whom he perceiued not. And why? For it was God that did it (saieth the text), whereas we say it was by chaunce or fortune: Because wee cannot conceiue that things happen otherwise than by chaunce. Yet see here howe it is saide to bee Gods doing: that is to say, it was the will of God who gouerneth all things by his secret prouidence, that such a one should bee taken out of the worlde. Yet notwithstanding, he that gaue the stripe vnwares, ought not to be punished as if he had killed one in anger and in a fray. Thus wee see heere what manslaughters are pardonable.

Deut. 19.5.

Howbeit, there are two thinges to bee noted herewithall: the one is, that inquisition must be made of it: and the other is, that although such a one bee not to bee taken as a felon, yet doeth God separate him from other men, & will haue him to bee as a prisoner for a time, to the intent he should be an example to others to shun murder the more, seeing that y manslaughter which was cõmitted vnwillingly is punished after that fashion. As touching inquisition and making of search, it is a notable point. For we see how men are abused with the thinges that are done in fauour of offenders: in so much that if any thing

be alledged that may moue to pitie, and a countenance bee set vppon the matter that the offender is verie sorie: men must shut their eyes at him, and say, alas, what should a man do? And this is done dayly, and woulde God that examples therof were not so common. Iustice is commonly abused: in so much that if there bee any cause or reason to be shewed that some mā may happen not to bee so faultie as he is accused to be: the same shall bee wrested to another mans defence, which is not worthy to haue any fauour at all. And why is that? For want of examination. And by that meane wicked men are styll maintained. For were there diligent examination made, and things sifted to the bottome: men might soone discerne betweene them that are faultie, and them that are faultlesse. But what? men are contented to shutte their eyes, and although they cannot but see, yet will they make countenance as though they knewe it not. And so are the wicked discharged. The matters lye open to the worlde, they may bee pointed out with ones finger, the euidence is too too apparant: and yet nothing can bee knowen. And why? Bicause men list not. O ye purblinde folkes which bleare your eyes in such sort, yee shall be driuen in the ende, to knowe what place yee hold, & that he which ordeined you to be iudges, seeth for you, yea and that he seeth clearely, and writeth ỹ things in his Registers which you forget and wilfully ouerslip, and he will put you in remembrance of them to your cost. For when so heynous offences are committed, our Lorde will not haue them let slip vnder colour of simplicitie or pretence of ignorance: but he wil haue them sifted out, and information giuen of them, & the truth tried by all meanes possible, so as mē may not say, where are we nowe? What is to bee done? And when it commeth to iudgement, he wil haue ỹ matter laid forth & handled plainely, so as the truth of it may be knowen: and after al this diligence vsed, he will haue sentence giuen according to ỹ which is knowen. That is the first point: namely that wee suffer not faultes and crimes to slip for want of due inquisition and examination how the case standeth.

There is a second point which I haue touched alreadie: and that is, ỹ God would there should bee some correction for such as commit manslaughter vnawares. And thereby he sheweth (as I said afore) that he loueth mankinde dearely: in so much that if wee offend that way, although it be not of malice, but by chaunce (as they say,) & in such wise as the lawe which he hath ordained, meaneth, & although we ment not so to do: yet neuertheless we must feele by experience & see with our eyes, howe deare mans life is vnto him. This is another thing which wee haue to marke vpon this place.

And herewithall let vs marke also, ỹ God intended to preuent ỹ daungers, (as we haue said) ỹ the kinsfolk might not be prouoked: for we bee too much subiect to our passions, & therefore he purposed to cut of occasions & obiectes as they terme them. In deede it is a wicked imperfection in me, & it is a vice worthie to bee condemned, when I haue one ỹ hath slaine my brother or thy neighbour vnwillingly, or when I beare him any grudge. And why? For the poore mā is not blame worthy, bicause God acquitteth him, & there is no fault in him. And yet for all that, I can not stride in my heart to looke vppon him: but if he come towards, my heart riseth against him, & I am mooued at him. Therefore am I to blame. Neuertheless GOD seeing our frailtie, hath vouchsafed to beare with vs in ỹ behalfe, & hath not left vs without a remedie for it. Now wee are warned thereby, to eschew the occasions of al euill to the vttermost of our power: & if God on his part haue vouchsafed to deliuer vs from such temptations, do not they ouerthrow themselues wilfully, which thrust themselues into them? Sure this lesson is verie profitable, & extendeth verie farre. For we see how a great nōber sticke not to fling out at rauō & to offēd God. And whereby? Through rashnes. To their owne seeming they be able to resist whatsoeuer cōmeth in their way: & thereupon they step forth boldly and without discretion, & they marualle greatly ỹ God shold disappoint their ouerlustinesse, so as they needs nōt any thing elsse to make them to stumble, yea and to tumble into some grosse fault. Seeing then that we be ouer hardy in hazarding our selues against a nomber of temptations: let vs learne ỹ God by giuing vs such a lawe, doth warne vs generally to walke in feare. It is true ỹ if God call mee to any thing, all the daungers in the worlde must not hold me back nor stoppe me. For why? God calleth mee, and he will shield mee. But if I of mine owne foolish rashnesse will needes aduenture vppon a thing that God commaundeth mee not: if it fall out to my harme, what is the cause thereof but the ouerweening & presumptuousnes wherewith I was puffed vp? For I considered not mine owne frailtie, that I should haue humbled my selfe before God to haue walked in his feare. Then let vs marke well, that wee must not cast our selues ouer boldly in daunger, and promise our selues this and that as we see a nomber doe, which say, as for mee, I can well serue God: Although other men misbehaue themselues, yet may I liue vertuously euen among the wicked. It is true: but art thou sure ỹ thou doest it? No: but this lustie gallant that speaketh thus stoutly, intermingleth himselfe with the wicked and with their abhominations. If he heare Gods name blasphemed and outrageously misused a hundred thousand times, he winketh at it and vaileth his bonnet: if he see any looseneſse and vnhoneſt prancks hee intermedleth himselfe with them: and if he happen not to giue his full consent to them, yet he withstandeth them not. Thus ye see how that vnder the colour of hardinesse mē cast themselues into daungers which they ought to shunne, considering that God warneth them of them after that sort.

And herewithal Moses here setteth down the inquisition that was to bee made, that is to say, *Whether slaue were enuy hatred or else preuiousness afore.* Wherein he sheweth, ỹ it is not ynough to heare a mans confession, and his protestation ỹ he did it not vpon any malice, wee must not stay there,

there. For if the offenders may bee beleeued: there shall neuer be anie hanged, they will well ynough cleare themselues, and it is a common rule among them: but the iudge must be of wisedom to bowle out things, & to seeke out the truth some where else than at the mouth of the offender. True it is that the confession of offenders ought to be take, but if a mā should tarie til they vtter things of their owne accord, & condemne themselues: it were too great a mocherie. Therfore they must be straitened and constrained to say the truth, and triall must bee made by other meanes, that men may be assured and vtterly out of doubt of it. And euen verie nature it selfe sheweth it vs, though there were no lawe written by Moses. Thus ye see what we haue to remember vpon this place.

Whereas it is said *that inquisition must bee made whether there were any malice borne the day yesterday or of any time afore*: it is a manner of speache that is vse in the Hebrew tongue, whereby is meant whether any hatred or rancour were perceiued to haue bin betwixt them at any time before. And why? For it is to bee presumed, where there is any hatred, the partie goeth to worke by malice. And contrariwise, if it bee found, there was no quarell, no ill will, no hatred, no rancour: can it bee saide that the manslaughter was committed of malice and set purpose? No. And hereby we be put in minde, that the life and conuersation of a man ought to direct and leade vs to the finding out of the matter. True it is that we ought alwaies to iudge of matters without respect of persons, and we must euer haue an eye to the deede & to the desert of the case as they terme it: but that is for the time comming. I meane not that diffinitiue sentence shoulde bee giuen according to that which hath bene knowen by a man afore times: but howe shoulde men deale to come to the trueth of things done? Let them consider what manner a one the man hath bin. I see that one is a despiser of GOD, I see a lewde vnthriste that hath neither faith nor honestie in him, I see a drunkarde that is full of furie and passeth no more to murder a man than to cutte the throate of a Capon or a Henne: I see this: also I see he is a quareller, and is euer working of some mischiefe or other, yea I see and can point one with my finger that seeketh to bring all goodnesse to decay and to put al things out of order: I see al this: now I pray you is not this a good inducement to leade mee to the trueth of the matter, by comparing the faulte that hee shall haue committed, with his former life? As for example, a man is founde at some murder, or apprehended for some other misdeede that he is charged with: and bicause there is not sufficient witnesse, he will denie that hee knowes any thing of it: notwithstanding, by the markes that God sheweth mee of him, I see his whole lyfe is as an euidence against him. If I were to take information of the whole matter, and had a dooseu witnesses that coulde say vnto mee, this is the murtherer: I coulde not more clearly perceiue the murther, than by beholding that the partie is a rank naughtipacke, a despiser of God, such a one as hath neither faith nor honestie, a cutthrote and robber, of a spitefull stomacke and ful of poison, so as he is vtterly out of all square. I pray you is it meete I shoulde be blinded still when I see such proofes? Now then let vs marke well, that whereas Moses speaketh here of the time past: it is to shew vs that God will helpe vs to the knowledge of matters and of the truth of them, so wee on our side shut not the gate, nor quenche not the light when it is offered vs. Loe what wee haue to beare in minde.

And on the other part let vs marke also, that if wee haue knowen a man to be of a good conscience, and seene none other signes in him but of the feare of GOD, of honestie, and of vpright dealing: wee must not lightly take vpon vs to charge him with any cryme. For to what purpose shoulde it serue suche as haue lyued as becommeth them, to haue giuen good example all their lyfe long: if euerie ill report shoulde bee admitted against them at the first dashe, so as they should be condemned without further inquisition? So then let vs marke, that God meant here to restraine vs from iudging vniustifiedly, and from thinking amisse on such as haue lyued aright.

Nowe for the sume and conclusion of all, here is the promise that Moses maketh: that is to wit, *That the people shall prosper in the lande that is giuen them to inherite, and that God will blesse them for euer, and them also that shalbe of their children*. And this doctrine is verie syre: namely that if wee serue GOD he will blesse vs, as though our seruice were recompensed. But yet wee must not imagine hereupon as the Papistes doe, that wee deserue any thing at all at Gods hand, & that he yeeldeth vs like for like, as though he were bound thereunto or as though there were some hire or wages due to vs: we must not enter into such dotages: but we must cōsider, the cause why God promiseth reward to such as serue him, is to harten thē by doing thē to vnderstand, it is not lost labor to serue God. By this means then God intendeth to incourage vs to serue him and to do wel: and not to make vs proude or to put vs in beliefe that wee deserue aught. Then let vs marke, that whereas God promiseth vs reward: it is for that hee had earst giuen vs the grace to serue him. Whereof commeth it that wee liue as becommeth vs? Commeth it of our owne freewill? Commeth it of our owne selfinnocuing? No: but of Gods gouerning of vs by his holy spirit. Now then, although it were a recompence: yet ought not the same to bee attributed vnto vs: but rather to the grace that God hath put into vs, which grace he crowneth. 1. Cor. 15. 10

But there is yet one point more: which is, that although God blesse vs and make vs to prosper: yet haue not wee serued him as we ought to do, for all that: but he should alwayes rather finde somewhat wherefore to punish vs, if he listed to vse rigour towardes vs. Therefore let vs not thinke that euer we haue so discharged our duetie, as that God should in any thing be bound towards vs. But forasmuch as he beareth with vs, and imputeth not our sinnes and offences to vs,

but winketh at them & taketh all in good worth as at his childrens handes: therefore doeth he vouchsafe to reward our workes. And so wee see that all such as attribute any deserte to themselues, are surely besotted with fond selfweening, & must be fain to mislike of themselues, & not to make any account of their owne wretchednesse. And soothly if we wist what our workes are, wee should alwayes haue cause to sigh, and to crie pardon at Gods hand: and that will make our workes to be accepted at his hand, notwithstanding they bee vnperfect. And why? Because he beareth with vs as with his children. And so he yeeldeth vs, not that which he oweth vs, nor that which we haue deserued: but that which it pleaseth him to giue vs of his meere liberalitie. Nevertheless he giueth such recompence to our workes, to the intent wee should be the willinger to serue him, and vnderstand that our seruing of him shall not bee in vaine: but that we must imploy our selues for him as for our maister and prince, and giue our selues wholly to his seruice; though it be not with such perfection as were requisite.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, that being humbled we may bee drawen to true repentance, and therewithall knowe to what ende wee are chosen to bee his people, namely to the ende wee should worship him as our King and obey his lawes, not onely in outward deedes, but also with true and heartie affection and line in such wise vnder him, as we may moreouer bee linked to our neighbours with brotherly loue, and by that meanes bee assured more and more that his adopting of vs to bee his children is not in vaine. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the vij. of Iune. 1555.

The xxx. Sermon, which is the twelfth vpon the fourth Chapter, and the first vpon the fifth Chapter.

44 This is the Lawe which Moses did set before the children of Israel,

45 These are the Couenants, Ordinances, and Lawes, which Moses shewed to the children of Israel, after they were come out of Egypt,

46 Beyond Iordan in the valley against Bethphogor, in the Lande of Sehon King of the Amorrhytes which dwelt in Hesebon, whom Moses and the children of Israel smote, after they were come out of Egypt,

47 And possessed his land, and the land of Og King of Basan, two kings of the Amorrhytes which were beyond Iordan towards the Sunrising:

48 From Aroer which is vpon the banke of the riuer Arnon, vnto the Hill of Sehon, which is Hermon:

49 And all the plaine beyond Iordan Eastwarde, vnto the Sea that is in the plaine vnder Asdoth of Phasga.

The fifth Chapter.

AND Moses called all Israel and said vnto them. Heare O Israel the ordinances and Lawes which I set before you this day, that ye may learne them and keepe them in deede.

2 The Lord our God made a couenant with vs in Horeb.

3 The Lorde our God made not this couenant with our fathers, but with vs which are all here aliue at this day.

For as much as it is hard to keep men in subiection to GOD: therfore after hee had chosen him a people, he vouchsafed to rule the, not for once and awaye, but euen so long time till they ought to haue bin well inured to his yoke. And after the same maner doeth he deale dayly with his Church. One worde ought to bee ynough to make vs vnderstand the trueth of our God. But forasmuch as wee beleeue not so speedily as were requisite: & when wee haue begunne, wee start away againe: and finally forget the things that he had taught vs: therefore he thinketh it not ynough to haue told vs once what is needefull for our saluation, but he doeth also put vs oft in minde of it, & printeth it in our heartes as much as is possible. That is the cause why Moses rehearseth in this

next,

text, ỳ he not onely deliuered them ỳ law in Horeb, but also taught it them new againe, after he had gone about with them a fortie yeres or fast vpon it, yea and ceased not of al that time to set the things continually before them which GOD had earst commaunded him to vtter vnto them, as hath bin touched already heretofore. But the diligence of Moses is not superfluous in that hee sayth, *that being come to the side of Iordan, and being vanquished Sehon king of the Amorrhites, and Og the king of Basan his neighbour, hee did stil put the people in minde of Gods lawes and ordinances*, that they might stand to them and put them in vre, and that if they had not had sufficient teaching already, they might at leastwise euen then know Gods trueth and sticke to it. That is the matter which moses meant by this text. And here he setteth downe expresly: *the Lawes, Commaunds, Statutes, and ordinances*, to expresse the better (as I haue tolde you heretofore) that God taught not his people by halues, ne gaue them a doctrine that was darke, short, or vnperfect: but such a lawe as comprehended al that was for their benefite & welfare, so as if they sticked thereunto, they should not neede to seeke any further, for they should haue wherewith to direct themselues in all poyntes and all respectes. Yea verily, for the lawe is a full doctrine accordingly also as the worde hath his originall thereof. Againe there are *Couenantes*: which is as much to say, as ỳ God couenanteth and indenteth with men, so as he neither forgetteth nor leaueth any thing out, that may make for the maintenance of the couenant betwixt him and vs, in that it hath pleased him to adopte vs for his children and Church, to take vs to himselfe. Whatsoeuer concerneth the spirituall aliance betweene him and vs, is comprehended vnder the worde *Couenant*, because they be articles. For when men intende to couenant, they set downe articles as well on ỳ one side as on the other. We see then how God protesteth here, that the Lawe hath enough to teach men withall, so they hold themselues to it. Afterwarde followe Statutes and ordinances. It is a wonder to see how painefull GOD is in teaching of vs, and how hee telleth vs that he hath not omitted any thing: and yet for all that, our wittes are so fugitiue, that wee still couet some better thing than wee finde in Gods word. This diuelish curiositie hath reigned at all times in the worlde. And we see that euen at this day, do what wee can, this cursed desire cannot be ouermastered, but that men will still needes be wiser than God would haue them to be. And why? For when his worde is preached vnto vs, there is no cause for vs to finde fault that hee hath not shewed vs all that is for our behoofe. Yet notwithstanding, wee be tickliſh still, and woulde faine haue this and that, besides that which God hath shewed vs. Seeing then that such faultinesse bewrayeth it selfe in vs: it standeth vs so much the more on hand to remember the counsel that is giuen vs here: that is wit, that if wee will suffer God to bee our maister, wee shall finde all perfection of wisedome in his schoole. For his lawe is of sufficient abilitie to make vs wise. And againe, (as I haue sayd heretofore) it conteineth all the poyntes that serue to vnite vs vnto our GOD: wherein consisteth our whole happinesse and glorie. Moreouer it sheweth vs the rule of well doing, so as we need not to seeke any where else what GOD alloweth, for wee haue there his statutes and ordinances. Then may wee well knowe and assure our selues that our lyfe shall please GOD, when wee passe not the boundes that hee hath set vs. But if wee adde any thing at al to it, let vs not thinke that GOD alloweth that as righteousnesse or as a good thing: for hee forgate not any thing that was necessarie or behoofefull. And these two poyntes are well worthie to be noted. For they serue to make vs to set the more store by the doctrine that is dayly set forth to vs in the name of GOD. Sith wee see it is the perfect wisedome, ought wee not to apply all our wittes to it, and to holde vs to it? Sith wee see that GOD foresloweth not, but continueth to teach vs dayly: ought not wee also on our side to bee attentiue and diligent to profite vnder him? And though wee bee not so well giuen to it at the first as were meete wee shoulde: ought wee not to inforce our selues all our lyfe long to know Gods will still more and more, till wee bee quite rid of all ignorance, which shall bee when wee be taken out of this world, and not before? Surely that which Moses did, ought to serue vs for a rule and example at this day. For hee did it not at aladuenture. And besides that, GOD ordayned him to bee as a lookingglasse to all propheres, and to all such as haue charge to teache in Gods Church. Let vs vnderstand therefore that GOD will not haue vs to learne his trueth in one day, as though one lesson were enough for vs: but hee will haue the thinges often rehearsed to vs which wee haue heard, that they may tary with vs and bee so rooted in our hearres, as wee may no more alledge in excuse of our selues, O I haue not yet bin wel instructed. God then on his part is alwayes ready, so as wee cannot erre except we doe it wittingly, willingly, and wilfully as it were.

Colos. 2. 8. & Deut. 6.

1. Cor. 1. 9. 10. 13.

But here is expresse mention made of: *the Temple of Phegor*, to shewe that although the people had an eysore there to turne them away to superstition: yet had they a remedie for it also, inasmuch as GOD called earnestly vppon thé by his worde, that they shoulde not meddle with the idolatries of the heathen. In deede it was a hard chastisement for them, to bee driuen to haue the temple of an idoll continually in their sight. It was as if God meaning to haue spyted them, shoulde haue sayd, I haue called you to possesse a lande that is alotted to my seruice, where yee shoulde haue seene nothing ỳ should haue offended you: for my Sanctuarie should haue bin set vp among you, I should haue bin worshiped purely, according to my law, ỳ land should not haue bin defiled with old superstitiõs, al such things should haue bin wiped out, so as ye should haue heard nothing sownde in your eares but my prayers. But now ye bee here in a corner of a countrie, where ye beholde the

temple

temple of an idoll, and where shameful abhominations are committed. Therefore it is as a vengeance which yee be faine to suffer for your sinnes, because yee be not worthie to enter into the land that I promised you. Thus yee see how it was Gods will to chastise his people, whē hee did let them dwell by the temple of Pheor. Lykewise if wee in these dayes bee mingled with idolaters, so as wee bee faine to looke vpon the filthinesse which they commit, and vppon their peruerting of all religion: let vs vnderstand that by that meanes God punisheth vs, or at leastwise humbleth vs because of our sinnes. And wee ought to bee sory, not onely for the offences that are committed by the vnbeleeuers, but also because wee may well perceiue that wee be not worthie to see the whole worlde reformed, so as there might bee one accorde and consent of harmonie in religion, and GOD bee purely worshipped euery where: I say wee bee not worthie to see it. Nowe then if superstitions bee neere vs, and wee bee driuen to beholde the markes of them, or to heare any peece of them: Let vs impute it to our owne sinnes.

But yet howsoeuer the worlde went, GOD failed not to giue the people of Israel a good remedie: For when the lawe was taught them so by Moses: it was as if GOD had separated those that were his, from the blinde wretches that went astray in their superstitions. And hereupon wee haue to note, that although the whole worlde bee peruerted, and great confusion is to bee seene, and all is full of error and corruption: yet notwithstanding we must take Gods worde for our guide, and that must strengthen vs to defy all superstitions and idolatries. And if wee bee so full of vanitie, as to fleete too and fro after that God hath giuen vs his worde: there will bee no excuse for vs. For as I haue sayd afore, Gods declaring of his will vnto vs, ought to bee a sufficient bridle for vs. Though all the worlde went the contrary way, and one sorte followed their owne fancies, and another sorte had some lykelyhood of religion: yet ought none of those thinges to wey with vs, when wee haue once heard the voyce of our GOD, and thereby gotten knowledge of his will. And therefore let vs learne to make this certeine and infallible doctrine auaileable, that it may drawe vs from all wicked opinions, from all errors, and from the thinges which the diuell hath forged and men inuented in the worlde. Thus ye see what wee haue to remember, when Moses maketh mention here of Pheors temple.

Now herewithall hee addeth also, *that this [was done] after their ouercomming of the two kinges, Og king of Basan, and Sehon king of the Amorrhites or of Hesebon.* And this circumstance serued to blame the people, if they yelded not themselues obedient vnto God. Wee knowe that the more fauor GOD sheweth vs, the more ought wee to bee prouoked to loue and feare him. God hath shewed himselfe beneficiall to vs: nowe ought not the same to drawe vs the more vnto him? Yes. For if wee bynde a mortall man vnto vs by our wel doing: he shall bee taken and deemed vnthankefull, if hee acknowledge not the good that wee haue done him: and howe much lesse are we to be excused, if we doe not so to the liuing God? Then let vs beare in minde that Moses maketh expresse mention here, of the two kinges that had bin ouercome: to the intent that the people shoulde haue considered thus with themselues. Goe to, we haue had here two excellent victories, Heretofore when wee woulde haue attempted it against the forbidding of our GOD: wee were stoutely beaten back, there was no strength nor courage in vs, our enemies came lyke Waspes or Hornets to sting out our eyes, according to the similitude which hath bin set downe heeretofore. But now are two strong and mightie kinges ouercome, without any cost of ours. So as GOD hath giuen them into our handes. Who was the cause of these two victories? was it not God, who directed and ruled all? Seeing then that he hath pitied vs, and begonne to performe the promise which he made to our fathers, and giuen vs so good a hansell of it already: ought wee not to indeuer to giue our selues in such wise vnto him, as wee may be wholy at his commaundement? Should wee not put our selues into his hand, which hee hath shewed to be so mightie for the loue of vs? Behold (say I) how Moses meant the thinges that he rehearseth concerning the discomfiture of Sehon and Og: namely to blame the people for their vnthankefulnesse, if they yelded not themselues quietly to the seruice of their God, which had bound them so greatly vnto him.

But now must we also apply this doctrine to our vse. Whensoeuer wee perceiue any sloth, or coldnes, or rebelliousnesse in our selues, so as our flesshe falleth to striuing, and wee labor not to Godward with so cheareful minde and lusty courage as were expedient: wee must enter into account of the benefites that we haue receiued at his hand, [and thinke thus with our selues] wretched creature how happeneth it that thou art so loth to sticke to thy GOD, seeing hee hath shewed thee his will? consider what thou hast of him, bethinke thee of the benefits which hee hath bestowed vppon thee vnto this houre. Let euery man examine himselfe how much hee is bounde vnto GOD, that wee may bee the more inflamed to serue him. And let vs vnderstand, not onely generally that hee hath created vs: but also that besides his redeeming of vs by the bloud of our Lorde Iesus Christ, as hee redeemed the Israelites out of Egypt: and besides his drawing of vs vnto him by his grace: wee haue also had the doctrine of the Gospell, which was all one as to take vs vnder his protection, and hee sheweth it vs dayly by effect. How many helpes and succours haue wee had in our infirmities? Shoulde not Satan haue ouercome vs a thowsand times, if our God had not reached out his hand to rescue vs? Surely we should be vtterly ouerthrowen. Yea we should not only be borne downe w temptations, but we should also be vtterly ouerwhelmed, if we were not for such rescue as I speake of. Seeing then that our Lord ceaseth not to con-

firme

firme vs dayly in his grace: Let vs on our side looke ẏ wee take occasion thereby, to serue him the more earnestly, as wee see is spoken of here.

Nowe proceeding herewith, Moses addeth ẏ he spake thus to ẏ people of Israel, saying: *Hearke to the Lawe which the Lord hath caused to be set before ye, that ye may learne it & keepe it.* Here again Moses rehearseth ẏ preface which wee haue seene heretofore: ẏ is to wit, ẏ Gods law was not giuẽ, only to ẏ end ẏ men should heare it & know what it is: but to ẏ end we shoulde be reformed, & that God might haue proofe of the subiection ẏ we yeld vnto him. To be short, we see that Gods doctrine consisteth in practise, & that we must shew by our deedes that we haue not bin taught it in vaine. Here Moses saith first of all, *Heare the Lawe which I set foorth to you in your eares to learne it.* As if he should say, Gods meaning is not that the doctrine which is preached vnto vs in his name & by his cõmission, should fall to the grounde: but ẏ wee should receiue it diligẽtly, & set our whole mindes vppon it. For what is the cause why we profite so slenderly in Gods worde, but for ẏ wee busie our selues to much about wordly matters? If we come to a Sermon, or if wee reade the holy Scripture, it is but as it were for fashions sake, we indeuour not to doe as wee ought to do, ẏ we might obserue the things ẏ are told vs. Wherefore let vs see that we become diligent schollers, while God is so gratious to vs as to teach vs by his word. And for the same cause doth Moses say *that hee setteth it forth in their eares*. In deed this manner of speech were harsh in our tongue: neuertheless it importeth, that God speaketh not to vs in a darke or strange language: but that he vttereth himselfe familiarly, so farre forth as is requisite. Seeing then ẏ God commeth down to vs, to the end we might haue his wil familiarly vttered vnto vs: what excuse will there be for vs, if his word be lost, or if it slippe away, or if we take not hold of it to fare the better by it? True it is ẏ forasmuch as we be grosse and ignorant, we shall euer finde much darkenesse in Gods word, so as it shalbe to high & profound for vs: but who is to blame for it? Let vs marke then ẏ al such as complayne ẏ Gods word is an vnknowen speach vnto thẽ: are here rebuked of lying: & they do god wrong in slandering him, forasmuch as they deny and despise ẏ grace which Moses protesteth to haue bin offered to ẏ Israelites in the setting foorth of the lawe. For he saith ẏ at ẏ time God spake to the peoples eares by the mouth of him. Sith it is so: the doctrine ought to haue bin familiar enough to them. And much lesse cause haue we nowadayes to alledge this shift, that wee vnderstand not the thinges ẏ are contained in the holy scripture. For God speaketh merily enough and familiarly enough vnto vs. It is long of none but our selues ẏ we haue not our eares bored to heare him. And so let vs marke well, that there remaineth nothing for vs to doe, but to be attẽtiue that we may profite by the doctrine.

But yet herewithall we must resorte to that which I haue touched afore: namely *that it must be kept and throughly followed.* for if we doe no more but onely lyke well of Gods worde, & yelde recorde vnto it that it is good, true, and holy: God shall be greately beholden to vs for it. What is to be done then? Behold, God will try whether he be our maister or no. For the thing whereby to rule our lyfe, is not onely to inquire what he sayth vnto vs: but also to giue ouer our owne desires and affections, and to desire nothing elsse but to please him, and to bee gouerned by him and by his righteousnesse. When wee be at that poynt, then is it a good proofe that God hath such authoritie ouer vs as hee deserueth. But vntill wee bee come to that poynt, we shall neuer knowe what it is to haue profited in the doctrine. Therefore let this worde *Doe* or *Performe* runne alwayes in their minds which heare the worde of God. How now, let them say? Beholde God hath graunted vs the grace to be taught. And to what ende? not to the ende wee should but only hearken to it to say, yeamary, ẏ is well sayd, this is good: but to the end that our whole lyfe should bee reformed, and that forasmuch as it is a good and sure rule, wee shoulde no more goe astray as wee haue done, and as the ignorant wretches do, which are wandered out of the right way, and haue not the teaching that wee haue, whome the doctrine ought so to mortify, as God may reigne ouer vs, and wee be subiect vnto him. Thus yee see in effect what Moses meant by protesting to the people in this preface, that his setting foorth of the Lawe vnto thẽ, was not to the intent they should but only heare it and haue their eares beaten with it: but to the intent they should also imbrace it and keepe it.

And for confirmation hereof hee alledgeth, *that God made his couenaunt with the people in Mount Horeb*, the better to bring them to feare, and to obey him for euer. For if GOD should but onely exact his dew of vs: yet were wee sufficiently bound to cleaue to him, and to stick to his commaundements. But nowe seeing it hath pleased him of his infinite goodnesse, to come as it were to a common treatie, and to binde himselfe interchaungeably vnto vs, whereas there is no cause why hee shoulde bee bounde: so as hee couenanteth to be our father and Sauiour, and to receiue vs into his flocke, to be his inheritance, that wee may liue vnder his protection, and hee setteth the euerlasting lyfe before vs: Seeing hee doth all these thinges for vs, ought not our heartes to yeeld, though they were of stone? Seeing that the creatures doe see that the liuing God abaseth himself so farre, as to vouchsafe to enter into treatie with thẽ, as if he should say, Go to, let vs see at what poynt wee bee: in deede there is an infinite distance betwixt you and mee, I might commaunde you what I thinke good without hauing any further to do with you, neither are you worthie to come ny me, or to haue any acquaintãce ẇ him ẏ can cõmaund you what he listeth, without making any other protestation than only this, This will I haue ye do, this is my minde: & yet for all ẏ I forbeare mine own right, I offer my self to you to be your leader & sauiour, I am willing to gouern you, & you shalbe as my litle housholde, I wil be your king if

Rom. 9. 12. 14.

if you will bee contented with my worde: and beſides this, thinke not that my making of my couenant with your fathers, was of purpoſe to gayne any thing at your handes: for I haue no neede nor want of any thing, and if I had, what could yee doe for mee? but I ſeeke your welfare and your ſaluation: and therefore I am here ready to enter into couenaunt w you, and to binde my ſelfe to you for mine owne part: Seing that the liuing God ſtoopeth ſo lowe, I pray you muſt wee not needes bee too too vnthankefull, if wee yeeld not to humble our ſelues vnder him, and forbeare all pride and ſtatelyneſſe? So then, it is not without cauſe that Moſes ſpeaketh here, of the couenant that God made with his people, to the ende that his goodneſſe and grace might bee chiefly knowen. And if this tooke place in the time of the Lawe, there is much greater reaſon that it ſhould take place at this day. For our Lordes couenanting was not onely with ỹ Iewes, nor for that one time onely: but when hee ſent his onely ſonne, then did hee ſhewe himſelfe much more fully to bee our father and Sauiour than hee had done afore, and hee did it after as ſweete and friendly a manner as could be, ſo as it is all one as if hee had euen opened his bowels vnto vs. Seeing then that God hath giuen vs his owne hearte in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and we heare how Chriſt proteſteth that
Iohn 15.15. hee will not hencefoorth call vs his ſeruauntes but his friendes, becauſe hee hath imparted himſelfe vnto vs ſo familiarly: I pray you muſt not the diuell needes haue bewitched vs, if wee bee not moued to yeelde our ſelues wholy vnto him, and to forſake our ſelues and all our owne affections? Therefore whē wee feele any naughtineſſe in vs that keepeth vs backe from ſeruing God, if wee finde any ſlothfulneſſe in vs, if wee bee fallen too faſt a ſleepe in this worlde: then to waken vs vp, and to cauſe vs to magnify God, let vs cal to minde the couenant which our Lord hath made with vs.

Now hereupon Moſes addeth, *It was not with your fathers that God made the couenant, but with vs, euen with vs that are all alme as this day*. This ſentence may haue a dubble vnderſtanding. For it may be taken as though Moſes made a compariſon, to ſhewe the better that the people which liued at that time, might haue bin the more inflamed to ſerue God, becauſe they had receiued more grace than their fathers. And for the ſame purpoſe alſo doth hee ſay in Exo-
Exod.6.3. dus, I haue not imparted this name of mine to your fathers. God ſpeaking there to Moſes, telleth him that hee had not manifeſted himſelfe ſo playnely to be God, vnto Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob, as hee did commaund to be done by Moſes. Hereby hee meaneth that the people ought to be ỹ more attentiue as now, becauſe God reueiled himſelfe to them after an vnaccuſtomed manner. And ſo the meaning of this text might bee that God made not the lyke couenant with our fathers. True it is that God ſpake to his ſeruantes Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob, and inſtructed them ſufficiently. And it is ſayd expreſ-
Ge.18.17.19 ly in the eighteenth of Geneſis, Shall I hide from my ſeruaunt Abraham, what I intend to doe vppon Sodom and Gomor? No: for I know hee will teach his houſholde my decrees, ordinances, iudgementes, and lawes. Yee ſee here that Abraham did ſufficiently inſtruct his houſholde and that not after a ſlender faſhion, but in Gods iudgementes, ſtatutes, and ordinances, ſo as it muſt needes bee ſayd that hee had Gods lawe well printed in his heart. But yet for all that, it was a benefit not to be held skorne of, when God ſent his Lawe to the people in two tables, and vouchſafed that there ſhoulde bee wherewith to inſtruct them continually, and alſo that the ſame thinges ſhoulde bee recorded for vs lykewiſe. The thing therefore which wee may gather vppon this text is this proteſtation which Moſes maketh to the people, as if hee ſhould ſay: my friendes, conſider the benefit which God beſtoweth vpon you this day, which (verily) hee beſtowed not vppon our fathers. For hee gaue not them the lawe in writing as he hath done to vs, neither vttered he thinges vnto thē by percelmeale. True it is that he taught them ſufficiently and as much as was requiſite for their ſaluation: but behold, wee all this day are come a ſtep higher than they were: and therfore ought wee to come the neerer vnto him, ſeeing that hee is ſo come downe vnto vs. That is Moſeſes meaning if we take the text after the foreſayd maner.

Lykewiſe might a man ſay to vs at this day, that God hath not delt with our fathers as hee hath dealt with vs. And ſo meant our Lord Ieſus Chriſt when hee ſayd to his diſciples, many kings & prophets haue deſired to ſee the things that you ſee, and to heare the thinges that are preached vnto you, and yet haue not had their wiſhe. Seeing then that God of his infinite mercie hath vouchſafed to preferre vs before the Patriarkes and prophets: according alſo as it is ſayd, that the Prophets ſerued more for our times, than for their owne: thereby wee ought to learne to reſort vnto him, & to giue our ſelues wholy to his doctrine.

Howbeit if all thinges bee well conſidered, although the matter before rehearſed be very profitable, and that the ſame exhortation be oftentimes made in the holy ſcripture: yet if all the woordes be well weyed, Moſes meant that God made not his couenant with thoſe that had heard the Lawe at the firſt giuing of it foorth, ỹ is to ſay, not only with them: but alſo with thoſe that outliued them, and ſucceeded in their place after their deceaſe. So to bee ſhorte, Moſes intended to ſhewe here, that the Lawe was not mortall, to continue onely during the liues of ſuch as had the firſt hearing of it: but that it was a doctrine which ſhoulde continue in force and authoritie for euer. The Lorde our God (ſaith hee) made not his couenant with our fathers: that is to ſay, hee meant not that onely our fathers ſhould bee his people, and ſo to binde himſelfe in ſlich ſort vnto them, ỹ his law ſhould ſerue but for a fortie or fiftie yeres: but he hath made his couenant lykewiſe with vs, and with thoſe that were yet vnborne when the lawe was

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giuen foorth. Although then that yee were not at mount Horeb, ne ſawe the fire vppon the hill: yet notwithſtanding aſſure your ſelues that your God did adopt you at the ſame time vnto himſelfe, and compriſed you lykewiſe in the couenant that hee made. Therefore it behoooueth you to keepe his lawe, becauſe it was ſet forth to laſt for euer, and to continue from age to age, and to be preached vnto the worldes end. That is the true and proper meaning of Moſes. And hereof wee may gather a good leſſon: which is, that although we were not at the firſt ſetting abroad of the Goſpell, nor ſawe the thinges that are reported to vs of the lawe: yet muſt not Gods word forgoe his authoritie with vs. And why? True it is that Gods rayſing vp of Moſes was a ſpeciall prerogatiue to the people that liued in that time: but yet muſt not the authoritie of the Lawe bee impeached for all that: for it conteineth Gods trueth, which indureth for euer, and is not variable nor tranſitorie after the maner of men. It is ſayde that men are lyke a flower or as the graſſe ỽ withereth and dryeth away out of hand: but Gods trueth endureth for euer. And this trueth which is vnchangable and vnuariable, is conteined in the Lawe. True it is that the Lawe as concerning the ceremonies is quite aboliſhed: but as concerning the ſubſtance of it, & the doctrine ỽ is cõteined in it, it keepeth his force for euer and neuer decayeth. Nowe let vs marke that although wee were not in the time of Moſes, yet is it not for vs to deſpiſe the the thinges that are reported to haue bin done [at that time,] or which are contayned in the lawe. And why? For hee ſpake them to vs. Hee ſpake not onely to the multitude that was aſſembled at mount Horeb: but alſo generally to the whole worlde. Now if this bee verifyed of the lawe: much more reaſon is it that it ſhould bee ſo of the Goſpell. For as I ſayd, the lawe, as concerning the ſhadowes and figures, is gone to decay: but in the Goſpel there is no ſuch lyke thing. For here our Lord maketh his newe and euerlaſting couenant: it is a couenant that indureth from age to age [without ceaſing.] What is to be done then, when the Goſpel is preached? Wee muſt aſſure our ſelues that the ſonne of GOD is come into the worlde: not onely to teache thoſe with whome hee was conuerſant when he was a mortal man: but alſo to purchaſe them vnto God his father, and to call the world to ſaluation, by giuing his Apoſtles commiſſion to ſound foorth their voyces through the whole worlde, that euen thoſe might bee made partakers of his doctrine which neuer heard them: which doctrine wee alſo muſt receiue ſtill at this day, as if Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe were ſtil among vs, or as if the Apoſtles ſpake to vs with their owne mouthes. That (ſay I) is the thing which wee haue to remember vppon this place. And therefore let vs not make any alteratiõ in Gods Church, or attempt to innouate any thing in his worde, foraſmuch as we knowe that hee will haue it to holde on continually in one equall courſe and trayne. For ſeeing hee hath giuen vs his Goſpel, and ſtabliſhed a certaine gouernment in the time of the Apoſtles and in the primatiue Church: it behoueth vs to come to the ſame, and to ſtay there. If wee doe otherwiſe: it is all one as if wee would make Gods worde mortall and corruptible as wee our ſelues are. Wherefore let vs learne, that although the worlde bee variable, ſo as there bee turnes and returnes euery day, and there is not any of vs all which hath not a number of opinions running in his head: yet muſt wee not looke to haue the libertie to doe now one thing and now another. Why ſo? For God hath not made his couenant with our fathers, but with vs that are aliue this day. Then let vs vnderſtand that as long as wee bee in this world, God gouerneth vs here and ſheweth vs the way, to the end wee ſhould not bee as wandering Pilgrims roming vp and downe, to gad after our owne luſtes: but bee guided as it were by his hand. To be ſhort, whereas Moſes ſayth here, *vs that are all aliue this day*: it ſerueth to ſhewe that men muſt not of all their lyfe long inuent any newe lawe, nor haue one to day and another to morrowe. For why? Our lyfe dependeth vppon Gods Lawe, and that ought to content vs: therefore let vs but onely profite in that, and haue an eye to the thinges that tend thereunto.

Furthermore, no doubt but that Moſes vpbraideth the people here with their vnthankefulneſſe, if they ſhould not dedicate their liues to the ſeruice of GOD. As if hee ſhould ſay, By what meanes liue wee? Is it not becauſe our Lorde hath placed vs in this world? Againe, ſeeing that the lyfe which wee haue commeth of him, ought wee not to beſtowe it in his ſeruice? Ought it not to bee wholy conſecrated vnto his wil? Thus then ye ſee how Moſes taxeth al ſuch as runne aſtray and follow not Gods worde. But yet herewithall wee muſt beare in minde the thing whirh I haue touched afore: that is to wit, that wee haue not a doctrine of two or three dayes continuance: but that wee muſt bee confirmed in it as long as wee liue. When wee haue once receiued the thinges that are conteined in ỽ holy ſcripture: we muſt indeuer to profite in them: and to goe forewarde ſtill in ſuch wiſe, as wee may ſtill growe in them vntill God take vs out of the world: aſſuring our ſelues that he wil keep couenant with vs, ſo as he for his part wil not bee vnfaithfull nor vnconſtant, but ſtedfaſt in his purpoſe. Seeing that hee is ſo: let vs bee the lyke, and ſo long as wee liue, let vs haue none other reſpect but to ſticke to him, euen in ſuch wiſe as hee ſheweth vs by his word. For wee muſt not goe about to knit and linke our ſelues to our GOD by our owne fancies: but looke as hee commeth to vs, ſo muſt wee goe to him, and when wee bee there, wee muſt beware that wee keepe vs there. Thus ye ſee what wee haue to gather vppon this text, that wee may bee the better diſpoſed to receiue the inſtruction that ſhall bee giuen vs hereafter, concerning Gods Lawe and commaundementes.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of

Deut.40.6.7.8
1.Pet.1.24.
Pſal.103.10
Pſal.117.2.&
119.90.152.
160.&1.Pet.
1.25.
Pſal.119.142.
Pſal. 146.6.
2.Cor.3.11.
Eph.1.15.
Col.2.14.
Heb.9.10.11.
Mat.5.17.18
Hab.2.4.9.13

Heb.8.8.9.10.

Mat.17.5.

Act.20.28.

Mat.28.19.
& Mar.16.
15.16.

Louit.18.5.
Ezec.20.11.
Rom.10.5.
Gal.3.12.

Phil.3.12.
Eph.4.13.

our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, so as our whole seeking may bee to submit our selues vnto him, and hee may vouchsafe to reach vs his hand, not suffering vs to bee any more giuen to our owne fancies and affections, but that wee may magnify his goodnesse which he vseth towardes vs, and fare the better by it by yeelding him the obedience that hee deserueth: specially because hee hath vouchsafed to bring vs his lawe and declare it to vs, and hath not onely shewed vs the way how to liue well, but also vouchsafed to adopt vs to bee his children, and too shewe himselfe to bee our father and Sauiour for our Lorde Iesus Christes sake. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but also to all people. &c.

On Wednesday the xij. of Iune. 1555.

The xxxj. Sermon, which is the second vpon the fifth Chapter.

4 The Lord God talked with you face to face vpon the mountaine, out of the middes of the fire.

5 The same time I stoode betweene the Lord and you, to shewe you the word of the Lord. For yee were afraid at the presence of the fire, and went not vp into the mount: And hee said,

6 I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

7 Thou shalt haue none other Gods in my sight.

WE haue seene heretofore howe Moses tooke great payne to make the people perceiue the maiestie that is in Gods word, that they might receiue it with all reuerence. For although men protest enough that they be willing to serue God: (for euen nature driueth them thereunto:) yet can they not submit themselues to his word, notwithstanding that that is the true proofe whereby to knowe whether wee bee subiect to GOD or no. But therein appeareth the rebelliousnesse of the worlde. For albeit that they graunt that Gods word is to bee receiued without gainesaying: yet shall yee skarsly finde one among a hundred, that humbleth himselfe in good earneste, to yeelde it the authoritie which it ought to haue. And why is that? Because wee conceiue not the maiestie of GOD which is vttered there.

Yee see then that it is not for naught that Moses hath tolde vs so often heretofore, that Gods worde ought to beare such a maiestie towardes vs, as all creatures ought to quake at it. And now againe hee addeth another confirmation of the same matter, saying, *that God talked with the people face to face in the mount, out of the middest of the fire.* As if hee shoulde say, yee haue now no cause at all to doubt, whether the doctrine that I deliuer vnto you bee of God or of men. For it is warranted enough and more than enough: God hath declared himselfe to you by visible and apparant signes, so as yee cannot but knowe that it is hee which spake to you. Now wee see Moseses meaning.

But before wee goe any further, here a question might be put, how it may bee sayd that God spake face to face, seeing that men cannot comprehend his infinite glorie: and with what eye can wee beholde Gods substance? Wee be so weakesighted, that if God should cast but one little beame of his brightnesse vpon vs, by and by wee should bee altogether daseled and confounded. Agayne, wee knowe how it is sayde that wee cannot beholde God face to face, vntill wee bee renewed, which shall not bee till the last day. For as now (sayth Saint Paule) wee see but as in a glasse, and in parte, and darkly. 1 Cor.

Moreouer hee sayth in another place, that as now the Gospell representeth Gods maiestie in such wise vnto vs, as wee may see him there: but the lawe was darke, and there hung a veile before it, which hindered the fathers fro knowing God in such sorte and so familiarly as wee doe nowadayes. But all this agreeth very wel. For if the Lawe bee compared with the Gospell it is certeine that the thing shall bee founde to bee true, which Saint Paul speaketh heere. For God declared not himselfe so familiarly at that time, as hee doth to vs by meanes of our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is his liuely image. Therefore at this day the greate treasures of Gods wisedome are layde foorth, so as GOD calleth vs to the kingdome of heauen, and sheweth that hee taketh vs for his children and heires: it was not so in the time of the Lawe. Againe, although wee haue so great & familiar knowledge nowadayes; yet doth the thing stand alwayes true which I sayd, that is to wit, that we see but in part. And

why so?

why so? For wee be not yet made partakers of Gods glory, and therefore wee cannot come neere him, but hee must be faine to reueile himselfe to vs according to our rudenesse and infirmitie. And albeit that God haue appeared to men euen from the beginning of the worlde: yet hath hee not shewed himselfe as hee is in deede, but according as men might be able to abide it. Therefore wee must alwayes come to this poynt, that God neither was knowen of the fathers, nor appeareth to vs at this day in his substance: but applyeth himselfe to vs, insomuch as hee is faine to stoope to make vs perceiue his presence according to our abilitie.

Neuertheless it is not for naught that Moses sayth here, *that God spake face to face*. For hee meaneth that the people had not some glimering or gesse onely, so as they might doube or onely conceiue some opinion of him, but that they had an infallible warrant, so as they might conclude thus: here is our GOD, who hath so communicated himselfe vnto vs, as our faith ought not to be any more vncertaine, neither ought the doctrine that is set foorth to vs in his name, to be any more debated in way of disputation, As whether it bee meete to bee receiued or no. And why? For God hath giuen vs a sure marke, which cannot deceiue vs, nor leaue vs in doubt that it proceeded not from him. Thus wee see nowe the meaning of Moses.

Hereupon wee haue a good lesson to gather: which is, that if GOD vtter not himselfe in such stately maner as our lyking could afoorde: wee must assure our selues that his so dooing is for our profite and welfare. For if wee consider our owne infirmitie, it will pull downe our ouerlustinesse whereto our nature prouoketh vs continually. For wee woulde bee inquiring of Gods secretes without ende or measure. And why? Because wee feele not our own vnabilitie. Wherfore let vs magnify the goodnesse of our GOD for that it pleaseth him to haue regard of vs and of our rudenesse, and to hide his glory from vs least wee shoulde be ouerwhelmed by it. For as I sayd afore, wee coulde not abide it, being so fraile as wee bee. And herewithall let vs vnderstande, that there is no excuse for vs, if wee yeelde not GOD his due honor when hee shall haue giuen vs any euident token of his presence.

Therefore let vs not looke that God should come to vs in his inestimable glorie, that the heauens should cleaue a sunder, and that all the Angels of paradise should appeare to vs: But when our Lord sheweth vs that it is hee that speaketh, let that suffise vs, and let vs humble our selues out of hand. For if wee will needes bee slothfull in that ease: it shall bee cast in our teeth that wee turned our backs vpon him when hee shewed vs his face. In deede it is sayd vnto vs in another place, that men cannot beholde Gods face without perishing. Insomuch that although hee shewed himselfe in such wise to Moses as is spoken of in Numery, so that he was familiar with him as with his friend: yet is it sayd that hee sawe no more of him but onely his backe parres. But that is to shewe vs alwayes that wee must not presume to preace vnto GOD, so long as wee beare this fleshe about vs: we must not think to attain so high. For if the very Angels of heauen vnder the shape of Seraphins, doe hide themselues when GOD sheweth himselfe: what shall wee doe, which doe but creepe heere on earth? But howsoeuer the case stand, yet will God condemne vs for our vnthankefulnesse, if we haue no list to behold his face, and that the tokens of his presence which hee sheweth vs doe not suffise vs. Aboue all thinges let vs beare this in minde, namely that the case concerneth our submitting of our selues as well to the lawe as to the Gospell. For it is there chiefly that God will be knowen of men to the ende they should worship him, simply receiuing whatsoeuer commeth out of his mouth. Whereunto then shall wee apply his saying of Moses? To this ende verily that whensoeuer the scripture is set afore vs, so as it is either preched or expounded vnto vs, or wee our selues reade it: this preface must serue to humble vs, that we may exalt God with all reuerence, and not aduenture to reply against his worde, but tremble at it, as is sayde in the prophet Esay. For all that euer is conteined in the holy scripture, is so throughly warranted vnto vs, as it may well be sayd that GOD hath talked with men, yea and euen shewed himselfe to them after a visible manner.

Exo. 6. 3.

Esa. 66. 2. 5.

Nowe hereunto Moses addeth, *that he himselfe had bin as a mediatour betweene God and men, because the people were afraide and durst not goe vp into the mountaine*. Whereby Moses doth vs to wit, that the deliuering foorth of the lawe by a mortall man, ought not to diminishe the authoritie thereof. And why? Because the infirmitie of the people required it: that was their fault. And it is a text well worthie to bee marked. For wee doe alwayes seeke startingholes, that wee might despise Gods worde. In deede wee will not pretend it openly: but yet are all of vs so lewdely disposed, that wee thinke our selues well at ease if wee can finde any color to say, Tush I knowe not whether this bee Gods word or no, I cannot tell whether it speake to me or no, I wote not what condition is annexed to it. Thus wee see how the worlde striueth continually to exempt themselues from the obedience of Gods worde: and it is a very common excuse to say, yea, it is true that GOD ought to be obeyed, but yet for all that, they that preach are but men lyke our selues: and must their doctrine bee hearkened to, as though they were men that came from heauen? Many men beare themselues in hand that this shoulde goe for payment, notwithstanding that they be rebels against GOD, or rather that they passe not at all to submitte themselues to him and to his worde.

But wee haue an aunswere heere, wherewith to cut off the occasion of all this: which is, that whereas GOD sendeth his worde by the hand of men, hee doeth it in respect of mens default and infirmitie. Neuertheless hee ceaseth

Num. 33. 11 Deu. 34.

not to giue vs some marke of his glory, whereby his word is sufficiently knowen to be heauenly: insomuch that if the matter bee duely scanned, it appeareth that God hath warranted it throughly. So then, it is not onely for the auncient fathers, that Moses spake: but this warning is directed to vs also: that is to wit, that although men bee appointed as messengers to preach Gods worde to vs, yet ought not that to diminishe the maiestie thereof any whit at all. And in deede wee doe misconsider our owne frailetie, when wee desire that God shoulde worke miracles dayly: nay verily wee cannot tell what is meete for vs. For as touching miracles, there haue bin enowe wrought already for the warranting of the trueth as well of the Lawe as of the Gospel, that wee might bee fully certifyed of them. Yet notwithstanding it is expedient for vs at this day, that God shoulde send vs men like out selues, with commission from him to teach vs in his name and in his stead, as one that alloureth vs to him with all gentlenesse and courtesie. Thinke we that wee were able to abide his presence, if hee shoulde come to vs in such sort as hee is in deede? Alas no: there were no shift for vs but wee should bee all consumed. If God should speake in his strength: wee knowe how it is sayd that it would make the very rockes and mountaines to melt: and could we that are as feeble as any thing may bee, bee able to outstand such force, that it should not thunder downe vpon vs and destroy vs? Therefore let vs marke well that when God ordeined that his word should bee preached vnto vs, and that we should haue it in writing, therein he applyed himselfe to our weakenesse, dealing with vs as if himself were a mortal man, to the intent we should not be afraide to come vnto him, but be drawen to him with all gentlenesse. Againe, how highly doth hee honor vs, in that it pleaseth him to choose men of no reputation among vs, to represent his person and to speake to vs in his name? For what could hee giue more to the Angels of heauen? Coulde hee giue them a more honorable charge or office? Seeing then that hee vouchsafeth to set men in so noble and excellent a roome, as to beare abroad his word: thererein hee sheweth how great his goodnesse is towardes vs, namely that it is more than fatherly.

Psal. 97. 5. Esa. 64. 1. 3. Mich. 1. 4.

And on the otherside, hee tryeth our humilitie. For if hee thundered from heauen, if he appeared visibly vnto vs, if the Angels came downe vnto vs: it were no maruell though men beleeued his worde. But when both great and small imbrace the order that hee hath set in his Church, that is to wit, when they obey his worde that is preached vnto them: that is a good tryall of our faith. Neuertheless, let vs still come backe to this, that God hath shewed himselfe sufficiently to men, so as wee haue no cause to doubt of his worde, or to stande scanning from whence it came. For wee bee sure enough of his will, if wee bee not wilfull in refusing the signes that hee hath giuen vs. Thus yee see what wee haue to gather vppon this sentence of Moses, where hee saith that the people durst not goe vp into the mount, by reason of the feare which they had conceiued. And although wee in these dayes woulde not refuse that God should speake vnto vs: yet if all thinges bee wel considered, it would not bee for our profite. And therfore let vs vnderstand, that Gods vsing of mens seruice in that wise, ought not to diminishe the certeintie of our faith.

It is sayd consequently, that God taught the people, saying: *I am the Euerlasting, thy GOD which brought thee out of the lande of Egypt. Thou shalt not haue any other God in my sight.* Here to keep the people of Israel in awe, GOD telleth them that the knowledge which they haue of him, ought to keepe them aloofe from all superstitions. For it was not to bee marueiled at, that the heathenfolke had idols, and went wandering after their owne errors and fancies. Wee must vnderstand that it is mans propertie of himselfe, to doe so. It is pitie to see howe much wee be inclined to vanitie. We neede not to goe to schoole to learne to bee deceiued: for euery of vs is clearke greate enough in that case. To bee shorte, wee goe alwayes forwarde to euill, yea euen vnder colour of good: insomuch that in stead of seruing GOD, there is nothing in vs but corruption and idolatrie. Therefore the Heathen had their diuersities of superstitions: for euery man might forge what hee would of his own braine, and in the meane while the liuing GOD was let alone of all men. And why? For hee was not so gratious to the whole worlde, as to shewe himselfe to all men. And so, men became brutishe, but that was for want of teaching. Neuertheless, that excused them not: for they bee still guiltie before GOD. Moreouer, the fountraine from whence idolatrie springes, is the vnthankefulnesse and lewdenesse of men in that they forsooke the liuing GOD of their owne accord.

And when the worlde was once growen out of kinde (as I haue sayd afore,) the wretched Paynims ran astray lyke blinde folkes: for they had no light to shew them the way of saluation. Now here GOD chargeth the people of Israell with rebellion, if they helde not themselues to the lawe that hee gaue them. And why? For *I am the Euerlasting, thy God*. When as he sayth, *I am the Euerlasting*: it is an excluding of al the Gods that haue bin inuented by men. As if hee should say, there is but onely one Godhead, and that is in mee. Therefore it is to bee concluded, that such as knowe mee and yet doe turne away to idols, cannot excuse themselues, but y they haue wilfully forsaken y liuing God.

And whereas hee addeth *that hee is the God of their people*: it is to shewe that hee had declared himselfe sufficiently. As if hee should say, I haue shouled you out from all other men: You see how all other men goe wandering astray, and that is for want of guiding and direction. But I haue chosen you for my people, and giuen my selfe vnto you.

Seeing then that I am your GOD: holde your selues henceforth to mee, or else ye shalbe lesse

lesse excusable than the Heathen. Your punishment must needes be dubble, yea and a hundred fold grieuouser than theirs, bicause ye shall haue falsified your faith which ye haue plighted vnto me, and broken the Couenant that I haue made with you.

He alledgeth yet furthermore the fauour that he had shewed to the people, saying *That he had brought them out of Egypt, from the house of bondage.* Whereby he meaneth that he hath bounde the people in such wise vnto him, as they can not start away, but they must deserue to bee still punished. For inasmuch as they shall haue forgotten their deliuerance: their vnthankefulnesse shall bee dubble. Seeing they had bene redeemed by the hand of God: it behoued them to giue ouer themselues wholly to the seruice of him that was their Redeemer. And he termeth Egypt *the house of bondage* purposely, to make the people consider throughly in what plight they had beene there. For we see that they which sighed and cried out when they were oppressed with such violence and tyrannie as wee reade of in Exodus: desired to returne thither againe as soone as God had deliuered them. And whereof came that, but that they remembred not their oppression any more, and the diuel stopped their eyes, that Gods grace might not bee esteemed among them as it deserued? That is the cause why Moses termeth Egypt *the house of bondage*. In the end the commaundement is added, that the people *should not haue any other gods before his face*, whom they ought to account for their God.

Now let vs apply all this doctrine to our own vse. First of all whereas he saieth, *I am the Euerlasting*: let vs learne to weigh this saying in such sort, that seeing Gods Maiestie is appeared vnto vs, wee imagine not any other Godhead. For God cannot abide any companion. If the Sunne doe darken the light of all the Starres: is it not reason that when God sheweth himselfe, al men should worship him, and that all the glorie that was before should be then as it were vtterly defaced? Yes: and therefore is it said by the Prophets, that when the Lord raigneth, there shall bee none other light but his: insomuch that euen the Sunne shall be dimmed, and the Moone bee turned into darknesse. This serueth to shew vs, that if wee mingle any of the fansies of our owne heads with God: it is a diminishing of the right that belongeth vnto him. For he can not away with any companion. Therefore this word *Euerlasting* must driue all fantasticalnesse from vs, that wee take not leaue to imagine one thing or other. Let vs be contented to haue the onely one God, & let him suffice vs. And for the same cause also is it said, that when our Lord Iesus setteth vp his seate in the world, then shall the idols of Egypt fall downe. Now this text belongeth to vs. For like as Moses saide to the people of olde time, The euerlasting hath appeared vnto you, and therefore you must driue away all idols frō among you: so now, seeing that God hath declared himselfe vnto vs in the person of his onely sonne, it is meete that all idolles should downe. Wee knowe that the Countrie of Egypt was full fraught with them aboue all the rest of ỹ world. Now then whereas we were plunged in lyes & darknesse before, & had an infinite number of idols: all those thinges must melt & vanish away, when as God telleth vs that hee is the Euerlasting. And whereas moreouer he termeth himselfe our God: it is to acquaint vs with him, that wee may knowe his Maiestie after a louing fashion. For if God should speake but onely of his euerlastingnes and of his being: we should for ỹ most part be vtterly abashed. True it is, ỹ this were sufficient to condemne all our dotages: But yet for all that, so it falleth out, that wee can not be properly instructed thereby to our owne vse and profite. Therefore when God hath once shewed vs that he onely is to be worshipped and honoured: then must he also come to vs after a gentle and familiar maner, that wee may feele him to bee our father and maister, and knowe that his will is to make a couenaunt with vs, to the intent that wee should sticke to him. This is the thing that is meant by the title that is attributed to him in this text, as if he shoulde say, I come not onely as the euerlasting to make thee afraide: but therewithall I am also thy God, I haue chosen thee to my selfe, I intend to haue thee for mine heritage. Now then wee see howe GOD authorizeth his Lawe, to the intent wee should receiue it with all reuerence and loweliness: and yet therewithal vouchsafeth to make it amiable, to the end wee should taste of it, and take pleasure to submit our selues to it, and suffer our selues to bee ruled by the doctrine therein contained. And so to bee short all excuse is bereft vs, if wee honour not our God nowe adayes by renouncing all superstitions, and all thinges that are contrarie to his seruice. Why so? Bicause the tides which he attributeth here to him selfe to holde vs in awe, ought to drawe vs vnto him. When as he speaketh of his souereintie ouer vs, and saieth he is our God: that ought to make vs to taste of his fatherly goodnesse. And both of them are contained here. Wee see then that there remaineth no more to doe, but to hearken to the thinges that are tolde vs in Gods Lawe, and to hold our selues simply to the same. And that is ỹ cause why he vpbrayded the people of Israel, that they neither loued him nor feared him. If I bee thy God and maister, where is thy feare? And if I bee thy father, where is thy loue, saieth hee by his Prophet Malachie? No doubt but the Prophet hath an eye to the thing that Moses toucheth briefely here. For when God nameth himselfe the euerlasting: it is to the end we should yeeld him the reuerence that is due to him. And whereas he nameth himselfe the God of that people: it is to the end to winne them by friendlinesse, and to shewe them that seeing he had chosen them, it was good reason that they should put themselues wholly into his handes. Nowe if it were so vnder the lawe: it agreeth much more to vs nowe adayes. For although God haue vouchsafed to bee as it were abased in the person of his onely sonne: yet notwithstanding he continued still in his glorie, and it was no abatement of the highnesse whereof

Exod. 2. 23. & 14. 11. &c. 17. 3. Num. 14. 3. 4

Deut. 4. 20.

Mal. 1. 6.

Phil. 2. 7.

mention is made here. The abasing of our Lord Iesus Christ, was an infallible euidence of the mercie of our God: but yet howsoeuer it were, it ought not to make vs to despise him. For it was Gods wil to draw vs to his infinite glory by that means, to the intent ỳ we shold worship him seeing he came down after ỳ fashion vnto vs. Iustly then may he vpbraid vs now adayes, that we be vtterly vnexcusable, if we doe not both feare him and loue him. For he sheweth himself to be both our God and our maister. Where then is our feare, if we make none account of his commandements, but bee so hard hearted at his threatnings, as to set light by them, and to goe on stil in euill deedes, & to make but a mocke of it though he shew himselfe to be our iudge and call vs to a reckening? Where is the reuerence that we owe to our God? For if it were a mortall creature, we would stand in more awe of him than we do of the liuing God, who hath all superioritie ouer vs. Againe, it is not ynough for vs to feare God after a slauish maner, as by constraint: but our feare must bee matched with loue. And for the same cause he nameth himselfe our father. Yea and wee haue to note, that in shewing himselfe to bee the GOD of Israel, vnder that saying he meant to bee our Sauiour also. Thou art our GOD (sayeth the Prophet Abacuck) and wee can not perish. Nowe then, let vs beare these titles well in minde, for they belong to vs, that is to say, they ought to serue for our instruction at this day, when the Maiestie of God is appeared in our Lord Iesus Christ.

Abac.1.12.

2.Tim.3.16.

And herewithall wee must also note what he addeth concerning the fauour that he shewed to his people. *I haue brought thee* (saieth he) *out of the land of Egypt.* Of a trueth God meant hereby to bind the people of Israel to him most specially aboue al other nations. And that is the cause why hee maketh expresse mention of their deliuerance. Neuertheless, when God speaketh, wee must bethinke vs of all the benefites whereby he hath bound vs to himselfe, which are infinite & inestimable. But yet must we taste of them after our abilitie, and apply all our vnderstanding to them, and forasmuch as wee see that wee come short, wee must straine our selues the more, to know at leastwise so much by them, as may teach vs to feare and loue our God. Doeth God then speake? We must first consider, that it is he which hath created and fashioned vs: and therefore wee bee his. Loe here a benefite that is singular ynough alreadie. Were there no more but his setting of vs in this worlde and his maintaining of vs here: could wee recompence it as wee bee bound to do, though euery of vs imployed himselfe to serue him to the vttermost of our power? No: But yet further when we behold ỳ recordes of his loue which he giueth vs both aboue and beneath, as that he hath made the world for our sakes, that he hath ordained and appointed all things to our vse, that he hath printed his image in vs to the intent wee should be immortall: and that he hath prepared a better inheritance for vs than this transitorie life: when we see al these things, must it not needes be that wee bee worse than blockish, if we be not rauished with earnest affection to worship our God, and to vowe and dedicate our selues wholly to him? Yes: but besides this, wee must bethinke vs of all the good turnes which God hath done vs, as well in general as in particular: and then must we confesse with Dauid Lord, when I thinke vpon thy benefites, behold, my wit is plundged as it were into a bottomlesse pit: yea they be moe in nomber thi the haires of my head, as it is said in the fortith Psalme. Againe, when wee haue acknowledged how much we be beholden to our God generally: let vs also consider the benefites that euerie of vs haue receiued at Gods hand particularly. And whereas it was saide to the people of Israel in olde time, *I brought thee out of the land of Egypt*: let vs consider whence our Lorde deliuered vs, when he vouchsafed to admit vs into his household and Church. For we be Adams childrē, by nature cursed, heires of death, altogither sinnefull, and consequently must needes be lothsome to our God. Let men like of themselues and glorie of themselues as much as they list: yet notwithstanding this is their pedegree, this is al their nobilitie, namely ỳ they bee Satans bondslaues, that they haue a sinke of sinne and corruption in them, and that they haue nothing but Gods wrath and curse hanging ouer their heads: and to bee short, that being banished from the kingdome of heauen, they be deliuered vp to all mischiefe and woe. But our Lord hath deliuered vs from these things by the hand of his sonne, he hath not sent vs a Moses as he did to the people of olde time: nay he hath not spared his owne sonne, but hath deliuered him to death for vs. Seeing then that we be ransomed with so deare and inestimable a price, as is the holy bloud of the sonne of God: ought wee not to giue our selues wholly vnto him? Furthermore if Egypt were termed a house of bondage: I praye you what is it when ỳ diuell holdeth vs in his bondes and vnder his tyrannie, so as we haue no meanes to scape death, but are shut out from all hope of saluation, and God is vtterly against vs? Seeing wee bee deliuered from all these things, is it not a much more excellent deliuerance, than that which Moses here speaketh of? Yes: and therefore whereas it was saide to the people of olde time, thy GOD hath brought thee out of the lande of Egypt: nowe it is sayde that we be not our owne, as saieth Saint Paul in the fourteenth to the Romanes, and also in the seuenth of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Wee bee not our owne: the faithfull must not take leaue to doe what they list, nor to liue euerie man after his owne liking. And why? Bicause our Lorde Iesus Christ dyed, and is risen againe to raigne both ouer quicke and dead. Then is it good reason that Iesus Christ shoulde bee Lord of life and death, seeing he spared not himselfe when our redemption & saluation were to be wrought.

Gen.1.28. Psal.8.7.

Gen.1.26. 27.& 9.6. Heb.9.15.& 11.16. 1.Pet.1.4.

And moreouer, besides that the sonne of God hath offered vp himselfe for redemption: let vs vnderstand that he maketh vs partakers of that benefite at this day, by meanes of the Gospell. For hee gathereth vs to him to the intent wee should

should bee of his flocke. True it is that hee is the Lambe without spot which wypeth awaye the sinnes of the world, and that he hath offered himselfe vp to reconcile men vnto God. But yet for all that, wee see a great nomber of people that are let alone, against whome the gate is shut, and GOD doeth not graunt them the grace to bee inlightened by faith as wee bee. And therefore let vs marke well that seeing the Gospell is preached vnto vs, and wee haue there a warrant that the sonne of God will make the redemption auailable in vs which he hath once wrought, and cause vs to inioye the benefite thereof: wee must learne that our thankelesnesse will bee the shamefuller, if wee doe not our indeuour to giue our selues to our God, who hath bounde vs to himselfe after that sorte. If the vnbeleeuers play the loose Coltes, and ouershoote themselues in their superstitions, and in wantonnesse of life: well, it is bicause they haue no bridle, he hath not reyned them backe as he doeth his houshold folke. Wee see the horrible confusion that is in Poperie: but yet there is not any doctrine to plucke men backe to God: nay rather, that doctrine which is there, doeth drawe them quite and cleane from him. And we see that the diuell hath gotte such footing there, that all is full of trumperie and illusions, and the liuing God is quite forsaken. And so ye see that there is a horrible confusion. But as for our part, seeing that God draweth vs to himselfe, is it not a straiter bond to make vs to linke in throughly with him, and to holde our selues vnder obedience of the doctrine that is set foorth to vs in his name? Yes: and therefore let vs learne to sticke so to our God as wee may renounce all that euer wee can imagine of our owne head: and let vs consider that it is not for vs to swarue one way or other any more, or to be tossed too and fro in any wise, assuring our selues that there is but onely one God, who will possesse vs, yea and possesse vs in such wise, as his honour bee not taken from him and bestowed vppon creatures, and that he watcheth ouer vs to the end wee should knowe that it is onely he on whom wee ought to call, and to whose grace we ought to repaire for succour. And finally forasmuch as it is his will to haue and accept vs to bee of his household: let vs walke as in his presence and in his sight, and that in such wise as wee worshippe him as our onely God, not onely with Ceremonies and outward protestation, but also in our hearts, as they that knowe that his seruice is spirituall, and to be short, let him possesse both our bodies and our soules, that he may bee throughly glorified in all respectes.

John 1.29. 2.Tim.1.9. 10.& Rom. 5.10. and 3.Cor.5.19.

Psal. 123.3.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, that it may leade vs to true repentance to be mortified more and more, so as our wicked lustes may be cut off, and we bee wholy giuen to feare and honour him: & that forasmuch as wee can not serue him throughly as he deserueth, so long as we be hild downe vnder the infirmities of our flesh: it may please him to vphold vs, vntill hee haue clothed vs with his own righteousnes. And so let vs all say, Almighty God, &c.

On Munday the xvij. of Iune. 1555.

The xxxij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the fifth Chapter.

8 Thou shalt not make thee any grauen image nor the likenesse of anye thing that is in heauen aboue, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters vnder the earth.

9 Thou shalt not bow downe to them nor worship them. For I am the Lord thy God, a ielous God, visiting the sinnes of the fathers vppon the children, euen vpon the third and fourth generation of them that hate mee:

10 And shewing mercie in a thousand generations, to them that loue mee and keepe my commaundementes.

FOrasmuch as men are so inclined to corrupte Gods seruice with wicked superstitions: God is faine to threaten them, that they may bee holde vnder as it were by force, or els their fondnesse would carie them away to surmise of God, contrarie to that which may beseeme his Maiestie. And this is a verie notable point, as I haue touched heretofore. For in as much as the people of Israel knew the liuing God: it may seeme to bee as it were needeleese to forbid them to make any image. Howbeit by reason of our cursed inclination, it was behoofefull that this forbidding should bee added as straite as wee see it here. And it is well for vs that it is so. For this sinne is rooted as it were in our verie bones: in so much that if God holde vs not that he cannot away with idolatrie, and that he wounded vs not with that threate: there is none of vs all which

would not forge infinite idols to himselfe, and by that meanes the honour of ỹ liuing God should be conueied ouer vnto our own imaginations. Wherefore let vs marke well, that here wee bee conuinced to haue a froward and cursed nature which draweth alwaies to superstition, and that it is requisite for vs to bee restrained after a violent maner. For of our owne will wee can neuer serue GOD so purely, as to imagine nothing of him but as may beseeme him. And herewithall wee see also whereunto our good intentes serue vs. For if there bee any thing wherein men may excuse themselues, by imagining that they doe well: it is in forging of idols. For to what end do they make them, but to serue GOD, that they may bee stirred vp to the greater deuotion, and be the surer that God will graunt their requests? Therefore by this meanes men might shroude themselues vnder colour of good intent. But we see on the contrarie part, that God abhorreth it: wee see howe he vttereth the grieuous sentence of condemnation, against all such as proceede to behaue themselues so after their owne imagination. They may well ynough say, (and so it is in deede) that their meaning is to serue God. But what for that? He accepteth no such seruice, but rather curseth it and vtterly misliketh it, & that iustly. For (as I haue shewed afore) it is a disguising of his Maiestie, to make any visible image vnto him. Therefore this text teacheth vs to forbeare to doe the thinges that seeme good to our selues, and specially that when Gods seruice commeth in question, we must not attempt any thing vpon our owne head, but in all simplicitie followe that which he ordaineth by his woord, wout putting any thing at all therto. For looke how soone wee swarue neuer so little from that; alledge wee what wee can, and set wee neuer so good countenance vpon our case: God will not faile to punish vs. For this threatening of his is not in vaine where he saieth, *That he is a ielous & angrie God, which visiteth the wickednesse of the fathers vpon the Children.*

Ye see then how there are two pointes for vs to remember in this text. The one is, that forasmuch as we be naturally too much giuen to idolatrie, wee must alwayes set this threate of God before our eyes, that wee take not vppon vs to mingle any thing with his word, or to deuise any worshipping of images, but serue God purely according to his owne nature, and not after our owne fansie. Let that serue for one point. The other is, that we must consider, that we must not pretend our owne good intentes, to iustifie the things that we our selues haue inuented: but contrariwise beare in minde, that the chiefe seruice which God requireth, is obedience.

1.Sa.15.22. Eccle.4.17.

But now let vs come to the wordes that are set downe here. First God saieth, *I am thine euerlasting God*, yea euen *the strong* or rather *mightie God*. Here againe he setteth himselfe against idols. For wee haue seene heretofore, that to correct superstition, he did set himselfe forth in his Maiestie. And surely Gods manifesting of himselfe, is to bereaue men of all excuse. So long as we knowe not the true Religion, no nor can discerne which is the true God: it is no marualle though our wits runne at rouers, and we gad vp and downe without any certaine stay, so as we be euer straying. But contrariwise, when God hath once shewed himself vnto vs, & giuē vs knoledge of his trueth: it is good reason that all our owne dotages should sinke, and that wee should sticke to the thing that wee knowe. For this cause God repeateth the matter, how he had declared himselfe to the people of Israel, and chosen them to himselfe of purpose to gouerne them, euen by his Lawe which is nowe published. And he termeth himselfe expressely a *ielous* or *angrie God*: for the Hebrew word that is placed here, betokeneth both twaine. And although he call himselfe God here: yet the word that he vseth commeth of strength. Now then whereas he termeth himselfe *ielous*: no doubt but his meaning is, that he cannot abide the violating of his honour, or that men should rob him of that which is his owne, to giue it vnto creatures: he is not so patient as to suffer such treacherie. And therefore although Gods honour be not so greatly regarded of vs as it deserueth: this argueth not ỹ he neglecteth it: for in the ende wee shall finde that he hath not forgotten himselfe; but that he will maintaine his glory, accordingly also as he declareth thorough out the whole holy scripture.

Truely, if we had but one drop of good reason, we would be ielous ouer the honour of our God, so as wee should neede no incouragement thereto, but rather should indeuour to performe this saying of the Psalme, that the zeale of him should euen consume vs, and we should be so set on fire within, that whensoeuer we sawe his Maiestie dishonored or lightly esteemed, we should feele as it were a burning fire within vs. But what? We be nice in maintaining our own honor but in the meane while wee suffer Gods honour to be trodē vnder foote, and to be scoffed at, and to be made sport of, or rather to be rent in peeces, when the world giueth it selfe to idolatrie. Howbeit, for as much as we doe not our duetie: our Lorde hauing cast vs in the teeth with our lewdnesse and vnthankfulnesse, must be faine to shewe vs, that although we haue bin lasie & negligent, yet will not he faile to haue such a zeale as is requisite for the maintenance of his honour, so as he will be reuenged of men for defacing of it after that maner.

And to the end we should know that God being ielous of his honour, is also well able to punish idolaters: he vseth that name of his which betokeneth strength or mightinesse, as I haue declared alreadie. And it behoueth vs to ioyne those two wordes togither. For Moses meaneth the same thing that is better expressed in the Prophet Nahum where he saieth, The Lord is a ielous God, a God of vengeance, a God that punisheth such as haue offended him, a God that watcheth ouer his enemies, a God that wil come with whirlewind and tempest. The Prophet vseth this manner of speache, that God is ielous, that is to say that he forgetteth not himselfe, no shutteth his eyes when men despise him, but marketh euerie whit of it, and inregistreth it be-

fore

fore him, and they muſt come to account for it. And hauing ſpoken of the ſaide diſpoſition, that is to ſaye, that God will maintaine his honour: hee ſheweth immediatly that hee hath wherewith to doe it, and that hee is armed with power to puniſh his foes, ſo as they cannot ſcape his hande. That is the cauſe why hee ſpeaketh of whirlwind and tempeſt: that is the cauſe why he ſpeaketh of vengeance: inſomuch that if God ſeeme to diſſemble thinges for a time, yet hee hath an eye to his enemies, and will in conuenient ſeaſon make them to feele with whome they had to doe, and that they prouoked the liuing God. Nowe wee ſee what Moſes meant here: that is to wit, that God ſetteth great ſtore by his own honour: and ỳ although we beare our ſelues in hande that wee ſhall ſcape vnpuniſhed when wee haue violated his ſeruice, or by any meanes corrupted it: yet notwithſtanding hee will ſhewe that hee hath not forgotten himſelfe, and that he will maintaine himſelfe. Marke that for one point.

Beſides this, hee is alſo mightie to put the ſame ielouſie in execution. He is not like mortall men, which are angrie and colerike when diſhonor, diſhoneſtie, or wrong is offered them, but yet are not able to doe as they woulde. God is no ſuch a one: for hee is armed with power to confounde all his enemies. In deede wee Deu. 32. 39. must not imagine any humaine affections in God, that hee ſhoulde bee moued as wee ſee that men bee. There is no wrathfulneſſe in God. But foraſmuch as wee cannot conceiue him as hee is: hee is faine to apply himſelfe to our rudeneſſe. Therefore whenſoeuer the ſcripture ſpeaketh of anger, of wrath, or of indignation: it is not for that God is inclynable, or for that hee reſembleth vs, or for that hee is moued thereto: [no,] hee ſtandeth alwayes at one ſtay, and there is not ſo much as any little ouerſhadowing in him, as ſaith S. Iames, who Iam. 1. 17. vſeth the ſame ſimilitude to ſhewe that there can bee no chaunge in his beeing. Howbeit foraſmuch as wee conceiue not Gods iudgementes and threatenings, but by the termes of yre, anger, wrath, and indignation: therefore doth the holy ſcripture ſpeake ſo of him. Wherefore let vs marke firſt of all, howe GOD hath Hebr. 10. 31. ſhewed vs in this text, that it is a dreadfull thing to fall into his handes. And ſpecially that if wee corrupt the pureneſſe of his ſeruice with our wicked inuentions, and will needes attempt whatſoeuer our owne braine deuiſeth: we ſhall feele with whom we haue to doe, and that he is too great a Lorde for vs to dally with after that faſhion.

Moreouer God thinketh it not ynough to threaten the parties themſelues that turne away from this Lawe through their idolatrouſneſſe: hee thinkes it not ynough to tell them that hee will puniſh the perſons themſelues: but hee extendeth his vengeance euen to their iſſue alſo. *I am* (ſaieth hee) *a iealous God which viſiteth the ſinnes of the fathers vppon the children, vnto the third and fourth generation.* It ſhoulde ſeeme at the firſt bluſh to bee vnſeemely for Gods Iuſtice, that hee ſhoulde puniſh the children for the offeces of their fathers and mothers. And beſides that it is vtterly againſt naturall reaſon: wee ſee Ezech. 18. 19. what is ſaide of it in the prophecie of Ezechiel: namely that the partie which ſinneth ſhall beare his owne burthen: ſo as the ſonne ſhall no more beare the ſinne of his father, than the father ſhall beare the ſinne of his ſonne. This text then may ſeeme ſomewhat rough and ſharpe, yea and to deface the vprightneſſe and equitie that is in God: for ſinne craueth his wages, that is to ſay the death of him that committeth it. Why then ſhoulde hee dye which is guiltleſſe? Againe, although this reaſon Ezech. 18. 2. were not ſo euident: yet doeth the holy ſcripture auowe, that God telleth vs hee will not puniſh the guiltleſſe children for the ſinnes of their parentes. Yea and hee rebuketh the Iewes for this blaſphemie which ranne in their mouthes, whereof they had made a common prouerb: Our fathers haue eaten ſower grapes, and our teeth are ſet on edge with it: Gods handling of vs thus rigorouſly is not for any fault of our owne committing, for wee haue liued as wee ought to do: but he ouer reacheth vs with the ſinnes of our fathers. After that manner did the Iewes grudge againſt GOD. But hee ſweareth that ſuch blaſphemie ſhall take place no more.

Nowe if all bee well conſidered, there is no contrarietie at all. For in the ſaide texte of Ezechiels, GOD meant nothing elſe but that thoſe whome hee puniſhed coulde not alledge innocencie, nor ſaye hee did them wrong in vſing rigour againſt them; but that euerie one of them ſhoulde finde themſelues guiltie, ſo as hee himſelfe ſhoulde bee iuſtified, and they well perceiue that hee went not beyonde meaſure and reaſon. And this is verie certeine. For although GOD puniſhe the children for their fathers ſakes: yet ceaſeth hee not to bee righteous in ſuch chaſtiſementes. For if the children bee well examined, they ſhall finde themſelues guiltie on their owne behalfe: yea (ſay I), euen though they were but newely borne, and had neuer done any open fault that were knowen to the worlde. For what manner of ofspring are wee? What bring wee with vs by nature but vtter naughtineſſe? Yee ſee then that euen infantes are ſinners aforehande: they bee condemned before GOD being yet in their mothers wombes. The euill is not yet perceiued: but yet for all that their nature is ſinfull and frowarde, they haue a ſecret ſeede within them, and they bee alreadie in Rom. 5. 12. 16. condemnation, becauſe of the originall ſinne that is come from Adam vpon all mankinde.

Nowe ſeeing that the little babes are not Eph. 2. 3. exempted from the wrath and curſe of GOD, in ſo much that if hee puniſhe them it is not without cauſe, neither can men ſaye but that hee proceedeth alwayes vprightlye as a good Iudge: much leſſe canne they that are

men growen auowe themselues to be innocent, but they shall much rather bee founde guiltie. And so as concerning Ezechiels purpose, it is an euident matter that God punisheth not the guiltlesse children for their fathers sakes: for there is fault to bee founde euen in them also.

Furthermore where as hee saieth *that hee punisheth the sinnes of the fathers vppon the children*: let vs marke howe that is done, and then will this doubt be yet better discussed. First of all wee knowe that God is not any thing indetted vnto vs, and that if hee doe vs any good, it is of his owne free goodnesse, and not for that hee is bounde vnto vs. Nowe if he list to vse rigour towardes vs, hee may leaue vs all in condemnation as those that are there alreadie. Let God but onely withholde his mercie, and shewe himselfe as a iudge to the whole worlde, and what will become of it? Wee bee all forlorne, there is no remedie for vs, both great and smal, fathers and children, I say all of vs without exception are damned euerychone, if God drawe vs not out of the cursed case wherein wee be, yea and that hee do it not of his owne freebestowed goodnesse, without being bound thervnto. Now then seeing that God might destroy vs and cast vs all away: is he to be blamed, is there any fault to bee founde with him, if it please him to vse his goodnesse and mercie towardes some, and to call them to him, and to deliuer them out of the bottomlesse pitte wherein they bee? No. For our eye must not bee spitefull because hee hath pittie vppon his creatures. And although hee vse not like courtesie towards all men: yet doth it become vs to keepe our mouthes shutte: yea and sometimes againe wee ought to open them wide to confesse that all his doings are in vprightnesse and equitie, though they surmount our capacitie. For wee cannot alwayes perceiue why God disposeth so of men: but our prattling must bee put downe, and wee must learne to reuerence God in his iudgementes when they bee too high and too secret for vs to attaine to. How soeuer the case stand, let this stand for a generall rule, that God might let vs alone in the destruction wherein we bee if he thought good, and that by that meanes all the worlde might perish: but forasmuch as it pleaseth him to shewe himselfe pitifull and gentle, not towardes all, but towardes one part of them, therefore putteth he a difference betweene the one and the other. And there vppon hee leaueth whom he listeth in their owne cursednes wherein they were borne.

Matt. 20. 15

Psal. 33. 4.

Nowe if it bee demaunded why GOD vseth mercie after that manner towardes the one sorte and rigour towardes the other: truely the first cause thereof is vnknowen to vs, and wee ought not to bee inquisitiue of it. And why? for it becommeth our wittes to bee locked vp and imprisoned in that behalfe, and wee ought to confesse that God hath free power to choose whom hee listeth and to cast away the rest. But howsoeuer the case stande, hee maketh this promise to the faithfull, that hee will haue mercie vppon their children: and that as hee hath begunne his mercie vppon the parentes themselues, so hee will holde out with it continually vnto a thousande generations. We see nowe that there is some cause why God hath pitie vppon the one sort rather than vppon the other. Againe on the contrarie part, he threateneth the vnbeleeuers that he will curse them, not onely in themselues, but also in their race, and in those that shall springe of them.

But nowe let vs come to the mercie that God graunteth, and to the punishment that hee extendeth. His blessing of the faithfull folkes children, is not in riches, in health, and in all other such thinges, or in making them to prosper to the worlde warde: Those are not the greatest blessings which God graunteth: that is not the ende which hee beginneth at: but rather the mercie that hee sheweth them, is that hee gouerneth them by his holy spirite, that hee giueth them the badge of his adopted children, and that he correcteth them and purgeth them from their sinnes, to fashion them againe after his owne image. Yee see then that the mercie which God extendeth towardes the children of the faithfull, is that hee suffereth them not to abide in their owne corruption and naughtinesse, but reformeth and ruleth them by his holy spirite. This done, hee proceedeth yet further, and maketh them to prosper, euen in this worlde, vntill the full measure of his mercie bee heaped vppon them, that is to wit, till he haue taken them vp into his heauenly kingdome, and there giuen them euerlasting life.

On the contrarie parte, whereas hee punisheth the sinnes of the fathers vppon the children: it is as much to say, as hee letteth their ofspring alone in the same plyght that they bee in. There is a wicked man, there is a despyser of GOD, there is an hypocrite, there is an vnbeleeuer: well may hee haue children, but God careth not for them (as yee woulde saye) and taketh them as straungers: and forasmuch as hee acknowledgeth them not to bee of the number of his, hee vouchsafeth not to shewe himselfe father like towardes them, but letteth them runne at rouers, so as Sathan must needes possesse them. And when they bee so destitute of Gods spirite, what can betide them but vtter mischiefe, so as they must prouoke him to wrath more and more? Nowe then doeth our Lorde punishe them without cause? Can they say that they be guiltlesse? Not for there is fault ynough in them beforehande. Wee see then much better, that the thing which God hath spoken by Ezechiel is true: that is to wit, that the partie which hath sinned shall receiue his owne hyre as hee deserueth: and that the guiltlesse shall not bee punished for the guiltie and for the offenders sake. Neuertheless wee see also, that his saying that hee will punish the sinne of the fathers vppon their children, is not without cause. For why? It is in him to withholde his grace from the children of the wicked and faithlesse, or of the despisers of his

worde, or of hypocrites that abuse his name: God is at free libertie to withdrawe his spirite from all the whole race of them. And when their children are so alienated from God: what haue they, but the corruption of Adam? There
Rom. 8. 7. is nothing in them but sinne and corruption, and therefore they must needes be enemies vnto God. Yee see then how he punisheth them iustly, and that they cannot shift themselues from his hande, to say that hee doeth them wrong, or that he is cruell to them. All mouthes must bee stopped in that behalfe. True it is that the rebellious sorte will neuer bee contented: for wee see howe there are some, which aduance themselues against God with such boldnesse, as all modest and sober folke may bee ashamed of them. But let vs suffer those dogges to bark their fill, and let vs in the meane while glorifie our God with all lowlinesse, acknowledging neuer-
Exod. 33. 19 theless that hee hath authoritie and good right to bee gracious and fauourable to whome hee listeth. By reason whereof wee must conclude, that if God withholde his spirite from the linage of the wicked, hee cannot bee blamed of crueltie for it: for yee see they bee punishable when they bee so forsaken of him, and are not gouerned by his holy spirit. Wherefore let vs marke well, that this saying impugneth not the saying of Ezechiell.

But let vs come backe againe to the intent of Moses. It is not to bee doubted but hee meant to imprint a greater feare of God in vs, than if he had said but singly, God will punish you when yee shall haue corrupted his seruice, by chaunging any thing in Religion: and thinke not to scape his vengeance, if yee deuise any shape of him: for hee cannot abide to haue his honour defaced after that fashion. Had Moses spoken after that manner, men are so stubborne and hardharted, that they woulde not haue beene sufficiently touched with feare. But heere hee proceedeth further. God (saieth hee) will not onely punish you in your owne persons, but also extende his vengeance to your issue, and not onely to your children, but also to the vttermost of your ofspring, so as you shal alwayes feele his wrath as a burning fire, and the markes of your wickednesse shal appeare stil after your decease. God will put you to open shame: so as yee shall needes bee a gazingstocke. Although yee be rotten in the earth: yet shall Gods vengeance pursue you in such sorte, as your sinnes shalbe remembered from age to age, and the world shall know that yee haue beene disobedient, vnto him that had bestowed so many benefites vppon you, as yee ought at leastwise to haue beene as sheepe of his flocke, to bee ruled by him according to his worde.

Nowe therefore let vs learne to bee no more so drowsie when God wakeneth vs after that fashion. Surely if hee gaue vs but some incling of his displeasure by some worde or outward signe: it ought to touch vs with feare and terrour. But wee bee dull vppon the spurre: and therefore seeing GOD telleth vs, that besides his punishing of vs in our selues, hee will continue his vengeance still vppon all our linage, and that those which are begotte of vs must be condemned after our death: his speaking after that maner ought at leastwise to make vs more ware, to liue in awe of him and to call our selues home to him, least we should prouoke his wrath, seeing it is so terrible. Thus yee see howe we may profite our selues by this text.

Nowe he saieth, *of them that hate him*. By this terme hee meaneth all such as breake his Lawe. If it bee demaunded whether all such as swarue from their obedience to God warde doe therefore hate him: this text sheweth that they do so. [Howbeit] not to their owne seeming, but yet in verie deede. And in this case we must not rest vppon our owne iudgement: for onely God is competent iudge to determine of that matter. And forasmuch as men when they giue themselues to naughtinesse, will not say, no nor think in their hearts, that they hate God in doing amisse: it is requisite that that fault shoulde bee discouered. True it is that the hypocrites will indeede pretende, that the loue of God causeth them to shew some good countenance, and in verie deed they may well haue some seede of it: howbeit, that is but a bastardly and sinful seede, insomuch that this hatred of God appeareth not in the hypocrites, no nor euen in those that leade a disordered and loose life: but yet is it in them though wee perceiue it not. For like as malefactors coulde finde in their heartes, that there were no iudge nor order nor gouernement in the worlde: so all such as acknowledge not themselues subiect to God (at leastwise willingly) are contemptuous against him, and coulde bee contented to haue him plucked out of heauen. This is apparant ynough in such as are vtterly giuen to wilfulnesse. When men haue once let themselues loose to all wickednesse: they can no more away with any correction, and thervpon they become so much the lesse teachable. If a man threaten them, they gnash their teeth at him, they storme at him, and they become as good as madde against God. Nowe then, this hatred of God is apparant ynough in such as haue taken lawelesse leaue to doe euill, and are caryed away with their owne leawdnesse, and as it were saped in their sinnes. Againe, it is true that this appeareth not in such as haue yet any feare of God in them, & feele some remorse when a man speakes to them of God and of his iustice: but yet is there some hate of God in them. Indeede they thinke it not: but God seeth much more clearely than wee, and whereas we perceiue not things, he noteth them. Wee must alwayes remember how
1. Ioh. 3. 20. saint Iohn saieth, that God is greater than our consciences, that is to say, that if our consciences beare records of our offences, God will not sleepe in the meane while. And so let vs briefely beare in minde, that all such as submit not themselues obediently vnto God, ne humble themselues vnder his maiestie to serue him and to honour him: do euerie one of them hate him, although they shewe it not at the first by their deedes, nor can bee deemed of the worlde so to doe. And for the same cause doeth God begin

atlone, when hee speaketh of such as keepe his commaundements.

He saieth *that hee will shewe mercie in a thousand descentes to such as loue him.* And why? For it is vnpossible that wee shoulde bee desirous to honour God and to bee obedient vnto him, vnlesse wee haue felt the loue that is spoken of heere. And this may serue vs for a good lesson: according as we shall see hereafter, howe Moses intending to giue vs a briefe summe of the Lawe, saith: What
Deut.10.12. doeth the Lorde thy God require of thee O Israel, but that thou shouldest loue him with all thy hart, & that thou shouldest sticke vnto him? Neuer (say I) doe we knowe what it is to keepe Gods Law, and to behaue our selues thereafter, vnlesse wee beginne at the saide loue. And why? For God requireth willing seruice. Hee will not
2.Cor.9.7. haue vs to serue him, onely vpon a slauish feare: but hee will haue vs to goe to it with a free and
Rom.8.15. cheerefull courage, that wee may euen take pleasure in honouring him: and that cannot be done without we loue him. Wherefore let vs marke, that the beginning and as it were the welspring, foundation, and roote of obedience, is the saide loue of God, so as wee be not forced to come vnto him, but haue a singular pleasure in doing it, assuring our selues that our true blessednesse is to desire to bee gouerned altogether according to his will, and to frame our selues wholly therevnto.

Moreouer let vs marke also, that this loue cannot be in vs, vntil we haue tasted of the goodnesse of our God. For so long as wee imagine God to be against vs, wee must needes shunne him. Will wee then loue him? will wee frame our selues to the obeying of him, to take all our delight in seruing of him? Wee must first knowe that hee is our father and sauiour, and that hee seeketh nothing but to bee fauourable vnto vs.
Ioh.14.15. When we haue so tasted his loue towards vs: thē shal wee bee prouoked to loue him as our father. Insomuch that if that loue be in vs, no doubt but we will obey him, and his lawe shall reigne in our mindes, in our affections, and in all our members. For what is the cause why we be so disobedient vnto God, but for that wee hate him, as I saide afore? So on the contrarie part the loue of God will drawe vs to serue him, and to submit our selues to his righteousnesse, so as men shall see a certaine conformitie and agreeablenesse betwixt Gods lawe and all our desires and affections. But yet for the better vnderstanding hereof, let vs consider what God is: For hee will not be knowen according to our nature. And when we heare him spoken of, it is not ynough for vs to giue him the title of God: but he will be knowen as hee is in deede: that is to wit, to bee righteous and good, as the perfection and fountaine of all wisedome, of all power, of all right, and of all equitie. Nowe then let vs conceiue God as he is: that is to wit, with his iustice, righteousnesse and equitie: and then shall wee not desire any thing else than to fashion our selues like to him. Contrariwise if we loue naughtinesse and be wrapped in it, we must needes hate God. For why? Heere is no talke of a naked being: wee must not imagine God to bee as an ydoll: wee must conceiue him with his righteousnesse and equitie. Therefore when wee hate the thinges that are in God, that is to say his iustice and righteousnesse: wee must needes hate his owne selfe: for hee cannot forsake himselfe, hee cannot disguise himselfe, hee cannot transforme himselfe after our fashion: hee continueth euermore like himselfe. So then, (as I saide afore) all such as loue God, neede not bee afraide that they shall not obey his Lawe and keepe his commaundementes: for they bee thinges vnited and vnseparable. That is the thing whiche wee haue to marke vppon this place. 2.Tim.2.13

And heereby wee bee warned to shunne all stubbornenesse and all offending, more than we haue done: for it is no small matter for vs to bee declared to bee Gods enemies, and as makers of warre against him. And yet the case standeth so, as we cannot aduance our selues aboue him, nor turne away from him, nor shake off his yoke: but wee be conuicted to haue beene his enemies, and to haue made open warre against him. And is not that a cursed thing? So then let vs learne to abhorre our owne sinnes and vices, because they attraint vs as traitors to God, and hee must needes shewe himselfe to bee our aduersarie partie. Also herewithall we be warned to resort vnto God with a pure and right meaning minde. For it is not ynough for vs to haue with helde our feete, hands and eyes from euill doing: but the heart must goe before, and wee must serue God with a true affection: and this affection must not bee inforced, but it must proceede of verie loue to Godwarde. Therefore if wee minde to keepe the Lawe well: wee must first knowe that God is a good and kindehearted father towardes vs, to the ende we may be fully perswaded of his loue towardes vs. And therewithall let it neuer sinke in our hearres to dally in protesting that wee loue God, except the same may appeare by our whole life. For when as Moses speaketh heere of the loving of GOD: hee addeth, *That those which loue him doe also keepe his commaundementes.* Therefore our life must bee answerable in that behalfe, and bee as a certificate whether we loue him or hate him.

Furthermore it is not without cause that God comparing here his wrath and vengeance with his mercie, saieth *that hee will punish those that hate him, euen in three or foure descentes: and shew mercie in a thousande descentes to them that loue him.* For thereby hee sheweth the thing which is yet better expressed in other sentences of the scripture: which is, that hee is slowe to wrath and forwarde to mercie, and therewithall long suffering, so that where as his anger lasteth but a verie short time, his mercie is euerlasting all the life long. Yee see then that the verie nature of God is such, as hee seeketh nothing but to drawe men to him by all manner of gentlenesse, and to vse his goodnesse towardes them. When hee punisheth them, it is (as yee woulde say) against his nature. Not that it is not meete for

God

God to punish as well as to shewe mercie: but his meaning is to shewe vs that his goodnesse is farre the greater: and to be short, that he is not rigorous, but that his onely desire is to vtter his good will to vs, if wee woulde suffer him: for in very deede hee woulde faine bee knowen to bee good and pitifull, and it is the thing wherein his glorie doeth chiefly shine foorth. Therefore let vs marke well how it is not for nought that Moses hath assigned heere a thousande generations to Gods mercie: and restrained his wrath and vengeance to a three or foure generations. As if hee shoulde saye: It is true that our Lorde will not suffer superstition vnpunished. When yee shall haue corrupted his seruice and defaced his honour by gadding after your owne dotages, yee shall feele the punishment thereof, yea and euen your children after you must bee faine to feele it to: insomuch that when the fire of his wrath is once kindled vppon you, it shall not bee quenched againe so soone as yee weene for: but yet for all that hee will not faile to bee pitifull still, and his mercie shall alwayes bee greater than his wrath. And in deede, like as by the threate which wee haue hearde, GOD intended to holde the worlde in the true religion, to the ende they shoulde not make ydols and puppets to themselues: so was it his will also, that the promise which is conteined heere shoulde allure vs to him, if wee beare him the loue and reuerence which wee ought to doe: and hee had leuer to winne vs by his goodnesse, than to restraine vs by his threatnings. And therefore hee saith, My children, looke not that I shoulde punish you. Truely if yee prouoke mee, I will not suffer my selfe to bee so mocked at your hands: but yet for all that, when I haue told you of my displeasure, I had much leuer to traine you and to winne you to me by mercie. Therefore I tell you that if you abide pure and sounde in my obedience: I also will continue in doing good vnto you euen vnto a thousande generations, so as your children after you shall find me the same still. Thus yee see what we haue to remember vppon that sentence.

Moreouer for a conclusion, it is not for nought that God vseth the terme *Mercie*, notwithstanding that it bee as a rewarde for the seruice that is done vnto him. Hee might well haue saide, I will consider the seruice of such as shall haue honoured and serued mee: and when men shall haue loued mee by keeping my commaundementes, I will shewe them that they haue not lost their labour in taking paines to honour me. God might haue spoken so: but hee saieth, *I will shewe mercie*. And howe may that bee? Doeth it not seeme that if we serue God, hee oweth vs recompence? No: but hee sheweth that his doing of good to such as honour him and followe his commaundements, is not of bounde duetie nor for any desert of theirs: for euen in so doing hee vseth mercie still. And the terme *Mercie* serueth to beate down all pride of men, so as they may not boast of their owne workes, as though they were worthy of recompence: but rather consider that thereby God ment to declare that when we serue him the best that we can, we haue still neede to be borne withall at his hande, and to haue our faultes and infirmities forgiuen vs. Thus are there two thinges for vs to marke in this place. The one is that although wee serue God neuer so purely, yet his recompensing of vs is not vppon any duetie that hee oweth vnto vs. For indeede whence commeth our seruing of him, but of his meere grace? And what can hee then owe vnto vs? Nay, there is yet a further matter: namely that we should all of vs be found faultie in his sight, if he listed to examine vs rigorously. So then, whereas God recompenseth vs for our seruing of him: hee doeth it for his owne meere goodnesse, and therfore not of any bounde duetie: but (which more is) hee is faine to pardon our sinnes and to beare with vs, yea euen in the good that wee doe. Wherefore let vs consider that God sheweth himselfe so gratious and freeharted towards vs, that where as hee might make vs to feele his rigour, hee is contented to make vs taste of his mercie by bearing with vs in our infirmities. For let vs not think but that without his mercie we were al vndone: and that although we strouue neuer so much to obey him, yet wee shoulde be found faultie, if he vsed not y foresaid gracious goodnes wherof he speaketh. So then, that is the thing wherevnto we must flee for refuge, if we intend to be sure of our saluation.

1. Cor. 15. 10.

Rom. 3. 4.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, that it may leade vs to true repentance, so as being taught to feare him, wee may stande in such awe, that as soone as he threateneth vs with his wrath, wee may conceiue the power that is in him, to the ende that being humbled in our selues, wee may haue recourse to his fatherly goodnesse, not doubting but that when hee hath once begunne to shewe himselfe a father and Sauiour towards vs, he will continue so stil yea euen after our decease, so that wee shrinke not from him through our owne naughtinesse and disobedience. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xix. of Iune. 1555.

The xxxiij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the fift Chapter.

11 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lorde thy God in vaine: for the Lorde

will not holde him guiltlesse which taketh his name in vaine.

IF we were well aduised, we needed not to bee taught to yeelde reuerence to our God: for nature ought to leade vs thereto. To what ende are we created in this worlde? To what ende liue we here, but to honour him to whom wee be beholden for al good things, and to giue our selues to the glorifying of his maiestie? That then is the end and whole summe of our life. But in the meane season, in steede of honouring our God, and of applying our selues that way: we seeme to haue conspyred the cleane contrarie. For some of vs woulde haue all remembrance of God buried: some despise him and mocke him: and othersome blaspheme him with open mouth: so as we shewe sufficiently, that wee knowe not to what end we liue or should liue. Now forasmuch as there is this vice in vs: God intending to redresse the same, telleth vs that we ought at leastwise to refraine from abusing his holy name: for that is as an vnhallowing thereof. And therefore hath hee forbidden men *to take his name in vaine*. By these wordes he meaneth, that wee must consider well which is the right and lawfull vse of his name. Of a trueth wee be not worthie to take Gods name in our mouth after any manner at all, for wee must remember what the Prophet Esay saide in his first Chapter: Lorde (quoth he) I haue vncleane lippes, and dwell among a people that is altogether defiled. Esay 6.5. Seeing then that we haue nothing but infection and filthinesse in vs: it is certain that we may not take Gods name [in our mouth,] at leastwise if it were not that God of his goodnes were willing that we should vse his name, so it bee to glorifie him withall.

Therefore let vs marke well, that when as it is saide *that we shall not take the name of God in vaine*: our Lord rebuketh vs for our vnthankfulnesse, if we haue not the skill to vse his name as he hath giuen vs leaue, by following the rule that is set downe in his worde: for that is the lawful meane whereby wee may rightly vse the name of God.

Neuertheleſſe to the end that this may be yet plainlyer vnderstoode: wee must marke, that vnder one particular, God meant to shewe vs here what a maiestie is in his name, to the intent we shoulde not speake of it, but with all reuerence and honour. Therefore he taketh one particular kinde, to wit, of an othe, specially when occasion serueth to sweare: and vseth it for all prophaning of God his name whatsoeuer. We see howe our Lorde loueth vs, seeing he lendeth vs his name whereby to communicate with our neighbours, so as if there happen any doubt or variance among vs, it may bee dispatched by that meane: that is to wit, if we be not beleeued, and a matter hang in doubt, the name of GOD may come in as an vmper, to dispatch all controuersie, so as the matter may bee certaine and sure by such confirmation. Is it not an inestimable goodnesse, that our God humbleth himselfe in such sort, as to giue vs leaue to vse his name? Yes. And why? for it is certaine that Gods maiestie is so precious, as it ought not to bee abased so lowe: but yet he vouchsafeth to apply himselfe vnto vs, and therefore so much the greater is the vilanie, if wee vnhallowe Gods name in our othes. And that is done, not onely by forswearing our selues: but also by taking Gods name at aduenture, without regarding to speake with good discretion, or whether the thing that wee haue in hande, is worthie to bee so confirmed or no. Therefore when men goe to it so at aladuenture, Gods name is as it were vnhallowed. It is true that GOD taketh it as a kinde of his seruice, when men sweare by his name: not that hee is beholden to vs for it, but cleane contrariwise. For as I haue touched alredie, we must in this case consider howe GOD beareth with vs, in that he giueth vs leaue to vse his name. But yet doe wee by our swearing acknowledge that God hath all superioritie ouer vs. The inferiour sweareth by his superior, saith the Apostle to the Hebrewes. And surely if wee wist to what ende an othe serueth, it cannot agree but onely to the maiestie of GOD. For our meaning is to warrant such thinges as are secret and haue no proofe among men. But that cannot bee done by any creature: God must bee faine to shewe himselfe in that behalfe, as hee that searcheth mens hearts to the verie bottome. And againe it is not for nought that he chalengeth to himselfe the title of trueth. Wee see then that in swearing, wee do homage vnto God by protesting him to bee our iudge, and the onely partie to whome wee haue recourse in all doubtfull and secret cases, because it is his office to bring them to light, and againe hee will maintaine the trueth, sith the same belongeth to his honour. That is the cause why God taketh it to bee a kinde of seruing of him, when men doe sweare by his name, howe be it so as the othes bee not needelesse. And hereby wee see that the fault of such as forswears themselues, or as sweare rashly, is so much the greuouser: for it is as a violating of Gods seruice, and as an abolishing of it, as much as in vs lyeth.

As touching them that commit periurie they bee not onely guiltie of taking Gods name in vain, and of abusing the same falsly: but also they bee traitors and wicked caitifes. Can wee deuise to doe a greater outrage to our GOD, than to abolish or deface his trueth? No: for there is nothing more peculiar vnto him. And therefore it is all one as if wee woulde plucke him out of his seate, yea and vtterly bereaue him of all diuine honour and glorie: whiche thing is done when men turne his trueth into a lye. Therefore whosoeuer forswareth himselfe, that is to saye, whosoeuer taketh Gods name with an euill conscience, whether it bee to colour lies, or to beguile, or to disguise matters: surely hee blaspheneth in so doing. And I say expresly, if wee goe about to disguise matters. Why so? For many doe dispence with

Exod. 22.10 11. Hebr. 6.16.

with themselues, vnder colour that they cannot be conuicted of periurie before men. And why is that? Because they turne the cat in the pan, and set such a face vppon their matters, as it may seeme that they forsware not themselues at all. But God liketh not any such fimbleties. Wherefore let vs not imagine that wee shalbee quitte and escape scotfree before him, when wee shall haue vsed such ferches and startingholes. Thus wee see in effect, that all such as take Gods name otherwise than soundly and simply, doe commit blasphemie. Let that serue for one point.

Now as for them that sweare to no purpose and vnadvisedly: they shewe well ynough that they take none account of God, and that they doe but dally with him. In deede they protest the contrarie: they can welynough say that their intent is nothing so: but that is but hypocrisie: for the deede it selfe sheweth sufficiently that they beare no reuerence vnto GOD. If wee haue a mortall man in estimation, wee will not take his name in vaine, wee woulde not that men shoulde make a babling of it, or intermeddle it with scornefull and scoffing words. Nay we woulde take that in reproch. And would wee haue more priuiledge than the liuing God? We bee wretched carions and dung: and yet would wee be had in honour and estimation, and that our God shoulde be our vnderling? We see then that there are verie fewe of good religion nowadayes in the world. Although a great number pretende to bee Christians: yet they neuer wist what it is to worshippe God, or to doe him homage, or to yeelde him the seruice that belongs vnto him. For howe doeth Gods name trotte about? Men cannot bargaine for a quart [of wine,] but some othe must bee rapt out with it. If Gods honour were esteemed among vs: surely we would abstaine from such needlesse othes: nay rather wee woulde abhorre them. And yet nowadayes men make but a sport of them, and if a man bee rebuked for his swearing, hee thinkes he hath great wrong done him. If there bee any talke that is not for a mans profite, he will be wearie of it and grieued at it, yea and finde fault with it: but if any of vs bee so zealous to Godward, as to be grieued at the abasing of his name: by and by a quarell is picked to him, they despite him, and gnash their teeth at him. But seeing that the worlde taketh so fast holde of the despising of GOD, and is so hardened in it: it is a signe that there is no more knowledge of his maiestie.

Againe although men take so lawlesse leaue vnder coulour that it is an ordinarie matter, and haue made custome a Lawe: yet will God shew in the end, that hee maketh more account of his name than men haue done, and that if we make hauocke of it, wee shall paye deerely for it, and wee shall bee driuen in the ende, to knowe that wee haue defiled the lande where wee dwelt, and wee must bee called to a reckening for al the benefits that we receiued there, and which GOD bestowed vppon vs with his hande, because wee acknowledged not the author of them, to yeelde him his due honour for them. Yee see then that the first thing which we haue to marke in this text, is that God beareth with vs and vseth such gentlenesse towards vs, as hee is well contented that wee shall vse his name in all lawfull cases: by the which grant of his wee may well perceiue, that hee is more than fatherly towardes vs. Neuertheless hee warneth vs therewithall, to bee more ware in abstayning from all wicked othes. For as for periurie, (as I said afore) it is an offering of too outragious and cursed vilanie vnto him, because his trueth is turned into lying and wee bee falsedealers to the vttermost of our power. And so ye see that that is a passing deadly crime.

But it is not ynough for vs to refraine from periurie: it behoooueth vs also to looke that our othes be sober, and that Gods name be not tossed among vs like a tennisball: but that necessitie may excuse vs in our vsing thereof. And forasmuch as by our swearing we giue to vnderstande that GOD hath all superioritie ouer vs: therein we see that the othes which are made by creatures are wicked and proceede of superstition. As for example, whereas in the Popedome men sweare by S. Antonie or by S. Iohn: it is all one as if they made ydols of them. And why so? For we must alwayes bethinke vs of this saying of the Apostle which I alledged afore, namely that by our swearing by the name of God, wee auow him to bee our superiour, yea and our soueraine Lord. And that is the cause also why God sweareth to confirme vs in his promises, or rather to waken vs when he seeth vs wilfull and hardened in our sinnes, so as we be not afraid of his iustice. He sweareth: and by whom? Euen by himselfe. He referreth that honor to himselfe, as shall bee declared more at large in the 6. Chapeau of this booke. And therefore they that sweare by creatures are ydolaters. By reason whereof, in speaking of superstitions, the othe is set downe as a record to proue that men are turned away from the purenes of the Law. The shepherds (saith Ieremie) which haue the charge of leading Gods people, must teach them to sweare by the name of God: that is to say, to lay away all other othes, and to intermingle no creatures in that behalfe.

Deut. 6. 13.

Soph. 1. 5. 6.

Ier. 12. 16.

Furthermore whereas the name of GOD is mentioned: let vs marke that it is not the onely speaking of that word, that is forbidden vs: but that we must haue a regarde to the substance of it, as I haue said alreadie. God is not a sophister to vse trifling fimbleties towards vs: but hee hath an eye to the deede it selfe. There are that will not sweare expresly by the name of GOD: but yet they cease not to bee faultie and offenders. For wee must refer our selues to that which our Lord Iesus Christ speaketh in the fift of saint Mathew. When yee sweare by heauen (saith he) is it not the seate of the liuing God? If yee sweare by his temple: is it not the place where his maiestie resteth? Then if wee thinke wee shall not bee condemned, so wee expresse not the name of God: it is a fondnesse. Let vs not beguile our selues therewithal: for it is too childish an excuse. For why? Doeth not the heauen beare a representation of Gods Maiestie?

Mat. 5. 34. 35.

Yee see then that his glorie is thereby diminished. As much is to be saide of the earth. For it is his footestoole, as Iesus Christ auoucheth in the forealleadged text. Wherefore let vs learne in fewe wordes, that we must yeelde such reuerence to the name of God, as to put away all othes from among vs, saiuing so farre forth as necessitie requireth, and as God giueth vs leaue to borrowe his name. And moreouer, let vs alwayes followe this, to keepe this simplicitie in our talke, to say it is so: assuring our selues that whatsoeuer is more, is euil and condemned by the lawe, that is to wit, if wee take the name of God in vaine. Matt. 5. 37. And indeede there is a dubble mischiefe to bee seene in all needlesse othes, and wherein Gods name is not honoured as it ought to bee. For when men let them flie so at all aduenture: it is a token that they passe not what they saye. Againe, whereof commeth it, but onely of this, that folke are so full of lying and deceit, as no man can beleeue that which is saide to him, when one speakes to another? Needes must there bee greate frowardnesse and naughtinesse among them. Whereas God hath giuen vs a tongue, it is partly to the intent wee shoulde common one with another thereby: for it is as yee woulde saye the messenger of the hearte, so as thereby wee expresse the thinges that we haue conceiued in our minde. Wee see then that needelesse othes spring of the vnrustinesse of men. And there needes no inquisition or long trial of the matter: for euerie man hath his owne witnesse in that behalfe. Howe so euer the case stande let vs learne to vse such modestie in this respect, as God commaundeth that we sweare not without cause nor vnrequired.

Howbeit to make this matter the easier to bee vnderstoode, many do beare themselues in hand that when they sweare by their faith, it is not materiall. Indeede the most part of them sweare by nothing at alsfor they haue no more faith thã dogges: they haue neither conscience nor Religion. But yet shall not the name of *Faith* faile therefore to be esteemed afore God: for hee setteth much store by it, and counteth it as a holy thing, which cannot nor ought not to bee so vnhallowed, except we will needs make our selues guiltie, and runne in daunger of the threat that is vttered here, as we see. Now then let vs mark wel that it is not ynough for vs to haue forborne to sweare expreslly *By God*: but also that if a man sweare by his faith, or vse any confirmation wherein there is any marke of Gods maiestie: his name is vnhallowed in so doing. And what shall then become of such as not onelye vse false othes to countenaunce their matters withall, and sweare at all aduenture and as it were in scorne and mockerie: but doe also spite God with horrible blasphemies, so as they spare neither flesshe, bloude, nor death nor anye thing elsse? Are such men to bee holde as onely guiltie of simple abusing of Gods name? No: but as guiltie of the heynousest vilanie that can bee doone. Beholde our Lorde Iesus Christe the Lorde of glorie, abased himselfe for a time, as saieth S. Paul. Now if there were no more but this, that he being the fountain of life, became a mortall man, and that he hauing dominion ouer the Angels of heauen, tooke vppon him the shape of a seruant, yea euen to shed his bloud for our redemption, and in the end to suffer the curse that was due vnto vs: were it conuenient that notwithstanding all this, he should nowadayes in recompence thereof bee torne in peeces, by the stinking mouthes of such as name themselues Christians? For when they sweare by his bloud, by his death, by his woundes, and by whatsoeuer elsse: is it not a crucifying of Gods sonne againe as much as in them lyeth, and as a rending of him in peeces? And are not such folke worthie to bee cut off from Gods Church, yea and euen from the worlde, and to bee no more nombered in the aray of creatures? Should our Lord Iesus haue such reward at our handes, for his abacing and humbling of himselfe after that manner? God in vpbraiding his people saieth thus: My people, what haue I doone to thee? I haue brought thee out of Egypt, I haue ledde thee through the wildernesse, I haue brought thee vp with all gentleneesse and louingkindnesse, I haue planted thee as it were in mine owne inheritance, to the intent thou shouldest haue beene a vine that should haue brought me forth good fruite, and I haue tilled thee and manured thee: and must thou nowe bee bitter to me, and bring foorth sower fruite to choke me withall? The same belongeth to vs at this day. For when the sonne of God, who is ordeined to bee iudge of the worlde, shall come at the last day: hee may well say to vs: howe nowe syrs? Ye haue borne my name, yee haue been baptised in remembrance and record that I was your redeemer, I haue drawen yee out of the dungeons where into yee were plunged, I deliuered you from endelesse death by suffering mine cruell death my selfe, and for the same cause I became man, and submitted my selfe euen to the curse of GOD my father, that you might be blessed by my grace and by my meanes and beholde, the reward that you haue yelded mee for all this, is that yee haue (after a sorte) torne mee in peeces and made a iestingstocke of mee, and the death that I suffered for you hath beene made a mockerie among you, the bloode whiche is the washing and cleansing of your soules hath beene as good as trampled vnder your feete, and to bee short, you haue taken occasion to banne and blaspheme mee, as though I had beene some wretched and cursed creature. When the soueraine Iudge shall charge vs with these thinges, I praye you will it not bee as thundering vppon vs, to ding vs downe to the bottome of hell? Yes: and yet are there verie fewe that thinke vpon it. For if needeles othes were as greatly abhorred nowadayes among men as they ought to be: they would not by & by after take such leaue and boldnesse as they doe to flesh themselues in periure and forswearing.

As touching blasphemie, doth not ỹ world for

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what commeth of it? And yet wouldewe bee ielous of our owne honestie and reputation, when in the meane season Gods name is troden vnder foote among vs. If a man haue spoken amisse of ones father, hee couldo finde in his heart to make a quarrell of it, and eyther to sew him at the Lawe, or else much rather to bee reuenged of him with his owne handes, and men beare themselues in hande that they may with honestie maintayne the quarrels of their parentes. Beholde, our soueraigne Father is iniured after the same manner, euen the same father who not without cause is named the Lorde of glorie, before whose sonne all knees ought to bow, as Saint Paule reporteth to the Philippians, euen hee shall bee so mocked as a man couldo doe no worse to him, except he shoulde spitte in his face: and yet notwithstanding euen they that name themselues Christians, and which pretend in deede to seeke his honour, shall bee the greatest and horriblest blasphemers of him. But yet for all that, as I said afore, our Lorde will not cease to maintayne his owne honour, (as hee himselfe auoweth.) When hee seeth men so heathenish as to deface his Maiestie after that fashion, to the vttermost of their power: He maketh a solemne othe that he will bee reuenged of it. As truely as I liue (sayeth the Lorde) I will not giue myne honour to another. And like as hee will not haue his honour conueyed ouer vnto idols: so is it certaine that the same saying hath a further reache, that is to wit, that if men doe falsely abuse his holy name, they shall feele in what estimation hee had it. And therefore let vs not looke till this bee accomplished vppon our selues: but let vs learne to yeelde reuerence to our GOD, and to him that hath all soueraigne Maiestie, that is to wit, to our Lorde Iesus Christ: and let vs learne therewithall, to sweare in such wise, as it may alwayes bee a warrant vnto vs, that it is he to whom wee belong, and that hee is our Father, our Maker, and our Iudge. Thus yee see what wee haue in effect to gather vppon this text.

But withall there is a threatening added: whereby weesee mens dulnesse, and howe Satan hath as yee woulde say bewitched them, so as they conceyue not Gods wrath, when it is set afore them. *I will not holde him giltlesse that taketh my name in vaine.* Loe it is GOD that speaketh: I pray you ought not the haire of them to stande vp stiffe vppon their heades, which sweare so vilanously as I haue mentioned afore? If a man sweare by his faith vnadui sedly: beholde, God armeth himselfe and sayeth: no sir, seeing thou hast not honoured mee, thou must yeelde an account of such treacherie. God can not away with a simple lye: and if periurie be added thereto, it is yet worse. If a third fall to blaspheming, it is the vttermost poynt of all leudnesse, and as bad as an open defying of GOD, as though we woulde runne vpon him and wounde him. Now if in this case a man thinke not vppon the punishment that is prepared for all such as doe so falsely misuse the name of GOD: or haue disheartened it, may is not bee said that he is beastly drunken, and as it were out of his wittes, and that Satan hath made him starke blinde? Alas yes: and yet neuertheless, it is as common a thing as may bee. If a maister shoulde saye in his house, I will bee obeyed in all things: but yet there is one thing aboue all the rest which I am desirous to haue done, and I can not abide that any man shall transgresse it, but that hee shall by and by bee thrust out of the doores, and bee punished for it as he deserueth: if a Maister haue a thing in such estimation, although his men be not so circumspect in all the rest, yet will they stand in some feare of this.

Nowe then, beholde, God curseth all such as shall haue transgressed his Lawe in any point. Cursed bee he that honoureth not his Father and mother: Cursed bee he that stealeth: Cursed bee he that committeth adulterie: Cursed bee he that perfourmeth not all things contained in the Lawe. And here specially, there is a threate vppon all such as shall haue abused Gods name. Hereby he sheweth vs that although he will haue vs to keepe his Lawe in all pointes, and to direct our liues thereby: yet aboue all thing he reserueth still this poinct to himselfe, and will haue his name to bee priuiledged. Nowe if this threatening slippe away for all that, so as it sinketh not in our mindes, nor restraineth vs at all from presuming to dally so with God and his Maiestie: must it not needes bee said (as I haue touched alreadie) that the diuell hath carryed vs away, and that wee bee bereft of all wittes and reason? Yes: but if this threate doe not awaken vs nowe: wee must finde in the ende that Gods publishing of it was no false alarum. And therefore let vs learne to bee touched to the quicke, sith wee see that our Lorde setteth himselfe so expressely against vs, and sheweth himselfe to bee an aduersarie to all such as abuse his name. For what cost is it to vs to abstaine, as well from all false othes, as from all vnadui sed othes, and specially from all blasphemies? The greatest excuse that they haue which would lessen their fault, is that they cannot refraine because they bee inured to it by custome. Yea but if euery man woulde set before his eyes that God is his Iudge: surely he might soon forget his swearing: and when the name of GOD were to bee vsed, men would not doe it but with great singlenesse of heart. In so much that if men were to sweare, they shoulde haue as it were Gods Maiestie present there, so as hee myght bee beholde sitting there as Iudge when he were called to witnesse, and men shoulde not vse his name but in such wise, as Saint Paul speakes of, where he saieth that wee muste not take Gods name but in all holinesse.

This therefore might well be done. But what? Our tongue runnes ryot euen so farre as to the foresaid despising of Gods name: so that crie what men can, yea and (as yee would say) beate they it into vs with beetles: (for the things that the holy Scripture telleth vs concerning the abuse of Gods name, are like mightie blowes with a beetle wherewith GOD striketh vppon vs:)

Deut. 27.26. 10, 24.16.

1. Tim. 2. 15.

and yet for all that, wee continue still the same wee were afore, and Gods name hath neyther honour nor Maiestie more than it had before. Yet notwithstanding, all such as haue any vnderstanding and feeling of Gods name, ought to thinke well vppon that which is saide here. And moreouer (as I haue declared alreadie) when wee bee once warned of that which wee haue seene heretofore, that is to wit, that hee which speaketh is the Euerlasting, and our Creator and Redeemer, which hath shewed himselfe more than a Father and Sauiour towardes vs: if this bee well printed in our minde, surely all othes wil easily be forgotten. But if we keepe on
Zach.12.10. our way still: the saying of the Prophet Zacharie shall be fulfilled vpon vs: which is, they shal see him whom they haue perced, that is to say, whō they haue wounded. For although men flatter one another, and make but a laughing at their othes, and imagine that their swearing shall easily bee forgiuen them: yet is God wounded by it, and hee wil shewe in the end, that it is not for men to rush against him after that fashion.

Herewithall wee haue to marke, that vnder one kinde, GOD meant to shewe what reuerence wee ought to yeelde in effect to his name. In deede he speaketh here expressely of Othes: but yet this doctrine ought to bee stretched further: namely that when wee thinke of God, or heare any speaking of him, it must be done with all reuerence, so as wee may bee wakened vp, not onely to honour and praise him aboue all,
Iob.41.16. but also to consider, that euen the Angels doe tremble at the sight of his inestimable glorie, and therefore that we which are wretched creatures and as transitorie as maye bee, ought at leastwise to doe homage to the soueraigne Maiestie of our GOD, whensoeuer hee is spoken of. That is a principall point which we ought to marke well in this text.

Truely this doctrine is easie ynough of it self: but it is darke to vs, bicause it is so ill put in practise. What a sort of vaine thoughtes come in our heades when wee thinke vppon GOD? In deede our nature is inclyned therunto, as of folk that are fraughted with all vntrueth, so as there is nothing but darkenesse in vs. But yet for all that, if a man feede his owne humour with lewd and wicked imaginations conceiued against the honour of GOD: he sheweth sufficiently that he hath conspired and confederate himselfe with the diuell. Neuertheless how many are there that bethinke themselues, when any leawd fansie commeth in their minde, or which labour to suppresse and beate downe the thinges by force, which their owne conscience telleth them to be wicked and against the glorie of GOD? Nay, they rather take pleasure in them, and welter in them. Nowe when mens spirite, that is to say, their vnderstanding is so defyled, the residue is easily corrupted. And for proofe thereof: howe doe men most commonly speake of God? What manner of talke haue they of him? It shoulde seeme that their whole seeking is to bee corrupted: there needeth but a little leauen to sowre
1.Cor.5.6. the whole lump of Dowe, as sayeth Saint Paule treating of this naughtie talke which marreth and infecteth vs with wicked vices. But the worst is when men speake of GOD in way of mockage. For what a thing is it that he shoulde bee scoffed at, and that he shoulde bee scorned in woordes, not onely vayne and fond, but also shamefull and horrible? Is it not a wilfull violating of his Maiestie? And yet men doe so, yea euen ouer commonly, in so much as yee shall hardly haue long talke in any companie, but somewhat shall be intermingled that may sound to the contempt of GOD. And doe wee not shewe thereby, that wee neuer wist what it is to worshippe GOD? Wee can well ynough say dayly, Hallowed bee thy name: and yet we doe the cleane contrarie. Needeth there any other sentence of condemnation against vs than that? When wee come here to Church, wee protest with our mouthes that wee desire that Gods name shoulde bee maintayned in due honour; wee say as much at the table; and likewise doeth euerie man both at his rising and at his going to bedde, (I meane such as are not vtterly brutish, for there are which wote not what praying to God meaneth.) But as for those which haue yet so much honestie as to pray vnto God, they will well ynough say with their mouth, hallowed be thy name: but it is no sooner from their tongues end, but by and by a false othe is in their mouth, and they make Gods name to runne too and fro. And what else is such falshood, than a violating of Gods Maiestie, and as a striking of him with a Dagger, or as a spitting in the face of him? Therefore as I haue tolde you alreadie, there needs none other Iudge to condemne vs for our foolish othes, than the protestation that wee our selues make when we desire GOD to maintaine the holinesse of his name, and yet in the meane whyle indeuour to deface it as much as wee can.

But nowe remayneth that we speake of God in al reuerence, specially when his workes come in talke. As howe? In speaking of the weather, bee it faire or bee it rainie, they bee matters of his Maiestie. If he sende vs sadde weather, hee sheweth himselfe a Iudge to make vs perceiue his displeasure, to the intent to make vs enter into the examination of our sinnes, that wee myght bee sorie for them and bee ledde to amendment. But in stead of humbling our selues before GOD, and of being sorie that wee haue offended: wee become wayward as wee see men commonly bee, who fall to repyning, and say, must this weather last euer? and so wee flee not to our GOD, ne aske him forgiuenesse of our sinnes. And after the same maner deale wee in all other thinges: for I alledge but onely one example, to shewe that when wee speake of Gods workes, wee must eyther perceiue him to bee a Father by his goodnesse, or feele him to bee a Iudge by his rigour. Therefore whensoeuer God doeth any thing that misliketh vs, and is contrarie to our desire and wishing: let vs vnderstand that hee chastiseth and tameth vs, to the ende wee should enter into the examination of our sinnes to condemne them and to bee sorie for

for them. If we glorifie not God in that behalfe, wee vnhallowe his holy name. Againe on the contrarie part, when God draweth vs to him by gentlenesse as a louing and pitifull father: is it to the intent wee should bee brought vnto him, and honour him the more. And if our vnthankfulnesse bee to bee condemned for not honouring of him at the first worde that he speaketh to vs: howe shall wee doe when all things vpbraide vs, so as God hauing layd hold on vs on all sides, can by no meanes win vs to him, whereby hee sheweth that wee bee vtter despisers of his Maiestie, and that wee haue trampled his woorkes vnder our feete, or ouerturned them with our snouts like swine? I pray you shall it not redound to our dreadfull condemnation, if this may bee laid to our charge?

Nowe although God haue set his marke vpon all his workes, so as wee ought to know him both in fayre weather and in fowle, in heate and in colde, and (to bee shorte,) in all the order of nature: yet hath he set his marke chiefely vpon his woord. Of a trueth it is an vnexcusable crime, when wee acknowledge him not in the good thinges that he hath made and doth for vs. Wee holde our life of him: it is in him that wee liue, as speaketh Saint Paul. If all these benefites make vs not to bee mindefull of God: it is too vnmeasurable a churlishnesse alreadie: but yet (as I saide afore) it hath bene his will that his marke shoulde bee printed aboue all thinges in his woord. Let vs looke vppon Heauen and earth, and wee shall see GOD euerywhere. For Rom.1.20. what elfe is the worlde than (as sayeth S. Paul) a liuely image wherein God setteth foorth himselfe? Although he bee vnuisible in his owne being: yet doeth he shewe himselfe there, to the intent that wee should worship him. But come wee once to the holy Scripture: there is an 2.Cor.3.18. image wherein God sheweth himself much more familiarly vnto vs, than he doeth either in the skies or in the earth. Neither Sun nor Moone, (though they giue light to the worlde,) doe so set foorth the Maiestie of God, as the Lawe, the Prophetes and the Gospell doe. And yet for all that, after what manner doe men speake of them? Howe boldly doe they deale with them? I pray you doe not men take leasure nowe adayes to speake of Gods name after their owne fansie? And when they fall to reasoning vppon the holy Scripture among Cuppes, in Tauernes and at Tables, doeth their talke tend to the humbling of themselues, that they may all knowe their owne rudenesse and infirmitie, and aske of God the gift of his holy spirit, to the end that we may handle his mysteries as becommeth vs? No: but those disputacions are made as it were in way of mockerie, and thereby it appeareth well, yea much more than were requisite, that there are very fewe true Christians nowe adayes in the worlde. It is apparant that some dally with the holy scripture, and wrest it to prouerbs of laughter, making it a matter to sporte and play withal, as though it were but as a nose of waxe for euery man to fashion and vnfashion at his owne pleasure. Othersome holde fond discourses on it, demaunding, why is this, and why is that? And againe, when wee come to Gods high mysteries if any thing mislike vs, wee would haue it euerie whit wyped out. And that is all one as if wee would pull God out of heauen.

Nowe then let vs learne that God commendeth the honour and authoritie of his word vnto vs aboue all thinges: as if he should tell vs that looke whatsoeuer is contained in the holy scripture, wee must receiue it with all lowelinesse, and yeelde our selues plyable to that which is contained therein. Yea and although the same bee contrarie to our vnderstanding, and wee coulde finde in our heartes that God had spoken after our maner: yet let vs doe him the honour to imprison all our owne wittes, and to say: Lord, wee be thy scholers, and therefore we receiue quietly whatsoeuer thou hast vouchsafed to teach vs, assuring our selues that the same is for our benefite and welfare. Therefore whatsoeuer is contained in the holy Scripture, let it bee receiued reuerently without exception. And when Gods holy mysteries come in question let vs not iudge of them according to our owne vnderstanding: but if it happen that any thing seeme not good and conuenient vnto vs, let vs bridle our selues, and let God haue his full scope, so as his woord may haue all the libertie that may be. Also therwithall, when wee reade the holy Scriptures or come to a Sermon, let vs alwayes beare in minde to thinke thus with our selues: behold, our God sheweth himselfe here, and he is set down as our iudge: and therefore it is not for vs to kicke and spurne against him, as wee see a greate horse doe when they come to Sermons. But what? They haue conceiued rancour in their heart against God and his word, and therefore they can reape nothing by it but vtter naughtinesse: in so much that they gather venim more and more, to belk out their blasphemies at tables when mē speake not to their liking. And is that (thinke you) a good honouring of Gods name? Now therefore, whether it be that wee reade the holy Scripture, or that it be treated of in Sermons: let vs learne to haue Gods name alwayes in such reuerence, as to quake at it when we heare it spoken of, specially whē his word is preached, as is said by the Prophet Esay. For so shall wee shewe, not onely Esa.66.2.3. in wordes but also in deede, that wee be true beleeuers: and God also wil auowe vs for his people, and in the end gather vs into the heritage of the kingdome of heauen.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him, not to impute those vnto vs which we haue committed heretofore: but that it may please him so to reforme vs to himselfe, as our whole seeking may bee to honour him, and to giue our selues to his seruice, y he may dwell among vs, and our Lorde Iesus raigne ouer vs, both by his holy spirit and by his woord. And so let vs all say, Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xx. of Iune. 1555.

The xxxiiij. Sermon, which is the fifth vpon the fifth Chapter.

12 Keepe the day of rest, to hallowe it as the Lord thy God hath commaunded thee.

13 Sixe dayes shalt thou labour, and doe all thy businesses:

14 But the seuenth day is the rest of the Lorde thy God. Thou shalt not doe any worke therein.

AFter that he had spoken of the pure worshipping and seruing of GOD, to the glorifying of his name, without taking of it either in othes or in other thinges, otherwise than in way of honour, nowe mention is made of Gods seruice accordingly as he hath required it in his lawe, and of the order which he hath set downe for the faithfull to exercise themselues in. As for example, the [Sabaoth or] day of rest was a figure, partly to shewe that men could not serue God duetifully, but by mortifying all that euer is of our owne nature, and by dedicating themselues therewithall in such sort vnto him, as they may bee as it were quite separated from the world. Secondly the day of rest was a Ceremonie to bring the people togither, that they might heare the Lawe, and call vppon the name of GOD, and offer the sacrifices, and all other thinges that concerne the spirituall gouernment. Thus then wee see nowe after what sorte the Sabaoth day was spoken of: but yet would it not be well vnderstoode without distinction, and without laying forth of the said two partes by peece meale. Therefore we haue to note, that the Sabaoth or day of rest, was a shadow vnder the Law till the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ, to doe mé to vnderstand that God requireth that they should vtterly cease from their owne workes: and that is it which I meant in one word, when I said y we must mortifie all that euer is of our own nature, if wee will conforme our selues to our God. And that it is so, Saint Paule declareth: and besides that, wee haue recordes ynow thereof in the newe Testament. But it shall suffice to haue alledged that which is most apparant, namely to the Colossians, where it is saide that wee haue the substance and the body of the thinges that were vnder the Lawe, wee haue it (sayeth he) in Iesus Christ. And therefore it was requisite for the fathers of old time to bee trained in this hope, as well by the day of rest, as by some other Ceremonies. But nowe that the thing it selfe is giuen vnto vs, wee must no more stay vpon the shadowes. In deede the lawe Is not so abolished, but that we ought to holde still the substance and trueth of it: but yet is the shadowe of it done away by the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ If it bee demaunded how the fathers of olde time knewe that: Moses hath giuen vs vnderstanding thereof, as is shewed sufficiently in the Booke of Exodus, For God hauing set foorth his Lawe in the twentieth of Exodus, 17. which hee vttered vnto Moses, telleth him to what ende it tended, saying that he had ordeyned the Sabaoth daye, to bee as a warrant of the sanctifying of the people of Israel vnto him. It is (sayeth he) a badge of my holynesse which I haue ordayned among you. Now when as the scripture speaketh to vs of being made holy vnto GOD: it is to separate vs from all thinges that are contrarie to his seruice. But where is such pureneese to bee founde? Wee bee in the worlde, and wee knowe that in the worlde there is nothing but vtter frowardnesse and naughtinesse as sayeth Saint Iohn in his Canonicall Epistle. But men needs not to goe out of themselues to haue battell against God and his righteousnesse: for all our senses and all our affections (sayeth Saint Paule in the epistle to the Romanes) are enemies vnto God. When men giue heede to their owne thoughts, desires, likings, and lustes: they make open warre against God. Wee knowe howe it is tolde vs in the sixth of Genesis, that all that euer man can imagine is alwayes euill, and that all that euer man deuiseth in himselfe and hath of his owne store, is vtterly vntowarde and corrupt afore God. So then, wee see well that wee cannot bee sanctifyed to our God, that is to say, wee cannot serue him vndefyledly, except wee bee separated from the defylings that are contrarie to him, and that the thinges which are of our owne nature bee abolished. Nowe it was requisite that all these thinges should bee figured to the ancient fathers, bicause Iesus Christ was not yet fully reuealed vnto them. But wee in these dayes haue the full accomplishment and performance of all thinges in Iesus Christ. And for proofe thereof, Saint Paule saieth that the olde man is crucified with him. Whereas Saint Paul speaketh after that sort of the olde man, he meaneth the things that we haue from Adam, all which must be rypened and done away. Not as touching the substance of our bodie or of our soule, but as touching y naughtines that is in vs. The blindnes that maketh vs to go astray, and the wicked lustes & likings which are vtterly disobedient to Gods righteousnesse, must be beaten downe, bicause they be drawen fró Adam. And how is that done? Not by our owne power or policie: but by our Lorde Iesus Christ: who by dying for vs, to wipe away our sinnes y they might no more bee imputed

Col. 2. 17.

Matt. 5. 18. Eph. 2. 15. Col. 2. 14. 17.

imputed vnto vs, hath also purchased vs this prerogatiue, ỳ by ỳ power of his holy spirit we be able to forsake the world & our selues, so as our fleshly affectiõs shall not ouermaister vs. And although we be ful of disobedience: yet shall Gods spirit ouerrule vs, to hold them downe & to keep thẽ in awe. And therefore it is sayd ỳ wee be risen againe with him, as S. Paul declareth lykewise in ỳ forealledged text to ỳ Colossians. But this was not yet manifested vnder ỳ Law. Therfore it was requisit ỳ the fathers which liued at ỳ time, should haue some help, such as ỳ sacrifices were, to feed thẽ in the hope of the death of our Lorde Iesus Christ, so as they might know ỳ their sinnes were cleansed away by ỳ bloud of ỳ mediator. Likewise they had ỳ Saboth day as a warrãt of the grace ỳ was purchased vs to mortify our thoughtes & affections, that God might liue in vs by ỳ power of his holy spirit.

Now we haue som entrance to cõceiue ỳ which was touched briefely before: ỳ is to wit, ỳ the Saboth day was as a figure, to represẽt ỳ thing ỳ was fulfilled in deede at ỳ comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And therefore let vs marke wel, ỳ the Saboth day extẽded to ỳ whole seruice of God, to shewe that men could not honor him purely, but by renouncing thẽselues, & by being separated from the defilemẽts of ỳ world & of their owne flesh. And for the same cause were the Iewes rebuked lykewise by the prophet Ezechiel for not keeping the Saboth day. And it is tolde them in such wise as if they had broken the whole lawe generally. And not without cause: for he ỳ despiseth the Saboth day, hath (as much as in him lyeth) thrust the whole seruice of God vnder foot. And if the day of rest be not kept: all the residewe is nothing worth, according to this saying of ỳ Prophet Esay, ỳ men must beresue themselues of their owne vertues, and be contented to forgoe them: or else it is not the Lordes Saboth, neither doth he lyke or alowe of it. Hereby we see ỳ it is to no purpose to obserue the ceremonie alone. For had the Iewes kept the ceremonie neuer so straitly in assembling together on the Saboth day, without stirring one finger in their housholde businesse, & yet in the meane while nourish their own wicked affectiõs, & afterward put them in effect: it had bin but a mocking of God, by abusing of his name, and by defacing and falsifying the whole order that he had ordeined accordingly also as he vpbraideth them. But the chiefe thing was to haue an eye to the true meaning of the figure: that is to wit, to the spirituall seruing of God. And yet therewithal it behooued the Iewes to keepe the ceremonie also that was commaunded them. For God did so bridle them, as he vouchsafed not to let them haue the substance of things [alone by it selfe,] but he would that they should also haue the shadowes of them therewithall, vntil the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ.

And hereby wee see the thing that S. Paul speaketh: namely that as now we be no more tyed to the old bondage of keping the Saboth day. For we must doe so much honor to Iesus Christ, as to holde our selues contented with that which hee hath brought vs in his owne person, without the hauing of the outward thinges any more ỳ were vnder the law. Now we see how this obseruation concerneth vs at this day. As touching the ceremonie it selfe, it is past as I sayde, and therefore wee must come to the substance: which is, ỳ to serue God wel, wee must learne to forbeare all our own wils, & all our own thoughts & affections. And why? Because ỳ when wee will needes be wise in our owne conceites to imagine this or ỳ to serue God withal, we marre al. Therfore our own wisedom must be layd down, & we must heare God speake, without following our own wil or fancie. Thus the first entrãce to keep the Saboth day as we ought to doe, is, not to beleeue the thing ỳ seemeth good to our selues: for wee must rest. And how must we rest? Wee must stand at a stay, so as our thoughtes runne not rouing abroade, to inuent one thing or other. We must (say I) continue quietly at one stay in the obedience of our God. And when wee be tempted by our owne lustes, we must consider that all out lewde and disobedient affections, are enemies to God euerichone of them. Therefore we must rest stil in that behalfe, and referre our selues vnto God, that he onely may worke in vs, and guide and gouerne vs by his holy spirit.

Hereby we see God ouerslipped not any thing, when hee ordeined the Saboth day. And sith it hath so large a scope: what want wee more to teach vs a perfect doctrine of holynesse, when we haue the thinges which the holy Ghost hath set before vs? The matter is that we shoulde liue holily in the obedience of our God. And how is that to be done? Euen by receiuing his single worde, and by fashioning our selues according to his righteousnesse. Now forasmuch as the thinges which we haue of our owne nature, are cõtrarie thereunto: we must begin at this end of renouncing our selues. That being done, we haue all that is requisite to the seruing of God. But ỳ is very hard to be done. And therefore when we heare ỳ God commandeth vs to keepe the Saboth day, let vs looke that we marke, and consider that it wil not be done with playing, but ỳ we must inforce our selues: & we shall haue profited greatly all our lyfe, if we keepe it well, that is to wit by renouncing whatsoeuer wee haue of our owne, and by dedicating our selues wholy vnto our God. And we ought to bee the more inflamed to the spirituall keeping of the Saboth of the Lord, seing we be set free frõ the slauish subiection of the law, and God hath graunted greater priuiledge to vs, than he did to the fathers of olde time: insomuch that hee is contented with our mortifying of the old man, to be renewed again by the power of his holy spirit, & we be no more bound to the ceremonie that was kept so straitly vnder the law. Seing ỳ God handleth vs so louingly: it bindeth vs the more to haue an eye to the principal, ỳ we may obserue it duely. Yea & we must not alledge ỳ the auncient fathers had ỳ ceremonie to quicke thẽ vp, which serued thẽ as a spurre: for inasmuch as our Lord Iesus Christ is come, we haue much more than the outwarde and visible signe. And forasmuch as al the things

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that were figured in those shadowes, are accomplished in him: we must not craue stil the thinges that were vnder the lawe. Thus ye see how the thing that is ordeined here concerning the Saboth day, is nowe fulfilled, at leastwise as in respect of the truth of the figure, which the fathers had but in shadowe. And in very deede looke what was commaunded concerning the day of rest, must needes belong to vs as well as to thē. For let vs take Gods lawe in it selfe, and we shall haue an euerlasting rule of righteousnesse. And it is certeine that vnder the tenne commaundementes, God intended to giue a rule that should indure for euer. Therefore let vs not thinke that the thinges which Moses speaketh of the Saboth day, are needelesse for vs: not for that the figure remaineth still in force, but because we haue the trueth thereof. And for the same cause the Apostle in the fourth to the Hebrewes, applyeth the thinges that were spoken of the Saboth day, to the instruction of the Christians and of the new Church. For hee sheweth vs that we must fashion our selues lyke to our GOD, and that this is our full felicitie and perfection, because the whole souereigne welfare of man consisteth in being created after the image of God. What is to be done now, seeing that the said image is defaced by sin, but that it may bee repaired againe? Ye see then that the way for vs to atteine to perfection, is to fashion our selues lyke to our God and to yeelde to his will, and to inquire of his workes: that wee may doe the lyke. Wherefore let vs vnderstand that to serue God well, we at this day be commaunded to streine our selues to the vttermost of our power, to subdew our owne thoughtes, affections and desires, that God may reigne in vs and rule vs by his holy spirit. And therefore it is in vaine for all hipocrites to glose, & to set a faire countenance vpon their doinges. For so lōg as wicked couetousnesse lyeth lurking in their heartes: so long as they bee ful of enuie, rancor, ambition, crueltie, or guile: it is certeine that they do nothing else but breake the Saboth day. And therefore we may conclude that they ouerthrow the whole seruice of God, according to that which I alledged afore out of Ezechiel. As much is sayd thereof in Ieremy. And in deed that is ỳ cause why the ceremonie was so straitly looked to vnder ỳ lawe. Thinke we that God did euer take pleasure in mens idlenesse? no surely. But he punished the partie as sore ỳ wrought vppon the Saboth day, as him that had murdered a man. And why so? It seemeth to be a crueltie, that a man should bee put to death for cleauing of a litle wood vppon ỳ Saboth day, as if he had cōmitted a murther. But yet doth God condemne him to death ỳ cleaued wood vpon ỳ Saboth day. And why? Because ỳ vnder that figure was cōprehended ỳ whole seruice of God. And for ỳ same cause is it sayd in Ieremie, ỳ they bare burthens, and went to cart vpon the Saboth day. And why? It should seeme that God stādeth too much vpon a trifling and childish matter: but he had an eye to the thing that was betokened by the Saboth day: and when that was so despised by the Iewes, it was a trayterousnesse, whereby they shewed that they made no reckoning of the lawe at all. So then, to come againe to our selues, seeing that wee haue not this figure so straidy nowadayes, but God hath giuen vs a greater libertie, which was purchased for vs by the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ: let vs learne to giue our selues earnestly vnto him, and to vnderstand (as I sayd afore) that we may all trauel in all the residewe, and yet it shall be to no purpose vnlesse our affections be bridled, so as wee striue to renounce all our owne thoughtes and desires, in such sort as God may haue the whole gouerning of vs, and we protest that we desire nothing else than to rest in him. And for the same cause also doth God set foorth himselfe to vs for an example. For hee thinkes it not enough to commaund men to rest: but also sheweth them the way. For after he had created the worlde and all that is therein, hee himselfe rested. Not that he was weary or had any neede of rest: but to allure vs to behold his workes, that we might rest in them, and therewithall fashion our selues lyke vnto him. Wil we then keepe the spiritual rest? lyke as it is said that God rested frō his workes: so must we rest also, ceasing to doe what seemeth good to our selues, and whatsoeuer our owne nature coueteth. If this example of God prouoke vs not: wee shewe well thereby that we neither seeke nor in any wise couet our owne welfare, but that we will needes continew wilfully in our wretched and cursed state. The souereigne welfare of men (as I sayd afore) is to sticke vnto God & to be knit vnto him. Beholde, our Lord calleth vs to him, & telleth vs that wee can haue no true holynesse nor vnion with him, but by resting from our owne workes. Now if we be so vnruly, that we will alwayes be occupying of our armes & legges, & be still doing what wee thinke good: surely it is as a breaking of ỳ band that is betweene God and vs, & a separating and estranging of our selues from him as much as in vs lyeth. And doth it not appeare thereby, ỳ we seeke to be left vp as a pray to Satan, to be caryed & haryed away by him, for want of being any more vnder the protection of our God? Yes: but what for that? There are very fewe ỳ thinke of ỳ. The world sees what libertie al men take to theselues. If one come & tel a man that he must not walke after his owne fancie. Tush (saith hee) I knowe how to behaue my selfe. But a man could not deuise to spite God more manifestly, than by such rebelliousnesse. It is all one as if we would needes shewe that wee will not ỳ he should haue any superioritie ouer vs. In deede men will not be acknowē ỳ it is so: but yet it is so in very deede. For (as I haue sayd already) it is no seruing of God, vnlesse we begin at the absteyning frō our owne thoughtes & affections. Therefore when men will needes be selfwise & trust to their owne wit, so as they take leaue to doe what they list, & to follow their own affections & fancies, & labor not to represse thē, but are offended whē others goe about to reclaime them: it is a signe ỳ they neuer wist what it is to serue God, nor ỳ it is the chiefest poynt of the lawe. And therefore let vs marke wel, ỳ whereas God alledgeth his owne exam-

Col 2.17.

Psal. 19.8.9. 10.

Matt. 5.18.

Heb. 4.3.10.

Iere. 17. 24.

Num. 15.32. 35.

Ier. 17.21.22 28.

example: it is to allure vs gently to ẏ keeping of ẏ spiritual Saboth or reſt, ẏ we might thinke our ſelues vnhappy to be ſeparated frō him, as I touched afore. And behold, ẏ band of this cōiunctiō is ẏ we withdraw not our ſelues from his religion & trueth, but ſuffer our ſelues to be ruled by him.

But now it may be demaunded, why ẏ Iewes were commaunded to reſt but onely the ſeuenth day: for our renouncing of our owne thoughtes & affectiōs, muſt not be for one day in a weeke: but we muſt continue in ẏ minde al ẏ time of our lyfe. To be ſhort, the reſt ẏ God cōmandeth vs is euerlaſting, and not by pangs or fittes as they ſay. And why then choſe he but one day of the week? It was to ſhew vs, that when we haue done what we can to renounce our wicked luſtes, our falſe pretences, and whatſoeuer elſe is of our own nature: yet ſhall we neuer be able to atteine fully thereunto, till we be quite & cleane bereft of our fleſhe. True it is ẏ faithful ought to keepe a continual Sabboth all their life long, by forbearing their own wils and workes, & by indeuoring to giue themſelues ouer vnto God w all humilitie & ſubmiſſion, ſo as they may obey him quietly: I ſay we muſt doe ſo, or elſe al ẏ ſeruice ẏ we be deſirous to doe vnto God, ſhall be but a feining, & he wil diſalowe it & reiect it. Neuertheleſſe we cannot ſo diſcharge our ſelues in renoūcing our affections, but ẏ there will alwayes be ſomewhat worthie of blame in vs. S. Paul doth in deed glory ẏ the world was crucified vnto him, & he vnto ẏ world: but yet for al ẏ, he ceaſeth not to ſay, ẏ his fleſhe fighteth againſt his ſpirit, ſo as there is neuer any agreemēt betwixt thē. Yea and hee confeſſeth in ẏ ſeuenth to ẏ Romans, that he felt ſuch ſtrife cōtinually in himſelfe, as he did not ẏ good ẏ he would haue done, ẏ is to ſay, he performed it not w ſo earneſt affection, nor was ſo fully determined to walke according to ẏ will of God, but ẏ he had alwayes ſome lets to hinder him, ſo as to his own ſeming, in ſted of running ſtrongly, he did but go limpingly. Sith it is ſo: let vs marke ẏ Gods ordeining of ẏ ſeuēth day to reſt in, was not w out cauſe: for thereby he doth vs to vnderſtand, ẏ we cannot atteyne to ẏ perfect holineſſe which he requireth at our hands, neither in one day, nor in one moneth. Why ſo? Becauſe ẏ when we haue fought neuer ſo luſtily againſt the affectiōs of our fleſh, & againſt our wicked thoughts: there will alwayes remaine ſome dregges ſtil, till we be fully vnited to our God, & that he haue taken vs vp into his heauenly kingome. Vntill ẏ time, we ſhall alwayes haue ſome temptations, trouble, & vnquietneſſe in vs, ſo as wee ſhall well perceiue (I meane ſuch of vs as indeuer to ſerue God) that we be ſtil ſubiect to many tēptations, & to the feeling of a number of ſtinges whereby we be prouoked to this or that. And are not all thoſe thinges as many hinderances to holde vs backe frō the ſpiritual reſt? If a man reſted himſelfe in God as he ſhould doe: he ſhould not conceiue any thing at all in his minde, that might turne him aſide from the right way. He ſhoulde not haue any wicked luſtes or lykinges. All ſuch thinges ſhoulde bee farre from him. Now then when as we conceiue a number of lewde imaginations: then doth Satan ſtep in to aſſaile vs, & to vexe vs w vnquietneſſe. And when our minde is once inclined to doe euill: there are a number of thinges in vs, ẏ tickle vs & ſet vs ſtill foreward. And although we hate ẏ euil, yet ſo it is, ẏ by ſuch tēptations we are prouoked to goe through with it. And thereby it appeareth ẏ it is not an eaſie matter to winde our ſelues frō our wicked luſtes, & to bring to paſſe ẏ they may no more reigne in vs. So then let vs go foreward with this indeuer of keeping Gods ſpiritual Saboth, for we ſhal neuer atteine fully to it, vntill ẏ end of our lyfe.

But hereby we be put in minde of two things. The one is to miſlyke of our ſelues, & to mourne continually, & to conſider that although to our owne ſeeming we haue take neuer ſo great pain to obey our GOD: yet notwithſtanding we be but yet on our way ſtil, and we come far ſhort of fulfilling the thinges that are required and commaunded in the lawe. Thus haue wee a cauſe to humble our ſelues, becauſe God ſhal always find enough and too much to condemne in vs as cōcerning our ſeruing of him, and alſo becauſe that the ſpirituall reſt is not yet ſuch as he hath commaunded, nothing neere. And lyke as wee haue occaſion to humble our ſelues & to be ſorie with true repentance: ſo ought we on the other ſide to be ẏ more moued & quickened vp to goe forward, ſith we ſee our owne wants as thus: True it is that God hath giuen me the grace to bee deſirous to ſerue him: but how doe I behaue my ſelf therin? alas I am yet far off frō doing it. Sith we ſee it is ſo: what ſhould we do but inforce our ſelues? Therfore w our abhorring of ẏ euil which is in vs, let vs alſo be the more earneſt to profit ſtil in this reſt, & to go foreward in it, & let euery of vs dayly call himſelfe to account. Ye ſee then that God hauing giuen vs occaſiō to humble our ſelues all the time of our life, ſheweth vs that we muſt be earneſt in correcting our vices, & in mortifying our fleſh dayly more & more, & conſider ẏ it is not enough for vs to haue our olde man crucifyed in part, vnleſſe we be alſo quite buried w Ieſus Chriſt, as ſaith S. Paul in ẏ ſeuenth to the Romans before alledged. Thus much cōcerning ẏ ſeuēth day, wherof mētiō is made in this place.

Gal. 6. 14. & 5. 17.

Ro. 7. 15. 19.

Rom. 7. 4.

Now muſt we come to the ſecond point: which is, ẏ (as I haue ſayd already) ẏ Saboth day was a policy or order whereby to exerciſe the faithfull in the ſeruice of God. For that day was ordeined for men to aſſemble in, to heare the doctrine of the lawe preached, to communicate together w ſacrifices, and to call vpon the name of God. As touching theſe poyntes, it belongeth as well to vs as to the people of olde time. For albeit ẏ the figure be ceaſed, (I meane the ſame that S. Paul ſpeaketh of in the epiſte to the Coloſſians:) yet notwithſtanding, ſo much as cōcerneth the order, continueth ſtill and hath his vſe. And to what end ſerueth this order? To aſſemble our ſelues in the name of God. True it is that this ought to be done cōtinually: howbeit for our infirmities ſake, or rather by reaſon of our ſlothfulneſſe, it is requiſite that ſonie one day ſhould be choſen out. If we were as erneſt in ſeruing of God as we ought to bee: wee ſhould not appoynte

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one day in a weeke, onely but euery man ought to meete both morning and euening without lawe written, to bee edifyed more and more by Gods worde. And truely this exercise is more than needefull for vs, considering that wee bee so inclined to euill, as there needeth not any thing to thrust vs out of the way: and therefore it were expedient for vs to come together dayly in the name of God. But what? We see that men wil scarse meete vpon the Lord his day, and that moste of them must bee held to it as it were by force. Considering then that there is such infirmitie in vs: let vs vnderstand that this order was not made al onely for the Iewes, that they might haue some day wherin to come together: but also for vs, so as it belongeth to vs as well as to thē.

But yet herewithall we haue to marke, that this is not all: for it were a very slender order to haue a rest of our handes and feete, and to go no further than so. What then? we must apply this rest to a higher purpose: we must refraine from our owne businesse which might hinder vs from the minding of Gods workes: and wee must call vpon his name and exercise our selues in his worde. If wee spende the Lordes day in making good cheere, and in playing and gaming: is that a good honoring of God? Nay, is it not a mockerie, yea and a very vnhalowing of his name? Yes. But when the Shopwindowes are shut in on the Lords day, and men trauel not as they do on other dayes: it is to the ende wee shoulde haue the more leasure and libertie, to intend to the thinges that God commaundeth: that is to wit, to be taught by his worde, to meete together to make confession of our faith, to call vppon his name, & to exercise our selues in ỹ vse of his Sacramentes. That is the purpose whereunto this order ought to serue vs. But now let vs see if those which name themselues Christians, discharge themselues as they ought to do. Behold, a great number thinke to haue ỹ Lordes day most free to followe their owne busines, & reserue that day for the same purpose, as though there were none other day for them to appoynt vppon of all the weeke long. And though the bell tole to bring them to the sermon, yet it seemeth vnto them, that they haue nothing else to doe, but to thinke vpon their busines, and to cast vp their accounts concerning this and that matter. Othersome fall to gluttonie, and shut vp themselues in their houses, because they dare not shewe a manifest contempt in the open streetes: but yet the Lord his day is to them but as a couert to shrinke aside in from the Church of God. And hereby it appeareth what affection we haue towardes all Christianitie, & towardes ỹ seruing of God, seeing we make that thing an occasion of withdrawing our selues further of from God, which is giuen vs for a helpe to bring vs neerer vnto him. And againe, be we once gone astray: it serueth to pul vs quite and cleane away. And is not ỹ a diueliish spite of men? yet notwithstanding it is so cōmon a thing, as is pitie to see: and would God that examples were more rare and further of to be found. But ỹ worlde sees how all thinges are vnhallowed, insomuch that most folke haue no regard at al of ỹ vsing of that day, which was ordayned to withdrawe vs from all earthly cares and affaires, that wee might giue our selues wholy vnto God.

Furthermore wee must vnderstand, that the Lord his day was not appoynted al onely to the hearing of Sermons: but to the ende wee should apply the rest of the time to ỹ prayfing of God. Yea verily. For although he feede vs euery day: yet doe wee not minde his gratious benefites sufficiently to magnify them. In deede it were a poore thing if wee minded not Gods benefites but vpon the Lordes day: But because we be occupied too much about our owne affaires on the other dayes, therefore wee bee not so much giuen to serue God in them, as vppon the day which is assigned wholy therunto. The Lord his day then must serue vs for a tower to mount vp into, to vewe Gods workes a farre of, as a time wherein we haue nothing to let vs or to keepe vs occupied, but that we may imploy all our wits to consider the benefites and gratious gifts that he hath bestowed vppon vs. And if wee can put this thing wel in vre (that is to say, if we can consider Gods workes), vpon the Lordes day, surely we shall be the more giuen vnto it all the reste of the weeke after, and the minding thereof wil as it were fashion and polish vs aforehand, so as our musing vppon his workes long afore to the intent wee may knowe how to fare the better by them, wil leade vs to yeeld thanks vnto our God vppon the munday and all the weeke after. But if the Lordes day be spent not onely in games & pastimes full of vanitie, but also in thinges quite contrarie to God, so as men thinke they haue not kept holy the Lorde his day, except God be offended diuers wayes: if the holy order which God ordeyned to bring vs to him, be broken after that fashion: is it any woonder though men play the beastes all the weeke after? What is to be done then? Let vs assure our selues that it is not enough for vs to goe to some Sermon vppon the Lordes day, to receiue some good instruction & to cal vpon the name of God: but we must also digest the same thinges, and bende all our wittes to consider the gratious thinges that God hath done for vs: and by that meanes wee must frame our selues to the thinges that may leade vs to our God, without further trauel on ỹ Munday or of all the weeke after. And to the intent we may not doe aught else than record ỹ thinges by good leasure, which we had learned afore: let our mindes be discharged of all things that may hinder vs, or plucke vs backe from the considering of Gods workes. Thus ye see what the order is which we must keepe at this day. It is not to keepe the ceremonie so straite as it was vnder the bondage of ỹ lawe: for we haue not the figure or shadowe any more. But it serueth to cal vs together, that we may be inured according to our infirmitie, to apply our selues the better to ỹ seruing of God, and to dedicate that day wholy vnto him, so as we may bee vtterly withdrawen from the worlde, and the same may stand vs in stead all the rest of the weeke, as I sayd afore.

Yea and wee haue to marke also, that it is not enough for vs to thinke vpon God and his works

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vppon the Lordes day euery man alone by himselfe: but that wee must meete together vpon some day certeine to make open confession of our faith. In deede this ought to be done euery day as I haue sayd afore. But yet in respect of mens rawnesse, and by reason of their slothfulnesse: it is necessarie to haue one speciall day dedicated wholy thereunto. It is true that we bee not bound to the seuenth day: neither doe wee (in deede) keepe the same day that was appointed to the Iewes: for that was the Saterday. But to the intent to shewe the libertie of Christians, the day was chaunged because Iesus Christ in his resurrection did set vs free from the bondage of the law, & cancelled the obligation therof. That was the cause why the day was shifted. But yet must wee obserue the same order of hauing some day in the weeke, be it one or be it two, for that is left to the free choyce of Christians. Neuertheless, if a people assemble to haue the Sacramentes ministred, and to make common prayer vnto GOD, and to shewe one agreement and vnion of faith: it is conueniente to haue some one day certeine for that purpose. Then is it not enough for euery man to withdrawe himselfe into his owne house, whether it bee to reade the holy scripture or to pray vnto GOD: but it is meete that wee shoulde come into the companie of the faithfull, and there shewe the agreement which wee haue with all the whole body of the Church, by keeping this order which our Lord hath so commanded. But what? There a man may see too apparant vnhallowing of Gods seruice. For (as I haue touched afore) are there not a great sorte which could well finde in their heartes to shewe that they doe but mocke God, and that they would faine be exempted from the common lawe? It is true that they wil come to a sermon a fiue or sixe times a yeere. And what to doe there? Forsooth euen to mocke at God & at all his doctrine. In deede they be very swine, which come to defile Gods temple, and are worthier to be in stables than there, and they were better to keepe themselues at home in their stinking cabans. To bee short, it were better that such rascals and filthie villaines were quite cut off from the Church of God, than that they should come and intermingle themselues after that sort in companie with the faithfull. But yet how many times come they thither? The bel may ring wel enough: for looke where a man left them, there shall he finde the. So then we ought to bee the more diligent and careful, in quickening vp our selues to make such confession of our faith, as God may be honored with one common consent among vs. And besides that, all superstitions must bee banished. For we se how it is an opinion in poperie, that God is serued with idleneesse. It is not after that sorte that we must keepe holy the Saboth day. But to the intent it may bee applyed to the right and lawfull vse, we must consider (as I sayd afore) how our Lord requireth to haue this day bestowed in nothing elee, but in hearing of his worde, in making common prayer, in making confession of our faith, and in hauing the vse of the Sacramentes. Those are the thinges that wee bee called to. Howbeit, we see how al things haue bin corrupted & confounded in the popedome. For lyke as they haue alotted dayes to honoring of their hee Saints and shee Saints, and set vp images of the: so haue they surmised that they were to be worshipped with idleneesse. But seeing that world is so giuen to corruption: it standeth vs so much the more in hand to marke well this discourse concerning the Saboth day, as it is set downe here by Moses. And let vs consider to what ende our Lorde commaunded the people of olde time, to haue one day in the weeke to rest in: to the intent that wee knowing how the same is abolished by the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ, may take our selues to the spiritual rest, that is to say, dedicate our selues wholy vnto God, forsaking all our owne reason and affections. Againe let vs reteine still the outward order, so farre as is meete for vs, that is to wit, of forbearing our owne affaires and worldly businesses, that we may intend wholy to the minding of Gods workes, and occupy our selues in the consideration of the good thinges that hee hath done for vs. And aboue all thinges let vs stre ine our selues to acknowledge the grace that hee offereth vs dayly in his Gospel that we may be strengthened in it still more and more. And when wee haue bestowed the Lord his day in praysing and magnifying Gods name, and in minding his workes: let vs shewe all the weeke after, that wee haue profited in the same.

Col. 1. 11. 13 14.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done. And forasmuch as wee can by no meanes serue him, vntill the frowardnesse that is in vs be done away, and inasmuch as he hath tolde vs that wee shall not cease to fight against his righteousnesse, so long as wee giue heede to our owne lusts and imaginations: it may please our good God to graunt vs such grace by the power of his holy spirit, as wee may be fully fashioned lyke vnto him that dyed and rose again for vs to mortify vs and to quicken vs. So then let vs beare the marke of our Lorde Iesus Christ euen in renouncing our selues, and let vs so submit vs to his will, as our whole seeking may bee to be fashioned lyke to his righteousnesse, that his lawe may bee fulfilled in vs euen as it is spirituall, and wee be changed from flesh to spirit, to liue vnder his obeisance. And because there is alwayes so much in vs to be misliked: it may please the same good GOD to beare with our infirmities, vntill his rest be fully brought to passe in vs, and that he haue taken vs vp into his heauenly kingdome. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely, &c.

S On

On Friday the xxj. of Iune. 1555.

The xxxv Sermon which is the sixth vpon the fift Chapter.

13 Six dayes shalt thou labour &c.

14 Thou shalt not doe anie worke therein, thy selfe, thy Sonne, thy daughter, thy manseruaunt, thy womanseruaunt, thyne Ox, thyne Asse, and thy cattle, and thy Straunger which is within thy gates, that thy manseruaunt and thy womanseruaunt may haue rest as well as thy selfe.

15 Remember that thou wast a seruaunt in the land of Egypt, and that the Lorde thy God brought thee thence with strong hande and arme stretched out. And therefore the Lord thy God hath commaunded thee to keepe holie the Saboth day.

I Declared yesterday how and why the commaundement of keeping the Saboth day was giuen to the Iewes. I told you briefly how it was a figure of the spirituall rest which the faithfull ought to obserue, to
Col.2,14.17.20. serue God in. Howbeit our Lorde Iesus Christ hath brought vs the performance thereof, so as
Rom.6.6. wee must no more stay vppon the shadowe of the Lawe, but content our selues with the crucifying of our olde man by the power of ỹ death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ, that wee may bee renued to serue our GOD throughly. But yet in the meane while we haue need of some policie and order among vs. Therefore it is expedient that there bee a day of rest for vs to meete together, that we be confirmed in the doctrine of God, and profite daily therein, that is to say, all the time of our life, and also bee occupied in calling vppon his name, and in making confession of our faith: and that therewithall the residewe of the day be spent in considering the benefits that wee receiue from time to time at Gods hand, that he may be the better glorifyed for them.

And now we haue to marke what is sayd in Moseses text. *Six dayes shalt thou labor*, sayth the Lorde. This must not be taken as though God commaunded vs to labor. It is true that we bee borne thereto, and wee knowe that God intendeth not that wee should be idle, while we liue in this world: for hee hath giuen men handes and feete and cunning and wit. Yea and euen
Gen.2,15. before there was any sin, it is sayd that Adam was put into the garden to dresse it. But the labor that men take now, is a chastisement for sin. For it is sayd vnto them, Thou shalt eate thy bread in the sweate of thy browes: that is a curse which is layd vppon all mankinde. For wee be not worthie to inioy the state that was giuen to our first father, which was to liue in pleasure without much troubling of himselfe. Notwithstanding, euen before sin came into the world, and before we were condemned of God to this paynfull and constreyned labor, it behoued men to occupy themselues in some exercise. And why? For it is against our nature to be as vnprofitable blockes of wood. So then it is very certeine that we must apply the whole time of our lyfe to some labor. Neuertheleſſe here is no precise commaundement giuen of laboring six dayes. For in very deede there were other solemnities besides the Saboth day, vnder the Lawe: There were other feastes which might fall in the middest of the weeke. But for as much as the number of them was small, (for they were but fower dayes in the yeare:) here is no mention made of them: hee speaketh but only of the Saboth day. And whereas it is sayd, thou shalt labor sixe dayes: our Lord sheweth vs that wee haue no cause to grudge of the giuing and bestowing of one day vppon him, seeing he leaueth vs sixe for one. As if he should say, is it a great matter to you that I should chose out one day to be reserued wholy to my seruice, so as ye shall doe nothing therein but reade and exercise your selues in my lawe, or heare the doctrine that shalbe preached vnto you, and come to the temple to be there confirmed by the sacrifices that shall be offered, and to call vppon my name, and to protest that you bee of the fellowship of my people? Should this grieue you seing you haue sixe dayes free and whole to doe your businesse and affaires in? Seing then that I deale so courteously with you: as to require but one day of seuen: is it not too great an vnthankfulnesse, if yee complayne of that time as though it were misbestowed, as who shoulde say yee were so churlish and nigardly, as to grudge mee the seuenth part of your time? I giue you your whole life: ỹ sunne neuer shineth vpō you, but you ought to consider my goodnesse, & that I am

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a freehearted father towardes you: For I make my sunne to shine, to giue you light to go by, that euery of you might doe his businesse. And why then should not I haue one day of seuen, wherein euery man shall surceasse from his owne businesse, so as ye shall not be intangled in any worldly care, but that ye may haue leasure to thinke vppon me? We see then that this saying of laboring sixe dayes, is not set downe as a commaundement, but rather as a graunt that God maketh euen in way of vpbraiding men with their vnthankefulnesse, if they doe not obserue the Saboth day and keepe it holy as is spoken of it here.

But hereof we may gather a good and profitable lesson: which is that when we be slow to obey God, we must cõsider his benefits. For what should more sharpen our desire to followe Gods commaundementes, than to consider that hee dealeth not roughly with vs, nt ouerpresseth vs not? behold God coulde reine vs with a streite bit if it pleased him: he could driue vs to so hard thinges as there should be no meanes to get out of them: but hee hath a consideration to guide vs as a father doth his children. Seing then he doth so beare with vs, ought wee not to be the more prouoked to doe as he appointeth vs? yea. So then, as oft as Gods commaundements are hard vnto vs, or at leastwise seeme to bee so: let vs assure our selues that hee doth not presse vs so much as hee could, nothing neere. For if God listed to vse his right with extremitie: we should be contented out of all measure. Therefore let vs vnderstand that he beareth with vs, and that hee vseth more than fatherly goodnesse in that behalfe. It is true that the lawe of GOD is vnpossible vnto vs, insomuch that wee bee not onely vnable to obserue it throughout: but also if a man would of his owne naturall power discharge himselfe to Godward, he could not stirre one finger, nor haue one good thought, to know which way to begin. And so farre off are wee from being able to obey GOD, and to execute the thinges that are contained in his lawes: that all our thoughtes and affections are enmities against God. If men could through their owne power performe the Lawe: it should bee sayd to them, *Labor thus*. But contrariwise it is sayd, *Rest yee*, to the end that God may worke. The lawe then may well be vnpossible as in respect of vs, but yet is it possible for GOD to printe it in our hearties, and to fashion vs by his holy spirit, yea euen in such wise as it shall bee a sweete and light yoke vnto vs, and there shall bee no hardnesse in it that may weary vs. Therefore when men haue looked well about them: they shall finde that God beareth with them, as a father that pitieth his children. And therefore let vs learne to bee thankfull, and to be the more forwarde to serue our God, seeing hee commaundeth vs no such thinges as ought to seeme ouer bitter or paynefull to vs, but hath a regarde of our abilitie.

Thus yee see what wee haue to marke vpon this text, where our Lord sheweth that he leaueth men their commoditie. True it is (as was touched yesterday) that wee ought to bee so spirituall, as to assemble euery day to call vpõ the name of God, and that we ought to mount vp to the heauenly lyfe, leauing all our worldly businesses. But what? God seeth that wee be compassed about with our flesh, that we creep vppon the earth, and that our infirmities carry vs away in such sorte, as we cannot leade the life of Angels: God therefore beholding such rawnes & weakenes in vs, and rewing our vnabilitie to discharge our selues fully of our dutie: releaseth vs, and vttereth not his vttermost rigor, but sayth hee is contented if wee alowe him one day: or rather if that day serue vs for all the rest of the weeke, God is contented with it. And why? For (as I sayd) hee goeth not to extremitie: because hee knoweth that wee bee too feeble. Seeing then that hee beareth so with vs, and leaueth our commodities to vs: we be so much the more lewde, vnhoneft and vnexcusable, if wee bee not inflamed to giue our selues ouer vnto him.

Now it is sayd therewithall, *that neither man-seruant, nor woman-seruant, nor Ox, nor Asse, nor any other Cattell must labour on the Saboth day, no nor any stranger within thy gates*. As concerning cattel, it might bee thought straunge that God shoulde comprehende them vnder the keeping of the Saboth or day of rest, seeing it is a high and heauenly mysterie, as was declared yesterday. Doeth such geere belong to Oxen and Asses? GOD sayth, I haue giuen you the Saboth day, to bee as a signe that I make you holy, and that I am your GOD which reigneth among you. This is not common to all mortall men. For God graunteth not such grace and priuiledge to the paynims and infidels, as to make them holy. Hee speaketh but onely to the people whome hee adopted and chose to bee his heritage. But nowe seeing that the Saboth day is a signe of Gods separating of his faithfull Church from all the rest of the worlde: wherefore is it extended vnto Oxen and Asses? Let vs marke that it is not done for the brute beasties sakes: but to the intent that men shoulde haue a monument before their eyes, to bee the more touched therewith. This Sacrament then concerneth not the beasties, which haue no vnderstanding nor reason: but it concerneth men, who ought to make their profite of it. Wee see that the Sacrifices were made of the brute beasties: wee see there was greate preparation in that behalfe: there were vessels of gold and siluer & such other lyke thinges: and whereas all these things were hallowed, is it meante that God did put his spirite into the corruptible mettals, and into the other thinges that haue no feeling? Not: but all this is referred to the men, for whose vse and commoditie they are made. God doth not onely serue his owne turne with them in this presente and brittle lyfe: but also giue them to vs as tokens of his fauour, to bee as meanes and helpes to drawe vs vp to heauen. Now then, whereas God would haue the Oxen and Asses to rest the seuenth day: it is not meant thereby that hee maketh them partakers of the spi-

Exod. 31. 13. 17. Eze. 20. 12.

Gen. 1. 28. Psal. 8. 7.

vntill rest that wee spake of before: but it was done to y end that y Iewes beholding their Stables and stalles shut vp, shoulde consider thus with themselues: Loe God setteth vs downe this signe and visible Sacrament before our eyes, and extendeth it euen to the bruite beastes: and that is to the end that wee on our part shoulde be held the better to his seruice, and consider that it were a breaking of the whole lawe, if wee shoulde not thinke vpon the thing that is chiefest in all our whole lyfe: namely if wee shoulde not learne to forsake our selues, and no more followe our owne lykings, reason, and wisedome, but suffer our God to rule vs, and become as dead creatures, that hee may liue in vs, and not followe our own swindge any more, which is vtterly corrupted. After this maner should the Iewes haue looked vpon the visible signe that extended euen to the beastes, to the end it might haue restreined them so much the more, and they by that meane haue bin put in minde to haue kept the Saboth day with all reuerence.

Gal. 2. 20.

Also wee see how God at all times handleth men according to their hardnesse, and how he hath prouided conuenient remedies for them, because they bee not ouerhastie to come vnto him, vntill they bee drawen thither after that fashion. And this serueth not onely for the Iewes, but also for vs. Then let vs consider the goodnesse of our God, with wee see heere is not vnmindefull of vs, nor ouerslippeth any thing at all that may remedy our vices. And therewithall let vs also consider the vntowardnesse that is in our selues, to the ende that wee flatter not our selues ne giue head to our affections, seeing it is so that wee haue neede to bee constreined, and that God should giue vs strokes with the spurre, as it were to rule horses. Seeing then that God quickeneth vs vp after that fashion, let vs assure our selues hee doth it not causelesse, but because wee be froward and stubborne. And therfore let vs mislike of all our affections, and learne to imprison our selues, so as nothing may withhold vs from following the trace that God commandeth vs. And although our nature striue against it, yet let vs so bridle the same, as wee may goe through without ceasing, euen til wee be fully obedient to our God.

Thus ye see what we haue to remember vpon this place, besides that which shall be spoken anon concerning menseruaunts and womenseruaunts, wherby God putteth the Iewes in mind, that *they had bin seruaunts in the land of Egipt*, and therefore that they ought to deale gently with such as were vnder their power. *Thy manseruant* (sayth hee) *and thy womanseruant shall rest themselues*. And why? for thou thy selfe hast bin in bondage. [The time hath bin that] thou wouldest fayne haue had some rest and refreshing giuen thee. Therefore now thou must vse the lyke gentlenesse towards such as are vnder thy hand. Heere it should seeme, that God ordeined not the Saboth day for a spirituall order onely, as is sayd afore, but also for charities sake. For hee sayth, if thou thy selfe wert in bondage, wouldest thou not that other men should giue thee some ease? couldst thou finde in thy heart to be alwayes toyling? No surely. Therefore must thou also beare with others. Now this is not done for the seruice of God, but rather for common charities sake which ought to be betweene neighbor and neighbor, how farre soeuer they be vnderlings to vs in degree. Howbeit and much as this commaundement is contayned in the first table of the Lawe, surely the thing that is touched here, is but an accessorie, I say the first table. For not without cause hath God deuided his lawe in such sorte, as that he wrote it in two stones. Could he not haue written it all in one stone if hee had lifted? Yes. Why then was it made in two partes? It was not without cause. For there are two principall poynts in Gods Lawe. The one concerneth our duetie towards him, & the other concerneth our dueties towardes our neighbours in being conuersant with them. For the end whervnto our whole life ought to bee referred, is first of all, that vpon knowledge that wee haue a God to whome wee belong, wee should walke in his obedience, and that forasmuch as wee holde our lyfe of him, wee should doe him homage for it: and that forasmuch as he hath created vs to a better hope, and adopted vs for his children, wee should glorify him for such goodnesse: and that forasmuch as hee hath redeemed vs with the bloud of his sonne, wee should bee wholy his, indeuouring to withdrawe our selues from the defilements of this world, y we may be true sacrifices vnto him, calling vpon him alone, fleeing to him alone for succor, & yelding him thanks for all his benefits. Ye see then y the first poynt of our life, is the honour that we ought to yeeld to our God.

Another poynt is this: that forasmuch as it is his will to trye our obedientnesse by liuing vprightly among men: none of vs must bee giuen to his owne peculiar profit, but euery of vs must indeuour to serue other, and maintaine mutuall honestie among our selues, so as wee not only abstaine from deceite, violence, and crueltie, but also leade a sober and modest life, without lasciuiousnesse, lewdenesse, or beastlynesse. Thus is the second poynt of our lyfe.

Now sith it is so that the commandement of the Saboth day is contained in the first table: it followeth that it belongeth to the spirituall seruice of God, and that it concerneth not the charities which ought to bee betwixt neighbor and neighbor. And why then is it treated of in this place? It is all one as if our Lord should say, The Saboth day shall serue you for an ouerplus, that your manseruauntes and womenseruauntes may haue some ease as well as your selues. Not that that was the drift of Gods purpose: his chiefe intent was not y there should bee a day in y week wherein we should cease frō labor, y they might take breath & not be continually ouerladed, & as they shoulde be tyred: y was not the cause which moued God to appoint the Saboth day. But his ordeining of it was to do y faithfull to vnderstand y they ought to liue after such a holy maner, as to rest from all their owne lustes and desires, that God might worke wholy in them.

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Also here is a verie excellent benefite, as men terme it. Behold (saieth our Lord) in as much as ye haue this warrant among you, that I do sanctifie you: see that you also indeuour to giue your selues vnto mee. For loe, this thing shal doe you seruice, and it is to your profite: that is to wit, your housholde shall not bee alwaies ouerhaled: for your menseruantes and your womenseruantes and your cattell must haue some rest. Therefore ye shall haue this as an ouerplus. Nowe wee see why here is expresse mention made, ỳ the Iewes had bin bondseruantes in Egypt, and therefore ỳ they ought to haue regard of such as were held as prisoners vnder their hand. For whereas Moses speaketh of menseruants & womenseruantes: he meaneth not ỳ maner of seruice that is common among vs nowe adayes: for in those dayes seruantes were slaues, and they were held downe like Oxen & Asses: they were handled so roughly and vnkindly, as was pitie to see. God therfore telleth ỳ Iewish people, ỳ in keeping the Saboth day, they should euen benefite & prosper their owne housholde. So little cause haue you (saieth he) to repine at the time that I haue reserued to my selfe, in taking one of seuen: ỳ if ye were not ouercruell and tyrannous to such as are at your deuotion, [ye would see that] the same day is to your benefite. If ye had no further regard than to chuse order, that is to wit that in that day your seruantes shall haue some refreshing: it ought to perswade you thereunto. But ye must vnderstand that I haue not ordained it alonly for your housholdes sake; but to the intent ye should bethinke ye of the thing ỳ I haue told you: namely that in as much as ye be sholed out from the Infidels, you must be to mee a kingly priesthood, so as you must seeke nothing but to serue me in all soundnesse and puritie of conscience. Haue yee once that regard, ye shall perceiue that the same day will yeelde ye moreouer some earthly commoditie, but yet is not that the thing which you must seeke thereby. To bee short, our Lorde sheweth vs here ỳ same thing which is shewed by Iesus Christ: which is, that if wee seeke the kingdome of heauen, all other thinges shall bee cast vppon vs. For we beare our selues on hand, that if we seeke the heauenly life, we shall starue for hunger, & it wil be a meane to turne vs out of all our cõmodities. To be short, the deuil comes, & alwaies rempres vs to mislike of Gods seruice, vnder this pretence & guile, that if wee giue our selues to the seruing of God, wee must starue for hunger, so as we shall bee in rufull case, & all the world will forsake vs. But surely we cannot serue God, vnlesse we be bereft of our own affections, & shake off the worldly cares that presse vs too sore. Neuerthelesse wee must repose our selues vppon the blessing that is promised vs: which is, that if we seeke the kingdome of God, we shalbe blessed euen in these transitorie things, so as our Lord will pitie vs, & giue vs all thinges which he knoweth to be requisite for this present life: only let vs but waite vppon him for the things which wee cannot attaine to by our own power & policie. That is ỳ thing which is shewed vs in this place.

Now this saying ought to serue vs continually for a spurre, to make vs goe forward with the things that God commandeth vs. For the chiefe thing that staieth vs from ruling and directing our life in the obedience of God, is that being too much wedded to our selues, we thinke ỳ this thing or that thing will be more for our profite, and whatsoeuer come of it, we will needs lay for our own commoditie, & for the things that pertaine to the world. Wee see here ỳ men cannot finde in their heartes to follow God: but rather shrink away frõ him & drawe cleane backe from his law, bicause ỳ to their seeming, if they should serue God they should neuer thriue. But that is such a shamefull thanklesnesse, as inhanceth their rebelliousnes a hundredfold more. What is to be done then? Let vs marke well ỳ we can neuer serue God w a free & cheerful heart, except we be fully resolued ỳ he wil prouide for vs al our life long, & not forget vs as is said in the person of Iosua. For in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, the Apostle applieth this doctrine to all the faithful, euen of purpose to withdraw them frõ ouer great carefulnes: he saieth, *Thy God will not forsake thee, neither will he forget thee.* Now if we could once be throughly perswaded that God watcheth ouer vs, and that he will prouide for al our necessities: it is certaine that we should not bee so ouerplunged in our earthly affections, wee should not bee turned away frõ the seruing of him, neither should we be letted to minde the spirituall life: but wee should passe through the world & vse the creatures as though wee vsed them not, bicause wee would consider that wee had yet further to goe. Thus ye see the effect that we haue to gather of this lesson, is that where our Lorde sheweth vs ỳ his commanding of the Saboth day to be kept, hath a spirituall meaning: yet notwithstanding men shal not faile to finde the same profitable vnto them, and that God will blesse them for it, if they looke rightforth to him, and be not too eagre in seeking their earthly commodities.

Iosua 1.5. Heb. 4.8.11.

And by the way wee bee warned, that if any haue authoritie ouer others, they must not despise their neighbors though they be their inferiours. And this reacheth very farre. For wee must not interprete it onely of menseruants and womenseruants: but also of the poore, of such as are not of authoritie or estimation, of all vnderlings & subiects, & of all such as (to our seeming) are not worthy to be compared or matched with vs in respect of the worlde. For wee see what the pride of men is. Although there be no cause why we should disdaine our selues: yet doth euerie of vs couet some preheminence. Now then, if we be so high minded, that euerie of vs could finde in his heart to ouerpeere his neighbour, you see though there be no reason why: what will we do if we be aduanced in deede? Looke vpon such as sit in seate of iustice: they beare themselues in hand ỳ the whole world (as ye would say) was made for none but for them, except God tickle them by his holy spirit, & shewe them ỳ they ought to walke in all maner of mildnes, & not oppresse those that are vnder their charge, but rather behaue themselues as fathers, & account of their subiects as of their children, yea & that bicause God honoreth the,

therefore they ought to liue in the greater humilitie. As for those that preache Gods worde, and haue charge to direct others: if they think they ought to bee exempted from the common sort, & despise other men: woe worth them. For it were better for them to breake their neckes in going vp into the Pulpit, than not to straine themselues to be the first that should leade a godly conuersation, & liue quietly with their neighbors, & shew themselues to be sheepe of the flocke of our Lord Iesus Christ. But yet for all this, it is true that rich men may well be serued by the poore. If a man haue menseruantes & womenseruantes for wages, he will not set his seruant aboue himselfe at the table, neither will he lay him in his owne bed: but yet, (notwithstanding all superioritie,) we must come to this point, that we be knit togither as one flesh, & that all of vs are created after the image of God. If we considered that as many as come of Adams race are our owne flesh & bone: ought it not to moue vs vnto kindnes, though we were as wild beastes one to another? When the Prophet Esay ment to reproue men for their vnnaturalnesse, he said, thou shalt not despise thine owne flesh. There ought I to behold my self as in a lookingglasse: namely in as many men & women as are in the world. Marke that for one point.

Gen.9.6.

Esa.58.7.

But there is yet more: namely that the image of God is printed in all men. Therefore whersoeuer I goe about to oppresse any man, I not only despise mine owne flesh, but also hurte Gods image as much as in me lyeth. So then let vs mark well, that by this text, God meane to shewe to all such as are in authoritie & estimation, and to all such as are richer than others, & to all such as are in any degrees of honour: that they ought not to abuse those that are vnder their hand, nor to vse ye[ir] superiorite out of measure, but euermore to beare in minde how wee bee all descended of Adams race, & are all of one kinde, yea & that all of vs haue Gods image printed in vs. That is the thing which we haue so note, specially now that our Lorde Iesus Christ is come downe to vs, and hath abased himselfe to condemne all pride, and to shewe that there is none other meane to serue God than by lowelines, & moreouer hath made vs all members of his body, as well seruants (& vnderlings) as maisters & superiors, so as there is no distinction in that behalf. When we come to our Lord Iesus Christ, and haue an eye to him: wee must follow him. And seeing that all of vs both great and small are members of his bodie, and he is our head: it is good reason that euerie of vs should fashion himselfe like to his neighbors. And besides that, seeing that God hath shewed himselfe a father more familiarly to vs, than he did to them that liued vnder the Lawe: let the same moouе vs to maintaine brotherly loue among vs. Thus ye see further what we had to remember vpon this place.

Phil.2.7.

2.Cor.12.13 Ga.3.27.28

Howbeit there is yet one point more, concerning Gods ordaining of this monument to put the Iewes in remembraunce. *That they had beene as strangers in the land of Egypt*: And wee knowe that they were naughtily and cruelly handled there. Now forasmuch as they would faine haue bin borne withall in that case, and God hearkened to them whē they sighed and groned: therefore doeth he tell thē, that they also ought to doe the like to others. And this containeth a good lesson, which is, that if wee consider our selues, we may continually be induced to discharge our dueties. On the contrarie part, if we be cruell towards our neighbors: it is bicause wee bee (as ye would say) beesotted in our own ease, & think not vpon our wretchednes & miserie. He that hath suffered hunger and thirst, bicause he hath longed to bee succoured at his neede, will thinke thus with himselfe when he sees a poore man: Go to, I my selfe haue bene in the like necessitie, and I would haue bin glad to haue bin succored, & me thought that other men ought to haue had pitie vpon me to releeue me. Now (say I) if a man bethinke him of such things when he beholdeth a poore man in neede: will it not make his heart to relent? Yes verily: but what for that? When we be at our ease, we thinke no more vpon our humane wretchednes: but rather we imagin that we be exempted, and that we be no more of the cōmon sort. And that causeth vs to forget our selues, so as we haue no more compassion of our neighbours, nor of any thing that they indure. Therefore haue we so much the more neede to mark this matter, namely, bicause our Lord seeth vs blinded with selflouе, so as it is ynough for vs to walter in pleasure, & wee neuer thinke vpon such as are in distresse & necessitie: therfore he sheweth vs our state, saying: Who be you? Were ye neuer in any aduersitie? Yea & though ye happen to ouerflow your selues towards them: doe ye not bethinke your selues againe [and say,] Lo, these are creatures shaped after the image of God, & if we misuse thē, God will haue no pitie vpon vs? And so let vs practise this doctrine all our life lōg. Therefore whensoeuer wee see any folke pinched with aduersitie, let vs call our selues to remembrance in this wise: Haue not I bin in neede as well as they? And if I were in like taking againe, would I not be glad to bee succoured? Seeing it is so, why shoulde wee exempt our selues from such conditions? We ought at leastwise to do to other folkes, as we our selues would be done vnto. Nature teacheth vs that, and wee neede not goe to schole to learne it. Then needeth there not any other euidence to condemne vs, thā our Lordes teaching of vs aforehand by experience. If wee haue that: surely we shalbe touched with kindnes & compassion to succour such as haue neede and wany, and we shalbe moued to pitie towards them that are in durance, so that if wee haue the meane and power to releeue them, euerie of vs will straine himselfe to doe it. That is the thing which we haue to marke in this place, where it is said, *Thou wast a stranger in the land of Egypt*, & therefore thou must now haue a care to releeue them that are vnder thy hand: for at that time when thou thy self wast a seruant, thou wouldest faine haue bin borne withall.

But let vs come nowe to such as were not of the Iewish nation, but onely traffickers among them. God will haue them also to keepe the Sabboth day, & yet were they not sanctified of God, neither

neither could this signe belong to thé, as I haue said already. It seemeth then y God vnhalloweth the Sacrament, when he maketh it so common to the Infidels, & to such as were not circumcised to beare the mark of the couenant, & to such as had not the law & the promises. But we haue to marke, that Gods speaking of straungers in this place, is as hauing alwayes an eye to the people whom he had chosen and adopted. For we know y if things should bee permitted which are contrarie to Gods seruice: although a might bee sayde that they bee no people of our bodie: wee might bee induced to followe them by their euill example. If straungers had bin suffered to trauell among the Iewes: what would haue come of it? The Iewes would haue dealt with thé, & so haue defiled themselues, and there would haue bin no difference at that time. For when occasions offer themselues, wee bee easily incited to euill. And although there be no great occasion: yet is our nature so much inclined to euill, that wee be allured to it by and by. And what will become of vs then, when all shall bee out of order? So then the libertie that had bin giuen to straungers to labour & trauell among the people of Israel [on the Sabaoth day,] would haue led them to corruption. Euery man would haue dispenced with himselfe, and taken leaue to breake the Sabath day and not to keepe it. Therefore to cut off such occasion of euill, and to haue that day obserued with the greater reuerence like as Gods will was that the cattell should rest, so ordayned he the like also for straungers. And nowe must this serue vs too. For it shereth vs that vices may not bee suffered among people that make profession of Christianitie, so as they should goe vnpunished, no not euen in such as are but trauellers or sojourners. As howe? Whereas blasphemie is condemned among vs, if a man heare one blaspheme in passing by, so as he scorneth God, and yet suffereth it and winketh at it: is not his bearing with such blasphemie, so as it hath full scope vnrepressed, as good as a defiling to make al other things stinke? Yea: and yet is it to bee seene. Surely so farre of is it that blasphemie is punished as it deserueth, among such as are not of our religion: that euen in those which are mingled with vs and professe Christianitie as we doe, men doe as it were harden themselues: and that is to our greater shame. But yet for all that, if any man, bee he Papist or bee he of any other sect, (as nowe adayes the worlde is fraught full of despisers of God:) I say if any man bee suffered to rayle against the doctrine of the Gospell, and to blaspheme Gods name: corruption will insue of it, so as it shall not bee easie to redresse it. If Whooremasters and Ruffians may bee suffered to bring in their lewde trickes, and to sowe more wickednesse among vs than wee had afore: If wanton persons & vnthriftes may bee suffered to come and play their lewde prancks here: must it not needes bee that wee shall play the vnthrifts with them, & bee vtterly corrupted? Yea: and therefore let vs marke well, that our Lord intendeth to keepe his people occupied in all cleannesse, so as the professers of Christianitie shall not onely abstaine from euill themselues, but also not suffer any, so farre as in them lyeth. For wee must vnderstande that the earth is as it were vnhallowed, where Gods seruice is defyled, and his holye name dishonoured. The lande wherein hee will haue vs to dwel, is as it were defyled and accursed, or at leastwise it is not long of vs if it bee not so. But if GOD haue giuen his children prerogatiue, so as they bee able to ridde idolatrie out of the Countrie where they dwell: surely if they doe it not, they prouoke Gods wrath and vengeaunce against themselues. Nowe then if wee shoulde graunt the abhominations of the Popedome, to bee mingled here with the pure seruice of GOD, so as the wilfull Papistes that list to liue here, shoulde haue Masse graunted them by priuiledge, and they shoulde bee suffered to haue some corner to worke their idolatrie and superstition in: it were a drawing of Gods wrath vppon vs, and a kindling of the fyre of his vengeaunce against vs. And why? Bicause that if as much as God hath put the swerde of Iustice into the hand of such as haue the rule of things in this life, and giuen them power to driue away idolatrie and all infections of Papistrie: surely if they maintayne them, it is as if they draue away GOD, that he: shoulde no more dwell among them nor raigne ouer them. So then let vs mark well, that it is not without cause that our Lord woulde that the straungers which dwelt among his people, (notwithstanding that they were of another faith and Religion,) should bee compelled to keepe the seuenth daye. Not for their owne sakes nor for their owne instruction, (for they were not capable thereof) but to the ende there shoulde bee no stumbling blocke to disorder his people, or to deface his seruice, but that the land which he had giuen to his seruaunt Abraham to inherit, might bee wholly dedicated vnto him.

And hereby we bee warned, not onely to sanctifie our selues by Gods worde: but also not to suffer anye occasion of offence or disorder to bee committed among vs, but to see that all such things be cleane rid away. Moreouer seeing our Lorde will haue vs to be so zealous in the maintenance of his seruice, as to constraine euen the that professe not themselues to be of his Church, to yeeld and frame themselues vnto vs as long as they be in our companie: I pray you how shall wee excuse our selues, if wee on our side bee not wholly giuen vnto him, not set foorth our selues as mirrours to drawe wretched vnbeleeuers vnto vs, and to winne them to our GOD? For if wee rebuke them when they doe amisse, & in the meane while they perceiue the like or greater faultes in vs: shall they not haue occasion to laugh all our sayinges to scorne? Nowe then seeing it was forbidden to suffer straungers to doe thinges contrarie to Gods seruice: let vs assure our selues that wee be dubble commanded to walke warely and in such humilitie & sobernesse, as straungers may see by experience, y our desiring that God should be honoured, is in good earnest & without counterfeiting, & that

wee cannot abide that any man shoulde woorke reproche to his Maiestie and glorie. That is the thing which we haue to marke vppon this place, if wee minde to obserue the thing nowe adayes which was commaunded the Iewes, accordingly also as it belongeth to vs in trueth and substance. For like as our Lord in olde time deliuered that people out of Egypt: so hath he nowe deliuered vs from the gulfe of hell, and rid vs frō euerlasting death, and from the horrorlesse pit of hell wherein wee were plunged, of purpose to take vs vp into his heauenly kingdome, purchased for vs by the bloud of his deare beloued sonne our Lord Iesus Christ.

Col.1.13. Heb.2.14.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God, with acknowledgment of our sinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, to the ende that wee indeuouring to reformme our selues more and more according to his righteousnesse, may fight dayly against the lustes of our flesh, and shunne al that is against the pure seruice of our God, holding out in the same incounter till he haue fully ridde vs of it, and fashioned vs againe after his owne image, according whereunto we were created at the first. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xxvj. of Iune. 1555.

The xxxvj. Sermon, which is the seuenth vpon the fifth Chapter.

16 Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commaunded thee, that thy dayes may be prolonged, and that it may goe well with thee in the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

NOwe wee bee come to the second table of the Lawe, where GOD sheweth vs howe wee ought to liue one with another. For as hath bene touched heretofore, there are two principall thinges in our life: first that wee serue God purely: and afterward that wee liue honestly and vprightly with other men, yeelding euery man his due. Nowe like as the honour of God excelleth all thinges that concerne man: so was it meete that the rule thereof shoulde bee set downe in first and chiefe place, that wee might honour him as wee ought to doe: which thing is dispatched in the first table. Here therefore GOD beginneth to tell vs howe to direct our life, if wee intend to serue him as in respect of men. Also I haue shewed you that God requireth not any honour at our handes for that he hath neede of it or is euer the better for it: but hee doeth it for our benefite and welfare. Nowe then his intent is to trie our obedience, and the loue that wee beare him, by commaunding vs to behaue our selues vprightly and honestly towardes our neighbours, and to liue together in such fellowship and concord, as none of vs bee giuen to himselfe, but all of vs communicate together, and euerie man straine and imploye himselfe to doe good, according to such power and abilitie as they haue. That (say I) is the proofe to knowe if wee worshippe him with our heartes. For wee may well make many faire countenances and Ceremonies: but God will not take them for payment. And euen that is the cause why our Lorde Iesus Christ saith, that the chiefe pointes of the Lawe are Iustice, Iudgement, vprightnesse, and faith, that is to say faithfulnesse or trustinesse, for so doeth the worde *Faith* betoken there. Then if wee liue vprightly among men, so as wee bee neither guilefull nor malicious, but desirous to serue euerie mannes turne, maintaining the good and resisting the euill as neere as wee can: it is the chiefe point of the Lawe. Not that the seruice of God ought to bee forgotten in the meane while, or that it is of lesse importaunce: but bicause it is impossible for men to discharge their duetie towardes their neighbours, if they bee not led by the feare of God.

Pſal.16. Deut.30.19 20.

Matt.23.23

Now let vs treate of the forerehearsed commaundement, which is *of the honouring of our father and mother*. Although mention bee made here of father and mother by name: no doubt but he meanes to deliuer a generall doctrine for the honouring of all Superiours. For proofe whereof, wee knowe that the Lawe is a perfect rule wherein nothing is wanting. But if there were nothing included concerning other superiours, as Princes, Magistrates, and such as haue the swoorde of Iustice, and Maisters: there were some want. Therefore it is to bee concluded, that here GOD hath commaunded the honoring and obeying of all such as are in degree of superioritie. Moreouer seeing it is so that all preheminence commeth of GOD, and that it is an order set by him, without the which the worlde coulde not continue: what a thing were it that God shoulde haue made none accounte of it in giuing vs the sure fourme of good and holy life? It is not to bee thought strange, that he shoulde comprehend all vnder one particular: for I haue tolde you alreadie, that that manner of dealing is to bee found in the Lawe, and wee shall see more of it againe hereafter. Neither was that doone bicause GOD coulde not haue spoken otherwise: but bicause it was best for our

commoditie and instruction. For we know that although men couet to seeme subtile and sharpe witted: yet they cease not to shroud themselues vnder the couert of ignorance, whilst they see that Gods lawe presseth them: for then would faine haue some excuse to exempt vs from the subiection thereof. Now if Gods Lawe were not meete to teach the rude & vnlearned, many would alledge that they be no clarkes, and that they neuer went to schoole, and so they would beard themselues in hande, that Gods Lawe bounde them not. But in asmuch as we see that God hath stooped to our rudenesse, and spoken grossly according to our vnderstanding: it bereaueth vs of all excuse, and cutteth off all occasion of quarelling, so as euery of vs must be faine to submit our selues, and to acknowledge that there is none other impediment, but that wee be stubborne against God, and lack to beare his yoke. Thus ye see that Gods comprehending of all vnder one particular, was to traine vs on as little children, which are not of full capacitie to bee taught throughly and perfectly. Neuertheless, that is the true and natural sense of the text, as we shall see hereafter. For like as God gaue the tenne Sentences, as hee termeth them: so added he an exposition of them, to the ende that nothing shoulde bee darke, nor men call the thinges in question and disputation which they had heard. Wee see then that God hath opened himselfe more fully, and shewed howe his will is, this not onely fathers and mothers, but also all superiours without exception shoulde be obeyed.

Besides this, let vs marke that God speaketh here of the honouring of fathers and mothers, of purpose to drawe vs by meanes most conuenient and agreeable to our nature. Wee knowe there is such pride in men, as they beeloth to stoope one to another, and euery man thinkes hee ought to bee a master. And surely it is harde for men to yeelde and come downe so lowe, as simply to obey those that are in any authoritie ouer them: vntill GOD haue disaymed them. GOD therefore perceiuing subiection to bee a thing so fore against our nature, hath set vs downe the termes of Father and Mother, to drawe vs to it by a more louing manner. Nowe it is an vngodly and vnnaturall thing, that the childe should be not know those by whom he came into the world, and by whom he was nourished and brought vp. Therefore if the childe disdaine his father or his mother: he is a monster, & euerie man will abhorre him. And why? For without Gods speaking, without hauing any holye scripture, without preaching vnto vs, nature it selfe sheweth vs that the duetie which the childe oweth to his father and mother, is such a one as cannot bee broken off. Wee see then that the intente of our God, is to winne vs to himselfe by setting downe the termes of father and mother, to the end we should not be stubborn, but come meekly to receiue the subiection that he layeth vpon vs. And because all the authorities which men haue proceedeth from him, he speaketh accordyng to the Lawe of equall order: meaning that we shoulde be diligent in doing him his due honour, and euery of vs on his owne behalfe obey those that haue superioritie ouer vs, and euerie man haue an eye to his owne place and calling, so as the children honour their fathers and mothers, the people the Magistrates, and seruants likewise their masters: and to be shorte, that there be a good harmonie of concorde among vs, according to the order that our Lorde hath set, which ought to be inuiolable.

Furthermore whereas there is mention made of honour it is not ment that children shoulde but onely speake fayre to their father and mother, or put off their Cappes or bow their knees to them: for God standeth not vpon such things but *Honouring* importeth much more, that is to wit, that the children should follow their fathers and mothers counsell, that they shoulde suffer themselues to bee ruled by them, that they shoulde straine themselues to doe their duetie to them, and to bee shorte, that they shoulde knowe that they be not at their owne libertie, so long as they haue father and mother. That is in effect the thing that God ment by the worde, Honour. And that it is so, we cannot haue a better & faithfuller interpreter of this law, than the holy Ghost which spake by the mouth of Moses, and of all the Prophets, and also of S. Paul. For we shall see hereafter, that God expoundeth the effect of this sentence, that is to witte, that it is not ynough for children to shewe some reuerence with the heade or with the knee to their parentes: but that they must bee subiect to them, and imploy themselues in their seruice to the vttermost of their power. And Saint Paules touching thereof is not to exhorte vs to obserue some ceremonie: but his meaning is that children shoulde bee subiecte to their fathers and mothers. He setteth downe expresly the worde *Subiection*. So then we see now what this importeth, and what the natural meaning of this place is.

Now let vs returne to the thing that I touched briefely before, that wee may profite by it, by gathering some profitable lesson of it. First and formost let children vnderstande, that seeing GOD hath giuen right to fathers and mothers, it is good reason they shoulde obey them, or else they set themselues to bee despisers of God: and the stubbornesse which they vse to their superiors, edifieth not men but mooueth all creatures, that is all one as if Gods maiestie and glorie were troden vnder foote. It is saide that (to speake properly) we haue but one father, which is in heauen: and that is ment, not onely in respect of our soules, but also in regard of these bodies. Now then this honour of bearing the name of Father, belongeth principally to GOD alone, and cannot agree to men, further forth than it pleaseth him to make them partakers therof. Seeing then that the title of father is as a marke which God hath set vpon men: wee see that when children make no reckoning of their fathers and mothers, they doe wrong vnto God. As much is to bee saide of

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Pſal. 19. 8.

Eph. 1. 2. Col. 1. 2. 22. 1. Pet. 2. 18.

Deut. 21. 18. 20.

Eph. 6. 1. Col. 3. 20.

Matt. 23. 9.

all such as disobey their princes & magistrates: and likewise of seruants that would haue all degrees confounded, and raigne without order. And for the same cause also did the Heathen mē apply this worde *Godlinesse* to that honour that wee giue to fathers and mothers, and to all such as are in authoritie ouer vs. Godlinesse (to speak properly) is the reuerence that wee owe vnto God: and yet the heathen, (notwithstanding that they were blinde wretches) knew that God will bee serued, not onely in his owne maiestie, but also by our obeying of such folke as haue authoritie ouer vs: To be short his will is to trie our obedientnesse in that behalfe. And therefore in asmuch as fathers and mothers, magistrates and all such as haue superioritie, are Gods Lieutenants and represent his person: surely if a man despise them and make light of them, it is all one as if he bewrayed that hee woulde not obey God. Hee may well protest the contrarie: but yet is it so in deede for all that. If the wretched infidels knew this, & that God left thē such an affection: what excuse will there be for vs, if wee knowe it not yet better? Sith we heare that all fatherhoode proceedeth of God, (as Saint Eph. 3.15. Paul auoweth,) and that we be directed thither by the vnion of Iesus Christ: haue wee not a most expresse declaration of it? Must the heathen men bee faine to bee our teachers still? But if those which call themselues Christians, doe playe the blinde beetles in this behalfe, or stoppe their eares least they might vnderstande Rom.13.2. the thing that GOD hath tolde them by fillie ignorant soules: woe worth them, for their condemnation wil be the more horrible. Wherfore let vs well marke this: that wee cannot indeede liue heere belowe on the earth together, except this order that God hath established be holily and religiously kept, that is to say: Except those that bee in authoritie bee honoured, esteemed, and obeyed: verily without that, there wil be nothing but horrible confusion. They then that cannot finde in their hearts to be subiect to magistrates, they that disobey their fathers and mothers, they that will beare no yoke of masters and mistresses, doe well shewe that it is not long of themselues that the whole order of nature is not peruerted, and heauen and earth confounded togither as they saye. For that is the onelie meane whereby it is Gods will to preserue mankind. And of a trueth we see that (as he himselfe saith) when he sendeth magistrates and princes, 1.Pet.2.14. he striketh a feare of them, not onely into men, Dan.2.36. but also into beastes. After that maner is it spoken of in Daniel.

And thereupon wee may gather, that such as rise against the ciuill magistrate ordeined of god, and labour to set thinges in a broile and to bring all thinges to confusion, are worse than brute beasts and worthie to be sent thither to schoole. For our Lorde, to shame men which are reasonable creatures, saieth that the feare of princes and magistrates ought to extende euen to brute beastes. Is it not apparant then, that the diuell possesseth all such as cannot finde in their hearts to submit themselues meekely to the subiection which God hath ordeyned, and without the which all must needes perish and goe to hauocke in this worlde, as I haue declared afore? Yes: and therefore if wee finde our selues ouerhighminded, so as it greeueth vs to be subiect: let vs striue against pride, and let Gods authoritie suffice to bridle vs. For though wee were worse than wilde: yet ought this to bee as a fetter vnto vs, that wee heare how God telleth vs he is not honoured at our hande, except we honor him in the persons of those whome hee hath set in his place, and in whom hee hath printed his image. To be short, wee see that charitie beginneth at the humbling and meekening of our selues, so as none of vs aduance himselfe through pride and presumptiō, nor make too great account of himselfe, but be willing to stoope and to yeeld to what soeuer pleaseth God. And for the same cause doeth Saint Paul bring vs back to charitie, when he setteth forth the commaundement of obeying the Magistrate. For hee sheweth vs that if wee haue not the meekenesse in vs to bow down our neckes, when our Lorde layeth the yoke vpon vs: we haue no loue towards our neighbors. And if we couet disorder and turmoile, so as the superiors should no more be reuerenced: al must needes goe to hauocke and spoile. It were much better for euerie man to liue alone by himselfe and without companie: than to see such confusion as woulde growe of it, if we should not keepe the ciuill order which GOD hath set. Wherefore let vs beare well in minde, that if we will liue among neighbours, euerie of vs must pull downe this loftinesse and ouerweening, and not harbrough it in our heartes, but learne to be lowly and meeke, assuring our selues that it is our duetie to submit our selues euen to the meanest, as S. Paul saith. And that we may the better doe it, let vs consider what may enhable vs thereto. For behold, the thing that makes vs ouershoote our selues, is that euery man woulde haue greater preheminence than God alloweth him: for our blindnesse maketh vs to forget our selues. And besides this we knowe not our owne wretchednesse and sinfulnesse. By reason whereof euery of vs thinkes himselfe a marueilous fellowe, whereas indeede he is nothing at all. Again, wee bee so inclined to make no reckening of our neighbours, that wee despise euen the vertues which God hath put into them. Then is it sinfulnes and churlishnes that prouoke vs to pride, by meanes whereof euerie man takes more vpon him than becommeth him. And that is the cause why wee cannot submit our selues as we ought to do. But instead of doing so, let vs learne to do homage to our God, forasmuch as we see he hath commanded vs to obey our superiors, & againe we knowe that whatsoeuer they bee, it is he that hath giuen vs them. If a child haue a father or a mother, he must not say, Tush, my father is not altogether such a one as hee ought to be, I finde defaultes in him. But yet is hee thy father, and that ought to content thee: at least wise if thou minde not to bring all to naught, and vtterly to deface the order of nature. Either the thing that God hath ordained must be disanulled and

and adnihilated: or else thou must honour thy father whatsoeuer he be. And why? Because that whatsoeuer father thou hast, hee is of his giuing which hath commaunded thee to honor thy father and thy mother. As much is to bee saide of Masters, Princes, and all superiors. For they come not by haphazard: but they bee of Gods sending, as S. Paul auoweth, and as all the scripture witnesseth. Yea and we bee led expressly euen by experience, to knowe Gods prouidence and fatherly care towardes vs, in ordeyning of Magistrates. Therefore let vs learne to behold Gods goodnesse, in all such as haue superioritie ouer vs, to the ende to submit our selues obediently vnto them. Thus yee see what wee haue to remember.

Rom. 13.1. Iob 12.18. 1. Tim. 2.2. 1. Pet. 2.14

Now seeing that so it is that God hath in one worde and in a briefe summe giuen vs heere the rule of obedience to all superiors: let vs marke that in so doing he resigneth not his owne right ne forgoeth that which belongeth to himselfe. Therefore God must holde still the highest degree. And indeede seeing that all fatherhoode proceedeth of him, (according to S. Pauls text afore alledged): let vs marke that when we obey father or mother, prince or magistrate, master or mistresse: it is done vnto them as officers of God. God then must be honoured aboue al, and that in such sort, as the honour which we yeelde vnto mortall men, hinder not the doing of the seruice and honour which wee owe vnto him, but that euery of vs indeuer to discharge our dueties chiefly towards him. It were a goodly sight to see a man obey an vnderofficer, & therewithall to spitte in the face of the iudge or of the Prince. What a dealing were that? But euen in like case is it with vs, when we dispossesse God of his preheminence, and obey men in such sort, as in the meane while wee make no reckening of him that is aboue all. For it is against nature, that the authoritie which men haue, should in any wise deface the glorie of God. Therefore let vs marke well, that whereas we be commaunded to obey our superiors: this exception is implyed, that the same be no derogation or impeachmēt to the right that belongeth to God, which hath beene treated of alreadie in the firste table. For wee knowe that the seruice wherewith God is honored, ought to be preferred before all things. And for ỳ same cause S. Paul minding to giue vs an exposition of this text, addeth expressly that children must obey their fathers and mothers, howbeit in the Lorde. And I told you also, that the foundation whereon we ought to build, that wee may bee obedient lowly and subiect to our superiors: is to know that God is represēted in their persons. Now take me away the foundation, and must not all the whole building fall and go down to the ground? But all they ỳ regard not god, do take away the fundation of this doctrine: & so their proceeding is too faulty and froward.

Ephe. 6.1.

Howbeit, this thing must as well warne them that are in autoritie, as them that are vnder subiection. Then if men and women haue children: they must vnderstand that there is no subiection due vnto them, except they themselues be ouerruled by God. Now then what is to be done? Let the father traine vp his childe diligently in the feare of God, and begin himselfe to shew him the way. Let the mother do the like, ỳ God may haue his honor both of great & smal, old and yong. Let magistrats indeuer to haue God serued and honored, & (as much as in them lieth) maintaine all things that may make thereto: and seeing he hath done them ỳ honor to make them worthie to sit in the seat that is dedicated to his maiestie, & to beare the sword ỳ is consecrated vnto him: let them shewe themselues to bee his officers in deed. Seing then that he hath aduanced them to such dignitie, whereof they were not worthy: let them at the least shew that they beare autoritie in his name, & let them refer the same vnto him. After this manner ought princes to discharge their dueties. The like ought euery man to do in his owne house and family. Let those to whom God hath granted the prerogatiue to haue menseruants & womenseruants, beare well in minde ỳ they themselues haue a Master aboue al, & that he must be so obeyed, as his whole right be reserued to him vnminished. Loe what instruction all Superiors (of what degree soeuer they be) ought to take of this that they are commāded to obey God. Furthermore when fathers & mothers and magistrats wil needs auance themselues against God with such tyranny, as to take vpon thē that which belongeth only to god, & to turne vs away from the obeying of him: it is an exceptiō which I haue set down before, for the which they ought not to be obeyed. God then must go formost, & afterward the creatures must followe, euery one in his order of aray. And in very deed, oftētimes the cause why meekenes & humility be so il kept in the world, that childrē set themselues against their fathers and mothers, and become like mad beasts: that subiects are ful of spitefulnes and rebellion: that seruants are vntrusty & stubborne: and that none of all these can by any meanes be reclaimed: is the iust punishment of God vpon superiors, for abusing of the dignitie which God hath giuen them. For oftentimes wee see that Princes reigne not to magnifie Gods name, and to cause him to be honored as he deserueth: but cleane contrariwise they would faine make thēselues ydols, and as it were plucke God out of his seate to sit in it themselues. This is apparant at leastwise a man may see that Princes reigne loosely: & therfore God must needs be reuēged of them. What zeale or minde haue fathers and mothers to bring vp their childrē in the feare of God? They passe not for that, so they may aduance them to the worldwarde. Nay rather it should seeme that their intent is to traine them vp in all vngodlynesse, and in the contempt of God and his worde. If the fathers bee woolues, they would haue their children wooluish: if they be olde Foxes, they would haue them to be foxish: & if they be serpentes, they would haue their linage and ofspring like themselues. This is to be seene. Therefore it is good reason that GOD should be reuenged of the creatures, when they forget themselues after that sort, specially when men consider not howe God hath reached them

Eph. 6.4 Col. 4.1

1. Tim. 2.2

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his hande to aduaunce them, and to make them partakers of his honour, one vnder another. This is alwayes to bee borne in remembrance. But is it not a shamefull vnthankfulnesse, when a man that is in authority of iustice, considereth not with himselfe: what am I? Beholde, I am a wretched worme of the earth, and yet GOD vouchsafeth me to beare his name as from him selfe, and withal to put the authoritie in practise which hee hath giuen me? Is not a man too vnthankfull when hee acknowledgeth not that? Againe, when fathers consider not: Beholde, God is the father of all mankinde, and yet hath hee giuen mee the same honorable title: Therefore it is good reason that I shoulde looke to yeelde him an account of it: When masters and mistresses acknowledge not: We be no better than other folkes, and yet hath God vouchsafed to inhonour vs, not onely by creating vs after his owne image, but also by giuing vs this moreouer, that others are subiect vnto vs: if men (say I) acknowledge not this: is it not to be said that they be become starke beastes?

Then let vs marke well, that diuers times the ground of rebellion & disobedience is this, that they which are in authoritie knowe not their owne duetie, namely that aboue al thinges they should finde the meanes to haue God honored, serued, and obeyed. True it is that children, subiects and seruants shall not bee excused by that: 1. Pet. 2. 18. but yet we see it is the iust vengeance of God, & therefore so much the more ought we to be prouoked to followe that which is told vs, as well in this text as in all the holie Scripture, where this commandement is declared vnto vs. Then to be short, let vs be wel aduised, that we discharge our duties euerie of vs in his owne calling and state. Let those to whome God hath done the honor to giue them the mace of Iustice, & whom he hath set in his seate, be wel aduised that they reigne in his name, that they cause all men to serue and honour him, that they be as mirrours to giue good example to their people, and that they holde their subiects in such good awe and order, as Gods name bee blessed, and the mouthes of all euill speakers be stopped. Marke that for one point.

Againe let fathers and mothers haue a care to bring vp their children wel, and to make them knowe God for their onely father. And as touching their menseruantes and womenseruants, let them so vse their seruice, as God haue always the preheminence. Let them not followe the common trade: for men doe commonly passe for nothing else, so as they may bee serued to their owne profite and contentation: As for God, he is forgotten all the while. But let masters vnderstande, that God must reigne both ouer themselues and ouer those that are vnder them. Thus much concerning those that are in authoritie.

Now for our part, let vs beare wel in minde, that when we haue Magistrates, if wee rebell against them, or rise against the State, indeuouring to ouerthrowe the order that God hath set: wee re- Rom. 13. 2. sist not mortall creatures, but it is God whom we assaile. And what can we winne by making warre against him? Can we ouermaster him? No: but he will reuenge himselfe without handie strokes, so as men shalbe vtterly abashed, to see howe he maintaineth the thing that hee had spoken with his mouth, yea euen by wonderfull power. Thus much concerning the first point.

Againe let children beware that they bee not highminded, nor wildheaded, nor wilfull, but that they submit themselues quietly to their fathers and mothers, assuring themselues that they fight against God, when they cannot finde in their hearres to stoope to the yoke which our Lorde putteth vppon them. And let seruaunts knowe that if they refuse the subiection of the men whom they serue, God is offended at it, and in the end they must bee blamed for refusing to be gouerned by his hand.

But let vs marke herewithall, that God muste be honoured first, and the subiectes must so obey their Princes and Magistrates, as the same may be no derogation to the right that God reserueth to himselfe, as he is worthie. And if Princes will needs inforce vs to doe euill, and ouerthrowe the pure doctrine of God, (as we see too commonly in the worlde, insomuch that a number are so madde as they woulde faine wrest religion after their owne fancie, to make as it were an image of wax of it, that they might writh it which way they lifted, as all men may see): God will not like of it that they shoulde bee obeyed in that behalfe. For who bee they? When they once reuolt and climbe aboue him that hath all soueraine Dominion: forthwith they forgoe all their authoritie. The verie diuels must bow their knees before God and our Lorde Iesus Christ: and beholde, mortall men vsurpe such superioritie, as the honour of God is defaced and all religion thrust downe. So then let vs learne to obey both princes and fathers and mothers in such wise, as God may holde still his right vnimpayred, and wee not be letted to yeelde him his due honour. Neuertheless we must obey them quietly, so farre forth as wee may without hurt of conscience. And although that such as haue authoritie ouer vs discharge not their duetie, yet must not children misbehaue themselues when their parents are too sharp and rigorous to them. True it is that the parentes are forbidden to vse any cruelrie towards their children, & specially to discorage them: but yet for all that though the parents bee not so well aduised as to gouerne their children with mildenesse: the children must beare it patiently. Finally wee must suffer at the handes of all such as haue authoritie ouer vs. And so yee see what God ment to set out in this commaundement.

Nowe hee addeth a promise. *That thy dayes* (saith hee) *may bee prolonged, and that thou mayst prosper in the Lande which the Lorde thy God giueth thee.* But there is yet one thing more which is, that forasmuch as we be loth to yelde our selues to humilitie: God giueth vs here a stroke with the spurre, saying: *thy God commaundeth thee.* And it serueth to confirme the doctrine that I haue touched alredie: that is to wit, that it is but

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a fond & trifling ſhift, to diſpute whether ſuch as are in ſtate of honour aboue vs, doe deſerue to haue that roome: Or whether they do diſcharge their dutie, as well as they are aduanced therto. All ſuch geere muſt bee laide aſide. And why? For wee muſt holde vs contented with Gods ordinance, and reſt altogether vppon his good pleaſure. And that is ỹ cauſe why Moſes addeth here expreſly, *according as the Euerlaſting thy God hath commaunded thee.* As if he ſhoulde ſay, true it is that men doe alwayes kicke againſt it as much as they can. If one woulde bring them vnder awe, they will not abide it by their good will: Againe they haue ſuch loftineſſe in them, as prouoketh them continually to bee deſirous to exalt themſelues too much. By meanes whereof there will neuer be any willing ſubiection, vntill God haue wrought it. But you be alwayes rebellious againſt God (ſaith hee) when yee once enter into ſuch debatings as this: Shoulde ſuch a one raigne ouer mee, and I obey him, ſeeing hee is no better than I? If yee beare ſuch ſpite towardes men: God himſelfe ſteppeth forth, and deſireth to knowe whether yee will ſerue him or no: And if yee will not receiue his leeuetenantes when hee ſendeth them vnto you: it is a certaine ſigne that yee refuſe his yoke likewiſe, by meanes wherof his iuſtice is impeached, and hee feeleth himſelfe to bee iniuried by you. Sith it is ſo then, knowe yee (ſaieth Moſes) that the children which are diſobedient to their fathers and mothers, may well alledge this and that: and the folke that rebell againſt their ſuperiors, may well make excuſes: but none of thoſe thinges ſhall ſtande them in any ſteede. The reaſon is, that God, who hath ordeined ſuperioritie in the worlde, will alſo haue it maintained: hee hath ſpoken the word, and it cannot be called backe. When God hath once giuen his definitiue ſentence, it is not for vs to call the matter in queſtion any more: but we muſt ſtand to it and holde our mouthes ſhut. Yet notwithſtanding, our Lorde vſeth ſtill his goodneſſe in this commaundement: and he doeth it to winne vs and to drawe vs the better to him, that wee might the willinglyer obey our ſuperiors, ſeeing he addeth a promiſe. For (as ſaieth S. Paul) it is the firſt commaundement of the lawe, that hath any ſpeciall promiſe. In deede wee haue ſeene heretofore, how God ſheweth mercie in a thouſand generations, to ſuch as loue him. And that was added to the commaundement wherein God ſhewed vs, that he woulde haue his ſeruice maintained in al pureneſſe, without ſwaruing aſide to idolatrie or ſuperſtition. But that promiſe extended to the whole Lawe, as wee ſawe there: whereas this is annexed oncly to the commandement of obeying our fathers and mothers. For as much then as wee ſee it is an acceptable ſacrifice to God: let ſuch as are in ſubiection holde themſelues to it, and not play the rebels and madde bedlems, but bowe downe their neckes and ſubmit themſelues, ſo as it may appeare in deede that they bee willing to obey GOD, becauſe they refuſe not to obey the mortall men whom he hath ſent, and appointed in his name.

Thus yee ſee to what purpoſe this promiſe was giuen: namely, that God perceiuing vs to bee dull vppon the ſpurre, ment to ſoften our hearts, and to winne vs to him by mieldneſſe and gentleneſſe, to the intent it ſhould not grieue vs nor be yrkeſome to vs to obey our ſuperiors. But foraſmuch as all cannot bee diſpatched at this preſent: Let vs beare in minde at a worde, that to ſerue God wel, we muſt lay down al pride and preſumptuouſnes. Although we haue naturally in vs the curſed roote of deſirouſnes to climbe, ſo as ambition reigneth both in great and ſmall: yet muſt the ſame bee laide downe, if we meane to prepare our ſelues to Gods ſeruice. And why? For lowlineſſe is the thing whereat the true obedience muſt beginne. And as concerning men, let vs marke well that we ſhal neuer bee able to liue in peace and concorde, except that thoſe whom God hath ſet in place of authoritie and preheminence, bee obeyed and receiued for his ſake, ſo as men ſubmit themſelues to them. For elſe all muſt needes goe to wrecke, and wee ſhalbee worſe than the wilde beaſtes that are abroade in the woods. Therefore al they ỹ are diſobedient to lawful ſuperioritie, are as enemies to God and nature, and to all mankind: yea they be as monſters whom al men ought to abhorre.

But when wee haue ſhewed our obedientnes by being ſubiect to thoſe whom God hath ſet ouer vs: let vs learne alſo, that it is good reaſon wee ſhoulde be humbled vnder him, and that in ſuch wiſe, as hee bee ſerued by vs: not in way of ceremonie, but in trueth and pureneſſe of minde, ſo as wee doe him his due homage, and make account of his honor aboue al things. Yea and all the ciuill orders of the worlde muſt leade vs therevnto: namely that God may haue his throne exalted aboue the heauens. And whereas children obey their fathers and mothers, and ſubiectes their Magiſtrates, and the like order is to bee ſeene in euerie houſe according to Gods ordinance, who hath appointed that there ſhoulde be ſome difference of degrees euerie where: Let the ſame drawe vs vp higher, to conſider that God who holdeth the chiefe ſoueraintie of the worlde, ought to ouarrule all creatures, and to be Maſter of our whole life in effect. And ſo wee ſee that all the obedience which is yeelded to mortall creatures muſt tend to the pure worſhipping of God. Whereby we perceiue the more plainly howe much we ought to abhorre the curſed Popedome. For it is an ouerſtatelineſſe crept vp in the worlde, to none other end than to driue God out of his ſeate, & to bereaue him of the honor ỹ belongeth to him. For the Pope will graunt well ynough that hee ought to bee ſubiect to his Superiors: But what thoe? Keepeth hee any order either of God or of nature? No: but cõtrariwiſe his meaning is to deſpiſe al that is cõteined in the holy Scripture, ouerthrowing all the order and policie that God hath commaunded vs. Hee termeth himſelfe Chriſts Vicar: and yet notwithſtanding the worlde ſeeth, that hee hath thruſt Ieſus Chriſt out of his ſeate, ſo as hee is no more the

Iohn 4.24. 1. Tim. 1. 5.

heade of his Church. Therefore let vs learne to abhorre the thing, which the diuell hath so set vp on the contrarie part, quite and cleane against that which God hath ordeined in the worlde. And therewithall though wee see that sometimes thinges goe not as they ought to do, but that superiors abuse their power: let vs assure our selues they cannot ouerthrowe Gods ordinance as in respect of kingdomes and Empyres, and as in respect of the grounde of Iustice: but that all those things must be maintained still. For they haue their foundation of God: and it is not with them as with this hellish Popedome which hath no foundation at all: but contrariwise wee knowe that God will haue kinges and princes and magistrates of Iustice to continue still: and therfore those must needes bee maintained. And if the fathers doe not their duetie, but vse tyrannie towardes their children: let vs bee sorie for it, and assure our selues that the same springeth of our sinnes. Also when God suffereth his ordinance to bee vnobserued, so as all is out of order: let vs vnderstande that wee ought to runne vnto him the more carefully, and to beseech him to set those things in order againe, so as it may bee knowen that our whole desire is to be gouerned by him, as the onely meane whereby hee worketh our welfare.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to vouchsafe tomake vs feele them better, that wee may with true repentance learn to mislike of our selues for them, and so returne vnto him as we may profite more & more, euen vntill we be rid of al our sinnes & throughly fashioned againe like to him in righteousnes. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the first of Iuly. 1555.

The xxxvij Sermon which is the eight vpon the fift Chapter.

17 Thou shalt not be a murtherer.

WE haue seene alreadie, howe that to liue well with men, wee must obey our superiors. For it is the first thing that God commaundeth vs in the second table of his lawe: because the meane in descending from him to men, is to honour those whom he hath set ouer vs. In deede when wee speake of men, there is some equall fellowship: for wee come all of Adams race: we be all of one kinde: and all this importeth an equalitie among men. Neuertheless forasmuch as it hath pleased God to set certaine degrees: wee must holde vs thereunto, and keepe that order, so as the partie which hath any preheminence and dignitie, may bee acknowledged for such a one as is to bee honoured. And in this case we must not alledge, why is he more esteemed than I? For that commeth not of any worthines that is in one more than in another: but of Gods will, who will haue them so honoured to whom hee hath giuen any preheminence. And it is not ynough for ỹ children to honor their parents by yeelding them some reuerence: but they must also succour them, and spende themselues to the vttermost for them, accordingly as our Lorde Iesus Christ sheweth howe it is but hypocrisie, when children doe but make some countenance of honoring their fathers and mothers, and in the meane while let them alone in their necessitie, without regarde of discharging their duetie towardes them at their neede. It is a defrauding of the parentes of that which is due to them, and a scorning of Gods Lawe, when men obserue it so by way of Ceremonie. In like case is it with all manner of subiection. For it is not ment that men shoulde but onely yeelde some signe of honour: but that they should yeelde the partie his full right, which hath any preheminence, yea and that the same shoulde bee done willingly. True it is (as I haue declared heretofore) that men would faine be exempted from all bondage. Howebeit forasmuch as God hath set a contrarie order: wee must submit our selues to it with a good wil, and not by force. For to what purpose is it to obey God spite of our teeth, when our heart goeth cleane against? The must our will goe with it, and whatsoeuer our Lord commaundeth vs wee must thinke it good and amiable. Thus the entrance into good conuersation among men, is to consider that our fathers and mothers and all our superiors are aduanced to that preheminence aboue others, to the intent they shoulde be honored: Otherwise, God is misused in their persons, and it is all one as if we refused to honour him and to be subiect to him.

Rom.13.1.

Matt.15.4. 5.6.

Nowe after that Moses hath set downe this fift commaundement: he addeth, *That wee must not be murtherers*. In deede it may seeme at the first blush, that God ledde not his people to great perfection in forbidding them to commit murther. But wee must marke, that God intended to comprise (as it were in a short abridgment) all that is requisite for the well ruling of this our life: and therefore it was not for him to forget any thing, or to leaue any thing behinde. Nowe wee must vnderstande that the way for men to rule their liues well & orderly, is to abstaine from al euil doing, iniury, & violence, and therwithall to liue chastly and honestly without hurting or hindering of any man, and on the other

other side, to keepe their tongues from harming any man by any manner of falshood and lying. All these good properties must be in vs, if wee wil frame our selues to Gods will and righteousnesse. So then, it is not to bee marueiled at, that God shoulde speake here of murthers. For it is done to holde vs in awe, that we shoulde not goe about to doe any outrage or harme to our neighbours. But yet for all this, we must come backe againe to that which I haue touched alreadie: that is to wit, that God speaketh after a rude and grosse fashion, to apply himselfe both to great and small, and euen to the very ydiots. For wee see howe euery man excuseth himselfe by ignorance: and if a thing bee somewhat darke and hard, we thinke we haue wherewith to wash our handes of the matter. When wee haue done amisse, [wee thinke all is safe,] if wee can say, Oh, it was too high and too profounde for mee, I vnderstoode neuer a whit of it. To the end therfore that men should haue no such startingholes: Gods will was to speake after such a fashion, as euen little babes might vnderstande what hee saide. That is the cause why he saith in short wordes, *Thou shalt not bee a murtherer.*

Let vs marke moreouer, that God, to the intent to leade vs by little and little to liue well, serueth vs downe the thinges that are most hatefull that we might learn to keepe our selues from euill doing. As for example, hee coulde haue saide, yee shall doe no wrong nor violence to your neighbours: hee could well haue saide so: but he lifted to set downe the word *Murther*. And why? Because it is a thing against nature, when men goe about to wipe out Gods image after y^e^ fashion. Needes then must we abhorre murther, if we be not starke beastes. Howe be it, this teacheth vs that there is not a more heinous thing, nor a thing that wee ought to abhorre more, than murther. GOD therefore to tye vs the shorter and to withhold vs from all anoying, and from all wrong dealing, telleth vs that wee muste not defile our handes with the bloude of our neighbours. Well then: If a man abstaine from murther, is that all? No not by a great deale, as shall bee shewed anon, and as the matter afordeth alreadie at the first enterance into it. For Gods intent is to holde both our hearres and our thoughtes in subiection, and he will be serued so purely at our hands, as we nourish not any ill will towards our neighbours. Why then speaketh he of murther? [It is all one] as if hee should say, although ye had no lawe written, but were as heathen men: yet ought yee to haue this printed in your hearres, that murther is a shamefull and owgly thing. Nowe I tell you, that as many as doe any outrage to their neighbours, as manie as deuise any mischiefe against them, and as many as nourish any hatred and rancour in their hearres: I account and condemne them all for murtherers. Thus yee see the cause why GOD vseth that terme.

And nowe let vs marke well, that it is not for nought that God forbiddeth murther. Why so? For wee can haue no fellowshippe with men vnlesse we abstaine from al wrong and violence. And vnder one particular kind, God forbiddeth all. Why so? for had hee vsed long speech: a man might haue saide, I cannot well beare my lesson in minde, and it is too hard for me. Therfore hath God spoken here in one worde, to the intent that his doctrine might be soone learned, and his lawe bee easily borne in rememberance. There needes no great turning ouer of leaues: wee need not to haue many great volumes and registers: God hath comprehended the rule of good life in tenne wordes, and that is ynough for vs. Who is hee nowe that can alledge, I haue forgotten such an article, I haue not borne it away? Howe so? Are wee not able to remember so much as halfe a score wordes? Nowe then wee see it was Gods will to holde men conuicted of shamelesnesse, if they vnderstande not what they ought to doe. And so yee see the cause why hee spake so briefely. Moreouer he hath (as yee woulde say) chawed the thinges to vs, that we might learne to submit our selues quietly to him, and that euen the veriest ydiots might knowe, that they neede not to bee greate clearkes to vnderstande his Lawe, for asmuch as hee hath stooped so lowe, that there is not so ignorant a poore soule, but hee vnderstandeth what is conteined in the Lawe. That is the effect of the matter which wee haue to remember here.

Furthermore seeing God hath forbidden murther as an owgly and outragious thing: let vs assure our selues that hee which riseth vp against his neighbour to murther him, is not worthy to liue vpon the earth: for he is worse than a wood beaste. Wee see howe Beares, Lyons, and other wilde beastes doe play together. And why is that? Because that although they haue no reason nor discretion, although they haue no Lawe nor equitie: yet notwithstanding the common knowledge [or instinct] of nature holdeth them in order. Yee see then that the verie beasts haue skill to liue well together with the beastes of their owne kinde, without hurting one another. And shoulde not men bee restreined by some consideration, seeing that God hath imprinted it in their hearts that murther is a wicked thing? They see they bee all of one nature, and euerie man beholdes the image of God in his neighbor. And shoulde not this serue them for a bridle, to withholde them from all violence? What a dealing were it else? So then, let vs beare well in minde, that although God had neuer spoken to vs, yet haue wee sufficient proofe in our selues alreadie, that if any man set himselfe against his neighbour, hee defieth nature, and is vnworthy to be reckened in y^e^ aray of men. But nowe seeing that the authorise of God is matched with the knowledge which wee ought to haue had aforehande, and that hee sheweth vs that there shall no bloude of man bee shed, but the same shall come to account before him: let the hearing thereof teach vs to liue without doing any man wrong, or els let vs assure our selues he will become our mortall enemie: for hee tel-

leth vs that men are in his protection.

In deede the threate is not expressed heere: but yet is it all one, for as much as it is spoken of in other places. Seeing it is said that man is Gen.9.6. created after the image of God; it is not lawfull to make any assault vppon him. For it were all one as if our Lorde shoulde say, yee bidde mee battell when yee goe about to hurt one another after that fashion: for I haue printed mine image in you. If a man shoulde but deface the armes of a Prince, it were so great an iniurie as should bee punished as a murther. And why? Because it tendeth to the confusion of the state. Beholde, Gods image is printed in men, and it is despised: and shoulde not such an outrage be punished dubble? Yes. Now then let vs mark, that God in telling vs that we assault him when we do any man wrong, intendeth to shew vs that that ought to restraine vs, or else we be too witlesse and madde. Yea and to the intent wee should the better bethinke vs thereof: our Lord Num.35.33 telleth vs that a murther cannot bee committed, but the lande is defiled with it, as is declared in another texte, where it is saide that the shedding of mans bloude bringeth such a staining and defiling with it, as can scarsly bee wyped out. When there is any speaking of man- 2.Chro.22.8 slaughter, yea though it bee done lawfully, as in warre, which is allowed: yet is it saide to bee a defiling. And why? To the intent that wee shoulde learne to abhorre the shedding of bloud the more. If an enemie bee slaine in open warre, although GOD pardon it because the slaier hath iust and lawfull cause, and doeth it of necessitie: yet notwithstanding it is saide still to bee a staine, and the doer thereof is saide to bee defiled. And why is that? To the intent wee shoulde knowe that God hath created vs to liue quietly together, and that wee cannot giue a fillippe (as they say), but that it is streitwayes a spotte vpon vs, and wee be by and by defiled before God. Seeing then that the holy scripture vseth all these formes of speech, ought we not to be held the better in awe, to liue without doing of any wrong to our neighbours? Yes.

Howebeit forasmuch as God doeth so chawe thinges to vs heere, according to our rawenesse and infirmitie: let vs marke further, that it is not ynough for vs to abstaine from bloudshed: but that wee must also abstaine from all outrage and violence. To bee short, mens persons must bee deare and precious vnto vs. For till we bee come to that point: God will take vs still for murtherers. If a man doe but strike his neighbour, although hee kill him not: yet is he a murtherer alreadie in Gods sight. And why? I haue tolde you alreadie howe GOD vsed that worde of set purpose to shewe vs that although wee take a quarrelling or the giuing of a blowe ouerthwartly, to bee small and light faultes: yet they bee not so before God. And why? Because there is alway a murtherous intent in it. And that is ỹ cause why God calleth it murther. And besides that, if we be forbidden to commit murther, let vs vnderstande that wee bee likewise forbidden to doe any wrong, or to make any assault vppon our neighbours. If wee doe but lift vp our fist against one, or touch him in anger: by and by there is murther committed before God. If wee thought well on this: woulde we not be mielder than we be? Wee see some men so testie, that if a word doe but mislike them, by and by their fist is vp, to smite and beate the partie. For they thinke it is a small matter, so they shedde no bloude. But wee must not make God to eate his worde, in that he telleth vs that all quarellers are murtherers. So then let vs learne to forbeare our owne fancies when we intend to iudge of our faults, and let vs quietly imbrace the sentence that god hath giuen, assuring our selues that all such as offer any violence to their neighbours, are alreadie guiltie of murther before God. That is the thing in effect which we haue to remember here.

But haue wee abstained from all anoyance? Haue we done no outrage to the persons of our neighbors? Then must we go euen to the heart. For God hath not giuen a ciuill Lawe, onely to make vs liue honestly: but he hath giuen a Lawe agreeable to his owne nature. We knowe he is a spirit, and he will haue vs to serue him in spirite Iohn and trueth. Seeing it is so, we must vnderstand ỹ he hath giuen vs a rule, not only for our hands and feete, but also for our affections & thoughts. True it is, that inasmuch as men are fleshly, when gods lawe is first vttered vnto them, they thinke they haue well discharged themselues, if they cannot be blamed before the world: and so on ỹ otherside they doe easily grant & take leaue to do euill. And for the same cause, euen ỹ lewes themselues, who ought to haue bin grounded in ỹ lawe of God from their childhood, tooke this saying too grosly, *Thou shalt not kill*. For they vnderstood it, ỹ they offended not god, so they made no open assault vpon their neighbour to wound him. And therfore if the fault were not apparant to the eye: they bare themselues in hand ỹ they ought not to bee charged with it before God. Which thing our Lorde Iesus Christ rebuketh, shewing that the law was too sodly expounded. Because it is said *Thou shalt not kill*, you beare your selues in hand (saith he) that yee shalbe quit before God, if men cannot bring yee to the bar for it. But whosoeuer calleth his neighbor foole, ỹ is to say, whosoeuer doth but shew som token of displeasure against him, is forthwith worthy of hell fire. Whosoeuer doth another man wrong, is in danger of iudgement from heauen, ỹ God and all his Angels shal set themselues again him. And whosoeuer doth but murmure against his neighbour, so as he doth but mible somwhat betwixt the teeth though he vtter nothing at all: he is already in danger of iudgement. Wee see whereto our Lord Iesus sendeth vs: namely that when we may protest that we haue not done any outrage, nor giuen any blow, and ỹ we haue so litle meant to wounde our neighbour, that wee haue not so much as once drawen our sworde at him: yet is not al this ynough, but wee must consider that God wilouer rule both our tongues, our thoughts and all our affections, as good reason is he shoulde. Sith it is so: whosoeuer misuseth his

his neighbour [in speeche,] sheweth himselfe alreadie to bee a murtherer: for the tongue cutteth as a sworde. Although then that yee haue not your sworde in your fist to strike: yet if your tongue bee armed to speake euill of your neighbour, so as yee haue railed vppon him: it is a kinde of murther, as in respect of God. And although yee haue not so misused him as all the worlde may bee priuie to it: yet thinke not that ye shall therefore goe cleare. For if ye doe but mumble betwixt the teeth: it is ynough to make yee guiltie in the sight of GOD, and ye shall be condemned before the heauenly throne, though ye bee quit before men, and though worldly Iustice take no holde of you. When wee heare this: we may well perceiue, that he which speaketh it is the same person whom God the father hath giuen to bee the iudge of the world. Therfore wee must not giue our selues too large scope in this behalfe. For wee shall win nothing by our cauceling and shifting. But let vs learne to looke at God, if wee will haue the right and naturall exposition of the Lawe. Who is he that speaketh? Euen hee that raigneth ouer our heartes and thoughtes: euen hee that can not abide to bee serued with eyeseruice, nor that wee should abstaine from euill onely to the worldward, but which will be serued in spirit and trueth. He will haue our consciences to be pure & cleane, so as wee bee clensed from all naughtinesse. Seeing it is so: if wee consider the nature of GOD, wee must no more restraine his Lawe to the outward deedes: but wee must conclude that when God speaketh of murther, he speaketh likewise of all enmitie, displeasure, anger, and rancor that we haue against our neighbours. And in deede that is the verie cause why S. Iohn sayeth, that he which hateth his neighbour in his heart is a murtherer. As if hee should say, yee maye well set a fayre countenaunce vppon the matter: but bee the hatred neuer so secretly hidden in your hearte, and although yee dissemble neuer so much, so as ye vtter no signe of any malice: yet thinke not that Gods eyes are shut for all that. Men may well bee ignoraunt of the thing that yee haue not bewrayed: but haue yee once hated your neighbours in your hearts, that is to say so secretly as no man may perceiue it: by and by ye bee murtherers before God. And truely the reason hereof is too too apparant. In deed when Princes and Magistrates make lawes, it is not after the maner of God. It is but onely to the end that men shoulde behaue themselues well as touching outward ciuill order, so as no man bee misused, but euerie man haue his right, & peace and concord bee maintained among men. That is the intent of Magistrates in making of their lawes. And why? For they bee mortall men, and cannot reforme the inward & hidden affections. That belongeth to God. Againe they cannot searche mens hearts, for ỹ is Gods peculiar office, and so doeth the holy scripture attribute it vnto him. Neuertheless, when a ciuill lawe is once made: although there be not one drop of bloud shed: yet is the offender worthie to bee caried to the gallowes, if he be knowen to haue done what he could to haue murthered one. If one draw his sword vpon a man, who notwithstanding doth so ward his blowes as they neuer touche any bare of him: the Lawes euen of the heathen doe nenertheless condemne such a one to the gibbet as he is worthie. For why? The Lawe respecteth not the successe, but the purpose and intent. Nowe seeing it is so that earthly Princes and Magistrates doe punish such as haue indeuoured themselues to doe amisse, though they haue bene disappointed of their purpose, and not brought their attempt to passe: what shall God doe? Shall he haue lesse authoritie than a mortall creature? To that point (say I) must wee come, to knowe that GOD doeth iustly condemne all such for murtherers, as hate their neighbours. Why so? As I said afore, let vs consider what his nature is. Will wee then keepe his commaundement? Wee must in effect begin at murthering: And why? For God meant to strike a feare into vs aforehande, to the intent that whensoeuer wee went about to hurt our neyghbours, or to doe any extorsion or wrong: wee might vnderstand that it is a detestable and horrible thing vnto them, and such a one as hee cannot abide. Why so? Bicause it is a kinde of murthering. Ye see then howe God meant to daunt vs at the first blowe: and that is the end that we must begin at.

1. Pet. 4. 5.

2. Sa. 16. 17. Psal. 7. 10.

Iohn 4. 24. 1. Tim. 1. 5.

1. Ioh. 3. 15.

Moreouer if we thinke it straunge that God should condemne a blowe to be murther, yea or a wrong offered but in wordes, yea and euen a frowne though the tongue haue bewrayed nothing at all, yea and euen the secret and vnespied hardburning that is deeply ouercouered within: I say if we thinke it straunge that these things should bee condemned for murther before God: let vs consider what his nature is, and howe he is worthie that wee should allow more to him than to mortall men. For if earthly Iudges haue power to punish a wicked intent when it bewrayeth it selfe: what shall GOD haue, from whom nothing is hidden? Againe wee must consider howe the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrewes sayeth, that the word of God resembleth him that is the author therof, so as it must needs be as a two edged sword, pearcing in such wise to the verie marie of the bones, that there is not a thought within vs, which it espieth not out. And why is that? Bicause nothing is hid in the presence of GOD. Nowe seeing that nothing is hidden before God: his woorde must needes searche and fifte mennes heartes to the harde bottome. So then, the things that are vnknowen to men, must needes come all to account before God: whereby wee must take warning to liue in such sort, as wee beare no enmitie nor ill will to our neighbours.

Heb. 4. 12. 13

But yet notwithstanding we must go yet further. For it is not ynough for men to abstaine frō euill dooing: but forasmuch as they bee created to helpe one another, they must seeke one anothers maintenance. God thē in forbidding vs to murther, sheweth vs on the contrarie part ỹ wee must set store by our neighbors liues, & indeuour to maintaine & preserue them to ỹ vttermost of our

our power. But it was his will to begin at that end, to shewe vs what he commanded. And why? For we see howe sinfull we bee. Looke how many thoughts wee haue, and so many briers and thornes wee haue. Looke howe many affections wee haue: and so many bushes, brambles, and such other things wee haue. Not without cause therefore intended God to weede out ỹ naughtinesse and vice out of our heartes, yea and to amend all the partes in vs that are sinfull and corrupted. For without that, it were vnpossible to set so much as one finger to the dooing of any good, that wee should but so much as thinke one good thought. That is the cause why ỹ Prophet Ier. 4. 4 saith that men breake vp their layes & sowe not among bushes. As if he should say, I see how the world goeth w̄ you: if a man tell ye ỹ ye haue offended God, ye wil make some faire coũtenãce, & pretend as though ye were reformed, & yet in the meane while continue still the same ye were before. But it is not ynough to sowe corne in a field: but ye must also stub vp the bushes & clense the ground. So long as ye doe but indeuour to make some faire showe: thornes, briers, thistles, and other euill weedes growe still within. Therfore there can bee no good sowing, & much lesse can ye bring forth good fruite before God. And for the same cause doth our Lord say here, *Thou shalt not kill*, in stead of saying, *Looke that thou preserue thy neighbors life*. Now we see by experience howe men would faine discharge themselues to Godward w̄ faire countenances, and yet retaine still their vices and corruptions, according to ỹ which I haue alledged out of the Prophet. For if a man speake to vs of doing good to our neighbours: in deede we dare not altogither gainesay him. So then wee would discharge our selues after a sort. But in the meane season our sores doe rancle within, & we doe but plaster them aboue, like vnto those that are loth to open their purses whē their houses decay: but what do they? They parget them ouer, & stop the holes and rifts, but yet in the meane while their house is still in decay. Euen so is it with vs: wee doe but parget or plaster our selues ouer, of purpose to discharge our selues as lightly as might bee. But yet doeth nature teach vs the cleane contrarie. For if a mã be minded to sowe a field, will he cast his corne among the briers and thornes? No: but when he sees his field faire and cleane, then breakes he it vp & tils it: and so must we do. Let vs learne then that it is not without cause that God doeth first of all condemne the vices. For hee sees they bee rooted so deepely in our nature: that it is hard to weede them out, yea and that he can neuer hold vs at such a stay, as to cause vs to liue in his righteousnesse, vnlesse he plucke vp the cursed rootes of this naughtinesse which he knoweth to be in vs. That is the cause why he saieth, thou shalt not kill. As if he should say, will ye liue in good loue one with another? Euerie man must enter into himself, and examine wel whether he haue there any hatred, enmity, or ill wil towards his neighbours. Ye must looke whether ye haue not some hartrisings & eagernesse in you, which prouoketh you to threaten your neighbors or to attempt somewhat against them. Ye must consider all these things. For when ye be cleare from all anger, hatred, and enmitie: then must yee come to this point, that it is not ynough for you to abstaine frō anoyance, wrongfulnesse, & violence, so as yee haue not practised any thing against ỹ persons of your neighbors, nor norished any rancor or malice against thē in your hearts, nor bin infected with euill will: but you must also liue in charitie, and ye must bee as brethren one to another, worshipping God as your father. Lo to what point we must come.

So then let vs marke, that if we intend to profit well in Gods Law, we must haue an eye to the vices and imperfections that are in vs, and bee sorie for them: and moreouer straine our selues to weed them out. Haue we done so? that is not all that wee haue to doe. For God will not haue vs idle in this worlde. His creating of vs, is not onely to abstaine from euill: (for stones and trees and other senseleſse things doe as much as that comes to:) but wee must giue and applye our selues to the doing of good. Then let vs vnder- Phil. 2. stand, that whereas our Lord will haue the life of our neighbours to bee deare and precious to vs he sheweth therewithall ỹ he which helpeth not his neighbor at his neede, doeth what he can to murther him: in so much ỹ we become murtherers, not onely whē we beare any ill will, or keepe any hatred priuily towards our neighbours: but also euen whē wee succour them not in their necessitie. If we vouchsafe not to bestow our trauel for them when they haue neede of our helpe, we shall be blamed before God. Sith it is so, it is not for vs to flatter our selues any more in this case: for wee see howe straite the Law is: and yet not straiter than it ought to bee. For can wee refuse to bee knit togither in charitie at Gods commandement, seeing he hath created vs after his owne image? Or to yeelde him such reuerence being our father, as to maintaine brotherhood among our selues, seeing he hath vouchsafed to vnite vs in such bond? Shall wee say that God is too straite to vs, and layeth too heauie a burthē vpon vs, bicause he leadeth vs to such indifferencie & vprightnes? No: but howsoeuer come of it; let vs beware we flatter not our selues, seeing we vnderstand ỹ our Lord will haue vs to do our indeuour in helping one another, and that wee should set as much store by the life of our neighbour, as he himselfe doeth.

Nowe haue we the effect of this commandement, *Of not killing*. What remaineth then, but ỹ we pray God so to guide vs, as wee may frame our selues to his will? For it is to no purpose to alledge that his speeche is darke: Or to alledge that there be so many commandements, as wee cannot beare them in remembrance: (for God speaketh in a worde or twaine, and vseth briefnesse to take away all excuse.) Or to alledge that wee wote not whereat to begin: for he sheweth vs it: namely that in stead of taking leaue to doe euill as wee haue bin wont to doe, bearing our selues in hand that the thing which we doe is no great nor no deadly crime: wee must contrariwise thinke alwayes thus, if I doe my neighbour

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the least harme that is possible to bee named, I am a murtherer before God. When wee bee willing to doe euill, see howe the diuell blindeth vs, to bee desirous at the first dash to kill one and to cut his throte. This (as I sayd) is an ougly thing. For euen nature restrayneth vs, that wee can not bee so madde as to say, I will kill. But if a man displease vs, and we bee no more but angry with him: all is well, it passeth away as a smoke, and to our owne seeming, it is nothing. Againe, haue wee once conceyued any grudge, wee thinke it is to bee pardoned if wee require like for like, so wee doe it not with ouergreat violence. Moreouer if a man doe but bend his fiste to strike or to beate: tush, it is still but a blowe, it is no deadly offence. Loe howe men dispence with themselues. And why? Bicause all their imagining is howe to lessen their faultes. But wee must keepe a contrarie way to this, as GOD telleth vs: namely that when wee goe aboute to strike and to beate, or when we goe about to doe wrong, or when wee go about to conceiue any hatred or hearteburning: wee must set murther before our faces, and thinke thus with our selues: Wretched creature, whither goest thou? whither throwest thou thy selfe? Wilt thou make thy self guiltie of murther before God? So thē let vs no more alledge that wee wote not whereat to begin: for God sheweth it vs, and we cānot be ignorant of any thing but through our owne wilfulnesse: & therefore in the end it must needes be knowen, ỹ we listed not to lift vp our eyes, to see the things which we ought to haue seene most manifestly. Those are the things which wee haue to gather vpon this place.

Againe, there is this further, that God hath not without cause forbidden murther before he come to command charitie, & to shewe vs howe we be bound to succour one another, according as neede requireth. And why? For we be full of euill affections which had neede to be rooted out. Therfore like as a peece of ground that is ful of thornes & briers, had needc to be clensed before it be sowed: so haue we neede to be clensed from the vices that are naturally in vs, or else we shall neuer bee disposed to liue in good loue one towards another. But yet must euery man haue an eye to his owne abilitie. If I haue wherewith to helpe my neighbors: I must be fully resolued w my self, ỹ the things which God hath giuen mee are not mine own, ỹ is to say, that I must not loue my self so much, as to haue no regard of others: but if I be of abilitie to succour other folkes that haue want of my reliefe, I must bestowe it vppon them. For there is a commō fellowship amōg all men. It was not Gods wil to make so many seuerall worldes, euery one by it self as there be seuerall mē & women: but he hath knit vs al togither. Seeing then ỹ God hath brought vs one neere a nother: we must keepe & maintaine ỹ fellowship that God hath set among vs, & we must alwayes come to this point, that it is against kind to hate our owne flesh. But yet there is a farre other respect than this among ỹ faithfull. For they must not only cōsider themselues to be created after the image of God: but also remember ỹ they be members of our Lord Iesus Christ, so as there is a much straiter & holier bond, than the bond of nature which is common to all mankinde. And therfore so much the more ought we to mislike of those, which do so forget the vnion that God hath set among his people, seeking nothing else but to put the thinges asunder which God hath ioyned togither, by disseuering the body of his Church, as we see these vnderlings of Satan do, who practise nothing but all maner of mischief, as though they were wilfully bent to defie God bicause he bindeth them to men, & therfore doe separate themselues frō such as are not for their profit (as it seemes to thē,) nor yet for their fansie. Now when so brutish a disposition & so far out of square is entred into a mans mind, is it not a token that the diuell dwelleth in him, and that ỹ spirit of God raigneth not there, no nor any drop of him is there? Yes: and therefore let vs learne to frame our selues in such wise to that which is spoken here, that being rid of all rancour and malice, wee determine to imploy our selues in the seruice of our neighbours, & to discharge our duetie according to the abilitie that God giueth vs. Again, if wicked affections, (notwithstanding that they bee hidden) bee taken for murther before GOD: what shall violence & outrage be, when men ouershoote themselues so farre, as to strike & slea one another as much as they can? Must it not needes bee that they be worse than all the Paynims in the world? Yes: but whatsoeuer come of it, let vs assure our selues that wee haue ill profited in Gods schole, if wee onely keepe our handes from dooing euill, and in the meane while leaue our hearts vnreformed. Nowe then, to shew which is the true perfection of Christians, they must not only refraine from bearing any priuie euill will in their hearts: but they must also be as true brothers, to spend themselues in their neighbours behalfe to the vttermost of their power. And if it bee not lawfull to nourish any secret ill will, much lesse is it lawfull for a man to ouershoote himselfe so farre, as to smite, to kill, and to doe outrage: and they that doe so, are worse than wild beastes. Yea and if that that disposition was condemned euen among the heathen, & by the lawes of men: much more shall it be condemned by the Lawe of God. And therefore let vs learne to submit our selues to him, not after our owne imagination, but according to his owne nature. But forasmuch as he is a spirit, he will haue vs to serue him with such soundnesse, that besides the restrayning of our feete and handes, our hearts also must be submitted vnto him, and that with such subiection and obedience, as our whole indeuour be to shew by our deedes, that we be his true children, in as much as we maintaine brotherlinesse with all those whom he hath called to the same alyance with vs.

Eph. 5. 30.

1. Pet. 2. 17.

Iohn 4. 24.

Nowe let vs kneele down in ỹ presence of our good God, with acknowledgment of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, and that wee considering howe hee hath bounde vs to our neighbours, and will haue vs to shewe the reuerence ỹ that wee beare towardes him by abstaining

ſtaining from all euill & wrongfull dealing: may liue in ſuch brotherly loue one with another, as the chiefe marke that we ſhoote at, may bee to honour him as our father, and to ſuffer our ſelues to bee gouerned by him and by his holy ſpirit according to his word, ſo as we may bee ſtrengthened more and more in it, knowing that his reaching of his hand to vs, is to the end to guide vs and to hold vs vnder his protection. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſday the ij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xxxviij. Sermon, which is the ninth vpon the fifth Chapter.

18 Thou ſhalt not bee an Aduouterer.

SAint Paul ſpeaking of the life of Chriſtians, and hauing exhorted them to the feare of God, addeth ẏ they muſt walk vprightly and ſoberly. Now it is not to be doubted, but that the ſame is to be referred to the ſecond table of the law. Wil we then obſerue the things that our Lord hath commaunded vs in the ſecond table? It is not ynough for vs to hurt no mã either in his perſon or in his goods: but beſides this righteſulneſſe, it is required that we ſhould liue ſtayedly and honeſtly, as is declared in another place. And in the former text of the Epiſtle to Titus which I haue touched, hee ſaith that we were redeemed by the grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, to the intent we ſhould liue in the feare of God in this world, and alſo in ſoberneſſe and vprightneſſe. In another place to Timothie he ſaieth, that if there bee good gouernment, ſo as the Magiſtrates doe their duetie, we ſhall liue vprightly and honeſtly in godlineſſe. And as touching the feare of God, it is the ſame ſpirituall ſeruice that we haue ſpoken of before, which cõſiſteth of our pure worſhipping of him, by indeuouring to truſt in him, by calling vppon him, and by yeelding him his deſerued reuerence: and in reſpect of our neighbors, [it conſiſteth] of knowing howe wee ought to behaue our ſelues one towardes another. Theſe are the two pointes that he ſetteth downe heare. The firſt, which is vprightneſſe, is that wee offer no man any violence, extortion or deceite as in reſpect of his goods: and the other, which hee ſetteth downe by the name of honeſtie, ſobrietie, or ſtayedneſſe, is that there be no looſeneſſe, wantonneſſe, leawdeneſſe, or vnrulineſſe in our lyfe. Wee haue ſeene that in expounding the commaundement where GOD forbadde to kill, I told you how he meant that we ſhould abſtaine from all outrage and iniurie: and not onely that: but alſo that wee ſhoulde indeuour to liue quietly with our neighbours, and not ſuffer any man to be troubled. And is it ſo? When wee come to treating of goods, it ſhall bee declared that wee muſt not play the theeues, nor beare falſe witneſſe againſt our neighbours: whiche things pertaine to Iuſtice or vprightneſſe. Nowe if wee will yeelde euerie man his right: we ſhal doe no hurt nor wrong to any bodie: and as touching goods alſo, wee ſhall not attempt to rob any of their ſubſtance.

Tit. 2. 12.

2. Tim. 2. 2.

But here God interlaceth a lawe that forbiddeth to commit adulterie: & that is comprehended vnder the terme of ſobrietie or ſtayednesſe. For although we ſteale awaye no mans goods, nor be murtherers and barreters: yet if wee bee vnchaſt, wanton, or of beaſtly conuerſation: we muſt not thinke that God is contented with vs. Vprightnes & Sobernes are things inſeparable for God hath ioyned them togither in his lawe, and we ſee that he confirmeth it by his Apoſtle, who largely expoundeth the thing ẏ is here touched in fewe words. And therfore if we will haue the true meaning of this text: wee muſt vnderſtand that God commaundeth vs here to leade an honeſt and chaſt life, ſo as there be no diſhoneſtie nor looſeneſſe in vs. That is the effect of this commandement. True it is that here we be expreſly forbidden to *commit Adulterie*, that is to ſay, to breake the faith of mariage by inticing other mens wiues to naughtineſſe. But let vs alſo weigh ẏ thing that I haue touched here: namely how that vnder one particular, God comprehendeth the whole, and ſetteth vs downe the thing that ought to miſlike vs euen of nature, to the end we ſhould abhorre all maner of whoredome the more. I told you yeſterday, that when men are tempted to doe euill, they begnile themſelues, weening that the fault is but ſmall, and ſo from the leſſer they proceede to the greater. Contrariwiſe, to hold vs in awe, God ſetteth before vs the ſins that are heynouſeſt, to ẏ end we ſhould be ſtriken with feare aforehand, and not bee ledde ſo eaſily to commit any fault. As if he ſhould ſay, beware ye fall not: for it will coſte ye to breake your necke: beare not your ſelfe in hand that you ſhall but ſlide, for the fall will be deadly: and therefore take heede of it. Thus ye ſee in effect why God proceeded in ſuch order in his law: & why he ſpeaketh not now generally of all whoredome, but of Adulterie, which is the breaking of Mariage. Nowe wee knowe that if any thing ought to bee taken for holye in the whole life of man: it is the fayth which the husbande plyghteth to his wife, and the wife to her husbande. In deede all the couenants and promiſes ẏ we make, ought to be kept faithfully.

But

But if wee compare them together it is not without our cause that mariage is called the couenant of
Pro.2.17. God. For in so saying, Salomon sheweth that God is the Lorde of mariage, and therefore that if the husband breake the promise which hee hath made to his wife, hee is forsworne, not onely towardes her, but also towardes God. In lyke case is it on the womans behalfe. Shee doth wrong, not onely to her husband, but also to the lauing God. For it is he to whom she bindeth her selfe: & like as he hath ordeined wedlock and is the author thereof, so will hee haue a care for the maintaining therof. Therfore whē we heare the word *Aduowtrie*: we ought to lothe it, as an expresse defying of God, by wilfull breaking of the holy bond which he hath set in mariage, like mad beastes. And hereby we see in what estimation he hath honestie. Why so? When hee will haue vs sober, chaste, and modest: he sayth, If ye be not honest and well stayed, yee bee no better than Aduowterers. That is to say, whatsoeuer excuse ye pretend before men, and make ye your faults neuer so small and light: I hate ye, for yee stinke, & your whole life is infected in my sight. We see thē as I sayde afore, that here is a strait commaundement to keepe our selues honest & chaste. And hereby it appeareth how fond their excuse is, which say they do no man wrong, whē they be full of disorder and vnrulinesse. For our Lord knoweth well enough to what end he vsed such speach. It was not for ỹ he was toungtied & wist not how to vtter things in order: but because he intended to shew, that if men made but a smal matter of wantonnesse and vnchastitie: there is another balance [for thē to be tryed by: I name-ly that he condemneth & accurseth all those for aduouterers, which behaue thēselues vnhonestly or vnchastely. Therefore we haue so much the more neede to wey well ỹ words ỹ are set downe here, where he sayth *Thou shalt not be an Aduowterer*. But yet herewithall we must follow the degrees ỹ are conteined vnder this cōmandement.

First (as I sayd afore) let vs vnderstand ỹ God will haue wedlocke to be kept holy. For as our persons & liues are deere vnto him: so will hee haue ỹ faith and troth that is plighted betweene man & wife, to be mainteined in their price and estimation, that so holy a thing as mariage, be not giuen vp to shame & reproch. This ought to bring to passe, that no man should looke vpon his neighbors wife with vnchaste eye. And why? For God hath matched her to a husband already, &
Ro.10.16. he wil haue her husband to shadow her. And whē we thinke any euill, or feele any vnhoneste lust: he will haue vs to shun it for feare of that which
Ro.2.17. is tolde vs, namely that God himselfe taketh vengeance of them that breake the holy fellowship which was knit in his name. In lyke case is it with women in respect of their husbandes: so as a wife may not yeelde to wicked lustes when she beholdeth a maryed man. Why so? For God hath assigned her, her make. If we wil not make warre against our maker, we must liue euery one in his own house, ỹ such match as he hath: & ỹ order must be mainteined wout breach, because god is ỹ author of it. That is one principal point.

But besides this, we must alwayes come backe to the nature of God: & remember that he is not an earthly lawemaker, which forbiddeth but only the outward deede, and in the meane while letteth the lewd affections alone: for God will 1.Sam. 16.7.
admit no eyeseruice, neither is he lyke to vs. Men are contented if they perceiue no fault: but God who searcheth mens heartes, respecteth the Ier.5.3.
trueth as it is sayd in Ieremie. Therefore hee in his lawe meant not to restreine our bodyes only: but also had a speciall regarde to our soules. So then let vs marke, that God not onely forbiddeth the act, so as wedlocke be not broken by any actuall deede: but also hee forbiddeth all wicked lustes and lykinges. And therefore doth our Lord Iesus Christ say, that he which looketh Matt.5.28.
vpon another mans wife with a wicked eye, is an Aduowter already before God. Though he cannot be blamed by the lawes of men, nor punished as an aduowterer: yet is hee condemned already before God, as hauing transgressed this commaundement. Therefore when we heare this word Aduowtrie, which is so greatly condēned: let vs learne, not onely to abstaine from all whoredome as touching the actuall deede, but also to keepe our thoughts and conceits chaste, so as we be vndefiled both of eye and heart. For after that maner doth S. Paul define true chastitie, when he saith that such as are vnmaried 1.Cor.7.34.
ought to haue a care how to please GOD, by keeping themselues pure and cleane both in bodie and minde. He saith not that those continue chast which haue not defiled their bodies with whoredome: but which haue indeuored to keepe themselues vndefiled both in body and minde.

And when we haue thus considered how God curseth and abhorreth all aduowtries: wee must proceede further, and reache out and apply the same to all maner of whoredome. True it is that he which breaketh the faith of wedlocke committeth a dubble offence, and it is much more haynous as I haue sayd already. But yet must we alwayes come backe to this poynt, that Gods meaning is that men shal not only not commit any thing against mariage, but also that they shall not leade a beastely lyfe, so as whoredome may haue full scope, and vnmaryed folke runne loose to giue ouer themselues to lewdenesse with euery one whom they meete with, lyke brute beastes: but that we shoulde be pure and cleane both in body and minde. For it is sayd, that not onely our soules, but also our bodies are the 1.Cor.6.19.
temples of the holy Ghost, as was declared euen now. And they be Saint Paules owne wordes, where he telleth the Corinthians that it was too too much to their reproche and shame, to suffer fornication and whoredome among them as they did. Knowe ye not (sayth he) that your bodyes are the temples of the holy Ghoste? Beholde, God hath done vs the honor to choose these wretched bodies of ours which not onely are fraile vessels but also rotten carcases and earth. GOD (I say) notwithstanding this, hath so inhonored them, as to vouchsafe to make them the temples of his holy spirit, that he may dwell there: & shall we goe weker then

Note that he speaketh this, because ỹ day at the Sermō a mariage was solemnised.

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in all filthineſſe, and make hoggeſcotes or ſwines ſtyes of them? What a treacherie is that? Again,
2.Cor.6.15. that is not all. Let vs haue an eye whereunto S. Paule leadeth vs. Our bodies are members of Ieſus Chriſt: therefore if a man giue ouer his body to whoredom, it is all one as if he tore Chriſts body aſunder. For it is certeine that wee cannot mingle Gods ſonne the fountaine of all cleanneſſe, with our filth and lothſomneſſe. Now then if a man caſt himſelfe into whoredome: it is as much as a rending of the body of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt in peeces, as much as in vs lyeth. Not that wee can doe it in deede: for the ſonne of God is not ſubiect to vs to be ſo diſhonored at our handes: but yet are wee guiltie of ſuch trayterouſneſſe, foraſmuch as wee would haue committed ſuch iniurie againſt him. Now then let vs learne that God wil haue euery of vs not only to keepe our faith and troth in mariage for his own parte: but alſo generally to bee chaſte, to walke in pureneſſe of lyfe, and not to giue our ſelues the bridle to any vncleanneneſſe or diſhoneſtie. And why? The reaſons that I haue alledged, ought much to moue vs thereunto. And therefore looke what hath bin ſayd already concerning aduowtrie: let vs apply it lykewiſe to this preſent caſe: Namely that we hold al our ſenſes in awe with ſuch ſtayednеſſe, as the diuell may alwayes bee driuen backe when he tempteth vs to any vnchaſtneſſe, and not get any enterrance into vs. There was a certeine heathen
Pericles. man that coulde wel skil to ſay, that it was not enough for a mā to haue ſtay of his hands, (that is to ſay, that hee coulde refraine from rauine, outrage, and doing of wrong:) but alſo that he ought to haue ſtay of his eyes, that is to ſay, that hee ought not to caſte any vnchaſte looke. If the blinde and ignorant wretches were able to teach vs thus much: what ſhall become of vs when it is tolde vs (as I ſayd afore,) that God hath done vs ſo much honour, as to repayre for himſelfe, not onely our ſoules but alſo our bodies, notwithſtanding that they becorruptible, and that (as wee ſee) there is nothing but rottenneſſe in them? Seeing then that God taketh them for his owne, and voutſafeth to dwell in them: ought we not to learne to liue warely, that no vncleaneneſſe or filthineſſe bee committed that may driue God away from vs, when as he would haue vs to be his dwelling place and holy temple? Yea and we muſt call to minde how S.
2.Cor.6.18. Paule ſayth, that all other ſinnes are committed outwardly of mans body: but whoredome is committed in the body it ſelfe. For it is right certeine that wee defile our handes by robberie and ſtealth (as is auowed in the holy ſcripture:) inſomuch that when we do any man wrong, we haue
Eſa.1.15.& 59.3. bloudy handes, as ſayth the prophet Eſay. But Saint Paule very well perceiuing whoredome to bee yet more ſhamefull, and that men haue ſo much the more neede to beware of it: telleth them that there remaineth ſome ſcarre thereof ſtill printed in the bodie of the whoremonger, ſo that his body is put to reproch by it. Surely wee would be very chare of the preſeruing of our honeſtie, and it would greatly greeue vs ỹ it ſhoulde be ſteyned or blemiſhed by any man: & why then doe we make ſo light account of it, as to ſteyne and imbrewe it with infamie, before God, before his Angels, & before men? So then let vs beare this in minde, and we ſhall be bridled. Although wee finde ſuch frailtie in our ſelues, and the diuell doe continually tempt vs: yet muſt this ſerue 1.Cor.
vs as a bridle to pul vs back to the foreſaid cleanneſſe, not onely of body, but alſo of minde.

Furthermore we muſt marke lykewiſe howe it is ſayd, that no man muſt deceiue himſelfe Eph.5.
through vaine words: for by reaſō of ſuch things Gods wrath commeth vpon the vnbeleeuers. It is not now of late that men begin to flatter themſelues, and to beare themſelues in hand that it is not ſo great and deadly a ſin, to commit whoredome. Nay wee ſee howe theſe ſcoffers doe skorne God, terming whoredome a naturall ſin, and a matter of ſmall importance. There are ſome ſuch filthie ſwine which ſpeake after that faſhion. Now for that cauſe S. Paul ſayth, let no man deceiue you. Such ſkoffes flewe abroad in the mouthes of the diſpiſers of God euen at that time, and many were blinded with them, after the maner of the world, which is to be giuen to ſelfſoothing. Let no man beguile yee with ſuch lyes, ſayth S Paul. Why ſo? For whoredome is a deteſtable thing before God, as he ſheweth by the puniſhmentes which he hath ſent for it, as
Rom.1. 1.Cor. S. Paul noteth in ỹ tenth chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to ỹ Corinthians. There he alledgeth this example, that a great nūber of men were ſlayne for whoredome: whereby it appeareth that God cannot abide it. For ỹ lyfe of man is precious in Gods ſight, as was ſhewed yeſterday: they bee creatures faſhioned after his own image. Seeing then that a two or three and twentie thouſand men were ſo diſpatched, & God deſtroyed ſuch a number of his owne images, that is to ſay of ỹ creatures ỹ he had made: is it not to be ſayd that there was a terrible fire of his vengeāce kindled? Yes: and wherefore? Euen for whoredome. Then let vs conclude that it is not for vs to deceiue our 1.Cor.13.
ſelues, as though it were a light fault and eaſie to be pardoned, ſeeing ỹ our Lord, who is not ouerrigorous, did puniſh it ſo ſore: but rather let vs aſſure our ſelues, that we muſt come to account for it before the heauenly Iudge. Whē men haue pardoned vs neuer ſo much, and we be of opinion that ſuch maner of vncleaneſſe and filthines is but a ſporte: then muſt God ſet to his hand. Therefore let vs haue an eye to him and to the examples that he giueth vs, that we may continue vnder his feare, and indeuer the earneſſer to keepe our ſelues from all ſpottes. And ſo ỹ ſee in effect how this ſeuenth commaundement of the lawe is to be vnderſtoode: namely that we muſt not defile our ſelues with any vnchaſtitie or vnſtayednеſſe.

Now if it behoue vs to keepe both our bodies and our ſoules vndefiled: ought wee not alſo to eſchewe the occaſions ỹ may intiſe vs to whoredome? Yes ſurely. Let vs marke then, that whoſoeuer doe giue themſelues to any looſenes, doe ſeeke nothing elſe than to caſt themſelues into Satans ſnares. And although they be not repen-

ued for it to the worldward: yet are they whoremaisters already before God. Were this wel cõsidered: we should see no more of the wantonnes in apparel, gesture and wordes, that is commonly in the world, which taketh too much libertie in that behalfe. And when men and women attire themselues of purpose to intice one another and as it were to lay baytes of lewdnesse: are not such doinges very trickes of baudrie? In deede their excuse shalbe, as for me, I haue committed no whoredom: but yet they set themselues forth as a pray to Satan, & are willing to drawe others with them, as much as they can. Then are they kindes of whoredome before God: and all the loosenesse and superfluitie that is vsed in apparell and attire, is nothing else but a laying of snares for men. Lykewise againe there are gestures and wordes. When a man and a woman haunt one anothers companie, to open a gap to Satan by acquainting thẽselues together, so as they may bee caught in his nette, and giue themselues ouer vnto him in bondage: it is whoredome before God. And although there be no deed done, no nor any thing fully agreed vpon: yet will not God leaue such doings vnpunished: for it is too manifest that they were attempted. And hereby it appeareth how fond and childish a shift it is to excuse ones selfe by saying that it is not euill to doe this or that, so there be no intent to doe euill. As for example, such as delight in dancing and dissolutenesse: is that so euill a thing (say they,) so long as there bee no whoredome committed? yea truely: It is all one as if they would mocke God of set purpose, and blindfold his eyes to buffet him, and in the meane while bid him gesse whether it be euill or no. It is well knowen that dancing can be no better but a prelude to whoredome, to open an entrie purposely vnto Satan: and a crying out alowd vnto him, ỹ he should be bold to come in. That is alwayes the very effect and substance of dauncing. If thou say, I meant no euill: thou makest God a lyer. Behold, S. Paul auoweth that lewde wordes corrupt good manners. Yea and hee alledgeth that saying of an heathen man, of purpose to make vs the more ashamed. If we admit not the doctrine giuen by S. Paul: let vs goe to schoole to ỹ wretched infidels and idolaters: for thy coulde good skill to alledge, that vnhoneſt speech corrupteth good manners. Now when mens tongues are infected with naughtie and vnchaste talke, and there is nothing in their behauiour and wordes, but signes and marks of vtter dishonestie: if they say hereupon, that they had none euill meaning: is it not a manifest belying of the holy Ghost? Yes: and therefore let vs marke, that whereas al whoredome is forbidden: it is meant that wee should behaue our selues modestly both in our wordes and in our gestures, & that there should be no inkling of loosenes in vs that may tend to whoredome or whorishnesse. It is true that all thinges are cleane to them that haue a cleane conscience: but yet for all that, we must beware that Satan ouertake vs not, least hee make some breach vpon vs. Thus ye see ỹ this precept ought to be considered in such wise, as we must haue an eye, not onely to the very deede of whoredome: but also to all that matcheth with it, to al appurtnances of it, to all that commeth neere it, and to all that may intice or indure vs to it. To be shorte, wee must come backe to that which I touched euen now out of S. Paul: namely that as wee must not doe any man wrong either in his person or in his goods: so must wee also liue honestly, and put away all looseneſse and disordednesse from vs.

And lyke as all lewde talke, and dauncing, and other vnchaste dealinges are condemned before God for kindes of whoredome: so let vs marke that all other loose misbehauiours shall be condemned lykewise. Yee shall see a sorte of drunkardes that cram themselues lyke brute beastes. And when they be so full that they be ready to burst: thẽ fling they themselues into all maner of filthinesse till they euen stincke again, not perceiuing their own shame. Therefore whẽ men behaue themselues so beastly, ỹ they play the drunkardes and gluttons, and moreouer abandon their bodies to all villanie: thinke wee that they shall scape Gods hand, and not be cursed as whoremongers, though they commit not whoredome in actuall deede? Yes. Yee see then that the soberneſse which Paul speaketh of, doth tell vs that if wee will bee chaste and stayed before God: wee must not onely absteine from whoredome it selfe: but also vse our eating and drinking soberly for our nourishment, and not to prouoke vs to lecherie, so as wee should haue no more stay nor holde of our selues. That is a thing which we haue to marke further.

But now it will be alledged: and howe then can we absteine from al vncleannesse, considering the frailtie that is in our flesh? For we see how little stay men haue of themselues: whereby it appeareth (doe what they can) how sinnefull our nature is. True it is that men be not able to be chaste: for our Lorde will haue vs to feele the cursednesse of Adams sinne in that behalfe, that is to say in the vnrulynesse of ỹ flesh, if hee himselfe preserue vs not by speciall gift, accordingly as it is sayd that it is not giuen to all men, but euery man must consider what GOD hath giuen to himselfe, and he must vse the gift that hee hath, assuring himselfe that hee is so much the more bound vnto God. But yet howsoeuer he fare: matrimõge is prouided for a remedy to all such as haue no stay of themselues. Although then that God list to leaue this marke of infirmitie in vs: yet doth hee appoynt a conuenient remedy for it. Is a man fraile in his flesh, or a woman lykewise? In deede it is a vice: and although it bee as it were a naturall inclination, (yea proceeding of the corrupt nature that wee take from Adam:) yet is it to bee condemned of it selfe. For all such vnstayednesse is farre off from the excellent dignitie which God did put in mankinde, of purpose that wee should haue borne his marke, & haue bin as Angels. Therefore all vnrulinesse of the flesh is sinne. Notwithstanding, forasmuch as our Lorde beareth with vs, he hath ordeyned a meane whereby ỹ sayd vice shal not be imputed

1.Cor.7.7.

1.Cor.7.9.

to

to vs for sinne. Now then whereas the vnrulinesse of the flesshe is of it selfe sinfull and damnable: it shall not be imputed to vs before God, if it be couered with mariage. And when a man seeth that hee cannot forbeare, and thereupon prayeth vnto God, and hauing commited himselfe vnto him, taketh a wife to the intent hee may not leade a lewde lyfe, by running at randon lyke a dogge, or a bull, or a brute beast: his entering into wedlock after such maner as God hath ordeined, doth couer and hide his vice, so as it commeth not to account. And herein we see the inestimable goodnesse of our God, that whereas hee leaueth this vice in vs, yea in such wise as ought to make vs ashamed: yet notwithstanding hee ordeineth a good meane whereby to bury it. And although men be vnchaste, yet are they not blamed for it before God and before his iudgement seate, so they hold thémselues within the boundes of mariage. For all vnchastitie is vnlawfull. As for example, if a man take too much libertie with his wife, or the wife with her husband: it is no reason that they shoulde make their bed a brothelhouse. But if a man liue honestly with his wife in the feare of God: although the companying in bed be shamefull, yet hath it no reproch or shame before God and his Angels. And why? Because the couert of mariage serueth to sanctify the thing that is vncleane and vnholy of it selfe, and to make cleane the thing that is foule and filthie of it selfe. Seeing then that our Lorde is so gratious, as to ordeine such a remedie: are not wee the more lewde and vnthankefull if wee vse it not, and put not away all the excuses that men alledge, as who should say that God had not prouided for their necessitie, nor played the good phisition with vs in healing our diseases, yea and euen preuented vs as wee see? Now then, seeing that our Lorde hath vouchsafed to succour vs in this behalfe, and ordeined holy mariage to keepe men from abandoning thémselues to al naughtinesse, which haue not ỹ gift of chastitie: let vs put away al shifts of frailtie. That is the thing which wee haue to marke.

Heb. 13.4. And hereupon let vs marke well how the Apostle sayth, that when men and women holde themselues within the feare of God and sobrietie, the bedde of mariage is honorable: And whereas it should iustly bee shamefull: our Lord conuerteth all to honor. It is no small matter, ỹ the Apostle calleth the thing honorable before God, which would be shamefull euē before men, if God pardoned it not: & yet pronounceth curse & vengeance against al aduowterers. Sith we heare such a sentence: let vs learne to shrowde our selues vnder this honorable shadow, (if we haue neede of it,) to the end that our shamefull dealings be not accursed and condēned before God and his Angels: and therewithall let vs stand in awe of the dreadfull sentence that is giuen against all aduowterers and whorehunters. Yea & if any be able to forbeare mariage, let them take good heede that they forbeare it not but for the present time, so as they reiect not the remedie that God hath appointed them, if they finde not that God giueth them a stay of themselues. And so let their liuing out of mariage be but fro morrow to morrow, being alwayes ready to submit themselues to God, whensoeuer he shall call them to that state.

1. Cor. 7. 5.

But here we see how Satan hath displaced al order, yea and that vnder pretence of holynesse. The world sees what abhominations haue come of it. Insomuch ỹ in poperie it seemeth to be the most Angelike vertue that can be, to liue vnmaryed. The state of perfection (say the Munkes) is to be vnmaryed. The priestes say that they be vowed to God. Seeing wee bee the Cleargie (say they) and as it were the flower of ỹ Church: it behoueth vs to be separated from the common defilementes of the world. So then, in poperie it is counted an approching to ỹ Angels of heauen, when men forsake mariage. But in the mean while, we see how God is mocked with such diueliish pride: for worse than beastely abhominations haue happened through the dissing of mariage after that sorte. See how the Priestes, Munkes, and Nunnes defy God, by refusing the benefite which he offereth thē: which is, that if they finde infirmitie in themselues, they should marrie. But this doe they dispite and disdayne, esteeming it as an vncleane thing: and that is a fighting euen against nature. And therefore, was it not meete that God should be reuenged of such presumption, when men trode the remedie vnder their feete, which he had giuen them? Is not that sicke man out of his witt, which in steade of taking a medicine for his health, dooth fling it against the ground in dispight of his phisition? As much is done by these helhoundes of the popedome, euen all this vermine of Priests, Munkes, and Nunnes which haue refused holy mariage: wherein they haue made open warre against God. And they bee not contented with that: but wee see they haue ouershot themselues so farre, as to be bolde to vtter blasphemies, that ought to make all mens haires stand vp vpon their heades. If there were no more but that: the world may see that the diuell hath altogether ouermaistered them, and that the Apostatike or backesliding Church of Rome is the very seate of Antichriste, inasmuch as it hath giuen sentence, that such as are in the flesshe cannot please God, but wee must bee separated from all vncleanesse. And therefore mariage ought to be forbidden vnto priestes. Those are the very wordes of a Pope: and yet notwithstanding, they haue bin registred as an Oracle comming from heauen. Now if the diuell had his full scope, yea and were incarnate in this world: coulde hee speake more detestably in dispite of God and holy wedlocke, than to apply this saying, *they that are in the flesh cannot please God*, vnto maryed folke? It is as much as if he condemned all mankinde: For in so doing hee condemneth not onely those that are aliue at this day: but also all the holy fathers that liued vnder the Lawe, and all the holy Patriarches, Apostles, and martyrs.

Yee see then that the diuell of Rome intendeth to banishe both the Apostles, and martyrs, and

and all the holy fathers out of heauen. And therefore whosoeuer listeth to bee in the Popes paradise, must bee a fellowe with the diuels in hell. For although it bee a monstrous thing, that the vngratious Pope *Syricius* shoulde vtter such blasphemie, as to goe about to shut the most part of the holyest folke that euer haue bin, out of the kingdome of heauen: yet would God neuer haue suffered so horrible blasphemie to bee spoken, but that it was his will to make the Sea of Rome abhominable, by letting those diuels haue their own swindge so farre, as to reiect mariage vnder pretence of holinesse, by meanes whereof (euen through iust vengeance) they tooke libertie to commit all wicked filthinesse, and so infected the worlde with their detestable Sodomie, that euen the very Paynims themselues did abhorre it. And hereby wee be warned (as I sayd afore) not to dispise Gods giftes: but to vse them with all modestie. And as for such as haue not stay of themselues: let them learne to bow downe their neckes, to receiue the yoke of mariage, and to submit themselues thereunto, assuring themselues that if the husbandes beare with their wiues and the wiues indeuour to liue quietly with their husbands: it is an acceptable sacrifice to God. And if they haue charge of children: let them looke to the bringing vp of them, and to the finding of them, whether they bee poore or riche: assuring themselues that God accepteth that seruice. Also when the women take paynes and are troubled about their houshold businesse: let them vnderstand that their doinges are acceptable sacrifices to God. And although mariage be despised by those feendes, who in despight of GOD, doe surmise an Angelicall perfection in abstaining from it: yet notwithstanding let such as bee in that state vnderstande, that God accepteth and receiueth them, yea and that hee gouerneth their household. For seeing he auoweth himselfe to bee the author of mariage: hee will blesse it, if folke proceede to it according to his will. Let such as are vnmaried bee well aduised to walke neuertheless in the feare of God, and to haue mariage in estimation, and to honour it accordingly. And let both sorts bee carefull to maintaine themselues in all cleanesse both of body and minde, as S. Paul declareth in the seuenth of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. In that place he condemneth not widowes and such others as abstaine from mariage: but exhorteth them to doe their duties. For widowes and maydes and such as are vnmaried, ought to stucke the faster vnto God, and to liue as folke that are lesse hindered to giue themselues wholy vnto him. Why so? for they haue not so many worldely thinges to drawe them away. Maryed folkes haue mo incumberances: but yet must they beware that they giue not themselues the bridle, so as they should not walke cõtinually in feare and carefulnesse. Thus yee see how that in all states wee must haue sobrietie and honestie in such estimation, as wee may not onely shewe tokens of chastitie and honestie in our persons: but also make offerings & sacrifices both of our bodies and of our soules vnto God, seeing hee hath bought them so derely by the bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ, and will haue them dedicated to himselfe, to dwell in them as in his temples.

1.Cor.7.34.

1.Cor.7.32. 34-35.

1.Cor.7.33. 34.

1.Cor.6.20.

1.Cor.6.18.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe to make vs feele them better than we haue done, yea euen in such sorte, that being rightly sory for them, wee may learne to repayre vnto him, with acknowledgement of the faultes whereof wee bee guiltie, seeking to giue our selues to his obedience, and to please him in all things, euen vntill we haue finished our course and pilgrimage vpon earth, and bee come to the saluation that is prepared for vs, as it is already in the kingdome of heauen. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

2.Cor.7.9. Ep.5.21.25 Col.3.18.19. 1.Pet.3.1.7 1.Tim.2.15.

Matt.19.5. Prou.2.17.

On Wednesday the iij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xxxix. Sermon, which is the tenth vpon the fifth Chapter.

19 Thou shalt not be a thiefe.

IF wee vnderstoode Gods will in one worde, as hee declareth it familiarly enough vnto vs: wee should not neede any long study, to know how to behaue our selues well, and to leade a holy and righteous lyfe. But there is not so lewde and ignorant a person, as he that wil not vnderstande nor so deafe a man as hee that wil not heare, as they say in the prouerbe. And that is the cause why wee play the blinde buzzardes, though our Lorde shewe vs his light to our faces. And wee see it as well in this cõmaundement of the lawe, as in the rest that haue bin touched. For if euery man would enter into his owne conscience to make true search: should hee not finde it easie to iudge, that howsoeuer things be cloaked, we bee guiltie of theft before God if we deceiue our neighbour, or doe him any wrong in his goods? Yes. But what for that? So we may hide our shame to the worldewarde: it is enough for vs. And in the mean while Gods Iustice is thrust vnder foote, & we thinke not on it. Yet notwithstanding, all these figge leaues shall stand vs in

no stead, we must be faine at length to come to account before ỹ heauenly Iudge: and thẽ shall wee feele how it was not for naught ỹ he sayd by his prophet Zacharie, ỹ his curse shal light vpon the forswórne person, and vppon ỹ theefe: ỹ is to say, wheresoeuer we offend, what poynt of ỹ lawe soeuer it beer he will finde meanes well enough how to punishe vs for it. Men then may well either iustify or flatter themselues: but yet for all that, God will in the end vtter his wrath, both against forswearers and against theeues.

Zach. 5. 3. 4

Howbeit, to the intent wee may know Gods will the better, let vs marke that hee vseth the worde *Theft*, to make vs hate all deceite and robbery, and all maner of wrong that wee can deuise to doe to our neighbor, as hath bin shewed heretofore in the expounding of murder and aduowtrie. If a man call one theefe, he will take displeasure at it, (for it is a worde of iniurie) insomuch that hee will not abide to bee so dishonested before the worlde. Now God to bring vs to the hating of all fraud, couin, deceit, guile, harme, hurte, & extortion which we may doe to another man in his goods: setteth them all downe by the one name of theft. He coulde well enough haue spoken after another maner: hee could haue sayd, keepe your selues from catching or plucking of other mens goods vnto you: keepe your selues from working any harme or losse to your neighbors: keepe your selues frõ doing any maner of violence: but hee sayth in one worde, *Steale not*. And why? To the intent wee shoulde the more abhorre all deceite, all pilling and polling, all scratching and catching, and al maner of anoyance: and to the intent we should bee ashamed, onee to make mention of doing any man wrong, yea and euen abhorre it from our heartes, seeing wee shall bee guiltie of theft for it before God. Moreouer, let vs mark ỹ there are diuers kinds of theft. For some vse priuie packing and deceite in drawing other mens goods to themselues by subtil meanes and practises. Some vse open force, and that is properly termed either robberie, or extortiõ, or spoyling. And othersome deale yet more couertly, so as they seem not to touch a man, neither can they be accused to ỹ worldward: neuertheless forasmuch as they deale not playnly and vprightly, they be theeues before God. After ỹ maner must wee come to the particular kinds of theft, if wee intend to know what is forbidden vs in this text.

But by the way wee haue to note, that God iudgeth not of theft after the maner of men. For they that are in authoritie and estimation, shall not faile for all that to bee condemned before GOD, yea euen though no man accuse them but onely the crying out of the poore for vengeance, whome they haue deuowred. And although they say neuer a word, yet the afflictions which they suffer shall cry out lowde and shrill enough before God, and make an inditement substantiall enough without vttering any word. So then wee must not bring our owne imaginations hither to iudge of theftes, nor thinke our selues escaped from Gods hand, when wee bee not punished by men nor by worldely iustice: for GOD looketh farre deeper. And therefore let vs beare in minde at a worde, that all maner of harme and all maner of counting to rake to our selues that which is none of our owne, is called theft in respect of God throughout the whole holy scripture. And in deede when as GOD threateneth by his prophet Esay, that he which hath spoyled and robbed, shall haue his turne [to bee spoyled and robbed lykewise:] hee speaketh not of the petie theeues that are caryed to the gallowes: but of the great princes and monarkes that bare sway in the worlde. Also in the first chapter when hee speaketh to the holy people that were the Church of GOD, Thy princes and gouerners (sayth hee) are companions of Theeues. Yet notwithstanding it is certeine that they were not arreigned: Nay, they themselues arreigned other men: and yet neuertheless they failed not to bee condemned before GOD. So then the theeues that are honorable here beneath, faile not to be accursed by the Lawe, and God hath giuen sentence of them in this text. Therefore wee must be faine to cast downe our eyes knowing ỹ it shall not boote vs though our theeuery be excusable before ỹ world, nor though it bee cõcealed or faced out. For yet for all ỹ, Gods Lawe shal haue his course, & the execution of it is ready at hand. God hath not forbidden any thing, which he calleth not to accosit. Thus ye see what we haue to remember vppon this text.

Exo. 22. 23. Deut. 24. 15.

But now must the thinges which I haue touched breefely, bee layde foorth by parcelmeale and specifyed by examples, that they may bee expressed the better. As I sayd afore, if we were diligent in harkening to the things that God declareth: there should neede no long exposition in this behalfe. But what? All our seeking is to intangle our selues, and to take occasiõ of doubting though the matter be knowen vnto vs. And therefore doth it stand vs in hand to be presol the more. I haue tolde you already that there are moe kindes of stelth or theft than one. For some play the theeues by stealing away other mens goodes: as if a man say, such a one hath stolne a horse, he hath stolne monie, he hath stolne bedding, potres, platters or such other lyke thinges. Well the worlde can iudge well enough of these kindes of theft.

But when a marchant taketh more for his ware than it is woorth, or if hee sell vnlawfull wares, and the simple man that knoweth nothing of it is beguiled, and woteth not how to winde himselfe out of the snare: men deeme not this to be theft. Yet notwithstanding such a marchant is a theef though no man condemne him, because hee hath dealt so vnconscionably. Surely hee that hath bin bitten willbee a good and rightfull iudge in that case: if hee spy the collusion, hee will by and by say, hee doth me wrong. We need not to goe to any doctor, [Sergeant, Coũseller,] or great cleark to shewe vs ỹ we haue wrõg don vs: euery of vs knowes it wel enough: but yet for al this, we discern not ỹ same kinde of theft in our selues, neither doe we sufficien-

ficiently consider it. Yet notwithstanding, God will not faile to iudge him for a thiefe, which shal haue so abused a simple man, by deliuering him vnlawfull wares, seeing hee hath beguiled him for want of iudgement and skil. Lykewise hee that ouerselleth his wares to an vnskilful person therein, is a thiefe as wel as the other. Againe, if a handicraftes man make slight or false stuffe, and the fault be not perceiued, but hee maketh what hee can of it, not regarding to sell it according to the valew of it, but how to inrich himselfe, alledging these excuses for himselfe: hee with whome I haue to deale is a rich man, it is al one to me, he hath a good purse. A man doth in deed vse these speeches: but yet true it is, that albeit his shifts may well serue him to the worldward, yet shall Gods Iustice still haue his course and take holde of him. When euery man hath bin asked his opinion, and all agree that it is no theft at all: yet will not God vnsay his worde for our pleasure. Ye see then that the theftes which men let slip, shall neuertheless come to accoũt before God, notwithstanding that the takers of such libertie, woulde neuer so faine haue the lewdenesse pardoned them. For beholde, Gods Lawe is vnchaungeable, as I haue tolde you already: and it shall be shewed hereafter that it caryeth execution with it.

Againe sith it is so that we must not goe to worke with craft and subtiltie: wee must come backe to natural vprightnesse, which is to do nothing to another which we wold not haue don to our selues. Seeing we haue such a rule, we neede no huge volumes to teach vs that wee shoulde not steale: for euery man may know in one word, how to behaue himselfe towardes his neighbors: that is to wit, that he deale not lewdely, that hee goe not about to inrich himselfe by other mens losses, and that hee take not other mens goods to him as his owne. Thus needeth there not any moe wordes than this: and then the fairest couerings & countenances that we haue, would vanish away. For when we haue once beguiled men: we beare our selues in hand that wee haue lykewise bleared the eyes of God. Let vs take an example whereby this poynt may bee plainlyer perceiued. He that hath gotten away another mans goods by sute at the lawe, thinkes himselfe to haue as iust title as can bee to possesse them. Why so? because he hath them by order of lawe. I will forbeare to say, that perchaunce the lawe was corrupted. Of a trueth there are that make lawe a flat theeuery by their bribing and other wicked practises, so as they ouerthrow all right and equitie, and the courte of Iustice becommeth oftentimes as a market to sell other mens right in, and to peruert all equitie. And although it be not so: yet if a man finde the means to get another mans goods by craft and subtiltie: alledge he neuer so much that Lawe hath so iudged it, and therefore that there is not a better nor a rightfuller title in the world: yet is it dubble theft, and hee had bin much better to haue robbed and spoyled his neighbors house, than to haue gotten his goods so vniustly by order of lawe. Why so? For in so doing there is theft, yea and the theft is committed vnder colour of Iustice, which is a most holy thing: and that is a treacherie that God cannot abide. If a house be robbed, it shall be grieuously punished: and is it not farre woorse than robberie, when the seate of Iustice which God hath dedicated to his owne maiestie, is so disordered that all things are turned vpside down and confounded? So then let vs marke well, that what pretence soeuer we can make before men: Gods lawe shal still keepe on his course: insomuch that if wee vse any craftinesse or krinking, or any extortion or violence: wee shalbe condemned for theeues. If a man misuse his poore neighbor vnder colour that he is in authoritie, and by that meanes oppresse him: he is a theefe, and halfe a murtherer, and it is not single theft or robberie, but (as yee would say) qualifyed with murder: and yet for all that, it escapeth and is pardoned. It is true that men will now and then mutter at it: but that is but with halfe mouth: and in the meane while hee that hath misbehaued himselfe, sootheth himselfe, and (which woorse is) the greater thief that he is, the more is he honored. For the more a man hath gotten to himselfe: and the richer that hee is become: the more doe men stoope to him, and the highlier is hee aduanced. Yee see then that oftentimes men come to greate honor in the worlde by theeuery. And therefore let vs not take any of those skarfes to couer our eyes: but rather let vs consider what ỹ holy scripture sayth: namely that we be theeues, if we doe not vnto others as we our selues would be done vnto, ne yeelde to euery man his right. For we must define a vice by the contrary vertue. If we will knowe well what theft is: let vs cõsider what it is to doe right to our neighbors. Now, we doe not right to our neighbors, when we spoyle thẽ of their goods, and by any meanes rake ỹ things to vs which are theirs. To be short, if we vse any couin, violence, or extortion, it is proofe good enough of our theeuery.

Hereby wee see that theft is committed, not onely by taking away of mony and other thinges with our handes: but also by withholding a mãs owne from him, and by neglecting to preserue the thinges that God hath put into our handes, according as his will is that euery man shoulde keepe that which he hath. As for example: If a seruant waste or deuour his maisters goods, hee is a thiefe. If a laboring man look to haue his wages, and in the meane while loue to loyter and to haue his hand in the platter: surely hee is a theefe, and wee can well skill to deeme him so. But it were expedient for vs to come to the other kindes also, and to make this comparison, that if wee render not euery man the right ỹ belongeth to him, such vnindifferent dealing shall alwayes bee taken for theft before God, and wee shall bee condemned for it.

But now remaineth to see how we may liue in such sorte, as God may not curse vs as if wee were theeues. The first poynt thereof is to learne to loue our neighbors, as Saint Paul sheweth in the thirteenth to the Romans. And it is a wonder that men should make so light of the

Rom. 13. 8. 9. 10.

taking away of other mens goods, seeing that if a man aske vs whether it be so harde a matter to loue our neighbors: wee will aunswere, no. For nature hath voutsafed to linke men together in vnitie, and God hath created them all after his owne image: and therefore it ought to bee no hard nor combersome matter to vs, to loue one another. Now it is so, that if a man haue loue hee will neuer bee a theefe, as sayth Saint Paul: yea and if wee did willingly consider, what wee owe to other men of right, and howe wee be bound vnto them: wee should not needo all these warninges, *Thou shalt not play the theefe, Thou shalt not play the aduouterer, Thou shalt not play the murderer*. All this were needelesse, as Saint Paul sheweth in the same place. But what? there are very fewe that thinke vpon that. Nay contrariwise, (as I haue told ye already.) when wee haue stolne other mens goods, wee fall by and by to seeking of vaine excuses: and when we haue done any deceit, shrewd turn, or extortion, straightwais we shift it off with an excuse redy at hand: But yet in so doing it appeareth that wee haue no loue in vs, and that wee bee as wilde beastes, so as wee be not worthie to bee taken for men, because wee breake the bonde of vnitie which GOD had set among all the children of Adam. Thus much for that one poynt, namely that it behoueth vs to minde this lesson of charitie, if wee will not bee counted theeues.

Againe there is another poynt, which is that wee must not couet to bee rich. For as soone as the desire of gayning is setled in vs: it is certeine that wee shall become theeues, and it cannot bee otherwise. This will seeme strange at the first blush: but when euerie of vs shal haue gathered home his wittes to himselfe, [we shall finde] (as the heathen themselues coulde well skill to say) that euen nature teacheth vs, it is vnpossible for vs to couet to bee riche, but wee shall bee inflamed to rake to our selues by hooke or by crooke. Will wee then shunne theft? Wee must lay aside couetousnesse, that is to say the desirousnesse of inriching our selues. To the intent this worde be not cauilled at: how shall wee doe it? Let vs learne to bee contented with our state. For as for him that hath no certaine stay, but is alwayes tossed and turmoyled with coueting: his affections harrye him to and fro, so as hee can neuer haue any rest, to say, Here must I hold my selfe within my bounds, I say that the state which GOD hath giuen to euery man, must bee as a bound to hedge him in, as though it were sayd to him: Beholde, thy God will haue thee to stay vppon that which hee giueth thee, content thy selfe therewith: if thou doe not, thou not onely troublest the whole order of the worlde, but also defyest thy GOD, as though thou meantest to bid him battell.

1. Tim. 6. 9. 10.

Yee see then that the thing which we haue to marke, is that inasmuch as we haue the rule of charitie to leade vs, wee must learne to bee contented with our state. And why? Because wee knowe it is Gods will, and that hee will haue a triall of our obedience. And that cannot bee done without keeping of Saint Pauls rule: which is, that we haue learned to bee riche and to be poore, to bee hungrie and thirstie, and likewise to haue aboundance. Saint Pauls saying is, not onely that wee must bee patient in pouertie, whereof hee protesteth himselfe to haue felt his part, and therefore hath giuen vs an example thereof, and shewed vs the way: but also that wee must learne to bee riche and to haue aboundance. And how is that? They seeme to bee but wordes to no purpose: for euery man knowes wee haue neede to bee exhorted to patience when wee be in pouertie. Why so? For wee shall bee tempted: and it is a harde and grieuous thing, when a man hath not bread to eate. And although hee had but browne bread, yet would hee faine haue ease and quietnesse with it.

So then as touching pouertie, euery man will graunt that wee haue neede to bee comforted, and to bee tolde that wee must not grudge against GOD, nor bee inticed to doe euill. But when hee sayth that wee must know how to bee riche: men will laugh that speach to skorne, as if it were not grounded vppon any reason, and yet is that lesson needefuller than the former. And why? Let vs consider a little what rich men are: They be gulfes that can neuer bee filled, yea and much more vneasie to bee contented than poore men. If a man compare the rich and the poore together, lyke as hee shall finde poore men which murmyr themselues, and repine, and are inducted to filching and to doe many lewde turnes: so shall hee finde the most part of them contented with that which God giueth them, and so keeping on their course. But if a man goe to the rich sorte, specially to kings and princes: hee shall finde them so inflamed, and so faine in loue with the riches of this worlde: as they cannot be satisfied. Nay, it euen greeues them at the heart, that the sunne shineth vppon the poore. To be short, it is seene that if God shoulde giue the whole earth in possession to the riche: yet the moste parte of them would neuer thinke it enough. For (as I sayd) it greeueth them that the light of the sunne should be common to the poore, or that they should haue water to drinke. Yea and although the poore take paynes, and do the best they can: yet doth the rich man malice him. Although hee shed sweate and bloud for him: yet the riche man thinkes that hee plucketh the guttes and bowels out of his belly, whe he eateth of his coste. This nigardship, or rather beastly crueltie of the richer sorte, is apparant & it is too common a thing. Not without cause therefore doth Saint Paul say that wee haue greatly profited, when we haue learned to be rich: that is to wit, when we be not desirous to gather still more and more, so as if GOD haue giuen vs any aboundance, we followe our trade still without coueting in this wise: O, such a peece of ground were good for me: I must needes purchace that, and the next to it.

Againe, not to be desirous to be stil increasing, is not all that a riche man hath to doe. We must

must also bee poore in our heartes: that is to say, wee must not bee proude to trust in our riches, nor take occasion by them to oppresse the weaker sorte, and such as haue no estimation nor friendes in the worlde to maintaine them. And finally wee must bee readie to become poore whensoeuer it shall please God. Let him that is nowe verie riche, which hath his garners, storehouses, and Cellars full, which hath his purse well stuffed, which hath Landes and possessions, and which hath a good trade of marchandize: let him (say I) not thinke it straunge if GOD list to bereaue him of all, neyther let it grieue him and vexe him ouermuch, but let him bee patient as Iob was and say, seeing it is Gods will to take againe the things that he had giuen mee, his name bee blessed for it. It is a verie hard thing (say I) to haue skill howe to be riche: yea verily, if wee submit not our selues to Gods will, to accept quietly whatsoeuer he giueth vs, that is to say to beare pouertie patiently when he sendeth it, and to holde our selues contented with the goods that he hath put into our hands, without setting of our heartes vppon them. Otherwise wee must alwayes needes be theeues. For the poore shall bee tempted to doe euill, and they beare themselues in hand that God dispenseth with them for it: in so much that nowe and then they vse this shift, O, I see howe such a man goes about to eate the flesh from my backe, and he would destroy mee if he could: & why then should it not bee lawfull for me to bee reuenged of him? See how euerie man would be his owne caruer: but it is not for vs to doe so. Verily when a man is become riche euen by pilling and powling, by suttletie and deceite: yet is it not for vs to spoile him of that which he hath, bicause he must make account of it vnto God. Nowe then if wee bee poore, wee shall by and by bee prouoked to theft, if wee haue not this bridle to say, What thoe? It is our Lordes will to exercise vs, and therefore are wee needie of worldly goods: wee haue not as we would wish, and that is bicause God mindeth to humble vs by that meanes. Marke that for one point. And therewithall, let vs labour to ouercome this temptation. For wee see howe that euen Salomon desireth that hee may not bee poore, for feare least he should bee prouoked to steale. Seeing that such a person was afrayd, yea and made sute vnto GOD in the name of the faithfull: ought not wee to stand vpon our garde? Yes: and therefore let al such as haue lacke and scarcetie of bread and drinke, and wote not which way to turne them, but leade a verie slender life, so as some time they can scarcely get halfe their fill of bread: and let others also which haue not their commodities as they woulde desire: let them (say I) put themselues into Gods hand, and pray him to graunt them the grace to liue in such sort, as they may not bee caried to doe any man wrong or harme, vnder pretence that need driueth them vnto it. And as for them that haue the world at will, and money in their purse: let them take good heede that they oppresse not the poore, as they commonly doe, by laying their snares for them. Loe howe the rich men deale. If they see a poore man going to decaye: they play the Hunters, they fall by and by vpon him, and they neuer leaue tossing and turning of him about, till the poore soule bee at length intrapped. Therefore let such as are wealthie beware that they bee not ouergreedie, but rather let them holde themselues backe, so as they abuse not their abundance. Let not such as haue abundance steppe vp to oppresse such as haue it not. After that manner must wee proceede in this case. Yea and in stead of being suttle to seeke thinges a farre off, let vs when occasion seemeth to doe it, let vs aduisedly repulse all such naughtinesse. And in stead of imagining all to bee well wonne when wee can inriche our selues by other mens losses: let vs assure our selues that such riche folke doe cut the poore folkes throtes, & that they make many widowes and fatherlesse children, though they thinke it not. Howbeit for as much as our flesh is sharpe witted and suttle in seeking such occasions: let vs thinke vpon our God, who intendeth to trie vs. Wee may well haue a sword in our hand: but let vs beware wee doe no harme with it, and let vs consider that if wee were in like case as poore folkes are; wee would gladly bee succoured. To be short, if we wil abstaine from theft, let vs bee neither wolues nor Foxes. For as many as deale by deceit and craftinesse, they be like foxes: and what neede so euer the poore haue, if they followe the prouocation to doe euill, they shewe themselues to bee no more men, by their vniust raking of other mens goods vnto them. And as for them that rob with violence: they be like wilde beastes, which seeke nothing else but to deuour all. So then, to y intent we be not theeues, let vs not be cruell.

Iob. 1. 21.

Prou. 30. 9.

Therewithall, whatsoeuer worldly thing wee want, let vs waite for it to haue it by the blessing of God. If wee holde this rule: surely all couetousnesse, all fleecing, all fraude, and all other like thinges woulde soone bee amended. Wee should neede none other medicine to heale all our diseases than this, namely that we coulde lifte vp our eyes to heauen to saye, God is our Father, hee will prouide all that wee want, it is hee to whom wee must trust for all things that belong to the mayntenaunce of this present lyfe, and at a woord, his blessing is the welspring of all riches. If wee were well perswaded of this: wee shoulde not neede any more, eyther preceptes of the Lawe to forbid vs theft, or any other warnings and aduertisementes. This onely one woord woulde suffice vs. But what? Wee aske GOD our dayly breade, protesting that it is his peculiar office to feede vs: and yet in the meane whyle wee fall to filching, deceyuing, and malicing: and is not that an vtter scorning of God? I say with my mouth, giue me my dayly bread: and in the meane seafon I goe and seeke it at the diuels hand. For if wee vse vnlawfull meanes, so as wee beguile one and fleece another: at whose hand fetch wee our welfare? Is it at Gods hande? Are wee not companions with theeues and robbers? So then, it is certaine

that our whole seeking is to bee inriched by the Diuell, when wee giue our selues so to craft and extorsion. And moreouer the same is a sure token of our vnbeliefe, and that wee looke not for anye thing by Gods blessing, ne thinke him riche ynough to finde vs. Loe at what poynt we bee. Neuerthelesse these things ought to profite vs. When wee heare that our Lorde curseth theft and robberie, and that he abhorreth it: let vs likewise hate and abhorre it, assuring our selues that he iudgeth not after the fansie of man, but will haue vs to liue in such vprightnesse, as euerie man may haue his right, and no man bee hindred or impeached in his goods and substaunce, and therefore wee must still haue the more staye of our selues. Againe, forasmuch as wee bee so inclined vnto euill: let vs seeke meanes to holde vs in awe of our God, and to restraine vs from stealing as I haue shewed you before. And sith wee knowe that hee hath knit vs togither: let vs keepe that Law and rule of equitie. Furthermore let vs not couet to bee riche: but to bee short, let vs put this lesson in vre, of bearing pouertie patiently, and let vs not bee eager of getting, and of promoting our selues out of measure. And finally let vs abhorre all cruelnie and deceite: and specially let vs learne not to bee so beastly, as to thinke that our catching & snatching by hooke and by crooke, is able to inriche vs. Let vs not beguile our selues in that poynt. Why so? For the true richenesse (as I saide afore,) is the blessing of GOD. Then must wee drinke of that fountaine, and bee filled with it, if wee will abstaine from all theft.

But nowe herewithall let vs come also to Gods threateninges. When he hath shewed vs sufficiently that this commaundement is exceeding rightfull, and hath also giuen vs meanes to liue vprightly without hurting or wronging of any man: perceyuing vs to bee harde hearted still, and that our wicked lustes doe turne vs the contrarie waye: hee addeth threates to make vs afraide. And is it a small matter when he sayeth, that theeues and robbers shal not enter into the kingdome of God? Nowe then, shall wee set so much store by this present life, that to gather a little good for the maintaining of it in this worlde, wee shall wilfully prouoke God to displeasure? He telleth vs that we shall be banished out of his kingdome. If we had any spark of fayth at all, woulde not this threatening pearce vs to the heart? Yes: but our Lorde proceedeth yet further. For in as much as he sees vs to bee so fleshly, and so greatly giuen to the earth: he telleth vs that euen in this worlde he will make vs to goe backewarde: in so much that he which thinketh to further himselfe by his crinking, pilling, and deceyuing, shall bee consumed, and a secrete curse shall waste him away. According whereunto it is sayde in the forealledged text of Zacharie, that Gods curse shall lyght vppon the house of the theefe, and there abide vntill he bee consumed. Also wee see howe hee speaketh of it by the rest of the Prophets: In so much that our Lorde telleth vs, that when men weene they haue inriched themselues and doone much: hee will blowe vppon them, yea and he will blowe after such a sorte, as all shall vanish away, and that so sodainely, as a man woulde neuer haue looked for. But God passeth yet further. In deede it is ynough and too much alreadie, when wee see howe our Lorde mocketh at those which martyr themselues so much in heaping vp of riches, when all goes to decay and slippeth away like water: but a man shall see moreouer, that the same goods are a cause of the ouerthrowe of such as haue beene in some reputation. Looke mee vpon a father that hath pilled & powled and prouoked Gods wrath against himselfe all the time of his life: When he dyeth, hee beareth himselfe in hand that his children shall become little princes. Nowe had he left them but a little, that they might haue falne in trade of occupying, and had he taught them to haue trauailed honestly, then they might haue had competent wherewith to find themselues. But behold, the father spinneth a halter for euery of his children, by making them to trust after that fashion in their euill gotten goods, so as they must needes eyther goe to the gallowes, or come to some other vnhappie ende. And what is the cause of it? The wrath of God which is present with them to consume all the goods that were gotten by stealth and by pouling. The house of them must needes bee accursed: and God must needes shewe himselfe a iust iudge, both against the theeues, and against all such as dally with his diuine Maiestie. If a man tell them of it, they make but a ieast of it, as these scoffers doe, who will say, well well sir, the tyme is worth the money they thinke, all is one. And if a poore man bee neither of abilitie nor of credite to make his part good against them: O how they welter themselues in the meane whyle in their wickednesse! But wote yee what? When God seeth men so sotted, and that hee can not bring them backe to the heauenly lyfe, in so much that they make no reckening of being banished from the kingdome of heauen: well then goe to (saieth he:) I summon you aforehand, for I will begin to put my sentence in execution. I will shew how my curse lyes vppon euill gotten goods, and that they which haue possessed them for a time, must be dispossessed of them, and that themselues and their goods with all their whole ofspring must be consumed togither. Now when wee see all these things: must wee not needes be mooued at them, if the diuell haue not vtterly bewitched vs? Yes. What remayneth then? We must holde faste the good conscience which God requireth of those that are his, so as euerie of vs trauell quietly for our liuing, and goe not about to grieue other mē, but seeke by al meanes to passe our life without offending of God, that if we haue no great reuenew nor much to spend sobrietie may serue vs for a dubble portiō. After that maner must wee deale.

But now if theft [to manward] be so condemned of God: what shall bee done if wee rob him of his honour? For wee must compare these towardes man, and theft towards God togither.

Beholde,

1. Cor. 6. 10. Eph. 5. 5.

Miche. 6. 13. & 3. 12. 14. 15.

Beholde, it is God that hath forbidden vs to bee theeues. And why? Bicause he will haue vs to keepe equitie and vprightnesse one towards another. Yea and looke what goods soeuer he appointeth to our vse, he will haue them so vsed, as wee possesse them not by wicked shiftes. He that hath much, must spend them as one that hath but onely the laying out of them, and not the ownership of them: and he that hath but litle, must be contented with it, as I haue saide alreadie. Now if God will haue vs to keepe such an euen hand towards our neighbours, for the preseruing of their goods which they haue in their hands: if he make such account of the goods ỳ he hath created, as he wil not haue them defiled by guilefulnes, by violence, or by such other like dealings: what will he doe in the thing which he setteth much more store by? So then, when wee haue liued soundly & vprightly in all respects among our neighbours, so as we haue indeuoured to giue euery man his due: let vs also yeelde our God his right: ỳ is to say, let vs glorifie him, and beware ỳ he remaine vnimpeached in his Maiestie, so as we take not more vpon vs than is lawful for vs as we see men commóly do, who are so bolde, that when they haue bin so mad as to oppresse their neighbors, by & by they set vp their hornes against God. When they haue spoiled other men of their goods, they woulde make God their vnderling too, and they will not obey him further than they list themselues. Therefore we must beware of al these things. And to conclude, let vs also beware, not onely ỳ we abstaine from all iniurie and anoyance: but also ỳ as neere as we can we suffer not any man to be vexed or indomaged. For these are the two things that God commaundeth: namely Iustice and iudgement: Iustice consisteth in yeelding euery mã his right: and Iudgement consenteth not to any euils, nor sustaineth the poore to be misused, which haue no meane to maintayne themselues. For if I see a man oppressed before my face, & withdraw not to helpe him: I am consenting to the theefe, so as the saying of the fiftith Psalme may be verified of mee, thou saweſt a theefe & runnest with him. Now is it not a running with theeues, when we labour not to restraine them, but either wink at them, or giue thé the bridle [to doe what they list: Yes: and [in so doing] we be consenting to the robberie that is committed, and we must answere for it, as theeues before God, although no reckening be made of it among men. Therefore let no man thinke that he is bound but onely to keepe his own goods: but let vs also beware that we indeuour to maintaine and procure the welfare of our neighbours as we would our own, and as the rule of charitie willeth vs to doo. Thus ye see how we shal not be found to be theeues both before God & man, & how the goods ỳ he hath put into our hands may be blessed, so as he shall make them to prosper, and wee haue such contentment, as we shall euer mount vp to the heauenly heritage, being sure that there wee shall haue the perfect fulnesse of all good things.

Nowe let vs kneele down in ỳ presence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue doone, and that wee may profit more and more in the keeping of his holy Lawe. And bicause wee bee so corrupt and frowarde, that all our thoughtes and affections got the contrarie way: it may please him to reforme vs by his holy spirit, and to draw vs in suche wise vnto him, as we renouncing the world and despising these mortall and transitorie things, may mount vp to the heauenly kingdome, where we shall haue all contentation and rest. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

Psal. 50. 18.

Deut. 17. 7.

Psa. 58. 2. Ier. 22. 3. Ezech. 45. 9

1. Tim. 1. 9. 17.

On Thursday the iiij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xl. Sermon, which is the eleuenth vpon the fifth Chapter.

20 Thou shalt not beare false witnesse against thy neighbour.

WEe haue seene heretofore, that it is not lawfull for vs in anye wise to vexe our neighbours in their persons, or to do them any domage in their goods. Notwithstanding for as much as harme may bee doone by the tongue: God hath vouchsafed to make mention of ỳ also in his Law, as we see in this text. Now then like as heretofore he forbad the doing of any outrage to our neighbors, (which thing he comprehended vnder ỳ word *Murther*:) & likewise all grieuing of them and all anoying of them by any meanes in their goods: so he sheweth here ỳ we must not speake euill of them, nor vse any such words as may cast any blemish or staine vppon them. It is true that he speaketh expressely of *False witnesse*: howbeit, that is according to the rule that I haue set downe, namely ỳ he setteth forth the thinges formost which we ought most to mislyke, to the intent wee shoulde mislyke the sinnes that come neere them. Then if wee speake euill of our neighbors, so as wee slaunder them: although it bee not taken for a grieuous sinne before men: yet doeth God take it for a false witnessing. But here a mã might demaund a question, why GOD speaketh here of false witnessing and periurie: seeing he had alreadie said, Thou shalt not take ỳ name of ỳ Lord thy God in vayne. For it seemeth to bee a needlesse repetition. For in so short a sum of ỳ law, where there be not aboue ten sentéces, it seemeth vn-

conuenient to repeate one thing twise. But we must marke that the things which haue beene set downe heretofore, concerning the not taking of Gods name in vayne: were in the first table, where GOD respected onely the Maiestie of his name, to the intent it shoulde bee had in reuerence. Therefore whensoeuer wee speake of God, wee must thinke vppon the infinite glorie that is in him, that wee may neuer open our mouth but with reuerence and humilitie. And whether wee intend to sweare, or to speake of him in any other wise: wee must euer thinke that his name is to bee reuerenced, and that wee must not fling it foorth at aduenture. Thus much concerning the thinges that wee haue seene alreadie vppon this matter. Now God speaketh of another thing: namely of the not hurting or harming of our neighbours in any wise by our wicked tongue. So then, in as much as there is a dubble intent: wee see nowe that these two sentences differ, & also that there is no superfluitie at all. Wherefore let vs marke well, that for as much as it is shewed here howe men ought to liue togither charitably and vprightly: although Gods name be dishonoured by lewd witnessing: yet the lawe is not superfluous which saieth, *Thou maist not beare false witnesse against thy neighbour.*

I tolde youbefore, that Gods meaning here, is to condemne generally all slaunders, all false reportes, all diffamations, and all other such like things. And for proofe therof it is expressely saide in another place, Thou shalt not bring vp any euill reporte, nor speake euill on thy neighbour, to cast thy blot vppon him. If the Law of God containe all perfection of good life: it insueth that this also is comprehended therein. And where shall wee put it, but vnder this sentence? Therefore wee must conclude, that although GOD haue peculiarly set down here the name of *False witnesse*: yet notwithstanding hee meant to extend the doctrine thereof to all slaunders, misreportes, and crooked speeches that tend tothe diffaming or defacing of our neighbours, or to the hurting of their good name. Wee see then that Gods meaning here, is to keepe vs in good friendship one towards another, and that so farre, as he suffereth not any man to bee impeached any more in his name, than in his person or his goods. Therefore whosoeuer diffameth his neighbour, or in any wise backebyteth him: doeth (to the vttermost of his power) breake the bond of charitie among men, and proclaime open warre. And if we consider all thinges well: it is certaine that sometimes misreportes, slaunders, and backebytings, doe much more harme than robberies. Wherefore let vs vnderstand that if wee minde to obey our God, wee must maintaine the honestie and honour of our neighbours, to the vttermost of our power. For seeing he hath forbidden vs to hurt any mans good name: it is his will on the contrarie part, that wee should indeuour to preserue all mens honesties. For it is not ynough to abstaine from dooing of euill: vnlesse a man doe good therewithall.

Leuit. 19. 16 17.

Psal. 34. 15.

Now must we proceede by the degrees which God meant to set out vnto vs in this place, speaking of *False witnesse*. The first then is to beware that wee vtter not any false reporte, lye, or periurie in place of Iustice, whereby to hurt them whose honestie, honour and welfare we be bound to procure. For hee that beareth false witnesse against his neighbour, doeth kill him and robbe him as much as in him lyeth, and doeth all the euill that may growe of his periurie. In deede most commonly men thinke it not to bee so: but yet is it so in trueth. And for the same cause did God expressely command in his Lawe that the witnesse should be the first in executing the partie that was to bee punished for any misdeede: to the intent a man might knowe, that their words and their tongues put him to death: and that the witnesses themselues might stande the more in awe, & consider y they should yeeld account vnto God, of their witnesse bearing against any man. Therfore when any euidence is to bee giuen, it standeth euery man in hand to looke neerely to himselfe, that he inlarge not his conscience, but speake the thing simply & plainly which he knoweth to be true before God.

But the case concerneth not onely the giuing of false euidence in matters of life & death: but also in all matters that touch mens honour, honestie, good name, or goods. Therefore let vs haue a care to preserue the honour and welfare of our neighbour in all respectes, when we be so beare witnesse. Yet notwithstanding wee must not vnder this colour, cloake the offence of him that hath doone amisse, or lye against God to maintaine his good state. For if the honour of men bee precious vnto vs: howe much more precious ought Gods honour to bee? Gods forbidding of mee to beare false witnes against my neighbour, is bicause he will haue friendlinesse maintayned among men, and that no mā should bee impayred in his name or goods. Now if God haue such regard of vs which are but wretched Earthwormes: thinke wee that he forgeteth himselfe in the meane while? No. But if I by my false record, doe goe about to support or bolster an offender, so as I couer or conceale his crime: it is certaine that I dishonour God as much as in mee is. Why so? For I protest to say the truth, & yet notwithstanding I make a lie. And is not y defacing of Gods honor? Is it not an imbacing of his glory? Yes: & therfore let vs vnderstand, that when God said, *Thou shalt not beare false witnesse against thy neighbour*: he meant not to gratifie or pleasure euil doers, or to couer mens faults: but to shew in few words, that we ought (as much as in vs lyeth) to maintaine our neighbours honestie, so it may be done with trueth.

And let vs marke further, that heere God had an eye to the wicked affections that proceede of malice and rancour, rather than to the deede itselfe, as wee shall perceyue better in the thinges that remayne as yet to bee discussed. For I haue tolde yee alreadye, that in this place, GOD speaketh not onely of the giuing of false euidence in place of Iustice, and in cases where solemne othe is to bee taken: but

but also of all slaunders and diffamations, because that after what sort soeuer a man backebite his neighbour, hee shall euer bee counted a false witnesse before God. If I wisper any man in the eare to diffame my neighbour withall: surely it is a false witnessing. It was true that I was not called before a iudge: I laide not my hande vppon the Booke: I performed not the rest of the ceremonies in taking of an othe: but yet wee see howe God speaketh of it: and therefore am I guiltie in that behalfe. But now must this bee considered: if I spie a fault in a man without bearing him any ill will, whether am I to bee counted a false witnesse before God or men for so doing? No. For God hath a speciall respect to the euill will and enmitie. Then if I hate a man and thereuppon misreporte him, caried thereto by the ildisposed minde that I beare towardes him: in so doing I am to bee condemned for a false witnesse. If I haue desire to backebite, and that vice doth so reigne in mee, as I must needes be snatching at euerie man: surely I am a false witnesse. And that is the cause why it is saide that loue couereth the multitude of sinnes, but hatred bewrayeth them to shame a man. Loe howe Salomon hath in fewe wordes, in this sentence touched the roote of the false witnessing which GOD hath forbidden and condemned by his Lawe: namely, that we bee ledde by hatred. And why? For if wee loue one another, surely wee will indeuour to maintaine one another. We knowe it is as a kindling of a fire, when wee backbite any man, so as hee must needes bee angrie with vs in defence of his owne honestie: by meanes whereof all friendship is broken. So then, if wee had any care to maintaine charitie: we woulde hide other mens faultes as much as wee coulde. But if there bee any enmitie, then will our tongues runne ryot. If the heart bee venemous, it must needes haue a vent, and we must needes vtter the malice that lay lurking within. Let vs marke wel then, that in this text God condemneth all backebitings that proceede of malice, and ill will, when we hate any man, and woulde wish him vndone, so as if wee cannot anoy his person, nor hurt him in his goods, by bereauing him of his substance: wee fall to touching of him with some priuie nippe, and we will goe about to diffame him. If we doe so: it is a wicked roote, which cannot but bring foorth like fruits. That is the point that we must resort vnto, to haue the right vnderstanding of this commaundement of God.

Prou. 10. 12. 1. Pet. 4. 8.

Howbeit let vs marke by the way, that whereas it is saide that loue couereth the multitude of sinnes: it is not ment that wee shoulde flatter one another, and foster our vices by lying: but that we should not blowe them abrode vpon desire to diffame the parties, who possiblie might take such a stomacke thereat, that they might giue themselues ouer to al naughtinesse through shamelesnesse, as desperate persons do. Wherefore let vs marke well, that the holy Ghost intendeth not to make vs flatterers and fosterers of our neighbours vyces, nor yet lyers: but that wee shoulde labour to reforme their vyces as much as wee can, and yet notwithstanding beare with them, that we make them not desperate when they haue done amisse. For when a man seeth himselfe defaced, and that it is done vppon reuenge: it spyteth him, & he giueth himselfe to the doing of euill, and so hee hardeneth in it. Therefore when men are in an euill plight alreadie, if we reproue them boystowsly without any charitable affection: wee cause them to disorder themselues the more. And therefore if wee rebuke mens vyces: let it bee doone with mieldnesse, that the parties which are so rebuked may perceiue that our meaning is to drawe them backe from the way of destruction. And for the same cause doth Saint Iames apply this text to such as labour to drawe their neighbours to God, by good, gentle, and friendely corrections. Therefore if I see a man deale leawdely, and I tell him his faulte, so as by my warning I win him, that he returneth into the right way: beholde (saith he) then is this saying fulfilled, that loue couereth the multitude of sinnes. True it is that Salomon speaketh it to another end: but yet hath not S. Iames misapplyed this lesson of Salomons by a similitude, for he doeth vs to vnderstande, that our couering of mens sinnes, must not bee by winking at them nor by holding of our peace when God is offended: (if a man destroy himselfe, wee must not then dissemble to conceale his vyces through loue: that is an ill practising of this lesson) but we must rather vse good and brotherly correction, & therewithall finde the meanes that his faults may bee buried before God, & also not come in remembrance before men. Therefore it must contents vs to haue brought our neighbours home againe: and wee must alwayes keepe this measure, that when the faults are amended, we must not diffame the parties if it bee possible, least they haue shame of their repentance, and fall into dispaire to the worldwarde. But this is ill put in vre: and we see how men do amisse in going too farre both the ways. For the meane way, (that is to wit of correcting mens faultes with gentleneesse, and of seeking to couer them to the ende that euerie man should be reclaimed, and in the meane while not bee diffamed:) will in manner neuer be kept. Why so? For our desire to haue friendshippe with men, is by flattering them. When wee see them offende God diuers wayes, we let it slipe and as wee woulde that our friends should spare vs, so do we beare with the naughtinesse that is in them. Yee see then that this is a wicked cloking, because Satan blindeth the wretched sinners by it: and we bee the cause of it, forasmuch as wee winke at the faults which we ought to rebuke. And yet that inconuenience sufficeth vs not. For the worlde is come to that point nowadayes, that we cannot seeme to be good friendes, nor to be faithful and trustie to those whom we mach withall, vnlesse we agree to all naughtinesse for their sakes. If they haue offended, & it come to the point that they must receiue rebuke or shame for it: we must rather fall to flatte periurie. And howe? Euen

Gal. 6. 1.

Iam. 5. 20.

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thus men speake, Shal I willingly hurt my neighbour? I am beholden to him: and shall I depose against him? What a thing were that? Lo howe wee esteeme Gods trueth. Loe howe wee turne it into a lye. Loe howe wee abuse the commaundement that forbiddeth vs to diffame our neighbours. Wherefore let vs learne that this ouercockering is wicked when wee support the euill, and feed mens vyces. And specially when we be called and required to giue record, if we bewray not the euill truely which is to be corrected: wee shall bee guiltie of it as accessories to our power. I conceale a murther, a robberie, a leawde, pranke, a briberie, a false packing: surely in so doing I intangle my selfe in al those crimes both before God and man. So then the foresaide couering of our neighbours sinnes through loue, doeth no whitte hinder the bewraying of them, when it is needful and meete to be done, & when we be required thereunto.

But there is yet another foule extremitie, worthie of blame: which is that wee be too hastie in blasing abroade the misdeedes which ought to bee reformed quietly, and without making too great brute of them. And this groweth somtimes of enmitie, sometimes of ambition or vaineglorie, and sometimes of a fonde desire to vaunt our selues. Sometimes it is of enmitie. For vnder colour that wee bee desirous to chastise vice, and that we be loth to haue God offended: wee fall to lying in waite for those whome wee hate, and to whom we beare any priuie grudge: and if we find any thing to be blamed or caught holde of against them: by and by their tale shal bee tolde, and wee abuse Gods name falsely in playing the zealous persons after that fashion, when wee seeke nothing else but to vndermine our enemies. And our malice appeareth the better in this, that hauing rebuked a vyce in one whom wee hate, we beare with it and cloke it as much as wee can in our friends, and keepe not an indifferent hande. And doeth not that bewray that wee doe it not of any good wil, and that wee make not warre against the sinnes and vyces, but against the persons rather? It may be discerned too easily. And therefore whensoeuer we goe about to bewray mens vyces and sinnes, let vs vnderstand that our hearts must be cleare and free from all ill will, so as wee may protest before GOD that wee bee desirous both of the welfare and of the profite of him whome wee finde fault with. Let that serue for one point.

Againe wee must keepe our selues from all fonde ambition or vaineglorie, (as I touched afore:) which is, that we must not bee desirous to vant our selues before men as a number do, who woulde faine make themselues as holy as saints, by crying out against other men, and by finding fault with them. As soone as they spie a thing amisse: by and by men must bee charged with it, and all the world must know it. O this is a good zealous man: and yet in the meane while all is but a foolish desirousnesse to vaunt himselfe. For this cause God doth oftentimes punish such pride, because they beare themselues in hande, that so they rebuke other men sharpely; they themselues are saintes and halfe Angels: whereas notwithstanding, they dispence with many misdemeanors in themselues, and though they offende more grossely than those whome they finde fault with, yet will they needes haue men to beare with them. And why? Because they haue well chidden others. Yea and yee shall see some that are not ashamed to say, What? haue I not done well in rebuking euill? Seeing I haue behaued my self so stoutly, is it not ynough for mee? Yes, and if thou couldest not beare with other men, how wouldest thou haue other men to beare with thee? If thou haddest but one droppe of good disposition in thee, wouldst thou not hate the vice in thy selfe, as well as in another man? So then, when we crie out against our neighbours in rebuking them: let vs beware that we be cleare from all ambition. If wee will discouer the euill that wee perceiue in another bodie: let vs deale so orderly, as to beginne at our selues. If wee intende to condemne other mens faultes: let vs serch and examine well what is in our selues, and reproue our selues first: and then let vs steppe to our neighbours. That is the order which we must keep if we intend to proceed according to Godlinesse. But let vs marke that here God condemneth generally al iniuries and all backebitings, so as if wee doe but open our mouth to speak any maner of euill of our neighbours, we be condemned for false witnesses before God. Neuertheles it is not ment herby, that men shoulde conceale the euill that is knowen. For as I haue shewed heretofore, that wee must not foster mens sinnes through flatterie and lying, vnder pretece of charitable hiding of them, so must wee not say that blacke is white, vnder colour that wee bee forbidden to doe men wrong. And that is to bee marked well. For there are some which would faine that nothing at all shoulde bee condemned; but that men shoulde alter their speech, so as if there be a robberie committed, it shoulde bee termed by some other title, and vyces shoulde not bee condemned by their proper names. This is to bee seene: insomuch that if wicked men bee to bee reproued, which haue not onely offended God, but also caused others to play the naughtipackes as well as themselues, and are as an infection to poyson all the rest: if a man fall to rebuking of them lustilie as hee ought to doe: by and by there are a sort of these nycelings which take greefe at it. Yea (say they)? And ought men to proceede so farre as to goe vp euen into the pulpit, when they will crie out against vyces? A man shall see blasphemie reigning, and a man shall see open wickednesse against God and his word, a man shall see as shamefull disobedience as may bee, a man shall see so outragious occasions of offence as he cannot possiblie beare with them, except hee will be a traitour to God: and yet if he crie out against them, by and by he shal bee answered, what now? The Gospell teacheth you to win all men by gentlenes. Did not Iesus Christ cal sinners louingly vnto him, by forgiuing them their faultes? Nowe then shoulde the

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preachers of the Gospel vse such rigour? Verily as who shoulde say that Iesus Christes will were that men shoulde abuse his grace, to stablish the kingdome of Sathan, that sinne might haue full scope, and men winke at it and let it passe vncondemned. Nay, contrariwise, he saith that by the Gospel hee exerciseth a iurisdiction, to condemne the whole world. Beholde, the thing that he aimeth at, is that when we be tolde of our naughtinesse, wee shoulde bee so ashamed of it, as wee shoulde not knowe whither to flee for refuge, but onely to his grace, and that wee shoulde bee vtterly confounded in our selues. Therefore let vs marke well howe wee bee forbidden to diffame our neighbours, vpon any hatred or euill will: but yet wee bee commaunded on the contrarie part, to blame the euill, and to rebuke them lustily that doe amisse, to the ende wee may assay to bring them to good againe, and also make other men take heede, that they bee not corrupted by euill examples. This wil be the better vnderstoode, if on the one side wee take y meaning of our Lord Iesus Christ, where hee saieth that whosoeuer calleth his brother foole, shall bee in daunger of hell fire: and whosoeuer doeth but grunt at him, is alreadie damnable. And on the otherside, whereas it is saide that wee must rebuke the fruitlesse workes of darkenesse: let vs abhorre the euill as sainct Paul himselfe saith, auouching to the Corinthians that if the Gospell bee preached as it ought to bee, they that heare it shall bee constrained to glorifie GOD, by casting themselues vppon the earth, that is to say, by beeing ashamed of their sinnes. And why? Because they be brought to light, where as they were hidden before. Whereas their sinnes were not knowen: they see themselues as it were diffamed before GOD, and that it is not for them to hide themselues any more. Then if I doe but grunt of ill will against my neighbour, yea though it cannot be saide that I haue called him naughtipacke, vnthrift or foole, but that I haue but onely nodded my head at him, or made but a flirt at him with my finger: behold, it is a false witnessing before God. And why? For I despise my neighbour, and am desirous to shame him. And what moued me thereto? The misliking of him which I haue conceiued against him.

But on the contrarie part, if I bee desirous to giue my neighbour good counsell, and to seeke his weldoing, so as I am not ledde by any euill affection, but I woulde procure his welfare as much as in me is: I may well say vnhappie man, looke to thy selfe, it seemeth that thou intendest to sell thy selfe to the deuill, wilt thou bee a slaue vnder that cursed bondage? Thou shewest indeede that thou art witlesse and starke madde, seeing thou wilt receiue no warning. Wilt thou needes perish so vnhappily? Go like a wretch as thou art, euerie man ought to spitte in thy face. I may alledge all this to a man, and yet doe him no wrong. For why? I coulde not otherwise reclaime him. When I see that Sathan hath so hardened him, that hee had neede to bee quickened vp with maine strokes of the hammer: I may deale thus vehemently w̄ him, and it is the next way to couer his faultes. For to what intent doe I so, but that they shoulde be pardoned at Gods hande, and that he should no more be diffamed to the worldward? It greeueth me to see him poinred at with the finger, it greeueth mee to see him a laughingstocke to al men, it greeueth me to see him set as it were vppon a scaffolde for all men to gaze at: I say this geere greeueth mee: and therefore I labour to bring him into the right way againe. In so dealing there is no wrong at all. But yet for all this we must not take leaue to bee ouer bitter. For although wee bee verie well minded, and bee not caried with any euill intent: yet may wee soone doe amisse, if we be too sharpe in rebuking. And therefore doeth Sainct Paul warne vs expresly, to deale mieldly in rebuking such as haue offended. And why? Consider (saieth hee) that thou thy selfe also maist fall. Therefore let vs bee mielde and gentle to our neighbours, as wee woulde they shoulde bee to vs in like case. But howe soeuer the worlde goe, let vs speake of vyces without colouring of them, and let vs indeuour lustilie to correct offenders, according as they bee able to beare, and after as wee see them disposed: and let charitie and brotherly loue moue vs thereunto, for if wee pray God to guide and gouerne vs in this case by his holy spirite: the thinges that are spoken roundly and charitablie cannot bee counted an iniurie. Yee see then that the way for vs to keepe this commaundement, is to beware that wee doe not so much as once open our mouthes to speake one worde of rayling or slaundering, vppon enmitie or euill will: and yet notwithstanding to rebuke offenders plainly and mieldly as wee would that others should do to correct vs in like case if neede required. If we vse this vprightnes: then shall we not bee false witnesses against our neighbours.

Furthermore let vs marke, that where as *Falsehoode* or *Falsenesse* is spoken of: wee bee not onely forbidden to inuent or forge any lye, so as the thing that wee speake shoulde bee contriued without any colour of trueth: but if a man doe maliciously marre deface or disgrace the thing that is not euill of it selfe: beholde, it is alreadie a false witnessing. According whereunto it is saide that the parties which gaue euidence against our Lorde Iesus Christ, that he had saide, Destroye yee this Temple, and in three dayes I will builde it vp againe, were falsewitnesses: and yet notwithstanding it is verie certaine that Iesus Christe had saide so, and that hee had spoken the selfe same wordes with his owne mouth. Why then are the reporters of them called falsewitnesses? The reason is, because they wrested the wordes of the sonne of GOD, to another sense than hee had spoken then, and thereupon went about to ground their owne furie, and to charge him with wicked slaunders, as though hee had spoken of the materiall temple of Ierusalem, whereas he ment his owne bodie, which is the very temple wherein dwelleth the fulnesse of the whole Godhead:

for

1.Tim.3.16. for he is God manifested in the flesh. So then, we see in fewe wordes, that the falsenesse which God condemneth here, is not the contriuing of some lie, nor the forging of some thing that was neuer done nor saide, so as we should report some fable, and men should not knowe what it is: but also a malicious wresting or defacing of words that might haue beene well taken, and a turning of them to euill: if we doe so we are false witnesses. As for example some are so frowarde, that as soone as they spie a thing that misliketh them, although it be not altogether wicked and vngodly: yet they fall to picking of some quarrell to it. O say they, see, such a man hath done such a thing. If they spie neuer so little a spot or specke, there needes no more with them to make vertue become vice. If wee doe but misconster some one worde that is well spoken, beholde, wee mischarge the partie, and his good reputation is wounded. Yee see then that we bee false witnesses, not onely when wee inuent thinges that were neuer doone nor saide: but also when either by suttle caueling, or by any leawde and indirect slight, we wrest the thing amisse which might haue bin wel taken. Nowe (as I saide) this commeth to passe nowe and then by reason that men are ouercaptious. And if they bee frowarde: needes must they turne all thinges to y worst. But it is saide that loue is not 1.Cor.13.5. mistrustful, as Saint Paul speaketh of it: & therefore wee must be sure that a thing is euill, before we condemne it. It is true that wee may sometimes bee deceiued in discerning of good and euill: But when there are apparant signes and tokēs, and the matter is manifest as we may bee able to say, This is ill done: if wee be still too much wedded vnto it, it cannot bee but sinfull. And specially if our nature bee so malicious as to bite men and to slaunder them where there is no cause: surely we be condemned for falsewitnesses before God.

Nowe if they that are stout in rebuking vyces be to be condemned, whē their stoutnes proceedeth of too rigorous a minde: what shall they be whose doings spring of manifest hatred and which will needes misconster such sayings and doings, as might neuertheleſſe be wel taken, and haue no apparant fault in them? If they marre such thinges by their lewde constructions: are they not false witnesses before GOD? So then, let vs learne in fewe wordes to maintaine the honestie and welfare of our neighbours in such sorte, that whether wee rebuke them, or whether we speake of their vyces to the intent they shoulde bee punished, and that such as might bee seduced and miscaried by their euill example may bee reclaymed: let vs alwayes haue this regarde in our speaking, namely that wee seeke their welfare and benefite as much as in vs lyeth, and that wee keepe such an euen hand continually, as we diffame not men after such a sort as they shoulde bee out of heart with it. For wee shoulde rather burie their faultes to the vttermost of our power both before GOD and man, to the intent they may call themselues home againe, and not forgoe all shamefastnesse, and so rush out into all naughtinesse. That is a thing which we must needs take heede of.

Nowe if wee will obserue the thinges that are conteined heere: we must resort to a higher grounde: which is, to consider for what purpose God hath made our tongues, and to what ende hee hath giuen vs speech: namely to the intent wee might impart our mindes one to another by communication. And wherevnto shoulde the communication of men tende, but to the maintaining of themselues in charitie and loue? Therefore at a word, wee must learne so to bridle our tongues, as the vnion which GOD hath commaunded, may alwayes bee maintained as much as is possible. And that is the cause why saint Iames vseth such earnestnesse in speaking of euill wordes. The tongue (saieth he) is a small thing, and but a little peece of flesh: and yet it kindleth such a fire, as is able to burne vp the greatest woods in the worlde. Nowe let vs come backe to the saide grounde: which is, to vnderstande that God wrought vs a singular benefite, in giuing vs abilitie to common together. Beholde, the thoughtes of men are secret: and yet the tongue serues vs to vtter our minds. Therefore let vs be circumspect in vsing such a benefite, that it bee not steined by our vice and naughtinesse. And seeing that God hath giuen it vs to maintaine loue and brotherly good will one towardes another: let vs not abuse it in babling, or in gadding vp and downe with it to sowe rancour & malice among our selues, by wresting our words amisse. Thus ye see whereto we must come backe.

And when wee knowe generally, howe to auoide the crime of false witnessing: forasmuch as it is a hard thing to bridle our tongues: let vs take the more paine and heede to doe it. We see tha tmany euill wordes doe easily scape vs. And when we haue talked to and fro vnadisedly: because wee bee accustomed to it, we thinke it is no fault before God. But let vs marke that forasmuch as wee bee naturally too much inclined to speake vndiscreetely, and to cast foorth wordes of blame and reproch against our neighbours: wee haue the more neede to indeuour to imprison our tongues and to holde them downe. For though wee bee giuen to some one fault more than to others: that will not serue vs for excuse before God. But when wee perceiue any fault in our selues, we must not flatter our selues in it, but rather bee sorie for it and say, Alas I see this disease reigneth too much in me, and therefore I must fight the more stoutly against it, and I must by Gods grace inforce my selfe to attende to the repressing thereof, seeing I perceiue that God condemneth it. And herewithall let vs bethinke vs of the threates that are giuen out against it. For whenas saincte Paul saieth that neither whoremongers, nor drunkardes, nor theeues, nor murtherers shall inherite the kingdome of heauen: he addeth also *Cursed speakers*, and he banisheth them likewise from all hope of life and saluation.

Nowe when wee heare these thinges, is it for

vs to couer our selues any more with leaues, or to beare our selues on hande that there is no harme in speaking euil of our neighbors? Thinke wee that the threate which God hath vttered by the mouth of S. Paul, serueth but to feare little children, and shall not bee executed vppon such as will needes exempt themselues from it, as it were in despyte of him? Yes.

So then let vs take paine in this behalfe: and to conclude, let vs specially make this comparison, that if God will haue vs to maintaine the good name of our neighbours, forbidding vs so rashly to lay blame or misreport vpon it, whereby their honestie may bee defaced: hee will much more haue vs to regarde his honour. For are wee not a hundredfolde more bounde to maintaine Gods honour, than to preserue the good estimation of men: seeing wee cannot by any meanes benefite him? Yes: And therefore let vs beware that we beare not false witnesse against God, according to Sainct Paules saying, who auoweth that such as corrupt the pureness of the Gospel, are falsewitnesses, against God and not against men. What is to be done then? Wee must maintaine Gods trueth, and deale soundly in it, that forasmuch as wee see the doctrine is good, wee beare it aboue and maintaine it, knowing that God hath ordeyned vs to bee as his deputies. Then if I see the trueth oppressed, I must not suffer it, to my power. Why so? God hath appointed mee to see that lying and vntrueth bee suppressed in his name.

And this is to bee obserued most specially, when the doctrine of salustion commeth in question. As for example, when wee see the doctrine in daunger to bee falsified, and that men would mingle Leuen with it, to imbrewe men with falshood and leasings: in that case we must be zealous indeede, not suffer false witnesses to haue their full swindge against God, vnlesse we mind to consent to them, and to bee partakers with them, as I haue declared alreadie. Finally let vs learne, that when wee haue liued in such plainenesse among men, as it cannot bee laide to our charge that wee haue gone about to deface any man by slaundering, rayling, or backbyting: wee must also haue such zeale to Godwarde as his trueth may continue sounde, and be maintained to reigne among vs. Thus ye see in effect what wee haue to consider vppon this commaundement.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs perceiue them better than we haue done, and to leade vs more and more to such repentance, as we may learne to bethinke vs of our sinnes, to be sorie for them, and to mislike of them, that hauing obteined forgiuenes of them, we may learne to direct our life according to his holy commaundementes, so as he may be honored of vs with true obedience, & not onely with confession of the mouth. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people & nations of ȝ earth &c.

On Friday the fift of Iuly. 1555.

The xlj. Sermon, which is the twelfth vpon the fifth Chapter.

21 Thou shalt not lust after thy neighbours wife, neither shalt thou couet thy neighbours house, nor his fielde, nor his manseruant, nor his womanseruaunt, nor his Oxe, nor his Asse, nor any thing that is thy neighbours.

IT might seeme at the first sight that this commandement were more than needeth, because that in condemning of theftes & whoredome, God ment thereby to represse all wicked affections. For I told you that we must expounde these commandements according to gods nature, and we knowe that it is Gods peculiar office to serch mens hearts, so as he knoweth euen the deepest, secretest, and hiddenest thoughtes. It followeth then that in forbidding men to be theeues and whoremasters, hee ment also to bridle their affections and lustes. And indeede, if it were not so: God had no more power in making of lawes, than mortal men. For if an earthly man condemneth whoredome, he will also condemne the intent of it. If there appeare a wicked intent, it shal be punished. If Gods Lawe were no more but so: it were a matter of no great importance: for it were but a ciuil order to gouerne vs honestly to the worldward. But there is much more in it: for we see howe S. Paul saith, that the lawe cannot be kept without a pure conscience and an vnfeined faith. If it bee requisite for vs to haue such a soundnesse in vs, for the well keeping of Gods Lawe: it followeth that all wicked lusts were forbidden vnder the name of whoredome. As much is to be said of the word *Theft*. Also we might alledge the authoritie of our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is a faithfull expounder of the Lawe. For it is by his spirite, that Moses and all the Prophets spake. Why then is it added heere, that we must not couet? If all wicked lustes were spoken of before: why shoulde they bee repeted againe? Wee must marke, that in this place God meaneth not to represse the affections that are fully intended and determined vpon: but the other affections or motions that stirre vs vp and prouoke vs although we neither sticke to them nor consent to them. This requireth a longer and plainer exposition.

1. Tim. 1. 5.

Mat. 5. 28. 1. Pet. 3. 19.

Sometimes *Concupiscence* or *Lust* betokeneth the will in man. As for example, when I see my neighbours goods and am tempted to couet them, and to lust after them: Now if I feede this temptation in my self, and giue my selfe the bridle: then doth the sinne so ouermaster me, that my wil is fully resolued vpon it, and I would faine that those goods were mine. This is a kinde of couetousnes or lust that carieth the will with it: for the partie consenteth to the sinne, and hee would put his wicked intent in execution, if hee were able. Nowe such kinde of wicked couetings and lustings were forbidden heretofore where it is saide, *Thou shalt not steale*, *Thou shalt not commit adulterie*. For there God hath forbidden vs, not onely the actuall deeds of theft and whordome: but also the verie lusting and longing after another mans wife, goods, or possessions.

But there is another kinde of couetousnesse or lust, wherevnto we doe not altogether cleaue, as to consent thereto and yet notwithstanding it tickleth and moueth vs in such sort, as wee feele some euill prouocation in our selues, which is against God, & striueth against the righteousnes that is conteined in the Law. Those are the lusts that are forbidden in this place.

And so we see, that God hauing alreadie condemned all wicked intents and purposes: doeth iustly adde, that that is not yet such a perfection as he requireth at our handes: but that we must vnderstande that all manner of affections which stirre vs vp to euill, [are sinfull:] insomuch that although wee determine not vppon any thing in our selues, ne purpose it at all, but onely that some lusting or liking doe glaunce through our heart: A sinne is forthwith committed, and wee bee guiltie before God. We see then what manner of soundnesse is required in this text: namely howe that our Lorde hauing alreadie forbidden wicked intents, addeth that all our senses & wits must be so imprisoned vnder the feare of him, and so inflamed with loue and desire to liue in all holinesse: as wee may not bee moued or stirred one way nor other, by any wicked passion, to luste after another mans gooddes or wife.

Seeing wee haue Gods meaning: nowe let vs see whereto he bindeth vs: for the Lawe shoulde be as a lookingglasse vnto vs, to behold our own wretchednesse in. And when we once knowe our duetie: let vs assure our selues we be worthy to be condemned, if we draw not to the perfection which God calleth vs vnto. Thus yee see whervppon wee must stand, that wee may make our profite by this last commandement of the Law. And to the end we may take the better heede to it, and consider that it is such a doctrine as deserueth well to haue our whole mindes applyed vnto it: let vs beare in minde howe saint Paul saieth, that whereas hee had beene counted a great doctor, and a wise man, and had beene trained vp in Gods lawe from his childhood: yet notwithstanding he had beene so blinde that he wist not what Gods Lawe ment, vntill hee had beene conuerted, and that our Lord Iesus Christ had inlightened him by his Gospel, and so made him to knowe wherevnto the Lawe ought to leade vs. Yee see then howe S. Paul had beene brought vp in such sort, that he was of great reputation among men, howbeit not among the heathen, as who should say hee had beene some Philosopher, but as one that had beene trayned vp in the Lawe of God. And as in respect of his life, he protesteth y he had bin vnblameable before men. Yee see then that S. Paul was a lusty and a wise man in common account: and yet for all that, hee is but a filthie beast as in respect of Gods Lawe. Why so? He saith that he thought himselfe to bee alyue, and to haue beene righteous before God, not knowing that hee needed the mercy which God offereth to all sinners. For hee absteined from whoredome, and robberie and such other things: and againe he had no euill intentes that any man coulde perceiue or knowe, by reason whereof hee thought himself to be a righteous man. But at the length when God had pitied him, hee opened his eyes and made him to vnderstande by this last word, *Thou shalt not lust*. Loe howe S. Paul began to learne the lawe newe againe, whereof he had beene a teacher before. S. Paul making profession of the Lawe wherein he had beene brought vp from his tender age, saith that vntill such time as he had throughly bethought him of the meaning of this text: hee posted ouer it as it had beene vppon burning coales, as they say, so as he tasted not the strength and power of the lawe, nor knew what sinne was that hee might condemne himselfe and flee to Gods mercie for refuge, wherein the hope of our saluation lyeth, and ought to bee grounded. Seing that S. Paul could not conceiue the meaning of the lawe nor attaine to the right vnderstanding thereof, but by this chast let vs determine with our selues to trauell earnestlyer in it. And sith hee was so blinde all the time of his life vntill his conuersion, that he vnderstoode not that saying: wee ought require the better heede of it, as I tolde you before. For wee be not of better abilitie than hee: but God must bee faine to shewe vs by his holy spirite, what is ment by this coueting or lusting, which is condemned in this place.

But nowe besides this, we haue here another warning which is right necessarie for vs. For the diuel hath labored to couer this concupiscence after such a sort, as Gods intent and meaning might not be knowen, but that men might lightly passe ouer all wicked lustes, which were seene to be sinne, and whereof euery man might haue proofe in himselfe. Insomuch that men restrayned this worde *lust*, to none other affections than such as import a resolute purpose or full intent: but that is contrarie to the plaine meaning of Moses. And let vs consider what is come to passe in the Popedome. For although the Papistes cannot denie, but that to be prouoked and stirred vp to euill desires, is a damnable fault, and springeth of original sinne, and of the corruption which wee receiue from our father Adam: yet notwithstanding they imagine that after baptisme it is no longer sinne, though there come a thought into a mans

minde

Rom. 7. 9.
Act. 22. 3.
Gal. 1. 13.
Phil. 3. 5. 6.

minde to doubt of Gods promises, and to grudge and repine against him. If a man bee afflicted, and his heart riseth against it, so as he blameth God of vnrighteousnesse and crueltie: that is no sinne say the Papistes. And they be not the small fooles that say so: but it is a generall resolution in all their diuelish Synagogues or Schooles. There is not any synagogue in the Popedome, wherein this point is not receiued as an article of the faith, namely ỹ though a man bee moued and prouoked by any wicked lust, yet it is no sinne: insomuch that if hee bee tempted to murther, to poyson, to committe whoredome, and to doe all the crimes and outrages of the world: yet if he do not *consent thereto*, nor *assent*, (for those are the two termes that they vse) that is to say, so they determine not fully vpon the matter to say I will goe through with my wicked intent, nor stande vpon it to delight in that wicked affection: it is no sinne at all, it is but an exercising of our selues in battell, whereby wee shewe our selues to bee valiant champions, and that sinne ouermastreth vs not. Indeed it is true that the faithfull doe well shewe that Gods spirite reigneth in them, by their beating backe of such temptations. And when they hold themselues in awe, and as it were imprison themselues, and resist those things because they know they bee contrarie to Gods will, and that hee condemneth them: it is certaine that thing sheweth, that God hath giuen them the vpper hande of sinne, and that his power is resident in them, and that they be stout champions to fight against Satan: but yet doeth it not followe, that they bee cleare from all fault, and that they can pluck vp sin, and fully deliuer themselues from it, as though there were not any spot or blemish more in them. Alas, we come farre short of that. For surely on the one side wee haue cause to praise God, for giuing vs the grace by his holie spirite to ouercome all wicked affections. But yet must wee sigh with all humilitie, acknowledging our selues to be weake on our part, and that if he pitied vs not, we haue such a wicked minde alredy in vs, as prouoketh his vengeance against vs, so as we shoulde well deserue to be vtterly destroied at his hande. Moreouer it was requisite that God should discouer the shame of the popedome, and shewe that the greatest clarks there, are duller witted than the sillie Infidels that neuer hard one word of holy scripture. Why so? For we must take that which is written in the Law. It is saide that the whole summe of the lawe is that wee shoulde loue God with all our heart, with al our soule, with all our minde, and with all our powers. If it had beene saide, Thou shalt loue GOD with all thy heart: very well, a man might haue concluded, that it is no sinne vnlesse thewil doe fully resolue vpon it and purpose it. For although the word *Heart*, doe sometime signifie the vnderstãding: yet doth the holy scripture take it also for the will. Nowe then a man might alledge this shift: it is saide that wee must loue God with all our hearts therfore so we haue not our will bent contrarie to goodnesse, it is ynough, we be quite discharged before GOD. For men woulde take the wil for the wicked affection, and so it woulde seeme that the wicked lustes which stirre vs vp and prouoke vs, are not compriſed vnder the name of sinne, so long as they holde vs not captiue. But when as hee addeth, with all thy heart, with all thy thoughts, and with all thy powers: let vs see whether a peece of my soule or minde be not alreadie corrupted, when I conceiue any thing against God, or when I conceiue any wicked lust of whoredome or robberie, although I sticke not to it. Is it no bee saide that I loue God with all my heart, when a peece of my minde is bent against him? The case concerneth not the very heart or will, as I haue declared afore: but the conceit that is in the soule of man. Now then, I shew that there is vanitie in mee, and that the feare and reuerence of God restraine mee not as they shoulde doe: and therefore it followeth that I am condemned as blameable, because I haue not discharged my self in louing my God as I am commaunded. Again, is there no power of my soule which is not applyed to the thinking of some one thing or other that is contrarie to God and his righteousnes? Yes. We see then that naughtie and wicked thoughts are to bee condemned, and wee must no more qualifie them that they shoulde not bee punished at Gods hand: and also that the men which neuer consented to euill so farre as to purpose and fully intende it, should not faile to be cursed before God, if hee listed to vse rigor against them. Nowe therefore we haue the true and plaine meaning of this text, whereby we see that it behoueth vs to looke neerer to it, that we be not beguiled nor misledde. And S. Pauls example ought to pricke vs the more forwarde, seeing he confesseth himselfe to haue bin ignorant of Gods lawe, vntill our Lorde Iesus Christ had inlightened him by his holy spirit, to the intent he should know what was ment by the word: *Lust*, or *Concupiscence*.

Nowe must we apply the foretouched things to our benefite, and vse. First therefore let vs learne, that to serue God well, we must not onely be desirous to doe well, and go forwarde therein to effect: but also ridde our hearts from all euill affections and corrupt thoughts, so as al our senses may tende to the giuing of our selues all wholly vnto God. Let vs not shewe our selues to haue beene drawen aside to reele one way or other: but let vs bee throughly stayed, to runne forwarde without stopping or stunting, yea euen to runne forwarde in the way that GOD sheweth vs, so as there may be nothing but perfect pureneſse in vs. And when we once knowe that well: then must wee take warning to stande vppon our garde. For we see howe men runne astraye and dispence with themselues. And what is the cause thereof? It is for that they make their reckening without their hoste, as wee say. For they conster Gods lawe after their owne fancie, bearing themselues in hand that it is ynough for them, so they had none euill intent with them, nor rested vppon the thing with determinate purpose. Tush say they, God imputeth none of all this. And thereupon they walke

for warde in leawde lusts, with a towell of their owne tying before their eyes, that they may not discerne their owne secret deceiuing of themselues. But yet when men haue spoken so, they cannot scape the hande of the heauenly iudge. And therefore let vs looke to the restreyning of our lustes. For God hath condemned not onely the wicked intents and purposes: but also all the lustes that prouoke vs & thrust vs forward vnto euill. Wherefore let vs liue in the greater awe, and let euerie man holde himselfe short, euen because there is no part in vs which is not infected with sin. Let vs make a trial of al the powers of our soule, and wee shall finde that sinne is shed throughout, like as when a poyson is soked into a mans bodie, it infecteth him throughout, and so is there as it were an vniuersall leprosie which hath ouergrowen the whole man, both bones, and marrowe, and thoughts, and affections, and all that euer is of him. Seeing then that our nature is so corrupted, ought we not to be the more vigilant to holde our selues in awe, considering that God by his lawe condemneth all wicked thoughts, that tende to the prouoking of vs vnto euill, inasmuch as there is a certaine inward mouing that tickleth vs, and wee feele our will pricked forwarde, although it be not ledde quite and cleane away as a prisoner? Sith we see this, haue wee not good cause to gather our wittes to vs, and to walke the more warely and carefully vnder the hande of God? So then whereas wee bee drowsie and slothfull, and woulde faine discharge our selues to Godward with ease: yee see howe this commaundement ought to waken vs. But wee must vnderstande that it is not for vs to scape by such shiftes. And why? After that God hath condemned wicked intentes: hee proceedeth still to the condemning of euill lustes too. And that ought to stande vs to a dubble vse. The one is, that we must pray to God the earnestlyer, to gouerne vs with his holye spirite, and to clense vs from all vices and corruptions, & that hauing prayed vnto him, euery of vs shoulde inforce himselfe, and as it were doe violence to our nature, and to all our senses and powers of minde, forasmuch as there is nothing in vs but rebelliousnesse against the Lawe of God, euen as Saint Paul speaketh not onely of mens willes, when he saith: that men in their owne frowarde nature are enemies to God, but also of their affections and thoughts. Hee vseth a worde there, which extédeth euen to the thoughts ỹ we conceiue. Al of thẽ (saith he) are enemies vnto God.

Rom. 8. 7.

Seeing it is so: let vs assure our selues, that when we haue takẽ neuer so much paine to hold our selues imprisoned vnder the awe of God: yet there will scape manie euill lustes from vs, the which it behoueth vs to bewaile before God. And so the first point is, that we must be earnest in calling vppon God, to gouerne vs by his holy spirit, and doe our indeuer and diligence to bridle our selues in such wise as satan may not haue any hoole to enter at, nor bee able to make any breach vpõ vs, to win the possession of our harts: but that we driue them a great way of, so as if we perceiue any thought tending vnto euill, wee straitwayes preuent it and set a barre in the way saying: No not so, Thy God must haue the whole dominion of thee, so as he possesse, not only thy heart, but also all thy senses. And for the second point wee must learne to condemne our selues, that we may glorifie God in cõfessing our selues to bee all giltie, and that if hee call vs to a reckoning, we be all vndone and cast away, if he vse rigor against vs. To that point must wee come, or else we shall neuer profite in Gods Lawe as wee shoulde doe. But here it might bee demaunded, seeing that God knoweth mens frailtie, why hee doth not either strengthen them better, or els make a Lawe that were lesse straite and seuere? For it should seeme that God ment to oppresse vs, when he forbiddeth wicked lustes, and thinks it not ynough for vs to yeld him obediẽce in our willes, without adding of the other worde. And that is the cause why scoffers say that God ment to mocke men in his lawe, and intended (as we would say) to forbidde men to scratch, when hee made them to itch. But wee must come to the curstednes that is in our selues: namely that we haue neither thought nor affectiõ in vs, (as I said afore) but the same is disobedient to Gods righteousnesse. Therefore let vs not wonder though there be such a battle betwene Gods law & our lusts. For why? when we haue throughly searched what is in vs: we shall find nothing there but vtter corruptiõ and damnable vice: for we cannot conceiue so much as one thought which tendeth not to euill. Forasmuch as it is so: behold, God giueth vs here a perfect rule of all goodnes and righteousnes. Needes therefore must there rise vp as it were a thundering, and the fire & water must needes shewe their contrarie workings. Nowe there is lesse agreement betweene mans nature and Gods righteousnes, than is betwixt fire and water. Therefore let vs not thinke it straunge, that God doth so represse all our lusts. And when we heare the blasphemies which the scoffers that I spake of, doe spew out: let vs abhor them as monsters. For insteade of glorifying God for his righteousnes, they come dashing against him like wild and mad beasts. Thus much concerning this point of the frailtie of men.

Nowe although it be such: yet is it not to be marueiled at, that God hath condemned it in his law. Why so? For in ordering of our life and in shewing vs howe we should walke, God respecteth not what we be able to doe, nor ỹ measure of our strength: but what duety we owe to him, & what righteousnesse is, although it be not to be foũd in vs. We be Gods creatures: and ought we not then to giue our selues wholly to his seruice? Yes certainly. That is a peremptory reason. And men may well grunt at it, but yet shall they alwayes finde proofe in themselues, that forasmuch as they belong to GOD, they ought to dedicate all their senses, all their affections, and all that euer is in them both in bodie and soule vnto him. Howbeit let vs marke well herewithall, that wee cannot discharge our selues thereof: and what is the cause thereof but our owne naughtinesse? And we take that from Adam. That followeth not. For although

wee bee holde in bondage vnder sinne, and this bondage hindereth vs from wel doing, and driueth vs to all euill: yet howsoeuer wee fare, the roote of it is in our selues, and euery man shall feele himselfe blame worthie, so as wee shall not neede to say that wee bee driuen by any other force: but euerie man is caried and driuen to it by his owne lust. And so is there no more excuse for vs. Whereby it appeareth, that it is not for vs to measure Gods Lawe by our owne power and abilities. Why so? As I sayde afore, GOD respecteth not what wee can doe, nor what our abilitie can brooke: but he respecteth wherein wee bee bounde vnto him, and hee hath an eye to the perfection that is without vs. That is the thing which wee haue to marke. And it is the thing that beguyleth the Papistes. For they haue this principle among them, That Gods Lawe is not vnpossible to men. It is a wonder that they should bee so straught, and that the diuell shoulde bewitch them after that fashion. For it is most euident and apparant doctrine throughout the whole Scripture, that men shall alwayes bee condemned by the Lawe, and that they must bee fayne to flee for refuge to Gods onely mercie. When Saint Paule goes about to proove that all men are cursed for as much as all men are sinners, and that there is not so much as one righteous man: what argument vseth he? He alledgeth this text of Moses, Cursed are all they that performe not the whole contentes of the Lawe. Nowe at the first blush, it shoulde seeme that Saint Paule reasoneth amisse, and that the sayde allegation is impertinent. Well then, it is sayde that all such as transgresse Gods Lawe are cursed: but yet it followeth not therefore that all mankinde is accursed. For if a man keepe the lawe and discharge his duetie: in so doing hee is exempted from the sentence of condemnation. Some then there are to bee founde that haue performed the lawe: and therefore all are not accursed. Yes. But Saint Paule presupposeth, that the lawe is vnpossible. And if he should not presuppose that: he had spoken as a witlesse and vnreasonable man. Therefore we see that the Papistes haue taken a grounde that is cleane contrarie to Gods spirit: and surely hee bestoteth them in such wise, as they knowe not the verye Apsie of the Christian faith and Religion. So then let vs marke well, that when wee treate of Gods lawe, wee must not measure it by our abilitie, nor looke what wee can doe: but wee must looke what wee owe vnto God. Yea but saye they, not so: howe shall wee doe then? For to their seeming all the worlde shoulde bee damned. It is true, and so is it meete that it shoulde bee: that is to wit, that wee shoulde all be damned, if wee will not haue saluation in Iesus Christ. For howe shall wee seeke Gods grace, vnlesse wee thinke wee haue neede of it? Men will not begge by their good willes. So long as we thinke our selues to haue any righteousnesse of our owne, wee will not passe to seeke any else where than in our selues. Therefore it behoueth vs to bee vterly ridde of it, and to seeke Gods wrath and death lying heauie vpon vs: for without that, wee will neuer vouchsafe to submit our selues to God to obtaine mercie. But this deserueth to bee layde foorth more at large.

Therefore let vs beare well in minde first of all, that when wee feele any sinfull thought in vs, and our lustes doe tickle vs vnto euill: we be guiltie before God. But here it might bee demaunded, how then? If a man doe but conceiue a thought, so as he not onely hath no will to abyde by it, but also misliketh of it euen before he haue felte any sting or pricke of it: is this sinne? Nowe there are thoughtes which touche not our heart at all, neither are wee mooued with them, neither doe wee conceiue any euill desire. A thought commeth vppon a man as it were sleeping, and it flitteth afore him. What? so as his heart is moued withit, or his desire inclyned to it? No. When it happeneth but euen so to vs, surely it behoueth vs to bewayle it before GOD, and to consider that if we were not holde backe by his grace: there were a gap open for Satan, and he woulde by and by winne the aduauntage of vs. Therefore wee must stil sigh in this case. But yet doeth not God impute this for sinne.

The second poynt is, when wee not onely conceiue some euill thought in our minde, and some thing presenteth it selfe before vs: but also wee bee somewhat mooued with it, so as wee feele some sting of Satan pricking vs, and then is the sinne conceiued: that is to say, although there bee no consent as they terme it, nor any resolute purpose: yet is the sinne full shaped before God, and it is damnable. It is expedient to alledge examples hereof. It may bee that a man beholding another mans house or ground, conceiueth some lyght imagination, and yet is no whit mooued therewithall in his heart, ne hath any desire to say, I woulde this were mine, but passeth it ouer and sees it but vanitie. Hee can not let the comming of it into his minde, but yet (as I sayde afore:) although it bee not matched with any euill affection, GOD doeth thereby warne vs of the infirmitie that is in vs, and it behoueth vs to humble our selues, and to bee sorie, and to consider that it is such a fault alreadie, as wee are well worthie to bee condemned for. For let vs see if this bee to be founde in the Angels of heauen. No vndoubtedly. And yet the righteousnesse of the Angels is hardly and scantly answearable to the Lawe of God. In deede there is a righteousnesse of God (as wee haue seene in the Booke of Iob) which surmounteth the righteousnesse of the Lawe. But though the Angels of heauen giue themselues neuer so much to the keeping of Gods lawe: surely the vttermost that they can doe, is but to frame themselues to the rule that is giuen vs here. Nowe then wee see how it is a fault alreadie, for the which men ought to condemne themselues, though they haue not had any wicked thing presented before them, but euen a little heartrising, so as a man shoulde say, I woulde, and yet for all that he doeth verie

Iam.1.14.

Gal.3.10.

Deut.27.26

Iob.4.18.

sodainely beare it back, and yeeldeth not thereto, though I say, he so cut it off, yet is he guiltie of that coueting or lusting whereof mention is made here. And seeing it is so, let vs learne to condemne our selues in all respectes.

Againe let vs looke that wee condemne our selues dubble, when wee haue not onely had some hearrising to prouoke vs to euill: but also some setled affection by nourishing the said hearrising, as when a woman breedeth childe and nourisheth the conception till it come to the birth. Now then, when wee haue giuen head after that fashion to our euill lustes, so farre forth that our will is ouercome, and wee rest vppon the euill to consent vnto it: behold (say I) there lyeth a dubble condemnation vpon vs. And then must wee bewaile our wretchednesse yet more bicause we see a dubble condemnation hanging ouer our heades, vnlesse GOD of his infinite goodnesse doe spare vs. Thus ye see what wee haue to marke. Iam. 1.15.

But nowe herewithall wee must resorte to the remedie. For wee shoulde fall into vtter dispayre and confusion, if wee had not Gods grace to succour vs withall. Therefore if wee acknowledge our selues blameworthie in all respectes: then doeth GOD call vs to him, and shewe vs that although the wicked lustes which are in vs, bee sinne of their owne nature: yet hee will not impute them to vs for sinne. Then if it bee demaunded whether euill lust, bee imputed for sinne to the faithfull: I say no: but they bee two diuers thinges. For if ye haue an eye to the nature of the vice: ye shall euer finde it to bee sinne: but yet GOD pardoneth it. After that manner shall no euill lustes bee layde to the charge of the faithfull, for as much as they bee forgiuen through Gods free goodnesse: and wee knowe also that all our spottes are wyped out by the bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ: and therof is Baptisme a good warrant vnto vs. For there haue wee our spirituall washing, to cleanse vs from all the filth and vncleannesse that is in vs, that wee may appeare pure and cleane before GOD. So then our wicked lustes shall not come to account. Nay (which more is) euen the deadly sinnes, notwithstanding that they proceede euen into the acte or deede dooing, shall not bee imputed vnto vs: verily euen bicause (as I saide before) God respecteth not that: and yet notwithstanding he will that we haue an eye to it. Howbeit, if any man beguile himselfe by bearing himselfe in hand that he hath not conceyued any wicked lust: it causeth GOD to call him to account. And why? For in as much as men soothe themselues, it is meete that they should be condemned. And for the same cause hath the Diuell brought to passe to bleare mens eyes by making them beleeue that none of all those things is sinne: in so much that wee see howe the Papistes imagine, that euen the grosseste faultes that bee, are blotted out by the signe of the Crosse, or taken away with the sprinkling of holy water. To their seeming they be matters of no weight, and they dally with God as with a little babie. But on the contrarie part let vs alwayes beare this in minde. And for as much as wee be not only too negligent, but also inclined to sooth our selues in our own vices: let vs take this looking glasse to behold our selues in. Let vs not deceiue our selues. A man may bee smeared or grimed, and euerie man shall laugh at him, and yet he himselfe shall not perceiue it a whit. But if he go to a glasse, and there spie his face all bespotted, he will shrinke away and go wash it of. Euen so must wee doe. Surely the whole Lawe of God is as a glasse to shewe vs our foulenesse, to the intent wee should bee sorie and ashamed of our lewd doings. And if we will haue a true looking glasse, we must come to this present commaundement as I haue saide alreadie. For as long as we reade no more but *Thou shalt not steale, Thou shalt not murther, Thou shalt not commit adulterie*, all is well, euerie man will beare himselfe in hand that he is not guiltie. But when wee come vnto this poynt, *Thou shalt not lust*: it is a sharp lancing knife wherewith God launceth deeper, to search not only the bottom of our hearts, but also of all our thoughtes, imaginations and conceits. There is not that thing in vs which commeth not then to triall and knowledge. In so much that the things which we tooke to be no faultes at all, must be condemned before God, and hee must haue the iudging of them, vnlesse wee play the iudges with our selues aforehand. And herewithall wee haue to magnifie the mercie of our God, in that although we be faultie so greatly & so many wayes, yet notwithstanding he accepteth vs for righteous. Let vs make comparison here betweene the righteousnesse which we obtaine by faith, and the curse that is vppon vs. Wherevnto be we plunged? Are we faultie but in some one offence, or in some two or three, or in some certaine nomber? Nay we be plunged in such a gulfe, that if wee begin once to fall to reckening, wee must needes be confounded. A hundred Millions of faultes is not the hundred part of the offences that wee haue commited before God. Then are we so guiltie, as there is none ende nor measure of our sinnes. Yet notwithstanding God receiueth vs to mercie, so as wee bee counted as righteous before him, as though there were such full soundnesse and perfection in vs, that nothing were amisse, but that we had performed the whole Lawe. Seeing then that God forgiueth vs such an infinite nomber of offences, and clotheth vs with his owne righteousnesse, through the operation of the death and passion of our Lord Iesus Christ, in as much as wee lay hold by faith vppon the grace that is purchased for vs, and do him the honour to say, Lord, it is in thy meere and free bestowed goodnesse that our saluation consisteth: doeth it not appeare therein, how much wee bee bound vnto him? Yes. So then, whē Gods Law hath brought vs to our wittes end, not only bicause of the infinite nomber of our lustes, but also bicause wee shoulde lye buried vnder them as vnder huge mountaines, if God should deale rigorously with vs: let vs call to minde that Gods intent is not to leaue vs in despaire, but to lift vs vp againe as soone

1.Iohn 1.7. Eph. 5.20.

soone as wee be sunke downe. When he sees our feeblenesse, he reacheth vs his hand, and calleth vs to him, and will haue vs to bee comforted, for as much as he of his mercie layeth not any of al our sinnes to our charge. Thus ye see howe the faithfull ceasse not to be of good cheere, though they bee so condemned in themselues. But yet must wee begin at this ende of being vtterly dismayed in our selues, that our Lorde may deliuer vs from the dungeon of death, and wee acknowledge þ our saluation consisteth in his only grace. Howbeit let vs notwithstanding liue warely and keepe good watch, assuring our selues þ when we haue trauailed neuer so much, and taken neuer so much paine to serue God, so as wee haue on the one side eschewed all occasions of euill, and on the otherside subdued our affections, & lusts, & also indeuored to represse al wicked thoughts: yet wee must not ceasse to condemne our selues still, and to stand still in awe. Although we haue had victory through the grace of God, and sinne hath not ouermaistred vs: yet doth it dwell continually in vs, and there is still some vncleannesse and spot in vs. Therefore let vs sigh, and let vs sigh in such sort, as it may sharpen vs to doe our duetie. We see how S. Paule speaketh of it. After he had profited as much as might bee, and was come to an Angelicall holinesse: yet notwithstanding he saith still, wretch that I am, who shall deliuer mee from this body of death? And what is the cause that he considereth death in himselfe, but for that he sawe sinne there? Nenertheless let vs vnderstand that wee must not bee out of heart. Although wee perceiue a Million of sinnes day by day in vs: yet must wee still passe on further. And therefore when Saint Paule exhorteth the faithfull to eschew sinne: He saieth not, Let not sinne dwell in you that he sayeth, Let not sinne raigne in you. In deede it were to be wished that sinne dwelled not in vs: but seeing it is in vs, yet must wee not bee too much discomforted. For whereas it is saide that sinne dwelleth in vs: first it warneth vs of our wretched state: and secondly it willeth vs to consider that wee must bee occupyed in continuall warfare, and therefore flee the earnestlyer to our God for succour, praying him to strengthen vs with his power, by the grace of his holy spirit which he hath giuen vs for our Lord Iesus Christes sake.

Rom. 6. 12.

Nowe let vs fall downe in þ presence of our good God, with acknowledgment of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, and that wee may learne to frame our lyues to the obeying of him, which beholdeth not onely our outward woorkes, intentes and affections: but also euen all our thoughtes and conceytes. And for as much as wee can not attayne to such perfection, out of hand: let [vs beseeche God] that the same may bee an occasion to humble vs: and therewithall to stirre vs vp continually to fyght lustilyer, so as euerie of vs may inforce himselfe to correct the vyces that are in his nature, vntill our Lorde hauing rid vs from this corrupt flesshe, doe clothe vs againe with his owne righteousnesse, and fashion vs al wholly like to his glorious image. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people, &c.

On Tewsday the xvj. of Iuly. 1555.

The xlij. Sermon, which is the thirteenth vpon the fifth Chapter.

22 These are the woordes which the Lorde spake to your multitude, vpon the Mount from the middes of the fire, out of the Cloud and darkenesse, with a great voyce. And he added no more thereunto, but wrate them in two tables of stone, and gaue them vnto mee.

FOr as much as wee finde not a better excuse of our lewdnesse & disobedience towardes God, than to pleade ignoraunce: we coulde finde in our heartes to haue alwayes that shrouding sheete, so as wee myght saye wee vnderstand not what GOD sayeth, or that hee speakes not vnto vs, or elsse that his voyce is too farre off for vs to heare. But GOD foreseeing such lewdnesse, meant to preuent all that men could alledge, to the ende they might haue nothing to defend themselues withall. And therefore in setting forth his Lawe, it was his wil that the doctrine which is contained therein, should be vttered with a loud & shirle voyce. Yea & he spake it not onely to three or foure, *but to all the people*, both great & small without exception. Besides this, it was his will that the lawe should be put in writing, that it might continue, and not serue for one age onely, but stand in force and authoritie to þ worldes end. And þ is the cause why it is said in this place, *That God spake with a loude voyce.* Hereby Moses sheweth that the Lawe is no hidden doctrine, and that men can not alledge that they bee not of sufficient learning: for not without cause did God so lift vp his voyce, when he intended to giue a rule for men to liue by. It is

Matt. 5. 18.

added expreſſely, *That he was doone to the whole multitude.* As if he ſhould ſay, It is true that God hath choſen men from among you to gouerne you, and that he hath giuen them his ſpirit; but yet for all that, he will haue his lawe knowen euen of the rudeſt and moſt ignorant, ſo as it may be a wiſedome common to all men. That is one of the pointes which we haue to marke here.

Pſal.19.8.

The ſeconde is, *That God added not any thing more*, after thoſe ten ſentences. Wherein Moſes doeth the people to vnderſtand, that this briefeneſſe which God vſeth, ought to incourage vs to receiue the thinges that he ſpeaketh. For if he ſhould lay great volumes before vs: we might replie, that all our life would not ſuffice to ſtudie them. God therefore was not ouerlong in giuing vs his woord. There are but onely ten verſes of them. Let vs count them vpon our fingers, and wee ſhall haue inſtruction ynough in all things that are requiſite for our life. Yea & herewithall Moſes meant to doe vs to wit alſo, that ſeeing God hath giuen vs ſuch a ſure rule, as he intended not to adde any whit at all to ỹ which he had ſpoken alreadie: it behoueth vs to holde vs to it, and it is not lawfull for any creature to adde aught vnto it. Thus much concerning the ſecond point.

For the third point he rehearſeth that againe which he had ſayde heretofore: that is to wit,

Deut.4.11. *That God in ſtiling forth his lawe, ſpake from out of the cloud, and that the mountaine ſmoked, and that there were flames of fire*, and flaſhes of lightening flew to and fro. Whereto tendeth all this? That the doctrine might carrie the greater Maieſtie, and that men might be moued to humble themſelues reuerently before GOD, and to ſubmit themſelues wholly to his word, and to obey the ſame. Theſe are the three notable points which Moſes rehearſeth here, before he proceede to the reſt.

Now as touching ỹ firſt, let vs remember what hath bene ſaid afore, that is to ſay, *That God ſpake loud and ſhrile*: and not to a fewe folke, but *generally to all the people*: which thing was doone to make vs vnderſtand, that Gods woord ſhall bee cleare and certaine to vs, ſo wee playe not the deafe folkes wilfully. True it is that our wits are ſo weake, as we ſhall neuer vnderſtand one word of the things that God ſpeaketh to vs, except he

1.Cor.2.13. inlighten vs by his holy ſpirit: for the ſenſuall man vnderſtandeth not the heauenly thinges. Thoſe then are too high for vs. But whereof cõmeth that fault and vice but of our owne blindneſſe? Yet notwithſtanding, Gods trueth, as in reſpect of it ſelfe and in it owne nature, is eaſie & open ynough: and therefore let vs not charge it with darkſomneſſe. Againe, what is to be done, if we would haue God to make vs profite in his word? Let vs be lowely and of ſmall reputation:

Pſal.25.9. for it is not in vaine, that he hath promiſed to teache the lowely. Then let vs not truſt to our own wit, let vs not come with ouerweening and loftineſſe, as though wee thought our ſelues of ſufficient capacitie to iudge of the thinges that ſhall bee ſaid vnto vs: but let vs rather beſeeche God to open our eyes and to reach vs his hand, and let vs confeſſe that we haue not the apteneſſe to profite in his ſchoole, further foorth than he giueth it vs. If wee bee at that point: let vs not doubt but that Gods word will be eaſie to vs, and wee ſhall vnderſtand what he intendeth to ſay. Hereby we ſee what wretchednes hath bin in y world, whereby the cõmon people, and almoſt all other men haue bene phiched backe from reading the holy ſcriptures. For it hath bene an opinion, that it belonged to none but Monkes & Prieſtes: yea & in the end there was ſuch beaſtlineſſe, as it ſeemed that diuinitie ought to be locked vp in cheſtes or caskets. But yet for all that, this record hath indured, and muſt indure to the worldes ende, namely that God hath ſpoken with a loude voyce, & not hidden or ſtraunge himſelfe aſide into ſome litle odde nooke. Therefore it was too ſhamefull a thankleſneſſe, that men haue ſo left Gods woord as it were in a wilderneſſe. And wee ought to marke this text ſo much the more, where it is ſaide, that God ſpake not to ſome Doctor onely, but to all the people in common, yea euen to the verie ſimpleſt ſort of them. In reſpect whereof we haue cauſe to magnifie the goodneſſe of our God, in reſtoring the beneſite vnto vs, whereof wee ſee the moſt part of the world bereft, for their charliſhneſſe and retchleſneſſe ſake, ſo that now adays Gods word ſoundeth among vs, and we may reade it, and be partakers of it both openly and ſecretly, and the treaſures thereof are ſet foorth to vs, ſo as we may inioy them: and that is an inеſtimable beneſite, which wee ought to magnifie. Againe let vs be diligent in giuing eare to our God, and let no man alledge excuſes to ſhift himſelfe from him. For ſeeing that God ſpeaketh to all ỹ companie of the faithfull, euen to as many as are baptized in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: let euery man on his owne behalfe and in his degree, indeuour to profite thereby, and let all of vs in common take God for our ſchoolemaiſter, and bee readie to hearken to him whenſoeuer it pleaſeth him to ſpeake vnto vs, which thing he doth daily. Thus much concerning the firſt point, where it is ſaid that God ſpake to the whole multitude.

Now let vs come to the ſeconde point, that is to wit, *That he added not any thing*: and that is to the end that we ſhould be the willinger to heare what is contained in the Lawe. It is true that all that euer is ſet downe in writing by Moſes, belongeth to the Lawe. Likewiſe the thinges that the Prophets haue left vnto vs, and finally that which is added in the Goſpell, containe all one ſubſtance. And though the Byble be very great: yet notwithſtanding GOD hath made it all to ame at one certaine marke, to the intent we ſhould not goe wandering at rouers, nor be driuen to make too much ſeeking whither we ſhould goe. For why? All is referred to ten verſes, as I haue ſaid alreadie. Let vs recken vppon our fingers, and wee ſhall haue Gods commaundements, we ſhall haue a ſumme of the thinges which we ought to beare in minde, that we may be good ſchollers to Godward. Seeing there is ſuch briefeneſſe, muſt it not needes be that men

are too froward, if they refuse such teaching, and can finde no leasure to profite in Gods worde? Nowthen, let vs forbeare all such trifling replies as this, Oh sir, the holy scripture is a deepe sea, it is a bottomlesse pit. If a man would enter into it, how should he get out againe? Let vs alledge no such thinges. It is true ℣ in the scripture God sheweth such secrets, as euen ℣ Angels doe reuerence. It is true ℣ we can haue but a small tast of the so long as we be in this world. It is enough ℣ we know in part (as sayth Saint Paul) & darkely, and ℣ we see ℣ thinges now as it were through a glasse, which we cannot see as yet face to face. All this is very true. But yet for all ℣, God hath so abased and applyed himselfe to our slenderneesse: that the thinges are become easie vnto vs, or at leastwise wee conceiue so much of them, as is auailable to our saluation. If we meet with things that are doubtfull: let vs haue this modestie with vs, that wee rush not too farre forewarde, till wee haue first asked counsell at Gods mouth, knowing that wee bee yet farre of from our perfection. Yet notwithstanding, wee may alwayes glorie, that according to the abilitie that is giuen vs, our Lord will not leaue vs in doube and ignorance, without giuing of vs such certeintie, as we may walke safely on our way, so as we shall knowe that his calling of vs to him is not in vaine, and that wee bee not let loose to runne at rouers: but that wee haue a certeine marke set vp for vs to runne at, whereunto if wee hold on our way, wee ought not to mistrust that we shall misse, forasmuch as wee haue so good direction. Therefore let vs beare in minde, that our Lorde speaketh not here according to his owne nature.

1. Pet. 1. 12.

2. Cor. 3. 18.

For if he should speake in his owne language, should it bee vnderstood of mortall creatures? Alas no. But how is it that hee hath spoken to vs in the holy scripture? As nurces doe to their little babes. Saint Paul sayth that hee did as a nurce doth with her little children, when hee preached the Gospel. And in speaking of himselfe, no doubt but hee sheweth the goodnesse of God, who ruled him after that sort by his holy spirite. And looke what was in Paul: the same doe wee finde lykewise in Moses, and in all the prophets. Then let vs marke, that God made himselfe nurcelyke, who talketh not to her little babe as shee woulde doe to a man, but hath a respect of the childes capacitie. So then, GOD did as it were stoope, because wee should not haue vnderstood what hee sayd, vnlesse he had lowlyed himselfe vnto vs. That is the cause why that in the holy scripture, hee shewes himselfe the rather lyke a nurce, to the intent to conceale his high and infinite maiestie, whereunto wee could not atteine, no nor once come neere it. Seeing that GOD hath yeelded himselfe so courteously vnto vs: there hangeth the greeuouser condemnation ouer our heades, if wee indeuer not to profite in the doctrine, which is (as yee would say) chawed to vs aforehand, to the intent that we should doe no more but swallowe it downe and digest it. Furthermore let vs marke well, ℣ where as Moses sayth, *that God added not any thing to these ten sentences:* it is to the end that this breefenesse should stirre vs vp, and incourage vs, knowing that Gods intent is not to make vs to wander as in a thing that hath neither brim, nor bottome: but to set vs downe these onely ten sentences. True it is that he expoundeth these ten sentences by Moses, and consequently by all the prophets: and in the ende wee haue had a finall exposition of them, made by our Lorde Iesus Christ, as it is giuen vs nowadayes in the Gospell. But what for that? Yet haue wee still this one marke to aime at, *that there are but tenne sentences.* Sith it is so, must it not needes bee that men are too froward, when they dispise such grace of GOD, and cannot finde in their hearts to come to him when he intreateth them so gently? Yes. So then this is the effect of that which wee haue to remember here concerning the easinesse which Moses sheweth to bee in Gods word.

Heb. 1. 1. 2.

And by the way let vs marke also, that hee intended to cut off all occasion of quareling, to the ende wee shoulde learne to bee contented with the simplicitie of the lawe: that is to say, that wee should not fall to controlling of GOD, by adding of collups and morsells of our owne to his worde. For when hee spake: hee spake once for all. And hee will haue vs to holde our selues to that which hee hath spoken, as we shall see hereafter, where he forbiddeth vs straitly to swarue to the right hand or to the left, or to adde any thing at all to the doctrine thereof. And in deede, seeing that GOD himselfe hath not added aught vnto it: what are wee, that wee shoulde presume to take vppon vs aboue him? Thinke wee that when GOD gaue his Lawe, hee had lost his remembrance, and wist not what was for our profite? Can a man bethinke himselfe of any thing that is vnknowen to God?

Deut. 5. 32.

Againe moreouer, when as our Lorde hath applyed himselfe so familiarly vnto vs: thinke wee hee meant to teach vs by halues, and to leaue vs in the middest of our way? No. Then let vs remember that seeing God added not any thing after hee had once spoken those ten wordes: it becommeth vs to yeelde our selues wholy to the simple doctrine that is conteined in his Lawe, without interlacing of any thing of our owne, assuring our selues that our perfect wisedome is to obey our God. Had this bin wel obserued: we should not be so greatly cumbered nowadayes in correcting ℣ corruptions ℣ reigne in the world. For wherof came the corruptiō of Gods religion & seruice, that is is to be seene in the Popedome? The Papistes vaunt they serue God, when they vse their kyrieleysons, their holy, holy, holy, their ceremonies & other petie trash. And why? Because they tooke vppon them to adde to Gods word, so as they thought it not enough to serue God after his owne deuising: vnlesse men also did forge what they listed in their owne brayne. Therfore all ℣ euer is termed by the name of Gods seruice

1. Cor. 3. 1. 2.

in

in poperie, is but toyes of mens inuention. And not onely so: but also the saying of the prophet
Esa. 29.13. Ier. 15.13. is fulfilled in them, namely that they haue despised Gods commaundementes, and in the meane while giuen themselues to their own inuentions. The worlde sees what mischiefe hath insued through this diueliſh malapeartneſſe, that men durſt disguise Gods word w their owne dreames and dotages. So much the more therefore doth it stand vs in hand to marke this text where it is sayd, that after GOD had once spoken, hee added not any thing to that which he had sayd. And in deede, (as I sayd afore) it is an horrible blasphemie, when men take vpon them to finde some better thing than is conteyned in Gods lawe. It is all one as if they would reproue him as a lyer, or say he was misaduised, or that he had forgotten what hee should haue commaunded. But can men finde any better way? No. Then let vs learne to submit our selues in such wise vnto God, as wee may alwayes beare in minde, that when God had once spoken, hee made a finall ende and conclusion, as if hee should haue sayd, Holde yee there, these are my boundes and listes: whosoeuer goes any further, hee shal breake his necke: so as there will bee nothing but falling, if wee keepe not the right way which God hath made and hedged in after that fashion. And although God speake not presently after a visible maner as hee did then: yet ought we to bethink vs oftentimes of this lesson which is conteined in his lawe. In deede God spake not twice: but hee spake once for all, as they say. Wee on our part ought to heare it often, according to this saying of the threescore and
Psal. 62. 12. second psalme, the Lord hath spoken once, and I haue heard him: but my hearing of it was not for once and away, I haue heard it twice. Hereby wee bee warned, that it is not enough for vs to bestowe one dayes hearing vpon the thinges which our Lord hath willed to be set forth in his name: but wee must minde them continually.
Psal. 1. 2. Then let euery of vs occupy himselfe in them morning and euening all the time of his lyfe, and let vs not cease to recorde well the thinges which our Lord hath told and declared vnto vs. For though wee should apply our selues to them all the dayes of our lyfe: hardely shoulde we atteine to the one halfe of our iourney. It is true (as I sayd afore) that our Lord will instruct vs so far forth as shall be expedient for our saluation: but yet for all, wee shall alwayes finde our selues to haue neede to profit more and more in Gods worde. Therefore let vs bee diligent, and let vs not think our labor lost when we take y way, and apply our whole study dayly thereunto, so as we neuer leaue searching and seeking out of the thinges which our Lord teacheth vs. Thus yee see how wee must put this sentence in practise, where it is sayd, *that our Lorde added not any thing more.*

Now let vs come to the third poynt, which is: *that hee spake from the middeſt of fyre, Clowdes, and whirlwinde.* In deede this hath bin expounded already heretofore: Howbeit forasmuch as it is repeated by Moses: let vs marke that it is not superfluous. And in deede, it cannot bee tolde vs too often, that Gods worde ought to carry a maiestie towardes vs, to make all our wittes to stoope and to submit themselues to it. And why? First wee see there is such pride in men, as they cannot bowe their neckes. It is true that they will not say that they intend to resist God or to bid him battell: but whatsoeuer they say, are they plyable and meeke as they ought to bee? No: they come farre shorte of it. Againe, there is a blockishnesse in vs, so as wee dote vpon these worldly thinges. Wee cannot rayse vp our wittes to apply them to the hearing of God. Wee cannot attaine to that spirituall wisedome, because our wittes are occupyed afore hand about the affaires and cares of the world, and we neede nothing to holde vs here beneath. Therefore it is greatly for our benefite, that our Lord shoulde touch vs to the quicke, to the intent we may yeelde such reuerence to his worde, as it may not dye, partely through our stubbornes and partely through our blockishnesse: that is to say because we be partly so dull, grosse, and earthly, and partely so forepossessed with vanities, that we mount not vpwarde, but are holde downe heere in these corruptible thinges. And therefore not without cause did God speake from the middest of fire, clowdes, and whirlwinde, when hee went aboute to set forth his Lawe. For it was expedient that the people shoulde bee touched with some feare, so as they might say, it is not for vs to daly with our God. Seeing he appeareth to vs with so greate and terrible maiestie: what should wee doe but tremble ynder him, and yeelde him such subiection as hee may rule vs as sheepe, and wee all of vs bowe downe our neckes and holde downe our heades, suffering him to wealde vs at his will, and giuing our selues in sueh wise vnto him, as wee may bee abashed when hee speaketh, and haue none other desire, but onely to serue and honor him, and to submit our selues wholy to his guiding? Lo here the cause why God did so magnify his lawe at the setting forth thereof. He could wel haue spoken without the casting forth of flames of fyre, without making the hill to smoke, and without hauing any thicke or darke clowdes about him: but it was his will to adde all these miracles, to the intent that the people shoulde bee afrayde. And therefore let vs marke, that hee intended to bring the prophet Esayes saying to passe: namely, that his spirit shoulde not rest vppon vs, except we tremble at the presence of his worde. For the thing wherein he will try our obediennesse towardes him, is if wee doe loue him so well, that as soone as hee speaketh, wee receiue his word without gainesaying, so as wee thinke it good and agree thereunto, saying amen, not onely with our mouthes but also with our heartes, and seruing him quietly all our lyfe long. For Gods requiring of the seruice whereby hee will bee honored at our handes, is to shewe the obedience which wee owe vnto his worde. Howbeit, forasmuch as wee bee so hard and heauy that we rather dragge backe, and cannot abide

to bowe downe our neckes to beare his yoke: we haue neede to be helped by all the meanes that are mentioned here. And therefore let vs marke that these flames of fire appeared not for that time onely, to serue no moe but them that sawe it: but also to the intent that the Lawe of GOD should beare record stil at this day, of how great authoritie it ought to bee, and to the intent the remembrance therof should be renued vnto vs, that by calling to minde what happened at that time, wee may bee humbled vnder the maiestie of our God, and that whensoeuer wee goe about to aduaunce our selues, or to bee tempted with presumption and pride, the burning fire that made the people agast at that time, & the thicknesse and darkenesse of the cloude, and the sight of the smoking mountaine, may come before our eyes and serue to holde vs in such awe, as all lostinesse my be beaten downe in vs, and we bee so wakened in good earnest, as we may come & yeeld our selues to our God to deale with vs as he list, and to leade vs whither he will, so as wee may follow him whithersoeuer we bee called by his mouth. Thus ye see whereto we must referre the things that are spoken here concerning *the smoking of the mount, the flaming of the fire, and the thicknesse of the cloude.*

Besides this, let vs marke further that Gods appearing in whirlewindes, and thicke cloudes after that sort, serueth to represse mens foolishe curiositie. True it is (as I haue saide alreadie) that God speaketh to the intent to bee vnderstoode, and therefore vseth no doubtful wordes; nor goeth about the bushe (as they say): but hath vttered his will so plainely, as wee cannot but be throughly instructed, vnlesse we our selues bee to blame for that wee will not hearken to him. But yet for all this, we must not bee too curious and inquisitiue in seeking whatsoeuer seemeth good to our selues, as we see men commonly bee, who are inclined to such a desire of glorie, that their eares are euer itching to heare and knowe this and that. But behold, here our Lord saith the contrarie: would ye faine knowe? Behold, here is a cloude to stoppe yee: see what a darkenesse is here. So then let vs learne that if we wilbe good scholers to Godward, wee must not giue our owne desires the head, to searche the thinges that ought to bee hidden from vs: but content our selues to knowe what GOD telleth vs, and tary vntill the day of full discouerie for ỹ knowing of the rest which we cannot yet comprehend. To be short, let vs be ignorant in the thinges that God voutsafeth not to shew vnto vs. For this ignorance of not coueting to knowe more than our Lord giueth vs leaue to knowe, excelleth all the wisedome of the world.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moses addeth. Hee sayth, *that the lawe was written in two tables of stone, and deliuered vnto him*. Whereas hee speaketh of the two tables: wee must call to remẽberance what hath bin treated of heretofore: namely that God could well haue written all his lawe in one stone: but it was his will to write it in two that the destinction might the better leade vs to the vnderstãding of the things conteined in the law. For wee see that our Lord doth as it were chawe the thinges to vs which are set downe there, to the intent wee shoulde not alledge ỹ he speaketh to high for vs. Because there are two principall poyntes of our lyfe, our Lord hath deuided his lawe into two tables, of purpose to make vs to know how wee shoulde behaue our selues towardes him, and also how wee ought to liue with our neighbors. Is a man desirous to rule his life aright in all perfection? First hee must giue himselfe to the seruing of God, so as hee be sure what thinges God requireth and alloweth: and secondly he must liue so vprightly and euenly with his neighbors, as he may shewe by his doinges that hee is the verie childe of God. The first poynt then is, to know how God wil be honored at our handes: and the second is to yeelde our neighbors their dewes, and to keepe this indifferencie of nature, of doing nothing to another, which wee would not haue done to our selues. So then, in the one table God hath shewed how he himselfe will bee serued, accordingly as I haue tolde you already ỹ he did set himselfe alone there, to the intent ỹ men should not inuent newe Gods: declaring therewithall that he will not be resembled by any images or puppets: but that forasmuch as he is a spirit, he wil haue vs to serue him spiritually, and not to deuise one thing or other on our own heades, but to yeelde him spirituall seruices: & moreouer that he will haue his name sanctified, by our exercising of our selues in his worde, & specially by forbearing [our owne wits,] & by renouncing our owne imaginations & affectiõs ỹ so as we rest from our owne doings, to suffer our selues to be gouerned of God. These are the thinges conteined in the first table. As touching the second, we haue seene how he commanded vs there, to honor our father & our mother, and how he forbad vs murder, whoredome, theft, euil speach, & all maner of wicked lusting or couueting. That is the cause why God diuided his Lawe into two tables.

Mat. 7. 12.

Iohn 4. 24.

Esa. 58. 13.

Now then, wil we lead our lyfe aright? Let vs alwayes haue regard, first to honor our God, & afterward to liue vprightly and indifferẽtly with our neighbors. For there are some ỹ forbeare to doo harme to their neighbors, but in ỹ meane while they make no reckoning of God: but they thinke they shall go quite & cleare, so no man cõplayne of thẽ in the world. And I pray you what matter is it though we steale not frõ men, if we rob God of his honor? Is it not a heynouser crime to rob God of his honor, than to rob a man, or to cut his purse, or to rifle his coffer? Yes. Then let vs not think we haue all done, whẽ men cannot indite vs nor complayne of vs. For ỹ case standeth vpon yelding vnto God ỹ which he demandeth, ỹ which also is dewe vnto him. For we be bound to honor him all our lyfe long. Therefore it stãdeth vs so much the more in hand, to apply our minds to ỹ keeping of ỹ first table of the lawe, so as we lead not a philosophical lyfe lyke ỹ heathẽ, onely to behaue our selues honestly amõg men: but specially ỹ we haue Gods honor in estimatiõ & make that the first poynt which wee begin at.

Lyke-

Lykewise there are some others which wil needs
cary a countenance of deuotion towardes God,
and of great zeale to serue and honor him: and
yet when they come to bee conuersant among
men, they pill, they poull, they quarell, and they
be ful of cruelnie, enuy, and malice. But let vs
marke that God hath not separated the two ta-
bles of his lawe. In deede he hath put a differéce
betwixt them: but he hath not deliuered to some
men the first table, and to others ome the second
to keepe. He hath sayd, this is my lawe: and
looke what I haue ioyned together, must not be
put asunder. Thus it is that ye must be put in re-
membraunce of the loue that yee owe to your
neighbors, that ye may goe through with it: But
yet notwithstanding, when ye haue discharged
your selues of that poynt, yee must frame your
selues to the other also. Lykewise when yee shall
haue shewed great deuotion in the worshipping
and seruing of me: ye must not bee careleste to
liue iustly and vprightly with your neighbors.
Also there are many that bee desirous to serue
God: but after what sorte? Euen as the papistes
doe: after their owne fancie. But our Lordes wil
was to bridle vs in his giuing forth of the first ta-
ble, to the end we should learne to serue him as
he commaundeth vs, and not lyke well of any
thing but that which he alloweth for good. Thus
ye see whereto this saying is referred, *that God
wrote the lawe in two tables.*

And his wil was to write it in two tables *of stone*,
purposely to the intent it should continue. For it
was not giuen for any little time, neither is it
transitorie. True it is that the ceremonies had
an end. And in that respect the lawe is called
temporall: namely because the order that had
bin stablished among the people of olde time, to
continue till the comming of our Lorde Iesus
Christ, was then abolished, and thinges were
made perfect, so as wee be no more vnder the
shadowes & figures which serued for that time.
Neuerthelesse the substance and trueth of the
lawe serued not for that one age onely, but is a
thing that shall indure for euer, and neuer faile.
Wherfore let vs learne, that Gods setting forth
of his wil at the going of his people out of Egypt,
and his speaking to them vppon mount Sinay
was after such a sorte, as he prouided and tooke
order therewithal, that his doctrine should stand
in force for euermore. And for that cause did he
set downe his lawe in two tables of stone, and
not write it in barches of trees as the maner of
wryting was in those dayes, or (as we might say
nowadayes) in paper or parchment: but his will
was to ingraue it in stone as an euerlasting mo-
nument, to confirme vs the better in the thinges
that he had sayd. For he was not satisfied with
the speaking of it for that onely day: but by in-
grauing it in stone, his intent was that wee all
our life long, should giue attentiue eare to heare
what he tolde vs. Yet notwithstanding, surely
Gods ingrauing of his lawe in stone after that
sorte, would serue to small purpose, vnlesse it
were also ingrauen in our hearts. What is to be
done then? Let vs assure our selues that the do-
ctrine which God setteth downe vnto vs, is be-

4. Cor. 3. 11.
Gal. 3. 19.
Heb. 7. 18. 19.
and 9. 8. 10.
Ephe. 2. 15.
Col. 2. 14. 17

Matt. 5. 18.

2. Cor. 3. 3.

hoofefull and necessarie for vs, and yet it should
stand vs in no stead, vnlesse hee added a secret
grace, which is, that the thing which he hath vttered
be forthwith printed in our hearts and bowels.
Then lyke as God wrate his lawe at that time in
two tables of stone with his finger, that is to say
with his power: so now he must be fain to write it
with his holy spirit in our hearts, which are flin-
ty and hard as the prophet sheweth, where he
prayeth God to giue vs hearts of flesh, that
may be soft, lythe, and playable to receiue what-
soeuer he shall say. Now then seeing that God
hath shewed vs visibly, that it belongeth to him to
write his Lawe, that it may be well knowen: let
vs beseech him to vouchsafe to write it in vs now
adayes by the power of his holy spirit, to the end
wee may holde it fast, as the deuell may neuer
wype it out of our remembrances, doe what he
can.

And herewithall Moses concludeth, that the
Lawe was deliuered vnto him to bee the preser-
uer and keeper therof, and to bee the minister
and dealer forth of it to the people, so as euery
man might acknowledge him for a Prophet. For
otherwise he could not haue executed his office,
nor haue builded Gods Church, except it had
knowen that that charge had bin committed vn-
to him. Likewise now adayes, if we were not per-
swaded that it is Gods will, that his Gospell should
be preached by the mouthes of men, and that
there should be Shepheardes in his Church to
beare abrode his worde: who would vouchsafe
to come togither? Neither I, nor any other crea-
ture is of abilitie to driue men to come to re-
ceiue the thinges that are to bee vttered by
my mouth. When I speake here in the name of
God, and men giue eare to the doctrine, to sub-
mit themselues to it and to doe him homage: it
is more than all the lawes and proclamations of
kings and Emperors can doe. Is the mortal man
the doer thereof? No. But when we once know
it to be Gods will, that this order shoulde be in
his Church, and that it should bee kept vnin-
lably: namely that there should bee sheepheards
to beare abroad his worde and to expounde the
same, which should be as messengers to bring
tidings of the forgiuenesse of sinnes in the name
of our Lord Iesus Christ, and to rebuke, reprooue,
comfort, and exhort: when we (I say) doe vn-
derstand it to be Gods wil, that there should be
such gouernment in his Church: then are we a-
shamed to withstand him that hath created and fa-
shioned vs. So then, ye see now why Moses sayd
in this text, that God deliuered him his lawe
for himselfe. Trueth it is that God gaue it for
all the people in generall, as I sayd afore. Why
then is Moses now the possessor of it? It should
seeme that God meant to bereaue all his peo-
ple thereof, and that none should bee priuile-
ged but Moses, so as the lawe should be restrai-
ned vnto him, and the residewe be as it were shut
out from it. But it is not so. For although the
Lawe was giuen for all the people: yet was Mo-
ses made the protector of it. And looke what
God hath spoken of him: we must extend it yet
further, accordingly as we heare that the pro-

phets

phets were put in the same commission, to bee as it were disposers or dealers foorth of the treasure of saluation, and of Gods couenant, so as their office was to shewe Gods will from time to time, and to bring vs worde of it in his name. And the generall rule which Saint Paul giueth vs, is that men must esteem vs as Gods ministers & as dealers forth of the secretes which he sendeth to the world. Now whereas Saint Paul sayth wee bee dealers forth of Gods secretes: he sheweth vs thereby, that it is not enough for vs to haue the holy scripture, and to reade it euery man at home in his house: but it is required that it should bee preached vnto vs, that wee should haue this order of being taught by the mouthes of men, and that there should bee shepheardes to serue Gods turne, to the ende by giuing eare vnto them, wee might profite more and more in the doctrine of saluation. And for the same cause doth Saint Paule say in another place, that the Church is the piller of trueth, and as it were the ground and standard of the trueth. The Papistes alledge this verse full doltishly, to clayme priuiledge to themselues to deuise newe articles of fayth, and to lode men with lawes at their owne pleasure. But Saint Paul meant the cleane contrarie: For hee saith that the Church is the piller or ground of Gods truth, because that seeing God hath vttered his trueth to men by his Lawe, and by the Prophetes and Apostles: his will is that the same ministerie should indure continually, namely that there should bee men ordeined and appointed to the office of expounding his worde, and of building vp his Church. Then let vs vnderstand, that after that maner the Church is the meane of vpholding Gods trueth sounde and vnappayred. For when God rayseth vppe men indued with his spirite, to confirme vs in the faith, and to inlighten vs, and so shewe vs the right way: by that meane Gods trueth continueth in the worlde, so as it is not quenched nor vtterly done away. Let vs mark then that Moseses meaning here, is not to make him selfe the onely possessor or owner of Gods lawe, and to shake off the people and to shutte them out of the gate: but to vtter his minde plainely to this effect: my friendes, in deede the Lawe is common to vs all, all of vs are Gods children, I chalendge no more to my selfe in that behalfe than to you but yet will I discharge my selfe of the commission that God hath giuen mee, which is that I should serue you for a faithfull expounder of the Lawe, and bee as a keeper thereof, that yee might not thrust it vnder foote, nor forget it for euer, but alwayes bee put in minde of it by mee. Sith it is so: let all ministers of Gods worde looke that they bee readie prepared to serue the ignorante: and let all men consider howe it is not for vs onely to reade the holy scripture, but wee must also be diligent to profite therein, and humbly come to ỹ hearing of those whom he hath appointed to be his ministers, to giue vs the exposition & vnderstanding therof. Thus ye see whereto this text is to be referred.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, and to drawe vs dayly to such repentance, as our whole desire may be to serue him and to please him, without seeking any whit of our own will. And that forasmuch as we be so greatly giuen to worldly thinges, it may please him to drawe vs from them, and therewithall to graunt that wee may submit our lyfe to his will, and frame it to his righteousnesse, and that for the bringing thereof to passe, his worde may so ouerrule vs, as wee may bee gouerned by it, and all our wholelyfe be framed thereafter, vntill that being quite rid of all our fleshly affections, wee be clothed againe with his heauenly glory, at such time as wee shall haue no more neede, neither of writing nor of preaching. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth. &c.

On Wednesday the xvij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xliij Sermon which is the fourteenth vpon the fifth Chapter.

23 And when yee heard the voice from the middest of darkenesse: because the Hill burned, yee came to mee, all the heades of your tribes, and your Elders.

24 Then saide you, Behold, the Lord our God hath shewed vs his glorie and his greatnesse, and wee haue hearde his voice from the middest of the fire: This day haue wee seene that GOD hath spoken with man, and man is still aliue.

25 Now then: why die wee? for if wee heare the voice of our Lord God againe, this great fire will deuour vs, and we shall die.

26 For what man is hee that may heare the voice of the liuing God speaking from the middest of the fire as we doe, and yet liue?

27 Goe thou and heare whatsoeuer the Lord our God shall say, and then tell

thou vs what the Lord our GOD saieth to thee: and wee will heare it and doe it.

VEebee of opinion, that where as God causeth his worde to be preached vnto vs by ỹ meanes of men, if he spake to vs in his owne maiestie, or sent some Angell to appeare vnto vs, wee would bee the better touched, and all the world would bee conuerted by and by, and euery man obey without gainesaying or rebelling: but wee knowe not what is for our owne benefite and behoofe. For if wee looke vppon our owne frailtie: it is not possible that God should make vs feele his power, but it shoulde be to our vtter vndooing and destruction. Now therefore when men are desirous that God should come downe from heauen, or manifest himselfe by some visible token: they know not what they bee, nor how frayle their state is. For did they wel consider it, they would bee agast at Gods infinite glorie, knowing well that they were not able to abide it. Besides this, let vs assure our selues that God tendereth our welfare and saluation, in shewing vs his will by the mouth of men, when hee ordeyneth and appoynteth them to be ministers of his worde, to bring vs such message as hee knoweth to bee for our benefite. Neuertheless, it was his pleasure to auowe it by open proofe to mens faces, that it is not good for them to heare his voyce thunder from heauen. And that is the cause why hee thought good to giue forth his lawe, not simply by Moses, but by comming downe in his owne person, as I haue declared already, and as I tolde you yesterday that the lightninges and whirlewindes, and the flaming of the fire, and all that is written in the nineteenth and twentith chapters of Exodus, was done euery whit of it to the end that the people of Israell should learne to yeede reuerence to Gods word. And this lesson belongeth to vs also. For Gods intét was that the remembrance of those thinges shoulde indure for euer, and that they should be put in vre continually. So then, we see here that God hath vttered his glorious maiestie once for all, to teach vs to receiue his worde with all reuerence and lowlynesse.

Exod. 19. 18. 19. & 20. 18

But yet furthermore hee intended lykewise ỹ the people should bee driuen of themselues to say, *It is not good that God should speake to vs againe. Onely let vs haue a man to bring vs the doctrine which is shall please him to send vs*. And this rule serueth to condemne vs, if wee followe not this people which stepped forth to say so. And if any man alledge, that the thinges which were spoken at that time cannot binde vs: The answere is easie, namely that if God should doe the lyke at this day, that is to wit, if hee should speake ỹ thinges with his owne mouth, which we heare at the mouthes of men: it were impossible for vs to abide his glory, wee should bee vtterly vndone. And therefore let vs learne that this is rehearsed vnto vs, to the ende that in the person of the people of Israell, wee might vnderstand that God applyeth himselfe to our slenderneesse and infirmitie, and that in voutsafing to send vs his worde, to bee preached vnto vs by men lyke vnto our selues, whome hee maketh his messengers hee hath respect to our benefite and commoditie: and therefore it proceedeth of a foolish and inordinate lust in vs, to desire that hee shoulde appeare to vs from heauen, or that hee shoulde worke any visible miracle: for wee cannot comprehend his glory and maiestie.

Furthermore although the proper nature of the lawe bee to fray folke: yet notwithstanding the same may also bee verifyed of the Gospel. For wee must take it for a generall rule, that assoone as wee perceiue Gods presence, we must needes bee abashed. Wee see how the very Angels doe hide their eyes, because Gods glory is too great for them, and they be driuen to confesse that they bee too feeble, as creatures. And what will become of vs then? For wee be inferior to the Angels, and besides that, wee holde not still the vncorruptnesse of our nature. We be not as wee were created: that is to say, we be not earthly men as our father Adam was, but wee bee vtterly corrupted, so as there is nothing but sinne in vs: and therefore God is faine to be as an enemie to vs, and wee bee faine to flunne his throne, as offenders shunne the seate of the Iudge to the vttermost of their power. To be short, we be but wretched wormes and carions. Nowe then, looke how soone God commeth neere vs, wee must needes be dismaied, yea and vtterly stryken downe. And therefore (as I haue touched already) it is to our benefite that God sheweth himselfe after that fashion: that is to wit, by the meanes of men, so as hee appoynteth men to shewe vs his will as well as if hee spake himselfe, and hee will haue vs to receiue his word with as great reuerence, as if we heard him thundering from heauen. But yet it wil bee good for vs to vnderstand more at large the thing that I haue touched in one worde: namely that the Lawe frayeth vs far more in comparison than the Gospel, as is declared also more at length elsewhere. And why is that? Because that in the Lawe God requireth that which is due to him at mens handes. But now let vs see if wee be able to discharge our selues of it. No: but contrariwise wee bee lyke wretched detters, which haue not one dodkin nor dodkins woorth.

Now then wee be vtterly vndone. For whatsoeuer come of it, God dischargeth vs not, but sheweth vs that wee deserue to bee cursed and damned at his hand. And for the same cause, after he hath shewed how the lyfe of man ought to bee ruled: he addeth this curse thundering downe vpon them: That they be all accursed which performe not all the thinges that are conteined there. As if hee should say: All men must bee faine to yeelde themselues guiltie in this behalfe, and from the greatest to the least they must all knowe that they be in my daunger, and that I may sinke thē downe to the bottom of hel.

I doe

I doe already pronounce this sentence, & there is no man able to reply against it, Behold then ye are all lost and condemned: This is the language of the Lawe, and the speach that God vseth there: and now must not all men needes quake at it? Yes. So then it is not sayd for nought that the lawe frayeth vs, and that we must needs bee forlorne, so long as God listeth to demaund his due at our handes with rigor. But the case standeth not so with the Gospell. For there God beareth with vs, and not onely forgiueth vs our sinnes, but also wryteth his lawe in our heartes. And moreouer although wee serue him but by halues: yet doth hee pardon vs our defaultes, and as it were winke at them. And lyke as a father will not presse his childe too straitly: so doth God vse a fatherly gentlenesse towardes vs in the Gospell, to the intent wee should not bee afraid to come vnto him. In respect whereof the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, sayth that wee bee not come to this smoking mountaine, wee be not come to mount Sinay to bee astonished at the sight of burning fyre, and at the sight of the lightnings and of all the other thinges that were done there to abash the people: but that wee heare a gratious and pleasaunt melody, wherein we be accompanyed with the Angels of heauen, with the soules of the holy patriarkes and other fathers that liued vnder the hope of lyfe, notwithstanding that they had as then but darke shadowes of it, and so GOD coupleth vs with those that waited in olde time for the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ. Seing it is so: we must not recoyle backe, but goe still on forward with a chearefull courage to heare our God, because he speaketh to vs so kindely, and with so fatherly speach, as doth not scarre away his children, but rather (as ye would say) allure them. This difference then is to be marked well, that it may make the Gospell amiable to vs in comparison of the Lawe.

Exo. 17. 19. & 2. Cor. 3.

Heb. 12. 18. 19.

But yet for all this we must come backe againe to the generall principle: which is, that it is much better for vs that Gods word should be preached vnto vs by the mouthes of men, than y God himself shold thunder it down from heauen. And why? For let vs but here the naturall thunder, and by and by we be astonished, and yet is nothing expressed there, God doth but (as yee would say) braye with a confused noyse. What would come of it then if hee should speake to vs, & shew vs his glory? We feele such a weakenesse in all our senses that we cannot so much as looke vpon the sunne which is a corruptible creature: and how then can we beholde gods maiestie, if it shewe it selfe to vs playnely and in full perfection? And therefore it is sayd that no man liuing can see God, and not dye and bee vtterly consumed. Trueth it is that God shewed himselfe to Moses, and that, not as he did to the prophets, not in dreame nor in vision: but with a speciall priuiledge, and (as it is sayd in Exodus) face to face as a man speaketh to his friend, and with so great familiaritie, that he was after a sort exempted from the companie of men, that hee might become the more familiar with God.

Exo. 33. 11.

But yet for all that, the trueth is so that GOD shewed himself vnto him but in portion & measure. For had he shewed himselfe in his infinite being: what grace of the holy ghost soeuer Moses had receiued, hee must needes haue bin vtterly ouerwhelmed. In deede once in his lyfe God shewed him his glory more fully than euer he did: but yet for all that, he sawe but as it were the backe parte of him. In the which similitude is expressed vnto vs, that when wee see but the backe of a man, wee see not the chiefe part of him, (for the chiefe sight of a man is in his face:) so although Moses had speciall familiarine with God, insomuch that in y souereigne sight which was shewed him in the mountaine, he was separated from the state of this mortall and transitory lyfe, and was as an Angell of paradise: yet notwithstanding he sawe God but in part, as if wee should see a man but on the back. Therfore let vs be contented when God vseth the lyke order with vs: (that is to wit, that his worde bee preached vnto vs by men:) and let vs receiue it as if wee sawe his maiestie face to face. And why? For it is good for vs that shepheardes are ordeined to bee ministers of his worde, because we shoulde be vtterly confounded by the glory of God, if it were manifested to vs to the full.

And to the ende that no man shoulde haue cause to complayne, as though Gods doctrine were not sufficiently ratifyed, but y it were to be doubted whether a man might holde him to it or no: therefore did hee shewe himselfe in the setting forth of his lawe. And wee haue record of it heere, in that the people say, *Is to the Lorde. This day hath bee made vs to see his glorie, and his greatnesse: and wee haue seene that it is euen hee that hath spoken vnto vs:* hee hath not put any other person in his place, but we haue heard his voyce with our owne eares. This was done but once for all. Howbeit let vs take the thinges that are reported here, to bee as a record that Moses spake not on his owne head, nor deuised the doctrine of his owne brayne, which we receiue of him: but that hee was a faithfull stewarde to Godwarde, who aduoweth him so to bee, and not onely ratifyed his doctrine with miracles, but also declared in his owne person, howe it was hee himselfe that was the author of the doctrine that Moses taught. And forasmuch as it was good reason that the Gospell should bee authorised as well as the Lawe: wee haue had recorde likewise from heauen, that the same is not a doctrine of man, but that it proceedeth of God. And this is the thing which Saint Peter toucheth in his second Epistle, saying that hee & his fellowes had heard the voyce from heauē, whereby the father proclaymed his sonne the chiefe maister and teacher of all his Church, saying, this is my welbeloued sonne, heare yee him.

1. Pet. 1. 17. 18.

Seeing then that this voyce hath thundered from heauen: God hath shewed that wee must not take the Gospel as a doctrine bred here belowe, but we must alwayes haue the sayd maiestie before our eyes. Lykewise nowadayes if we will bee Gods true disciples, wee must

at our resorting to sermons, remember what Moses rehearseth, namely that the lawe was giuen forth in such sort, as God was the speaker thereof. Againe in the second place we must adde the testimonie that I am about to alledge, so as the foresayd saying of God may euer ring in our eares, whereby he proclaymeth our Lord Iesus Christ to be the onely partie whom he will haue men to heare. Loe here the perfect seale whereby Gods worde hath full and perfect authoritie among vs as it deserueth, notwithstanding that it be brought vnto vs by mortall men.

Furthermore to the intent that men may not thinke that Iesus Christ is not to bee heard, but onely in his owne person: hee sayth, hee that Luke 10. 16. heareth you, heareth me, and hee that refuseth or despiseth you, despiseth mee, and him that sent me. In deede the Pope and his champions lyke a sort of traytors to God, vsurpe that saying to mainteine their owne tyrannie: but it belongeth as much to them as to the diuell of hell. And why? for first they should bring vs the pure doctrine of our Lord Iesus Christ. For the sonne of God hath not resigned his office to men to be spoyled thereof, hee will not haue vs gouerned after the lyking of men: but hee himselfe will alwayes haue the preheminence and soueraignetie ouer vs that was giuen vnto him. Now then, whereas hee sayth that in hearkening to those whome hee sendeth, wee hearken to him: his meaning is, that if wee obey the doctrine of his Gospell, without despising of it when it is preached to vs by men: it is all one as if hee himselfe spake to vs, and wee must not in this case rest vppon the outward appearance. And that is it that Saint Paul meaneth in saying, 2. Cor. 4. 7. that although wee be brittle vessels, yea and as broken vessels of no valewe nor worthinesse: yet the inestimable treasure that is committed vnto vs, is not ỹ worse or of lesse estimation & valewe therefore. True it is ỹ we cannot purchase the word of God such reuerence as we faine would. And why? For we haue not any thing in vs (I meane of our own) wherby it may be sayd ỹ God shoulde bee exalted: but yet must wee approue our obedience in this behalfe, namely that wee deliuer God his worde with such boldenesse, courage, and power as if hee himselfe spake in vs. And herewithall let all loftinesse be corrected in this case, and let euery man receiue the doctrine of the Gospell in simplicitie, and without disputing or scanning why we be bound to submit our selues to mortall men. For inasmuch as it were a despising of Gods sonne, yea Luke 10. 16 Matt. 17. 5. and of the heauenly father himselfe who ordeined him to bee the chiefe teacher, if wee should not heare those whome hee sendeth as his messengers: it standeth vs in hand to yeelde in Luke 9. 35. ỹ behalfe. So then let vs learne to bowe downe our neckes and to beare the yoke of Gods sonne by receiuing ỹ doctrine of ỹ Gospel with all humilitie, though it bee preached vnto vs by men.

And as I sayd afore, let vs thinke well vpon the ratification that was giuen thereof, which ought to bee enough to make vs to vnderstand, that the lawe was brought from God himselfe, and that the Gospell also was warranted and ratified from heauen, when God pronounced with his owne mouth that he would haue vs to hearken to his sonne. That is the effect of the thinges which wee haue to remember vppon this text. And therefore let vs followe the example of those which are spoken of here, and let vs not couet that God should come down from heauen to feede our humors: but let it suffice vs ỹ he vouchsafeth to cõmunicate his word vnto vs.

But it should seeme at the first sight, that hetre were some contrarietie. For first the people say, *This day haue we seene how God speaketh with men, and that they continue aliue still*: and afterwarde they say againe: *wee dye if God speaketh vs*. For by all lykelyhoode, if wee haue once found by experience ỹ God speaketh to vs without destroying of vs: it ought to imbolden vs. And why? For seeing wee remaine aliue still after we haue heard the voyce of God once: why should wee not doe so still after twise or thrise, as well as after once? And here the people say, *We haue heard the voyce of God: but if he speake to vs again, wee dye for it*, wee bee vndone, wee bee forlorne. It seemeth that they trust not to Gods goodnesse, but rather that they be vnthankefull, in that they acknowledge not the benefite which God did for them in letting them continue in their strength. But wee must marke how the people shew here, that they wil not try God any further, and that it is enough for them to haue had that one experience, that the lawe was not a thing inuented by man, but that God was the author thereof. Therefore it must be taken as if they had sayd thus: This day haue we seene that God hath spoke to men, and they remaine still aliue: that is enough for vs: we intend not to abuse Gods patience in this case: he hath spared vs to day, but wee must not looke ỹ he should doe so euer: he hath giuen vs a tryall for this once, & that was because of ỹ lewdnesse & hardnesse of our heartes. For were we worthie to haue him appeare to vs in his glory? Nay but he knew ỹ we would neuer be fully tamed & subdued to his obediẽce, except he had come in his visible glorie, & made vs so afraide as we had bin at our wits end. Therfore if he had not won vs so by force, he knew wel that we would haue bin alwayes as wild beasts. But seeing it hath pleased him to pardon the fault that we haue cõmitted, & to beare with vs this time: we wil not fal to it again for ỹ were ouermuch: it were a storming of his patience. So then, this one recorde sufficeth vs, both for our owne liues and for the liues of our children, & so forth for euer to the worlds end, ỹ they which come after vs may knowe ỹ it is not for vs to draw God out of heauen any more, as though he ought to be but our mate. Thus yee see how these two sayings agree very wel.

Now hereupon we haue to note, ỹ although Gods word be of force to bring vs to naught: yet he vseth such mercy towards vs, that whereas it should cõsume vs, it giueth vs life. And whẽ I say ỹ Gods word can bring vs to nought: I meane not ỹ word alonely as Moses discribeth it here: but also that if our Lord list to make vs feele the

power

power of his word, it would vtterly vndo vs, notwithstanding that it be vttered by men. Nevertheleſſe wee ſee how our Lord quickeneth vs by his word, ſpecially now adayes by the preaching of his Goſpell. For that which is ſpoken in the fifth of Saint Iohn, is dayly accompliſhed: namely that as many as heare the voyce of the Sonne of man, are reſtored to life. For naturally we bee ſtraungers to God, and baniſhed from his kingdome, and ſo by that meanes wee bee as it were in our graues. But here our Lord Ieſus Chriſt offereth vs the remiſſion of our ſinnes, and God his father adopteth vs for his children: and ſo doeth he ſhewe vs the light of ſaluation, and we bee quickened againe by meanes of the Goſpel. And therefore wee haue good cauſe to glorifie our GOD in that he maketh his woorde to ſerue to deliuer vs from death and to reſtore vs to life, notwithſtanding that it bee of power to conſume vs, at leaſtwiſe if he turned it not to the contrarie vſe.

But by the way let vs marke well, that if our Lorde haue at one time giuen vs more than we deſerue: wee muſt not therefore take leaue to tempt him, and to ſubdue him ſtill to our luſtes, as wee ſee the Papiſtes doe nowe adayes, who excuſe themſelues of their not comming to the Goſpell, becauſe they ſee no myracles wrought in our time. No ſurely. But whereto ſerue the myracles that our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt wrought, and which he committed to his Apoſtles to doe likewiſe? Shoulde thoſe ſerue to no purpoſe at this day? Ye ſee then þ God vttered an excellent power at the firſt comming vp of þ Goſpel: heauen & earth were ſhaken at that time: there was no part of the world wherin God printed not ſome marke of his Maieſtie, to the intent that þ Goſpell ſhould bee authorized. The Angels came downe at the birth of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt to beare witneſſe of him: the Sunne was darkened at his death: the vaile of the temple was rent aſunder to ſhew that the ſanctuarie was opened, and that there was more free acceſſe to God thã euer there had bin: the ſea was calmed: the diuels themſelues did homage to þ glorie of God which was vttered at that time: and to be ſhort, GOD ſhewed both from aboue and beneath, that the Goſpel came from him, (as I haue tolde you already,) as well by the healing of diſeaſes, as by al the other myracles þ were wrought. And this ſerued not for þ time onely, but the remembrance thereof continueth vnto this day, and it behoueth vs to receiue that record to ſeale vp our faith withall, to the end wee may not doubt, but that our Lord maketh his Goſpel of as great force by them at this day, as he did at the ſame time that they were ſhewed. Yet notwithſtãding wee ſee howe the faithleſſe doe ſtill alledge, that if they ſawe myracles, it woulde conuert them. But it is certaine that if they ſaw neuer ſo many myracles, yet would they continue in their ſtubbornneſſe, & take occaſion of greater rancor againſt God. What is to bee doone then? Let vs learne to bee contented, as I ſaid afore. If God haue giuen vs more than he owed vs, let vs receiue it with thankſgiuing, & learne not to prouoke him to wrath, nor to tẽpt his patience. That is the thing which we haue to remember in this text, where the people ſaith, let not þ Lord ſpeak to vs any more, for it ſuffiſeth vs that wee haue heard his voyce once already, and that yet notwithſtanding he hath let vs liue ſtill.

And to the end that the thinges which I haue declared heretofore may bee the certainer: let vs beare in minde how it is ſaid here, *Was there euer man that heard the voyce of the liuing God, and continued ſtill aliue?* Here it is ſhewed vs that the people of Iſrael ſpake not in their name onely: but as it were for all mankinde in common. They ſay not onely, who are wee, but what is all fleſh? And indeede, (as I ſaide at the firſt,) it muſt needes bee that men are beſotted, when they cannot humble themſelues. For they neede no more but to looke to their owne ſtate and to ſay, what are wee? There is nothing neither in our bodyes nor in our ſoules, but all maner of frailtie, (I mean not, as we may be conſidered in our nature as we were firſt created:) But now being fallen as wee bee, what are wee but as water that glydeth away, & as a ſmoke that vaniſheth away? Nay, which wors is, we be enemies to god, and he muſt needes be againſt vs, becauſe he findeth nothing in vs but ſin and frowardneſſe. And therefore when wee bee tickled with our fonde luſts, ſo as we would faine that God ſhould work myracles, and that we might heare Angels from heauen: let vs repaire to that which is tolde vs here, and ſay, *What is all fleſh?* Let vs (ſay I) enter into conſideration to ſee what wee bee: and our owne vnabilitie will teach vs ſufficiently, to praiſe God for not making vs to feele his preſence to conſume vs and confounde vs: but to make vs feele it in ſuch wiſe as it may drawe vs to him with amiable gentleneſſe, by hearing mẽ like our ſelues, and our owne brethren ſpeaking as it were in his perſon. Rom. 8. 3. Eph. 2. 3.

And whereas the people of Iſrael ſay, *What people is it that euer heard the voyce of the liuing God, and continueth ſtill aliue, as wee haue done:* it is to ſhewe that this deede of his ſhould not bee drawen into a common example, [ſo as others ſhoulde looke to haue him doe the like.] And therefore let vs not ſay, why doeth not GOD ſpeake to vs now adayes after a viſible maner, as he did vpon Mount Sinay? It pleaſed him ſo to doe: but it is not for vs to lode him with any law, or to binde him to do ſtill as he hath done once heretofore. Therfore (as I ſaid erſt) let vs not abuſe Gods grace, neither let vs fall to diſputing with him, to ſay, ſeeing that God did ſo at other times, why ſhould he not do þ like now adayes? For when men auaunce themſelues after that faſhion, it is a diueliſh preſumption. Wherefore let vs yeelde God ſo much honour, as to giue him leaue to manifeſt himſelfe to vs as he himſelfe liſteth, and as he knoweth to be expedient, and let vs not bind him to any neceſſitie, vnder colour that he hath vouchſafed to ſhewe ſome ſpeciall fauour at ſome time before. Let not vs threape vpon him to doe the like againe, but let vs be contented with his ſingle wil, for it becommeth vs to be ſubiect therevnto.

In the ende it is sayde, *Goe thou to God, and heare what hee will say to thee, and bring vs woorde thereof, and wee will heare it and doe it.* Heare we see first, that the people desireth Moses to bee their Spokesman, and to bring them woorde what he receyueth at Gods hand. Nowe this is written for vs, that all men shoulde submit themselues to the order that GOD hath set in his Church. For (as I haue sayde afore) his will is to speake to vs by the mouthes of men. That is the cause why hee woulde there should bee Ministers. It was not deuised by men: but our Lorde Iesus Christ hath tolde vs that hee will haue that kinde of gouernment in his Churche. Nowe then, that there shoulde bee shepheardes in the Churche, to preache godly doctrine, which it behoooueth vs to receiue for our owne saluation: it is an inuiolable ordinaunce, and such a one as proceedeth from GOD. Sith it is so: let no man striue against it, but let vs beare it patiently, and when GOD raiseth vp men to serue him, in bringing vs the message of saluation: let vs not grudge that euerie of vs hath not the same preheminence: for it is his will that his bodye (that is to saye his Church) shoulde bee gouerned after that fashion. Ye see then that the thing which wee haue to gather vppon this text, is, that seeing God hath ordayned Ministers of his woorde, we must hearken to them quietly, and not beare any spyte or malice in our heartes, though all of vs bee not teachers, nor put in that office by GOD: for wee must yeelde our selues to his will as I haue told you before. Let that serue for one point.

Matt. 28.19. Luke.10.16.

But by the waye, let vs marke also with what condition wee must haue shepheardes. For this text teacheth vs to discerne betweene ỳ deceyuers ỳ abuse Gods name falsly, by taking vppon them ỳ title of prelates without cause or reason: & the true Prophets, the good seruants of God, & the Ministers of the Gospell. The Pope & all his rable will surely say that men ought to hearken vnto them, and to receiue their doctrine wout gainsaying. And why so? Bicause it is Gods will ỳ there should be prelats in the Church, and that men should heare them and obey them. All this is true. But yet for al that, hath he set vp the title of Prelacie without discretion? No, but he hath also declared therewithall, that he himselfe will continue chiefe stil, so as we must obey him, and not be in bondage vnto men. Seeing it is so, we must consider what maner of Prelates & teachers God sendeth vs. And that is, (according to the contentes of this text) ỳ they must hearken what God sayes vnto them, & afterward report the same faithfully to the people. Therfore they that are desirous to be heard in Gods name, and will haue their doctrine receiued reuerently: must first hearken vnto God, so as they take not vpon them to adde any thing to his woorde, but yeeld themselues teachable vnto him. And whē they haue learned at his hand: let them deale forth the things to others, which they haue receiued. For no man shall euer bee a good Minister of Gods word, vnlesse he bee a scholer first, so as he take not vpon him as a Maister ouer other men, to tell them what he listeth. And a mā must not be ouerwise in this case: for God reserueth to himselfe the office of appointing what things he will haue vs to know. It is not said here simply, Hearken what the Lord will say to thee, and then come and bring vs word: but it is said, Hearken vnto all ỳ the Lord shall say vnto thee, so as there bee not one point nor one article omitted. By meanes whereof Moses is restrained of all libertie here, and not permitted to report any thing, but that which God cōmandeth him, as we haue seene alreadie in other places. And what are nowe these rascals, that dare auaunce themselues aboue Moses? We shall see in the end of this booke, that there was neuer any Prophet raised vp with such grace. And in deed, although we see there was a wonderfull spirit in Esay, & in all the rest of the Prophets: yet is Moses preferred before them all. Whereas it is said, be mindfull of the Lawe that was giuen you in Horeb: Malachie which spake last of all the Prophets, doth notwithstanding referre all to Moses, as if he had bin the first teacher, & as though the law were the fountaine from whence wee ought to draw all things. Now seeing that Moses being so greatly preferred, & hauing so excellent preheminence giuen him of God, might not for all ỳ take vpon him to speake aught of his own head, but was bound to deale forth the things faithfully to the people, as he had heard them of God: is it not too diueliish a pride now adayes, that lewd lozels should aduaunce themselues so farre as to say, ỳ it is in their power to lay lawes vpon mens consciences, and to binde them vnder paine of deadly sinne? Is it not too barbarous a tyrannie? Therfore to the end we fall not into the two extreme vices: let vs hold the meane way that is shewed vs heere: which is, that sith it is Gods will to haue his Churche gouerned by the outward preaching of his word: euerie of vs must submit himselfe thereto, and be diligent in hearing of Sermons, and hold this as a holy & reuerent order: to wit, ỳ we should be taught by the mouth of men. And yet in the meane while, men must not haue authoritie to bring vs what they list, but they must be faithfull dealers foorth of Gods word, so as we may euer be able to protest, that our faith is grounded vppon Gods will, and that we depend not vpon the wisedome of men, but that our Lord holdeth vs so in obedience towards him, as we may say ỳ wee heare him from heauen, though he vse the meane and trauell of men in the doing thereof.

Now let vs kneele down in ỳ presence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs so to feele them, as wee maye learne to mislike more and more of our selues for them. And for as much as the verie remedie to rid vs from al our diseases and corruptions, is to heare his holye woorde: it maye please him so to open our eares, as wee maye receyue it with all reuerence and humilitie, and so print it in our heartes, as wee may make it auayle to the vse for which hee ordeyned it, namely to quicken vs and to drawe vs to saluation,

sion, that wee may desire it with all our heartes, and apply our indeuour thereunto more and more. And therefore let vs all saye, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xviij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xliij. Sermon which is the fifteenth and last vpon the fifth Chapter.

28 At the same time the Lord heard the voyce of your words when you spake to mee: whereupon the Lord said to mee, I haue heard the voyce of this peoples words which they haue spoken vnto thee: all that they haue said is good.

29 I would they had such heart to feare mee, and to keepe my commaundements alwayes, that it might goe well with them and with their children for euer.

30 Go say vnto them, Returne ye into your tentes.

31 But as for thee, tarie thou here with mee, and I will tell thee all the commaundements, Ordinaunces and Lawes which thou shalt teache them, that they may do them in the land which I giue them to possesse.

32 Therefore see that ye doe as the Lord your God hath commanded you. Ye shall not bow aside to the right hand nor to the left:

33 But walke in all the wayes which the Lorde your God hath commaunded you, that ye may liue, and that it may bee well with you, and that your dayes may bee lengthened in the land which you shall possesse.

ACcording to that which was declared yesterday, God in this text sheweth that he graunteth the peoples request, and giueth them the choise of that which shoulde bee best for them. And hereby wee see, that he meant to make the people to feele his goodnes, of purpose to win them the better. True it is that he might iustly subdue vs to him by authoritie, and he could doe it: but hee had much leuer to deale with vs by fatherly gentleneſſe. That then is the cause why he shewed himself agreeable to the people. Therefore let vs marke well, that God hath such regard of our weldoing and welfare, as if the choise were in our owne hands, we could not wish better thā he doeth. It seemeth not so at all times: but yet is it so in deede. Furthermore he addeth, That he graunted not the peoples desire in any other respect, than for that he himselfe liked of it. For now and then God graunteth men their requestes, howbeit, it is for their importunatnesse sake, and the thing turneth to their condemnation. As for example, when the people were desirous to eate flesh, it is true that they had their fill of it: but they paide right deare for their shot, for they spited God by their wilfull desiring of the thing that was withheld from them. Neuertheleſſe it is true that God did fully satisfie the murmurers, so as they had wherewith to fill their bellies: but it had bin much better for them to haue starued for hunger. But it is not so in this request whereof Moses speaketh here: for GOD sayeth expressely, *That they meane rightly.* As if he should saye, keepe that course still, and yee shall see howe I will pleasure you. Yee haue desired that yee myght haue a man to speake to you in my name, and I am contented with it. Nowe then it ought to perswade you the more, to receiue the doctrine that shall bee preached vnto you from mee, on my behalfe, for as much as I haue done it at your desire and choyse. But yet yee must not thinke that I meant to please you without reason or cause why. For I assure you, all thinges shall goe well with you, if yee keepe on this course of profiting in my woorde, so as whensoeuer Moses shall come vnto you of my sending, you giue reuerent eare to the thinges that hee shall tell you for your welfare. And so let vs marke well, that when Gods woorde is preached vnto vs by men, they doe it not vpon their owne head, but bicause GOD hath giuen vs here the doctrine that is for our benefite. And this ought to settle vs the better, that wee bee not mooued with any fond affection, to chaunge as our manner is, to delyght alwayes too much in Nouelties. Let vs vnderstande that the thing whereunto wee must holde our selues, is that wee must giue eare to the preaching of Gods woorde, all the time of our lyfe. And why? For it is not onely his will that wee should doe so: but also he sheweth vs that it is for our behoofe.

Num. 11. 33.

Besides this, GOD wakeneth the people here, to the ende they should thinke better vppon the keeping of the commaundements of his Lawe, than they had doone. For the people had saide, we wil do it. And sayth God on his side, who will giue them the heart to doe it, and who will giue them such disposition of minde? And by those wordes he doth vs to wit, that it was an easie matter for them to promise,

as men commonly make great proteſtations with full mouth, but whē it commeth to the performance they ſhewe well that their promiſing was at alauenture. God therefore to make the people perceiue how hard a matter it is to keepe the lawe, ſayeth here, I would fayne it were ſo. For the Hebrew woord which he vſeth where he ſayth, who wil giue thē the heart, importeth as much as when wee ſay, be it ſo: I would faine it were ſo. True it is that here God ſpeaketh after the maner of men: for he needeth no more but wiſh things done, all things are in his hand. And therefore it might be replyed, Lord it belongeth to thee, and askeſt thou who ſhall giue them the heart? To whom belonges that to doe? Man of himſelfe will neuer incline to good, but he muſt bee driuen to it by ſome other meanes, and that can no creature doe, but it is thy ſpirit that muſt doe it. Now then ſeeke not thou who ſhall giue them the heart, but let the power of thy ſpirit vtter it ſelfe, and then ſhall they doe it. Likewiſe
Deut. 30. 6. we ſhall ſee howe God will ſay, I will giue you a heart to feare mee. If it were in vs, why ſhoulde he ſay ſo? But he ſaieth that it belongeth to him to doe it, like as he addeth by the Prophet, I will
Ie. 32. 39. & Ezec. 11. 19. and 36. 27. giue them a heart to obey mee. As much ſhall wee ſee hereafter, where he ſaieth, I will cauſe them to keepe my commandements. God then chalengeth to himſelfe the inſtructing of men, and the gouerning of them by his holy Ghoſt, to the intent they ſhould be ſubiect vnto him, & ſubmit themſelues to his righteouſneſſe. And why then doth he pretend to wiſh it in this text? It is bicauſe he ſpeaketh after the maner of men, as he doeth in many other places. And (as I ſaid afore) it is to the ende that when there is any mention made of walking in obedience to Godward, wee ſhould vnderſtand that it cannot bee done without hardneſſe, and that our wits ſhould be wakened to apply our ſelues earneſtly to that ſtudie. Therefore whereas men promiſe vnaduiſedly, that they will worke wonders in obeying God and in keeping his Lawe: let vs vnderſtand that we muſt examine our owne abilitie, and then we ſhall finde that there is nothing but all maner of weakencſſe in vs. So farre off are wee from being able to perfourme all that is commaunded vs: that wee knowe not at which ende
Phil. 2. 13. to begin. Nay, wee haue not the skil to conceiue one good thought, vntil God haue reformed vs, drawen vs to him, giuen vs the minde, and therunto added abilitie to put our deſires in execution. Thus ye ſee what is ment by this ſaying, And who ſhal giue thē the heart? or I would it were ſo.

Hereby wee be warned to take heede, that we preſume not vpon our owne ſtrength, to bee too bolde. For when we beare our ſelues in hand that wee can doe all things, it is the cauſe of our ruin. And God doeth iuſtly laugh ſuch ouerweening to ſcorne. But let vs learne to feele that we can do nothing: and that although we be bound to fulfill all that euer God commaundeth vs: yet it followeth not therefore that wee bee able to doe it, but rather that we be vtterly vnable. Neither is it ſo ſmall and common a matter to loue God with all our heart, with all our minde, and with all our power, as if wee needed no more but to ſay, yea, I will goe about it out of hand: but it is a thing that paſſeth all that is in man. When we once know that the law containeth too high a righteouſneſſe for vs to attaine vnto, and that wee on our part are ſo weake as is pitie to ſee: then will we learne to figh before God, and conſider well that wee bee bound to doe whatſoeuer he appointeth, but yet wee will craue power at his hande, that it may pleaſe him to helpe vs with his holy ſpirit, and not onely ſupplye our frailtie, but alſo be the beginner and perfourmer of all thinges in vs, ſo as he make vs willing, and confirme vs in that willingneſſe, and with that conſtancie match alſo power to accompliſh our deſires.

And by the way God ſheweth here, that his ſending of his worde vnto vs, is to the intent to be ioyned vnto vs, and that wee alſo ſhould bee vnited vnto him: ſo as he requireth nothing but obedience, that we might be his children, and he ſhewe himſelfe to bee our father. And ſo Gods intent in cauſing his word to bee preached vnto vs, is to gather vs as it were vnder his winges, that wee may bee defended and ſaued, yea verily ſo wee come vnto him quietly, and ſuffer our ſelues to bee ruled by his woord, and bee ſubiect thereunto. But it is true (as I ſaid afore) that it is not in our owne power to doe this, but God muſt giue vs that grace, and he giueth it not to all. Neuertheleſſe it is not for vs to bee inquiſitiue of Gods ſecrete purpoſe in that behalfe, why he reformeth the one ſort by his holy ſpirit, and letteth the other ſort goe on ſtill in their corruption, without bringing of them backe. Wee muſt not enter into that maze: but it muſt ſuffice vs that God liſteth to make men vnexcuſable, in ſaying, I would faine it were ſo. As if he ſhould ſay, that after we haue once beene taught by his word, wee haue no more excuſe: God is not to blame if wee be not ſaued. Why ſo? For we ſhall perceiue that to walke as he hath commaunded vs, is the way to attaine to all goodneſſe. And therefore let vs lay the blame of all our miſeries [vpon our ſelues:] and if God afflict vs and puniſh vs with aduerſitie, let vs vnderſtande that wee haue no cauſe to grudge or complayne of him, for wee be faultie, bicauſe wee haue not followed his lawe. That is the thing in effect, which wee haue to marke vpon this text. Yet notwithſtanding, it is true that wee muſt haue recourſe to his aide, knowing that wee of our ſelues are too weake to performe his lawe, in ſo much that we be neuer able to come at it, no nor any thing neere it. But yet if we liue not as becommeth vs, we muſt alwayes yeelde our ſelues guiltie, knowing that the fauk remaineth in our ſelues, ſo as if God doe beate vs with his rod, we can not ſay it is vndeſerued on our part. For why? Seeing we haue Gods word, wee haue matter of recourſe that he is deſirous to bee at one with vs, and to doe the duetie of a father, and to maintaine vs in all proſperitie, if wee burie not his grace, or withhold the thing that is due on our part. Yee ſee then that men are iuſtly conuicted and condemned for refuſing Gods grace, and for ſlan-

ding

ting the doore against him, in that they profited not in his worde when they were taught it. And so it is a very profitable warning for vs, when we see in this texte howe God wisheth that wee shoulde doe the thinges that hee commaundeth vs, to the intent it might go well with vs. Wherby wee see that if wee receiue the doctrine with humilitie, and desire to obey it, the ende thereof cannot bee but happie, so as wee shall bee sure of our saluation. Howbeit wee must alwayes come backe to this point, that wee pray to God to giue vs heartes: (for it belongeth to him to doe that): and yet if wee doe amisse, wee must learn to condemne our selues, that he may acquite vs.

On the otherside let vs reioyce inasmuch as we see howe hee procureth our saluation, and intendeth the furtherance thereof, as oft as his worde is preached vnto vs. And let vs remember howe it is saide in Salomons prouerbs, That it is the delight and pleasure of Gods wisedome to dwell among men. See heere howe God auoweth, that his sending of his worde vnto vs, is to teach vs the full perfection of wisedome, as if hee shoulde sende his owne wisedome from heauen. Yea, and to what ende? Wisedome is brought in their saying thus, All my delight is to dwell among men. And that is as much as if God shoulde open his heart and say, Beholde, my teaching of men by my worde, is of purpose to binde my selfe to them with a holy band. And if they on their side bee not stubborne, they shall perceiue that I wil alwayes be among them without departing from them at any time. This ought to inflame vs greatly with a reuerence to Gods worde, so as we may seeke to profite in it, and neuer suffer our selues to bee turned from it, forasmuch as it bringeth inestimable benefite vnto vs, namely that our Lorde vniteth himselfe vnto vs thereby.

Prou. 8. 31.

Nowe it followeth in Moseses texte, that God commaundeth the people to *goe euerie man to his tent, and Moses to tarie there still*: and then he addeth, *I will shewe vnto thee all the commaundements, statutes, and ordinances which thou muste teach to all the people*. Heere God sheweth againe, that hee ceaseth not to continue his teaching of the people, though he vse the foredeclared meanes, that is to wit, though hee make Moses as it were the vtterer of his will, and the bearer of his message. This is to bee marked well: for it serueth to make vs knowe, that God intendeth to holde vs alwayes to himselfe, and will not haue our faith grounded vpon men, nor to depend vpon them: And that is a very requisite thing. Truely as for them that followe their owne good intentes, or say they holde the thinges that haue beene determined by the Church, or by the auncient fathers: they may many times be grossely deceiued. And if a man tell them they doe but as it were hang in the aire, and haue no certaintie in beeing so wedded vnto men: they bee wilfull in their owne opinions, as we see the Papistes are, whome the duell hath so bewitched, that they content themselues with the resolutions made by men, and boldely despise the wordo of God. Insomuch that if a man bring record from thence to reproue their superstitions: they bee at a full point, for they bee so dored that they regarde not to haue God against them. Men then may well for a time haue this ouerlustinesse of running boldly whither soeuer their fooliish imagination carieth them, & they may harden themselues against God: but when it commeth to the verie puih, they be so dismaied as they wote not where to become. And therefore let vs note that wee shall neuer haue any sure and longlasting stay, vnlesse our faith be grounded vppon Gods worde, and that wee bee able to say, that looke whatsoeuer wee haue wee holde it of him, and that it is the verie trueth, so as wee wander not in our owne imagination, nor take the doctrine of men for our stay. And wheras we heare God say in this text, *I will tell thee the things which thou muste teach*: Let vs marke that wee likewise must rest wholly vppon him and vpon his infallible truth, ỳ our faith may not be wauering and doubtfull. And the thing which wee haue to seeke when we come to sermons, is to haue this point well warranted and sealed in our consciences, namely that we haue Gods word wherein lyeth our life.

And herewithall let vs marke also, that God ment to holde the preachers of his word in such awe, as they shoulde not presume to put forth any thing of their owne, but be contented to bee faithfull setters forth of the things that he commaundeth, so as they may alwayes protest, that they haue serued god in executing his commaundement, and in deliuering it foorth from hand to hand. This is a thing which wee haue to marke, we (I say) whom God hath appointed his ministers to preach his worde, and to whom hee hath committed the office of teaching: namely that we adde not aught of our owne deuising, but deliuer the thing simply which we knowe to bee proceeded from God. 1. Cor. 4. 2.

And to the end that folke shoulde knowe ỳ God ment not to teach them by halues: he reherseth the thing again which we haue seene heretofore namely his *statutes, ordinances, commandements and Ceremonies*. As if he should say there wanteth not any thing in his doctrine, neither ought the people to couet any thing more. This hath bene declared more at large alreadie. Notwithstanding, whensoeuer God vseth such diuersitie of wordes to vs, wheras he might say in one word *the Lawe*: let vs marke, that it serueth to restraine men the better from fond curiositie of adding any thing to his law, as the thing which wee see we bee too much giuen vnto by nature, forasmuch as our flesh prouoketh vs continually to inuent, I know not what new thing. And ỳ is the cause why in popery euery mã hath aduẽtured to cast to his collup, & to make so many lawes one vpon another. For why? They thought it not ynough to liue plainly according to gods word, but ỳ it would be good to ad still some minglemangle. But contrariwise God telleth vs that if we haue his law, we haue statuts, commandements, ordinances and rites ynow: as if he should say ỳ morral mẽ ought not to stand so much in their own conceits, as to

goe

goe about to be wiser than hee. For when they haue made neuer so large discourses, yet can they not amende any part [of his doings] nor ad any thing to them, but whatsoeuer they put too further of their owne, it shall bee not onely superfluous and vnprofitable: but also a marring to all the rest, as if a man shoulde mingle vineger with good wine.

And now God hauing spoken after that manner, addeth *that they shoulde take good heede that they kept the things which he commanded them, without bowing to the right hand or to the left*. Here our Lorde sheweth vs againe, that the honoring of his Lawe which he requireth at our hands, must not be an onely allowing of it with our mouthes, after which manner wee woulde faine discharge our selues thereof: but hee telleth vs that his giuing of it forth, is to holde vs in his subiection & seruice, and that to the same ende he will haue it preached still at this day. For thereby he intendeth to trie whether he can weeld vs as quiet people that submit themselues to him. Therefore let vs marke, that our resorting vnto sermons must not be to commend the doctrine for good and holie: for God shalbe much beholden to vs for saying that his word is worthie to be receiued: hee will not haue vs to be his iudges. It is true that we owe him that acknowledgement, so as when wee haue hearde his worde, euery of vs ought to confesse it to bee the pure trueth, and that there is none other rightnesse, righteousnes, nor wisedome than is contained there. But yet must we passe further therewithall, and yeeld our selues to the seruing of our God. That is one point which wee haue to gather vpon this text. Another point is *that we must beware that we keepe it*. Wherein God sheweth, that wee must applie all our strength earnestly in that behalfe. For men shall neuer followe God by sleeping. Although they inforce themselues neuer so much, yet the infirmitie of their nature is such, as they can hardly keepe their feete. Therefore let vs not think that we can discharge our selues to Godwarde without taking of paine. For the thing is too hard considering what we be, namely slowe and sluggish to good thinges, yea euen though God haue already made vs willing, and do gouerne vs by his holy spirit. And if he let vs alone as we be of our selues, we shall not only be slowe, but also drawe cleane backe from his wil. If he call vs to him, we shall go from him: yea & wee shalbe so little able to couet any good at all: that wee shalbe inforced to doe euill. But let vs marke what I haue touched afore, namely that although our Lord haue giuen vs some good disposition of minde, and set vs in some good forwardnesse: yet are we slothfull still, and when we should steppe one pace forth, whereas the same should be done in lesse than a minute of an houre, we must haue a whole houre to do it in. Nay we fall to kicking, or else by that time that we haue gone one pace, ofttimes we stumble, or retyre backe, or else take such foule falles as is piteous to see. Therefore it is not for nought that God saith here *Take heede that you doe them*. As if hee should say, in deede my lawe is giuen you to the intent you shoulde put it in execution and obey it: but yet thinke not you that it is so easie a matter to be done. What is to be done then? Prepare your selues to walke after my commandements, thinke vpon them, put to your indeuour, be diligent therein, take a tast & sauour of them, keepe good watch for feare of being turned away, and take very good heede to your selues. Thus we see in effect, that our Lorde exhorteth vs here to labor earnestly, when the case standeth vpon walking in obedience towardes him. And why? For the thinges that he requireth of vs are not so easie to be don. And besides that, we be so ill disposed therevnto, as is pitie to see: insomuch that if we be not spurred and driuen by force, we cannot goe forward. Therefore it standeth vs in hand to awake, and to take heede, and to stande continually vppon our garde, that wee may performe y things that our Lord hath commanded vs. Nowe afterward he addeth, *that this must be done without bowing to the right hand or to the left, so as wee walke throughout in the way that he hath shewed them*. In deede this text shalbe expounded more at length in the twelfth chapter: but yet must we not passe it ouer without knowing what God ment by it. In forbidding vs to bowe to the right hand or to the left, he sheweth vs that he will haue vs to harken to him in all things without exception. And this importeth two things: namely that wee must neither put any thing to his lawe, nor take any thing from it. As concerning putting to, it is as if we would go *to the right hand*: for they y ad to Gods law, do it vpon imaginatiõ y the keeping of the things contained there, is not al that they haue to do, & therfore it is good to put somewhat more to it. Loe how men would giue place to their owne fancies, so as if any thing come in their heades, they thinke that God forgate that, and that it were good to be done. And that was the very cause of the great number of ordinances, lawes, and ceremonies that are set vp in poperie. The Iewes had the like vice among them, according as they be blamed for despising of Gods commandements & statutes, for their owne traditions sakes. Now then, let vs keepe vs from walking on the right hand, so as we should turne from the way which God hath shewed vs. And why? For the *right hand* is when we will needs bee too wise and too righteous, bearing our selues in hande that it is good for vs to do more than we be commanded. But in so doing we be the diuels seruants, for God vterly refuseth all that euer we adde to his worde he will haue no such mingling.

And we decline or bowe to *the left hand*, when wee diminish Gods worde, that is to say, when wee bee contented to serue him by halues, and therewithall would haue him to giue vs leaue to follow our owne lusts. Some man peraduenture is not subiect to some vices: and well coulde hee find in his heart to discharge his duetie to Godward in seruing him so farre forth: but forasmuch as he cannot ouermaister himself in some other vyces, hee woulde haue God to holde himselfe contented, & to enter into a bargaine with him, as if he should say, very well, if I faile in this behalf,

halfe, I will recompence it in another. But let vs keepe our selues from walking on the left hande, that is to say, from taking any thing away from Gods worde. For as he hath forbidden to murther: so hath hee also forbidden to steale and to commit adulterie: and therefore we must submit our selues to his commaundements in all poinctes and all respectes without making of any reply thereto. For as wee must not in any wise adde ought to his Law: so is it not lawfull to take any thing from it, but we must walke in all the wayes that he sheweth vs.

And whereas hee termeth it *a way*, it is to the ende to exhorte vs to keepe vs in it, according as we shall see in the ende of this booke, where Moses will say, This is the way, walke therein. As if he should say, whosoeuer turneth away from the doctrine that I set before you, goeth astray, hee doth but runne gadding ouer the fields, and yet for all that hee commeth neuer the neerer his wayes ende, but rather is still further and further from it. Therefore in this place, *walke in the way* is as much to say, as wander not ye wretches wilfully, goe not astray. Sith your God is your guide, you cannot goe amisse in following him. But if you followe your owne heade: in the ende God must bee faine to shewe you, that yee shalbe no better than stray beastes, and that yee haue not holde the right way. Know ye therefore that Gods doctrine is your way. If this saying were well printed in our mindes, we shoulde be holde so in awe, as our itching appetites shoulde not be able to make vs runne astray as wee doe, but our life should bee restrained by it. For God sheweth vs dayly which is the way, & yet notwithstanding men dispute & make much questioning with What is to be done? & what is to be done? Verily as who should say it were not told vs, that God neuer openeth his mouth, but it is to shewe vs the right way. And seeing he sheweth it vs, do not we offer him wrong and iniurie if we followe it not? Do we not blame him as though hee had lost his time & trauel about vs? Now we see what this worde *way* importeth: that is to wit, that out of Gods doctrine there is nothing but error and deceit, and that men beguile themselues when they thinke they do wel, further forth than when they suffer themselues to be ruled by gods word, which sheweth vs the good and right way.

And he saith purposely, *All the ways*. For he intendeth not to make such a parting of stakes in this behalfe, as men woulde that he should, so as they would faine reserue somewhat alwayes to themselues. Here God saith contrariwise, either you must obey me throughout in all poinctes, or else I renounce you. So then, are wee desirous to make our life alowable to God? Wee must not be obedient vnto him in part, but we must loke that all our whole life be framed according to his commandements, so as we may say wee haue kept all ways. But here it might be demãded, whether it be possible for vs to walk throughout in the way of the Lord. For on the contrarie part, seing that men do not the good which they faine would: it is much for vs if we shal haue indeuored to come to *y* good way, & to go towards the ende, though we be not come at it. S. Paul himself complaineth that he was not able to do as he would in the discharge of his duety towards god. Here is no speking of such perfection as is required by *y* Lawe: but we must only vnderstand that God will haue men to yeeld & giue ouer themselues vnto him, & inforce themselues to run thitherward though they attain not to the mark. Although then that we do as it were drag our legs after vs in our going all our life long, and neuer come fully vnto God, yet must we keepe on to him ward, and that not in part, but in all the things that are conteined in the lawe. Truth it is that we cannot so discharge our selues, as there may bee a full answerablenes betwixt Gods word and our liues: but if wee bee desirous to submit our selues vnto God, and to frame our selues thereafter, not in some one point but in all without exception, indeuouring the same to the vttermost of our power: it is as a keeping of all the wayes of God. For he beareth with vs, and taketh such willingnes in good worth, when he seeth vs go to it roundly, & that we be not dubble minded, nor desirous to reserue any peece of our owne willes or to take leaue to do them, but labour [and striue to the contrarie] as much as in vs lyeth, according to the grace that is giuen vs.

Rom 7.23.

Nowe hereunto he addeth also, *That they may prosper, and that it may go well with them and with their children.* Whereof hee sheweth, (as I haue touched alredie) that all the miseries and griefes which we indure in this world, are chastisements for our sinnes. And we cannot wite our vnhappinesse vpon any thing else than our owne faultes. True it is that euery man couets to liue at ease and in prosperitie: we neede no teaching to desire that: for our owne nature leadeth vs thervnto. But in the meane while it should seeme that we haue conspired our owne mischiefe. For *y* meane of prosperitie is to obey our God. And then will he blesse vs in such sort, as we shal feele the fruits of his grace and fauour in all respects. But what? We be loth to yeeld him his due obedience: and therefore must we also bee refrof his blessing, and reiected as vnworthy to be of the number of his creatures. And so let vs marke, that here our Lorde ment to rebuke men, and to shewe them that they themselues are to be blamed for al the aduersities and miseries which they indure in this worlde, and that they must wyte the same vppon their sinnes. But yet moreouer hee ment therewith to drawe his owne to him, by setting the reward before them. As if he shoulde say, Go to, I deserue well to be serued at your hand without looking for any thing at my hande for it: for seeing you bee my creatures, is it not reason that you should be subiect to me? Ought not all your life to bee giuen vnto me? Yes: but yet intende not I that you shall serue mee for nought, I will forbeare mine owne right, which is that you shoulde bee bounde to doe whatsoeuer I commaunde you, without looking for any thing: and I tell you that I am readie to blesse you, and to make you to prosper if you serue me. Our Lorde then in saying so, sheweth that his meaning is to winne his seruants to him by gentlenesse, & as it were

were to breake their harts, that they may be the willinger to serue him, seeing hee goeth not to worke with such rigour as he might, but forbeareth his right, and rather playeth the father, telling vs that if wee behaue our selues like children towards him, he wilbe gracious and liberall towards vs, and although hee owe vs not any thing, yet will he not faile to rewarde vs for the seruice that we yeelde vnto him.

Hereby we bee warned that Gods intent is to drawe vs vnto him, but yet must wee not inferre therevpon, that men can deserue any thing in seruing of God, as the Papistes doe, who when they heare such texts doe by and by fall to their merits, and beare themselues on hand that God is beholden to them therefore. But contrariwise Gods meaning is to shewe vs that he is readie to apply himselfe to vs after the manner of men, so as he seeketh nothing else but to induce vs to obey him. And that is not for any benefite to him selfe: for what profite can hee receiue by vs, though wee shoulde performe his whole Lawe? Should that adusntage him any thing at al? No. Yee see then where at God ameth, and what we haue to marke vppon this sentence. Wherefore let vs learn, that if we haue obeyed our God, and he make vs to prosper: it is not for that hee oweth vs any thing, or for that wee haue deserued aught, and can boast that he recompenseth our deserts: but because it pleaseth him to vtter his free goodnesse so farre forth vnto vs, as to terme that thing a wages, [hyre, or recompence], which hee giueth vs of his owne onely free liberalitie, without being bounde any thing at all thervnto. Againe, when he chastiseth vs, and wee bee distressed with many miseries: let vs assure our selues that we reape the fruits of our own seede: and because we haue liued amisse, our Lord also must be faine to giue vs some signe of his wrath, to the ende that hee may bee knowen to be the iudge of the worlde. But yet hath hee also a regarde of our welfare, namely to mislike of our faults and to bee sorie for them, and to resort to him by true repentance. Thus yee see that God in shewing of himself angrie with vs ceaseth not to vtter his loue towards vs. For he indeuoreth to bring vs home to himselfe therby. He seeth that we be falne asleepe in our sinnes, and hee wakeneth vs, as one knowing it to be expedient for vs so to be. That is the thing which wee haue to marke vpon this place.

Nowe in the end Moses speaketh of the land, and saith: *That thou maist prosper in the lande which I will giue thee:* and afterwarde he setteth downe this saying againe, *That it may goe well with you in the land which yee must possesse*. Nowe it seemeth heere at the first sight, that God promiseth none othere rewarde than in this earthly and transitorie life. And if it had beene so, then had the hope of the children of Israel bene quite dashed. But wee must note that our Lorde vsed another maner of dealing towards that people, than hee doth towards vs, though they tende both to one end. For the sacrifices that were ordeined by the lawe, serued not to drawe the people away from the saluation which we haue in Iesus Christ: but rather to leade them to it: so as Gods mind was to doe men to vnderstande, that they were condemned, and that there was none other meane of reconciliation, but by the bloude of our Lorde Iesus Christ. But yet in the meane while men ceased not to kill brute beasts, and God said vnto them, your sinnes shal bee forgiuen you when you shall haue offered me a Calfe, a Lambe, or a Sheepe. It should seeme by this, that God ment to set the remission of sinnes in the sacrificing of brute beastes. But hee did not so. That was done to leade the people after that grosse manner to the redeption that was at the length purchased for vs by our Lord Iesus Christs owne person. In like case is it with the land of Chanaan. For first of all Gods will was to set foorth the euerlasting heritage of saluation to the children of Abraham, in saying to Abraham, I am thy large reward. He promiseth not Abraham the lande as though he would haue him to stay himself there, but willed him to put his whole trust in him, and to raise vp himselfe aboue the worlde, & to looke for the heauenly life both for himselfe and for his ofspring. Howbeit forasmuch as our Lord Iesus Christ was not yet come, nor the veile of the temple was not as yet broken, I say it was meete that the Land of Chanaan should be as a pledge of it, because it was fully behighted him for an inheritance. Then let vs marke well, that when as God saith, *that thou maist prosper in the land*: his intent is not that his people shoulde set their mindes vpon this present life, but to guide them higher by that meane, namely to the hope of the immortalitie which hee had promised them. Neuertheless our Lorde promiseth his blessing in such sort to his people, as they shall feele it euen in this worlde and haue some tast of it here, in waiting for the discouerie of the full enjoyment thereof, at such time as they shalbe taken out of the worlde. And euen at this day also we must bethinke vs of this text of Saint Paul, that if we feare God, we shall haue the promises both of the life present and of the life to come. For God will make vs to feele his goodnesse in this worlde, to the ende to drawe vs vp higher, and to teach vs so to receiue his benefites heere, as wee may looke to haue our fill of them when we be come to his kingdom, where we shal haue the whole fulnesse of them.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, euen till they haue driuen vs to true repentance, and that wee acknowledging our wretchednesse more and more, may learne to striue against all the affections of our flesh, and against all our wicked and frowarde lustes, and moreouer to withstande the cursed presumptuousnes that is in vs which also would haue vs to doe that which we our selues best like of, so as nothing may stay vs from following the pure and simple worde of our God, assuring our selues y it is the true & perfite rule wherunto we must submit our selues, and that we must not attempt to ad any thing to it, but simplie rest vpon that which is conteined there, and goe forward

Heb. 9. 8. 13. 14. 22.

more and more therein, vntill that hauing finished this earthly race, wee be come to the heauenly reſt wherevnto hee calleth vs. And let vs pray him to reach vs his hande in the meane while, whenſoeuer we ſeeke him and call vppon him in our neede. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Friday the nineteenth of Iuly. 1555.

The xlv. Sermon, which is the firſt vpon the ſixt Chapter.

THeſe are the Commaundements, Ordinances and Lawes which the Lorde your God commaunded me to teach you: to the end that you ſhould doe them in the Land whereinto you ſhall enter to poſſeſſe it.

2 That thou maiſt feare the Lord thy God, in keeping al his ordinances & commaundements which I commaund thee, all the dayes of thy life, both thou and thy children and thy childrens children, that thy dayes may be prolonged.

3 Hearken therefore O Iſrael and take heede that thou doe them, that it may goe well with thee, and that thou maiſt be mightilie multiplied in the land that floweth with milke and honnie, as the Lorde God of thy fathers hath ſayde vnto thee.

4 Heare O Iſrael, the Lord our God is the onelie Lord.

WE haue ſene oft heretofore howe Moſes ſpake to the people concerning ỹ contents of the law: yea and euen yeſter day we ſaw ỹ hee made mẽtion ther of: and here we ſee the like againe. And yet for all that, it is not a needeleſſe repetition, conſidering howe ſoone men forget the thinges they haue learned of God, if they be not put in mind of them: and wee knowe that we neede not any thing to turne vs away from them. For we be ſo giuen to vanitie, that nothing is harder to vs, than to holde our ſelues in obedience vnto God. As ſoone as any toy takes vs in the heade, it carieth vs away, and wee minde no more what God had ſaide vnto vs. Againe foraſmuch as he is very deſirous to winne vs to him: he muſt bee faine to plucke vp ỹ falſe opinions by the roote, wherewith we be ouergrowen aforehande. For when a grounde is buſhie, it will aske much labour before it can be put to any vſe: and euen ſo is it with vs. And that is the cauſe why Moſes ſaieth againe, *that theſe are the commaundements, ſtatutes and ordinances which the Lorde commaunded to him, to giue them forth to the people, that they might be kept*. Nowe by theſe wordes hee giueth an incling, that Gods intent is to holde the people vnder his obedience. What meane yee wretched folke to goe aſtray after that faſhion? I giue you my Lawe: and hauing that doctrine ye cannot goe amiſſe: it is the way of ſaluation, and therfore holde you to it. But yet for all this, men are fickle and fleeting to and fro: and God reigneth them with a ſtrong bute: like as when a horſe is harde to bee ruled, hee is faine to bee raigned backe more than once, and if hee fling out and will not ſuffer himſelfe to be handled, the ryder is faine to reine him ſtreyt againe & againe. After the ſame manner doeth God deale with his people. And thereby hee ſheweth that mans minde is full of ſtubbornenеſſe, or elſe of lightneſſe, ſo as hee cannot reſt vppon Gods worde, wherein notwithſtanding lyeth our whole ſaluation and welfare. Sith it is ſo: let vs marke that in the perſon of the people of Iſrael, wee bee warned heere, that when God ſetteth his worde before vs, wee muſt not onely minde it for one day, but wee muſt exerciſe vs in it all the dayes of our life, and wee muſt alwayes haue this ſaying before our eyes, theſe are the Statutes, theſe are the Ordinances, theſe are the Commaundementes, ſo as it is not for vs to frame rules and Lawes wherewith to gouerne our life, foraſmuch as that authoritie belongeth only to God.

Beſides this wee bee alſo put in minde, that God hath ſhewed vs the right way. Therefore let vs followe it, and not ſtand queſtioning what wee haue to doe. For there is no more cauſe of doubt when our Lorde hath once ſpoken. Wee muſt not any more alledge, I cannot tell whether it bee good, I wote not whether I needе to do more or no: but let vs be contented with that which God hath ſhewed vs. For hee will alwayes be a good ſchoolemaſter vnto vs, if we bee not euill ſcholers vnto him. And for the ſame cauſe ſpeaketh hee here againe of Commandements Statutes and Ordinances, to the intent we ſhold not think that God ment to teach vs by halues.

Then is the perfection of wisedome conteined in the Lawe: and there remaineth no more for vs to doe, but to obey it, so as we be not curious in coueting more than God hath shewed vs, or in fonde deuotions to draw vs one way or other, but perswade our selues that God hath not enuied those of whome hee tooke the charge, but hath taught them all that is for their benefite. Let vs behaue our selues according to his will, and apply all our wittes therevnto, and let his lawe suffice vs. Although all the worlde reiect vs, wee shall not passe for it, for wee haue our iudge. And therefore although the worlde wander away in vaine imaginations, and euerie man deuiseth what hee thinketh good: Let vs alwayes remember that wee must appeare before the iudgement seate of our God, so as it is hee to whome wee must make our account. But hee hath giuen vs his Lawe, and according therevnto will he iudge vs. And therefore let vs leaue al worldly imaginations, assuring our selues that they are al but vanity and leasing.

Pſal.19.8.

Rom.2.16.

Rom.3.12.

Herevnto Moses addeth, that as concerning his office he had not brought them any thing of his owne deuising, but had set forth Gods Lawe faithfully according as hee had giuen him in charge. And this protestation is well to be marked. For wee must bethinke vs of the thing that hath beene treated of heretofore: namely that Moses was the excellentest Prophet that euer God raised vp: and yet notwithstanding he taketh no libertie here to teach what hee himselfe deemed good: for he knew himselfe to be a mortall man, and subiect to the Lawe as wel as other men. That is the cause why hee protesteth that the things which hee bringeth are the same ỹ he receiued of God, so as he deliuereth them as it were from hand to hand. Seeing ỹ Moses did so: who dareth say that it is lawful for him to passe further? And yet we see what hath come to passe. For in the whole Popedom is there any harkening what God saieth, that they might put a difference betwixt it and the doctrines of men? No: but they haue their holy mother ỹ Church as they terme it, they haue determinations and decrees of their owne, and they thinke it ynough to take couert vnder the name of the Church: and in the meane while they rob God of his authoritie to bestowe it vpon men, which are no better but dung. Therefore it is an intolerable traiterousnesse, that God should not bee suffered to be any more the Lawemaker that hee might guide his people, and holde them vnder his yoke: but that men should vsurpe such authoritie against him. And therfore we haue so much the more need to marke what is conteined here: namely that although Moses was as an Angel of heauen, and had beene exalted aboue all men by God, and had beene fortie dayes and fortie nights with him vpon the mount without eating or drinking, to shewe that he was no more of the common aray of other men: yet notwithstanding when hee came from that heauenly glorie and as it were from the company of Angels: hee humbled himselfe still, and shewed that hee did not put forth aught of his owne, ne followe his owne fancie in that behalfe, but was contented to harken what God said, and reported the same as a good seruant that had neither added any thing, nor falsified the commission that was giuen him. That is another thing which we had to marke againe vppon this text.

Deut.34.10

Nowe followeth an exhortation *shewing how the people should discharge themselues in doing the Lawe*. As if hee should saie, that the giuing thereof was not to the ende that men shoulde but onely confesse that all that is conteined therein is good, iust and rightfull: but also that men shoulde thereby shew whether they were obedient to God or no. And in that respect he saith, *to the ende that thou shouldest feare the Lorde thy God, and keepe his commaundements and statutes*. By this word *Feare* he doth vs to wit, that God in giuing forth his Lawment to trie what we be, and whether we be willing to serue him or no. For although we coulde doe all his commaundements in such sort as no fault could be found in vs to the worldward, if in the meane whyle the feare of God be not rooted in our hearts, to yeelde him such reuerence as to be willing to be his: all our life shalbe but a fond pompe: for wee must not thinke that God is satisfied with outward apparances. Howmuchsoeuer they be commended of men, they bee but smoke before him. Then if wee minde to keepe his Lawe dewly, and to haue our life acceptable vnto him: we must beginne at this point of yelding him such reuerence, as to be desirous to bee vnder his hande and gouernement; and to doe him homage as to our soueraine Lord & to giue ouer our selues to him as to our maker, and to honour him as our father. If we be thus minded, it is the beginning of all the Lawe and of al righteousnes. And that is the cause why it is sayde that the true wisedom is to feare God. And if we will know whether we haue profited in gods lawe or no: we must alwayes sift & search our selues whether we haue such desire & zeale that God shold be honored & glorified by vs. For if there be that feare in our hearts, ỹ fruits therof wil shew themselues both in our feete and in our handes, ỹ is to say in al our members, according to ỹ rule which he hath set downe in publishing his law. And as for them that boast of the feare of God, & nevertheless behaue themselues lewdly in their conuersation: they belie thẽselues w their own mouthes, & bewray ỹ they be shameles in bragging so of the feare of God. Now when we see here a text which is well worthie to be marked: wherin Moses declareth, that to serue god well, first we must giue our hearts vnto him, so as it suffiseth not to haue all ỹ vertues ỹ can be imagined to outward shew, vnlesse a vertuous mind go before them: secondly that the feare of God is no secret or ydle thing, but ỹ although it bee inclosed in mens harts, yet nevertheles it must shew it self in their liues: for it is the heart that gouerneth both the hands and the feete and all that euer is besides. Therefore if wee feare God, we must learne to shew it by our deeds and by proofe, euen by framing our life according to his will.

Now herevpon we may gather, that God disalloweth all that euer men can doe, when they

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turne away from his worde. As for example, the Papistes are alwayes seruing of God (as they themselues say): but in the meane season what doe they? They take much paine, but they bee neuer a whit the forwarder, because they haue nothing among them but mens inuentions. Their seruing of God, is to bible bable or to kneele downe before puppets or idols, to scudde from altar to altar, to cause Masses to be chaunted, to gadde on pilgrimage, to fast such a day in the honour of such a saint, and to eate no flesh vppon fridayes and saturdayes. To bee short, it is a gulfe of all baggage, couered with the name and title of Gods seruice. But shall ye find that euer God vttered one word or syllable concerning such thinges? No. It was euerywhit of it deuised by men. Nowe let vs consider by this texte, whether God accepteth such seruice for good and lawfull. Nay contrariwise he saith, thou shalt feare the Lorde thy God, and keepe all his commaundements and statutes. So then, when men turne from that way, and followe their owne imaginations and the inuentions of men: thereby they shewe sufficiently that they haue no feare of God in them, for else they woulde offer him the sacrifice which hee preferreth before all things: namely the sacrifice of obedience, as is shewed in the first booke of Samuel the fifteenth Chapter. Insomuch that if a man herken not vnto Gods voice to submit him selfe thereto, but contrariwise followeth the inuention of his owne braine, or the thinges that other men haue deuised: surely it is an ydolatry, and as badde as witchcraft, which God abhorreth. After that manner doth Gods spirit speake of it, notwithstanding that mortall men doe deeme the cleane contrarie. Now then wee see howe Moses declareth here, that if we feare God in good earnest, we will also doe him the honour to be ruled by his will, so as we wil not take leaue at mens handes to doe what they thinke good, but stop all mens mouthes when God speaketh, and open our eares to hearken what hee saieth, and receiue the same.

1 Sam. 15. 22. 23.

But yet for all this, it is not ynough for euery of vs to imploye himselfe in the seruing of God: wee must also procure to the vttermost of our power, that he may be worshipped of al men: yea and that his seruice may continue euen after our decease, so as his honour may abide fast setled when we bee deade and gone out of the worlde, & not be abolished with our transitorie life. And that is the cause why Moses saith, *thy children, and they that issue of their race*, shal continue in seruing God & in keeping his law. Therfore let vs mark well, that here Moses not onely exhorteth euerie man to serue God by framing his owne life according to the Law that he hath giuen vs: but also willeth fathers to take paine in bringing vp their children, and to leaue such seed after them (so neere as they can), as God may be honored in their ofspring, and his name bee euer purely called vpon, that by that meane such as descend of vs may bee blessed, and his couenant (which conteineth our saluation) indure for euer, & not perish though we our selues be mortall. But wee see that fathers are so farre of from discharging their duelies in this behalfe: that they giue such examples to their children, as they may seeme to haue conspired to abolish al feare of God, and all keeping of his Lawe. And therefore no marueil though God withdraw himselfe from vs, and seeme to be minded to cut off the benefits which he hath bestowed vpon vs. For are we worthy of y continuance of them towards vs, seeing we bee so negligent in causing his seruice to continue in perfect and vnappaired state? But yet for al that, this must not bee spoken to vs in vaine. Therefore let vs indeuour to teach such as shal succeed vs, so as God may euer bee worshipped, and knowen to bee the father and Sauiour of the whole worlde, and men giue themselues whollie vnto him.

Immediatly herevppon, Moses addeth that which he had said afore: namely, to the end that *their dayes might bee prolonged, and that God might make the people to prosper, according as he had promised to their fathers to giue them a land that flowed with milke and honie.* I haue declared alreadie heretofore, what Moses ment by this saying: that is to wit, that although God might at one worde haue compelled vs to serue him, yet notwithstanding he vseth a more louing kinde of dealing towards vs: which is, that hee promiseth vs rewarde for seruing of him: not that our workes deserue aught, or that hee is any whit bounde vnto vs: but that his benefiting of vs after that sort, is to the end that we shoulde be the better allured to serue him the more earnestly. For is it not too shamefull a thanklesnesse, that when wee heare howe God bindeth himselfe to vs after that maner, of his owne accorde, and vouchsafeth to set rewarde before vs, is it not (say I) too great a shame and vnthankfulnesse, if we giue not our selues wholly to his seruice? Wee bee his, and whatsoeuer we can doe, wee be beholden to him for it, as our Lord Iesus Christ speaketh thereof. Howe say you, saieth hee? tell mee, if a man haue a seruant, or rather a slaue whom he may put to toyle like an Oxe or a horse, and the same haue done him some seruice: will his master rise from the table to serue him at his turne? No: for whatsoeuer a man doeth that is in bondage, hee oweth it to him that hath the superioritie ouer him. So owe you all thinges to God (saith Christ), and God oweth you nothing. Yet notwithstanding God binding himselfe of his owne free good will, promiseth that if wee serue him wee shalbe well recompensed, and not lose our labour. To what purpose doth hee so? euen to breake our hearts, for (as I saide afore) we bee too churlish if wee bee not wholly inflamed to serue God, when wee see that he of his owne free goodnesse vouchsafeth to beheight vs rewarde, whereof we be not worthie.

Luke 17. 7.

And herewithall let vs marke also, that if God had couenanted a thousande times with vs to rewarde our workes: yet coulde wee so little say that hee owed vs any thing, as hee might rather curse and abhorre vs. For which of vs performeth his Law as we ought to do? If wee doe one point, we faile in a hundred: and when we thinke

we do the thinges that God commandeth vs in his Lawe: we do but drag our legges, and there is alwayes much imperfection in vs, so as wee can neuer runne as were requisite. Therefore wee should be cursed and damned, if God listed to iudge vs with rigour. Then is it not for men to vaunt themselues in this behalfe of the obteining of any rewarde for desertes sake, or to boast of their workes. But rather they must vnderstand that all the promises which God hath giuen in his Law, import a condition, and therefore that they should not boote vs at all, because none of vs dischargeth his durie, if God did not accept vs & beare with vs of his own mere goodnes. And hereby we see how mad the papists are to boast of their merites, so as it seemeth to them that they haue to bargaine with God, and thereupon enter boldly into account with him through deuilish malapeartnes, bearing themselues in hand that God is greatly bounde vnto them. And for what maner of dealinges? They alleage their satisfactions, their workes, and their merites. And where shall a man finde these merites? O (say they) we haue done this and that: and therefore we neede not sticke to enter into account with God. But on the contrary parte, God requireth here that we shoulde serue him throughly in all respectes: which thing we can not do as we haue seene heeretofore, and as is declared in many other places. For lette all the worlde examine themselues, and see if euer there were anie one that performed the Lawe. Nay, so farre off is that to be found, that there is none which may protest that he hath done the hundreth parte of it. Therefore all must needes confesse themselues to bee accursed. Besides this, euen in that little portion which men can bring, howe small so euer it be, there is alwayes some default and blot by reason whereof God might well refuse it and abhorre it. Nowe then let men continue confounded in their shame, and confesse themselues to be all faultie before God. And let vs note that this promise can not be performed, vnlesse God beare with vs, and respecte not the great number of infirmities and vices that are in vs, but bury them through his mercy. Our workes then are receiued at Gods hande, inasmuch as he respecteth not what they be, but accepteth them as good and holy, through the power of the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And although there be euer som blemish and blot in them, yea and that God could finde euen some filthinesse in them if it were not blotted out by the bloud of Iesus Christ: yet doth he accept vs by that meane, and not otherwise. Wherefore let vs learne to glorie in Gods meere mercie, and not to boast of any deseruings. And yet therewithall let vs not cease to steppe vppe with the better courage to serue him: when wee see that he vouchsafeth to drawe vs so vnto him and to winne vs by such gentlenesse.

Rom.7.14.18.

Pſal.32.1.2.

Verily Moses sheweth that all that euer God promiseth to his people for keeping of his Law, springeth from the same fountaine, rather than from any bond. And that is it which he meaneth by saying, *As God promised to thy Fathers*. As if he should say, my friendes, serue God and hee will be good maister vnto you: and thinke not that ye shall haue lost your time when yee shall haue kept his Lawe: for ye shall haue the large rewarde that is behighted you. But yet for all that, consider from whence the same commeth. The fountaine thereof (sayth he) is, that before yee were borne into the worlde, God promised your fathers to bring them into a lande that floweth with milke and honnie. Moses by bringing the people thus backe to the promise that had beene made to the Patriarkes, sheweth sufficiently that God promised not any thing anewe, but onely that he performeth the thing that hee had promised afore. And why so? Was it for that hee was bounde to them, which were not yet borne into the worlde? No: but because he loued their fathers as is saide heretofore. It is true that heere Moses sheweth that the people should be partakers of that promise, so they kept Gods Lawe. But what for that? Yet behoued it them to come backe still to this point, that men are vtterly vndone if they set themselues against God, and that if they alledge any worthines, they shall abide still in their condemnation, and finde themselues all accursed. Therefore they must haue none other refuge but to Gods mercy, & they must vnderstand that when they haue inforced themselues neuer so much to liue according to Gods Law, yet shall God owe them nothing at all, neuertheleſſe hee will not faile to performe his promise to them euen of his owne mere and freebestowed goodneſſe. And so ye see how this text is to bee vnderstoode. Nowe forsmuch as here is mention made of the Land that was promised to the Iewes: let vs marke that we nowadays ought to bee much more prouoked to serue God, seeing hee hath dedicated the whole earth to himself, & wil haue his name to bee called vpon euery where. For the bloudshed of our Lord Iesus Christ, hath sactified the whole world which was then in vncleanneſſe. For we knowe there were no moe lands but this, which God reserued to himselfe, and wherein he would reigne til the comming of his sonne. But when our Lord Iesus Christ was once come: then got hee the possession of the whole worlde, so as his kingdome was extended from the one side thereof to the other, specially at the publishing of the Gospel. Seeing it is so, let vs marke that we nowadayes are so much the more straitly bounde to serue God, because hee hath sanctified the whole earth by the precious bloude of his sonne, that wee might dwell in it and liue vnder his reigne, and beware that we addict our selues vnto him, as well as we would that hee should haue vs in his protection and safekeeping.

Howbeit forasmuch as men are alwayes so tickliſh, that (as I haue saide alreadie) they cannot bee bridled ynough to restraine them: Moses confirmeth the whole doctrine that hee had vttered heere, saying, *Harken therefore O Israel, the Lorde thy God is one God*. Hee had saide afore, *Hearken*: he had saide, *take heede*: hee had saide that it behoued them to keepe the lawe but heere hee confirmeth the whole matter

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much better, by setting downe expresly that the God of Israel is the one God. And hereby his meaning is to exclude all the Gods which the world forged to it selfe, and to shew that it is not lawfull for vs to conceiue any thing in our owne imagination, whereof wee haue not warrant in Gods woord. Therefore whereas the God of Israel is called the one God, it is all one as if Moses should compare the God that had set foorth his lawe, (who had also manifested himselfe before to his seruant Abraham, and to the Patriarkes,) with all those whom the worlde weened to be Gods, and should set him against them all. For in deede God had beene called vpon in all ages, and that name was common to the heathé. But what for that? The Heathen wandered at rouers, so as euerie man said I worship God. And yet in the meane while, what was it they did? nothing but dreames and fantasies: for when men take vpon them to worship God without knowing him: no doubt but they worship idols. The Turkes at this day doe say they worship the God that made heauen and earth: but yet is it but an idoll which they worship. And howe so? They name him the maker of heauen and earth, and they haue none images. That is true: but yet for all that, they haue but an idoll in stead of God, bicause they admit not our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is ỹ liuely image of God his father. And we knowe how S. Iohn saieth that he which denieth the sonne, denieth the father too. Therfore they haue not God, but an idoll. As much is to be said of the Iewes. The Iewes boast of their hauing of the lawe, and of their worshipping of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Iacob. But what for that? They bee but backsliders and haue renounced Gods lawe, for as much as they haue reiected Iesus Christ who is the soule of the law. It is he in whom God the father intendeth to manifest himselfe vnto vs: It is he, whom he will haue to bee worshipped. And in that respect he saieth, Kisse the sonne whom I send vnto you. And againe, he that honoureth not the sonne, honoreth not the father that sent him. Let vs marke wel then, that here Moses meant to compare the God which vttered himself by his word, with al the Gods that are honored through the whole world, and to shew that in them all there is nothing but mockerie and leasing. And why? For wee can neuer worship God aright, vnlesse we first knowe him. And wee must alwayes haue an eye to this saying of Iesus Christ which hee spake to the woman of Samaria, yee knowe not what ye worshippe. Iesus Christes vsing of such speach, is as much as if he shoulde spit at all the worshippings which ỹ world had set vp in those dayes. There was not that nation which boasted not themselues to serue God: but Iesus Christ reiecteth quite and cleane the things which mé tooke to bee good and holy. Ye knowe not what ye worship saieth he. Hereby he sheweth that it is expedient for vs to be told of it. We must not goe to it at all aduenture, but wee must bee sure which is the God whom wee serue. And seeing it standeth vs on hand to knowe God, if wee will worship him and serue him aright: let vs consider from whence this knowledge cõmeth. Groweth it in our owne garden as they say: May wee get it by our owne trauell or policie? Is it lawfull for euerie man to imagine what he listeth, and to say, I knowe God? No no: but God must bee faine to vtter himselfe, and to come vnto vs. And so the onely meane to knowe God aright, is to be taught by his woorde. And that is the cause why he saieth, *The Lord thy God*. For this people had receiued the lawe: and beside, the couenant had bin made with their fathers: God had shooled out that flocke from the rest of the world. Iustly therefore doeth Moses here bring back the people to the knowledge of God, to the ende they shoulde restraine themselues from all the superstitions of the heathen, and haue nothing at all to doe with the vnbeleeuers, but know that in as much as God had manifested himselfe so familiarly vnto them: they had the certaine and infallible trueth.

Now although this was spoken in the time of the lawe: yet doeth it agree better still to vs. For although God gaue the Iewes sufficient warning that they should not haue to doe with the defilings and idolatries of the heathé: yet haue wee a much larger light nowe adayes, since the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Hee is the liuely image of God his father (as I haue sayde alreadie,) and we may well agree to this saying in the first of Saint Iohn, That no man euer saw God, but the sonne who hath alwayes beene in the bosome of the father hath reuealed him vnto vs. The fathers of olde time had a knowledge as I said, but that knowledge is esteemed as none at all, in comparison of the knowledge which we haue now adayes by the Gospell. God sheweth himselfe more plainely vnto vs by the shining forth of the dayesunne of righteousnesse. And for the same cause the Prophet Esay treating of the redemption that was to bee performed in the person of the sonne of God, saith expresely: Behold, this is he: beholde, this is our God. The Prophet crieth out, this is he, this is our God. He contenteth not himselfe to say, behold our God: but he speaketh as if the thing were present, and as though God had appeared vnto him. How so? And was not God in ỹ mids of his people? Yes: for he said, I will dwel among you. And againe, This is my rest, Sion is ỹ place where I will dwell. And afterward he protesteth that he will neuer depart thence, and that the people is his temple and a royall Priesthood. Why then doeth the Prophet Esay say, Behold, behold our God: this is he, this is he: when our Lorde Iesus Christ was to come into the world? Euen bicause God reuealed himselfe to vs in greater perfection. Now then we be the lesse to be excused, if we run gadding nowe adayes without holding of our selues to the pure trueth, so as euerie of vs turneth away after his own dotages, to say, it seemeth so to mee, this thinke I good. Let vs assure our selues that all this is nothing worth, but we must repaire to the certaintie that is brought vs by our Lord Iesus Christ.

Neuertheleſſe, so farre off is the worlde from knowing this, that it should seeme they bee all

Col. 1. 15. & Heb. 1. 3. 1. Ioh. 2. 23.

Rom. 10. 4. Col. 1. 17.

Pſal. 2. 12. Ioh. 5. 23.

Ioh. 4. 21.

Col. 1. 15. Hebr. 1. 3.

Ioh. 1. 18.

Matt. 4. 16.

Eſa. 25. 9.

Exod. 25. 8.

Pſal. 132. 13. 14.

bent to spyte God, and haue conspired to turne their backes vppon him, and to shake off all subiection, that they may haue libertie to continue in their disorders, and to scape in the meane while vnespyed with their lewdnesse. The Iewes are vnexcusable, according as wee see howe the Prophetes vpbrayde them with their wilfull forsaking of God, so as they coulde not excuse themselues by saying y they had not heard any thing, as the poore Paynims might doe: for God protesteth that he spake not in vaine. And now adayes when God speaketh to vs with open mouth, and wee haue him perfectly discouered vnto vs by the Gospell, is it not too great a lewdnesse that men should runne astray after that fashion? Were there euer any superstitions more grosse and more outragious, than are to bee seene nowe adayes in the Popedome? It is true that the Iewes medled with the superstitions of the Heathen, and tooke much filth and vncleannesse of them: but if all bee well searched, it will bee founde that the Papists haue farre exceeded them. For Gods word is as it were, at this day buryed among them. When they treate of fayth, they fetch the points of it from mens inuentions: and the holy scripture is in as much reuerence among them as if it were dead, and that all thinges went to hauocke. Loe at what poynt they bee. And if a man speake to them of Gods seruice, (as I sayde) they bee busie about their owne inuentions. Yea verily, myne intent is good say they: and so they beare themselues in hand, that God will suffer himselfe to bee dandled lyke a little babe, and will neuer come to examine any whit of the doctrine of Poperie. Againe if they speake of fayth: exhort they men to resort to Gods free promises? No, but they chalendge all to themselues. When they take in hand to treate of the office of Iesus Christ, they ouerthrowe the vertue of his death and passion, as much as they can. When they treate of their saluation: then step forth their owne freewill, their merites, and their satisfactions. But contrariwise we should resort to the mere grace of the holy Ghost, acknowledging our selues to bee in bondage to sinne, vntill God deliuer vs from it through his mercie. And thereuppon it commeth that the holy Scripture calleth the forgiuenesse of sinnes our righteousnesse. That is the point which wee must resort vnto, to know that when wee haue done amisse, wee can bring none other amendes or payment for it, than such as wee borrowe of the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ. But there is not a word of all this in Poperie. When God is to be prayed vnto, they make their vagaries to their Heesaintes and Sheesaintes: & in the meane while Iesus Christ is not knowen to bee as he is, neither is let alone with the office that is giuen him by God his father: but they depose him, lyke a sorte of theeues and traytours that seeke nothing else but to burie him againe, and to make hauocke of all the glorie that was giuen him by God his Father. After the same sort deale they also in all other things. Wee see how the Sacramentes are defiled to the vttermost. In stead of the Supper of our Lorde Iesus Christ, they haue set vp that same hellish abhomination of the Masse, wherein they say that Iesus Christ is sacrificed, as though he had done nothing alreadie, nor were appointed to be the onely & euerlasting Priest by God his father. Wee see then that the Papists haue so dalyed with Gods word wherein he hath reuealed himselfe: as it should seeme that they meane of set purpose to wype away the knowledge that is in the Gospell. And therefore wee haue so much the more neede to marke well this saying, *That the Lord is God, was geuen the onely one God.*

Ef. 42.19.20 & 65.10.11. Esa. 55.11.

2. Cor. 3.18

Ro. 7.17.18

Rom. 3.22. 23.24.

Nowe then, as oft as this word *God* commeth to our minde, let vs assure our selues that it serueth to cut off all toyes that may come in our heades, and all inuentions of men, and all other things whereof we haue not warrant in the holy scriptures. For God will haue vs to consider him in such wise, as wee snarle not our selues in the imaginations and errours of idolatrie. And of a truth, we cannot haue the true God, except wee haue him alone: that is to say, without adding any companion vnto him. For as soone as we fall to bringing in of vndergoddes, we forsake the liuing God. And why? Bicause his will is to bee alone, as he auoweth in another place by his Prophet Esay saying, I am the liuing God (saieth the Lord) and I will not giue my glory to any other. Againe we haue seene heretofore how he called himselfe a iealous God. And why was that, but to withdrawe vs from all corruptions, as S. Paule affirmeth in the second to the Corinthians? For as soone as we be turned aside from the simplicitie of Gods word, it is all one as if a wife should hearken to a bawde that came to whisper him in the eare. By and by we be corrupted, and so wee commit foule whoredome against God, when we falsifie the faith that we haue plighted him in Baptisme. We cast away his law, and stain all religion, when wee swarue neuer so little from the pure Religion. Wherefore let vs beare well in minde, that as oft as this word *God* commeth to our remembrance, God must be all alone. And if wee accompanie him with any creatures: he forsaketh vs as backsliders, and as folk vnworthy to haue any thing to doe with him, bicause wee vouchsafed not to yeelde him his deserued honour: that is to wit, to take him for our [onely] Lord, but haue vnhallowed that name by imparting the same to creatures, or rather to our owne dreames.

Psal. 50.23.

Esa. 42.8

2. Cor. 11.2

And herewithall let vs marke, that it is not ynough for vs to reserue to the liuing God the title of *the onely God*: but all that euer belongeth vnto him must also abide vnminished and vnappaired. As howe? His meaning is not alonely to be called the onely God; but also to be acknowledged to be almightie, and to be our father and Sauiour, which hath all authoritie ouer vs to gouerne vs, in whom wee ought to put our whole trust, and whom wee ought to call vpon. Those are the chiefe things which wee ought to minde when mention is made of the honoring of the onely one God. Truth it is that the Papists will

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well ynough say, that S. Michael and S. William are not their Gods: but yet for all that they worship them, yea euen the stockes of them. Although they hope to scape by this shift, that the images are not the Saintes themselues whome they pray vnto, but onely rememberances set vp there to represent them: yet is it expressely against Gods forbidding. And againe, we see that they cannot by any meanes discerne the difference how God will bee worshipped, when they intangle themselues after that maner with their idols of stone and timber, whereby they surmise themselues to represent their Saints. True it is ỳ they countenance the matter with the termes of *Dulia* & *Latria*, which they themselues vnderstand not, saying that they serue their puppets and yeelde reuerence vnto God: for that is the thing which they meane by those woordes. But surely God is much beholden to them, in ỳ they shew that they doe but honour him, and in the meane season serue their idols. Againe, is it not a holy thing to pray vnto God? Yes: for it is ỳ very seruice that he requireth, as it is saide in the fifth Psalme. So then, we see that the world doth dally too shamelesly with God, in corrupting his seruice so lewdly, yea and that it is too detestable a thing, that men should runne astray so, after so cleare and open reuelation or discouerie of thinges, as is contained in the Gospell. And therefore it behoooeth vs so much the more to stand to this doctrine, knowing that our Lorde will haue vs tyed wholly to himselfe alone, so as there may be an inuiolable vnion betwixt him & vs. Which thing will come to passe, if wee holde our selues simply within the boundes and listes of his word, so as we giue no enterance to mens

Psal. 50 45.

intentions, nor suffer our mindes to wander at reuers, but hearken to the thinges ỳ are contayned in the holy scripture, & not only say amen to them readily with our mouthes, but also settle our faith throughly vppon the thinges that are proceeded out of the mouth of our God.

Now let vs kneele downe in ỳ presence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue doone, so as wee may knowe more and more wherein wee bee bounde vnto him, and not thinke to discharge our selues thereof lightly, but bend our selues wholly to him and to his seruice, not hauing any other intent or desire than to keepe his holy Lawe. And seeing wee bee yet verie farre off from it, so that straine wee our selues neuer so much, wee stop in the middes of our waye: let vs flee for succour to the forgiuenesse of our sinnes, praying him to vouchsafe to receiue vs to mercie, and to beare with vs in such sort, as he neuer ceasse to guide vs with his holy spirit, though wee deserue to bee vtterly shaken off at his hand. And therewithall it may please him so to open our eyes, that wee beholding the brightnesse of our Lorde Iesus Christ, may bee wholly rauished thereat, to renounce these worldly things and our fleshly affections, which carrie vs awaye: so as wee may haue none other desire than to humble our selues vnder him, to the ende that beyng stricken downe in our selues, wee may bee lifted vp at his hand by his woorde, wayting till it please him to transfigure vs after his owne image at the latter daye. That it maye please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but also, &c.

On Saturday the xx. of Iuly. 1555.

The xlvj Sermon which is the second vpon the sixth Chapter.

4 Hearken O Israel &c.

5 Therefore thou shalt loue the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soule, and with all thy strength.

6 And these woordes which I commaund thee this day, shall be in thy heart.

7 Thou shalt rehearse them to thy children, and talke of them when thou art at home in thy house, and as thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest vp.

8 And thou shalt binde them as a signe vpon thy handes, and they shall bee as frontlets written betweene thine eyes.

9 Also thou shalt write them vppon the entries of thy house, and vppon thy gates.

I Beganne yesterday to tell you wherefore Moses auoweth that *There is but onely one God*: that is to wit, bicause mẽ can neuer giue themselues to the seruing of the true God, vnlesse they discerne him from all things imagined by the world. For euerie man forgeth gods at his owne pleasure, and the verie fountaine and welspring of all superstition and idolatrie, is that men cannot bee contented with the liuing God, but giue heade to their owne fansies, and thereuppon builde a great sort of fables to beguile themselues. Therfore it is requisit before all other things, to know which is the true God, that wee may holde our selues wholly vnto him, and worship him simply

without adding any thing at all to his word. For as soone as any thing is mingled thereunto, by and by it is corrupted. And here is expresse mention made of *the God of Israel*, bicause God must needes haue manifested himselfe, or else wee could neuer haue knowen him. For where are the wings wherewith we should flie to so infinite a height, as to comprehend the Maiestie of God? But when it pleaseth him to reueale himselfe to vs by his word: it is as though he came downe to acquaint himselfe with vs: and then doe wee knowe him. And this certaintie of being fully resolued that we worship not a new forged god, or a god that is brought in by men, but the same God to whom all praise is due: is the verie foundation of all Religion. Herewithall let vs beare in minde, that he will bee worshipped all alone, not onely by reseruing to himselfe the name of God: but also by hauing all that is his, that is to wit, all that belongeth to his Maiestie, and as ye woulde say to his office. I speake after this maner, to expresse the better, that God hath not respect alonely to his being. His will is not that men should onely call him the euerlasting, or confesse him to be the maker of the world: but that they should also knowe him to bee almightie, and that it is he to whom the gouernment of vs belongeth, it is he in whom is all vertue, wisedome, goodnesse, and righteousnesse, it is he to whom wee must runne for succour, it is bee in whom we must put all our trust, it is he to whom wee owe all glorie. Yee see then how Moses, in shewing that there is but onely one God, meaneth that men should commit themselues vnto him, knowing that they be in his hand, that they bee maintained by his onely power, that it is he at whose hand they must looke for saluation and all welfare, and finally that it is he in whom they haue their lyfe, moouing and being: and therefore that it is he whom wee must honour, as well with prayer and supplications, as also by praise and thanksgiuing.

Act. 17. 28.
Psal. 50. 14. 15.

And nowe to shewe his meaning the better, Moses addeth, *Thou shalt loue the Lorde thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soule, and with all thy strength.* In these wordes wee see the thing that hath bin touched alreadie: that is to wit, that Gods intent is to hold vs wholly to himselfe, and to possesse vs in such sort, as wee serue him not by halues, ne wander in the meane while to and fro. Then like as God of his gratious goodnesse giueth himselfe to vs: so doeth it behooue vs to bee altogether his possession and inheritaunce. That is the summe of the thinges contained in these wordes of Moses, where he speaketh of the louing of GOD with all our heart, with all our soule, and with all our strength. As if he shoulde say, There is no meane way in this case, deceiue not your selues by imagining to serue God by parcelmeale, and by making any restraint from him: for he will keepe his owne right throughout in all points. What is to be done then? You must giue your hearts wholly vnto him, so as ye reserue not any peece of it to idoles. For that were a corrupting and a bastarding of his seruice: eyther he must haue all whole, or else he will haue none at all, accordingly as we see how he renounceth the people in Ezechiel, for mingling of superstitions with his Lawe. Goe your wayes (saieth he) and serue your owne idoles: I will no more of you. He giueth them leaue and casteth them vp to Satan, telling them that hee liketh not any of all the things which they doe: for he will not bee matched with idoles. What an outrage and blasphemie is that? Thus then we see now the meaning of Moses.

Now as concerning these words, *Soule, Minde, and Strength*: the Iewes did misunderstand them. Their saying is, that *Thou shalt loue God with all thy soule*, is as much to say as thou shalt not spare thy life for the loue of thy God, but thou shalt set so much store by his glorie, that in comparison thereof thou shalt not esteeme thine owne lyfe, so as if neede require that thou shouldest die to shewe the loue which thou beareſt vnto God: thou shouldest doe it. Againe *Thou shalt loue thy God with all thy minde or Heart*, betokeneth with them but as it were a comparison, so as a man shoulde preferre GOD aboue all other things. And finally, *Thou shalt loue God with all thy strength*, importeth among them, that thou must loue him with all thy substance and with all thy goods, so as if the case required that thou shouldest bee impouerished, thou shouldest rather giue ouer thy worldely goods, than forsake thy God. But this exposition is too straite laced, and attaineth not to the verie meaning of Moses. For proofe whereof there needeth nowe no long discourse. For what better expounder of the Lawe is there to bee found, than our Lorde Iesus Christ, by whose spirit it was giuen? For it was at his hand and by his authoritie, that Moses receiued the Lawe which wee holde of him. So then, we must fetch the exposition thereof at his mouth, and we must receiue it without gainsaying. And for the same cause doe the three Euangelists S. Matthew, in the 22. S. Mark in [illegible] and S. Luke in the 10. set downe this louing of God to be the whole summe of the well keeping of the lawe. True it is that he addeth, *Thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe*. Howbeit, in answering he saieth, thou shalt loue thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soule, with all thy minde, and with all thy strength. Our Lord Iesus Christ addeth there one woorde more: not to make a new sense, but to assure vs the better of the same thing that Moses meant by the wordes *Soule* and *Heart*. So then he setteth downe *Soule, Heart, and Minde*, as if he should say, The man that intendeth to keepe Gods Lawe well, must yeeld himselfe wholly and throughly to the obeying and louing of God. Nowe wee see that in our soules, first there is the power of thinking, when we conceiue thinges to iudge and discerne of them. That is the first power of the soule: namely that vpon the insight of things, we enter into deliberation and iudgement, and conclude one way or other. Gods will then is to restraine all these thoughtes to himselfe. Againe there is the soule, which is not onely the life, but also the meane betwixt the thoughtes and the heart. For the Heart betokeneth the affections, desires, & will

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It is one thing to think a thing, & another thing to desire it, and to set a hartie affection vpon it. Ye see then that the heart is matched with the thoughtes, to shewe that we must loue our God with all our mind. And there is the Soule, which is as it were betweene both: as if it were sayd, that whether wee debate and take counsell of our owne affaires we must alwayes begin at the loue of God, and referre all thinges thereunto: or whether wee couet one thing or other in seeking our own profite, Gods loue must alwais gouerne vs, so as al our desires be as it were restreined and bridled vnder it. Yee see then that the whole soule with all the powers thereof ought to bee throughly possessed with the loue towardes God. And the word *strength* serueth to shewe yet better, that God admitteth not any exception, neither may wee reply in this behalfe, and say, is my doing of this or that an impeaching of any part of my loue towards God? No no, if thou doe neuer so little a thing, & that al thy thoughts tend not to the louing of God, so as the loue of God doe guide thee: all is mard, and there is nothing but sinne in thee & in all thy whole soule. For hast thou any strēgth or power there, which is not giuen thee from aboue? No. Therefore must thou reknowledge it vnto God of whome thou holdest it. Now then, seeing that our Lord Iesus Christ hath expounded vs this text, wee neede not to make long discourse of it, as I sayde afore, but onely to holde vs to the authoritie of him which is the very Lawegiuer.

Now remaineth the practising of this doctrine, that is to say, to knowe how wee should put it in effect and execution. And let vs marke first of all, how this onely one text sheweth vs sufficiently, that Gods law passeth al our abilities, so as it is not possible for vs to fulfill it, & to discharge ourselues of it, or of the hundreth part of it, as long as wee liue here beneath. For why? doe we knowe God throughly as we ought to doe? No no, wee come farre short of it. Then is it impossible for vs to loue him with all our strength and with all our affections: for knowledge goeth before loue. If our knowing of God bee but in part, so as wee be wrapped as yet in much darknesse: our louing of God must also be weake lykewise. Moreouer wee see what the fondnesse of our minde is: for in stead of seeking heauenly thinges, wee looke alwayes downeward. And if wee be desirous but so much as to lift vp our head: wee must be faine to striue and to goe to it by maine force, and yet wee returne still to our owne nature. How fickle are our desires? and how light they one against another? So as men are tossed and turmoyled without ende or measure, and haue no rest at all, but are tormented with vnquietnesse, of ambition on the one side, and of couetousnesse on the other. Againe they would faine liue at ease and in pleasure, and they would faine be had in honor and estimation. Finally they be combered with fleshly lustes and such other lyke thinges. Hereby then it appeareth enough and too much, that wee come farre short of louing God with all our heart, and of giuing our selues wholy ouer vnto him, as wee be commaunded here. And so let vs marke, that the righteousnesse of the Lawe respecteth not what men can doe, but what they ought to doe. We be bound to loue our GOD with all our heart, with all our minde, and with all our soule. Although we haue no such perfection in vs as to come any thing neere it, yet notwithstanding wee bee bound vnto it. If any man say, How so? why should God require more of vs than we be able to performe? we must consider from whēce the mischief springeth: namely euen from our owne fault. The originall sin that is in vs is the cause thereof, so as we take it by byrth. And is it meet ỹ because we be naughtie and froward, therefore God should bee bereft of his seruice and lose his right? No. If a man haue played the vnthrift and wasted away both his owne goods and other mens: shall his creditor bee bound to bring him his obligation and to say, take thee here thy bond, thou owest me nothing? The creditor will at leastwise keepe still his obligation, and although the vnthrift haue not wherewith to pay: yet ought he to doe homage to his creditor, and to stand bound vnto him still, and not to deny him his dette. Now God deserueth well to bee much more priuiledged than mortall men. Wherefore let vs consider that we owe him a hundred thowsand fold more than al the debts of gold and siluer in the world. So then, Gods righteousnesse is an inuiolable thing, so that the order of nature ought rather to bee abolished. Now then if men bee lewde and froward, doth it follow therefore, that they should pluck the sonne out of the skie, or make the earth to bee confounded? True it is that there happen many confusions by reason of our sinnes, insomuch that our Lorde sendeth both raine, and thunder, hayles, and tempestes, and such other like thinges: but yet for all that, the order of nature continueth vnappayred after such turmoyling. Therefore wee must vnderstande, that although wee bee lewde, and there is nothing but vnrighteousnesse and naughtinesse in vs: Yet must Gods iustice and righte continue perfecte and vnappayred as in respecte of the commaundementes: and we must needes stoope to them, and suffer our selues to bee condemned for not discharging our dueties. Do we then heare this summe of the Law, *Thou shalt loue the Lord thy God with al thy heart, with all thy soule, with all thy minde, and with all thy strength*? Let it make vs conclude that we be all damned and accursed before God, and that there is none other shifte for vs, but to flee to his mercie: and that we bee not condemned for any one sinne, or for two or three: but ỹ God findeth vs guiltie in al pointes & al respects. And for proofe therof, let vs examine wel ỹ best works that we can haue done in all our life: and there wil be stil some fancie or other to turn vs away, so as we shal not goe on so freely towardes God, but ỹ there wil be some temptatiō mingled therwith, or som toy to pluck vs back, & the diuel shal haue endeuered to coole vs. And when it fareth so w̄ vs, it is a plaine corruption to infect ỹ thing ỹ should be good and commendable in our works.

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Ye see then that wee take not any deliberation, any counsel, or any desire in our whole life, but the curse of God is with vs and vpon our heads. Were this well printed in our heartes: all glorying to the worldeward should bee beaten downe in vs, and there would be no more so much meriting, wherewith the Papists are so bewitched, that (to their owne seeming) they may enter into account before GOD. Alas, they shoulde then see that they be far off from their account. Howebeit forasmuch as the Diuell hath blinded them with such pride: let vs on our side make our commoditie of this text.

And sith wee heare that God requireth that we should loue him perfectly with all our heart, with all our minde, and with al our soule: let vs be of opinion that hee condemneth vs vtterly, vntil hee haue acquit vs of his owne infinite goodnesse. But yet for all this, we must plucke vp our hearts and quicken vp our spirites, sith wee see that our Lorde prouoketh vs after that fashion. For what maketh vs so cold and negligent? It is our bearing of our selues in hande that wee bee discharged. The cause therefore why men doe flatter themselues, is for ỹ they take themselues to be perfect, when they haue brought some petie trifles vnto God. When we bee at that point, let vs bethinke vs how it is said here, Thou shalt loue God with all thy heart. If it happen that we be not very disordered in our life, but that wee haue praied vnto God at our vprising in ỹ morning, wee haue done no man wrong all the day long, we haue not played the whoremasters, nor the drunkardes, wee haue not hurt any of our neighbors, we haue not conspyred any euil, we haue not blaspheme God, but wee haue occupied our selues about some good matters, insomuch as wee haue indeuoured to doe good to such as were in necessitie, and laboured to apply our selues to the things that God commandeth, and haue done them some seruice which had neede thereof: when night commeth, we thinke our selues to be litle Angels, and that God hath no more to demaund of vs. That is the cause that cooleth vs, and why we serue not GOD so earnestly as were requisite. For wee beare our selues in hand, that wee bee perfect, and we bee contented with our selues, and we need nothing else to content vs withall, for we be too much inclined to like well of our selues. But behold here is wherwith to waken vs frõ such follie, namely, Thou shalt loue ỹ Lord thy God. And after what manner? after our owne measure? No no: but w̃ al our heart, w̃ al our soule, & with al our strẽgth. And therefore let vs looke that wee searche well our thoughtes: and in examining of our liues, let vs consider what a number of vaine and fonde fancies haue passed vs. And if it be alleaged, yea but I yelded not to them: very well, diddest thou not conceiue any such thought? Will not thy God possesse thy whole soule? Shal ỹ diuel beare rule ouer thy thoughts, & God in ỹ meane while haue nothing to doe w̃ thẽ? And seeing he hath giuen thee those thoughtes, if thou fall to mingling of thẽ w̃ any corruptiõ, whence procedeth ỹ, but frõ ỹ affection of our mindes? Therefore if wee were well fraughted aforehand with the loue of God, should not all the powers of our soules be brought vnder his obedience? Yes. So then, our forging of so many fond imaginations, our letting of our desires and delightes loose to followe this and that, and our forgetting of God in the meane while, or rather our excluding of him from bearing any sway at all in vs, doth prooue sufficiently that the true loue of God is not receiued into our soules. Alas, doth it not appeare that we be yet farre off from discharging the hundreth part of our duetie?

Besides this foresayd condẽning of our selues, wee must also quicken vp our selues, and say, what doest thou wretched creature? doest thou giue thy selfe to doe well sith god exhorteth thee so earnestly? In the meanwhile thou seest ỹ thou hast much adoe euen to begin. Thus ye see how wee ought to beare this text in minde, that it may inflame vs with the loue of God, seeing we be yet so farre off from the perfection which he requireth and commaundeth. Againe let vs marke well, that our Lordes vppening of all the abilities of our soule here, is to make vs looke better to the good turnes that he hath done vs, to yeelde him homage for the same, and to apply them to his honor. For what a thing is it that wee haue the gift of consulting, the choyce of discerning betweene good and euill, and the abilitie to cõceiue things so as we can say we will doe this or that? Lo here an excellent gift wherwith wee be indued. Now then seeing wee haue will to choose, so as wee can say, go to, I finde this to bee good: and againe, seeing wee haue a soule which beareth Gods image printed in it, and seeing we haue so many goodly vertues, wherethrough wee excell all other creatures, ought not the consideration thereof to prouoke vs the more to serue God, and to honour him with those so precious giftes which hee hath put in vs? Yes: and therefore let vs learne, that when our thoughtes are set vppon vaine and wicked thinges, and when our desires runne at rouers and rebell against God: we vnhallowe so holy a treasure, as wee deserue well to bee vtterly cast vp at Gods hand, because of our vnthankfulnesse. Now then whereas Moses speaketh here of the thoughts and the will: and our Lord Iesus Christ addeth one word more, that is to wit, minde, Soule, and will: let vs vnderstand that hereby we be warned, that if we submit not our selues wholly vnto God, it happeneth for want of considering the good thinges that hee hath bestowed vppon vs. For if wee feele him liberall, as he sheweth himselfe towardes vs: surely it will draw vs wholy vnto him. So then let vs consider, that Gods making of vs so excellent as to haue his image printed in vs, was not to any other end, but ỹ we should do him homage for them, & by that meane be ỹ more moued to loue him, & to keepe our selues well from defiling so precious gifts, as reason, will, discretion, & all ỹ rest of the powers of our soules which he hath giuẽ vs. Thus yee see in effect what we haue to remẽber vpon this place.

But yet herewithall wee must marke also this thing that I haue tolde you heretofore: that is

Deut. 13.

2. Cor. 7.

to wit, that God wil not be serued by constraint, but of free loue. He could say, Thou shalt honour thy God, thou shalt obey thy God, thou shalt feare thy GOD: and so hee doeth in other textes, and it is good reason that it should be so: but he speaketh expressely of loue. And why? To shewe that if our seruing of him bee by constreint, so as wee goe to it against our wils: though wee honor him neuer so much, and doe all that is possible to glorify his name: yet if the same proceede not of loue, so as our heart yeeld vnto him freely and without gainesaying: hee vtterly disaloweth it, and such seruice is not accepteable vnto him, for he loueth him that giueth with a free will and pure affection, as sayth Saint Paul treating of Almesdeedes. Seeing then that God loueth him which giueth with a chearefull courage: thereby hee sheweth that if a man should spend all his goods, yet should it not boote him at al as to Godward, vnlesse hee haue a delight in well doing. And why? Because God hath commaunded it, and wee ought aboue all thinges to desire that hee be glorifyed, that his righteousnesse bee obeyed, that he bee exalted at our handes, that hee reigne ouer vs, and that we be his people in very deede. Ye see then that the chiefe ioy which wee should haue to incline vs to doe well, is a hartie and free affection. And that is the cause why the worde *Loue* was playnely set downe in this text.

Deut. 13.

2. Cor. 9. 7.

Notwithstanding, God will not haue vs to loue him as our fellowe: but hee will haue vs to loue him, honor him, and serue him as our God. And therefore let vs marke well, that if wee will obserue Gods lawe as we ought to doe: we must not consider him alonly in the degree of a maister, thereby to yeelde him reuerence: but wee must also set before vs the title of father, and assure our selues that Gods intent is to win vs to him by gentlenesse, that our heart may bee as it were tyed vnto him, according to this saying of his by his prophet, If I be your maister, where is my feare? and if I be your father, where is my loue? In deede he setteth downe honor in that place, to betoken that a seruant ought to feare his maister: but yet immediatly after hee setteth downe the worde Loue also, of purpose to shewe what honour the childe yeeldeth to his father.

Mal. 1. 6.

And therefore let vs remember, that the first point of seruing God aright, is to bee led vnto him, yea and to be led thither vpō knowledge of this worde Sauiour, so as we couet aboue all things to be so knit vnto him, as all our ioy, contentation and rest bee there, that by that meane we may no more be giuen to the thinges that are contrarie to his righteousnesse. And that is the cause why wee say, that we must first know Gods grace and goodnesse, before we can serue him. For as for such as serue God for feare of being damned, not knowing that hee will bee their sauiour: what doe they? They seeme to inforce themselues greatly forward: but in deede they drawe cleane backe. Though they breake both their armes and their legges, yet are they neuer the forewarder. And for that cause is it sayde in the hundred and thirtith psalme. Because the Lord hath bin mercifull, and men haue found him gentle and gratious: therefore is hee feared and dreaded. In deede the world thinketh to serue GOD well enough, without knowing him, and wee see that the Papistes doe this and that vpon such opinion. But what for that? In the meane while they haue no trust in God, they neuer knewe his will nor his louing kindenesse: and therefore are they alwayes in terror and vnquietnesse.

Psal. 130. 7.

True it is that they yeelde some outward seruice vnto God: but all that euer they doe is not woorth a pin, insomuch that God reiectes euen their keeping of the Lawe: for wee must be led by loue and by a franke and free goodwill, as I sayd afore. And how may that bee done? Euen by knowing God to be our father and Sauiour, as I alledged out of the text of malachie, and as is yet better expressed in this verse of the psalme, that wee must first know Gods mercy, and rest thereupon, or else wee can neuer feare him, and come neere him to serue him. That is the true & plaine meaning of this text, and so must wee apply it.

Psal. 130. 7. & 131. 3.

Moses hauing spoken after that fashion, addeth now, that the Lawe must bee so deare vnto vs, as to take it for our chiefe treasure. And forasmuch as wee bee too much subiect to the seeking of the corruptible thinges of this world, and forget God out of hand, and withdrawe our selues too farre from him: hee sayth, *that men must haue Gods lawe continually in their sight, and make as it were a Headroll thereof*, as if a woman were attyred after the auncient maner, with borders on her head, bracelets on her armes: or as if a man should make borders of the aboue his house, or ingrauers vppon the doores of his house, so as Gods glorie might be euery where. And whereas hee speaketh heere of frontlets and bracelets, and of painting and ingrauing of Gods lawe vpon doore postes: it is to shewe that whereas men giue themselues to vaine glory in decking and attyring of themselues, and the same turneth them away from God: they must make all their deckinges of Gods Lawe; that must bee their Iewels. Like as if a man or a woman haue a costly Iewell vpon their finger, and take pleasure therein: in steade thereof they shoulde haue Gods Lawe continually before their eyes, so as a man should no sooner looke vpon himselfe, no though it were but vpon his nayles, but it shoulde come to his minde to thinke, Thou hast a maker who fashioned thee, and whose will it is that thou shouldest serue him by yeelding thy selfe wholly to his obedience. Although thou bee a fillie vnprofitable creature: yet will thy God bee glorified in thee. Thus yee see howe we must make all our deckinges of Gods Lawe. Againe, in stead of the beautifying of houses, with thinges of goodly shewe and furniture, to the ende it may bee saide, this is the house of some man of estimation: the Lawe of God must be written vpon it. Now wee see what the meaning of Moses was.

But by the way we haue here to bewaile the corrup-

ruption of mankinde. For it is manifeſt, that euen of the holyeſt thinges in the world, men take occaſion to mocke God, and to marre all, and to turne them to a contrary ende. As how? This ſaying, *Hearken O Iſraell, the Lorde thy God is one onely God*, is a notable ſaying, and worthie to be had in remembrance aboue all others. For it ſerueth to magnify the liuing GOD, that hee might bee diſcerned from the idols that haue bin forged, to the ende that our religion might be certeine and infallible. Then is it as excellent a leſſon, as a man ſhall reade any: and yet what haue the Iewes which were Gods people fared the better for it? They haue turned it into a charme and ſorcerie, imagining y^t the ſpeaking of thoſe words would make a coniuration, lyke to the *Agnus Dei* in poperie, and to ſuch other geugawes as the papiſts hang about their necks, in the which *Agnus Dei* they write y^e beginning of Saint Iohns Goſpell and I wote not what els, wherewith they beare themſelues in hand that they can coniure both God and the diuill. As much haue the Iewes done with this leſſon: inſomuch that they haue abuſed euen the very letters of it. There is one letter (ſay they) which importeth foure, betokening that God is Lorde of the fowre partes of the worlde. They haue taken otherſome according to their numbers and ciphers, to ſignify thinges which they haue deuiſed of their owne brayne. And in the meane while they had no reuerence to God, but would that hee ſhould haue no more power nor authoritie ouer them. And that doe they ſhewe full well, not onely by their deſpiſing, ſhunning, & reiecting of Ieſus Chriſt, who ought to haue reigned ouer them: but alſo by their crucifying of him in deſpite of God, and by their turning away from the ſaluation that had bin promiſed them. And euen as much haue they done with this text. For they haue turned to pride and ambition the thing that is ſayd here, as wee ſee how our Lord Ieſus Chriſt in the Goſpell vp-
Matt. 23.5. braideth the Scribes and Phariſies with their large gardes, inſomuch that if the common people had any narrowe garde of wryting, wherein the commaundements were ſet downe, theſe great Rabbies (to the intent to become holyer than other men,) had gardes of an handbredth vppon their garments, wherein Gods lawe was written in great letters, that it might be ſeene a great way off. O, thoſe were holy perſons, for they had Gods lawe written in great letters, whereas the common people had it in ſmall. They knew the lawe much better, and therefore was God much magnifyed in them. Nay, contrariwiſe, ſuch vaine bragging was a flatte mocking of God: but yet it was the faſhion of all men, as I haue declared already. And by this which befell the Iewes, let vs take vnderſtanding and inſtruction, that the ſame muſt ſerue vs to behold that we bee ſo froward, that whereas God laboreth to drawe vs familiarly vnto him, we deſpiſe it, and in ſtead of profiting our ſelues by the doctrine that is ſet before vs, wee turne it vnto laughter, wee vnhalowe it lyke Churchrobbers, and we turne quite and cleane contrarie to his meaning, ſo as it had bin better for vs neuer to haue heard one worde of his mouth. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to marke.

But now herewithall we muſt come to the meaning of Moſes, which I haue touched ſhortly already. *Remember theſe wordes* ſayth hee. And howe? *By talking and conferring of them in thy houſe, and as thou goeſt abroad.* Here wee ſee well how our Lordes meaning was not to be honored with gardes of garmentes and ſuch other thinges, but to haue his lawe printed in his peoples heartes, and to haue it kept alwayes freſh in remembrance. Therefore let vs conſider, that whereas wee haue ſo much needeleſſe talke our Lord will haue his people exerciſed in talking and conferring vppon his lawe, whether it bee in reſting, or in iourneying, or when they be at home in their howſes. If wee minded this warning well, ſurely it would be a bridle to reine vs backe and to withdrawe vs from the vnprofitable talke whereunto wee bee ſo much giuen. For wee can ſpend, I ſay not ſome forenoone, but the whole day continually in light talke: but if wee ſpeake but two or three wordes of God, by and by wee bee wearie and it greueth vs. Yet notwithſtanding, this talking of him is not the chiefe poynt. For wee muſt come to this ſaying of the pſalme, I beleeue, and therefore will I ſpeake. For oftentimes and moſt commonly, they that haue Gods lawe in their mouth and at their tongues end, haue it not at all in their heart and affection. Therefore wee muſt ſpeake of Gods lawe, much more with our heartes than with our mouthes. But yet muſt we talke of it alſo, to edify our neighbour, that the father may teach his children and the maiſter his ſeruantes, to ſerue God. That is the cauſe why our Lord commaundeth men to talk of his Lawe: not to diſcharge themſelues lightly of it, as though the whole matter lay in ſpeaking of it: but to quicken vp and correct our ruſtineſſe, ſo as euery man help foreward his neighbor, and drawe him with him, and the fathers and maiſters in the meane while be careful to teach their children and ſeruants, as I ſayd afore. That is Moſeſes ſimple meaning when he ſpeaketh here of talking either at home or abroad: namely that mens talke muſt alwayes be of Gods Lawe.

Afterward here inſueth, *thou ſhalt binde them vpon thy hand*. Herein wee ſee how our Lord rebuketh vs, and ſheweth vs how fickle headed we bee, inſomuch that if wee be not holde faſt by diuers meanes, wee forget God his lawe out of hand. For what is the cauſe that he ſetteth as it were frontlets here before our eyes? Wherefore is it that hee will haue vs to weare as it were Tablets, Ringes, and Bracelets: but for that whereas we bee woont to gaſe chiefly at ſuch thinges, and to make a ſhewing of them, he will haue his own law to be ſet in them? Now the excellentſt part of man is his face and his eyes: and our Lorde wil haue his lawe to be there. Againe he will haue it vppon our handes: and we cannot doe any thing, but our handes muſt needs goe foremoſt ſtill in it. Now our Lordes will is that

wee ſhould not be able to ſtirre one finger, but we ſhould be put in minde of his law by it. Hereby he ſheweth vs (as I ſayde afore) that if wee haue not good ſtore of bridles, we ſhall play the looſe coltes: and if the lawe be not brought to our minde, and the remembrance thereof refreſhed by many meanes: we wil ſoone haue forgotten it. Wee neede no more but to cloſe our eye, and the thinges that wee had learned and which had bin tolde vs and retold vs afore, are ſtreightways out of our thought. Let vs vnderſtand therefore that our Lord blameth and condemneth vs in this text, for being ſo cuſtomably carried too and fro, and that hee muſt bee fayne to quicken vs vp, and to giue vs ſo many helps, if hee will enioy vs and haue vs to obeye hym. That is one thing which wee haue to marke vpon this text.

Beſides this let vs marke alſo, that our Lord could not better haue taxed the vanities whervnto men and women are giuen in all their pretie toyes and trifles, in attyring and decking themſelues with gardes, imbroyderies, and borders and ſuch other lyke thinges: God (I ſay) could not haue skorned ſuch vanities better, thã by telling vs that in the meane while wee forget the chiefeſt poynt of all, which is the minding of his lawe which wee forget eaſily, to occupy our ſelues about vaine and vnprofitable thinges. And this is ſpoken chiefly to women, becauſe they giue thẽſelues ouer curiouſly to theſe nice attires and deckings. For if they conſidered that they ſhoulde apply themſelues to the minding of Gods lawe, they would not be ſo much occupied in decking or rather in diſguiſing of themſelues: but they would rather conſider which is the true decking of faithfull women: that is to wit, to feare God, to liue honeſtly, mildely, chaſtely, and ſoberly, to gouerne well their houſholdes, and to occupy themſelues in bringing vp of their children. This is a beautifull attyre, and ſuch a one as is precious in Gods ſight, as Saint Peter termeth it. So then let vs marke, that whereas the worldlinges doe decke and diſguiſe themſelues, and make ſo many deuiſes to pleaſe and allure one another: we muſt beware that wee take the true decking which wil make vs acceptable before God: that is to wit, that wee beare his Lawe in minde, and can glory that wee haue a God which guideth and gouerneth vs accordingly as it hath pleaſed him to receiue vs for his people, and to giue vs his word to rule our liues by. 1.Pet.3.3.4

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as we may learn to miſlyke thẽ more and more, and to flee for refuge to his mercie, being vtterly voyde of all truſt in any ſtrength of our owne: And yet notwithſtanding that wee may not leaue to inforce our ſelues, ſo as we may be the more giuen to his ſeruice, knowing that we bee not yet come to perfection by a great way, no nor yet to the midde way thereof: and therefore that theſe warnings which hee giueth vs may inflame vs more and more to yeelde him prayſe al our life long, by acknowledging the benefites which hee hath beſtowed vppon vs, and the nobilitie and worthineſſe which hee hath giuen vs aboue all creatures, that we may learne thereby to withdrawe our ſelues from all the vaine and tranſitorie thinges of this world, and to ſeeke the ſpirituall and heauenly thinges, to the intent that being knit vnto our God, wee may not onely withſtand all worldly temptations, but alſo drawe our neighbors from the ſame by our example. That it may pleaſe him to graũt this grace not only to vs but alſo to al. &c.

On Wednesday the xxiiij. of Iuly. 1555.

The xlvij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the ſixt Chapter.

10 And when the Lord thy God ſhal haue brought thee into the land, which he ſware to thy fathers Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, to giue thee great and goodly Cities which thou buildedſt not:

11 And houſes full of all maner of goods which thou filledſt not: and welles which thou diggedſt not: and vineyardes and Oliuegardens which thou plantedſt not: and thou ſhalt haue eaten and filled thy ſelfe:

12 Then beware, leaſt peraduenture thou forget the Lord which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the houſe of bondage.

13 Thou ſhalt feare the Lorde thy GOD, and ſerue him, and ſweare by his name.

WE haue ſeene how it was Gods wil that his law ſhould alwayes bee before his peoples eyes, and that the remembraunce thereof ſhould bee renewed by all meanes. For this cauſe hee commaunded them to ſet gardes vppon their garments, and to wryte the ſentences of the Lawe therein, and to weare them in ſtead of bracelets, and other ornaments, and to haue thẽ in their cappes and in the reſt of their apparell, and to ingraue them vpon the poſtes of their

houses. All this rehearsall tended to this ende, that because men are too forgetfull of GODS Lawe, they must haue certeine helpes and meanes to put them in minde thereof: and specially that whereas the children of this worlde are curious in decking themselues, and in making themselues braue to the eye, and giue themselues to pompe when they bee rich: in stead thereof GOD woulde that his faithfull ones shoulde decke them selues with holinesse of lyfe. For it is not enough for them to beare skroules of the lawe aboute them vnlesse all of it be referred to the right end.

Now we must also cal to minde what hath bin touched afore: namely that if we were as wel inclined to thinke vppon God and vppon the doctrine which hee setteth forth vnto vs, as were requisite: we should not neede any other helpes. Therefore it is a token that wee bee full of vanities, and that our wittes wander too and fro, and that it is very harde for vs to settle our selues vpon God.

But yet notwithstanding wee shall bee neuer the more excused for all that. Seeing then that wee be easily led away after our owne follies, and there are a great number of temptations in this world to bleare our eyes withal, and to wipe Gods law out of our hearts and mindes: it standeth vs in hand to take the more payne in the thing that is commaunded vs here, namely that wee make a continual exercise of returning vnto God, so as it be our whole studie, and that whereas wee see the vnbeleuers caryed away in their owne follies, wee seeke vnto God, to settle our selues vppon him, and to referre all our thoughtes and desires vnto him, so that euen in making mirth wee haue him before our eyes, and in our remembrance, to the end he may be glorifyed in the thinges that wee take pleasure in.

And now Moses addeth, *that when the people shall bee come into the land that was promised them, & inioy the goods that are there:* (for we know it was a fruitful & fat land:) they must beware that they forget not him to whome they were beholden for all thinges, but rather honor and serue him, and shewe themselues to holde all things of him who is their God. Now at the first sight it might seeme superfluous to warne the people that they should not forget the Lord their God, after they had possessed the land that was giuen them to inherite. For is it possible? a people which hath bin guided by the hand of God, and seene so many miracles, should turne away, yea and bee so blinded, as to bee vnmindefull of him to whome they were so much bound? That were against nature. But what? The vnthankfulnesse of men is so great, that notwithstanding all the benefites which they haue receiued at Gods hand, yet they cease not to defy him, or at leastwise to shew that they haue no further care of y^e^ thinges that were tolde them. True it is that here Moses speaketh to the people of Israell. But yet in that people hee setteth vs forth a lookingglasse, wherein to shewe vs our frowardnesse in that we cannot finde in our heartes to doe homage to God for all his benefites, but that all that euer hee bestoweth vpon vs is lost, because it is misbestowed, vnlesse wee be exhorted and pricked foreward to doe our duetie better. Therefore let vs not thinke that this doctrine was written for the Iewes onely: but let vs rather vnderstand that it is directed vnto vs also.

Howbeit, first of all wee must marke what Moses meant: and afterward the doctrine conteyned therein must bee applyed to the instruction of our selues. *When thou art come* (saith hee) *into the land which the Lord thy God promised to thy fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob.* Moses speaketh expressely of Gods promise, to the intent that the people might bee throughly perswaded, that their going into that land was not by haphasard, nor their winning of so many victories against their enemies was by good fortune (as they terme it) or by their owne strength and pollicie: but that it was wrought by Gods owne hand, and all came of his power. True it is that the wonders which were shewed at that time, were sufficient enough to haue made them beleeue, so as they needed not to haue sought any further.

When the people sawe Gods scourges vpon the Egyptians, was it not a sure record of the diuine and heauenly power which shewed it selfe there? Againe, whereas they passed the red sea, whereas they were guided with a cloud by day and with a fire by night, whereas they were fed with manna from heauen, and whereas they sawe the clowd vpon the tabernacle which was a token of Gods presence & maiestie: should they not haue concluded that God bare rule ouer them and shewed himselfe to be their guide? yes: and yet for all that, Moses beholding the hardheartednesse of the people, thought it not enough to tell them of the thinges which were seene at that time, but also alledged the promise that had beene made fowre hundred yeers afore.

Behold (sayth hee,) the Lorde thy GOD will bring thee into the land of Chanaan. If thou aske what proofe thou hast that it is Gods hand, thou needest no long disputing of the matter, thou knowest what promise was made therof. This heritage thē was assigned vnto you afore hand by the free goodnesse of your God, euen before you were borne. If God had giuen this land simply to the people of Israell without promising of it before: it had bin somewhat the darkesomer.

But seeing that GOD made an agreement and as it were a solemne league with Abraham, saying, this is the signe that I enter into couenant with thee and with thine ofspring this day, namely that thou shalt inherite the land: howbeit, that shall not bee presently, but thou thy selfe must liue and dye there as a straunger, and also they that come of thee and their ofspring lykewise, must bee soiourners in a straunge lande, and let

bee there vexed and greeued with continuall tyrannie: neuertheleſſe they ſhall returne thence at the end of foure hundred yeeres, and then will I performe my promiſe: Doth it not appeare by theſe ſayinges, that God wrought in that behalfe? Should any further proofe be ſought thereof? may not euen blinde folkes feele it with their hands? We ſee then for what purpoſe Moſes alledgeth here ſ promiſe ſ had bin made to Abraham, Iſaac, & Iacob: yea and Gods rehearſing of his promiſe againe, was a larger proofe thereof, ſo as the thing became the better knowen and of more authoritie. In deede the people are alſo put in minde therewithall, that this inheritance befell them not by their owne policie, nor for any worthyneſſe that was in themſelues, nor was conquered by their own power or ſtrength, but was giuen them freely of God, ſo as it behoued them to acknowledge that they had receiued it, and that their poſſeſſing of it was not as though they had obteined it by their owne power. The Lord (ſayth hee) promiſed you this land. At what time? when none of them was yet borne or bred. Then coulde they not haue earned or deſerued aught. And therfore it behoued them to acknowlege that Gods onely free gift was the cauſe of it, and that they obteyned not any thing but through his freebeſtowed mercie, becauſe it pleaſed him ſo to doe. For men will neuer ſufficiently perceiue themſelues bound vnto God, vntill they bee vtterly bereft of all their merites and that is bee ſhewed them that they haue not any thing of their owne to bring, but that it is God which doth all, not of duetie, but of good will. Men muſt bee fully perſwaded of that, or elſe they will neuer duely perceiue themſelues to bee bound vnto God.

And whereas Moſes ſpeaketh afterward of the great and goodly Cities, of howſes full of goodies, of vineyardes, oliuegardens, and of all other commodities: it is to make the people to vnderſtand the better, that God delt not nigardly with them, but had powred forth his treſures, to the intent that they ſhould be the more prouoked to ſerue him. And that is another point well worthie to bee marked. For ſo long as God dealeth with vs but after the ordinarie maner; wee will not perceiue that he is willing to bee our father, becauſe wee conſider but the order of nature and ſtand muſing therupon. That then was the cauſe why God vouſſafed to adde the full meaſure of all liberalitie, by handling his people as is ſhewed here, ſo as hee gaue them not a meane land, that was neither barrein nor abundant, of which ſort ſome are to bee found: but hee gaue them faire and ſtrong cities, howſes throughly furniſhed, and groundes throughly manured. Seeing it is ſo: the people ought to haue bin the more prouoked to acknowledge, that ſeeing God had ſhewed himſelfe ſo bountifull, it became not them to fall a ſleepe, but to knowe him to whom they were ſo greatly bound. And it is ſayd expreſſely heere, *that the people ſhould poſſeſſe the thinges which they had not made, or gotten to themſelues*. There is not any thing of thine owne labor, ſayth hee. Diddeſt thou build the houſes wherein thou dwelleſt or ſhalt dwel? (For hee ſpeaketh here of the time to come.) When yee come into the land, yee ſhall finde fayre houſes, and that of other mens building: ye ſhall finde all maner of houſholde ſtuffe and neceſſaries ready made: yee ſhall finde vineyardes and Oliuegardens throughly planted: ye ſhall want nothing: yee ſhall finde welles ready digged: for that land had not water at will. We know what payne and diſtreſſe the holy fathers were driuen vnto, onely to haue water for themſelues and their cattell, namely how they were driuen from place to place, yea and that not for any pretious thinges, but when they digged ſome poore pitte, their neighbors came and draue them from it. Not without cauſe therefore is here expreſſe mention made of pittes or welles, to ſhewe that the people ſhould finde all commodities there, without the putting too of one finger to take any paynes for them.

Gen. 21.25. & 26.19. 20. 21. 22. 32.

And therefore hee addeth, *take good heede that thou forget not the Lord thy God when thou art full*. This is the chiefe matter which we haue to wey. For Moſes doth vs to vnderſtand, that mé are a kin to reſtie horſes: if they be ouerpampered, they fall to kicking, and will not be handled nor ordered any more: and this ſimilitude is ſet downe more expreſſely in the two and thirtith chapter. But in this place hee ſheweth playnely, that ouermuch eaſe is the cauſe of wilfull ſtubbornneſſe: ſo that if God hath once pampered vs, wee forget him, and play the drunkardes ſo as we cannot order our ſelues in ſuch wiſe in the inioying of the beneſites which hee beſtoweth vppon vs, as to yeelde him thãks for them and to ſerue him the more effectually, but contrariwiſe we deuoure them vp with ſuch greedineſſe and exceſſe, as our nature becommeth vtterly brutiſh, and God hath no more authoritie ouer vs, but wee beare our ſelues in hand that wee could well enough forbeare him. Yee ſee then that men become brutiſh through pleaſures and abundance of wealth. And that is the thing which Moſes hath noted here, in ſaying: *take good heede that thou forget not the Lorde God when thou art full*.

Deut. 32.13

Finally hee concludeth, that wee *muſt feare God, and honor him, and take him for our* GOD, which thing he betokeneth by this word *Sweare*. For whereas ſ people are commanded to ſweare by the name of God, as wee ſhall ſee more fully hereafter: it ſerueth to ſhewe how it was his will that they ſhould kepe the Religion that was giuen them by the lawe, and not mingle it with any idolatrie, ſo as they might throughly proteſt that they had nor any moe Gods than that one which had ſhewed himſelfe by his lawe and word. That is the effect of the matter which is conteined here. In deede the land of Chanaan which had bin promiſed to the fathers of olde time, and giuen to the people of Iſraell by ſo many miracles, had more to be conſidered in it, than haue the countryes wherein the faithfull dwell at this day. For wee bee not ſetled in

them by the mightie and miraculous hand of God, as it shewed it selfe in those dayes. But yet for al that wee must come backe to this poynt, that none of vs commeth into this worlde by his owne power, and that our dwelling in it is the singular benefite of God. For there should bee no earth at all, if God listed not to assigne it vnto men.

It is for our sakes that the seas & waters withholde themselues: or else they would ouerflowe and drowne the whole earth. And therefore although there were no more but the order of nature, it were a miracle great enough to shewe vs that God voutsafeth to nourish vs here. We
Deut. 32. 8. know what is sayd in another texte which we shall see hereafter: that is to wit, that God did spred out his meetelines ouer all the nations of the world, so as hee deuided the countries and did set the boundes of them. Then let vs vnderstand, that wee cannot bee in any nooke or corner of the world, without Gods mainteyning of vs there, nor haue any place to dwell in, which is not giuen vs of his free fauour. And as the land of Chanaan was dedicated to the seruice of God at that time: so is the whole world consecrated thereunto at this day. For it is sayde
Psal. 2. 6. 8. that our Lorde Iesus Christ is a king, and that hee hath inlarged his dominion from the one ende of the worlde to the other. Wherefore let vs vnderstand, that our Lordes setting of vs here and his mainteyning of vs here, is to receiue such prayse at our handes as hee deserueth.

Now it is certeine that wee must liue of our labor, and most men shal not haue the world at will, but a number haue much a doe to get bread, and God will handle them very hardly: but yet howsoeuer they fare, one bit of bread is enough to make them beholden to the Lorde. Yea and although men labor for their liuing: yet must they be fully resolued of this which we shall see hereafter, namely that it is not their labor that findeth them, but the blessing of God, whereby the children of Israell were fed in the wilderneſſe. Trueth it is that the falling of the Manna from heauen was a more manifest token. But yet howsoeuer the case stand, God hath left a continuall president, that by what meanes soeuer wee liue: it is hee that mainteyneth vs, and it is at his hand that wee receiue both sustenance and nourishment and all that euer wee haue. Yee see then that no man can exempt himselfe from seruing of his God, and from shewing by our deedes that we thinke our selues beholden vnto him, both for our lyfe and for all thinges belonging thereunto. Again the more bountifully and liberally that GOD dealeth with vs, the more ought wee to be prouoked to serue him. Therefore let euery of vs on his owne behalfe learne to beare Gods benefites well in minde. Let not the poore murmur though they wot not oftentimes which way to turne them: but let them assure themselues that GOD will so blesse the little which they haue, as it shall well ynough susteine them to liue therewith. And as for the richer sorte which haue more aboundance, let them vnderstand that Gods shewing of himselfe so gratious towardes them, is to the ende they shoulde the better knowe him and honor him.

For although the riche sorte may now and then alledge that they haue taken much payne in gathering the thinges which they possesse, or that they haue atteyned to them by some other meane, and that they haue them by succession from their fathers and auncestors: Yet will not God lose his right, for (as I sayd afore) it is his blessing that maketh men riche. Therefore they that possesse most must knowe that Gods being liberal to them after that fashion, is to the ende to binde them the streitlyer to him, and to allure them the more to serue and honour him as their father, yea and as a kinde-hearted father which desireth nothing but to giue his children their fill of al good thinges, so as they may not want any thing.

Thus haue wee heere a generall rule: which is, that after as GOD giueth vs ease and the commodities of this world, so must wee bee the more disposed to loue him: for that gentlenesse of his draweth vs vnto him. And when we haue so tasted of his goodnesse and found sauour in it: needes must there bee too great vnkindenesse and churlishnesse in vs, if wee bee not moued to loue him as we ought to doe. And that must be not only in our eating & drinking, but also in all thinges that concerne this present life. As for example, if GOD giue vs peace and quietnesse, whiles others are in trouble and warres: if wee bee vnuexed of plagues and diseases, while wee see a number of other folkes afflicted: let vs vnderstand that our Lord alureth vs gently vnto him, and would faine winne vs by such kindenesse, and therefore if we voutsafe not to come vnto him, wee shall pay right deare for the thinges that wee shall haue receiued at his hand. True it is that God requireth not any payment at our handes: for we haue not any thing to giue him: but yet will he haue vs to bee thankefull towardes him for our dueties sake. If wee doe not so: it must be layd to our charge, that being not his children, wee haue treacherously robbed him of his goods.

For what right haue wee to the inioying of them, but that hee is our father? And if wee honor him not, dare wee say wee be of the number and company of his children? And that is the cause why Saint Paul is so hotte against such as returne not vnto GOD when hee spareth them. What meane yee you wretches (sayth hee) know yee not that yee abuse the great treasure of Gods goodnesse? For his dealing so gently with you, is as an alluring of you to repentaunce. True it is that GOD doth sometimes chastise vs sharpely, to waken vs and to make vs knowe our faultes, that wee may bee sory for them: But yet for all that, if hee deale mildely with vs, it is as much to say as he woulde faine winne vs by

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friendly meanes, as hath bin saide already. Nowe if this can beare no sway with vs, wee shewe our selues to be too too leud, and ỹ we despise Gods goodnesse, yea and that wee make but a skorne and mockage of it. And therefore must horrible vengeance hang ouer our heades, according as S. Paul threatneth in the foresaide place, to al such as abide hard harted and stubborne in their vices, when God beareth with them. And nowe let vs looke to our selues. For although euery mans state be not so wealthie as hee would wish: yet are wee handled very gently in respect of others. What remaineth but that our Lord should enter into account with vs, if wee on our side haue no lust to serue him, and that the ease and rest which hee giueth vs, bee not applyed to shewe that wee take him for our father indeede, forasmuch as hee handleth vs as his children? If wee (say I) acknowledge not this: then shall not our vnthankefulnesse escape vnpunished.

Also by the way let vs not forget howe Moses exhorteth heere the people of Israel to beware that they forget not the Lorde when they were well fedde and growen full. But seeing that we bee inclined to such frowardenesse as well as they, let vs consider our owne disease, that wee may seeke remedie for it. For though there were no more but this one point: it were enough to occasion men to mislike of themselues, and to bee ashamed. For wee bee as monsters against kinde: insomuch that whereas God offereth himselfe to vs, and reacheth vs his hande, so as if wee sawe him in his owne person, wee coulde haue no greater assurance of the fatherly loue that hee beareth vs, than that hee is so liberall that wee may haue our fill of his benefites: yet notwithstanding wee forget him euen when hee putteth vs in minde of him, not onely by speaking to vs, but also by shewing vs by experience that hee knitteth himselfe to vs, and hath a care of vs in watching ouer vs, not onely for the sauing of our soules, but also for the nourishing of our bodies, feeding vs like litle babes, and as it were stretching out of his wings ouer vs, as a hen doeth ouer her chickens, as Mat. 23. 37 comparison is made in the holy Scripture. Seeing that God giueth vs such proofe of his goodnesse, and also knitteth himselfe vnto vs, of purpose to gather vs together and to take vs vp to himselfe: were it not a diuelishe madnesse to forget him, and to turne our backes vpon him, and to shut our eyes against him, yea and to conceiue so excessiue rage as to say, wee wil not thinke vpon him that seeketh vs, is not this a diuelishe madnesse? Yes: and yet is there not any of vs all, that can excuse himselfe to bee vnsubiect to such naughtinesse. So then, this text ought of right to humble vs, and to make vs ashamed afore GOD, because wee see wee bee so malicious and spitefull as not to regarde God when hee is neere vs, nor to wake and open our eyes that we might see his goodnesse when it is shewed vnto vs, yea euen after so euident and easie a maner. That is the thing which we haue to remember. True it is that wee make common prouerbes of it, but in the meane while no man thinkes vppon it. Wee say that nothing marreth men but ease: Wee say that ouermuch welth maketh men vnweldie: and yet in the meane while the same thing befalleth vs, and none of vs findeth fault with himselfe. And although God preuent vs and blame vs, and doe vs such shame as to make vs beare of it: yet will not wee thinke vppon it. Notwithstanding it is not written in vaine, *When thou hast thy ful of the benefites of thy God, beware that thou forget him not.* Wherfore let vs marke, that prosperitie of it self ought to prouoke vs to resort vnto God, bicause it is all one as if he should reach out his hands and armes vnto vs. Like as when a father offereth his childe a thing and sayth to him, Come hither, and holdeth out his armes: so likewise Gods desire in bestowing his benefits vppon vs, is nothing else but to see vs quiet, as it were in his lap or vnder his winges. Nowe then, if wee haue an eye to the order of nature: prosperitie should drawe vs to God, and make vs well minded to serue him: and yet notwithstanding, wee see how wee despise both GOD and nature and all kindenesse, and become woorse than wilde beastes. For whereas GOD alureth vs to him after that gentle manner: wee turne our backes vppon him, and in stead of cõming to him, retyre from him: nay (which woorse is) wee kicke againste him. For it is not inough for men to despise Gods goodnesse, and to stop their eyes, and to deuour al ỹ good things which they haue, without knowing who giueth them: but also they proceede so far as to rush against him, and to gnashing their teeth at him, and to spurning at him. If a man should liken vs to swine, wee woulde thinke hee did vs greate wrong. And yet are swine contented with rooting in the ground, to fill themselues with the Acornes that are fallen downe, and they be not so fearce as to fall to rending downe of the tree, they leape not vp against it, they byte not the boughes, they haue their groines hãging alwais downward. As for vs we play indeede the swine, bicause we haue alwais our groines in the earth: insomuch that When we cram our selues neuer so full, there is none of vs whiche lifteth vp his mind on highe to saye, it is Gods hande that giueth vs this thing: but either we impute al things to our owne policie, or we thinke that the gaine commeth of our selues, or wee imagine that it happeneth vs by some chaunce, and to be short wee neuer thinke of God. But besides this, wee fall to spiting of him, we caste out our furye and rage against him, we strike at him with our tusks, wee withstand him stubbornly to the vttermoste of our power, and we could finde in our hartes that his Iustice were vtterly abolished. For wee treade it vnder foote, as much as in vs lyeth. We see then that we bee woorse than swine, and woorse than the vilest brute beastes that are, yea we be euen vnkindly monsters.

But behold, our God calleth vs to him by this exhortation, wherein wee see the patientnesse which hee vseth towardes vs. If a father had handeled his child as gently as could be, farre

aboue the common maner, and the child should thereupon growe proude and despise his father: woulde not the father beare him such displeasure, as to disdaine to open his mouth to him, to tell him of any thing bicause of his despising of him after that fashion? Yes. Then is it most certaine that wee bee much lesse to bee borne with when it falleth out, that wee resist GOD who is more worth than all the fathers in the world, without comparison. So then, should he not haue iust cause to let vs alone as wee bee, when he seeth that wee haue no minde of him, and that euen his benefites are an occasion vnto vs to dispise him, so as wee turne them the cleane contrarie way frō the lawfull vse whervnto hee had ordained them? Might hee not iustly leaue vs in that state as cursed creatures and vnworthy that euer hee shoulde open his mouth to speake to vs? Yes: and yet for all that he commeth to seeke vs. Beholde (saieth he) I knowe yee bee inclined to forget mee, when I haue fed you well and fat, and the more abundance that you haue, the more ye refuse to come to me, and therefore ye deserue to be shaken off, & that I should neuer remember you any more. Yet notwithstanding, my desire is not that you should perish, but that ye should returne vnto mee. What naughtinesse or lewdnesse so euer I espie in you, I am contented to take you still for my children, I will preuent the vices whereto you bee giuen: therefore take heede ỹ ye forget me not when you be at your ease. Seeing that our Lord beareth with vs after that fashion, ought it not to breake our hearts though they were harder than stone?

So then, first of all let vs mistrust prosperitie. In deede we couet it, & for the loue thereof wee shun the things that are hard and combersome. If we suffer hunger and thirst, it grieueth vs, & we neuer leaue storming vntill God haue prouided for it: but yet for all ỹ it would be more for our profit oftentimes, to indure hunger than to haue abundance. Howsoeuer the case standeth, whensoeuer God bestoweth his benefites vpon vs, let vs haue prosperitie in suspitiō, as I said afore. Not that it ought of it selfe so to deceiue vs & blindfold our eyes, as wee should not knowe God: but for that it behoueth vs to perceiue our owne nature to be so sinfull and euill giuen, as we cannot profit our selues by any of the benefites which we receiue at Gods hand. Yea and we see howe Prou. 30, 9. euen Salomon was afraide to bee ouerriche, for feare of aduauncing himselfe against God, least he should despise him and forsake him. See here howe Salomon who was indued with so excellent giftes of grace, did neuertheless see the frailtie of man to bee such, that when he had all ỹ his heart could wish, yet he might forget himselfe, & be ouersotted as he should fall to renouncing of God by aduauncing himselfe against Phil. 2, 12. him. Now then, let vs liue in feare and aw, and if God giue vs not such aboundaunce as we would desire, but doe cutte our morsels very small: let vs vnderstande that the same is for our benefite, in that wee haue neede to bee dyeted, for feare least fatnesse stoppe our eyes, and so make vs starke blinde. If wee thinke well vppon this, it will make vs to beare pouertie the more patiently. When wee want our pleasures and delyghtes, when wee want our delicate morselles, and when wee want abundance to fill our selues withall: let vs knowe that our Lorde hath a regarde to holde vs in awe by that meane: for we shoulde bee in daunger of forgetting him, if we shoulde growe too farre. And therefore when wee haue wealth at will, let vs bethinke vs thus: why was it sayde to the people of Israel, forget not thy GOD when thou hast thy fill? It was bicause men can not brooke their wealth, in so much that if they haue all that they haue needs of, yea and more too: they ouershoot themselues, they play the loose coltes, they arme themselues against GOD, and they haue no more care of him. Is the winde in that doore? Let vs learne to haue God alwayes before our eyes: so as if he deale graciously with vs and giue vs more than he doeth to other men, wee may haue the skill to consider, See howe my God commeth to me, and to what intent but that I shoulde bee as it were brooded vnder his wings, and liue obediently towardes him, honouring him and referring my whole life to the glorifying of his holy name, so as it may bee as a bond whereby to binde mee straytlyer vnto him, than others on whome hee hath not bestowed the lyke benefites as he hath doone vppon mee? Thus yee see that both poore and riche ought to tend to Godward, eche one according to his degree.

Againe, the comparing of the people of Israel with our selues, ought to quicken vs vp yet better, to stand vppon our garde. It is said, when the Lorde thy GOD shall haue giuen thee thy fill. And of what goods? Of wyne which thou shalt haue gathered of other mens labours, and of all other thinges to lyue by which thou haste not earned: when thy God shall haue fedde thee so of his owne free goodnesse, see thou forget him not. If the people of Israel myght forget GOD hauing had most apparant recordes of the fauour that was shewed vnto them: what will become of vs which are holde here vnder the common order of nature? For wee haue no myracles to spurre vs foorth to Godwarde: wee haue not a lande of Chanaan as a speciall elected and chosen dwelling place. And therefore wee myght easilyer forget GOD than that people coulde, if wee shoulde not remember this present lesson earely and late. And for as much as wee see our owne coldnesse, let vs learne to matche the spirituall benefites as well which God hath bestowed vppon vs heeretofore as which we looke for heereafter, with the thinges that pertaine to the maintenaunce of this transitorie lyfe. True it is that although wee thought vppon no more than the thinges that are giuen vs for this bodie: yet were wee sufficiently bounde to God, yea and a hundred folde more than wee coulde discharge our selues of. Notwithstanding, besides all this, our Lorde giueth vs cause ynough to serue him, in that he graunteth vs so many spirituall benefites that belong to the saluing

uing of our ſoules, whereof wee haue a portion alreadie. For whereof commeth fayth? whereof commeth it that wee bee graffed into the bodie of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt by being baptized in his name, and that wee bee taken into Gods houſholde to bee auowed for his children? Whereof come theſe thinges but of his giuing of the ſpirit of adoption vnto vs, to the intent wee ſhould call vppon him as our father, bee aſſured of the heauenly heritage, ſtande in awe of him, and liue according to his woord? And is not this dooing of his a ſpeciall gift? Yes, and yet beſides this, there is a lyfe prepared for vs, whereof wee haue but onely a taſte as yet. For wee haue receiued (as yee would ſay) ſome firſt fruites of it: but wee ſhall not haue the full fruition of it, vntill God haue taken vs quite and cleane away to himſelfe: it is ynough for vs as nowe, that we followe after it aloofe. Now then ſith we ſee that beſides ỹ things which our Lord giueth vs for our bodyes and for this tranſitorie lyfe, he hath alſo giuen vs benefites farre nobler and precioufer, as which doe leade vs to his euerlaſting kingdome: muſt it not needes be that wee bee too lewd, if wee bee not drawen vnto him? And if wee take occaſion to forget him for al his drawing of vs vnto him after that ſort: what horrible damnation deſerue wee for ſuch vnthankfulneſſe? Yee ſee then in effect, that the thing which wee haue to remember vppon this place, is that euerie of vs muſt bethinke him of the great nomber of benefites which hee hath receyued at Gods hand, and which wee receyue ſtil day by day: and that the ſame muſt ſtirre vs vp to put our ſelues continually forewarde in going towardes him, and teache vs to doe him homage for all thinges and in all reſpectes. For we defyle all his benefites, if the end whereunto we referre them, be not the honoring and glorifying of him.

Againe as touching the goods of this worlde: let vs vnderſtand that our Lord cannot deuiſe to do ſo little for vs, or to giue vs ſo ſlender a portion of them, but we ſhall bee exceedingly much beholden to him though he doe no more, but if we perceiue that he dealeth gently with vs, and that hee beareth with vs: that ought to quicken vs vp and to prouoke vs ſo muche the more to come vnto him. And therewithall let vs beware that our vnthankfulneſſe leade vs not to forget him, ſeeing it is not for nought that hee warneth his people heere by the mouth of Moſes, to beware that they forgat him not whē they came to the inioying of the benefites which hee would beſtowe vppon them. For wee haue examples thereof euen among our ſelues. I pray you hath not GOD wrought after a wonderfull faſhion heere in planting of his Goſpell, and moreouer vttered his bleſſinges in ſuch ſorte, as they that perceiue them not, muſt ſpite of their teeth knowe that hee hath ſhewed his mightye arme? neuertheleſſe I ſhall not neede as nowe to blame mens vnthankefulneſſe, it is too apparant and openly knowen. For haue not many beene aſhamed, yea and are not many aſhamed ſtill, to bethinke themſelues of the miſerable ſtate out of which God hath deliuered them? Wee heare howe Moſes ſayeth heere, *Forget not thy GOD which brought thee out of the lande of bondage or bondmen*. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, when GOD ſhall haue graunted you the grace, to dwell quietly in the lande which he will giue you in poſſeſſion: call to minde the ſtate wherein yee haue beene, that yee maye acknowledge the good which GOD hath done you in deliuering you from it. Heere then are two thinges done you to vnderſtande: The one is, that the preſent benefites muſt prouoke ye to honour him that hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo liberall towardes you: [and the other is,] that the remembering of your former miſeries, muſt alwayes humble you and holde you in awe, ſo as ye mount not vp in pryde to like well of your ſelues and to bee puffed vp, nor the proſperitie that is giuen ye make yee to forget what bondage yee haue beene in.

Now although this was ſpoken to the children of Iſraell, I pray you doeth it not fitly agree vnto vs? Ought not wee to conſider well to whom wee bee beholden for this chaunge, that God hath vouchſafed to giue his children (as ye would ſay) a quiet neſt heere, ſo as they which were oppreſſed and ouerlayd with bondage and tyrannie, are nowe at full libertie, and inioye the thinges which they neuer hoped nor looked for? Seeing then that our Lord ſheweth himſelfe ſo gratious, are we on our ſide to bee excuſed, if wee feare him not? Though all the world might bee acquit, and all men ſcape Gods hande for misknowing him: yet deſerue we to be condemned in that behalfe. But ought not the remembraunce of all the miſeries whereout wee bee ſcaped, to be ſo printed in our hearres as wee might liue continually in awe of our God? And although we haue proſperitie as nowe, let it not puffe vs vp, nor miniſter occaſion to vs to ſtand too much in our owne conceites. And generally, ought not all Citizens, Burgeſſes, yea and ſtraungers of Geneua to bethinke themſelues thus? It is not long agoe ſince wee were in ſuche bondage and tyrannie in this Citie, as there was no likelyhood that euer wee ſhoulde haue ſcaped them. Nay rather wee ſeemed to haue beene as a people forlorne and paſt hope of recouerie: and yet hath our GOD looked mercifully vppon our miſeries, and prouided remedy for them, and that after ſuche ſorte as men woulde neuer haue thought, and as ſurmounted our deſire. The Citizens and Burgeſſes that haue beene priuie to the calamities and miſeries from the which GOD hath deliuered them, haue they not good cauſe to magnifie ſuche goodneſſe and mercie? And as for the ſtraungers whome God hath conueied hither as it weere into his folde, ought they not to conſider thus with themſelues? Alas, wee were as in the gulfe of hell in the horrible deſolation of the popedome, and God hath pytied vs, inſomuch that hee hath reached vs his hande to take vs thence and to bring vs hither into his Churche, that wee myght worſhip him with one common accorde.

Eph. 2. 8. Rom. 7.

Eph. 1. 5. & 2. Gal. 4. 6. Eph. 2. 14.

Now then let vs put this text in vre, seeing it was not written onely for the people of Israel, but also ought to serue vs now adayes more than euer it did. For seeing that the Gospell is preached vnto vs, should we looke for an Angel from heauen, to giue vs larger certaintie, when wee see that God hath so ratified his doctrine alreadie for our instruction?

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to mortifie vs in all our affections and wicked lustes, and to renew vs so againe, that being gouerned by his holy Ghost, wee may desire nothing but to submit our selues vnto him, and to profite more and more in his doctrine, that wee may bee settled in his feare and loue, euen vntill he haue rid vs of all imperfections and vices. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxix. of Iuly. 1555.

The xlviij. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the sixth Chapter.

13 Thou shalt feare, &c.

14 Yee shall not walke after other Gods, I meane the Gods of the Nations which are round about you:

15 (For the Lord thy God is a iealous God in the middes of thee:) for feare leaſt the wrath of the Lorde thy God bee kindled againſt thee, and he roote thee out of the Land.

VEe haue seene heretofore, that the welspring of all mischiefe is the forgetting of our God after he hath once shewed him selfe to vs, and that wee haue once knowē his wil. And this is the warning that Moses gaue vnto the people, that when they had once their fill of Gods benefites, they shoulde not forget him to whom they were so greatly bounde. Pursuing still the same matter, he addeth, *Feare the Euerlasting, your God.* Wherein he sheweth what it is to mynde God aright: namely that it is not a bare musing or speaking of him onely, but a yeelding of his due honour vnto him. For it is not possible that we should think vpon God and not be moued to honour him vnlesse wee make an idoll of him. For when Gods maiestie commeth to our remembraunce, must it not needes touche vs to humble our selues vnder the same? Ought wee not to vnderstande that he hath created vs with condition to bee wholly at this deuotion, and to dedicate our selues to his seruice? Then let vs marke, that the remembering of God importeth the reuerencing of him. And so, To feare GOD, and not to forget him, are two grounds which are so knitte togither as they cannot be put asunder. Againe, vnto *Feare* Moyses addeth *Seruice*, that is to say, the worshipping of him. For the terme *Seruice* betokeneth a dewtifull submission and reuerence, when men humble themselues before GOD, and yeeld him the honour that is dew to him to serue him withall, as is sayde of it heere. Feare then goeth formost: and from the same feare proceedeth the duetifull submission that wee yeeld vnto him. I could you that it is all one as if wee shoulde protest, that wee hold our life and all our goods of him, and that hee is worthy to hould vs vnder his subiection, and that wee shoulde glorify him in all respectes, by referring all our workes to the honoring of him. Thirdly hee addeth that *men should sweare by the name of God*, which is a kinde of confessing of our fayth. For wee haue seene heretofore, that suche as sweare (I meane as they ought to sweare) doe take their othe by the name of God, because that only hee is the sufficient witnesse of the truth, and will iudge all suche as turne his trueth into leasing. And so in this text Moses sheweth againe, that when wee haue worshipped GOD, we muste also make a declaration of our fayth, so as men may perceiue vs to bee his people, and that he raigneth among vs, that wee bee free from all superstition and idolatrie, and that wee hold none other religion than that which the liuing GOD hath giuen vs. That is the summe of the thinges conteined heere. 1. Cha. leasing.

Now, that wee maye fare the better by this doctrine, wee muste vnderstande that GOD accepteth not any seruice at our handes, except that first and formost we haue learned to feare him, that is to saye, to yeeld him suche reuerence, as to bee desirous to obey him, and to bee ruled by him, and to graunt him all superioritie ouer vs. Then if men take neuer so much trauell in doing this and that, and in the meane while haue not the feare of GOD rooted in their hartes: all that euer they do is but vanitie and lost labour. And therefore let not our onely handes and feete bee applyed to welldoing, neither let our indeuour bee so imployed vppon outwarde workes, as the sayde roote shoulde not goe before: But let vs conceaue suche knowledge of GOD, as our whole seeking may bee to submit our selues vnto him, so as wee may saye, Seeing that GOD hath shaped vs, is it not reason that hee shoulde raigne

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ouer vs? Seeing we be his creatures, shoulde wee not offer our selues to him with al humility, that he might inioy vs? Seeing we hold all our goods of him, is it not reason that wee shoulde doe him homage for them, and that our life shoulde bee dedicated vnto him? Seeing he hath done vs the honour to bee our father, ought we not to yeeld him childely obedience? This is the point which we must beginne at, if we will keepe Gods Lawe, to please him well all our life long. Herewithall let vs marke what was saide afore: namely that in thinking vpon God, wee must not imagine a deade thing, but we must set his glorious maiestie before our eyes, that wee may bee touched with the foresaide feare of him.

Moreouer, when wee feare our God, let vs learne also to worshippe him. For if a man boast that hee feareth God, and in the meane while despise all his commaundementes, so as hee regardeth not to doe him honour to whom hee knoweth himselfe to bee subiect: is it not too grosse hypocrisie? Then let vs marke that the feare of God bringeth with it a desirousnesse to serue him, and to direct our whole life according to his commaundementes, and specially to yeelde him the duetiful submission which he requireth in our worshipping of him. For the meane whereby hee will be separated from idoles, is that whereas the heathen and vnbeleeuers worshippe Gods inuented of their owne braine: wee must shewe our selues to haue none other than the liuing God. And why? For by our yeelding of that honour vnto him, we reiect all the fancies that haue beene deuised by men. And therefore with our fearing of the Lorde, let vs learne to shewe by our deedes, that our whole desire is to serue him.

Nowe this seruice is properly inwarde: that is to saye, the chiefe pointes thereof are, that wee put our whole trust in him, that wee acknowledge all our good thinges to come of him, that wee call vppon him with the saide trust, and that wee yeelde him the praise of all things that hee bestoweth vppon vs. This consisteth not in bare Ceremoniousnesse, but it lyeth altogether in the heart. And like as wee must worshippe God by acknowledging all our good thinges to come of him, and that it is his onely goodnesse whereunto wee bee beholden, both for this presene life and also for the hope of our saluation: so on the other parte, wee must make men priuie to this our spirituall seruice which wee yeelde vnto God, that they may commonly beare recorde thereof and bee edified by our example. And all this respecteth the swearing that Moses speaketh of heere, saying, *Thou shalt sweare by the name of thy God.*

It shoulde seeme at the first blush, that heere is no great reason in this case: for we bee but too forwarde and readie of our selues to sweare, without any furtherance thereto at Gods hand. Why then doeth Moses take order that wee shoulde sweare by the name of GOD? By all likelyhoode he shoulde rather haue commaunded vs to abstaine from all othes, and haue saide, Thou shalt not sweare in any wise at all. But (as I haue touched alreadie) when othes bee made lawefullye and according to Gods Lawe, wee shewe that it is hee whome wee worshippe, and whose people wee couet to bee. Nowe let vs consider the right vse of othes. The right vse is, that if neede require that the trueth must bee witnessed and warranted: then God must bee brought in as a pledge. As howe? Hee nameth himselfe the trueth: and therefore in thinges vnknowen to men, wee cannot haue a fitter witnesse than him. When a man sweareth faithfullie in a matter that is not knowen, sauing that men woulde get the confession thereof at his hande: if hee take the name of God [to witnesse], it is to shewe that hee goeth to worke vnfeynedly: like as in a case of Iustice, if the Iudge beeing desirous to finde out the certainetie at a witnesses hande, doe cause him to * lifte vp his hande vnto GOD: such swearing is as it were a doing of homage to GOD, as though the partie shoulde say: I knowe that GOD is the trueth, and the iudge of mens heartes, and I protest heere that I speake as in his presence, euen in trueth, knowing well that I shall yeelde him an account of my saying. Psal. 31. 6.

* That is the maner of taking an oth in som other countries like as our maner is to lay our hād vpō a Booke.

Thus yee see that the true vse of othes and swearing, is to warrant and ratifie the trueth when it is not knowen to men, in which kinde of case God must bee set as Iudge, and the deponent must protest that hee speaketh as before him, to the intent there may bee no counterfeiting at all. But yet is it not ment that it is Lawfull for vs to sweare [in all cases], though wee say the trueth. For it may bee that the matters are not of such weight and importance, that Gods name shoulde bee auouched: and then were it an vnhallowing or defiling of it. But if the matter deserue it and require it: then doeth God lende vs his name, as hath beene declared in the last chapter before. He vseth such courtesie towardes vs, as hee is contented that wee shall borrowe his name to the ende that the trueth may bee warranted by his recorde.

Thus wee see nowe, after what sort it is lawfull for vs to sweare: that is to wit, when there is such a case as deserueth it, and againe when wee cannot otherwise satisfie men, to shewe them that the thing which wee say is certaine and true, that they ought to stande to it. After that manner doth God giue vs leaue to sweare by his name.

Nowe seeing it is so that hee which sweareth doeth call God to witnesse, and also submit himselfe to punishment if hee shall haue abused his holy and sacred name: is it not a doing of homage vnto God? For our swearing by him is because he hath soueraine Dominion ouer vs, because it belongeth to him to search our hearts, because hee must be our iudge, and because wee must yeelde account of our whole life before him. 2. Chr. 6. 30. Iere. 17. 10. 1. Cor. 4. 4. 5

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Seeing it is so that all that euer belongeth to the one onely God, is conteined in an othe: must it not needes follow that it is a cursed superstition, when we sweare by the name of an ydol? Yes: for the honour that is due to the onely one God, is conueyed away to the creature. All they therefore which sweare by any other than by the name of God, doe shewe themselues vnworthy to bee his people, yea and that it is not long of them that they bereeue him not of his due homage. Nowe wee see howe it was not for nought that Moses hath tolde vs here, that wee must sweare by the name of God. And indeede when the prophets intende to shewe that the
Esa.65.15. right Religion shalbe set vp euery where, they say that all tongues shall sweare by the name of God. The heathen men likewise had the same opinion, that their swearing by their ydols was a token of their seruing of them. And that was comprehended vnder the worship which they yeelded vnto them. If they had not imagined that there was some diuine maiestie in an ydoll: they woulde neuer haue sworne by the name of it. True it is that afterwarde they disguised their othes, so as they sware likewise by their kinges and princes: but that flatterie was an vnhallowing of Gods name, and they themselues knewe full well that they were blameworthie in so doing. For in going about to flatter men, they vniustly snatched to their ydols ỹ honour which they pretended to be due to them. Seeing that the Infidels knewe that an oth is a kinde of worshipping, shoulde not they that haue beene rightly taught, haue a much more surer rule? Yes: and therefore let vs marke wel, that Moses in commaunding men to sweare by none but by the name of God, sheweth that therein they doe him the honour of acknowledging him for onely
2.Cor.4.5. Iudge, and attribute vnto him the office of serching mens harts and thoughts, and of bewray-
Psal.31.6. ing the thinges that are secret and hidden, & finally acknowledge him to bee the certaine and vnfallible truth, and therefore that he is able to be sufficient witnesse thereof. That is the effect of that which he ment to say.

Nowe hereby wee see, that such as sweare by the names of creatures are ydolaters, & rob God of the protestations which hee will haue men to make vnto him, inasmuch as hee will haue none to be so honored but himselfe. It is a common thing among the Papists to sweare by the virgin Mary and by the rest of the saints. True it is, that men haue not thought that to bee so great euill: but although there were no more but that, yet there appeareth to bee manifest ydolatrie in so doing. For why? They that sweare by the virgin Marie, doe set her in Gods seate, as though it belonged to her to iudge the worlde: and a man coulde not deuise to doe greater wrong to our Lorde Iesus Christ, than to attribute that thing vnto her which is giuen vnto him alone, yea and
2.Chr.6.30. giuen vnto him in respect that hee is God manifested in the flesh. Againe, they attribute vnto her the searching and knowing of mens secret thoughts, which title the holie scripture reserueth peculiarly vnto God. Then is it horrible trecherie to sweare by the virgin Marie, or by any other creature. And would God this superstition were vtterly abolished among vs, that it might neuer be had in remembrance any more. But what? There are a number of wilfull folke, from whom that cursed custome cannot bee taken, and say what yee will to them, they continue dosed in it, insomuch that if a man doe so point them to it with his finger, that as blinde as they bee they may see the meane howe to yeeld God his due honour: yet all is one with them, they will not in any wise bee made to beleeue it. And why? Because the diuell hath bewitched them. Howsoeuer the case stande let vs note that al such as sweare by any other name than by the name of God, are ydolaters. And why? I tolde yee the reason before: namely because we cannot sweare by the name of God, but wee must confesse that he is our iudge, and that it is onely hee to whom it belongeth to knowe our secret thoughts, and to punish vs for falsifying his truth and for turning of it into a lye, wheras we should beare witnesse vnto it. And let vs marke that one kinde is put for all of that sort. By reason whereof wee bee commaunded, not onely to sweare by the name of God, but also to yeelde such confession of him before men, as we may shewe our selues to bee his people in deede, and that we woulde faine that hee shoulde reigne among vs, and that his name shoulde be glorified. And so let vs extend this lesson generally to the honoring of God, so that if the case concerne religion, wee giue not that thing to creatures, which our Lorde telleth vs is peculiar to himselfe. And therefore whensoeuer wee speake of the name of God, let vs yeeld him al that belongeth vnto him, let those thinges bee reserued vnto him, and let vs not bereaue him of his honour, to giue it away by peeces and collappes to men and other creatures. This extendeth very farre. Neuertheleese it is ynough for vs to be admonished in faire wordes, that when Moses saith wee must sweare by the name of God, it is as much as if he should say, my friends, like as yee worship the Lord, so must ye also maintaine his honour before men. Insomuch that if any man will compell you to transforme or change your religion, you shall not suffer it in any case whatsoeuer: but stande stil in this vncorrupted to say, we haue the one God who hath called vs Deut.
to him, and both created and redeemed vs and therefore it is good reason that wee shoulde bee his heritage, and continue wholly his. Thus yee see in effect what Moses meant to vtter in this text.

But heere wee see the frowardnesse that is in men, which is a thing greatly to be lamented. For an othe (as I saide) ought to bee a recorde of ỹ honour which we yeeld vnto God: and wee see howe men cleane contrariwise will needes spite him in vsing of othes. First of all, when men sweare vnaduisedly, is it not a manifest despising of Gods name? It must bee rapt out when there is neither why nor wherefore. The talke shalbe but of mirth and laughter: and yet notwithstanding Gods name must bee mingled with

with it. And is not that too great and too shamefull a skorning of him? Nay moreouer, a mannes patience is no sooner stird, so as he entreth into a litle choler: but by and by gods name must answere for it. In so much that it is not enough for them to fome out their rage against their nighbours, but they must also step vp against God, and shew themselues wode and starke mad. And they be no simple othes which they vse: but othes matched with blasphemie, whereby the maiestie of Gods name is as good as trampled vnder foote. Othes are referred to nothing lesse than to the end that I spake of, (that is to wit to the glorifying of God among vs) when they be applied to so deuilish outrages as the wilfull defying of God, and the skorning of his name, by tossing it too and fro like a tennisball, without yeelding any reuerence vnto it. And therefore let vs learne that it is too too detestable a vice when trifling othes are so rife among vs, and also that in our cholerik passions of impatiencie Gods name shoulde be so rent and torne, and that men are not contented to haue sworne after some simple manner, but also take vp kindes of othes that are matched with blasphemie, so as it appeareth that their intent is to make warre against God, and euen to spyte him when they cannot bee reuenged of men. Thus yee see what wee haue to marke vpon this text. Therefore to bee short, let vs vnderstande that it is not ynough for vs, that the spirituall seruice which wee owe vnto God bee yeelded vncorruptly vnto him: that is to wit, that wee put our trust in him, that wee call vpon him, and that wee offer him our soules and bodies in sacrifice: but we must also shewe openly before men what religion wee holde of, and wee must make it knowen that wee bee separated from all the defilements of the Infidels and vnbeleeuers. The thing which is expresly required heere, is that when othes are to bee vsed, wee must vse them with such sobrietie as God may bee glorified, and that whensoeuer wee sweare, wee must beare in minde that God is to bee reuerenced as our iudge, and offer our selues in such wise before him, as hee suffer not any falshoode to abide vnpunished, and as wee yeelde vnto him the office of serching euen our heartes. If wee deale so: then shall our othes be holie vnto him, and accepted as a part and portion of the seruice that he requireth and alloweth. And by that meanes wee shall abhorre and loth not onely the blasphemies whereby he is spyted out of measure: but also all fonde and trifling othes, that are made without cause or reason. Thus wee see in fewe words what wee haue to note, and howe this text is to bee put in vre.

Nowe Moses addeth immediately, *Yee shall not follow any other Gods, the Gods of the heathen which dwell rounde about you*. When hee saieth, yee shall not followe any other Gods: hee sheweth vs that wee cannot mingle the true religion with any abuses, or with any thing deuised by vnbeleeuers, but by and by all is mard, and God disauoweth it, as soone as wee swarue one way or other from the plaine trueth, and from the rule that hee hath giuen vs. For it is not saide simply, you shall not renounce your GOD: but they bee forbidden to followe any other Gods. So then let vs marke wel, that if wee intende to serue the liuing God, we must holde our selues to him alone, and worshippe him with such vncorruptnesse, as all ydoles bee vtterly cast downe, and all superstitions cut off and cast behinde vs. And if this were well obserued, wee shoulde no more bee put to such paines, neither shoulde wee haue so manie bickerings as wee haue. For what causeth the troubles that are nowadayes in the worlde, and that there is such diuision betweene vs and the Papistes? For both of vs confesse that there is but one God: that grounde is common to vs both, both of vs name him the maker of heauen and earth, and both of vs take Iesus Christ for our redeemer: and yet notwithstanding we bee at so greate oddes, that the Turkes and the Iewes are not more deuided from vs than the Papistes are. Whereof commeth this? Not that the Papistes doe vtterly renounce GOD: but because they will needes make a mingled and confused hotchpotch of all the Religions of the worlde. They haue raked together all abuses, all Sathans trumperie, and all the superstitions that euer haue beene: and that terme they the seruice of God. It is no part of their meaning to holde themselues to the pureneſse of the holy scripture, and of the Lawe and the Gospell: but to the thinges which they haue deuised of their owne braine. They will needes haue those thinges mingled with the pure seede: and that is such a corruption, as God is vtterly shaken of by it. Although men thinke it not, or at leastwise confesse it not with their mouth: yet hath hee no more place where those thinges are. So then (as I saide afore), if this saying which forbiddeth vs to followe any other Gods were well obserued: we might easily agree nowadayes with the Papistes. For the controuersie heere concerneth not the onely name:

True it is that the Papistes call not their Saincte which they haue forged, their Gods: but yet they serue them and worshippe them as Gods. And therewithall they haue deuised such lawes and ordinances as they thinke good: and yet the thing which they terme Gods seruice, is but vtter follie of their owne inuention. Nowe it is a flatte following of the Gods of the Paynims, when men vse straunge fashions in the seruing of God, and in steede of praying vnto him alone, doe call vpon the creatures, so as they cannot tel whom to choose when al comes to all. And therefore let vs beare wel in minde the meaning of Moses: which is, that to worship God aright, we must sticke simply to his word: wee must stop our eares against all thinges that are brought vs from elsewhere: and we must not admit any thing but that which we haue from God onely. Let vs then submit our selues wholly to the obeying of our god, & not receiue any thing which procedeth not out of his mouth. And if we

followe

followe not that rule, but giue eare to all Satans trumperie, and to all manner of superstitions inuented by man: then haue straunge Gods their full scope among vs. Although wee giue them not the name of Gods: yet hath not our God the thing that belongeth vnto him for the serving of him according to his onely will.

And Moses saieth expresly, *namely the Gods of the nations that dwell rounde about you*. As if hee shoulde say, it wil not serue for excuse to alledge contrarie examples, that such and such doe so: none of all those thinges wil passe in account. But if we will needs shielde our selues with men: our Lorde will disallowe such shifts. That is the cause why Moses speaketh heere expresly of the nations that were rounde about them. And therefore let vs beare wel in minde, that to haue the true and right religion, wee must not inquire what men doe, but wee must heare God speake, and agree to whatsoeuer hee saieth to vs. And although wee see the whole worlde against vs: yet must wee not be abashed. For what are men in comparison of our God? Dare we make such comparison, that men shoulde rather be heard than God, and that they shoulde haue more authoritie than hee? But so wee doe when wee bee not contented with Gods pure and simple word, but alledge mens doings and deuices to the contrarie. Wherefore let vs beare well in mind, that wee must not esteeme the true religion by the wayes which wee see men walke: but although wee be hemmed in rounde about with ydolatrie, and see nothing but stumblingblockes about vs, and wee meete with store of incounters to tempt vs and to seduce vs: yet must wee not be moued therefore, but rest stedfastly vpon the thinges which our Lorde shall haue tolde vs. Haue wee Gods worde? Let that suffice vs: But let vs goe on: I see that the worlde doeth so, I see men behaue themselues after that manner, I see great countries vse that fashion. Yea, but yet our Lorde doeth well deserue to be obeyed. Though men drawe all the cleane contrarie way: yet must they not beare such sway with vs as to make vs to checke against our God. Marke it for a speciall point, that wee must renounce all that euer men can say or doe, if wee intende to serue our God duely. And hereby wee see howe sore the ignorant wretches are beguiled, which weene themselues to bee armed with good defence when they can say, O, it was not of mine owne deuising, it was the fashion of our auncesters and forefathers, they doe so in France and Italy. But what doeth Moses say? Though all the worlde conspire in superstition, and thou seest neuer so many trades of life differing one from another: yet must thou not fleete, but stande fast neuertheless in the faith which thou holdest from Gods worde, and hast learned of him. Content thy selfe with that, and defie all men: passe not for the whole worlde, let it beare no sway at all with thee, when the case concerneth Gods trueth. Seeing it is so then, let vs assure our selues it is a miserable excuse to alledge the examples of men to ground our selues vppon, considering that our Lorde will haue vs to receiue his worde in such wise, as all the world may not bee able to thrust vs from it. And therwithall let vs marke also, that forasmuch as the diuell casteth temptations in our wayes: wee haue neede to bee armed and fenced. It is not without cause saide heere, Thou shalt not followe after the Gods of the Nations that are about thee. For God regardeth the weakenesse of his people, and seeth that they should soone be turned away from the true and pure religion, if they were not restreined with this bridle. Take heede to thy selfe, for thou shalt be tempted, because thou shalt bee beset on all sides with stumblingblocks.

Nowe if this were spoken in old time to the Iewes: it pointeth also to vs at this day: for wee be not stronger than they were. Let vs not beare our selues in hande that there is such a strength and stoutnesse in vs, that we be able to hold our owne when wee once knowe Gods truth. For come the deuill once to imbrew vs with the false doctrine, and to draw vs to superstition: we bee caried away out of hand. Seeing then that we be so weake: let vs learne to fence our selues against corruptions, that wee maye beate backe temptations when they assayle vs. And we see in what plight wee be. For our Lorde holdeth vs heere as it were vnder his hande: whereas in the meane while if wee looke about vs, wee shall see the wretched world corrupted with all abhominations. We see how Gods seruice is vtterly defaced, and Idolatrye raigneth euery where. Nowe then if wee depended vpon men, what would become of vs? But seeing it is so that we might bee ouerwhelmed by such stumblingblockes, let vs looke that wee arme our selues with that which is saide heere: that is to wit, that we may boldly walke on in the Religion which we hold by Gods woorde, and laugh them all to skorne which swarue from it. Accordingly also as there are some which think, alas, shall I be wiser than so many nations whom I see liue otherwise? Behold, the great kinges, behold, the wysest men of the world hold of that religion: and should I not stand too much in mine owne conceit, if I shoulde not agree to it as well as they? The question is not heere, whether they or wee be the wyser: but whether God ought to beare all the sway and to bee acknowledged to bee only wise, so as there is nothing but foolishnesse in vs, vntill wee haue learned to submit our selues to him. Therefore let vs be fully resolued of this, that we must not turne aside neither one way nor other, though they that dwell about vs doe hold straunge religions: but we must stand fast grounded vppon Gods worde, and holde our selues contented with this, that he alloweth vs though the worlde mislike vs and condemne vs. For wee knowe that if wee followe Gods worde, wee shall one day iudge them which do nowe condemne vs: & that it is a dueliish malapertnesse for them to behaue themselues so after their owne fancie and liking. Thus much concerning the point where Moses sheweth that the people must not follow the straunge Gods that were worshipped in all the countries about them.

But

But this extendeth yet much further: namely that although the worlde flowe out into all naughtineſſe: yet ſhall not we be excuſed; if we bee corrupted as all the reſt bee. And why ſo? It is not for nought that our Lorde hath ſanctified vs to himſelfe. In theſe dayes wee ſee blaſphemie, wee ſee murther, we ſee enuie, malice, and backbiting, wee ſee whoredome, wantonneſſe & ſuch other things raigne almoſt euery where, and to haue their full ſcope: now if we ſhould alledge this for an excuſe to doe euill, it would not ſerue our turne. For although we were hedged in with thornes rounde about: yet ought wee to walke in ſuch ſorte, as wee might perſiſt in the ſeruing of our God. Yea and euen when wee ſee nothing but naughtineſſe euery where: let vs vnderſtande that our Lord intendeth to hold vs in the ſtreiter awe. And therefore wee muſt alwayes ſet this ſaying before our eyes: Take heede to thy ſelfe, and beware that thou be not corrupted, ſeeing thou canſt not open thine eyes, but thou ſhalt meete with ſome euill thing or other to allure thee vnto naughtineſſe. Thus yee ſee howe wee haue neede to liue ſo much the more warely and carefully in theſe dayes, foraſmuch as the diuell hath obtained to peruert the whole worlde. Therefore let vs marke well this ſaying, that wee muſt not followe the trumperie that is rounde about vs.

Nowe Moſes addeth, *The Lorde that is in the middes of you, is ielous. Beware therefore that his wrath kindle not, or that his countenance wax not angrie* (for the hebrewe worde that he vſeth in this place betokeneth the countenance, and by ſimilitude and tranſlation it betokeneth wrath or anger,) *leaſt thou be rooted out of the lande which the Lorde thy God hath giuen thee*. In this text Moſes ment to proue by particular, that if men abuſe Gods goodneſſe, in the ende they ſhall not be able to ſhunne or eſcape his hande. God (ſaieth hee) is in the middes of you: and hee is ielous: and therfore beware of his wrath. When as he ſaith, Gods is in the mids of you: it is an vpbraiding of the Iewes with the grace that was giuen them, in that God had communicated himſelfe ſo familiarly vnto them. And it ſerueth to make vs the more blameworthy, if wee ſerue him not in all pureneſſe. Wee knowe that the more benefites wee receiue at Gods hande, the more he bindeth vs vnto him. Now he dwelt in the middes of this people, and kept his reſidence there: it was meete therefore that they ſhould haue conſidered it more aduiſedly, that ſeing god came ſo neere to them, & had made thē to ſeele his goodnes: they ſhould not haue turned away from him, nor from the true religion, foraſmuch as if they did ſo, they ſhoulde bee the more to blame. As if it were ſaide, As touching the Paynims and Infidels, it is true that they ſhall at length yeeld account: they may well blindfolde their owne eyes as now by ſoothing themſelues: but yet ſhall they bee driuen to knowe that God hath not ſurrendered nor giuen ouer his right. And whereas they abuſe thēſelues in their falſe religion, and yet thinke not themſelues to be beguiled: [the time wil come that] they ſhal know it to their coſt. But yet ſhall they bee excuſable in compariſon of you. For they bee blinde wretches walking in darknes, our Lord is a ſtranger vnto them, and he hath not vouchſafed to draw them to him, nor to gather them as it were into his flocke. Yee ſee then that they bee as it were in vtter confuſion. But it is not ſo with you: for a man may iuſtly caſt you in ỹ teeth, that yee haue falſified the faith which yee gaue to your God. Yee ought to bee well acquainted with him becauſe he ſitteth in the mids of you, and he hath choſē you for his people, and you alſo haue perceiued him. For you haue his power which faileth you not: hee heareth you, and hee ſheweth himſelfe fauourable in all your requeſts. Seeing then that your God dwelleth among you: yee ought to vnderſtand that there is not any other thing wherby you ſhould be inſtructed than his law: and ye ought to know after what maner he will haue your liues ordered. Sith it is ſo, aſſure your ſelues that ſo much ỹ horribler vengeance will light vpon you, if yee ſtep aſide. Yee ſhall not paſſe the ſame way that the ignorant wretches and vnbeleeuers doe: but yee ſhalbe puniſhed a hundredfold more grieuouſly for your vnthankfulneſſe, in that yee haue not offended God through ignorance, but through ſpitefull wilfulneſſe, ſo as he could not hold you vnder his yoke nor wield you, though he gathered you into his flocke to be your ſheepherd and gouernour.

Ephe. 2. 12.

Deut. 4. 6. & 5. 32.

Luke. 12. 47. 48.

Although this were ſpoken a good while agoe to the Iewes: yet it concerneth vs likewiſe. For we ſee how our Lord ſitteth in the middes of vs. Firſt we haue this promiſe concerning ỹ church, This is my reſting place, heere wil I dwell for euer. Beſides this, experience teacheth vs, ỹ our Lorde not onely will dwell among vs: but alſo bindeth our ſoules and bodies to be his temple, & that we be members of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, in whom dwelleth the whole fulneſſe of the godhead. Nowe then ought not euery man to dedicate himſelfe to God, as though hee were his temple? And againe we know howe it is ſaid, that God dwelleth in vs by his holy ſpirite. So then, God is not onely familiar with vs as he was with the people of olde time, whom he ſaid he would holde as it were in his lappe: but alſo he dwelleth in euery of vs. Seeing it is ſo: if we turne away to the ſuperſtitions of the heathen, if wee will needes reſemble the vnbeleeuers in defiling our ſelues with them, and if wee will needes make a hotchpotch or minglemangle (as they terme it): thinke we that ſuch vnthankefulneſſe ſhall ſcape vnpuniſhed, conſidering that our Lorde commeth ſo nigh vnto vs? No: and yet for all that, after we haue fuſhed againſt him, we runne gadding away from him like ſtray beaſtes. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vpon this ſaying, where Moſes declareth that God reſteth among the people of Iſrael.

Pſal. 132. 13 ỹ 14. 1. Cor. 3. 16. & 6. 15. 19. 2. Cor. 6. 16. Col. 2. 9.

And heerewithall hee ſaieth *that God is ielous and therefore we muſt beware that we kindle not his wrath*. Whereby he doth vs to vnderſtande, that Gods dwelling among vs, is not to bee deſpiſed at our hands. True it is that he will bee louing vnto vs, and he telleth vs that hee will

Esa.42.3. beare with our infirmities, and that he is always pitifull. Although we deserue to sinke vnder his hande: yet will he alwayes shew mercie towards vs. But doth it followe therefore, that he will be scorned at our handes, and that wee may come pranking against him to despise him? No: but contrariwise, forasmuch as he sheweth himselfe gratious and louing towards vs, it ought to break & soften our harts, to make vs submit our selues wholly vnto him, and at leastwise to applie our selues altogether to the seruing & honouring of him, when he preuēteth vs through his free goodnesse. Then let vs mark well, that when our Lord is neere vnto vs, although it bee of purpose to make vs glad, and also to giue vs contentation and rest: yet notwithstanding hee ceaseth not to be zealous in the maintaining of his glorie, neither will he suffer it to be trampled vnder foote, without sending horrible vengeance for it. Doe we then know that our Lord dwelleth among vs? Let vs on our side beware that wee sanctifie our selues wholly vnto him, for feare least his wrath bee kindled, that is say, least hee withdraw his goodnesse which he hath once shewed towards vs, and bereaue vs of it as we deserue, and therewithall powre out his wrath vppon vs, when hee seeth that hee cannot winne vs, nor any whit preuaile by shewing himselfe pitifull in bearing with vs with such louingkindnes and gentlenes as he doth. Ye see then after what sort we ought to vse ỹ goodnes and patientnesse of our Lorde. That is to wit, knowing that we may boldly stay vpon him, not doubting but that he wilbe fauourable vnto vs, wee neuertheless must indeuour and inforce our selues to the vttermost of our power to serue and honour him. And forasmuch as we cannot do it of our selues: wee must pray him to hold vs in such obedience by his holy spirit, as our whole seeking may bee to shewe ỹ his comming so vnto vs is not in vaine, but that we be truly knit vnto him, and that hee hath set such a holy and vnuiolable bond betweene him and vs, that as he once gaue himselfe to vs to be our inheritance, so he also possesseth vs, and maketh vs to be throughly contented with him, and to proceede in such wise in profiting to his honor & glory, as our whole life may shewe that we desire nothing else but to bee retained vnder his protection.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God w acknowledgment of our faults, praying him to humble vs more & more by true repentance, so as we may not onely be sorie for our faults, but also amend them and submit our selues ductifully vnto him, to the intent we may be more and more rid of all our naughtie lustes, and bee clothed againe with his righteousnesse, that by the shining of his image in vs, wee may shew our selues to be his true children and that our desire is to be ruled by his holy spirit, vntill he haue made vs partakers of his heauenly glorie. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the xxx. of Iuly. 1555.

The xlix. Sermon which is the fift vpon the sixth Chapter.

15 For the Lord &c.
16 You shall not tempt the Lord your God as you tempted him in Massa.
17 Yee shall keepe the commaundements of the Lord your God diligently, and his testimonies and ordinances which he hath commaunded you.
18 Thou shalt doe the thing that is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may goe well with thee, and that thou maist go into this good land and possesse it according as the Lord hath sworne to thy fathers.
19 And that hee may beate backe thine enemies before thee, as the Lorde hath saide.

WE sawe yesterday howe Moses shewed the people, that forasmuch as God vouchsafed to dwell among them, they also ought to liue in his feare. And wee likewise must thinke, that his approching vnto vs after that sort, is not to be despised of vs, but rather to the intent that his goodnesse should prouoke vs to honour him the more. And there was a threatning added immediatly, *For feare least thou be bereft of the land which thy God hath now giuen thee*. Wherein Moses declared, that when we haue receiued any good alreadie at Gods hand, we must not be proude of it, but rather yeelde him due honour for it, that we may inioy it still: for after as he sheweth himselfe liberall to vs, so doth he binde vs vnto him. And therefore let vs marke, that when wee haue the possession of his benefites, it is not to the ende wee shoulde fall asleepe in them, but rather haue the greater care to serue and honour him. And herewithal let vs note, that vnder this terme of ỹ *lande of Canaan*, Moses comprehended generally all that belonged to the peoples election: for that lande was an outwarde testimony thereof. Therefore in effect hee ment to say, Beholde, God hath chosen thee to bee of his household and Church: wilt thou continue therein? Then must thou be carefull to honour him, and walke after his guiding. Nowe to apply the same

same to our vse, it is all one as if a man should say vnto vs, seeing that God hath promised to be our father and Sauior, let vs feare him, to ỹ intent he may continue alwayes so. And this importeth ỹ he will haue a care of vs, during this mortal life of ours. And although we passe through many miseries, yet will he deliuer vs from them. Howbeit that his defending of vs in this world is not the chiefe benefite, nor the thing that we must stay vpon, but we must mount vp higher to ỹ endlesse life. And so to be short, whensoeuer we think vpō the benefits that god hath giuen vs, let vs vnderstande that hee can well bereeue vs of them as soone as we abuse them, and pluck away our fathers ỹ make vs so proude. For his bestowing of his benefits vpon vs, is not to the intent that we should despise him, & take occasion to stande in our owne conceits, & so be negligent and cal no more vpon him: but the blessings which we inioy tend to this end wee should dayly and howerly haue ỹ better regard of him, & lift vp our minds on high to yeeld him due thanks, and to glorifie him in our whole life. Now hereunto Moses addeth, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lorde thy God, as you tempted him in Masa.* Hereby he meaneth ỹ the people must not abuse gods patience. As if he should say, look wel to it my friends: although god deale gently with you, ye must not think but your sins shal come to accoūt, if you serue him not with all humility. If ye say, we be Gods friends, we neede not be afraid ỹ he wilbe angry with vs or work vs any displeasure, for we see how well he dealeth w vs: beware how ye daly so with him, for ye know what befell to your fathers in Masa. Therefore do no more so, but preuent the chastisements of your God, & before he arme himself against you, know him to be your iudge, and tary not till hee shewe forth the tokens of his wrath and vengeance by his deeds, but in ỹ meane time while he vseth mieldnes & gentlenes, consider ỹ hee alluReth you to repentāce, & so let euery man be prouoked to amend his faults, that God may be honored by ỹ mean. For if ye tempt him againe, he wil not bere it. He sharply punished your fathers in Masa: but you shal feele much greater & horrible punishmēt, if you go on stil. And let vs mark, that here he toucheth the story which is written more at length in the seuenteenth of Exodus. There it is saide that the people being in a drie place of the wilderneſſe, did grudge and repine against Moses, because they had no drinke, crying out that they were betrayed, because there was no more water in the desert, so as it had bin better for them to haue taried still in Egypt, where were graues ynow to haue buried them in. God punished the people with the bytings of Serpents: but yet howsoeuer they fared hee had pity vpon them, and vsed mercie towards them, sending remedy conuenient for ỹ same. And yet notwithstanding his will is to haue the name therof to continue stil, for a memorial to vpbraid the people with their vnthankfulnesse. It is his pleasure ỹ it should remaine still, to the intent ỹ the childrē might know ỹ their fathers were rebels: for ỹ word *Masa* betokeneth as much as *reuolation*. Now for ỹ better vnderstāding of ỹ things that are saide here, we must consider what it is to tempt God: for that is done diuers wayes. But chiefly it is said that we tempt God, when we be too importunate in requiring more than is behoofull for vs, and when we will needs haue further trial of his power and abilitie than pleaseth him, so as we fall to spying of him as if we would say, Go to we shal see now whether God be mighty or no: let him do what wee will haue him to doe. When we go to work with such outrage, & haue no modestie nor stay of our selues, so as we consider not what is lawful for vs, but wil needs haue God to please vs without awe or measure: then do we tempt him. And why so? This word *Tempt* betokeneth properly to assay or trie. See nowe, God is willing to vtter his power, howbeit not at our pleasure: neither were it reason that he should be subiect vnto vs. True it is that he vseth this amiable kind of speech, that he wil doe the will of such as feare him. But this will is ment not of an inordinate lust when men take leaue to craue whatsoeuer commeth in their minde; but of the desire that is subiect and conformable to Gods ordinance, so far forth as he giueth vs leaue. And by that meanes God is glorified. It is not meant ỹ he will do whatsoeuer commeth in our head: for that would oftentimes turne to our vndoing. As for example, whē he gaue the people flesh: it had bin much better for them to haue died for hunger, than to haue crammed & glutted themselues after that fashion vnsatiably in despite of God. But God performeth our wil, whē we be obedient vnto him, & haue respect vnto goodnes in al our requests, according as S. Iohn exhorteth vs to attempt nothing further than pleaseth him. If wee doe so, God will also pleasure vs. But if wee come malapertly with a lofty countenance, to say I wil trie whether God can do this or no: [we shal come short of our desires.] What? Is it a conuenient fashion of dealing, that we shold stepforth so to trie God, & that we wil needs haue him to giue vs proofe of his power by making himself subiect to vs? Is it not a diuelish malapertnes that carieth vs so away? Yes. So then, we se now what is signified by this word *Tempt*, namely a trying of God, as though we douted of his power or abilitie, & a repining at him & a charging of him with infirmitie when he doth not whatsoeuer we lust, so as we measure him by the things that we perceiue with our eyes. That is the temptation which is forbidden here. And indeede our Lord Iesus Christ is a good & faithfull expounder of this text. For he alledgeth it to beat back Satan, as is written in the fourth of S. Mathew. Yea and ỹ diuell himself taketh ỹ holy scripture to tempt our Lorde withall, facing him with this text, It is written that God hath giuen his Angels charge ouer thee, to beare thee vp in their hands, & not to suffer thee to dash thy foote against a stone. Wel then, hereupon we may gather, ỹ God hath committed vs to the keeping of his Angels, so as we shalbe borne vp by them, & preserued from all euill that may incounter vs. Wee must assure our selues of that. But yet it is said therewithall, that they shall keepe vs in all our wayes, that is to say, which we haue to go in. Now then, let vs

Rom. 2. 4.

Rom. 7. 1. 7.

Pſa. 145. 18.

Num. 11. 33.

1. Ioh. 3. 22.

Matt. 4. 7.

Pſal. 91. 11.

keepe on our wayes, that is to say, let vs looke about vs how God hath disposed our life, & let vs not attempt any thing rashly & vppon our owne head, but let euery of vs consider his own calling: & then we may be sure ỳ Gods hand shal always be reached out ouer vs, and ỳ Angels of heauen shall trauel after vs: let vs not doubt of it. Neuertheles whatsoeuer come of it, let vs not passe the bounds & lists ỳ he hath set vs, nor play the loce colts to say, I will go trie this or that: for ỳ were a tempting of God. Why so? For whosoeuer listeth not to take paines, but saieth: Is not God able ynough to maintain me? He trieth gods power too fast. For why? God hath promised that his blessing shalbe vpon ỳ handes of them that take paines. His will is ỳ the lande should be tilled, and ỳ men should follow husbandrie, & other labors, euerie one according to his calling. And yet notwithstãding if they wil needs refuse al this, & disdain to vse those ordinary meanes: is it not a tempting of him what hee can doe? It is all one as if I shold step vp into ỳ pulpet, without vouchsafing to looke vpon any book, & fondly imagine to say thus in my selfe: tush, whẽ I come thither, god will giue me ynough wherof to speak, & in the mean while I holde scorne to reade, or to study aforehand what I shal speake, & come hither without minding how to apply ỳ holy scripture to ỳ edifiing of ỳ people, by reason wherof I should play ỳ presumptuous foole, & God also would put me to shame for mine ouerboldnesse. In like case is it with al other things. So then we see in effect ỳ to *tempt God*, is to be vnruly, and to omit the meanes which God giueth vs and setteth downe vnto vs, & to refuse to put thẽ to their right vse, so as wee wil needs haue God serued after our owne fond liking, and make him as it were subiect vnto vs. And forasmuch as our Lord Iesus Christ alledged this same text against Satan: we see which is the true and naturall sense thereof.

Psal. 128. 2.

Nowe then, whereas it is saide, *Thou shalt not tempt thy God*: It is al one as if Moses had said, my friends, beware ye play not mockholiday. When God is patient, and powreth not out his rigour vpon you at the first dash: thinke not that therefore ye shal scape scotfree, neither take occasion to fall asleepe & to flatter your selues for it: but liue in feare, and preuent the wrath which God hath not yet powred out vppon you, because hee spareth you. To be short, we be said to tempt god, when we abuse his benefits which we possesse, & which he hath put into our handes, & in ỳ meane while acknowledge not him to be the founder of them. For why? vnder pretence that God dealeth gently with vs, we beare our selues in hande that wee may despise him. And that is a turning of his goodnes to the cleane contrary end that it ought to be applied. Doth not god apply himself to vs, of purpose to win vs, and to the end that we should haue his loue so printed in our hearts, as we might be wholly knit vnto him and made one with him? But if euery of vs do contrariwise run at rouers, & deuour the goods ỳ he hath bestowed vpon vs: is it not a tempting of him? Yes. And aboue all thinges whereas it hath pleased him to impart vnto vs the doctrine of saluation: it is to the intent wee should take him for our father, and Iesus Christ for our shepherd, and that wee shoulde harken to his voice. Againe he hath taken vs as it were into his house, to the intent we should be his very householdfolke, applying our selues more and more vnto him, and bee vnetly separated from ỳ vnbeleeuers, by dedicating our whole life vnto him. But on the contrarie part, if we will needs be vnruly, & yet in the mean while vaunt our selues of hauing the Gospel, insomuch ỳ we feede our selues with this vaine hope to say, O ho, seeing we haue Gods word, he cannot but loue vs, for it is his power to ỳ saluation of al that beleeue: I say if men dalue after this sort, & abuse the name of faith to make a shrowding sheete of it, to the end they may giue themselues the more boldly to all naughtines: it is a tempting of God. For inasmuch as hee vttereth not his power as ỳ first dash by thundering downe vpon them: hee seemeth to them to be as a little babe & a weakling, & so they play with him [at their pleasure]. Therfore let vs learne to feare God: & although we perceiue not that he hath drawen his sword, bent his bow, & made readie his arrowes against vs: yet let vs not tary till ỳ fire of his vengeance be kindled vpon vs, but consider that the iudgement therof shalbe executed vpon all ỳ despisers of his maiestie, though they feele nothing of it for a time. Thus ye see how we be forbidden to tempt the Lord in the time of prosperitie. To be short, let vs learne to feare God while he beareth with vs. For if we say with these mockers, what I pray you? Doth not God shew himselfe gracious & fauorable towards vs, in that hee doth vs so much good? It is all one as if we scorned his power and should say, yea, it is true ỳ men threaten vs with Gods punishments, but where be they? we perceiue no likelihood of them. When we speake after ỳ maner, it is a defying of him, as though wee would say, Let vs tary a while & see what he can do. Yea, it is moreouer as good as a bereauing of him of his power, and a making of him to be an ydoll: and is not ỳ (in effect) a denying that he is the iudge of the world? Wherfore to ỳ intent we may not tempt God, let vs learn to liue humbly and warely. Although we bee at our ease & rest, & although there be no shew or likelihood ỳ god wil send any aduersitie or affliction vpon vs: let vs not measure his power by our perceiuerance, nor after ỳ which we see: but cue when his scourges seeme to be very far of from vs, let vs bee as much afraid of them, as if wee felt the stripes of them alredy. Thus ye see in effect how we ought to put this text in practise.

Now whereas Moses addeth, *Ye tempted him in Masa*: It is all one as if he had said, seeing ye haue escaped for one brunt, come no more there. For whereas your God shewed himself merciful at that time: his meaning was that yet shoulde not vnderstande, that hee listed not to be tempted. Wherfore seeing he hath withdrawen his hande from you, let it not be an occasion to deceiue you hereafter, that yee shoulde take courage to tempt him any more: for when men prouoke him so often, it is not for them to looke for mercy and fauour at his hand.

Now

Now we see to what purpose Moses alledged the temptation wherewith the Iewes tempted God in Masa. And thereby we bee taught, that when wee haue done any fault, wee must bethinke vs of it, to the intent wee may doe no more so. And in stead of taking occasion to grudge at GOD through impatience: we must humble our selues the more vnder his awe. When wee haue offended him after that sort, and obtained forgiuenes: it is to the ende we should take the better heede all our lyfe after, and that the rememberance of our euil doing should abide printed in our hearts, vntill we haue shewed that Gods goodnes hath booted vs as well as his scourges and corrections. And therefore, to bee short, when God chastiseth vs, let vs beware that we receiue instruction by it: and when he forgiueth vs, let vs looke that wee take such taste of his goodnesse, as may inflame our heartes and mindes to honour him the more. Whereas the vnbeleeuers doe mocke God when he spareth them, and make no reckening of it, but beare themselues in hand ỳ they be discharged, if he punish them not out of hand: ye see that the faithfull must by all meanes stirre vp themselues to feare & honour God so much the more carefully and warely. When he chastiseth the vnbelecuers, they fret and storme and grinde their teeth at him, and their rebellousnes increaseth more and more, euen vntill it come to starke madnesse. Nowe then, whereas the vnbeleeuers are so frowarde, ỳ howsoeuer God deale with them they become still worse and worse: let vs thinke well vpon this, euen to returne into the right way, whether it bee that God lift vp his hand to chastise vs, or that he make delay & pitie our infirmities as not being willing to punish them at all: To this purpose is Masa spoken of in this place. And so, to be short, when we haue cõmitted any grieuous offence I meane publikely, so as there is any disorder among vs and God is offended: let vs bethinke our selues thus: Alas, seeing that God hath shewed himselfe a father for all our prouoking of him, and yet neuertheless receiued vs to mercie: let vs doe so no more. Seeing God hath pitied vs and reached vs his hand, euen when we deserued to haue beene destroyed, which thing he hath not suffered to come to passe: let vs beware & take heede that wee giue not too much scope to our lustes, so as they should make vs to slip from him, and to ouershoote our selues so farre, as to run into the way of damnation. After this maner (say I) must the faithfull quicken vp themselues, bearing in minde that when they haue once ouershot themselues, & forsaken the right way: they must cal theselues home againe to walk awefully euer after, and betake theselues into Gods hand, ỳ he may guide them & not suffer thẽ to be so ouerseene any more. Also we must doe the like particularly. When any man shal haue bin ouerseen for a time, and not haue dealt so warely as hee ought to haue doone, euen after hee knoweth Gods trueth: let him bethinke himselfe thus: Alas, I haue bene vnthankefull to my God, and for as much as I haue started away from him, I am worthie to bee vtterly confounded: but yet hath not he suffered that to come to passe. Now then what is to bee done on my part? It is not meete that I shoulde forget the faultes which I haue committed, but that I should thinke vpon them, and beare the bitternesse of them still about mee in my heart. After that manner must euerie of vs deale, say I: not as distrusting God, or to prouoke our selues to any despayre: but to reyne our selues the shorter, and to holde our selues the more in awe. For as soone as a man doeth but lift himselfe vp, by and by he ouershooteth himselfe if God let him alone. That is the thing which wee haue to note in this text, where Moses sayeth that they must not tempt God, as they tempted him once afore in Masa. And for the same cause and to the same purpose also is it spoken of in the Psalme, where it is said, To day if ye heare his voyce harden not your heartes as your fathers did in the wildernesse. Psal. 95. 7. This is spoken expressely of the temptation that Moses toucheth here. See how the Prophet warneth the people, yea and that desirously, as if he should say, very well, if ye bee so teachable as to hearken to your God, seeing he doeth now exhort you to come vnto him, refuse it not: for this benefite shal not last alwayes to them that make delay and are neuer moued to obey him, but driue of from day to day when he calleth them. And therefore, if ye heare his voyce (sayeth he) nowe when God calleth you. He vseth there a vehemencie as though he could not finde words fit to exhort the people and sufficiently to prick them forwarde. In that hee saieth, Goe to my freindes, bee well aduised that you harden not your heartes: he sheweth what is the cause of al mischeife, and why we profit no better by Gods teaching of vs. Namely that besides that we bee full of naughtinesse, and so sinfull by nature, that whereas our heartes ought to be susteined to receaue that which God sayeth, it may seeme that wee intende of set purpose to harden them against him: we doe moreouer fall to stomacking against him with a certaine spitefulnesse, as if we would say, what care I to obey God? Shall I bee brideled of my will like a beast? Beware of that sayeth he: for ye knowe what happened to your Fathers. The Prophet casteth them in the teeth with the thinges that had beene done by their forefathers in olde time, to the intent they shoulde not boast of their descending from the holy Patriarkes. Beholde saieth he, your forefathers were rebels: & how thẽ haue you continued vnto this day? Is it not through Gods mercie? Yes: for ye shoulde haue perished vtterly. Againe, seeing your God hath pitied you being Abraham his race: thinke not that he will haue ye to runne backe againe, so as ye should bee alwayes newe to begin. For when he hath borne with you a while, he must bee faine to make you pay your arrerages all at once. Thus ye see that the way for vs to put this sentence in practise, is to vnderstand that when God shall haue pardoned our faultes oftentimes, hee shall haue iust cause to punish vs the more grieuously, if wee ceasse not to prouoke him still, but will needes bee the boulder to doe euill, vnder pretence

that hee hath not vſed extremity towardes vs. If God ſee that in vs: hee can well call vs to account for all the thinges that hee had pardoned before. For his pardoning of vs is with condition, that we ſhould humble our ſelues, and conſider all our life after, how much we be beholden vnto him. If an offender haue obtained fauour, and thereupon he fall to ſpying of him to whom he is beholdé for his life, within a day or twaine after: doeth he not deſerue to haue his former lewdneſſe brought to remembrance againe, and to be reckened withall frō point to point, and to haue his vnthankfulnes laid afore him, for his abuſing of the fauour ẏ had bin ſhewed him? Yes: and thinke we that our Lord will haue leſſe right than mortall men? Thinke we then that his ſhewing of fauour vnto vs, is to the intent to make vs bolder to doe euill? No, but rather his dooing of it is to the intent wee ſhoulde all our life after beare our offence in minde and bee ſorie for it: accordingly alſo as wee ſee howe the good king Ezechias ſpeaketh of the bitterneſſe of his heart, when he ſayeth, that he will bee mindefull of the euill and of the offence that he had committed. Not but that he reioyced in Gods goodneſſe, but that yet neuertheleſſe hee would beare it in remembrance, to the intent he might not let himſelfe ſlip any more, nor be any more ſurpriſed by the wylineſſe of Satan.

Iſa 38.15.

Now after that Moſes hath ſpoken ſo, he addeth: *Ye ſhall diligently keepe the commandements, Statutes, and Lawes of your God which I ſet before you this day, that you may enter into the land which he promiſed to your fathers with an othe, and he drive out all your enemies before you.* Here we bee put in minde of the thing that hath beene told vs before: that is to wit, that whereas Moſes vſeth many wordes to expreſſe the Lawe, it is no ſuperfluous ſpeeth, but ſerueth to induce folke the better, to profite in the doctrine that is giué them. As if he ſhould ſay, Giue good care: for behold, your God taketh paines with you. Like as a ſchoolemaiſter taketh paines to teach the children that are committed to his charge: ſo doth God apply himſelfe to you, giuing you his Law orderly and diſtinctly, to the end ye ſhould not be greatly combered to vnderſtand what he ſaieth concerning his will. Here therfore are his Statutes, Ordinances, & Iudgementes. As if he ſhoulde ſay, the doctrine is ſet foorth vnto you in good order, ſo that if you can finde in your hearts to hearken to your God, and to receiue ẏ which he ſhall ſay, you need not dout but you ſhall be taught faithfully by his word, & haue knowledge of al things ẏ are good and conuenient for you. The firſt thing then which Moſes ment to expreſſe by theſe wordes *Iudgementes ſtatutes, & Ordinances*, is ẏ our Lord taketh paine to teach vs whatſoeuer is good for vs, and ẏ he vſeth ſuch order, as we cannot ſay that his word is too high and confuſed for vs. And therewithall his intent is alſo to hold mé wholly to the pure obedience of the lawe, and to the ſimplicitie therein contained, as if he ſhould ſay: My friends, Gods meaning is, not onely ẏ ye ſhould be attentiue in hearing what he ſaith to you, but alſo ẏ your only wiſedome ſhould be to obey him, & not to inuent any nouelties, ſo as ye ſhould think to ſerue him after your owne fanſie, according to the common faſhion of mē, who haue alwayes ſome fooliſh deſire to change Gods word. No, ſaieth he. If ye can beare in minde the leſſons of the Law, ye ſhall haue ſtatutes, Iudgements and ordinances, ſo as ye ſhal not want any thing whereby ye may be taught in all perfection. This hath bin expouded alreadie heretofore: and therefore I ſtande not long vppon it. Neuertheleſſe the repeating of it here againe by the holy Ghoſt, is not without cauſe: and therefore I muſt needes put you briefly in remembrance thereof, as oft as thoſe wordes are ſet downe.

Now Moſes ſaieth expreſſely, *That thoſe Commaundements, Ordinances and Lawes muſt be done & kept.* As if he ſhould ſay, that God will not haue his word to fall to the ground. His ſetting foorth of it, is to the end that we on our ſide ſhould bee attentiue to hearken what he ſaith to vs. And ſo let vs marke well that it is not ynough for vs to allowe Gods worde in ſpeeche, by ſaying it is true: but we muſt alſo bee diligent in keeping it all our life long. And for further proofe of that which he had ſaid, he addeth, *Thou ſhalt doe that which is right & good in the ſight of God.* Herein he ſheweth vs, that we muſt not doe whatſoeuer ſeemeth good to our ſelues, nor followe our owne good intentes, as they terme them. And he will ſet out this matter yet better in another place which we ſhal ſee hereafter. For there he will forbid men expreſly to do the things ẏ ſeeme right in their owne eyes: for whatſoeuer ſeemeth excellent vnto vs, ſhalbe condemned for abhominable at Gods hand, as is ſaid in S. Luke. Therefore let vs take good heede ẏ we ouerſhoote not our ſelues in our conceites to ſay, How ſo? Why ſhould not God allow this for good, ſeeing we do it to ſuch a purpoſe? ſeeing wee be deſirous to obey him? Yea, but how will he be obeyed? Not ẏ men ſhould be Iudges & Vmpers of the things ẏ they do, to ſay this is good, or ẏ is euill: he reſerueth ẏ authoritie to himſelf alone. Now then, will we order our life aright? Let vs not open our eyes to be wiſe in our owne conceites, for we ſee that ẏ hath coſt vs deare. Wee ſee (I ſay) ẏ our father Adam ſaw too much, when he could not content himſelfe with the meaſure ẏ was giuen him. And therefore let vs not be too ſharpe ſighted to ſay, I finde ẏ this is good, & therfore it muſt be done. Curſed be ſuch wiſdome: for it is a diueliſh pride. Will we then be allowed of our God? Let vs take good heede to that which he ſpeaketh: for whatſoeuer is right in his eyes, muſt needes be allowed in the end: & the things which we ſhall haue imagined to haue bene beſt, ſhall be condemned when wee bring them before him. For why? He ſeeth more clearely than wee doe: he knoweth things which wee knowe not. And therefore he miſliketh all our imaginations, & will haue vs to followe the thinges which he vttereth with his mouth, ſimply without mingling any thing of our owne. For the verie ſacrifice that he requireth at our handes, is that wee ſhould ſerue him obediently, and therewithall learne to diſtruſt al our owne ſtrength, wit, and reaſon, and not to preſume

presume vppon any thing that wee our selues haue inuented: (for all that euer our mindes can conceiue, is but follie, vanitie, and leasing:) but to bee well aduised that we doe the things which are good and right in the eyes of the Lord, that is to say, that we frame our whole life according to his commaundements.

But now let vs come to the promise. *That thou maist goe into the land (saith he) which the Lord hath sworne to thy fathers, to possesse it.* Here we see how God is desirous to win the hearts of his people by gentlenesse, in setting the possession of the land of Chanaan before them, for a reward and inheritance. As if he should say, Truth it is that yee bee bounde to serue mee: but yet will I not haue yee to serue mee for nought: beholde, the recompence that is prepared for you, is that ye shall possesse the land of Chanaan. But yet wee must alwayes marke with what condition. It was not ỹ the people should liue there at rest like swine in a stie: but so as the land might bee as a pledge of the endlesse lyfe, and that they might consider thus: God hath adopted vs to bee his heires: and therefore let vs mount vp hygher to the euerlasting lyfe. See heere how GOD telleth vs, that if wee serue him, hee will keepe touche with vs, so as wee shall possesse the lande that hee hath promised vs. Nowe heere wee see first the thing that I haue touched already: that is to wit, that God stoopeth to mens rudenesse and infirmity, in promising them recompence though hee bee not bound thereto. Marke that for one poynt. But by the waye wee haue to marke also, that God bindeth not himselfe as though wee could deserue aught. For he saith not, I will giue you the land for the seruice you haue doone to mee, as a thing that you haue earned: but, you shall goe into the lande which I promised to your fathers. Heere are two thinges vttered couertly. The one is that God promised the lande of his owne meere goodnesse, and not as a due debt that had beene deserued at his hande. For the promise thereof had bine made before the people was borne: foure hundred and thyrtie yeeres before their departure out of Egypt, God had sayd vnto Abraham, this land shall be thine and thy seedes. Let vs note then that this people had not deserued aught at Gods hande, and that the rewarde which is mentioned heere, befell them not in respect of their workes. Marke that for a specially poynt: And God telleth vs also, that hee termeth the thing by the name of *Hyre*, [*Recompence*, & *Wages*,] which he giueth vs onely of his owne free liberalitie, without being bounde thereto by any kind of meanes, and without any desert at all at our handes. And why? To the intent that men should bee prouoked to serue him, and not that they should become proude, or father any thing vpon themselues which God shoulde accept for payment or admit for any recompence. And this wee see euen in Abraham himselfe. For before hee had doone any thing at all God sayd vnto him, I am thine abundant recompence: Abraham, I haue giuen thee this land: I will bee thy God, and the God of thy seede after thee: I will be thy defender. Yee see then that all the promises which are possible to bee wished, were giuen of God vnto Abraham before he had shewed any signe of faith or of the feare of God. But when he was willing to haue sacrificed his sonne Isaac: our Lorde sayd I will blesse my seruaunt Abraham, bicause hee hath feared mee, and seeing hee hath not spared his owne sonne for the loue of me, I will multiplie my blessinges vpon him. And that was saide afore. But God giueth so much the greater beautie to his goodnesse, of purpose to strengthen Abrahams heart, not that hee intended to exalt Abrahams deserte: that hee might presume of himselfe: but to make him know, my God hath of his own mere mercie giuen me the thing ỹ he promised me, I had the promise of it long agoe, and now he sheweth that he accepteth my seruice, in asmuch as he performeth the promise that he made to me of his owne free goodnesse. Thus we see howe we ought to take the textes of holy scripture, where god behighteth vs recompence. We must not conclude thereuppon that wee deserue aught, or that our workes are of any valew, or that God is any thing bounde vnto vs: but that he doth it to quicken vs vp & to harten vs the better to serue him, in as much as our labours are not lost before him, but are made account of and redound to our benefit. Nowe then we see what is ỹ meaning of these wordes where Moses sheweth the people that ỹ Lande had bin promised to their forefathers by othe, before they whom he speaketh to were borne.

Now for a conclusion let vs come to this saying, *That thou maiest driue out all thine enemies before thee.* Herein Moses doth the people to wit, that no let can binder them from possessing the land, so they serue their God. True it is that the land of Chanaan had people in it at that time to keepe possession of it, & we perceiue how ỹ spies brought word ỹ they were Giantes, and such as would haue swallowed vp the people of God. It shold seeme therfore to haue bin impossible for thẽ to haue set foote within ỹ land. But God told them ỹ although his people were barred from al enterance to mans vnderstanding: yet would he open them the way by his infinite power, so they inclined to serue him. Now remaineth that wee apply this to our own vse. First of all let vs mark, that whensoeuer God calleth vs to his seruice, his promising of reward vnto vs, (not onely in this transitorie lyfe, but also in the kingdome of heauen) is not to puffe vs vp with selfweening, or to make vs to beleeue that wee haue deserued aught: but onely to quicken vp our slouthfulnesse: and bicause wee bee so lasie in seruing him, his intent is to spurre vs forewarde by that meanes. Therefore let vs take courage: and seeing wee loose not our labour in imploying our selues in Gods seruice, let vs goe to it diligently and lustily. And whereas he behighteth vs reward: let vs assure our selues it is not bicause our workes deserue it, but bicause that he of his own infinite goodnesse taketh them in good woorth, and giueth that tytle vnto them. Let that serue for one poynt.

Gen. 17. 1.

Rom. 3. 20. Eph 2. 9.

And let vs marke heereuithall, that whereas God calleth vs to his inheritaunce, although he doe it freely: yet is it with condition that wee behaue our selues as trew children towards him, and consider that hee calleth vs vnto holynesse. Eph. 1. 4. 5. 6 & 2. 10. And in deede the very ende why hee calleth vs to bee his people and of his flocke, is not that he will haue vs to be intangled and held backe still in this worlde: but to sanctifie our selues vnto him that wee may liue holily vnder his obedience, for as much as he hath washed and clensed vs by the blood of our Lorde Iesus Christe. And Gods calling of vs thereunto, is not for our workes sakes, but for his owne mercie. Now if vnder colour heereof, wee will needes stand facing with him: I haue tould you already what will come of it. Therefore let vs haue regard to matche the thinges togethet which are inseparable: that is to wit, the free goodnesse of our God, and the condition thereunto annexed, which is that hee be serued and honored at our handes. And besides this, although wee see neuer so great lettes, which may seeme to barre vs from all entraunce into the kingdome of heauen, and that wee be cast vp heere for a pray vnto Sathan, and we haue so many enemies that our life is as it weere in hazarde euery minute of an houre: yet let vs not ceasse to hope, and to beleeue that our Lorde will keepe vs safe and sure, if wee walke in his feare. Then let vs not passe for all the worlde. Although it seeme that all thinges should be turned vpsidowne: yet let not all the troubles and inconuerances which we see in the world, stoppe vs from going through to the end: but let vs reason thus with our selues, who is he that hath taken vs into his keeping? Is it not our God? Is it not he which hath promised vs the inheritaunce of the kingdome of heauen? Yes. Then is it his office to holde vs by strong hande. True it is that wee on our part are feeble: but yet his onely power will bee ynough to strengthen vs. True it is that we be inuironed with many enemies: but yet our God is a good shield, he wilbe an inuincible fortresse for vs, so wee put our truste in him. We haue his promise that hee will neuer fayle vs. Thus yee see that God hauing once begun the worke of our saluation, will goe through with it in suche sorte, as wee may glory that his calling of vs vnto him is not in vaine, nor to disappoint vs of our hope wherein hee will haue vs to continue vnto the ende.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him that whereas heeretofore we haue abused his power and might too much, we may henseforth be more diligent in practising his iudgementes and corrections, and so make our commodity of them, as the warninges which hee hath giuen vs may neuer out of our remembraunce: and that as long as it shal please him to maintaine vs in prosperytie and quiet, we may be watchfull and stand vpon our garde, so as wee turne not from the right way, nor tary till he powre out his vengeance vpon vs, but indeuour to preuent it, as we bee warned to doe: and Psal. 5. 12. also that in al our lyfe we may continually so repent vs of our sinnes, as we may still trauelle better towardes him, vntill hee haue gathered vs fully to himselfe, to frame vs to the perfection of the righteousnesse whereunto wee tend as nowe. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the last of Iuly. 1555.

The L. Sermon, which is the sixth vpon the sixth Chapter.

20 When thy child asketh thee in time to come, saying: What are these testimonies, Ordinaunces, and lawes which the Lorde our God hath commaunded you?

21 Then shalt thou say to thy chyld, Wee were Pharaose bondfolke in Egypt: but the Lord brought vs out of Egypt with a mightie hand.

22 And the Lord wrought signes and miracles great and euill, vppon Egypt, and vpon Pharao and all his house before our eyes,

23 And brought vs out thence, to bring vs in [hither,] and to giue vs the land which he had sworne to our fathers.

24 And the Lorde commaunded vs to keepe all these ordinaunces, and to feare the Lorde our God, that wee might alwayes prosper and liue as wee doe this day.

25 And it shall bee counted vnto vs for righteousnesse, if wee keepe and doe all these commaundementes before the Lorde our God, as he hath commaunded vs.

Here

HEere wee haue two reasons to marke why Moses commaundeth, that such as were to come after that time, should be tolde why God gaue his Lawe to the Iewes, and why he woulde haue them gouerned after that maner. The one is, that it is good reason that Gods name should be magnifyed in all ages, and that wee shoulde indeuour to the vttermost of our power, that it decay not with vs, but continue still vnappayred, and florishe and reigne, euen after wee be dead. The other reason is, that hee intended to quicken vp the Iewes to serue God with the better courage, by putting them in minde of the deliuerance which God had wrought for them: for needes must they haue bin too vnthankefull, if that had not prouoked them to serue God. Now then the intent of Moses, is that those to whom he had declared the Lawe, should not onely indeuour themselues to serue GOD during their owne liues: but also finde the meanes that their children and successors should followe them in the same trace. And this lesson belongeth' to vs as well as to them. For wee know that God calleth vs with the same condition, not onely that we our selues should serue and honor him to our liues end: but also that we should haue a care to cause them that come after vs to doe the lyke. Verily there are very few that discharge themselues in that behalfe: but yet are we bound vnto it, and there will be no excuse for vs, if wee doe not our indeuour. Therefore let euery man haue an eye to himselfe, and let vs not thinke it enough to haue serued God so long as wee our selues liue: but [that we must also find ỹ meanes] that his name may continue for euer, and that his trueth may [alwayes] bee knowen, so as although wee bee taken out of the world, yet they that come after vs being taught by our meanes, may linke in with vs into the same fayth, and so fashion themselues thereunto, as God may alwayes be glorifyed & honored vnto the worldes end. And specially they ỹ haue children ought to thinke that it is they to whom this warning is giuen. True it is that euery one of vs is bound thereto for himselfe, yea and we must teach euẽ the most straungers: so as the man needeth not to be my sonne, or my nephew, or my kinseman, whom I should indeuour to cause to serue God & to be of the same faith and religion that I am of: but yet they which haue children ought to consider that they shall yeelde account for it, if they doe not what they can to hold them in the feare of God, and to see them so instructed and stablished in the pure doctrine, as they may continue in it, and as the knowledge of Gods trueth may still be conueied ouer from hand to hand. Thus yee see what we haue to remember vppon this place where Moses sayth, *If thy childe aske hereafter what these commaundements, statutes, and ordinances meane.*

Now there is also a second poynt: which is, that Moses intended to stirre vp the people to honor God and to obey him, because they had bin deliuered by his mighty hand. Therefore it is all one as if hee should say, Bethinke your selues well of the good which your GOD hath done for you: for he hath shewed himselfe to be your redeemer: hee hath smitten the realme of Egypt, a people that did set greatly by themselues, yea and which was rich and wealthie, and where was nothing but all maner of pompe and glory to the worldward: and yet notwithstanding, your God hath loued you so dearely, that he hath not spared the Egyptians for your sakes, but hee hath smitten them with plagues, and powred out such vengeance vpon them, as is horrible to thinke of. Hee hath stretched out his strong arme to bring you to this land which hee promised to your fathers. Seeing then that God hath shewed himselfe so gratious and liberall towardes you, and preuented you of purpose to be your father: is it not reason that you should giue your selues to him all your lyse long, and indeuour to serue him, and at leastwise shew that yee haue not forgotten his so great and inestimable benefites? Yes. And so wee see that forasmuch as the Iewes might bee negligent in keeping Gods lawe: Moses renewed the remembraunce thereof, and set their deliuerance before them, that they might bee the better minded, and consider that they were bound, at leastwise to serue GOD in such wise, as they might acknowledge themselues to bee the same people whome hee had once deliuered after a marueilous fashion, and with wonderful power. Like as at this day, if a man should speake to vs of the Christian religion and say, Beholde, our GOD hath vouchsafed to make vs partakers of the redemption which hee wrought in the person of his Sonne: and therefore it is good reason that wee shoulde bee gathered here together vnder his worde, to take him for our father and Sauour, because hee hath chosen vs to bee his people.

And whereas Moses declareth that the Iewes were deliuered out of Aegypt: hee meaneth to doe vs to witte, that God intended to shoule them out from all other nations, specially by assigning them the inheritaunce of the Lande which hee had promised to their fathers. Yee see then how they should haue sanctifyed themselues to the seruice of God, and haue held themselues in obedience to his law, because he suffered them not to be intermingled with ỹ infidels, but made a seuerall nation of them alone by themselues. And hereupon we haue to note, ỹ such as seeke counsell at Gods law, doe alwayes finde instruction, & our Lord procureth them ayde & help to bring thẽ to the knowledge of the truth. It is sayd, *If thy sonne aske thee, what meane these statutes?* He presupposeth that the children are not so brutish, as at leastwise not to be willing & desirous to knowe why they vse such maner of seruing God. And wee see it is Gods ordinance, that the fathers should helpe their children. True it is that the fathers ought not to tary for that, but if they see their children to be despisers of God, or vnruly, and carelesse both of the saluation of their owne soules and of all Christianitie and fayth: they ought to correct such

such vices. But the matter which wee treate of as now, is that if children bee willing to learne and to profite, God here assigneth them their fathers to be their teachers and schoolemasters, to shewe them why the lawe was giuen. Herein then wee see, that if wee haue any good will to knowe the trueth, our Lorde will not suffer vs to bee disappoynted, but wil finde the meanes that wee shall know whatsoeuer hee thinketh profitable for our saluation. And although hee appoynt not mortall creatures to teach vs: yet will hee worke in such wise by his owne power, as wee shall not bee destitute of knowledge. But our owne slothfulnesse is the cause that GOD shutteth the gate against vs, and that wee abide still in darknesse lyke blinde wretches. For what is hee that vouchsafeth, to seeke after the will of his GOD? Wee bee giuen to worldly thinges to our owne pleasures, to our owne vanities, and to all manner of worldly businesses: and in the meane while God is let alone, and his lawe is forgotten. And therefore it is not to bee wondered at, that hee hardeneth vs in such brutishnes, and that there is so grosse ignorance in the world, as fewe folke haue the true taste and sauor of the doctrine of saluation, but rather wee see that all men despise it, and are so farre off from hauing any affection and zeale to the knowing of it, that they doe rather thrust it from them when it is offered them, and when GOD seeketh them, they runne from him. Sith wee see such vnthankefulnesse euerywhere, is it any maruell that our Lorde reuealeth not his trueth as hee would doe, if men were well minded towardes it? It is true that God taryeth not till wee come vnto him, but rather performeth that which hee sayth by his prophet Esay, namely that hee appeareth to them that aske not after him, and that hee is found of them that seeke him not, insomuch that hee sayth to them that are farre off from him, Lo, here I am. Yet notwithstanding, men must not vnder this color that God reacheth them his hand, and draweth them out of the dungeons of ignorance before they euer thought vppon him, men (I say) must not flatter and fode themselues in their carelesnesse: but rather wee must learne according to this text, that whereas wee bee ignorant of the trueth, wee must at leastwise doe our indeuer to get knowledge of it, and resorte to such as wee thinke that God hath reuealed more vnto, than to our selues. If wee doe so, and with all humilitie seeke to knowe the thinges that are auaileable to our saluation: God will shewe himselfe to vs, and giue vs such meanes and helpes as he knoweth to be expedient for vs. And although mortall men faile vs: yet will hee so supply our want by the power of his holy spirite, as wee shall not continue still in darkenesse, if wee seeke ỹ light: for he wil not shut ỹ dore against vs if we knock, & do our indeuer to enter. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to remember vppon ỹ text.

Esa. 65. 1.

Matt. 7. 7. & Luke. 11. 9. 10

Furthermore it behoueth vs to marke, that here God sheweth not the end of his commandements, what is ment by them and to what vse he hath appoynted thē. He doth not onely shew, that the people were iustly bound to keepe the lawe that was giuen them, seeing that God had bought them so dearly. Here are two things. The one is that inasmuch as God hath giuen vs his worde, hee doth well deserue that wee should yeelde him obedience. Why so? Because we be his creatures, and hee hath vouchsafed to gather vs together vnto him, to bee his people and to fight vnder his standard, and hath made vs to bee of his flocke and of his Church. Marke that for one poynt.

The other is, that wee should know to what end hee hath giuen vs his Sacraments, so as we haue the preceptes of his whole Lawe, which pertaine to the exercising of vs in his feare and in the hope of our saluation: and to what end he hath set such order among vs as wee now haue. Wee must knowe what is meant by all this. Nevertheless, this briefenesse will bee darkenesse, if it be not declared better. When wee consider how God hath created & shaped vs, and moreouer made vs after his owne image, and giuen vs witte and reason, and therewithall the hope of a better life, and finally hath vouchsafed to take vs as his houshold folke: it sheweth vs that wee bee bound to submit our selues vnto him. For seeing hee is our maker: doe wee not owe him all obedience? Nay there is yet more: namely that in the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ his sonne, hee hath redeemed vs and made vs partakers of his Gospell, to the ende that wee should bee guided by his hand. Now then, the first poynt is that when we haue knowledge, it must stirre vs vp to serue God, & to stick to the pure religion that is comprehended in his word. Howbeit this is not enough: but whē we be asked yetneerer, Wherfore ỹ promises of ỹ forgiuenes of sins are giuen vs: [wee must answere,] Alas, it is because we be wretched sinners, & we should be continually in anguish and sorrowe of minde, if we knewe not that God is cōtented to be mercifull vnto vs of his owne meere grace. For he cannot loue vs except we be righteous: and we shall neuer finde any holynesse in our lyfe, or perfection in our vertues: but it is through Gods mercie, which it pleaseth him to extend towards vs. And so now yee see whereunto the promises tend.

Againe, if it be demaunded of vs why he hath appoynted the order of prayer, as wel publique as priuate: it is for that euery of vs ought to inure himselfe to seeke all his succor at his hand. For wee haue not any good thing, wee be destitute both of wisedome, strength, and righteousnesse, wee bee woorse than empte, vntill our good God doe succor our needes: and the meane thereof, is to flee to him for refuge. To that end hath hee ordeined priuate prayer. And publique or common prayer is ordeined to the intent to assure vs the better, that hee will here the common accorde that is among vs, when wee bee come together as it were into one bodie: and therewithall wee make confession of our faith & exercise our charitie. By this meanes then we learne, why and to what end our Lorde hath set order in his Churche, that is to say, what

what he meant to betoken thereby, and to what purpose it is to be referred.

If a man aske vs what is meant by Baptisme, and wherefore it was ordeined: it is to the intent wee should know, that euen from our mothers wombe wee bring nothing but all maner of vncleanesse with vs, and that wee be ful of infection and filth before the Lord, so as wee must be faine to bee washed, or else hee will not vouchsafe to auowe vs for his. And wherewithall must wee be washed? With the bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ. That then is the way to make vs cleane. For as long as wee liue in Adam and in our owne nature, wee can doe nothing but euill. Wee bee so marred, as there is nothing in vs but vtter rebelliousnesse against GOD. Therefore wee must enter as it were into death, and into the graue, to bee renewed, and our Lord must bee faine to giue vs a new vnderstanding, and a new heart, and he must so shape vs new againe, as we may no more be the same we were before, but bee (as yee would say) cast in a newe mould, and bee made new creatures, as the scripture vseth to speake of it. Thus ye see how wee may learne what Baptisme is, what it betokeneth, and to what end it was ordeyned.

As touching the Lordes supper: if it bee inquired of vs why wee come together to receiue a bit of bread: and a draught of wine: it is in way of acknowledgement that our soules haue neede of foode, no lesse than our bodies, and that as there is such frailetie in this present lyfe, as it cannot continue without the helpes of meate and drinke, so must our soules also bee mainteined after lyke sorte, by reason of the infirmitie that is in them. Neuertheleese our soules are not nourished with the corruptible meates of this world, but it is the sonne of God that is our foode. Wee then haue Iesus Christ, who is our lyfe, it is hee of whome wee haue sustenance and nourishment, forasmuch as hee was offered in sacrifice for vs, and the bloud that he did shed for our saluation is our drinke. Thus ye see how we nowadayes may learne whereunto ỹ ordinãces do tẽd which God hath stablished in his Church, and to what end they be to be referred.

In lyke case was it vnder the lawe. For God ordeyned not the ceremonies without further consideration of some reason in them. It is true that hee meant to separate his people from all the heathen and vnbeleeuers of the earth: but yet in the meane while, the washinges which they vsed were done, to shewe that they were full of naughtinesse as well as wee, and that it stood them in hand to seeke the meanes to bee made cleane. The sacrifices were a witnesse that they were worthy to bee condemned to euerlasting death, and that there was none other shift for them, but to flee to the sacrifice whereby they should bee reconciled to God. The Sanctuary betokened that no man but onely Iesus Christ might enter into Gods kingdome, nor come nye it: and that by his meanes all nations haue accesse thither, and that all such as are vnworthie in respect of their owne persons, are brought in thither by that mediator. To be shorte, all the ceremonies of the Lawe had some certeine vse, and serued to trayne the people to put their trust in the redeemer that was promised them. And that was the cause why Moses was commaunded to make all things according to the spirituall patterne which hee had seene on the mount. For Moses builded not the Tabernacle, otherwise than GOD had giuen him the patterne of it. And all was to shewe, that there was a conformable resemblance betweene the outward thinges, and the trueth which was to bee manifested in our Lord Iesus Christ. But in the text Moses speaketh but of the first, and that is the cause why I sayd, that it behoued vs to haue an eye to his meaning. For it was enough for him to say, go too my friendes, you which haue seene the redemption that GOD hath wrought, you (say I) ought to consider how much you bee bound vnto him. Therefore make account of the doctrine of the Lawe, and frame your whole lyfe therafter, that it may be as an acknowledgement of the deliuerance which you haue receiued at his hand. And when ye shall haue walked thereafter all the time of your lyfe: looke well to it that you teach your children also, so as Gods seruice may continue among you, and neuer decay nor bee abolished. That is the playne meaning of Moses.

Furthermore let vs vnderstand that wee must consider, that the Lawe was not inuented at the pleasure of men, neither was it founded by them; but God was the giuer thereof, who holdeth vs vnder his gouernement, and it is his trueth which we followe, so as wee holde not any whit of thinges inuented by men. That is the thing whereon wee must rest, that we may not bee alwayes wauering and doubtfull. And hereby wee knowe how wretched the state of the papistes is; for they bee stubborne and wilfull in their own imaginations. If a man aske thẽ of whõ they hold their superstitiõs: they alledge their fathers, they alledge long antiquitie, they alledge ỹ common fashion of ỹ whole world: but in ỹ meane while they haue no certeintie ỹ their doinges please God, or ỹ he alloweth thẽ, whereas in very deed the thing ỹ God leadeth vs vnto is ỹ we should be sure that we haue not ne holde not any thing ỹ is brought vs at aladuenture: but ỹ the doctrine of our faith is ỹ pure truth. Seeing then that God commaundeth vs so to doe: let vs assure our selues ỹ to liue as becommeth vs, wee must haue this certeintie ỹ wee be gouerned by Gods word, & that ỹ same is ỹ rule of our fayth, & that ỹ religion which wee sticke vnto is ỹ true religiõ. Now therefore we may profite our selues by this text, sith we se ỹ ỹ meaning of Moses was, ỹ the people should know, ỹ the Law was not deuised by men, but that God was the author of it. And euen at this day the Lawe must beare this sway with vs, ỹ wee must know to what purpose it was giue. Besides this, although there be nothing set down here cõcerning ỹ end whereunto Gods ordinances doe tend: yet must we looke thereat. For all things are not spoken in one place: wee must take things in such order as God hath set

Hebr. 7. 18.

Hebr. 8. 5.

Eph. 5. 26. 27. 1. Iohn 1. 7.

Rom. 6. 4.

Eph. 4. 23. 24

Iohn 6. 53. 54. 55. 56. Matt. 26. 26. 28. 1. Cor. 11. 24

Deut. 4. 8.

Heb. 9. 10. & 10. 1. & 11.

Heb. 9. 7. & 10. 18.

set them downe. In other places hee will teach vs what marke it behoued the people to shoote at in keeping the lawe: but here the case concerneth the continuall seruing of God with reuerence, so as the people may knowe themselues to bee wholly at his deuotion, and that therwithall he reserueth to himselfe the authoritie of gouerning his people and of holding them in subiection. Those are the thinges which we haue to beare in minde.

Rom. 3.20. 21. & 4.15. 26. & Gal. 3. 19. 22.

Now let vs come to that which hee addeth in the conclusion: that is to wit, *That God hauing deliuered his people, and brought them into the land that hee had giuen them, appointed them all his commandements*. Hereby wee see, that when God sheweth vs this grace, to gather vs into his Church, hee calleth vs not to bee idle, but at the least to the ende wee shoulde glorify him, as the thing whereof the whole Scripture speaketh. And these sayings, Behold, I haue purchased a people that shall sing my praise, Behold, I haue planted a vine and I wilbe glorified therby, and such other, are so often beaten into the peoples heads by the Prophets, as it ought to be a doctrine wellinough knowne among them. Nowe therefore Gods speaking after that maner, is to shewe that his intent in chosing that people, was to be honoured at their hands. And this belongeth much more to vs, forasmuch as God hath vttered a farre greater power in deliuering vs from the dungeons of hell in the person of his sonne. Let vs vnderstand then, that wee bee baptised with this condition, to giue our selues wholy to our God: lyke as when Saint Paule treateth thereof, chiefely in the first to the Ephesians: he sayth that God hauing chosen vs before the creation of the world to bee his children, hath also made vs partakers of the saluation that was purchased for vs by our Lord Iesus Christ, to the end that wee shoulde glorifie him which hath shewed himselfe so bountifull towardes vs, and vsed such mercie. As often then as we remember Gods benefites, and specially his voutsafing to call vs to the knowledge of his trueth: Let vs ad this, namely that it is to the end that our life should bee wholy dedicated to his honor and seruice, or else we doe what wee can to ouerthrowe Gods adoption, and wee labor to disanull it vtterly: lyke as on the contrary part it is sayd that our calling is warranted by our walking in holynesse of lyfe: for after that maner doth Saint Peter speake of it.

Esa. 12.5.6. & Psal. 107. 24.15. & 80. 16.

Col. 1.13.14

Eph. 1.5.6. 12.

2. Pet. 1.10.

Finally Moses addeth, *It shall bee imputed to thee for righteousnesse afore God, if thou keepe his commandements as he hath appointed thee*. In these wordes hee doth men to wit, that if they bee desirous to bee allowed of God, and that he should accept their seruice: they must not bring any of their owne inuentions, but bee contented to doe simply whatsoeuer Gods worde afordeth, and whatsoeuer is conteined there. That is the meaning of Moses. And whereas he sayth that the keeping of the commandements which God hath ordeyned, shall beee impured to men for righteousnesse before God: it is all one as if hee should say, my friendes, tell your children that if they swarue from Gods word conteined in his Lawe, and turne away after their owne fancies, to doe what seemeth good to themselues; God will reiect it euery whit, and it shall be but as dung before him. For why? Hee alloweth obedience aboue all thinges. He intendeth not to giue mee leaue to deuise and inuent newe Lawes: but hee will haue them to be contented with that pure rule [of his Law], in such sorte as hee hath giuen it. Therefore looke not that God should accept you, or allowe any of all your doinges for righteousnesse, vnlesse it be conformable to his doctrine. For although men would faine haue things to passe in account which they themselues like of; yet wil God crosse them out euery one. For why? Their trauelling is in vaine, vnlesse they can say, Lord we haue folowed the way wherin thou diddest set vs. For so sayeth he by his Prophet Esay. Who hath required these thinges at your hand, saith he? When the Hypocrites make their brags, and thinke themselues wel discharged in being willing to serue God after their owne fancie: there needeth no more but this answer to disprowe all their doings, who required these thinges at your hands? As if he shoulde say, let him that did set you a worke, pay you: for as for me I wil none of you, I disclaime ye, ye haue nothing to doe with me, seeing ye haue not serued me obediently, which is the principal seruice. I resolue. And that is the cause also why S. Paul speaking of mens inuentions, addeth no more but this, that they be mennes doctrines. True it is, that they shall haue some faire colour, and some likelihoode of religion, yea and there will seeme to bee in them a perfection of all holynesse: but what for that? Seeing they proceed from men, they be no better than flat mockery.

And it is purposely said, *They righteousnesse before God*. Why so? To the intent that men should no more beguile themselues in their owne opinion, as they be wont to do by hardning their harts when other men sooth them, or by standing in their owne conceites. For then they beare themselues on hand, that God hath no more authoritie to condemne them, but that the fond opinion which they haue conceiued, shalbe as a blocke to cast in his way. To the intent therefore that men should not yeelde to their owne imaginations and to the things which they surmise to bee good: Moses sayth here, my friendes, what shall yee winne, by deeming it to bee righteousnesse to doe as the heathen doe, and to intangle your selues in their superstitions? For though the world lyke well of you for so doing: yet must ye come [to an after-reckoning] before the heauenly Iudge: for men bee not competent iudges to giue sentence of that matter. And therefore (to bee short) yee had neede to looke about you how God will accept your doinges. And hee telleth you that he wil not be subiect to mens willes, nor be so plyable as to say: shal this be accounted good? Then must I agree to it. No no, hee will continue alwayes lyke himselfe. Therefore holde you to that which hee commaundeth: for his worde

must bee your whole wisedome, while the world foadeth it selfe with it owne inuentions. Thus yee see what is meant by these wordes where Moses sayth, it shall be counted to you for righteousnesse before God, if yee keepe the commaundementes which hee hath appoynted.

But yet by the way here might bee made a question. For it should seeme that God sendeth men to their owne deseruinges to bee iustified by them. And on the otherside S. Paul auoucheth that wee bee iustified by faith: that is to say, that wee bee accepted for righteous before GOD, through his onely free goodnesse, forasmuch as hee accepteth vs in our Lorde Iesus Christ. For it is written that Abraham beleeued God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousnesse. But here Moses sayth, that the keeping of the Lawe is imputed for righteousnesse. It seemeth then that men are able to purchase saluation by their owne workes, and so by that meanes are not indaungered vnto God. But wee haue two thinges to note here. The first is that whereas it is sayd that the keeping of the Lawe is righteousnesse before GOD, it is not meant thereby that men can become righteous by their owne workes: for then must they fulfill the lawe throughout in all poyntes. But now was there euer any creature found that discharged himself toward? No. Yee see then that wee be all damned, and so bee quite bereft of the righteousnesse that was giuen by the Lawe. Wherefore let vs learne that the Lawe could well iustify vs before God, if wee could keepe it from poynt to poynt without any fayling. For it is written, hee that doth these thinges shall liue in them. If a man (say I) coulde so order his lyfe, as hee might make his boast that hee had fully performed all that GOD hath commaunded him: hee shoulde be righteous. And why? For God which cannot lye hath made vs a promise, that hee will accept our workes for righteousnesse, so wee fayle not in the performance of any poynt of his Law. But now is there not any man that dischargeth himselfe so much as of any one poynt. Therefore are we all transgressors of the Lawe, and consequently wee bee all accursed. And wee must not imagine that it deserueth to bee allowed, when wee haue done but some peece of that which GOD commaundeth. No: for hee that misseth in any one poynt, is guiltie before God, and there remaineth nothing for him but death and cursednesse. For it is written, that whosoeuer performeth not all the thinges that are conteined in this booke, shall be accursed. Now then let vs learne, that whereas the keeping of the Lawe might bee imputed to vs for righteousnesse, if it could bee found in vs, wee bee vtterly depriued and bereft thereof. And why? For there is not that man which transgresseth not the Lawe in some poynt or other: nay, not onely in some one poynt, but in all poyntes throughout, when wee haue caste vp our account. For wee neuer serue GOD with all our heart, with all our soule, and with all our strength as hath bin sayd heeretofore. And euen when wee doe any good woorkes to outward appearance, there is alwayes some coldenesse, some slothfulnesse, or some one thing or other mingled with them, to hinder vs. And therefore the worke is still faultie. Thus wee cease not to breake Gods Lawe in all poinctes, so as wee must needes yeelde our selues guiltie, cõfessing that if God listed to iudge vs rigorously, hee shoulde needes reiect vs. Now wee see that although the Lawe conteine the true rule of righteousnesse: yet can it not make vs righteous, because of the weakenesse of our flesshe, as sayth Saint Paul in the seuenth to the Romans. It remaineth now to knowe, in what sense that is spoken: For it seemeth to be to no purpose, that God should promise to accept the for righteous which keepe his lawe: and yet notwithstanding that all of vs shoulde bee bereft thereof.

Howbeit wee must marke, that there is a refuge giuen vs which is to resort to the forgiuenesse of our sinnes, which is graunted vs in our Lorde Iesus Christ. Therefore when we haue acknowledged our selues to bee vtterly forlorne and damned in our owne nature, and thereupon repayre to our Lord Iesus Christ, sewing to bee partakers of his righteousnesse, and to bee iustifyed by vertue of the obedience which hee yeelded to God his father: then GOD not onely receiueth vs to mercy, and couereth vs with the perfection that is in our Lorde Iesus Christ, as with a cloake, to the intent wee shoulde obtaine saluation; but also taketh our workes in good woorth. And although wee performe not the Lawe, but come loytering aloose after it, so as there is great store of vices in vs, wherewith our workes are blemished: yet notwithstanding GOD accepteth them, and promiseth that we shall not loose our labor, insomuch that our workes shall be taken for righteous before him. Albeit that they bee worthie to bee taken for starke filth, because there is alwayes somewhat in them that God may condemne: yet this keeping of the Lawe which we performe (vnperfect as it is) shall not faile to bee taken for righteousnesse. The reason is, because Iesus Christ supplyeth our default. Then doth not our righteousnesse consist in the worthynesse of our owne workes: but inasmuch as they bee sanctifyed in the name of Gods son, & forasmuch as we be his mẽbers (both they & we be admitted for righteous, because of the obediẽce which hee yeelded vnto God. And that obedience is communicated vnto vs, as if it were our owne. Thus yee see how the promises that are made vnto vs, doe assure vs that God will accept the thinges for righteousnesse, which we doe in indeauouring to serue him. For such promises are not vaine nor fruteless, so our Lord Iesus Christ bee our mediator, and performe that which wanteth on our behalfe. For without that, all the lawe will serue vs to none other purpose but to condemne vs, as hath bin shewed afore.

Moreouer let vs marke for the second point, that although the people had kept the Lawe of GOD: yet euen the very performance there-

of was a record vnto them, that it stoode them in hand to bee iustifyed by mercie and grace, and not by their owne merites. For their sacrificing was a kind of protesting that they were worthie of death. There was neuer any beast slayne vnder the lawe, but the same was an autenticall record that men deserued to bee damned at Gods hand. And thereby it behoued the faithfull to bee put in minde to resort vnto God, and that with such humilitie, as they sought their lyfe elsewhere than in themselues. In lyke case was it with their washings, and with all the rest of their ceremonies. The hauing of light in the Temple, was to shew that men are starke blind in themselues: and their hauing of the holy Lampes, and the oyle that God had ordeined for the same, and their anointinges, and such other thinges ought to haue made the people to consider thus with themselues: there is neyther vnderstanding, grace, vertue, nor any thing else in our wit, but wee must bee faine to borrowe all thinges of the redeemer that was promised to our fathers, and of Gods spirit who is the fountaine and fulnesse of all good thinges. So then the keeping of the lawe sent the people backe to the grace of our Lord Iesus Christ, and serued for nothing lesse than to hold them still to those shadowes to put their trust in them. Lykewise at this day, sith wee vnderstand well which is the right keeping of Gods lawe, wee see well enough that it is not for vs to presume vppon our owne deseruinges, as these mad papistes doe, who vphold that they become righteous by keeping of the Lawe. They bee so caryed away with that opinion, that they think not any more of Gods grace, neither doe they perceiue that the Lawe was giuen to holde men conuicted, & to drive them to come before their Iudge, as wretched offenders to sewe for grace. They thinke not of that. Againe, they haue the terme *Merit* or *Desert*, which they vse like a drunken man that can discerne nothing because he is ouersotted and hath his eyes bleared: euen so play these wretched vnbeleeuers. But we for our part knowe that we haue to thanke our God for his infinite goodnesse, in making vs to vnderstand that the true keeping of the lawe, is for men to condemne themselues by it, and to take knowledge that they haue nothing in them but vtter frowardnesse, and that they must be faine to resorte vnto God, and to betake themselues wholy to his mercy. And forasmuch as there is none other meane but Iesus Christ: they must get them thither, and know that God will bee neither father nor Sauiour vnto them, but by accepting them in the person of him in whome hee auoweth all his delight to bee. Thus the things which wee haue to remember vpon this text, are, first that if we will haue God to allow of our lyfe, wee must not doe what wee thinke good of our selues, but simply follow that which is commaunded vs in his Lawe. Howbeit forasmuch as it is promised vs, that wee shall bee taken for righteous before him, if wee keepe his Lawe: and yet notwithstanding, all of vs are transgressors of y law, so as our whole lyfe condemneth vs, & there is none of vs but hee may iudge by the heartbitings of his owne conscience, that wee bee full of sinnes and offences: we must flee to the foremencioned refuge which is, to beseech God to iustifye vs of his owne free mercie. And besides this, when wee bee once graffed into the body of our Lorde Iesus Christ, let vs not doubt but hee will make vs partakers of the fruites of his death and passion, so that although our workes be sinfull, yet God will admit them for righteous. But yet, that proceedeth of his free goodnesse, and not of any desert of ours. Finally forasmuch as wee know that the best workes which wee can doe, are worthie to bee condemned: let vs looke well to it that wee presume not of our selues, nor of our owne vertues: but let vs go and submit our selues with all humilitie to our God, praying him to worke so in vs by his holy spirit, as hee make the death and passion of his sonne auaileable, whereby the euerlasting saluation is purchased for vs.

Hebr. 10. 3.

Eph. 4. 7.

And now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to voutsafe to print his Law in such wise in our heartes, as wee may bee able to keepe it, not of our owne power and motion, but by the guiding of his holy spirit: and that therewithall it may please him to beare with vs in our infirmities, vntill hee haue rid vs quite & cleane of al our sinnes, & taken vs vp into the euerlasting kingdome which hee hath promised vs. And so let vs all say, Almighty God &c.

On Thursday the first of August. 1555.

The Lj Sermon which is the first vppon the seuenth Chapter.

WHen the Lord thy God shal haue brought thee into the Land whither thou goest to possesse it, and shall haue cast out manie Nations before thee, namelie the Hethites, the Gergesites, the Amorrhytes, the Chananites, the Pherezites, the Heuites, and the Iebusites, seuen Nations more in number and stronger than thy selfe:

2 And when the Lord thy God shal haue deliuered them before thee: thou shalt smite them, and roote them out, and thou shalt make no couenant with them nor shewe them any fauour.

3 Thou shalt not alye thy self with them by mariage, thou shalt not giue thy daughter

dawghter to their sonnes, nor take their dawghter for thy sonne.

4 For shee would make thy sonne to go away from mee, to serue other Gods: and the Lordes wrath would kindle against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

IT shoulde seeme at ỳ first sight, that ỳ commãdement which is giuen here to ỳ Iewes was very strãge. For they be charged to dispatch all their enemies, and to put them to death euerychone, yea euen the young children and all, without sparing any of them: and it is God that speaketh it. But wee know that when he intendeth to exhort vs to mildnesse and mercy, hee alledgeth his own example. Ye shal reseble your heauenly father (sayth our Lord Iesus Christ,) who causeth his day sunne to rise both vppon good and bad: and therefore doe good to such as are not worthie of it. Seeing that GOD hath not a better reason to perswade vs to shewe mercy, than by shewing vs what he himselfe doth: it seemeth not in any wise conuenient, that he should prouoke vs vnto cruelties. For when hee sayth, ye shall kill all, yee shall leaue nothing, euen the young babes shall passe vnder the edge of the swords: what is to be sayd to it, but that GOD had no pitie nor kindehartednesse in that behalfe? But although it seeme so to vs: yet let vs learne to glorify him, knowing that the greatest rigor which is in him, is rightful & faultlesse, yea euẽ although the reason thereof be not manifest vnto vs. And hereby let vs learne to beware, ỳ we be not so bold as to iudge of God or of his doings after our own wit & imagination. For as soon as a thing seemeth good vnto vs, wee take it to bee so in deede: and on the contrary part, if wee fall to iudging of Gods ordinances at aduenture, & deeme them to bee euill because wee perceiue not the reason of them: where is our obedience? Wherefore let vs learne to humble our selues in such wise, that if the thinges which God sayth doe not fitly agree with our vnderstanding: yet neuertheless wee receiue them with all submission and reuerẽce, acknowledging that as there is nothing but all wisedome and righteousnesse in him, so it becommeth vs to yeeld to his good pleasure, and to confesse that whatsoeuer he ordeyneth is the soueraine righteousnesse.

Againe, to the end that the thing which is set downe here may not seeme straunge: wee must marke what maner of people they were of whom mention is made here. It is sayd, *Thou shalt destroy the people whom I will deliuer into thy hand*. Now if it be demaunded whereof it came that God would haue none of them reserued: Let vs haue an eye to that which had bin spoken foure hundred yeeres afore: namely, *The wickednesse of the Amorrhites is not yet come to his full ripenesse*. In the time of Abraham these people were so malicious and spitefull in vexing that holy patriarke, as they refused euen to let him haue water. Not that hee went about to borrowe any out of their pondes and fountaines: but that they wold not suffer him to inioy the welles that hee himselfe had digged in the desert places. He did no wrong to any man, and yet they were so cruell, that they would not suffer him to drinke of the water which hee had gotten by his owne skill and trauell. He was hunted from place to place, and yet hee had not done any man wrõg. Againe all the countrie was ful of the contempt of God, all was full of wickednesse, robberie, whoredome, and all maner of vncleanesse. To bee short, God seemed to bee asleepe in that hee punished not those nations which were so giuen ouer to all vngodlynesse and outrage. And if they that grudge at this text had lined in those dayes: they would haue sayd, how now? God promiseth to doe iustice, and to take vengeance vppon all the despisers of his maiestie: but there appeareth no such thing. If hee rule the worlde, and that his prouidence bee aboue all: how is it that hee suffereth so long the wickednesse that is in this people? After that maner doe the wicked alwayes take occasion to repine at GOD, and to complaine of him, and to finde fault with his doinges. For if hee bee patient, they say hee is careless to punish mens offences and sinnes. And if hee vse rigor: they say he exceedeth measure, and that there is no reason in his doinges, and that the same hastinesse of his, bewrayeth well that there is no mercy nor pitie in him. Lo how the wicked folke doe blaspheme God euery way. But let vs on our side goe to worke with another maner of modestie.

Gen. 15. 16.

Ge. 22. 25. 30

And first of all wee must marke well this sentence, as I sayd afore. Beholde, God telleth vs that although the Amorrhytes and their neighbours were giuen to all euill, and were past amendement, so as there was no more hope to bring them to anie good: yet notwithstanding hee bare with them and made as though hee sawe them not. Hee sawe that they despised him, and were giuen to all idolatrie, and therewithall made no conscience to steale and rob and to commit all maner of wickednesse: and yet for all that, hee sayd hee would not destroy them, [but beare with them yet further.] How long? not for halfe a score yeeres, or for twentie yeres, or for a whole hundred: but euen vntil foure hundred yeres were past & run out. Was not ỳ a tarryance long enough? Now in the end of the terme, when GOD had shewed that not onely hee himselfe knew, but also it appeared openly by experience to the whole world, that those nations were vtterly past hope of recouery, and grew woorse and woorse vnder pretence that God handled them not according to their

deserts: was it not meete that at length horrible vengeance should light vpon them? They had of all that long time heaped vp the treasure of Gods wrath vppon their heades by abusing his patience: and therefore ought the rigor that he vsed against them, to seeme too excessiue? Can wee say that hee was moued with ouersuddeine choler? Nay. Then let vs learne to restraine our selues in this case, and to keep our mouths shut, that wee vtter not a worde against GOD, but so bridle our mindes as we imagine not any thing of him but al Iustice and vprightnes, confessing that whatsoeuer hee appoynteth to bee done, cannot bee but rightfull, and that it becommeth vs to bee contented with his only will.

And let vs marke by the way, that when men take vppon them to repine against God, it is alwayes to their owne confusion. It is true ỹ at the first sight their cause may seeme very fauorable: for wee can so good skill to harpe vppon Gods mercie, that the rigor of his Iustice is alwayes odious to vs. But yet for all that, when men haue pleaded their discourse to the full: is not God able to aunswere them in a word, as I haue declared already? What is ỹ? I wil haue these people vtterly rooted out: for they haue skorned mee. I had giuen thẽ a good & fruitefull land to dwell in, & they haue deuowred my benefites without any acknowledging from whence they came. They haue spited me to the vttermost: I sent thẽ some chastisementes to correct them, but haue they amended for al that? I haue set lookingglasses of my wrath before them: but they stopped their eyes, they hardened their heartes more & more, & yet for all that, I haue bin contented to delay the punishment of thẽ to the ende of foure hundred yeeres. Behold, foure ages are come & gone: and ought they not to haue amended in so long time? Yes: but they be still at one stay. But yet must not this land bee alwayes infected with such filthinesse. I haue dedicated it to mine own seruice, I wil haue my name called vppon there, and I intẽd to plant my people there, that there may be a pure & holy religion: & should I leaue such rifferaffe among them? If there were none other reason but that: ought not Gods seruice to be more deare than the liues of all the men in ỹ world? If we spare mans bloud, & say it is no smal thing that a whole nation shoulde bee so rooted out: I graunt that. But shall wee make so little account of Gods honor, and of the religion whereby wee liue euerlastingly? shall we (say I) haue it in so small estimation, as to preferre mens lyues before it? What a dealing were that? Do we not bewray that there is no loue of God in vs? Vnder color of gentlenesse and mercie, we would pluck God out of his seate, and that men should play mockeholyday with him, so as there should bee no more reuerence nor humilitie yeelded to his seruice. & what a confusion were that? Therefore the way for vs to put this text in vre, is that when wee see that God is patient, and falleth not vpon the wicked at the first dash, nor powreth out his rigor vppon them to confound them: wee must not thinke that hee hath forgotten his duetie, and sitteth still in heauen: but wee must rather consider that hee accomplisheth the saying which I alledged out of Genesis, namely that the wickednesse of the parties is not yet come to full ripenesse. Truely in our iudgement it were time that hee shoulde worke as soone as the wicked doe passe their bounds. For wee see how impatient wee be, and how wee breake out into heates when thinges goe amisse: in our owne opinion wee would thinke it good that GOD should thunder vppon them out of hand, and to our seeming he is ouerslow. Nay rather let vs looke vppon God, who tarieth patiently as hee hath done at all times, and is loth to execute his rigor, vntill hee haue shewed that the wicked are vtterly past amendment. True it is that sometime hee vseth no such tariance, for it is not for him to deale alwayes after one sort, neither is it for vs to bind him to any certeine Lawe, hee hath liberty to haste his iudgementes when it pleaseth him. But yet for all that, hee doth commonly delay them and put them off, and for the same cause is hee sayd to bee long suffering.

And wee must not thinke that GOD will not call them to account whome hee beareth withall: but after as hee winketh at them, so will hee dubble his vengeance vppon them, if they bee not touched with heartie repentance, when hee hath giuen them respit. But on the contrary part, when hee hath waited for the wicked a long time, if hee shewe greater rigor than wee thought hee would haue done, and punishe them with more extremitie because they haue so dalyed with him, and despised his goodnesse, yea and euen turned it into an occasion of greater wickednesse: I say if he be more wrathfull and sharpe than we thought he would haue bin: Let vs not thinke him to be excessiue, but let vs assure our selues hee hath iust reason so to doe, although hee make not vs priuie to it. Therefore when wee shall haue marked the examples that are in the holy scripture: wee will make this conclusion: That it is not to be wondered at though GOD vse greater rigor towardes those whome hee hath spared so long time together. For his goodnesse is too precious a iewell, to bee made a iesting stocke so of the wicked.

Furthermore let vs marke generally, that God will not be subiect to our surmisings, but he will haue vs to receiue his sayinges and doinges without stanning of them, and to take al things for good and rightfull which come of him, yea euen though our reason gainesay it. For we bee too fickle headded to iudge, and therewithall we be so fooliish and rash, that to our owne seeming it is lawfull for vs to alledge our opinion, not onely to iudge of mens doinges, but also to giue sentence vpon the determinations of our God, & vpon such execution of thẽ as he doth ordinarily. But contrariwise it is shewed vs, both in this place & in all others: ỹ it is not for vs to aduance our selues so high, as to say whatsoeuer cõmeth at our tongues end: but we must receiue whatsoeuer cõmeth from God, wout any replying. Doth God them seeme cruell? Yet neuertheles let vs confesse

confesse that he is righteous, and that he doeth not any thing but in perfect righteousnesse and equitie. Besides this, let vs learne also to obey him in all pointes, by doing the thinges that he commaundeth vs, euen though they goe against our stomackes. Sometimes men may (to their seeming) haue honest excuse, not to do the thing that is commaunded them. But what for that? It will not discharge them before God: for GOD will bee wise for vs, and good reason it is that he should bee so. For what a thing were it if men might alledge, Yea Lord, but what will become of such a thing? Such an inconuenience myght followe of it. If wee fall to scanning after that fashion: is it not as much as if wee should say that God was misaduised, and foresawe not all, & that wee haue a deeper and better settled forecast than his is? And were not that wootoo diuelish a blasphemie? Yes. And therefore let vs marke, that to rule our life aright, we must not enter into so many countersayings and disputations: but wee must vnderstand that our wisedome is to obey God simply. When Saul spared the king who he had ouercome, and the Cattel that was fallen into his handes: it seemed to him that he had colour good ynough to doe it. For his intent was to haue led the king in triumph, and that had bin as a spectacle to shewe Gods goodnesse towards his people. In deede so was it to Saules weening. And as for the Cattell, he reserued them to haue made sacrifice withall: and that was a goodly thing to make men vnderstande, that God had giuen so noble and wonderfull a victorie to his people. All this went well then. Yea, if a man might haue beleeued Saul in his owne imagination. But yet in the meane while he is reproued at Gods hand, and both he and his mercie bee condemned togither, and the king is faine to be slaine by another before his face. For he himself was not worthie to be Gods minister, he was bereft of that office, and Samuell was put in his roome. And afterward it was tolde him, that the kingdome which he possessed should not descend to his children and posteritie, but should be conueyed vnto a straunger. Wee would thinke this geere very straunge, but that it is shewed vs that Saul was ouer arrogant in taking vppon him to bee wiser than he had leaue to bee: and in that as soone as a foolish toy tooke him in the head, he followed that rather than the commaundement of God. And was not that a taking vppon him to bee wiser than God? And was not that a cursed pride? Yes: and therefore the condemnation which Samuel pronounced vppon him was iust. For it is meete that God should be glorified, and that wee should confesse that there is nothing to bee amended in him, but that all mouthes ought to bee opened, and to say: Lord, wisedome, iustice, equitie, and vertue, are not to be sought for elsewhere than in thee. And therfore let vs practise this doctrin in such wise, as we be not more mercifull than God will haue vs to bee, or than the rule which he hath giuen vs will beare. For there are that would faine vse mercy in mingling white and blacke together, and in making a hutchpotch of all things, vnder pretence that wicked persons should goe quite and skotfree. And what remaineth more, but that the righteous and good men should be condemned, if the wicked shoulde bee so maintained? And that is the cause why Salomon sayth, that he which quitteth the offender when hee sees him giltie, is as much to blame before God, as he that oppresseth the innocent. For our Lord hath ordeined, not onely that good cases should bee maintained: but also that euill dealinges should be corrected when they be found. And for the same purpose hath he put his sword into the handes of princes, Magistrates, and all other officers of Iustice, to the intent that leaudnesse should not bee mayntained in the worlde. Then is there no replying against this. And yet notwithstanding yee shall haue some that will complayne of men as bludsuckers, and as soone as any mention is made of the execution of Iustice, it is no better [with them] but crueltie. Let such folke get them to God, and goe pleade against him, to see if they can get the vpper hand. And it is not only the galloweselappers that say so, I meane those whose faultes and crymes are manifest: but these Tauernhaunters or Alehouseknightes which counterfeit the preachers. O they haue great skill to alledge gentleneesse and mercie: and it seemeth to them that I doe no more spare bloud than they do the wyne, which they gussel and quaffe vp without measure or reason. But such blasphemies or raylinges doe touche God, and not men. For I heare what is spoken. Let those mastife dogs barke and gnarre as much as they list: yet is this doctrine which proceded out of Gods mouth, sufficient to make them ashamed.

And herewithall let vs marke, that the mercy which God commandeth, is to haue pitie of such as are going to destruction. Let that serue for one point. So as if it lay in vs, wee should bee mindefull how to drawe them out of the ditch. And when wee see them vtterly wilfull, so as there is no hope nor meane to bring them backe againe: wee must be sory for them, for as much as we see they bee wretched damned creatures. Marke that, for another poynt. Againe, let vs beare with such as fall to repentaunce. But when wee see folkes hardharted and desperate, so as they haue conspired to fight against God to the vttermoste: what mercie were it to mayntayne that? Lo heere another blasphemie, which is when men wil needes be more pitifull than God. He is the welspring of all goodnesse, and hee sayth that we be euil, and that although we haue the greatest shew of goodnesse that is possible to bee had: yet is it but a spark of the great and infinite perfection that is in him. But nowe, behold, there are newe Diuines which wil needes haue men to be mercifull. And how? Although a man be wicked, and the world seeth that he is full of venim against God, and ceaseth not to do euil, but the more he is borne withall the more he is still inflamed with malice: Yet [say they] why should hee not bee borne withall still? Let them aske that of God, and hee will tell them that there is no place for his mercie, but where

Prou.17.15.

Rom.13.4. & 1.Pet.2.14

Matt.7.11.

Ezec 18.21, Act 11.18, 2.Tim.2.25

there is repentance. True it is, that it is in him to giue repentance. But howsoeuer the worlde goe, when his will is to vtter his goodnesse towardes any man, he toucheth his heart that he may returne vnto him. Now then, shall we looke vpon such as are fully bent to blaspheme God to the vttermost, and yet in the meane while talke to them of mercie still? Ought we not rather to spit in the faces of such villaines, which mocke God and his word to the full? Yes: and therfore let vs beare simply in minde, that wee must followe the things which God commaundeth, and that it is not for vs to alledge any thing at all in that behalfe.

Deut.32.35. Rom.12.19. Heb.10.30.

And on the otherside let vs marke also, that God meant not to resigne his vengeaunce vnto men, & to giue them leaue to hurt their enemies when they shall haue offended them. Then if we do the worst we can to mē when they haue grieued vs or done vs any wrong, vnder colour that God hath told vs that he would haue the vngodly rooted out: it is a taking of a false couert from the word of God. Therefore let vs note that wee must not be led with any affection, neither must we passe whether any wrong or hinderance haue bin wrought vs or no: for as long as mens minds run vppon their priuate griefes, they shall neuer serue God: but we must haue this consideration with vs, of doing that which God commaundeth vs, without being mooued by any fleshly moode. Marke that for a speciall point.

Deut.12.8. 32.

Againe, let vs not deale further than God biddeth vs, but let vs bee faithfull executers of his words, & not stir one finger further than he saith, do thus or thus. To be short, he ỹ giueth his enemy but a fillup, is giltie of murder before god. But he that putteth a wicked mā to death, not being led thereto by any wicked affection, but bicause his office requireth it: is iust and allowed of God, and his executing of such punishment is a sacrifice vnto him. According as wee see that Moses speaketh therof, specially when the idolatrie that the people had committed was to bee punished, in which case he saieth, Sanctifie your hands vnto ỹ Lord. And how? What maner of holines was it wherof Moses spake there? It was ỹ they should kill all the idolaters that had defiled themselues, & put the corrupters of ỹ true religion to death. And whom commanded he to doe it? Euen ỹ Leuites, euen those which ought to haue bin ỹ mirrors of al pitie & louingkindnes. Euen the Priests whō God had dedicated to himselfe were neuertheless appointed to be the executers of ỹ rigor. And vppon whom? Euen vppon their owne kinsfolke, and they might not beare with them. Seeing then that we see this: let vs learne that such as do Iustice, (condicionally that they intermingle not their owne affections and reuenges, but indeuour to serue God & to execute the charge that is committed vnto them,) do sanctifie their hands in so doing, and the rigour which they vse is cōmendable. That is to say, if they haue compassion vpon ỹ poore creatures that perish: then ỹ rigour of theirs being so qualified, is an acceptable sacrifice vnto God. And on the contrarie part, if we doe but stirre one finger vpon displeasure for any wrong that is done vnto vs, yea or be but prouoked to grunt at them ỹ shall haue mist vsed vs: by and by it is murther before God. And so let vs learne, not to seeke fond excuses to reuenge our selues, vnder pretēce ỹ God hath told vs that the wicked must be destroyed and rooted out: but let vs haue a good and well stayed zeale, so as we ouershoot not our selues to say that we may step forth to do this or ỹ on their own heads, but ỹ they must tarie til God haue giuē sentence, and then execute the same, as we see is said of it in this text. Thus we see in effect what we haue to remember, cōcerning the rooting out of those whō God knowing to be past amendment, would not suffer to welter any lōger in their own dung, bicause he had borne with them ynough and too much alreadie.

Exod.32.29

And it is said expresly, *God hath deliuered them into thy hand to put them to death.* This is a watchword which he giueth to his people, to the intent they should the willinglier obey this commandement. As if he should say, he that will giue you the victorie, willeth you to deale so. And is it not reason [then that ye should do it?] Yes, for how should wee vse Gods giftes, but according to his will? So then, Moses confirmeth the doctrine that he setteth forth to the people: as if he should say, Looke about thee, thou must not dispose after thine owne pleasure, of them whō thou shalt ouercome. For if thou spare them vnder colour ỹ thou hast subdued them, and that they be in thy hand, & that ỹ hast conquered thē: it will cost thee right deare. For commeth the victorie of thy self? No: but it is thy God which hath deliuered them into thy hand. And for proofe therof, these nations are stronger and mightier than thou, yea and no in nomber. How then could you discomfite them, if your God ouermaistred them not, & were not your Captain, & fought not for you? If the victorie were not giuen you from heauen: how could you obtaine it? Nowe then, come not here to make your vauntes, and to say, wee may now dispose of the victorie as wee list our selues. For it commeth of God, and therefore he must beare all the sway, and you must vse such humilitie, as he may bee obeyed, and honoured for the thing which you knowe to come of him. Thus we see now the intent of Moses.

And hereby we be warned, that in all things which GOD putteth into our handes, we must beware that wee take not too great libertie, to vse his benefites at our owne pleasure. For it is good reason that hee shoulde alwayes haue so much credite with vs, as to shewe vs the lawfull vse of his benefites. As howe? Let vs take ỹ commoneſt example of eating and drinking. When God hath giuen a man abundance of worldly goods, hee must not forget him to whom he is beholdē for them. For if he say, this is mine, I will doe with it as I list: it is a defrauding of God of the right that hee reserueth to himselfe. It is true that wee may well terme the thinges ours which he hath giuen vs: howbeit, that is with condition that they must alwaies remaine at his deuotion, and wee vse them sobrely and modestly as I haue saide afore, so as hee

may still be acknowledged to bee the Lord and maister of them.

Nowe were this well obserued, wee woulde not vnhallowe Gods benefites after such sort as wee see most men doe. For there is no questioning whether GOD haue permitted or forbidden such a thing: but as soone as men haue power ouer it, by and by they thinke it is lawfull to doe with it what they list. And who shall let vs, say they? If thou finde none vppon earth to set himselfe against thee and to let thee: GOD can well ynough skill to call thee to account for thy stacklinesse, in that thou submittest not thy selfe vnto him, nor referrest to him the thinges that he hath giuen thee, to say that he shall alwayes ouerrule thee. So then let vs mark well this doctrine, namely that for as much as GOD sheweth himselfe liberall towardes vs, and bestoweth his benefites vppon vs: wee bee tyed and bound with so much the straiter bond, to doe him homage for the thinges that he hath put into our handes, that is to say, to vse them accordingly as his word will beare. That is another point.

Now Moses addeth immediatly, *Thou shalt not make any Alyance with them. Thou shalt not giue them thy Children in mariage. For if thou giue thy sonne in maryage to a daughter of the enemie, or to any of thyne enimies: thou will turne away his hart, and drawe him to superstition and idolatrie: & then will the wrath of thy God be kindled vppon thee, and thou shalt bee rooted out.* Heere our Lorde addeth an other commaundement, which is that the Amorrhytes should not haue any league or alliance with his people. Hee had saide afore, Thou shalt destroy all. And why? Because hee had tolde them howe it was his will (as I saide afore) that that Land should be reserued to himselfe. And surely we see what befell his people, when they became negligent in executing this commaundement. For notwithstanding any thing that GOD had spoken to them, yet they forbore to conquer the Land which hee had promised them. This is ynough (quoth they), let vs holde our selues quiet, and let vs not spend al our life in warre. And so by that meanes they left a great number of that people aliue. But what came of it? They became as thorns in their sides, yea and as pricks in their eys. Now then the reward which the Israelites had for not dooing the thing which God had commaunded them: was, that by leauing those idolatrous people aliue, and by intermingling themselues with thē, they felt them to bee as thornes to pricke them and to pricke out their eyes. For the enemies of God did bring the wretched Iewes into such captiuitie, that they were ouerloded with the yoke of bondage, and there was no man that succoured them, vntill they had languished long time therein. And it is good reason that GOD shoulde pay vs in such coyne, when wee will needes bee more louing and friendly than hee. Wee see what was sayde to Achab concerning Benhadad King of Syria, that bycause he had not punished the partie whome GOD had commaunded to bee punished, hee should receyue the punishment vppon his owne head. Thou wouldest not punish him (sayth the Prophet;) and therefore must thou answere for him in his stead, and bee his borrowe. And in deede, it is not for nought that men doe commonly vse this prouerbe, Saue a theefe from the gallowes, and he will helpe to hang thee. This prouerbe serueth not onely to condemne the vnthankefulnesse of such as haue receyued good at mens handes: but also to verifie the iust punishment of GOD: that is to wit, that if a man haue saued an offender by some wicked practises eyther for fauour, or for fond pitie, or for vaine glorie, and so hindered Iustice: he himselfe must answere in his stead, and the partie that was saued from the gibbet, must helpe to leade him thither from whence himselfe was discharged. And when it falleth out so: wee must vnderstande that it it of Gods woorking. So then yee see howe GOD hath shewed by effect, that it was no small offence, that the Lande which hee had dedicated to his owne seruice shoulde be still defyled with such abhominations, and that Idolaters should bee mingled with the people which ought to haue bin holy.

Howbeit although the doctrine that hath beene set downe alreadye, might suffice: yet notwithstanding here GOD sheweth moreouer, that his commaunding that those Nations shoulde not bee reserued nor suffered to liue, was not for naught. Why so? For if they liue with you (sayeth hee) you may acquaint your selues with them, and if yee make any allyaunce with them, beholde it is a plague, beholde it is a contageous disease that will come vppon you and your offspring, so as ye shalbe corrupted and growe out of kind: and in the ende that will cause you to bee rooted out, and GODS vengeaunce which lay vppon that people will lyghte vppon you, bycause ye haue not executed his iudgement as hee commaunded you. That in effect is the thing that is conteyned heere. And wee haue a good lesson to gather vppon this text: that is to wit, not to haue to doe with the wicked sorte, and with the despysers of God, according to this saying of Sayncte Paules, that wee must not drawe the yoke with the vnbeleeuers. For hee vseth the similitude of Oxen cuppled together. The yoke holdeth them so together, that looke which way the one draweth, the other must needes followe. In like case is it with men: They that fall into familiaritie with the wicked, Doe cupple themselues with them, so as they bee led out of the way and marred by them, insomuch that whereas they weere as little Godes beefore, nowe they become starke Diuelles. Therefore let vs beware wee mingle not our selues with the despysers of GOD and with the wicked, vnlesse wee intende to become lyke them. Yet notwithstanding theire are some to bee seene which are so fine headded, that they will make God a lyer.

For they beare me in hand that they may haunt the company of wicked men, & yet keepe themselues sound from all corruption. Yea, but it is a token that they doe ill knowe themselues, when they beare themselues in hand that they be far other than God hath reported them to bee. Behold, God warneth vs of our frailtie, and telleth vs that if wee keepe companie with the wicked, they shall rather drawe vs to euill, than we shall bring them backe to good: and therefore it behoueth vs to keepe vs out of their companie. And if we thinke the contrarie: what wil come of it? In the ende wee shall finde that all our weening was but fondnesse and follie: and therefore let vs rather learne to obey God.

But heere it might be demaunded whether it be not lawfull for the faithfull to haue any company with the wicked. I told yee already that we must not goe beyond the bondes that God hath set. God giueth vs leaue to indeuour as much as is possible for vs, to bring them backe againe which are out of ye way of saluatiõ. For as for the thinges that were spoken concerning the Amorrhytes and the people that were their neighbours: they take not place so rigorously nowe dayes, as though God gaue vs the sworde in our hand, to slea all that were against vs: but euery of vs must haue an eye to his owne state, and to the charge which God hath committed vnto him. Magistrates are armed with the sworde, to punish those whom God bringeth to their handes, and to put this doctrine in vre. Let vs looke among vs what the holy Scripture telleth vs: namely that wee should bee fayne to get vs out of the world, if wee shoulde not in any wise bee conuersant with the wicked. For why? The whole earth is full of them, and therefore we must nedes dwell with them. But after what maner? In such sort as we haue neither acquaintaunce nor familiaritie with them. For those are the yokes that cupple vs togither. When men fall to eating and drinking with the wicked, and creepe into acquaintance with them, and become friendes to them: it is not possible but that they must be corrupted, and God offended with it. That is a thing which we haue to marke concerning this text. Neuertheless, if we be in companie with the wicked: let it be for necessities sake, and so soberly as they may not bee able to infect vs with their naughtines, nor by any meanes turne vs aside from the right way, or frõ the feare of God and honest behauiour of lyfe. Lo how farre foorth we may be conuersant with the wicked. But to intangle our selues with them, and to haue familiar acquaintance with them, is a manifest tẽpting of God. And if we say there is such strength & stedfastnes in vs as they can not winne vs: wee deceiue our selues. Verily as who should say that God knoweth vs not better than wee our selues doe. Is it not a diuelish ouerweening when wee goe to worke after that fashion? And specially when wee fall to contracting of mariages with them, is it not as it were a plundging of our selues into naughtinesse? If a man see a dispiser of God which hath a daughter like hir father, and hee goes and matcheth himselfe with hir: is it not as good as an vtter renouncing of God? I goe and giue my daughter and to whome? To a wicked man, to a naughtipacke that hath not one sparke of honestie in him, whose life is wholy out of order. I make the silly shepe a pray, and cast it into the wolues throte: and what a cruelrie is that? Is it not all one, as if I sacrificed my daughter vnto Moloch? Yes: for he draweth hir away from obedience to God, to put hir into the hand of the deuill, and to turne hir vnto all naughtinesse. Againe, if a man match his sonne with a yong woman that is euill conditioned and an idolatresse, in whome hee seeth no religion nor vertue: is it not as good as if he should goe poison his sonne? True it is that the wife (to mennes seeming) hath not authoritie ouer her husband: But yet it is a deadly plague for a man to be matched with a wicked wife. For surely one woman of naughty behauiour, shall rather mar ten men, than ten good husbands shall win one leawd woman that is set vpon wickednesse. And that doth experience shewe. The wife shall sooner marre hir husband by hir allurementes and temptations I wot not how: than the husband shal reclaime his wyfe, and bring hir backe againe to good. And therefore let vs not thinke it straunge, that God should tell the Iewes heere, that if they giue their sonnes and daughters to the Amorrhytes, Hethites, Chananites, Heuites, Iebusites, and such like people: they should by and by bee turned away to idolatry.

Rom. 13. 4. & 1. Pet. 2. 14

1. Cor. 5. 10.

And heereunto he addeth a threat, *That they shalbe rooted out*: and that is according to that which I haue sayde already. For it doeth them to vnderstand, that God will be continually among them. In deede it was a woord of singular ioy, that God would dwell among them: for they might call vppon him at their neede, and when they were distressed they might feele that he was at hande with them, and therefore that they needed not to feare their enemies. But yet for all that, it behoued them to know, that God being so neere vnto them, would not suffer himselfe to be dispised. And therefore let vs beare away this lesson, that now specially seeing God hath vouchsafed to giue vs his word, whereby he assureth vs that he wil be neere at hand to vs, yea and that he will haue vs to bee his temples to dwell in by his holy spirite: let vs learne I say, to giue our selues in such wise vnto him, that whereas there are sinnes and infirmities in vs, (as in deede there are mo than is requisite) it may please him to correct them, and rid vs of them from day to day. And forasmuch as hee hath taken vs vnder his protection, yea and made his dwelling place among vs: let vs bee stirred vp by meanes thereof, to liue in so much the greater awe, seeing he is become so neighbourly and familiar vnto vs.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs so to feele the, as wee may learne to mislike of our selues for them, and as this cursed ouerweening may no more beare sway in vs to make vs liue after our

ownes

owne liking, but that we may forsake our owne fleshly reason and wisedome, and couet nothing but to please him in all pointes and all respectes: and that seeing he hath vouchsafed to shoule vs out from the wicked, and to deliuer vs from their corruptions, wee may learne to sanctifie our selues wholly vnto him, and to profite more and more in his feare, to the end that his glorie may shine forth in vs, & we be more & more confirmed in his free adoption, wherethrough hee hath chosen vs to be his childre & heires for our Lord Iesus Christs sake. That it may please him to graue this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Friday the second day of August. 1555.

The Lij. Sermon which is the seconde vpon the seuenth Chapter.

5 But thus shall yee doe vnto them. You shall beate downe their altars, and breake their pillours: yee shall heawe downe their groues, and burne their Images with fire.

6 For thou art a holy people to the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be his peculiar people aboue al the nations of the earth.

7 The Lord hath not set his loue vppon you, nor chosen you bycause ye were moe in number than all other nations, seeing you be the least of all nations.

8 But for the loue which the Lord beareth you, to keepe the othe which hee sware to your fathers, the Lord hath brought you foorth with a strong hand, and deliuered you from the house of bondage, euen from the hand of Pharao King of Egypt.

YEsterday wee sawe howe God forbad his people to aly themselues in any wise with the Infidels, and specially with ỹ people that dwelt in the lande of Chanaan. Forasmuch as it was said that God had chosen that lande to the intent that his name should be worshipped there: it was his will to haue it purged from all the filthinesse and infections, which had reigned there too long time afore. And after hee hath spoken of the folke, he addeth also that he will haue all ỹ tokens and markes of ydolatrie that were in the countrie put quite away. For like as it behoued the Iewes to worship God purely, without intermedling any of the superstitions of the heathen: so did it also behoue them to keepe the order in such wise as God had set it downe, and to put away al things that were contrarie to the true religion and seruice of God, so as there might bee no mingling nor corruption. Wee see now in effect, that the doctrine which is conteined here, is that forasmuch as God had giuen his people the land of Chanaan: hee would haue it cleare from all abhominations, and his seruice to be so set vp, as all the ceremonies of the heathen and vnbeleeuers might be taken away, and nothing be mingled with it besides his owne Lawe. And ỹ is the cause why hee speaketh expresly of *Altars and Groues*. For as wee see that men haue no end nor measure in deuising of fashions to serue God withall: there was not that Groue but they made some deuotion in it. And like as men builded Abbeyes, Pryories, and Chappels in the Popedome: so went the worlde among the paynims, and the Iewes followed the same trade, as we see. But that was not for want of warning: for God had prouided sufficiently for them, that they might not set their minds vpon such paltry. But what? Hereby it appeareth howe harde it is to holde men in the pure simplicitie of Gods seruice. Neuertheless, howsoeuer men fare, it is tolde vs here, that such as will serue God vncorruptly, must abstaine from the thinges that are deuised and forged by ydolaters, and stick to the pure doctrin which God hath ordeined, and not adde any thing to it of their owne, or which they find here & there, or which ỹ world hath folishly brought in: All those thinges must bee laide downe, if we will serue God purely. But yet let vs mark ỹ there were two reasons why God commanded the Iewes to breake downe the heathen mens altars, & to destroy their ydols. The one was to the ende that his people shoulde not bee prouoked and tempted to wickednes & superstition by looking vpon them: for we bee so fraile, ỹ we be caried away as soone as we spie any marke of superstition. I said euen now that it is a harde thing to hold men fast in pure obedience to god as in respect of his seruice. Why so? For their eares doe alwayes itch to heare some newe doctrine: & although none be brought them from elsewhere, yet their minds are so rouing, ỹ they euer couet some newe thing or other. Now then if wee haue any occasion to tempt vs vnto euill, or to any corruption of Gods seruice: wee bee ouertaken by and by. God therefore perceiuing that his people might bee inclined to ydolatrie, and that they would yeelde to it out of hand assoone as they spied any occasion: willed them to wipe away all such thinges. Beware (saieth hee) that yee suffer not anye of the markes of the ydola-

Deut. 13.8. & 13.15.

ydolatries that haue reigned hitherto there: for if any of them come in your sight, ye shalbe as it were rauished, and ye will be following of them. So then, suffer not any thing that may make you to stumble, or that may comber you, so as the way shoulde not be leuell before you. Haue you none other signes than those which I haue appointed you, and let them serue to confirme you in my worde. Let the thinges which I haue taught you bee as a burning Lampe to giue you light: and if yee haue neede of helpes, let the Sacraments and Ceremonies conteined in my Lawe suffice you: but take heede to your selues that yee haue no stumblingblocke. For though ye haue nothing to hinder your going on in the right way: yet may yee euen of your owne nature turne aside from it: and what will yee then doe, if any occasion of euill be offered you? That is one poinct.

Another is, That Gods will was to haue that Lande as it were dedicated to himselfe, and y his people should shew how much they abhorred ydols, by suffering none of the things to remaine which the heathen men had kept before. God then ment to trie the zeale of the Iewes, when he commaunded them to make cleane riddance of the ydols: and by that meanes he intended to inure them to abhorre ydols, and all things that belonged to them: so as they might shewe not onely that they purposed to worship the onely one God, but also that they could not abide his glorie to bee any whit abated. Nowe we see the two reasons that God had an eye vnto in this place. And nowe must wee apply them to our owne benefite. For although some woulde restraine this to the Iewes, as though it belonged not to vs in these dayes: yet was it not Gods intent to speake for any one time onely. And indeede, (as hath beene declared in the fifth chapter,) let vs looke into our owne hartes, and euery man examine himselfe, whether hee finde himselfe more stedfast and strong to withstande ydolatrie, than the Iewes and other Nations were. For surely that cursed seede is so rooted in all men, as there is none of vs all but hee may keepe a schoole of superstition, without hauing any schoolemaster to teach him. Wee be so frowarde, that although no bodie seduce vs, yet we rather tende still to some corruption, than holde our selues in the pureneſſe of gods seruice. What is to bee done then, seeing that ydolatrie is so rooted in our nature? If occasions be offered to drawe vs away, is it not like as when nettes are spred before birds? And wee bee so vnconstant, that we tumble into them immediatly. And therefore as for them that thinke themselues to haue such constancie & strength, that although they haue images, Chappels, and such other thinges, yet they shall not hirt them at all: they tempt God, and experience shewes it to bee so. Therefore there is no better way, than to know our infirmitie, and vpon the knowledge thereof, to vse the remedie that God hath giuen vs. If a man perceiue himselfe to haue a weake heade, so as he is not able to beare three glasses of wine but he shall be ouertaken: if hee drinke without discretion, is he not as badde as a swine? Doeth he not tempt God? Ought he not to thinke vpon the default that is in him, and to preuent it? Yes. Nowe it is certaine that in this behalfe we haue so weake braines, that we shal by and by be made dronke with superstition, yea and as good as bewitched with superstition, so as there wilbe no discretion in vs, but wee shall goe on still to secke further occasions and meanes of it: and is not that a manifest spiting of God? It is a poinct therefore which ought to bee well marked, that GOD knowing the weakeneſſe which is in vs, is not willing that wee shoulde haue images, altars, and such other thinges to seduce vs, but that all such thinges shoulde bee wyped out from among vs, to the intent there may not bee any thing to hinder vs from giuing our selues simplie vnto God.

But nowe let vs come to the seconde reason. It is not ynough for the faithful to refreine from all ydolatrie: but they must also shewe that they abhorre and hate all thinges that are against Gods seruice: And to the vttermost of their power they must indeuour to haue them all wyped away, so as the remembrance of them may be rooted out, that they may neuer bee spoken of any more. For else what zeale haue we to the honour of God, when we see ydols set vp in steed of him, and looke vppon thinges that serue to corrupt and deface the true and pure religion? If wee doe but laugh at them, and take them as small trifles, or as childrens games: is it not a token that we esteem the honour of our God no more than a thing of nothing? For if our desire to haue God glorified, were as earnest as it ought to be: surely it would wound our hearts to see ydols so set vp in his place, and to see men bereaue him of his maiestie to attribute the same to deade creatures, and that so precious and holy a thing as religion is, should be so marred, corrupted & turned vpside down. When these marks come before our eyes, surely if we haue any one droppe of good zeale, it must needes vex vs and greeue vs: and wee must to the vttermost of our power deface all those signes and marks of ydolatrie, and cause Gods honour to be maintained vnappayred. And indeede, when hee requireth that wee shoulde make confession of our faith vnto him: this also is comprehended therein. For as the mouth ought to vtter what is in our hart, that is to wit, that wee haue but the onely one God which hath redeemed vs: if wee yeeld him such record with our mouth: our outward doings must also bee answerable thereunto, so as both feete and handes tende that way. [If we were at that point,] wee woulde not wittingly and willingly suffer any superstitions, if it lay in vs to abolish them. But yet there is a thing in it, which is that Moses commaundeth the people expressly, to doe it when they bee come into the Lande which God had appointed thé to inioy for their inheritance. For if we be in a straunge Countrie where wee haue no authoritie: it is not in our power to put downe ydols, neither doeth this commaundement stretch thereunto. It is true that in passing through places where ydolatrie is

is vsed, we must sigh and mourne, and thinke our eyes to bee as it were defiled with the sight of such wickednesse contrary to the honour of god, so as it must greeue vs and vex vs at the heart that we bee driuen to see such sights. And for asmuch as our hands be tyed, and we haue not any soueraintie or authoritie in the place or Countrie where such superstitions reigne: wee haue no more to doe, but to pray God to put to his mightie hande, and to destroye it euerywhit: and in the meane while to holde our selues quiet. But if we haue authoritie: then behold, Gods voyce crieth out, vp vp, such abhominations must not reigne any longer. When yee bee come to the Countrie which your God giueth you to possesse: then let all such geere bee put downe.

Nowe then, out of this text wee must drawe a rule: which is that according as God giueth abilitie, wee must indeuour to haue all ydolatrie and all the tokens therof vtterly abolished both publikely and priuately. As howe? When a Countrie is at libertie, and our Lorde hath planted his word there: such as beare sway and haue authority, must find ỳ meanes that al such things as haue corrupted the true religion, may be abolished & brought to nought. If they doe it not: it is a negligence which God condemneth. And if a man will put downe ydolatrie: it is not ynough to saye, no man shall worshippe ydolles anye more: but all thinges which imbaced the pureneſſe of the Religion, must bee quite and cleane wyped away. As for example, if men should keepe still the Altars that were in the time of the diuelish Masse: what a thing were it? Wherto serued they, but to committe abhominable trecherie against God, so as there shoulde remaine neither faith nor feare towardes him, so long as such abhomination indured? The Altars serued to sing their Masses on. By meanes whereof the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ was vtterly defaced, in spyte of the redemption that he had wrought. Insomuch that if it bee admitted that Iesus Christ was sacrificed dayly: it is all one as to reiect the benefite that was purchased vs by his death and passion.

Heb.9.26.

Nowe then if the Altars were suffered to stande still: were it not a reteyning still of some memoriall of the leawdnesse which ought to mislike vs? Yes: for otherwise what were our zeale? When wee call to remembrance that wee haue hearde Masse in times past, and had cast our selues into that dungeon: wee ought to bee sorie and to craue pardon for it, and to bee abashed at the blindnesse whereinto wee were faine, wherethrough wee became so beastlie, as to goe seeke our saluation by renouncing the redemption that was purchased for vs long agoe by our Lorde Iesus Christ, and to make our selues partakers of so diuelish a thing: I say wee ought to bee afraide in our selues to thinke of it. And if the Altars shoulde haue stoode still, had it not beene as it were a spiting of God to play mockeholyday with him after that fashion, that whereas wee had shrunke away from Christianitie, wee bee neuer a whit sorie for it, no nor greeued at all to see the badges thereof? And in verie deede the Iewes were cast in the teeth with their reteyning still of those thinges, as who shoulde say they weltered still in their owne filthinesse. And if a leawde woman that had giuen her bodie to dishonestie for a time, shoulde afterwarde reioyce to see still the markes of her whooredome: were it not a signe that shee repented not at all? Yes: and euen that is the cause why this exception is purposely added, that when the kinges went about to serue God, and had beaten downe the ydolles, yet they belde still some relikes of them, and this blemish sticketh expressly vppon them, that God misliked them: as if hee shoulde saye, they were not worthy to bee allowed without exception, but bee driuen to beare this marke of reproch alwayes in their faces, that they had not throughly clensed the lande from the former superstitions, when they left the groues standing still. If a man say, why, and was that so euill a thing? Are not trees the creatures of God? Yes: but when men shall haue misused them and put them to such heathenish vncleannes as to spyte God with them: then must they bee wyped quite and cleane away. Men must not take ouermuch libertie in that case: for our nature is too much giuen to euill of it selfe, (as I saide afore) without anye inticing of it thereunto. Thus yee see howe wee ought generally to indeuour to abolishe all superstitions, and all things that may serue thereto.

1.Kin.15.14 and 22.44. & 2.king.12 3.& 14.4.

And likewise particularly, let euerie man looke well to his owne house, that hee retaine nor any thing which may couer any wickednesse, or which is not fully agreeable and conformable to the simplicitie of Gods worde. For as manie as dispence with themselues in that case, shall feele it turne to their ruine in their ende. Wee see howe it befell to Gedeon who was chosen of God, and by whom so many noble deedes were done. Onely because he made an Ephod and caused a certaine deuotion to be set vp: there insued great destruction after his death. And after the same manner wee see howe a great number doe keepe still their chappels. If they haue any Castle or great house, there must bee a chappell for a memoriall of their auncetors, in remembrance that there was such a thing, and such an antiquitie. They then which will needes haue some remnant after that fashion for vaineglorie, must feele at length that they haue couered a fire, which shall consume themselues and their children, as the deede of Gedeon was the cause of the vndoing and destruction of his linage, as I saide afore. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that whersoeuer GOD giueth vs power, wee muste so hate all the markes of superstition, as wee must doe what wee can to wype them out ỳ they may no more be had in remembrance. And let vs alwayes bethinke vs of the two reasons which I alledged before. Now for cõfirmation hereof, Moses addeth that

Iudg.8.27.

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the people of the Iewes are holy, and that they ought to dedicate themselues wholly vnto God: euen because they had beene chosen (saith he) *to bee a peculiar people in the whole worlde*. Whereas he saith that the Iewes are a holy people: hee meaneth that they ought to be separated from the Heathē and Infidels. For if wee take example at those to whom God hath not graunted such grace as hee hath done to vs: is it not as good as a thrusting of the priuiledge vnder foote which hee hath giuen vs? Beholde, God sheweth vs his will, and hee vouchsafeth to haue his worde preached vnto vs: and is that to no purpose? is it for nought? Whereas God commeth downe vnto vs, and communicateth himselfe so familiarly vnto vs: doeth that honour which he doth vs, and that grace which hee vouchsafeth to vse towards vs, serue to no vse nor profite? Surely it ought at leastwise to sanctifie vs vnto him, that is to say, to make vs redy to say, Alas Lord, we were miserable creatures, and thou vouchsafest to retaine vs to thy selfe: therefore behold, we be here, gouerne thou vs, and let vs be thy flocke. But nowe if we fall to defiling of our selues with the superstitions of the heathen: is it not a renouncing of the priuiledge that God had giuen vs? Is it not a forsaking of the couenant whereby hee had knit and vnited himselfe vnto vs? Yes. That then is the cause why Moses addeth heere, that the Iewes are a holy people. As if hee should say, Looke to your selues, for God hath shouled you out from all Nations, and hee hath called you, euen by shewing you that you shall bee his heritage, accordingly also as he hath giuen him selfe to you. Nowe then if yee goe and take example at these blinde wretches, so as ye alledge: Our neighbours doe so and so: what a thing is that? Your neighbours are straungers to God, they be as wilde beasts, God hath not vouchsafed to behold them with pitie and mercy, to deliuer them from the brutish ignorance wherein they be. To be short, yee haue them as mirrors of Gods wrath and rigour. Al they that perish do shewe you what you were, and what you shoulde be stil, if god had not reached you his hand. Now therefore acknowledge that benefite, and take no more example at those whom God hath forsaken, and to whom he hath not graated the like fauour as he hath done to you. Thus much concerning the Iewes. Now remaineth that we apply this doctrine to our owne vse.

Eph. 2. 12.

What is it that maketh vs a holy people to our God? Euen his worde. For it is saide, you be cleane because of the worde which I haue preached vnto you. Ye see then that the mean whereby God sanctifieth vs to himselfe, that is to say, draweth vs out of the common perdition of all the children of Adam, and taketh vs to be of his owne housholde: is his vttering of his will vnto vs. And so to bee short, it is (as yee woulde saye) a solemne consecration or hallowing of a people by God, when hee vouchsafeth to haue his worde preached vnto them. Wee neede not goe seeke the gewgawes of poperie to make a dedication or hallowing: for the meane whereby God dedicateth his temples, is by sending his

Iohn 15. 3.

ministers to preach his doctrine faithfully: and it is also the meane wherby we be hallowed vnto him. Nowe he hath graunted vs this grace: Wee see howe the wretched Papistes are gone astray, and runne gadding ouer the fields without keeping of any way. They hop, they trippe, they stumble, and all to their owne ruine. They haue no light, but are as blinde wretches in the mids of darkenesse: and in the meane while, behold, the Lord our God maketh his daysonne of righteousnes to shine vppon vs, for Iesus Christ sheweth himselfe to bee our redeemer. Sith it is so: what ought we to doe? Ought we not at leastwise to consider, to what end and purpose Gods worde is preached vnto vs, and euery of vs to gather vnder his hande to say, Lord, rule thou vs? Yes: but what? There are verie fewe which thinke vpon that. For we would be more afraide to defile our selues with the filthinesse of papistrie than we bee, if this doctrine were well printed in vs, that seing God hath separated vs from them, if wee intermedle our selues with them newagaine, it is all one as if wee mingled heauen and earth together, of purpose to turne the whole order of nature vpside downe, & to make a hotchpotch of all things, that there might bee a horrible confusion. For surely there ought to bee a greater difference betweene Gods children and the vnbeleeuers, than there is distance betweene heauen and earth.

True it is that we must be faine to be mingled together one with another as long as we liue in this worlde: but yet is it not saide for nought, that Gods children are citizens of heauen and pilgrims in the worlde. Although they bee conuersant here beneath: yet must they not be tyed to it, but they must goe on still as in a straunge countrie, knowing that their abidingplace is aboue, and that God hath chosen thē with condition that they should goe thither. Therefore when such as haue knowen Gods trueth, doe fall to mingling themselues with ydolaters, and will not bee separated from them: it is all one as if they went about to peruert the whole order of nature. But this doctrine hath more needs to bee throughly well minded, than to bee preached with long speech. The thing then which Moses ment by these wordes, is this: Yee bee a people that is hallowed to the Lorde: that is to say, Although we were of Adams cursed race, although we came of wretched Infidels: yet notwithstanding our Lorde hath vouchsafed to drawe vs to him, and to choose vs to bee of his housholde: and therefore it is good reason that wee shoulde be separated from the rest. Hath hee done so, by making vs partakers of the doctrine of his Gospel? Then his wil is to haue vs dedicated to himselfe, and that wee shoulde bee his temples. So then let vs looke well to it, that wee continue in this state, and that we doe not wilfully disanull Gods adopting of vs, nor consent to any thing that may put vs out of his house. For when wee forsake Gods Gospell through falshood, wee doe what wee can to cut our selues off from the bodie of Iesus Christ, and to disherite our selues of the heauenly kingdom,

and

and to banishe our selues from it, when wee make no conscience nor remorse of intermingling our selues with ydolaters and with their defilings. Whatsoeuer hee is that giueth himselfe the bridle to goe to the superstitions of the Papistes, and to communicate with them: it is alone as if he canceled the deede of the inheritance which God hath giuen him. And ỳ deede is not written in paper nor in parchment: but it is sealed by God in our harts, and it is his will that seales and markes therof should also bee in our bodies. Then [in so doing] we blot out the writing wherby God adopted vs for his children & heires, and (as I said) we banish our selues out of his kingdom, and cut off our selues from the body of our Lorde Iesus Christ. For if we be members of Gods son, we must not goe & do homage to ydols, nor defile our bodies (which are ỳ temples of the holy ghost,) with such filthines & abhomination. But as oft as we com to heare Gods word, we must thinke thus with our selues: Behold, my God hath made me holy, that is to say, he hath separated me from such as are ouerwhelmed in their owne vncleannes: and shall I nowe worke him spite? What a condemnation wil it be to me, ỳ my God hath so hallowed me, and I on the otherside doe vnhallowe and defile my selfe with all leawdnes, reiecting ỳ priuiledge that he hath giuen me? Is it not a making of war against him, when I will needs after that sort disappoint the good, which hee had offered me of his owne infinite mercy? Yes.

And Moses addeth expresly yet further, *That it was to the intent that this people should be separated from all the rest of the world*. If God graunted his grace commonly & without exception to al people, to haue his worde preached euerywhere: yet ought we to be sanctified vnto him, bicause he taketh vs out of the corruption of Adam, and from the ruine wherin al of vs are by nature. But when as he choseth one Nation, and alyeth himself to ỳ same, and in the meane while letteth all ỳ rest goe: it serueth to giue the greater beauty to his goodnes: like as nowadayes, our hauing of ỳ pure doctrine of ỳ Gospel, is as a corde whereby God draweth vs to him, and whereby he vouchsafeth to be made one w vs, as I said afore. The worlde seeth how he letteth the wretched papists run at rouers, so as their eys be stopped & they see not one whit, nay rather they turne quite & cleape away from the way of saluation. We see it. And what is to be done, but ỳ inasmuch as god setteth such beawty vpon his mercy: such comparison should make vs the willinger to serue him, & to liue the more warely, for feare of turning away from him, seeing he hath vochsafed to prefer vs before others, though wee haue not deserued it? But what? So farre are we vnable to profite our selues by such goodnes of God: ỳ we rather make it an occasion to take leaue & libertie to do euill. For whē we haue ỳ examples of the vnbeleeuers before our eyes: we thinke we may do the same things that they do. But that is far of from thinking vpon that which Moses saith here. Your god (saith he) hath sanctified you aboue al other nations of ỳ earth. As if he should say, Who be you? For ye be no better than other Nations: and yet neuertheles, your god hath vouchsafed to sanctifie you. Now therefore, be you the more carefull to bridle your selues, & to keepe you vndefiled, and meddle no more with the wretched vnbeleeuers ỳ are wholly giuen ouer to their owne vncleannes, because your God neuer drew them vnto him. Thus yee see why Moses compareth here ỳ Iewes expresly with ỳ heathen. Likewise in these days, forasmuch as God hath preferred vs before ỳ wretched papists, we must beware ỳ we walke the more circumspectly vnder his obedience, assuring our selues ỳ he wil not haue such a benefite despised, as is his vouchsafing to take vs into his house, and to communicate himselfe so familiarly vnto vs as he doth. But yet to expresse this grace ỳ better, Moses addeth *that this people was chosen*. As if he should say, indeede it is an inestimable dignitie and nobleneſse for you to bee chosen to be the people of God, so as no Nation of the earth can boast themselues to haue beene exalted to such degree of honor: but yet beware that you be not proud of it. For your sanctifying at Gods hand, came not of your owne purchase, but of Gods choosing of you: it came of him. Therefore let the praise thereof be yeelded vnto him: & assure your selues ye be the more beholden to him, in that he hath shewed such mercy towards you. Wee see then ỳ the word *Choose* which Moses setteth down here, serueth to magnifie Gods grace ỳ was spoken of before, to ỳ intent ỳ the people should be the more prouoked, & (as it were) rauished to serue God. And for the same purpose he setteth down a long discourse. *Wherfore is it* (saith he) *that your God hath loued you, & knit himself so you?* For this maner of speeche, (namely ỳ God knitteth himself to men) importeth very much. And why doeth he so, saieth he? What hath moued him therto? Was it for your owne sakes? Or did you put your selues foreward vnto it? Was it bicause ye were a greater nation than any other? Was it in respect of ỳ, that God was moued to choose you rather thā any of the others? Had you deserued it on your part? No no: but *it was* (saieth he) *bicause hee loued you*. Nowe this worde *Loue* importeth here, first that God respected not any thing in men why hee should choose them, but that his owne free loue sufficed him in that behalfe. He loued you, that is to say, seeke not any cause or worthinesse in your selues: bee contented that our Lorde hath chosen you of his owne free goodnesse before al others, though ye were no better thā they. Now we see all Moseses meaning.

And although this matter cannot be discoursed throughout, yet must we note, ỳ Moses spake here of Gods election, to the intent ỳ the people should be ỳ more humbled, and ỳ the same humbling of them should ingender an affection and zeale to serue God according as he was knowen to thē. Therefore when there is any talke of the grace ỳ God hath shewed vs in inlightening vs, & it is told vs that he hath adopted vs to bee his children & of his Church: wee must needes match this with it, ỳ our hauing of al these things is not by our owne purchase, nor for putting of

our ſelues foorth by any vertue or good minde ỳ was in vs: but through Gods ſeeking of vs at ſuch time as we turned our backs vpon him. Now by this meanes we be hũbled, & we haue need of it. For as ſoon as men haue any incling of any goodneſſe ỳ is in themſelues: they like wel of it & ſtand gaſing at their owne fethers like Peacockes: but in the meane while they conſider not, that they rob and bereaue God of the praiſe that is due to him. Therfore whenſocuer there is any ſpeaking of Gods grace, it is requiſite for vs to bee put in mind of this matter, to ỳ end we may not imagin our ſelues to haue deſerued aught on our owne ſide, or that God reſpected any good diſpoſition that was in vs: but aſſure our ſelues that nothing but his free loue moued him to doe it. When we be ſo humbled: then muſt we needs be ſpoyled of our owne reaſon, or elſe become ſtarke beaſts, if wee take not corage to ſerue God and to dedicate our ſelues wholly vnto him, to ſay, How happeneth it that wheras we were curſed and damned creatures, our God hath fought vs out, yea euen from the dungeons of death, & hath opened vs the gate of the kingdom of heauẽ, calling and drawing vs dayly thither: & yet in the meanwhile we be ſlothful in ſeruing him? And ſpecialy ſith we ſee ỳ whereas the moſt part of the world goeth to deſtruction, and the wretched Infidels are ſo blinded that they be let alone in the darkneſſe of their ignorance, God in the mean while watcheth early and late ouer vs: what ought we Ier. 31. 28. to do, when hee vſeth ſuch ſpeciall loue towards vs? Ye ſee then that this humility muſt leade vs to a care and warenes to ſerue God, and to gather our ſelues wholly vnder his wings, acknowledging ỳ the more we be bounde vnto him, the more we muſt ſhew by our deeds that we impute all to his mere goodnes, and are willing to yeeld him the praiſe thereof as he deſerueth. Thus yee ſee wherunto the things are to be referred which Moſes ſpeaketh heere.

And herewithall let vs marke, that whereas it is ſaid, *that the people [of Iſrael] were not the greateſt of other Nations:* vnder one kinde, he comprehended al the reſt. As if he ſhould ſay, there was neither dignitie nor worthineſſe in you, why God ſhoulde chooſe you rather than any other Nation. For it muſt be vtterly rooted out of our hearts, to imagine that God findeth any thing in vs, which may moue him to loue vs. For vntill ſuch time as men bee quite rid of ſelfeweening, they ſhall neuer be able to glorifie God as they ought to do. And although wee blaſe it not with open mouth, that there is ſome deſert or excellencie in vs: yet notwithſtanding we fall aſleepe in ſuch ſelfeſoothing, as we imagine that there is ſtill ſome value in our ſelues. And therfore it behoueth vs to enter purpoſely into our conſciences, and to cleanſe them in ſuch wiſe as wee leaue not any one drop of pride & preſumption there: to ỳ intent that whẽ we haue throughly ſerched and ſifted all that is in vs of our nature, wee may know there is not any thing that may purchace vs grace and fauor at Gods hand, nor that can be acceptable vnto him, but that wee be naked and vnpurueyed of all goodnes and glorie, and finally that we haue nothing in vs but vtter filth and vncleanneſſe. When examination is made after ỳ maner: then ſhall men bee diſpoſed to receiue Gods grace, and to glorifie him for it when they ſhall haue receiued it. Then let vs learne to vnderſtand wel, that the ſearching of all that euer is in vs to the hard bottome, (ſo as we ſoſter not any imagination of ſelfworthineſſe, but perceiue that God findeth vs vtterly vnhappy and accurſed, ſo as we might be vtterly forlorne and diſtayned, and wee haue not any thing of our own but ſuch as prouoketh Gods wrath and vengeance againſt vs:) commeth of the grace that god hath graunted vnto vs. When we be come to ỳ point: then muſt we come alſo to the loue that Moſes ſpeakes of here.

And to the intent to ſhewe the better, that the ſaid loue is freely beſtowed: he ſheweth out of what fountaine it ſpringeth. Euen of this (ſaith he), *that it is Gods will to performe the othe which he made to thy fathers.* And hereafter he will ſay, that their fathers alſo were choſen freely. But let it ſuffice vs that in this place God puteth the people in minde of the couenant that was made with Abraham, before the people, to whom he ſpeaketh, were borne. Hereby he ſheweth that the cauſe of our election, came not of our owne deſeruing. For what is it that wee did before wee were borne? If it bee ſaide that God forſawe what manner a ones we would be: yet did none of all that moue God to chooſe this people: for they were ſo hardhearted & ſtubborn a people, as hee coulde neuer weald them. What manner of ones did they ſhew themſelues to be at their going out of Egypt? Howe did they acknowledge Gods grace in ỳ deliuerance that he had wrought for them? The ſcripture yeeldeth vs record good ynough of it. And yet notwithſtanding God ceaſed not to take them ſtill for his people. Wherein he ment to ſhew vs, that his ytering of his goodnes towardes vs, is not in any reſpect of our deſeruings. And indeede, the holy ghoſt was not ſo ill minded, as to haue concealed ſuch a thing from vs, but that if our Lord had foreſeene any goodnes in vs, and ỳ the ſame had cauſed him to chooſe vs: hee woulde ſurely haue told vs of it. But what? As for ſuch as bable that God choſe vs according to his foreknowledge, that he knew we ſhould haue ſome good diſpoſition in vs: they ſhew themſelues to be worſe than beaſtes, foraſmuch as they conſider not that all men are alike, ſauing that God putteth his grace more into one than into another, and ỳ we muſt not imagine that we haue ſome thing I wote not what of our own. Who is he (ſaith S. Paul) which putteth the difference, to make thee excellenter than other men? It commeth not of our ſelues: then muſt we needs haue that making of God. And ſo it is not for nought, that Moſes telleth ỳ people, ỳ the onely cauſe why they were choſen was for ỳ God loued them, which loue made him to vtter ỳ ſame loue, euẽ before ſuch time as they to whõ he ſpak, were born or bred, ſo as he ſware aforehand to their fathers, ỳ he would take them for his people. Seeing it is ſo then, let vs know ỳ when we be beaten downe in our ſelues, we muſt con-

consider that the welspring and fountaine of our saluation, is the infinite goodnesse of our God, & that he ment not to regard our deserts, but to vse his owne free goodnes as we cal it, that is to say, not to sell any thing vnto vs. Neuertheless it was his will to loue vs. And wherefore? Because it pleased him. Nowe let men goe and surmise I wote not what causes in this case, for they shall confound all by it: but let vs take hold of the only good wil of God, in ỹ it pleased him to choose vs and to leaue others.

And now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, and to inducuour dayly to know them, that we may be sory for them and amend them: and that therewithal we may haue an eye to the couenant which he hath made with vs, to ỹ end to answere to his call, that we wander not heare and there like straye beasts, but that seeing he is willing to hold vs vnder his obedience, and to gather vs into his flock, wee may be satisfied vnto him by meanes of his word, which benefite it maye please him to make to preuaile in such wise in vs, as it may bee a furtherance to his glory, and wee be brought more & more to forsake the lusts of our flesh and of the worlde, & to offer our selues vnto him in sacrifice both aliue and dead: Aliue, that the power of his holy spirit may vtter it selfe in vs [by making vs] to followe his commaundements cheerefully: and deade, that we may be ready to goe out of this world, whensoeuer it shall please him to call vs hence. That it may please him to grant this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the third of August. 1555.

The Liij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the seuenth Chapter.

7. & 8. The Lord &c.

9 Knowe yee therefore that the Lord thy God is the God, [*euen*] the faithfull God which keepeth couenant and mercie with a thousand generations, to such as loue him and keepe his commaundements.

10 And yeeldeth payment vnto such as hate him before his face, to make them perishe. And hee will not forslowe to recompence him that hateth him [*euen*] to his face,

WE saw yesterday, that the cause why Moses saith here expressly, that God chose one certain people, & made not that grace common to all the world: was to humble those to whom god vttered himselfe, to the ende they should knowe that it befell them not for their desertes, nor through their owne purchase: but through the onely goodnesse of God. And that is the cause also why Dauid speaking of this people, saith, the sonne of Abraham Gods welbeloued, the seede of Iacob his chosen. Those two wordes are matched together, to shew that that people was shouled out from all other Nations, not for any worthinesse that was in them: but by reason of free election, and to expresse Gods goodnesse and loue towards vs the better: and therefore doeth he send vs wholly thither. Truth it is that in this place he speaketh of the generall election of the whole people, in that God had adopted them. And that is well worth the marking. For in calling Abraham, God extended the promise of saluation vnto his whole linage. Hee said vnto Abraham, I wilbe the God of thy linage after thee. Heere then is a generall election (as they terme it) of the whole people, inasmuch as God separated them from the rest of the world, telling them that hee tooke them for his inheritance and Church. And in very deede, the signe of circumcision was as a seale, to warrant al the offspring of that race, that God was their sauior: and so, that was such a grace as was common to all the children of Abraham. Howbeit, there is another second election or chosing, which is (as ye would say) streiter: namely, that out of ỹ same linage god chooseth whom he thinks good. And herein there is no contrariety. For we must consider ỹ degrees which the holy scripture setteth downe, when it speaketh of all mankind. It sheweth ỹ they be alienated or estranged from God, and consequently from the hope of saluation: by meanes wherof all men euen from ỹ greatest to the least, are damned. Now God draweth out of them whom he listeth. And to the intẽt his grace should be ỹ better knowen, he chose one linage. And whose linage? Euen the linage of one man in whom there was no hope of issue. For when God said to Abraham, I wilbe ỹ God of thy seede after thee: how many children & childrens children had he? He had not one, neither sonne nor daughter. He liued a long time after ere hee begate Isaac. He was old and drooping, and his wife was barren, so as there was no more hope of issue. And for ỹ same cause, whẽ the prophet Esay intẽded to vpbraid the Israelits w̃ their vnthankfulnes, & with their pride & lustines which they were in, by reason ỹ they were growen to so great a multitude: & contrariwise with their vnbeliefe when they were fewe in number: Looke backe

Psal. 103. 6.

Gen. 25. 3.

Esa. 51. 1, 2.

(saith he) to ỹ stone which you were hewen out of, look back to your wel head. What people had Abraham? He was all alone. And was your mother Sara fruitfull? Nay contrariwise God was faine to giue her a childe by myracle which shee neuer looked for, insomuch that it seemed incredible to her when she was told it. Seeing it is so: assure your selues (saith ỹ prophet) yee haue no cause to make any bragges, forasmuch as God hath shouled you out after that fashion. And for the same cause also doth Moses say in this text, If a man compare your state with the state of other Nations, he shall finde ỹ the other Nations are multiplyed by ỹ order of nature: but your father Abraham was all alone by himself, yea and an old man & drooping, & readie to creepe into his graue. Ye see then ỹ god chose a people which was not, of purpose to magnifie his free fauor & to make it the more manifest. Verily he accomplished ỹ thing which S. Paul speakes of in treating of the same Abraham: ỹ is to wit, God chose the thinges which were not, & called them forth to giue them their being. S. Paul telleth vs ỹ wee haue (as ye would say) a liuely picture in ỹ person of Abraham, to shew vs howe it is ỹ God maketh vs any thing, and exalteth vs to honor. For (saith he) what was Abraham? A poore creature halfe dead. Was his linage in any state? Did it florish at that time? No, but it was more likely that hee should neuer haue had any issue at all. Then let vs learn ỹ god guideth the things which are not, and bringeth them forth to giue them being: and so ỹ hope of the faithfull concerning their saluation, lieth not in themselues, but they look for it at Gods hand. As touching our selues, truely we be nothing: but God vttereth his power to giue vs being. And so ye see, ỹ through his goodnes we begin to hope for life euerlastingly in his kingdome. Thus then ỹ first degree of election, is ỹ God chose the linage of Abraham, notwithstanding ỹ it was forlorne as wel as all the rest of the world. And hauing done so, he stayed not with that grace: but forasmuch as a great nũber were estranged & as it were cut off frõ ỹ line of Abraham: he pulled backe also whom it pleased him.

Rom. 4. 17.

Rom. 9. 6. 7.

And that is the cause why S. Paul saieth, that all they which come of Abraham according to the flesh, are not reckened for his lawful children, I mean to Godward, in respect of ỹ spiritual inheritance ỹ was promised to the true linage. And for ỹ same cause S. Paul alledgeth ỹ saying ỹ is written in the 25. of Genesis, namely that the elder shall serue the yonger, accordingly also as it is said by ỹ prophet Malachie, Iacob & Esaw were both of them the children of Abraham: & what is the cause why Iacob was receiued, and Esaw refused so as god disherited him, and vouchsafed not to establish any Church in his ofspring, but that as many as came of the line were mingled with the heathen, and belonged not at all to the body of Christ? Whereof came this? To whom shal a man impute it? It is to be vnderstood, that (as saieth S. Paul) God had giuen sentence of them before they were borne. For Iacob and Esaw were twinnes, and their Mother Rebecka bare them both at one burthen: and at that time what could the one deserue more than the other? God refused the elder to whom belonged the honor of first borne, yea, by order of nature: but God shewed that his grace was aboue nature. So then, Iacob was chosen, and Esaw refused. To whom shal a mã impute al this? Brought they any strength and vertue of their owne (as saith the prophet Micheas) for the which God esteemed the one more than the other? Should the Iewes (which came of Iacob) set vp their bristles against God, to saye that they were nobler than other men? No, but they ought to yeeld the honor to Gods free fauour, acknowledging that to be ỹ onely cause of their saluation, and ỹ they haue not any thing of their owne wherfore they shoulde be preferred before other men. Heereby we see that God hauing chosen a people in generall, doeth notwithstanding reserue liberty to himselfe, to choose out of that people whomsoeuer he listeth, & to refuse ỹ rest. And so as I haue declared alredy, there is one election which god maketh generally: and another [particularly] of those whom he vouchsafeth to take for his children & heires. Nowe then, it is of Gods free election, ỹ we haue his word purely preached vnto vs, and ỹ we haue his gospel & Sacraments. And euen therein we haue cause to confesse ỹ he hath shewed himself liberal vnto vs. For by what title is ỹ gospel giuen to vs, rather thã to such as make greater account of themselues than we doe, and which are not inferiour to vs as in respect of the world? Why doth God leaue great kingdomes & principalities, and nations of renowne: & choose a little nooke, & a smal number of people, to say that his worde shalbe preached there? When it raineth so vpon vs, and al ỹ rest of the world abideth still in drought: is it not to bee concluded that God hath liberty to doe good to whom him listeth? And is it not his only loue, wherto we be beholden for it? Yes. So then, when the Gospel is preached in a place, and it hath the warrauns ỹ God giueth men saluation: (as when wee haue baptisme & the Lords holy supper ministred vncorruptly:) we may say it is an election that God maketh. But yet for all ỹ, in the meane time he reteineth to himselfe whom he thinketh good, to the end that men shold not trust to the outward signes without faith & obedience, knowing that although we haue bin chosen to be of the bodie of the Church, yet if we make not our profite of that election, God can welynough cut vs off againe, & reserue a smal number to himselfe. And although there bee some great multitude of vs which confes al w one mouth ỹ God hath chosen vs: yet can we not therefore say ỹ he auoweth vs for his childrẽ, except we liue in purenes of faith, & haue ratified ỹ couenãt which god hath made with vs. And so let vs vnderstand ỹ Gods liberality sheweth it self after al sorts to vs, and ỹ therfore wee haue the iuster cause to loue him more and more, & to yeeld him all praise. For haue we his word? It is a free gift aforehand, wherby he hath bound vs vnto him. Haue we his sacramẽts? They be the badges of his fatherly election: we haue not deserued any of all these thinges. But aboue all, when it pleaseth him to imprint the

Rom. 9. 12. & Gen. 25. 22. & Mala. 1. 2.

Rom. 10.

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certainetie of his promises in our hearts by his holy spirite: then is it a speciall adoption. then doeth hee shewe vs that wee bee of the little nomber whome hee hath reserued to himselfe. And so (as I sayde afore,) wee see that in all respectes wee must keepe our mouthes shut from bragging of any thing: and on the other side haue it open to magnifie Gods goodnesse which he vttereth towardes vs.

Nowe herevpon Moses addeth, *That God will keepe couenaunt to a thousande generations of them that loue him: yea through his mercie*, saieth he. For as much as he treateth of the generall election: therefore he exhorteth the people to bethinke themselues aduisedly. Note ye (saith he) that for as much as God hath promised your father Abraham to be the God of his seede after him: he wil not faile you. But yet for all that, looke ỹ ye walk warely, for the couenant is made with condition, that ye must be sound and haue a right meaning heart. Therefore thinke not but that your God can driue you out of his house and out of his Church, if he finde you vnworthie of the benefit which he hath offred vnto you. With ỹ meaning doeth Moses speake, when he putteth here a difference betweene them that loue him and keepe his commaundements, and them that hate him. Now by these wordes we be taught, ỹ when God offereth vs his word, it is alreadie an allying of himself to vs, & a giuing of vs a record of our saluation: but yet doth it not follow ỹ we may therfore be careless. Nay rather we must be quickened vp to imbrace ỹ promises which he sendeth vs, so as we may rest wholly vpon them, and bee stedfastly setled in them all our life long. That is a thing wherevpon it behoueth vs to think. True it is that God layeth open his heart vnto vs whē his word is preached vnto vs: there we be put in minde of his loue, and also haue full assurance of our saluation. But yet must ỹ word enter in vnto our heart, & preuaile with vs: which thing is not done but through faith. And so let vs vnderstād ỹ Gods electiō is as it were defeated by vs, vnlesse we be cōstant & continue stedfastly in it to ỹ end.

But yet Moses noteth here againe, that this Couenant which God maketh with them ỹ beleeue him and obey him, is of his owne *Mercie*, least we should imagine that God respecteth our deserues, as we see that men are commonly giuen to think: in so much ỹ if they meete but with a syllable which seemeth to tell them ỹ they may deserue I wote not what: they be puffed vp with pride, and beleeue wonders of themselues. That is the cause why Moses saieth expresly, ỹ God wil performe his couenāt & mercy. And he sheweth wherein this couenant consisteth. It is not ỹ wee on our side do bring him any thing why he shold loue vs: but ỹ he is mercifull vnto vs, as we see is said in the hundred & third Psalme. True it is ỹ euen there God requireth that wee should feare him, & indeuour to keepe his commandements. But yet howsoeuer the world go, he sheweth vs alwayes that the thing which wee must vnderstand of him, is that he vseth pitie in handling vs gently through his grace, and not according to our deserues. Therefore let vs beare this saying well in minde and weigh it throughly, where Moses telleth vs that the couenant which God maketh with vs, lieth wholly in his goodnes and no where elsse: and that it is not for vs to puffe vp our selues with foolish presumption, as though we were worthie of such a benefite, or as though God did but recompence vs: but that wee must alwayes looke vp to his goodnesse, so as when wee come vnto him, wee doe nothing else but say, Alas Lord, we be sure that thou receiuest vs to mercy as wretched creatures, and therefore vouchsafe to haue regard of our miseries, by shedding out thy mercy vpon vs. That is the thing whereof we be put in minde in this text.

Nowe furthermore Moses sheweth howe wee may keepe Gods commandements: ỹ is to wit, by hauing ỹ things which haue bin treated of heretofore. And they be maner of speeches which import so profitable doctrine, ỹ it is good to renue ỹ remembrance of them, whē the text offereth occasion therof. Moses therefore ment to do vs to vnderstand, that to abstaine frō doing of euill, & to keepe the things contained in the law to outward show, is not all ỹ we haue to doe. As for example, if a mā haue not blasphemed the name of God, if he haue not led a disordered lyfe, if he haue not bin an adulterer, a theefe, a quareller, or a periured person, but haue liued honestly: all this will not suffice him. For why? Such seruice may be by constraint, so as the partie shall not obey of his owne free will, nor delight in submitting himselfe to Gods righteousnesse, to frame his life thereafter. That is the cause why Moses beginneth here with loue. As if he should say, that ỹ beginning of good obedience to Godward, and of liuing according to his Lawes to determine ỹ our selues to delight in nothing more, thā to yeld our selues to him with al obedientnes, & to make that our whole pleasure, accordingly as wee see how Dauid protesteth, that Gods Law was more sweete and pleasant vnto him than honnie: and not only that he did set more store by it, than by gold & siluer: but also that he imbraced it ỹ such loue, as he gaue not himselfe to the pleasures of the world, nor was caried away with wicked affections to doe euill: but gaue himselfe wholly to well doing, and to walke according to Gods wil. So then, to offer willing sacrifices vnto God, let vs remember what is said in this text, and what hath bin treated of alreadie heretofore: namely that before there is any speech of the keeping of Gods commandements, Loue is set downe in the first place, bicause wee haue neede to giue our selues first vnto GOD, and to haue our hearts (as ye would say) fast tyed and knit vnto him, ere we can indeuour to behaue our selues according to his lawe and righteousnesse.

But nowe let vs returne to the matter that was touched before. Moses sayeth *That GOD will keepe Couenant, yea euen vnto a thousand generations of them that loue him.* As if hee shoulde say, When God hath once planted his worde: hee continueth that grace, not onely till the decease of those to whome he speaketh, but also to their children and their offspring. Nowe then let vs looke about vs, and whereas wee

Deut. 5.10. & 6.5.

Psal. 19.11.

perceiue Gods grace in that he hath vouchsafed to reserue vnto vs his word which was in maner abolished, and will haue the same now preached vnto vs: if wee (I say) perceiue his goodnesse in that behalfe: let vs also hope that hee will continue the same towardes our children which hee hath begunne towardes vs, if wee serue him by doing the thinges that hee commaundeth vs. Ye see then that the goodnesse which God sheweth vs in his word, must not make vs slouthfull and careleſſe: but rather bee as a spurre to pricke vs foreward vnto him, that his holy couenant bee not broken on our part and through our default.

Furthermore whereas he sayeth, *Knowe thou that thy God is God*, yea and *a strong God*: thereby he meant to separate the liuing God from all the idols which the world hath forged in al ages. And it is a text well woorth the noting. For wee shall neuer serue God with all our heart, neither shall wee be able to trust in him and to rest vpon him, vnlesse we be sure that he is almightie, and that he onely is God. No doubt but the vnbeleeuers may well beare themselues in hand for a time that their religion is good, and the worlde seeth how wilfull they be in that behalfe: but yet all is but stubbornnesse whatsoeuer they make of it. And therefore it behoueth vs to be fully resolued and perswaded of this, that wee must not haue a flying faith, so as our hoping to be saued is but at al aduenture. For we must alwayes beare in minde, how S. Paule saieth that we must know whom wee beleeue, and that God is a faithfull keeper of that which wee haue committed vnto him. Then if we know not that our God is one, and that he is alone, and that he is the verie true God: we shal be alwayes wauering and our faith shall haue no stedinesse. That is the cause why Moses saieth expresly, Know thou that thy God is the God. As if he should say, Consider in what state the wretched heathen mẽ and such as giue ouer themselues to superstition are. It is true that they wil talk ynough of God: howbeit, ỹ is but rouingly, they knowe not who he is. But it is not so with you. For seeing that your God hath taught you, and discouered himself to you: he hath certified you of his wil, and shewed you that ye need not doubt but your religion is such as you ought to sticke to. Now then, swarue neither one way nor other, neither halt ye, but go on right forth, seeing you bee sure of your religion. Marke that for one point.

2. Tim. 1. 12.

Howbeit, for as much as we see men giuen to follow their own fansies, which notwithstanding doe but tend to their owne destruction: we must remember by this text of Moses, that vntill such time as we be sure that the God whó we worship is the true God: wee shall euer bee intangled in some one thing or other. And albeit that we doe our indeuor to serue him, at leastwise to our seeming: yet is it nothing, it is but fayning, and that hope or trust is but a besotting of our selues. Wel may we haue some opinion: but as for to haue a setled faith, so as we may glorie that our saluation is laide vp in God, and that he will keepe it safely bicause he hath taken vs to himself: it is vnpossible that we should haue any such certainty, vnlesse wee can say with Saint Paule, I knowe whom I haue beleeued, and he will be a faithfull keeper of that which I haue committed vnto him. So then, let vs put such difference betweene the liuing God, and all the idols which men haue forged of their owne braine: as he may be knowē alone aboue all others. And that we may so doe, let vs learne to deuise nothing of our own head. For as soone as wee father any thing vpon God which is not in his owne word: it is all one as if wee did set vp an idoll: for by that meane we disguise him. Therefore wee must so sticke to the liuing God, to the ende we may bee his people, and hearken quietly to so much of his will as he sheweth vs by his worde: as it may suffice vs to haue so much knowledge of him as he hath reuealed by his word, without seeking any further. For as for those that are so bolde as to take leaue to say, I weene this is good, and why should not God take this or that in good worth? and in the meane while haue no warrant of the holy scripture: I say they forsake the liuing GOD, and turne away after idoles. For what else are the imaginations of men, but verie idoles to deface the true Maiestie of the onely God? Thus much concerning this place.

Moreouer Moses termeth God *Faithful*, to shewe that like as afore, he attributed strength vnto him, (for the Hebrewe worde that he vseth commeth therof:) so must we also haue his truth before our eyes and in our remembrance, to the end to leane vnto him & to referre our selues wholly vnto him, knowing that Gods strength serueth not to abash vs, but that whensoeuer it is spoken of, it is matched immediatly with mercy, to the intent we should be drawen vnto him, and come to him with a cheerefuller courage. Then is it not without cause that Moses hath set down Gods trueth heere, of purpose to hold the people in obedience to him. And heereby wee bee taught, not to preace into Gods priuities, and to dispute of thinges that are too high for vs, yea and vtterly vncomprehensible: but rather that wee must rest vppon his word and trueth, which he hath reuealed vnto vs. True it is that we must bee fully perswaded of this point, that GOD chose vs in his euerlasting purpose, not bicause wee were woorthie of it, but bicause it pleased him so to doe: and that there is none other cause thereof but onely his good pleasure, as the holy Scripture sheweth vs. And so let vs vnderstande, that although wee haue Gods worde: yet will God haue pitie on whome he will haue pitie, according to Saint Paules alleging of the same text, to shewe that albeit the multitude of people to whome the Gospel is preached bee neuer so great, yet God reserueth whome he listeth to himselfe, and it is meete he shoulde so doe, and yet notwithstanding we haue cause to glorifie him howsoeuer thinges goe, without attempting in any wise to grudge at it. But haue we knowē that? Would we be assured of our saluation? We must resort not only to Gods grace, but also chiefely to ỹ promises wherby he vttereth his loue towardes vs, as is said alreadie.

Yet

Yee see then that the cause why Moses doth in this place attribute the title of *Faithfull* vnto God, is to the end that when folke will be sure of their saluation, they should not enter into fooliſh imaginations, but looke vnto Gods woord which is before their eyes, whereupon they may be bold to rest. So then let it content vs that our Lorde allureth vs to him, and that the death & passion of our Lord Iesus Christ together with his righteousnesse is set afore vs, so as wee know that by that meanes we may bee reconciled vnto God, to the end ỹ our sins be not imputed vnto vs, but that we may be acceptable vnto him. Seing that this is set down vnto vs: let vs take hold of Gods faithfulnesse which Moses speaks of here, and let vs not thinke that God offereth vs such a benefite to deceiue vs, but that he doth it to the ende that we should glorifie him in the middes of our miseries, and that although wee bee silie fraile creatures: yet we may say that the life of Iesus Christ belongeth vnto vs, and that we be already lifted vp to sit with him in the kingdome of heauen. Thus ye see what we haue to beare in mind concerning the woord *Faithfull*.

Ro.5.20.18. Eph.2.7.

Eph.2.6.

Now for a conclusion Moses addeth a threat, saying: *that God also will requite like for like to suche as hate him, yea euen to their faces, & that he wil not foreslow.* In this place there is some darksomnesse in the woordes of Moses: for hee interchaungeth the number. God (saith hee) will yeild recompence to such as hate him to his face, or before his face. Then doth he shift the number, & it seemeth that whereas he sayth they hate him to his face, he ment to say that wee spyte God or hate God to his face when wee fall out into disorder and are so rebellious, as it should seeme that we would run against him, and defie him to be at open warre with him. But for as much as that woord is repeted twice, and in the end it appeareth that Moses spake of the faces of the transgressors: no doubt but it is a chaunging of the number, as the holy Scripture is commonly wont to doe. Therefore the very meaning of it, is that God will requite them to their faces, by making the hatred to turne backe vppon themselues. Othersome take it as though it were spoken of their lifetime, that God will not only punish the wicked and the despisers of his Lawe, after this present life: but also execute his vengeance vppon them aforehande to the sight of mens eyes, so as we shalbe prouoked to feare him, by ỹ sight of ỹ punishments which he wil so execute vppon the disobedient. Othersome take it that God will require it to his face, as though it were sayd ỹ wheras he spareth the wicked in this world, it is to the ende to ouerthrowe them and destroy them vtterly afterward, according as it is sayde by the prophet, that God pampereth those whom he punisheth not out of hand, like as men doe fatte an Ox or a swine when they intend to kill him. And the prophet vseth that similitude, to the intent wee should not enuy the wicked, when we see them prosper. For is an Ox or a Swine to bee enuied, which is fatted but to the slaughter? and which shall haue his throte cut when he is once fatte? Now then, God handleth the wicked and the despisers of his maiestie after such a sort, as he may seeme to loue them: but it is to hasten them the sooner to their destruction. And truly this is a good and profitable lesson: but as touching the present place, if wee read all the wordes of Moses throughout, there is no darkenesse at all in them. For why? he addeth, *God wil not foreslowe to requite them that haue him, euery man in his face.* And so Moses ment in effect to shewe, that men may be past shame in rebelling against God: but yet in the end they shal find that they haue too rough an aduersarie: and therefore God must be faine to pull them by the beardes to make them ỹ more ashamed. It is true ỹ as now they vtter great brags, and it shold seeme that they would make God ashamed, and put him to the foyle: but he can well skill to ouermatch them in such wise, as they shalbe faine to receiue their payment in their owne persons, yea and euen in their faces, according as it is sayd in the fifteeth psalme, I wil reproue thee to thy face. And in that place God pleadeth expressly against hypocrites. *How now*, sayth hee? Becommeth it thee to take my name in thy mouth? Thou boastest thy selfe to bee myne: and thou wilt needes play the preacher, and defile my holy law with thy stinking mouth. Now when thou doest me such iniurie as to take vpon thee to be a propher, and to speake in my name, and in the meane while dost match and accompany thy selfe with whoremongers, quarelers, and raylers: what will come of it in the ende? When I haue borne with thee a while, I will reproue thee to thy teeth, saieth he. Hee vseth there the word *Face* as he doth here in this text: but it is a common speeche in our language, to say that it is spoken to a mans teeth, face or heade. That then is the naturall sense of Moses.

Psal.50.16. 21.

And heere we be warned to humble our selues before God, and to stoop in such wise as we prouoke him not to wrath through our hardnesse & shamelesnesse, so as he should shewe himselfe to be our aduersarie, to requite vs to our face, that is to say in our owne persons, by being driuen to come before him to bee punished according to our deserres. Then let vs not harden our hearts against our God, but let vs learne to cast downe our eyes when he speaketh vnto vs. It is true indeed that wee ought to lift vp our heades when wee heare the promises of his goodnesse, so as faith must make vs to stie aboue the cloudes. But yet doth not this let vs that wee should not still bee ashamed in our selues, and haue an eye to our owne wretchednesse, and learne to bee sory for it, and thereupon labour to liue in the feare of God, bowing downe our neckes continually to receiue his yoke, and to beare it patiently. Thus ye see what we haue to marke as in respect of this word face, where it is sayd ỹ God wil recompence them all to their faces, which doe hate him.

But heere by the way a man might make a question, concerning this saying of Moses, that God wil not foreslowe to pay them to their faces, which hate him. For it is commonly seene

that the wicked doe spend all their daies and all their whole life in prosperitie, so as it shoulde seeme that God is willing to please them in all thinges, in so much that it is sayd of them in the
Psal.73.12. psalme, that they goe on in continuall prosperitie vnto their death, and pine not away as the children of God doe. Howe then is it saide that
Num.14.18. God wil not forslowe, seeing hee is long suffering? And men may see it with their eyes, though it were not toulde them in woordes. These
Psal.103.8. two thinges agree very well. For although God winke at thinges for a tyme, and punish not the wicked out of hand: when all is welreckened, the respite that hee giueth them will not bee so long, but that it shall euer bee true, that suddain destruction shall ouerwhelme them. And for proofe thereof, when the wicked say, Peace,
1.Thess.5.3. all is safe: then shall the suddeine storme fall
Esa.28.15. vppon their heades. When they thinke themselues to haue made a composition with death: then shall they bee ouertaken as a woman that falleth in labour of child ere shee bee aware, bicause shee mistrusted not that the houre or instant of hir trauell had bin so neere at hand. Euē after the same maner doth God ouerwhelme all such as shall haue abused his patience, when he hath borne with them for a time. Now then although God shew not himselfe a iudge to them so soone as we would: yet doeth he not faile to destroy them without foreslowing. Therefore let vs haue an eye to the shortnesse of our life, least we fall asleepe: and let vs vnderstand, that although God make not hast after our opinion: yet notwithstanding he foreslowеth not, bicause he forgetteth not the offences which he winketh at, and which he punisheth not out of hand. Let that serue for one point.

And let vs mark further, that God hath not indented with vs so as wee may say he ought to let vs alone vnpunished vntill death. For although hee execute not his iudgements all after one rate: yet doth he often punish the wicked euen heere, and shewe vs examples before our eyes, to teach vs to stande in awe of him, as the pro-
Esa.59.19. phet speaketh of it. Seeing then that God will alwayes shew himselfe to be our Iudge, both during this mortal life, & after our death: Let vs not delay our returning vnto him from day to day, but let euery man quicken vp himselfe, & walke carefully, forasmuch as if any man fall asleepe, if he wil be wel wakened againe, he must be faine to set this saying of Moses before his face, That God will pay them all home which do hate him. Truely ye wickedest creatures that be will not say they hate God: but yet it is so in deede. And for proofe therof, all such as are desirous to haue liberty to liue naughtily, to giue themselues to all iniquitie, could find in their heartes that there were no God in heauen to iudge them. To bee short, if we loue God, wee take pleasure in goodnesse. But we cannot loue him without his Iustice: for they be things which cannot goe asunder. Therefore let vs conclude, that as long as woe doe euill wee hate God. And why? For inasmuch as we bee loth there should bee any order or gouernment in the world: wee would not that he should be acknowledged with his righteousnes and goodnes. Now then, when the wicked doe giue themselues the brydle to despise God and to transgresse his commaundementes: they coulde finde in their heartes to haue him plucked out of heauen if it were possible. Wherefore let vs marke well, that God doeth not without cause auow, that al such as breake his commaundementes are his deadly enemies, inasmuch as they be against his Iustice, without the which he cannot be God. And therefore let vs beare in minde the thing that hath beene declared already, namely that if wee purpose to obey God, we must honour him in such sorte, as we may like well of his Iustice and mislike of euil dealing: & that although we fall into it through infirmitie, yet we may pray God to lift vs vp againe, and so to holde vs vp by his power, as our whole seeking may be to submit our selues vnto him, and to forsake all our owne affections and euill lustes in such wise, as we may bee reformed according to his righteousnes, and consequently obey his holy Law.

Now let vs cast our selues downe in ỹ presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him so to beare with vs in thē, as he vse not ỹ rigor towards vs which we haue deserued: but ỹ of his infinite goodnes he reache vs his hand, & print his word after such sorte in our hearts, as it may take roote there, and wee neuer swarue any way from it, nor he suffer such blessing to become vnprofitable through our sloth & vnthankfulnes: but that we may make it profitable, by receiuing the promises of our saluation to continue stedfastly in them vnto the end, and by shewing our selues willing to bring to passe ỹ God may be honored & serued, not only as long as we liue, but also after our decease, so as they ỹ come after vs may continue in exalting & magnifying his glorie, that he may be worshipped on all hands with one cōmon accord, vntill he haue rid vs quite and cleane from all the vanities and corruptions of this world, & made vs partakers of the glorious immortalitie which wee possesse not as yet but by hope. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also &c.

On Wednesday the vij. of August. 1555.

The Liij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the seuenth Chapter.

11 Therefore keepe the commandements, and Ordinances, and Lawes which I com-

command thee this day to doe them.

12 And it will come to passe, that because yee haue heard these Lawes and kept them and done them, the Lord thy God wil also performe the couenant and mercie vnto thee, which he sware to thy Fathers.

13 And he will loue thee, and blesse thee, and multiply thee: & he wil blesse the fruite of thy wombe, and the fruite of thy land: thy corne and thy wine, and thine oyle, and the increase of thy kine and the flocks of thy sheepe, in the Lande which he sware to thy Fathers to giue thee.

14 Thou shalt bee blessed aboue all nations, and there shall not bee either male or female barren among you, or among thy Cattell.

15 The Lord will take from thee all diseases, and all the euill plagues of Egypt which thou hast knowen. Hee will not lay them vpon thee, but vpon all those that hate thee.

WE see here againe the thing that hath bin treated of alredy heretofore: namely that God indeuoreth to drawe vs to him by gentlenesse. It were enough for him to shew vs his will: howbeit forasmuch as our nature draweth the cleane cõtraty way, he setteth his promises afore vs to win vs withall, & to prouoke vs to serue him the better. Therefore whensoeuer God promiseth to blesse vs, & to mak vs to prosper so we serue him: thereby we be put in minde of ỹ singular goodnesse & loue which he beareth towardes vs. For is he bound to doe it? Nay, ought not euery of vs to streine our selues, (yea euẽ aboue our power,) to serue him? Are we not bounde thereto by nature? Yes: and therefore let vs marke well, that whereas God vouchsafeth to tel vs that if we serue him he will be fauorable and mercifull vnto vs: his so dooing proceedeth of his own meere free-goodnesse. And if that moue vs not: the worlde may see what our vnthankfulnesse is. But yet by the way let vs marke well, ỹ his promises should stand vs in no stead, if our Lord supplyed not our defaults, I mean euen whẽ we be best minded to serue him, for else should we come farre short of ỹ perfection ỹ is required of vs. All his promises then should nothing boote vs, if he did not beare with vs: and so is he faine to vse dubble grace towardes vs. Howbeit to ỹ intent ỹ things may be the better vnderstoode: let vs see first of all how it may agree, ỹ God should blesse vs of his owne free goodnesse, & make vs to prosper: & yet notwithstanding match it with this condition, ỹ we serue & honor him. For at the first sight there seemeth to be some disagreement in it. If God loue vs without respect of our deseruinges: there ought to be no iffes nor conditions in the matter.

But he putteth them to it, as we see in this text: yea & all the whole scripture is full of the same doctrine, namely that God recompenceth euery man as they shall haue serued him. How can it thẽ be, that God should both haue respect of our life: & also loue vs of his owne free mercy? Let vs marke well the wordes that Moses vseth here. For he sayth *that God will performe his couenant and mercy according as he hath promised, if he be honored and serued*. In saying that God will performe his couenant and mercie, he sheweth vs well that we must not begin at our owne seruice, as though we would bring any thing vnto God to moue him to loue vs: For whereupon is his couenant grounded? Euen vppon his mercie. Now thẽ let vs see what his mercie is, & whereto it ought to be referred. First of all, it is his chosing of vs. Although wee be vtterly froward, & deserue to be shaken off at his hand: yet doth he take vs into his fauor. Thus is it already a great and inestimable mercie, that although God find vs lost and damned creatures: yet he vouchsafeth to take vs for his people, aduauncing vs to such dignitie as to be of his houshold and Church. Now when he hath so begun, he must be faine to hold out still: that is to say, he must be faine to like well of vs continually by reason of the same free fauor which he beareth vs, and all for our Lorde Iesus Christes sake. So then, God maintaineth his mercy towards vs, by cause he pitieth our wretchednesse and miserie. And although we be not worthie to be receiued: yet doeth he accept vs. And wherefore? Because he loueth vs in the person of his only son. Eph. 1. 6. But there is yet more: that is to wit ỹ he vseth mercy towards vs, in bearing with our imperfections, and by that meanes accepteth our seruice, so that although it be faultie and haue always some blemish in it: yet notwithstanding he admitteth it of his owne goodnesse. Now we see what the couenant importeth, which Moses speaketh of here: namely that first and foremost God receiueth vs to mercye, euen without finding any thing but vtter cursednesse in vs. And secondly, that he continueth his fauour towards vs for loue of his only son, notwithstanding ỹ he might find iust cause in vs, to shake vs off and to hate vs. And thirdly, that he accepteth our workes & taketh them for good, so as although they be (as ye would say) but halfe done, and haue alwayes some faulte mingled with them: yet notwithstanding he ceaseth not to admit them as if they were righteous and sound, and all by vertue of the said couenaunt, as I saide afore. Now then we see it is no inconuenience, ỹ God should blesse vs and make vs to prosper when wee haue serued him: and yet notwithstanding that his louing of

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vs should bee, not for any woorthinesse or desertes of ours: but for his owne free goodnesse sake, without any other reason that wee can alledge, than that he hath chosen vs and made vs partakers of the righteousnesse that is in our Lord Iesus Christ, that thereby all our filthinesse may be couered and hidden.

But as soone as the ignoraunt sort doe heare of the woord Condition, they beare themselues in hand that God maketh some payment, & that when he sheweth vs any fauour, he doth it in recompence of our deserres. And by that meanes the wretched Papists doe blind themselues with vain presumption, & quite ouerthrow themselues by perking vp after that fashion against God, & therefore they must at length be cast downe in their ouerlostines. For whereunto do they leane? Beholde (say they,) God telleth vs that he will blesse vs if we serue him: therefore it followeth that all the promises which he maketh are conditionall. Yea, but they haue ill studied the holy scripture, when they cannot discerne betweene the promises as they be set downe in the Lawe, and the thinges that God addeth to thē to supply our default. For if wee take the promises so rawely: that is to wit, that God will blesse none but them that serue him: wee shall all of vs bee shut out from hope. For which of vs serueth God with all his heart and with all his soule as God hath expressely commaunded vs? Nay contrariwise we drag backward, and by nature wee be deadly enemies vnto him, because all ỹ thoughts and affections that are in vs doe fight against his will. Then are wee so farre of from being able to serue him as wee should doe, that wee make war against him, and cease not to prouoke his wrath against vs. Nay verily, euen when God hath reformed vs by his holy spirit, so as he hath giuen vs some good disposition, wherethrough wee be inclyned to serue him, and to be short, wee shew that his spirit reigneth in vs by subduing of our vices and of the wicked lustes which are in vs by nature: yet come we stil far short of the marke which wee should tend vnto. It is true that wee will trauell thitherward, as all the faithfull doe, whose chiefe regard and principall desire is to serue God: but yet doe they finde themselues so sore combered as maketh them to shudder at it. When they bee about to stirre one finger forewards, the rest of their body drawes backward. It is much if they can but trayne themselues: that is to say, if they can get forward a little & coldely. And therefore they be driuen to sigh & grone, and to condemne themselues, beseeching God to vouchsafe to hearten them better, and to take away all the lets that are in themselues. For he that is perfectest, condemneth himselfe most: insomuch that the true perfection that is in mē during this mortall lyfe, is to knowe the euill that is in vs and how wretched we be.

Rom. 8. 7.

On the contrary part, as for those that make themselues idols, bearing themselues in hand that they bee come already to the highest toppe of perfection: they burst themselues with pride, and doe but shroude a secret filthinesse within, whereby they bewray that they knowe not yet what it is to loue God and to serue him. For otherwise they should neuer bee so blinded with madselfetrust, as to beare themselues in hand that they bee throughly righteous. Seeing then that although we indeuer neuer so much to serue God, we shall go limping and dragge our legges after vs: let vs bee sure that God shall neuer bee in daunger or det to any of vs, but rather wee shall be condemned in all our workes. We may well alledge, I was willing, and I did mine indeuer: but that is not all that wee haue to doe. For the will shall alwayes be found very weake, so as if wee haue one good affection, there shall be a dosen euil ones for it. And so by that meanes al of vs should be disappoynted of the hope that God giueth vs by his promises, if they should be taken so rawely & according to the naked letter where it is sayd: If yee serue mee, I will doe yee good. But nowe let men streine themselues as much as they list: when they come to their audit there will bee so many abatements, as will shewe that all Gods promises can stand them in no stead. And therefore they must come to ỹ second remedie, which is that God supplieth our defaultes: and that although all our workes deserue naught else but condemnation, yet notwithstanding God accepteth them and taketh them for good, of his owne fatherly goodnesse: and not of any duetie that hee is bounde vnto. Then let vs not bee so blinde as the wretched papistes, who when they heare that God addeth any condition to his promises, doe by & by step vp with their ergoes, and fall to defeating of their owne free will and deseruinges. But contrariwise, let vs assure our selues that when God speaketh to vs in such order of speach as is shewed vs here, although hee come to vs with gentlenesse: yet doth it nothing auaile vs, vnless he vse his own meere mercie to saue vs throughout, not for any desert of ours, but because it pleaseth him so to doe. Marke ỹ for a special point.

And therewithall let vs marke also, that if the good which God doth to men in the thinges that concerne this transitory lyfe, doe proceede of his mercie: much more reason is it that the immortall heritage cannot bee gotten by our owne strength, but that God must be faine to giue it vs of his owne meere liberalitie or free gift. And whereof speaketh Moses in this place? He sayth, *God will blesse thy Cattell, God will blesse thy Corne, Wine, and Oyle*. All these are transitory thinges: and how is it that God prospereth vs in them? By his mercie, saith he. And he sheweth expressly that Gods couenant proceedeth not from any other spring, nor hath any other roote than that, no not euen in cases concerning this fleshly lyfe and these transitorie thinges. Now if in promising to prosper vs in our Cattell, in our Landes, & in the bread which we eate, God haue not an eye to any worthinesse of ours, but only vouchsafeth to shew himselfe a liberall & kindehearted father towardes vs: what will hee doe in cases concerning the making of vs partakers of the heauenly glory? I beseech you, can wee alledge any deserres in that behalfe? Nor for then should Oxen & kine be of more estimation with him than

than mens soules. Therefore let vs marke well the thinges that I haue touched: namely that wee may well vnderstand aforehand howe greatly God loueth vs, by his promising of reward & recompence for our workes. For he doth it not of any duetie, but to win vs by gentlenesse and louingnesse. Yet notwithstanding let vs vnderstand moreouer, ỳ the same shall neuer boote vs a whit, vnlesse our Lord proceede yet further in shewing himselfe liberall towards vs: namely ỳ after he hath receiued vs to mercie, euẽ vs which were vtterly lost & damned, he doe also loue vs for our Lord Iesus Christes sake, and thereupon beare with all the imperfections ỳ are in vs without inteding to impute thẽ to vs, so as our workes may please him, although they deserue it not. For that is verifyed euen in these base thinges beneath. When we take our repast of the bread wherewith we be susteined: wee must acknowledge that the same commeth of ỳ meere goodnesse of our God. And lykewise when wee haue done our indeuour to serue him, [wee must acknowledge] that he is not any whit beholden vnto vs for it, but (which more is) that the good affection which we haue, is giuen vs of him, and yet that all this is nothing, because there is some faultinesse in it. Therefore it must needs be, that Gods receiuing of vs into fauor, is not for that he oweth vs any thing, but for that he loueth vs. Now seeing that God wil haue his mercy knowẽ in these corruptible thinges: what will hee haue done in the euerlasting saluation of our soules?

But here might a question bee moued, that seeing God respecteth not our merites when he doth vs good: why vseth he this maner of speach which we reade here in Moses? There are two reasons. The one is, that he intendeth to make vs feele his grace ỳ better, by driuing vs to grasse that none of al ỳ things which he behighteth vs could take effect, if our workes should be respected, & therefore that he must be faine to bury all our sinnes, & to accept vs of his owne freegoodnesse. This would be somewhat with ỳ darkest, if it should not be layd forth more at legth. His saying (in effect,) is that wheras God telleth vs, that if we serue him, he wil blesse vs and prosper vs: his intent is that euery of vs should examine himselfe, and consider at what point wee be with him. And when we once know ỳ in stead of serning him, we doe prouoke him against vs & greeue him, as though wee had conspired to doe so of wilful malice: & when we once knowe that we bee so greatly in his daunger euen by nature: then will all vaine selfetrust bee beaten downe in vs, & we wil haue none other minde, than to resort to ỳ mercy that is promised vs, and to flee thither for refuge, so as we shalbe quite & cleane bereft of ỳ fonde opiniõ which we had cõceiued of our owne workes, & not thinke thẽ any more to be meritorious. Thus ye see what we haue to note for the first reason.

The second is ỳ forasmuch as God hath pitied vs, he beareth with our workes, & intendeth not to sift them with rigor, but admitteth thẽ for good & auaileable, though there be many infirmities & vices in thẽ. But yet for all ỳ, wee must vnderstand ỳ he will not so beare w our infirmities, ỳ we should take leaue to abuse his mercie: for then should we deale too lewdly. And yet neuertheless it appeareth by experiẽce, ỳ as soone as men heare ỳ God forgiueth thẽ their sinnes, & saueth them of his owne goodnesse: they dispence w themselues, & take leaue to doe euil: & vnder colour ỳ they bee freed frõ ỳ bondage and cursednesse wherin they were by nature, they ouershoot thẽselues into all disorder. But God wil not be so mocked, he wil not haue the goodnesse which he vseth towardes vs, to be made an occasiõ of sinning. For our Lord Iesus Christ is come to destroy ỳ kingdome of Satan, as it is shewed vs. So then, although God wil haue vs to impute al ỳ good which he doth vs, vnto his free mercie: yet doth he put this cõditiõ to it, ỳ he wil haue vs to serue him. Although the inheritãce which is promised vs depẽd not vpon our owne workes: yet will hee haue vs to be his children for it, seeing he sheweth himselfe to bee our father. Although it become vs not to looke for any thing in respect of all ỳ seruice ỳ wee doe him, forasmuch as we be well assured that they be not of such value as we can rest vpon thẽ: yet notwithstanding inasmuch as God hath called vs to him into ỳ way of saluatiõ: he wil not haue vs to fal to kicking against him. His Church must not bee a Hoggesture, but a tẽple dedicated to his honor. So then, seeing God hath adopted vs, wee must liue as his childrẽ, so as wee may shew ỳ he hath not called & inuited vs to ỳ inheritãce of ỳ beauẽly life in vaine. For if we can finde no sauor in it, are we not worthie to be banished & shut out of it? Yes. Again, if we go thitherward, ought we not to despise these transitory thinges, and to passe through this world as straũgers, & not to be wedded to this earthly trash? That thẽ is the second reason why our Lord addeth ỳ cõdition that he will be serued & honoured at our handes. And therefore let vs learne in fewe wordes, ỳ when we haue done homage to our God for our euerlasting saluatiõ, & for al the tẽporall & transitory goods ỳ he bestoweth vpon vs in this worlde: it behoueth vs to vnderstãd, ỳ his adopting of vs to be his children, is to ỳ intẽt to be honored by vs, & his calling of vs into his Church is to the end we should be as his housholdfolke & not as wild beastes, seeing we be of his flock. For he wil haue such sheepe as shall hearken to his voyce. And ỳ is the cause why it is sayd expresly in this text, *Yee shall keepe all the statutes, ordinances & lawes which I set before you to doe them*. As if hee should say, among the other giftes of God, we haue his word which is an excellẽt treasure. And it is not giuen vs onely to ỳ end we should but heare it & allow it in our wordes: but to the ende we should frame our liues thereafter. Seeing then ỳ God vouchsafeth to teach vs, & stoopeth so lowe as to do ỳ office of a scholemaister & teacher towards vs: are not we too vnkinde if we hearkẽ not vnto him? And let vs marke wel, that wee bee none of his disciples, vnlesse wee obey his doctrine, and make it auaileable to vs. For otherwise it is but as if we heard a song ỳ delighted our eares, as is sayd of it in Ezechiel. And surely it is a goodly worshipping of God, for vs to say that he hath song well. Nay his will is that wee should

Rom. 1. 4. & 6. 1. 2. 15.

2. Cor. 5.

Eph. 2. 6.

Iohn 10. 27.

Ezec. 33. 32.

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vttey another melodie correſpondēt to his voice which is, that wee ſhoulde ſhewe by our whole lyfe, that hee hath not taken paynes with vs in vaine, nor loſt his time, in declaring his will vnto vs.

And now furthermore Moſes addeth, *Keepe them*: yea (ſayth hee,) *and God will bleſſe you*: and afterward hee addeth againe, *that hee will loue vs*. Surely by theſe wordes it may be deemed at the firſt ſight, ỳ God looketh whether men wil do their duetie or not, ere hee loue them. But I haue tolde yee already how the promiſes of the Lawe doe ſerue firſt of all to bring men to right humilitie, that they may know themſelues to be as they bee, and quite rid and diſcharge themſelues of all ſelfetruſt. When that is done, then know they ỳ Gods calling of them is with condition, that they ſhould ſerue him: and that if they inforce themſelues ſo to doe, they pleaſe him, ſo that alhough their doinges be vnperfect, yet will hee not faile to accept them, becauſe hee imputeth not the vices vnto them wherewith they bee interlaced. And moreouer wee may gather vpon theſe wordes of Moſes, that the ſeruice whereof hee ſpeaketh here, goeth not before Gods bleſſing and the fauor that hee promiſeth vs: for doe wee loue him before hee loued vs? Wee cannot make the holy Ghoſt a lyar which ſpeaketh by the mouth of Saint Iohn. It is not (ſayth hee) for that wee loued God firſt: but God vouchſafed to receiue vs into his fauor, at ſuch time as wee were his enemies. And all the ſcripture is full of this. Now then, ſeeing it is told vs here that God will loue his people, if they haue a care to keepe his commaundementes: let vs note that it is not meant, that men can preuent God and drawe him to them firſt of all: but that (as is declared vnto vs here) it is all one as if hee ſhould ſay, I haue loued you freely, and I will loue you ſtill, and yee ſhall feele my loue in ſuch wiſe, as yee may inioy it and poſſeſſe it for euer. But yet for all that, let vs beware that wee deceiue not our ſelues, as they doe which confeſſe that God loueth vs of his owne free goodneſſe, but yet we muſt ſecondly bee worthie of it. For wee muſt alwayes come backe againe to that which I haue touched already: namely that vnleſſe God beare with vs, and skowre away al the ſpottes that are in our workes, the thing that is ſpoken of here, ſhall neuer bee accompliſhed in vs: but contrariwiſe it ſhall alwayes turne vs to ſome greater ſhame, to ſhewe vs, Go to, behold, your God hath abaced himſelfe ſo much as to tell you that if yee ſerue him, hee will be fauorable and mercifull to you. For of whom is it long now, that you be vnhappie, that hee curſeth you, that he refuſeth you, and that he perſecuteth you? commeth it not of your owne fault? yes: You your ſelues then, are to be blamed for this, that you be not beloued of your God. It ſhould (ſay I) be layde to our reproche, if God pardoned not the faultes that are in our workes. So then let vs mark that his loue is alwayes free in our workes, howbeit that hee will not bee mocked, nor haue his goodneſſe abuſed, nor abide that men ſhould take libertie to doe euill when they ſee him ſo gentle and freehearted towardes them: but contrariwiſe will haue vs to bee anſwerable againe on our ſide, ſo as we giue not deafe eare to him when hee ſpeaketh to vs: but that when he hath bin ſo gratious to vs as to declare his will vnto vs, we alſo ſhould ſhew that his ſo doing is not in vaine, & ỳ he is not diſappointed of his purpoſe. But what? We ſee how ſtubborne men are for all that: and whatſoeuer God tel them or ſhew them, alhough they haue their eares beaten dayly with ſuch warninges, yet notwithſtanding they continue ſtil lyke themſelues in their wilfulneſſe. Beholde, God promiſeth to bleſſe vs, ſo wee ſerue him. Now there is no man but hee woulde faine proſper. We could well finde in our hearres that God ſhould ſted all our neceſſities, and that hee ſhould giue vs meate and drinke: we could finde in our hearres to be cloathed at his coſt. But in ỳ meane while, who is he that bethinketh himſelfe thus: this is ỳ meane whereby I muſt inioy Gods bleſſing? Nay we drawe cleane backe, and it ſhould ſeeme that our whole ſeeking is to bereaue our ſelues therof, and to cut off God by ỳ way, or rather ſo to ſtoppe the entries & iſſewes of his grace, as it may neuer come at vs. Behold, God wil haue vs firſt of al to liue vprightly, faithfully & in his feare: & thereupon hee promiſeth to bleſſe vs. On the contrary part, men giue themſelues to filching, ſtealing, robbing, & cruchie, ſeeking by all meanes to pick out one anothers eys. There is no mention of the feare of God: be ſhore, they would ỳ all might goe to hauocke. In ſo doing we renounce Gods bleſſing, ſo farre as in vs lyeth, and it ſeemeth to vs ỳ we cannot take a better way to proſper, than by ſeruing the diuell. Wherin it appeareth in how curſed plight we be. And whence ſpringeth it, but of that we giue no credit to Gods promiſes? For if we beleued God to be ſoothfaſt in good earneſt: ſurely we would be rauiſhed at this ſaying of his, *I will make you to proſper*. But foraſmuch as our vanities doe carry vs headlong the contrary way: it maketh vs to imagin that we win more by doing euill, than by ſeruing God. Neuertheleſſe this vnbeleefe of ours ſhal be right deerely paied for, ſpeacially when it is matched with ſuch blaſphemie, and wee doe our God ſo much wrong as not to beleeue his word: & moreouer, when inſtead of acknowledging him to be the Author of all goodneſſe, and comming to drawe of the fulneſſe of his grace, we doe nothing elſe but make our ſelues ſtrangers to him. Seeing then that we fall to prouoking of him ſo by all meanes: what remaineth for vs, but to bereft of his bleſſings, yea and that he, as though he were our enemy, purſue vs euen to the vttermoſt? But truly a man may ſtill perceiue an ineſtimable goodneſſe, in ỳ he ceaſeth not to doe vs good, when hee is ſo prouoked by vs, & that wee ceaſe not to kindle ỳ fire of his wrath: but yet in the end we ſhall finde that this doctrine was not in vaine. It is true that a man ſhall not alwayes perceiue the thing that Moſes ſayth here: that is to wit, that God proſpereth them that ſerue him. For yee ſhal ſee ỳ ſuch as are deſirous to doe beſt, and imploy themſelues

selues in the trueth, are miserable folkes, afflicted diuers wayes at Gods hand, and haue not halfe their fil wherwith to susteine them. Again, they shall be torméted with diseases, or else they shall haue many reproches & iniuries wrought them in this world, & (to be short) they shall be in continual languishing. On the contrarie part, ye shall see the wicked prosper: ye shall see them in credit and estimation: they shall cram themselues with all excesse: and they shall haue such abundance, as may make euen their heires to burst. These thinges are to be seene. Howbeit we must note, that when the good are so afflicted, it is first because they haue not yet serued God as they ought to doe. But why doth God scourge them, more than the wicked which rush out into all naughtinesse? it is because he intendeth to chastice thé fatherly. To ỹ end that their soules may be saued, he chastiseth them in their bodies. Againe, in sending afflictiõs, Gods intent is not alwayes to punish men according to their misdeedes: but also to try their patiéce, and to withdrawe them from the world, to the intent they should not be too much intangled in it: and his will is to humble them, that they may know thémselues as they be, & be sory for it. So then forasmuch as God hath many causes to afflict ỹ faithfull: he will not haue vs to make one egall rule of it, & to say that he punisheth them according to their misdeedes. But wherefore soeuer he doe it, let vs note that if God should vtterly destroy thé he had iust cause so to doe, & hee should doe thé no wrong. Neuertheless we must haue an eye to that which Saint Paul sayth in the eight to the Romans, and be contented with it: namely ỹ all thinges turne to the welfare of them that loue God, so as they serue not to turne them aside, or to pluck them away from their saluation, but rather be as helpes to further it. Marke ỹ for one poynt. And yet notwithstanding it is euidently seene, that Gods grace faileth thé not in the afflictions and miseries which they indure. True it is that they finde thémselues in paine, & the things are harde and grieuous for them to beare: but yet there is alwayes somewhat to sweeten them, they haue still some cõfort at Gods hand, which serueth to make them vnderstand ỹ hee blesseth and prospereth them. If he should giue them no more but one bit of bread: yet haue they such an inward ioy, as they can better thanke God for it, than ỹ wicked can doe [for great abundance,] who fret themselues inwardly, insomuch that although they labor to bring thémselues a sleepe that they might not haue any remorse of conscience to trouble them, & striue euen against nature, that they might be as it were senseleslesse Yet doeth not G O D let them so rest, that they can be so mery at the heart euen with their abundance, as the silie faithful ones are with their pouertie, who holde themselues contented from morrowe to morrowe, waiting to be fed at Gods hand, & referring themselues wholy vnto him, & calling vppon him. And againe, although they haue not all that they would wish: yet thinke thy thus ẅ themselues, well, yet doth not my God cease to watch ouer me, & therfore I betake me to his prouidence, and rest my selfe vppon him. Thus yee see howe the faithfull cease not to bee blessed of God, though the world see not Gods benefites so apparantly in them.

Psal. 17. 14.

2. Cor. 5. 5.

Rom. 8. 28.

But let vs come now to the vnbeleuers. It is true that God sheddeth out his temporall benefites vpon them, so as they be healthie, & haue aboundance of goods, and so forth: but yet shall all these thinges be turned into a curse to them. If a man demaund whether the hauing of bodily health, & also wherewith to finde a mans selfe, be not the blessinges of God: yes verily be they. But yet must wee note that as in respecte of the faithlesse, & of the despisers of God, they turne to their harme, because they be foule & vnclean, & doe defile Gods benefites with their handling of them. Needes must it bee then that the order of nature is turned vpside downe in this behalfe. For inasmuch as the wicked & the vnbeleeuers are full of filth & vncleancsse: they can not touch any of Gods benefites, but they must needes beray them and marre them. And therefore all must needes turne to their condemnation. Againe, we see how the world goeth. Haue theeues (I meane such as are giué to deceite & fleecing) haue they gathered much together? They haue tormented themselues all the time of their lyfe: & what ioy haue they had of them? God taketh vengeance on them: for they be inflamed ẅ such greedinesse of them, as they be neuer in quiet: & besides ỹ, they cannot doe good ẅ their euilgotten goods. But in the end, doe they once dye? Then goes all to hauock againe. For the worlde sees how the diuell hath libertie to ouerthrowe, euen such as a man would haue thought to haue bin well grounded, & that they shold neuer haue decayed to the worldes end. A man would wonder to see how they be destroyed in ỹ turning of a hand. Yea and moreouer, the goods which they haue raked together for their children, become as halters to hang them withall, so as they become miserable euen in the sight of the world, & men behold the signes of Gods wrath & vengeance in thé, whereby it is well knowen that he neuer leaueth men vnpunished for the contépt & wrong which they doe to his maiestie, in rushing foorth into all disorder: insomuch ỹ if hee punish not the fathers themselues, he layeth the execution of it vpon their children, how long soeuer he make delay. So then let vs marke that it is not without cause that God telleth vs hee will blesse such as serue him, yea euen to the worldward. And that is ỹ cause why Saint Paul saith, that the feare of God hath promises, not onely of ỹ euerlasting life, but also of this earthly life: so as if we liue in the feare of God, wee shall not onely be sure of the inheritance which hee hath prepared for vs aboue: but also, ỹ euen as long as we liue in this world he will guide vs and keep vs vnder his protection, & not suffer vs to want any thing whereof hee knoweth vs to haue neede. Trueth it is that God wil alwayes be our karuer, because he knoweth we bee too much giuen to these earthly thinges, from the which he intendeth to pull vs away, to the ende we should haue the better skill to lift vp our heades to heauen,

1. Tim. 4. 8.

and to seeke after the goods that are prepared for vs there. Therfore whē God restreineth his benefites as we see he doth, that is to say, when he giueth vs them in smal & slender portion: it is to the intent we should not be hindred to keepe on our way stil in going right foorth vnto him. Thus ye see what we haue to marke in this text. And therfore if we serue our God, let vs not dout but he wil blesse vs euen to the worldwarde, and make vs to prosper better than ỹ wicked, yea and although we see them puffed vp with pride, although we see thē tryumph in pomp & brauery, & although we see thē swimming in their pleasures: let vs tary patiently a litle while, & we shal find ỹ God dalied not w̄ vs, whē he promised his blessing to such as ar willing to serue & loue him.

And specially let vs marke well howe he telleth vs here expressly, *that he will blesse vs in our issue, and in the increase of our Cattell.* I pray you, if the fauor which God theweth vs do extend euen to the brute beastes, so as the marke of his fatherly good will towardes vs shall bee printed in them: what wil he doe to our selues & to our childrē, and to the things ỹ touch vs much neerer? For in deed me must make this cōparison of our bodies with our soules. If God haue a care to feede these wretched carkesses heere: what will hee doe for vs when we be restored into his glorie? If he haue a care of our mortall bodies: what will he haue of our soules, which are fashioned after his owne image? But let vs returne to the present matter. If God voutsafe to haue care of our cattell, as of our Oxen, our Asses, and our sheepe for our sakes: what care will hee haue of our persons? What care will he haue of our children, which are heires of the promised saluation, and are adopted to belong to his couenant, seeing it pleaseth him to choose and adopt vs to be his people? For hee doth not onely say, come vnto me: but also I will be the God of thy children after thee vnto a thowsand generations. Deut. 5. 10. But what? we be worthie to be left destitute of al Gods promises: and it were much to, if we could by that meane bee brought to right repentance. Let vs see if Gods blessing be to be found among vs nowadayes as it is promised. In deede it is to bee marueled (as I haue declared alreadie) that God is so patient towardes vs. For are we woorthie to be maintained here one minute of an houre, considering the outrageous offences which we commit dayly against him? No: and yet notwithstanding, although he spare vs, although he tarie for vs, and although he scourge vs not as we haue deserued: yet neuertheleſſe, we see how we doe partly languishe. Some decay and consume thē selues by little & little: some perish vtterly out of hand: & other some pine away as if they were almost dead of cold, as men terme it. And what is ỹ cause hereof but our driuing away of Gods grace & blessing? Again we need not to go to our Oxen, our horses and our sheep to weet whether God w̄draw his hand & grace frō vs or no: Let vs but looke vpō our children in what plight they be. Gods receiuing of their fathers into his fauor, ought to bee as a lookingglasse of his goodnesse towards thē: but yet ought it to be much better knowē in the children, so as it might be sayd, Lo here a blessed seede. For Gods voutsafing to take ỹ fathers vnto him, was of purpose to vtter his mercie yet more in their childrē. But cōtrariwise, let a man looke vpon their children, & he shall be driuē to conclude, ỹ we be as good as banished frō Gods blessing, & from all ỹ prosperitie which he promised to his people. And no maruel though it be so, for ỹ world seeth wherat ỹ fathers ame. Their intent is not to edify thē in the feare of God: for it should seeme that they be loth ỹ their childrē should shame them by becomming honester mē than they. And to say ỹ trueth, they bring thē vp in all lewdnesse: and is it not meete then ỹ God should shew himself a iudge? Where are ỹ fathers nowadayes, ỹ make ỹ feare of God their marke to ame at in teaching their children? In deede they be willing enough to haue their childrē aduanced to ỹ worldward, & to lay for thē ỹ they may want no wealth: but in the meane while, as for to haue an eye vnto God, to say, I will dedicate my childrē vnto him, I will haue them so brought vp as he may be rightly honored by them: it is the furthest end of all their thought. Needes therefore must we be bereft of the benefites that are promised here, and banished from them.

Furthermore, whensoeuer it is told vs ỹ our Lord prouoketh vs to returne vnto him: let vs vnderstād ỹ seeing he loued vs freely when we were yet his enemies: it must needes be ỹ he will much rather loue vs now ỹ he is reconciled vnto vs. Yea, but yet must ỹ be in respect of our Lord Iesus Christ, & for his sake. We must not seeke any worthinesse out of ỹ person of him ỹ is called Gods welbeloued son: for it is only he ỹ hath satisfied ỹ paimēt of all our dets, which thing it lay not in any creature to do. Yet notwithstāding let vs assure our selues ỹ it behoueth vs to indeuer to doe wel, knowing ỹ God wil not haue vs to abuse his mercie. For seeing he hath adopted vs to be his childrē: let vs yeeld him ỹ honor ỹ is due to our father. And besides ỹ, although our workes be vnperfect, and wee doe but offer him things which are not worth ỹ accepting at his hād: yet doth not he cease to lyke wel of vs in ỹ things ỹ we do to serue & honor him w̄all, & we shall not be disappointed of ỹ benefits ỹ he hath promised vs. But yet must we impute all to his mercie, and we must liue in such sort in this world, as we may be out of doubt ỹ he wil haue regard to maintein vs euē in this present lyfe, & to giue vs whatsoeuer he knoweth to be meet for vs. Therfore let ỹ serue to make vs to finde such tast in his goodnesse, as it may tolle vs on stil further & further, so as we may be able to goe through w̄ a cheerful heart, to the spirituall blessednesse that tarryeth for vs aboue, whereof we haue but only a taste as now by faith and hope.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs so to feele them, as we may learne to be sory for them better than wee haue beene, and to turne wholy vnto him, and to reforme our whole lyfe after such a sorte, as wee may seeke nothing but to giue

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quet our ſelues all wholy vnto him, and to frame our ſelues to his holy will as he hath declared it in his worde. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the twelfth of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lv. Sermon, which is the fift vpon the ſeuenth Chapter.

16 Thou ſhalt conſume all the nations which the Lorde thy God giueth thee. Thine eye ſhall not pardon them: neither ſhalt thou ſerue their Gods: for that wilbe thy decay.

17 If thou ſay in thine hart, theſe nations are moe in number than I, how may I driue them out?

18 Be not afraide of them: but remember what the Lorde thy God did to Pharao, and to all the Egyptians.

19 That is to wit, the great tryals which thine eyes haue ſeene, and the ſignes and wonders, and the ſtrong hand and ſtretched out arme, wherewith the Lorde thy God brought thee out. So will the Lord thy God doe to all the nations of whoſe face thou art afraid.

Mat. 5. 44. 45.

FOraſmuch as we bee exhorted to become lyke God in gentlenesſe & mildneſſe, and that he wil haue his children knowen thereby in this world: it ſhould ſeeme ỳ the thing which Moſes ſayth here, is not agreeable thereunto. For euen the heathen could well skill to ſay, that there is nothing wherein men reſemble God more, thn in gentelnes and louingkindnes, when they giue themſelues to doe good. But in this place heere is nothing but rigor. God will haue them to kill all without ſparing of any thing: it ſeemeth then ỳ there is ſome contrarietie in this matter. Not but (as I haue declared heretofore) although God execute his iudgements, and appoint men to be the doers thereof: Yet is that no let, but that we may in the meane while bee kindehearted in our ſelues, and haue pitie and compaſſion euen vppon them that periſh. Nowe on the one ſide, if God inioyne a thing to be done: it muſt be done without gainſaying. And yet in the meane while we muſt followe the rule that is giuen vs generally: namely to loue our neighbors though they be not worthie of it, yea euen ſuch as hate vs, and to indeuour to doe them good, & to ouercome them by doing good for euill. But this will be the better vnderſtoode, if wee take the matter by partes.

Deut. 4. 2.

First we muſt cal to minde here what hath bin declared vpon the ſixth chapter, that is to wit, that it is not for vs to meaſure Gods iudgemẽts after our fancie, for we muſt needes graunt, that ſometimes they bee as a bottomleſſe pit: but yet for all that, they ceaſe not to bee righteous ſtill. Then ſhal we not always ſee the reaſon of Gods doinges: but yet muſt we lyke well of them without gainſaying. For it is good reaſon that all creatures ſhould ſtoope to him, and that he ſhould not be bound to yeeld any account. And therefore when the thing that God commaundeth vs ſeemeth ſtraunge: let vs hold our mindes in awe and ſubiection, and yeelde God ſo much honor, as to confeſſe that he is righteous & iuſt though we perceiue it not. Let that ſerue for one point.

Againe when we ſee him vtter ſuch rigor towardes others, as to vs may ſeeme exceſſiue: therein let vs acknowledge his goodneſſe and mercie towardes vs: for hee might doe the lyke to vs. Of what or of whom is it long that wee periſh not, as well as they vpon whome God powreth out the extremitie of his rigor? It is certeine that our ſinnes haue well deſerued that as much ſhould befall vs: but God beareth with vs of his infinite goodneſſe. Therefore let vs ſtand in awe. For though God vſe goodneſſe and patience towardes vs as now: yet hath not he forgotten our faultes, except wee our ſelues doe beare them in minde. And therefore let vs vnderſtand ỳ God might iuſtly deſtroy vs, and thereupon let vs cal our ſelues home to him, and preuent the thing ỳ is to be feared, ỳ is to wit, leaſt he ſhould ſtretch forth his arme to cõfounde vs. So then, the executions of Gods iudgements ought to be as warninges vnto vs, to enter into the knowledge of our ſinnes, ỳ when we haue giuen God thankes for bearing with vs, wee may learne to returne home to him againe.

But yet notwithſtanding, when we haue well conſidered all thinges: [wee ſhall finde that] it was not without cauſe that God cõmanded his people to roote out all the folk that dwelt in the land of Chanaan. For he had already born with them a long time, as hath bin declared. Shall we thinke it ſtrange, ỳ after God had taryed foure hundred yeeres for men ỳ were deſpiſers of his maieſtie, & giuen to all naughtineſſe: he ſhould in the end haue no more pitie vpõ them, but wil them to be vtterly wiped out of the world? But ſuch were all thoſe nations. For although they were malicious and froward already in the time of Abraham, and it was apparant that the land was infected with their filthineſſe: yet did God auow, that their wickedneſſe was not yet come to the full grouth. And therefore hee delayed his wrath, not for the ſpace of halfe a

score yeeres only, but full foure hundred yeeres together. He let them alone in ease and rest: and they waxed stil woorse and worse, and hardened more and more. It seemeth that Gods goodnesse gaue the more libertie to doe euill. Therefore it was high time for God to put forth his mighty hand then or neuer to destroy them, seeing hee found them so farre past grace. And in deed, we can well skil to desire God to punish the wicked, and it greeueth vs that he should beare with thē, & if he make delay, we thinke hee is too patient. Againe, if hee vse rigor after his long tariance: thē we cry out that he is too seuere, and we ask if he could not deale otherwise thā so. To be plain, there is no measure in vs. For if God satisfy not our desires, we fal to cōplayning, one while of his ouergreat gentlenesse, & another while of his ouergreat seueritie. And if he execute not such vengeance at ỳ first dash as we would wishe, we thinke he is a sleepe, & that hee dissembleth too much. And dayly we here such murmuringes as these: What meanes he by this? Why doth hee forbeare so long? Againe on the otherside, if God come with his power to punish men according to their deserving: then, alas howe comes it to passe ỳ God (who reporteth himselfe to be so patient & pitifull,) doth now shewe himselfe so rigorous against vs? Yea, but we consider not that while our sinnes prouoke his wrath, & while we stack vp wood to kindle the fire of it, he allureth vs to repentance by gentlenesse. For he giueth vs leasure to return vnto him, to the end we should aske him forgiuenes. And if we doe not so, must he not then shew himself to be our iudge? In like taking were the people of whom Moses maketh mentiō here. For Gods intent was not to punish thē wour iust causeles sentence was giuē vppon thē aforehand in ỳ time of Abrahā. And now there are foure hundred yeeres runne out since: and is not ỳ a terme long enough? did these nations amend of all that time? Nay, contrariwise they ceased not to giue thēselues ouer to al naughtines, & because they were not corrected, they became the worse & ỳ more stubborne, & their malapernesse increased more & more. Now thē God executeth ỳ sentence which he had giuen vpon thē foure hundered yeere before: for hee knoweth ỳ they be past remedie. And therefore let vs learn to glorify him in his iudgements, & whereas we see ỳ reason of thē here, let vs not cease to conclude wour disputing (yea euē when we perceiue not ỳ reason of thē) ỳ he is iust & righteous, and ỳ he weieth his workes in such balance, as there is no fault to bee found in them, and that if wee chaunce to checke against them, we shalbe confounded in our blasphemie. And so ye see what we haue to remember.

Rom. 2. 5.

Psal. 112. 7.

Againe, whē God listeth to execute his rigor: let not vs allege his mercie to him. True it is ỳ in resorting vnto him we must alwayes beseech him to voutsafe to receiue vs to mercie, & al our prayers must begin & end w̄ this confession, ỳ if God vsed not his goodnesse wee shoulde be vndone, & there would be no more hope of saluation for vs: & therefore it standeth vs in hand to flee for refuge to Gods meere mercie. But the thing ỳ I speake of as now, is ỳ we must not reply against God when he listeth to deale rigorously w̄ vs: for there is none of vs al, but he could finde in his heart to make God to stoope to his lure. Let vs beware of such presumptuousnesse, & rather doe him the honor to say ỳ his iustice is vnblameable in all points & all respectes. And forasmuch as it is forwe haue to note, ỳ whensoeuer God punisheth ỳ wicked, it is not enough for vs to confesse ỳ he doth it iustly: but also if he commaūd vs to execute his iudgemēts, wee must doe it, & we must shut our eyes at all thinges. For as for him ỳ will be more pitiful thā God: although he be cōmended of men, & that his doing haue some shewe of vertue: Yet doth he most leawdly blaspheme him which is ỳ fountaine of all goodnesse. The man ỳ pretendeth to be more mercifull than God: is worse than the diuell. For why? What are we? Let vs make comparison betweē God & vs. Behold, God will haue vs to execute rigor: & we will needes call him back to mercie: now is not that a spiting of him, as though we would spit in his face if we could? Yes: for there is nothing more peculiar to him than his goodnesse. Let vs take away his goodnesse from him, & he is no longer God. Shal we imagine God to be but some dead thing? Nay, when we speake of God, we must vnderstād ỳ al goodnesse is in him, & that we haue none at al in vs, but by smal pieces, such as it pleaseth him to bestowe vppon vs. Now then, if a man wil needes say, I wil vse mercie, when God forbiddeth him: what a presumptuousnesse is ỳ? So then, let vs marke well in this text, that it is not enough for vs to confesse that God doth iustly punish whom he listeth, but also ỳ if he list to giue vs the charge & cōmission to execute his iudgements, we must goe through w̄ it wout skanning or gainsaying. And therefore in matters of Iustice, men must forbeare their own opinions & wils, & not be so ouerweening, as to take leaue to do what they think good, or to turn aside one way or other: but haue a regard to followe the rule that our Lord giueth them, assuring themselues that the authoritie of Iustice is tyed to the thing which he sheweth, and that his putting of them in that commission, is to the intent they should represse & punish euil doers, and maintaine & defend good folke. Seeing it is so: it is meete ỳ ỳ vse therof should be therefter.

Moreouer, as cōcerning these nations whom Moses speaketh of: Let vs marke that besides the other crimes & enormities which they had cōmitted: there was also a contempt of God, which was vtterly intollerable. In deede, wee will make no great reckoning of that: but yet doth GOD make reckoning of it, and hee passeth not what we haue imagined: for all our imaginations are corrupted. Whē God doth once set vp his iudgment seate: we may well put forth our opinion, but ỳ thing which God hath ordeyned must stād, & not be repealed. Now thē let vs note, ỳ whensoeuer Gods honor is lightly esteemed, then must rigor be vsed rather thā mercie in ỳ behalf. And we must call to minde ỳ example ỳ is rehearsed in ỳ first booke of kinges, namely of Achab who would needs shewe mercy to Benhadad king of Syria.

Syria. And there is expresly this saying, that whē Benhadad came to him to sew for mercie, al that euer he said vnto him was no more but this, that the kings of Israel were mercifull and kind hearted. And behold, that goodly vertue of clemencie ouercame his heart: by meanes wherof whereas God commaunded him to execute rigour, he shewed mercie. But it happened vnto him as he had deserued. And why? For the Syrians had cōmitted horrible blasphemie against God & scorned him, saying: He is ỹ God of ỹ mountains, but if we come into ỹ plain grounds, we shal haue victorie, he can do nothing there. Thus were idols set vp in Gods place. And therefore it was saide to Achab, that the king of Syria should bee vanquished & rooted out. Now it came to passe that his aray was put to flight: but yet they founde a shift by & by to make peace. And why? For this goodly commendation liked Achabs eares well, when they called him a mercifull Prince. By meanes wherof he was dandled a sleepe, so as he made sale of the blasphemie ỹ was committed against God, as it is a common matter with vs to bee pitifull in cases where God is offended. For this cause a Prophet was sent vnto him, bringing his badge with him, that is to wit, that he had bin wouded by the commandement of God: and the first man, (who had refused to do it,) was deuoured of a Lion out of hand. Yet notwithstāding the Prophet came to Achab wounded and disfigured and said vnto him: I tooke a man to keepe, and he that deliuered him to mee bad mee I should not let him goe vpon paine of my life. Neuertheless while I turned mee too & fro, he scaped from me. And thou must answere him vpon thy life, quoth Achab. Then answered the Prophet vnto Achab: it is thy selfe that this toucheth. This message is sent to thee of God, to shewe thee that for as much as thou hast spared the king of Syria, whom God had put into thy hand to be reuenged of him for the outrage done to his Maiestie: thou must answere for him lyfe for life, and thy people with thee. So then we see that if Gods honor be impeached, it is not for vs to let things slip, but we must vnderstand that if wee make light of such a crime, God will surely make the vengeance to light vpon our selues. To be short, let vs marke well, that if such as haue commission to punish offenders doe it not: there will bee no excuse for them. For ỹ which is written will not be repealed for mens pleasures: that is to wit, that he which iustifieth or acquitteth ỹ guiltie person, is as abhominable before God, as he that condemneth the innocent. If a poore innocent bee oppressed, men can skill to say, there is no reason in it, and that the matter must come to account before God. And here God addeth the second part, that is to wit, that if an offender be quit, and Iustice and equitie so turned vpside downe: it must come to account as well as the other. Yee see then howe it is a lesson which all those ought to beare in minde, whom God hath commanded to punish mens offences: that they must bee well ware to vse one rule and one egall measure. For if a man punish one offender and pardon another, and thinke to goe halfe quit for it before GOD: it is cleane contrarie. And for proofe thereof, let vs consider the example that is set downe in Hoseas concerning king Iehu. Oseo, 1. 14. God commaunded him to destroy all Idolaters: he did it partly but not altogither: for hee destroyed those whom he stoode in feare of, and he did it for his owne vaine glory and suertie. God did him the honour to make him king, & he considered it not. But when he came once to ỹ kingdome, O he must maintaine himselfe in it. And what did he? He executed rigor ynough vpon those whom he lifted, and specially vpon such as he wist might doe him harme: but when he had so begun, he let the rest go vnpunished, he cared not what came of it, so he might reigne peaceably. Now at the first sight a man might well say it was a vertue worthie of commendation, that he punished those whom God had commanded him. Verily and so was it, if he had held on that trade still. But for as much as he destroyed one sort and spared another sort: it is said that God will punish the māslaughter that Iehu had committed. And how may that be? Is it manslaughter to haue executed the cōmandement of God? Yea, after the maner that he went to worke. He is said to bee a manslear, bicause he had not an eye to the thing that God commanded him. For he should haue gone through as he began. But he stayed in the middes of his way. For as for those whom he punished, he punished thē in respect of his owne peculiar profit. He had no regard of Gods honour, so the Crowne of the kingdome continued with him. Therefore is he iustly accoūted for a manslear and not a iudge. And therefore let vs beware that we take not more libertie than God giueth vs. For he can well skill to moderate his own doings, though we take not vpon vs to be more pitifull than he. And if wee make our hand of his honor, we must pay dearely for it when we come to our reckening before him. But if this seeme straunge vnto vs: let vs go a litle by degrees, & see if nature might not be a schoolemystresse good enough for vs, if we were not blinded by our wicked affections. If a mā haue children, he knoweth well ynough that it is his ductie to teach them, and to chastise them whē they doe amisse. For if he beare with his childrē, and dare not touch them, but cockereth them, and in the meane while they bee of euill nature: may it not bee saide that he is worthie that his children should picke out his eyes, and pluck his nose from his face? And on the contrarie part, if children were teachable & meeke of themselues: it were not meete that they should bee touched. But when a father perceiues his children to bee curst and vnruly: if he spare them then, men will say that he marreth them, and that he sendeth them to the gallowes, and that he is the cause of their vndoing. Now let vs compare a father with a Iudge. Whereas a father ought to chastise his children with roddes: a iudge hath an office that passeth yet further. Therefore he must haue an eye thereunto: and if he doe not, he is worthy to haue his eyes put out with the mischiefe, as Moses speaketh here of these people, saying: They shall be as thornes to prick thee on all sides, and Iosu. 23. 13.

Deut. 25. 15.

to put out thine eyes: they shall be as waspes to sting thee in such sort as ỹ shalt not know which way to turne thee. Lo what reward ỹ Israelites had for their retchlesnesse in that they were not stout in putting the sentence in execution, which God had vttered with his own mouth. But howsoeuer the case stoode with them: let vs learne still to be pitifull. For the rigour that is spoken of here, must not make vs to forget how God commandeth vs to loue euen our enemies, & them Matt. 5. 44. that persecute vs, and to indeuour to doe them good to the vttermost of our power, that we may bring them into the right way of saluation. Then must we needes haue that. Yea and euen when a Iudge vseth rigour, his heart must mourne and lament, to see a creature that is made after the image of God so dealt withall: but yet must he go on still, and execute the office which GOD hath committed vnto him. These two thinges then are not vnmatchable: that is to wit, that gentlenesse should bee vsed in the executing of Iustice, so as our wicked moode should not carie vs away, but that we should alwayes hold vs still to this point, of louing euen those that shall haue done vs the worst they could. Thus ye see howe we ought to put this doctrine in vre. Gods intent is not to stirre vp his people to crueltie, his meaning is not to bereaue them vtterly of all compassion: and yet notwithstanding he will haue misdeedes to be punished.

And furthermore as touching the lande of Chanaan which hee had purposely appointed to his honour: hee woulde not haue it any longer so defyled with such infections. For the Nations that had dwelled therein before, had as it were defiled the land. Nowe Gods intent is to stablish his kingdome there, he will bee worshipped vncorruptly there: and therefore all abhominations must be rid away. For seeing that God will haue his righteousnesse put in vre through the whole world: whensoeuer he is knowen in any place, so as his trueth is there preached, and he hath set his Church in some good order and state: men must looke well about them that no offences, or defylinges may raigne there. For wheresoeuer God is worshipped and serued: that place is as a temple dedicated to his Maiestie, and Gods temple must be kept holy as it ought to bee. Then is it the greatest and intollerablest treacherie to Godward that can bee, when euill 2. Cor. 3. doings and crimes are fostered in his Churche. Therefore it is not said without cause, *Thine eye shall not pardon any of all those Nations, they must bee consumed vtterly.* And why? first the wickednesse that was among them was ouergreat, they were despisers of God, and therefore he was faine to be reuenged of them in the end. Againe, he hath an eye to the benefit and welfare of his Church, so as he woulde not haue his children intangled with such as might draw them to euill, & consequently to their ruine and destruction. God then wil haue his people rid of all stumbling blocks. Marke that for the second point. Moreouer for the third point, it was conuenient ỹ God should shewe himselfe a Iudge, to the intent that by beholding such vengeance, they might take warning to thinke thus with themselues: seeing that God hath done vs the honour to punish such as haue offended vs, to giue vs example by them, let vs beware ỹ wee fall not into the same offences: for then shall we be dubble to blame. Thus ye see how Gods committing of his vengeaunce vnto his owne people, to punish such as had bin giuen ouer to all naughtinesse, ought to serue all folkes for an example.

After he hath said so, he addeth now, *Thou shalt not serue their Gods, for that would turne to thy decay.* Although this saying haue bin set downe by Moses alreadie heretofore: yet is it not without cause ỹ he setteth it downe here againe. For we soone forget what God commandeth vs, if wee bee not quickened vp to put it in execution. We crie out dayly to haue iustice executed: but how do men discharge themselues therof? Let their eares be neuer so much beaten, it is to no purpose, they passe not much for it: but they be the more forgetfull from day to day. Therefore doeth Moses put them in minde of the things that he had told them before, to the intent that the people should in any wise refraine from seruing the idols of the heathen. And he addeth a threate, *It would turne to thy decay.* In deede the Hebrew word which he vseth is commonly taken for cordes or lines, but here by a similitude it is taken for snares or nets, and for ruine, decay, downfal, or stumbling. Then if thou fall into idolatrie: it will be a deadly fall to thee, saith he. Keepe thee from that. Thus we see that when God punisheth ỹ wicked, we must alwayes learne at their cost, to liue in his feare. For our condemning of other folkes wil not iustifie our selues, if we follow them or become like them: but rather they shalbe witnesses against vs to bereaue vs of al excuse. Therfore let vs thinke vpon that which is added here, that when God had commanded his people to destroy the idolaters: he addeth, beware ye meddle not with their superstitions, for then shall ye bee ouerthrowen out of hand. Yea & we see also that God did not beare with the people of Israel any long time after they had offended. For the heathen might yet haue some excuse, bicause they had not had any teaching: but the Israelites sinned wilfully, & their dooing was a manifest rebellion, bicause they had bin sufficiently warned thereof before, specially for as much as God had done them so great honor, as to put the sword into their hand, as if he should say, Thou shalt punish the misdoings of others. Seeing then ỹ God had so honored that people: was it not an increasing of their euill much more, whē they happened to become like those whom they punished? Yea: for ỹ punishment which they had executed vpon others, serued to bereaue thē of al colour of ignorance, and to dubble their owne fault. For after as God honoreth men: they ought to take ỹ more heede to liue in all purenes before him. That is the cause thē why those two things are matched together.

And hereupon wee may gather, that all such as haue the executing of Iustice, must lay away their owne fleshly passions, and looke that they be quite and cleare from all desire of reuenge, hatred and rancor. And this must be regarded

of vs, not onely in punishing of euill doers, but also in the admonishments and warninges that wee giue. For if we be too sharpe, it is an ouer-shooting of our selues which proceedeth of our sinfulnesse, by reason whereof, although the correction which we minister be out of Gods word, yet is it already steined, and God alloweth it not. Sometimes wee think our selues to bee excused, if wee tell a man the truth. Yea, but wee would not tell it him, if our ouerwhelmed affection draue vs not to it. For nowadaies vices are fostred among men, and euery man is content to beare with his neighbour in his euill doeing: but if there happen any variance or quarell, then our flieth that which was cõcealed before. Therefore in rebuking men, it is not enough for vs that wee can alleage that we haue told them the truth: vnlesse we can also therewithall protest, that we were not led with desire of reuenge or otherwise. Let vs marke then, that if it be but in warninges by word of mouth, we must not be passionate nor desirous of reuenge, but simply do it of zeale to Godward. Now then it is much more reason that when a iudge holdeth the sword in his hand, and is to proceede further to the executing of iustice with rigour, hee should then lay aside all euill affections. That is the cause why God hath expresly shewed his people the end of the law which he had giuen them, to the intent they shoulde bee the better taught to walke in the pure religion, and not follow the superstitions which they should punish in the Heathen. That is the thing which we haue to note in effect.

Now Moses adderth immediatly, *If thou say in thine heart, Alas these Nations are mee in nũber than I, & how is it possible that I should discomfite them? Remember what thy God did in the land of Egypt, how he handled Pharao & all his people, & what proofe of his power he gaue thee there. For euen so will hee doe to all the Nations whom thou art afraid of.* Heere Moses intendeth to harten the people, to the intent they should not bee daunted with fearefulnesse. For the thing that doeth commonly hinder men in doing their duetie, is a certaine fearefulnesse which they conceiue. O (say they) this is hard to be done: and againe, if I doe it, I shall stirre vp many mens displeasure against mee, and such a harme may come to me by it. Thus in stead of walking as God commaundeth vs, we bowe with euery blast, and in the end turn quite away. Wee be but ouer bould and hardie in following our owne passions, and wee be so blinded with them, that although there bee daunger in them, yet wee think not vppon it: and although it come to our mind, yet doe our affections so ouermaister vs, that we ceasse not to goe on still. We see that if a man be in a rage, although death be before his eyes, yet hee goeth through with it like a mad man, or like a beast that is caried away with furiousnesse. After that maner doe we deale. And that is the cause why I sayd that we be but too bold in executing our owne wicked and excessiue moode. But if God commaund vs any thing: we make such nyseneesse at it, as is pitiull to see. And then come all these doubtes in our head: How is it possible that I should holde out, if I should followe my vocation faithfully? For beholde, there is such a blocke in my way, I shall haue such a man mine enemie, such a thing may befall mee, such a man will bee against me. All these forecastes (say I) will come to our mind. And therefore let vs marke, that God doth not without cause say thus to his people heere, doe these thinges, not respecting thine owne power, and abilitie, but respecting and knowing my strength; for that is inuincible. If thou haue mee on thy side, feare not but I will make thee ouercome all thine incombraunces, and all the euill incounters that thou canst meete with. Thus ye see in effect what wee haue to mark vppon this text.

Howbeit forasmuch as the vice that is spoken of heere, is common among vs, and all of vs are (as yee would say) attainted with it: wee haue so much the more neede to bee earnest in putting this lesson in vre. We see that if men be against vs, by and by we ouershoote our selues, and we cannot serue God. And how so? If I should doe al that God commaundeth me, all the world would hate mee: I shalbe pointed at with mens fingers, I shal haue as many enemies as I haue neighbours about me. Heereuppon wee shrink in our hornes by and by, and we beare our selues in hand that wee bee excused before God. And this happeneth in maner continually. Yea verily, and forasmuch as the world is frowarde, we haue good cause to be afraid when we intend to liue in such vprightnesse and soundnesse as God commaundeth. Sith we see it is so, let vs returne to that which is said heere: namely that to obey GOD, wee must not passe what wee our selues are, nor what our owne credite and power is: but we must arme our selues with this promise. It is God that commaundeth me to doe it, and hee seeth well ynough what daungers and distresses are in it, he will stand by me and reach me his mighty hand. It behoueth me to rest vppon that, and to conceiue a stedfast trust, to ouercome all thinges that may turne me away from the doing of my duety. That is the thing which we haue to remember vppon this lesson of Moses. And in deede how should we doe without that? For wee see howe vices haue their full scope nowadaies, and he that intendeth to serue God purely, may wel say he is as a sheepe among wolues. But what for that? Wee haue a good Shepheard, who hath promised to defende vs. Let vs put our trust in him, and in the meane season walke on in the way that he hath shewed vs. Else, I beseech ye what would become of the poore Christians that are deteined among the enemies of the fayth? If they should passe for the daungers wherein they bee, how durst they open their mouthes to honour GOD? Should they not needes either giue themselues ouer to all euill, or else at leastwise be faine to strike sayle? Yes surely. But when they consider thus, Our God is the keeper of our soules, and seeing wee bee vnder his protection, let vs wait till hee reache vs his hande at our neede: then at the conceiuing of such thoughtes, they take newe

courage & are inabled to serue God, or at leastwise the saide fearefulnesse ouermaistreth them not. True it is that wee cannot but bee afraide, and feele our flesh continually shrinking away, when wee bee disposed to walke according to Gods ordinance, and wee shall conceiue many crossebytings: but yet must wee not foster such vice to foade our selues in it. I say we must come to that which Moses telleth vs here: *Thy God wil worke for thee.*

Aboue all other, they that are in authoritie must arme themselues with this promise, or else there wilbe neither constancie nor stoutnesse in them. For wee see what threatninges, and spitings are wrought euery where. Insomuch that when euen the greatest kinges and princes are minded to doe right: there needeth but some Courtier to inuegle them, and hee shall so alter their minde as (doe what they can) they must needes yeeld to all naughtinesse. No doubt but that euen the greatest princes, (although they themselues intend no such thing) doe become starke naught for other mens pleasures, so as they be oftentimes inforced to say, I would faine doe the thing that I knowe to be good, but I dare not for displeasing of such as are about mee, bycause they may stirre mee vp great troubles and vnquietnesse, and therefore I must bee faine to yeeld to them. Againe there are a great number of people that wil set themselues against me, if I should doe my dewty. Lo in what taking a prince shall diuers times bee. Insomuch that if hee perceiue some officers of his to haue committed outrages, pillinges, pollinges, and extortions, O [saieth he] I shall lose all my seruantes hearties if I bee too rigorous: therefore must I let such thinges slippe, and though my people bee oppressed by it, yet must not I make any countenance y I see it. Ye see then that the greatest princes are the cause of all mischiefe by their inclining to the woorser part, when they thinke they cannot maintaine their state, but by fauoring wicked persons, and by laying the brydle in their necke. And how then shall they doe which haue not the like authoritie? Surely euery little blast of winde, and euery leafe that falleth from a tree, must needes astonish them out of hand, so as for feare they shal alleage thus and thus: Alas, I shal get such a mans displeasure, such an inconuenience may befall mee for it: therefore I must doe such a thing or such a thing to saue my selfe: I see my life would be in daunger, and I am but one man alone, I should bee made a pray for others. Yee see then howe these forecastes are a cause of the ouerthrow of all right & Iustice, so as men keepe not one continual train, nor hold themselues at one good stay, but that as soone as they haue done any one good deede that is worthy of prayse, by and by they vndoe it againe and marre all. Therefore it standeth vs so much the more in hande to beare this doctrine well printed in our mindes, y if we intend to serue God, wee must not haue an eye to our owne power, but trust to him that setteth vs a worke. For he wil not suffer vs to be disappointed, so we doe him the honour to call vpon him, and to flie to him for refuge, not mistrusting but that his power is able enoughe to maintaine vs. Yea and although we haue none enemies to the worldward, yet must that be our foundation, that wee may keepe the right way all our life long. For let euery of vs looke into himselfe, and hee shall see that wee haue a common enimie of Sathan, and wee see what wiles he hath to surprise vs: and what strength haue wee to withstande him? Againe the holy scripture telleth vs that wee must forsake our selues, mortifie all our affections and hold them in prison, and renounce all worldly thinges, if wee will come vnto God, & moreouer our life must shew y fruits thereof. Now we know our frailtie, we see infinite temptations to inuegle vs, we knowe that the diuell is the prince that raineth in the aire aboue vs, and alas what can wee doe? This might at the first make vs abashed. But what? Wee must not heere haue an eye to our owne freewill as these blind wretches doe, which presume vppon their owne strength, and rest vpon their own abilities: but wee must say, O Lorde, performe thou the thinges which thou commaundest vs, and then commaund vs what thou wilt. Let vs goe and put our selues after that fashion into the hand of our God, and suffer him to rule vs by his holy spirite: and then wee neede not doubt but we shal haue the vpperhand of al euils that incounter vs, and that although wee be troubled neuersomuch, yet in the end hee will giue vs a happie issewe, so as wee shall feele that our trusting in him hath not beene in vaine. To be short, we see how profitable this doctrine is for vs. For it were impossible for vs to ouercome the least assault that wee could be put vnto, vnlesse God reached out his hand to succour vs at our neede. Therefore let vs call vppon him, and that not for once and away, but forasmuch as it is right hard for vs to hold out to the end, and to haue a continuall stedfastnesse, let vs pray God that when he hath once set vs in the good trade, he continue the same, and suffer not vs to turne head again within two or three dayes after, but that when we haue walked rightly for a certaine time, we may goe foreward more and more, and shewe that we haue walked vnder his guidance, and not beene foolish hardie to raunge abroad at aduenture, but that wee haue put our trust in him, and imbraced his promises, whereby he telleth vs that he will neuer faile such as are his, but that like as they submit themselues to him, so he also will vtter his power towardes them, to maintain them and defende them against all the temptations of Sathan, and against all the wronges of the world.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs so to feele them as wee may learne to mislike of them, and giue our selues more and more to serue him: and that seeth we bee so sore tempted with our owne wicked lustes, and so assailed by them euery minute of an houre, as we bee not able to ouermaister them: wee may take the armor which he giueth vs from heauen, that is to wit, the grace of his holy

holie spirite, wherewith to repulse all Sathans assaults, that by that meanes our God may bee glorified in vs, and his Kingdome aduaunced more and more, so as his righteousnesse, goodnesse, and wisedome may shine foorth euerywhere, and spetially be so printed in our hearts, as wee also may beare the badges of them in all our members. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the xiij. of August. 1555.

The Lvj. Sermon which is the sixth vpon the seuenth Chapter.

19 That is to wit &c.

20 And also the Lord thy God will send Waspes among them, vntill he haue destroyed the remnant of them, and those that shall haue hidden themselues from thy presence.

21 Thou shalt not be afraid before them. For the Lord thy God is in the mids of thee, a great and terrible God.

22 And the Lord thy God will cast downe those nations before thee, by little and little. Thou maist not rid them away out of hand, for feare least the beastes of the feelde doe multiply against thee.

23 But the Lorde thy God will giue thee them before thee, and astonish them with a great astonishment, vntill they be vtterly destroyed.

24 And he will giue thee their kinges into thy handes, and thou shalt wype out their name from vnder heauen. And none of them all shalbe able to stand before thee, vntill thou haue rooted them out.

WE sawe yesterday what courage wee ought to haue to doe our duety, and wherupon we ought to grounde our selues: namely vppon the promise which God maketh vs, that we shalbe maintained by his hand and power. For if we haue an eye to our own power & ability, we shal haue no cause to conceiue anie trust: but if wee bee acquainted with Gods power, and haue his promise that he will ayde vs: then haue we no cause to bee afrayde. Then if wee see anie daungers that may make vs afrayde, or astonish vs: let vs learne to haue recourse to this lesson, that whensoeuer God commandeth vs to do any thing, he wil not faile vs at our neede, but rather wee shall feele his presence in such wise as we ought to do him the honour to rest vppon him. And to the ende this doctrine might be the better knowne, Moses hath therwithall set down the experience therof which God had giuen the people of Israel at their going out of Egypt. *Thou hast seene the signes and wonders which God wrought: and he wil doe as much in this behalfe.* It ought to suffise vs ỳ God bindeth himselfe to vs by his promise. Howbeit forasmuch as he perceiueth our infirmitie: he giueth vs this help more, of making vs to haue experience of ỳ things that we knew before. Nowe if this anaile vs not: we be not onely vnfaithfull, but also vnthankful. For when god doth vs good, it is not for an houre or twaine: but hee wil haue it to stande vs in steede all our life long, and to conclude boldly, that as he hath begun well, so will hee also continue. Then let vs beware that we be not guiltie of so great vnthankfulnesse, as to haue thrust Gods benefites vnderfoot, which ought to be so well knowen vnto vs. And that is to the end we may goe through with our course without stoppe. And because wee be as weake as is possible, or rather lasie and vnprofitable, when we shoulde do any good: let vs take corage as it is giuen vs here euen by hauing recourse vnto God, praying him to holde out his hand continually to helpe vs: and therewithall let vs doe whatsoeuer he commaundeth vs, and whatsoeuer wee knowe to bee our duetie, not doubting but the end of it wilbe good. Although the diuel practise to turne al vpsidedowne, and although men streine themselues and make neuer so greate assaultes to further the same: yet will God get the vpper hande. And if hee succour vs, let vs not doubt but wee shall ouercome all the assaultes which wee shall bee driuen to indure.

And furthermore Moses addeth, *that God will sende Waspes to destroy the rest of those Nations, and those that hid themselues out of the way.* As if he should say, that although the children of Israel were not able to destroy their enemies: yet woulde God prouide for it as one that hath all meanes in his hande. Thou shals not neede (saith hee) to haue the sworde alwayes in thine hande: for God hath other men of warre, hee will arme the Waspes against them. Nowe surely this may seeme straunge at the first sight. For seeing that God intendeth to shewe his power against the enemies of his people: why doeth he not rather dart his thunder at thé from heauen?

Why

Why maketh hee not the earth to open and to ſwallowe them vp? Why worketh hee not after ſome other faſhion than by ſending of Hornets? Nay, heereby hee ment to ſhewe, firſt that hee hath all creatures in his hande, and can ſerue his turne with them as he liſteth. And it is a greate aduauntage for vs to knowe, that if God bee on our ſide, there is not any thing, no not euen ſo much as a flie, but it ſhall make with vs and againſt our enemies. Likewiſe on the contrarie parte, if wee haue prouoked Gods wrath and hee bee minded to make vs feele his vengeance: although the whole worlde had linked themſelues together to helpe vs: yet notwithſtanding, all thinges (yea euen to the verie flies) ſhall be armed to execute his wrath againſt vs. This therefore is a thing that ought to make vs afraide when wee liue not as wee ought to doe: and contrariwiſe which ought to giue vs ſingular hope and comfort, ſo wee bee vnder the protection of our God. Marke it then for a ſpeciall point, that whereas God auoweth that hee will ſende Waſpes: his meaning is to ſhewe that hee hath incomprehenſible meanes in his hande, and that hee will cauſe all thinges to imploy themſelues in his ſeruice, to deſtroye his enemies and to helpe his people. But yet hee ſheweth his mightie power much better thereby, than if he vſed myracles: I meane in puniſhing the pride of ſuch as truſt in their owne ſtrength, and ſwell like Toades, and beare themſelues in hande that nothing can hurt them. The deſpiſers of God do make themſelues beleeue, that they can exempt themſelues from all inconueniences, either by their pollicie, or by their power and cunning. Heereuppon (for wee knowe that men are readie to burſt for pride, vntill Gods ſpirite reigne in them:) God, to humble them and to make them meeke, ſubdueth them and ouermaſtereth them as they deſerue.

Rom. 8. 28. 29.

True it is that God coulde confounde them at the firſt blowe, and make them to feele ſuch a heauenly force, as were able to dant the whole worlde: but hee will not deale ſo with them. Howe then? Hee vndermines them by ſuch meanes as they neuer thought of: and that is to ſcorne their fonde ouerweening the more, which made them worſe than mad, and wherewith they had beene beſotted before. And that is the cauſe why hee ſent flies and other vermin vppon Egypt, rather than raiſed his Angels to deſtroye the Egyptians. It is true that God wrought al manner of wayes to make them feele his power. Hee ſent darkeneſſe, hee turned the waters into bloude, and in the ende an Angel came and ſlewe all the firſt borne of their houſes. This was well done. But yet Gods meaning was to pull downe the pride of Egypt, by ſending vermine to conſume them. Lo what men of warre God chooſeth to wage battell for him, when hee liſteth to laugh mens loftineſſe to ſcorne, and to ſpite them that they may bee aſhamed of it. For by meanes thereof they come to knowe themſelues, whereas erſt they forgate themſelues, and bare themſelues in hande that their owne power was wonderfull. And indeede when wee reade that Herod was ſo conſumed of wormes: it ought to put vs in minde, that God ſent him a puniſhment fitte for him, becauſe hee had ſuffered men to call him a God. Hee was not contented with the degree of a mortall man: but hee woulde needs imagine that hee coulde transforme himſelfe. Therefore it was meete that hee ſhoulde bee abaced beneath all men, and that the filthines of his bodie ſhoulde make him droppe in peeces, ſo as hee ſhoulde ſeeke to murther himſelfe with his owne hand. Nowe then Gods handling of him after that faſhion, is to humble him the better. And when wee reade this preſent text, let vs looke that wee liue in the feare of our God: and then wee may bee ſure of his helpe, ſo as wee may liue not onely among Waſpes and Hornets and other ſuch vermine, but alſo euen among Dragons and wilde beaſts, according as it is ſaide in the foureſcore and eleuenth Pſalme, that when wee bee in Gods keeping, hee will maintaine our life in ſuch ſort, as the thinges whereof wee be moſt afraid, ſhall not bee able to annoy vs. But on the contrarie part, if wee become his enemies and deſpiſe his maieſtie: hee needeth not to make any great adoe in arming of himſelfe to confound vs. For flies wil be able ynough to execute his vengeance. Thus ye ſee what we haue to gather vppon this place.

Rom. 8. Pſal. 91.

Nowe againe Moſes confirmeth the doctrine which wee haue hearde: namely that the children of Iſrael ſhoulde not bee afraide of their enemies. *For God is among you* (ſaieth hee) yea euen *the ſtronge and terrible God*. Firſt hee ſetteth downe heere, that they ſhoulde not bee afraide of their enemies: and afterwarde hee addeth the reaſon, For God (ſaith hee) is among you. And thirdly hee ſheweth what manner a God the ſame is, to the intent that the people ſhoulde not doubt but hee is mightie ynough, and by comparing him to his creatures, reſolue themſelues that it ought to ſuffiſe them, if they had him on their ſide. This is the ſumme of the thinges that are ſaide heere. Now it ſeemeth at the firſt ſight that heere is ſome contrarietie. For hee had ſaide afore, God will deſtroy all the enemies whom thou feareſt: and heere hee forbiddeth them to bee afraide. Howe hang theſe two together? Whereas hee ſpeaketh of feare, wee haue to note that when any daunger is apparant and threateneth vs, wee feele the griefe thereof, and wee muſt needes be afraide of it, and it cannot be otherwiſe.

Nowe then in ſaying that God will deſtroye all thoſe whom his people were afraide of, Moſes meaneth that although the enemies bee dreadfull of themſelues, yet ſhall not God bee hindered to deſtroy them. And againe, we haue to note alſo, that God hath alwayes borne with the fainthartedneſſe of thoſe that are his. Indeede it was a fault in the people of Iſrael, that they were afraide of their enemes, for ſeeing they knewe themſelues to bee in the tuition of

Acts 12. 23.

their

their God, they shoulde haue defiled all things that might haue abashed them. Yet notwithstanding, God beareth still with that default. And although the people was vnworthy to bee succoured, because of the fearefulnesse that proceeded of the saide infirmitie: yet did not God cease to holde them still by the hande. Neuertheleſſe if God beare with vs, his meaning is not to feede our vice, or to foade vs in it, when wee haue not such stoutnesse and constancie as is requisite. It is true that God ceaseth not to haue mercie vpon vs for all that: but howsoeuer the worlde goe, yet is that fearefulnesse alwayes worthie to be condemned. For let vs see from what spring it issueth. If we had a perfite trust in our God: it woulde put away all feare, and wee might defie all that euer is against vs, accordingly as Saint Paul saieth, if God bee on our side, who shalbe against vs? And Dauid saieth, If a Million of men of warre had beseeged mee, yet woulde I not bee afraide. Though I were in the darknesse of death, yet if I may see God my sheepeherd, and he shew me his sheepehooke, I will rest my selfe vppon that and bee in quiet.

Rom 8. 29. Psal. 27. 1.

Therefore let vs marke well, that our Lorde sheweth himselfe pitifull, when it pleaseth him to succour vs in such infirmitie. For hee needed to doe no more but say in one worde, prepare your selues to receiue my grace, and by and by thereuppon wee ought to imbrace his promises and to rest vppon them, and to take all our contentation in them. But wee doe not so: and yet notwithstanding hee ceaseth not to beare with vs therein. Neuertheleſſe, although hee vse such gentlenesse and patience towardes vs: yet doth it not followe that therefore there is no fault in our fearefulnesse, neither ought we to conclude that wee may fall a sleepe in it: but rather we must quicken vp our selues to say: how nowe wretched creature? Thou distrusteſt thy God. Thou hast beene as greatly afflicted as might bee, and hee hath succoured thee. What meaneſt thou by reiecting his goodnesse after that manner? Thinkeſt thou that his benefites haue alwayes beene lost towards thee, that thou diffeateſt them through thine owne leawdnesse, in that thou doeſt not acknowledge them? For if wee acknowledged not Gods benefits as they deserue, surely we should be confirmed by the as I haue saide alreadie. Then is it not without cause ỳ God addeth here, that his people should not be afraide of their enemies. True it is that he had saide, Thou shalt bee afraide of them: but there bee spake of the infirmitie that he knewe to bee in his people, which was faultie: for he condemneth it as it deserued. And thereuppon hee addeth, Thou shalt not bee afraide of them. As if hee shoulde say, true it is in deede your nature will alwayes bee fearefull: but yet yee must not bee afraide, yee must withstande such fearefulneſſe. And when yee see the multitude of your enemies, it cannot bee but that yee must bee somewhat moued: but yet yee must haue the buckler of faith to repulse all such feare, and ye must thinke that seeing I haue promised to succour you: I will not faile you.

True it is that doe what wee can, wee shall neuer be so well hartened, but that there will be some misdouting as wee haue heretofore seene. For wee ought to holde our selues vnto Gods promises, and to assure our selues of his succour. Surely if we seeme neuer so stout, and there bee but one sparke of feare in vs, wee must vnderstande that the same is euil. Yet notwithstanding, so wee bee not ouerwhelmed with feare, nor quaile not, but take courage, and after tossing too and fro, doe holde still our owne, and enter into the battell: our Lorde is contented with vs.

Nowe then, what is to bee done? When wee perceiue any daunger, it cannot bee but wee must haue some feeling of it: for otherwise we should be as blockes, and not to bee afraide of any thing, is no vertue. A drunkarde will runne vppon the swordes point, hee will leape out at a windowe, hee wil be afraide of no thing: and why is that? Because he is out of his right wittes. Likewise a madde man will throwe him selfe into the fire or kill himselfe. Therefore we see that it is no vertue to bee without feeling of griefe. Neuertheleſſe when wee feele the daungers, wee must resort to the remedie that God giueth vs.

True it is that our life hangeth as by a threed, and that there needeth not any thing to destroy vs. But yet howe weake soeuer we be, our Lord hath promised to holde vs shrowded vnder his wings: and therefore let vs runne vnto him. And seeing hee hath a care of our life, let vs trust thereto, and call vppon him as oft as wee see any daunger like to insue. And forasmuch as he hath promised neuer to shrinke away from vs: let vs approch boldly vnto him, and put our trust in him, and then shall wee bee fenced welynough. For the name of God is an inuincible forteresse, the righteous will flee thereto for refuge, and hee shall neuer perish. To the intent therefore that wee may haue a stedfast assurance in the middes of daunger, let vs learne to haue recourse immediatly to our God, by receiuing the promises which hee giueth vs: and they wilbe a sure and steadie leaningstock to rest vppon: and by that meanes also God shalbe glorified in vs.

Psal. 20. 2. and 33. 21.

True it is that wee may feele some such conceit as shall abash vs: but yet that feare of ours which wee doe so conceiue, shalbe but as an exercise of our faith, and the ouercoming thereof shalbe the more commendable. Howbeit if wee finde any difficultie, so as we cannot resolue our selues at the first: then let vs assure our selues there is yet still some infirmitie in vs, and wee yeelde not God his due honour, forasmuch as we bee slowe to beleeue his promises, and sticke not to them with a cheerefull courage. And therefore let vs blame our selues in that behalfe, yea and euen be sorie for it. Notwithstanding, we must not quail though there be infirmitie in vs: for God wil bring al to passe by his own power as shalbe declared yet more plainly hereafter. Thus ye see what we haue to remember vpō this text, where Moses saith ỳ we must not in any

wise

wise feare our enemies.

Now let vs come to the reason which hee addeth: *Thy God* (saith he) *is in the mids of thee.* This is the same promise that was giuen at the beginning: for we must always cal to mind what hath bin treated of heretofore, namely that God telleth vs not of our own strength, when he willeth vs to be well fenced with constancie, but calleth vs back to himself. The end then which we must alwayes begin at, is that we must not thinke our selues to haue any power, nor be besotted w any vaine opinion as we see men commonly be in esteeming and flattering themselues, insomuch ỳ although they be lesse thā nothing, yet they always imagin this and ỳ of themselues. And yet notwithstāding, that imagination is nothing else than an ouerweening. Also to incorage vs withal, god vseth none other mean but only to say, haue an eye to me. If it were in our owne selues to trust in him: surely god would not reproch vs any whit at al: for he is not loth ỳ there should be any vertue in vs. But when as hee saith, Haue an eye to me: it is a token ỳ we be destitute of all goodnes, and that if we serch & sift our abilitie throughly what it is, we cannot but be abashed at it. True it is that mē may welynough flatter themselues for a time: but yet in the end they shal find them selues deceiued in their own opinion. And as we see here & haue seene heretofore, our lord sheweth vs ỳ we shal neuer find firme ground to stand vpon, vntill we be come vnto him. And that is ỳ cause why it is said, *Thy God is in the mids of thee.* Surely it is an excellent promise, that God wilbe in the mids of vs. And for ỳ same cause also doth hee call vs his temple: which thing was figured in old time by the Sāctuarie. For it was Gods wil to haue it seated in the middes of al the people, and hee kept his residence in such wise in it, as men might perceiue his power to bee there. Not that hee was inclosed in that Arke or in the Tabernacle: but it was his will that the people shold haue a visible warrant, that they might not dout at all of him. For such is our rawnesse, that alwayes to our seeming God turneth his backe to vs, and thinketh not vpon vs, or else that hee is too farre of from vs to succour vs with his hand. Therefore it was Gods will that his Sanctuarie should be in the mids of his people, as a warrant of his presence and power. True it is that as now we haue not that, but wee haue other helpes as conuenient for vs. And first of all, the thinges that were figured by those outwarde shadowes, were truly, substancially, and throughly fulfilled in all poinces, by the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ. For seeing that the fulnesse of the Godheade dwelleth in him, wee must not doubt any more but that we haue God with vs. And for the same cause is hee called Emanuel, that is to say God with vs. Nowe then if this promise were made to the people of olde time, much more ought we to assure our selues of it at this day, in the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And the cause also why hee tooke our flesh and nature vpon him, was to the ende it shoulde be a holy and indissoluble bonde of the vnion wherein it behoueth vs to put the whole trust of our salvation. And herewithall, we haue his promises, and the seales of them in his Sacraments: so ỳ when we bethinke vs of our baptisme, thereby the son of God doth witnesse vnto vs, that we were once clothed with him as saieth saint Paul. And when wee receiue the supper, he sheweth vs that he is our foode, and that the breade which wee eate, doth not nourish vs better, than we be nourished by his substance, in somuch that we liue in him and by him. Againe wee heare how he saith, that whersoeuer two or three be gathered together in his name, he wilbe in the middes of them. Seing it is so: let vs not thinke that this was saide alonely to the children of Israel: but let vs vnderstande that the vse thereof belongeth vnto vs also at this day. According whereunto we see howe the Church is called Gods restingplace, as is saide thereof in the Psalme, and in the eighth Chapiter of Esay, where it is saide that God will dwell in the middes of his holy Citie.

Let vs applie all these texts to our vse, and let vs not doubt but God is with vs nowadayes, yea and that he will not onely dwel among vs [generally] as in his temple: but also abide in euery one of vs seuerally. And that not onely to make vs feele his power, and to vnderstande that wee haue our life and mouing in him, as S. Paul saith in the Actes: but also to make vs perceiue the presence of his, which he hath promised to all ỳ faithfull. Now then he dwelleth in vs, when wee feele that he yeeldeth vs record of his adoption by his holy spirit, so as we can call vpon him as our father. And therin doth our lord Iesus Christ shew that we be members of his bodie, and that he is so knit vnto vs, as he keepeth not any thing seuerall to himselfe, ne withholdeth any thing from vs, but communicateth all his graces vnto vs. Now then let vs mark, ỳ no man can cal himself a beleeuer, vnles he be throughly perswaded ỳ God is with him. And al of vs in general ought to imbrace this promise, that God is in the mids of vs: specially when wee haue the preaching of his worde, and the order of calling vpon him is common, stablished among vs. If wee haue that onee: let vs not think that euer we shalbe disappointed of the thing that is conteined herein: that is to wit that God will dwell among vs, so as wee shal neuer neede to make long iourneys to seeke him, but we shall finde him still ready at hand to succour vs. Mark that for one point. Neuertheles it is true that this presēce is not perceiued by our mother wit: for it wil seeme oftentimes that God is very far of from vs, or that he hath forgotte vs and cast vs vp: but it is his wil to try our faith & patience by that meane. Howsoeuer the case stand, if we worship him, & haue a care to cal vpon him & to resort vnto him to rest vpō his goodnesse: it is a signe that he is neere at hand to vs. Then if wee haue a desirousnesse to resort vnto him, and doe learne to mourne in our aduersities, beseeching him to haue pitie vpon vs: it is a token that he hath not giuen vs ouer, but that he holdeth vs vp with his mightie hand, so as we doe rest vpon his power. Yee see then howe God euen in hiding of himselfe away, ceaseth not to

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Exod. 25. 8.

1. Cor. 3. 16

Leui. 26. 11. Num. 2. 2. 17

Coloss. 2. 17.

Matt. 1. 23.

shewe himselfe neere at hand vnto vs, and that he dwelleth continually in vs. And nowe wee see wherevppon wee ought to ground our selues to conceiue assured trust: that is to wit vppon this, that we haue God on our side. And that is a good token that we haue not any thing in our selues, but that it behoueth vs to be vterly destitute of all trust and hope, vntill our Lord haue shewed himselfe vnto vs to helpe vs.

Nowe although this promise ought to suffise vs: yet notwithstanding, Moses addeth one point more, which is not superfluous: namely that *God is mighty and terrible*. Truely it should seeme at the first blush, that this is not spoken to any purpose. For the case concerneth the strengthening of the faithfull, so as they shoulde plucke vp a good heart, and not doubt but they shal discomfite all their foes: now then hereupon to call him a terrible God, should rather serue to feare them out of their wits. For although God mean not to put them in feare: yet doth his onely maiesty so amaze vs, as we would faine hide vs from his presence if it were possible. Inasmuch then as he termeth himselfe terrible, it should seeme that insteede of giuing vs matter of comfort, he intended to driue vs away from him. But wee must marke that Gods terming of himself mightie and terrible, is to the ende to put vs out of doubt that hee is strong and mightie ynough to discomfite all our enemies. For we must alwayes come backe to this point, that his shewing of himselfe fauourable, mercifull and patient towardes vs, is altogether of his owne proper nature: for we know he is our God & sauiour. Forasmuch then as God is called our God: he wil haue vs to shewe our selues to be his people: that is to say, that his receiuing of vs is with condition, to gouerne vs with his goodnesse, as a sheepeherd that is carefull for his flocke, so as his esteeming of vs as his children, is because he hath adopted vs of his own freegoodnes, and is willing to shew himselfe alwayes fatherlike towards vs, by bearing with vs in our infirmities. So then, whereas he is termed here a terrible and mightie God, it is not in respect of his owne people: but in respect of the vnbeleeuers and infidels. And that is the cause of the often repeting of this worde, *The everlasting, thy God*. Moses speaketh of it here a fower or fiue times within a little space. Wherfore saith he so oft, *Thy God*? To the intent that the people should resort to their couenant. In deede it were not Lawfull to preace vnto him, vnlesse he called vs: but seeing that hee of his own good wil hath couenanted with vs to receiue vs to mercie, and hath tolde vs that he will take vs for his flocke & keep vs vnder his protection: we ought not to be afraide any more. Then let vs learne that wee cannot put any trust in God, vntill we knowe that he is willing to admit vs to him, and that he hath already chosē vs to be his household, and to bee vnder his gouernement. When we haue once this promise that he will be our God: then may we well trust in him. For we haue taken holde of his courtesie, and that is to the intent we should knowe, that he will vse the same towards vs euen to the end. Howbeit when we once knowe the goodnes that God vttereth vnto vs: we must also on the contrarie part consider his power against al our enemies. For why? we see we neede not any thing to feare vs or to make vs afraide. In deed if we heare of the promises of Gods goodnes, we feele some sweetenes in them: but yet if the diuell stirre vp any trouble against vs, by and by we bee dismayed. As long as it is preached vnto vs that our life is in Gods hand, and that we be safe when wee be vnder his protection: all is wel, we receiue that doctrine, and to our owne seeming, it hath taken good rooting in our hearts: But as soone as the leafe is turned, or any daunger shew it self, where are wee then? But had we bin wel settled & confirmed in the thing that we heard: we should bee safe ynough, and we would keepe on stil forward: but wee neuer thinke more vpon that, neither is there any meanes at all to comfort vs. Thus is it a signe that if there happen neuer so little daunger, we doubt of Gods power, & we doe him not y honor to say, he hath promised it, therfore will he perform it, for he is able. And for y same cause S. Paul speaking of Abrahams faith, saith that he beleeued euen against hope, knowing that hee which had made the promise, was also able to performe it. Is seemeth to haue bin a smal matter to say that Abraham beleeued that God was mightie. For who denyeth that? And therefore Abrahams faith is not so greatly to be commended in that respect: for there is no man but hee confesseth it. Yea, yea: but yet for al that, as smal a thing as it seemeth to bee, it is a very rare and difficult thing: and that doth experience shewe. For (as I saide) if we meete with any crabbed incumberance, we thinke there is no God in heauen to succour vs any more: and al that euer can be alledged vnto vs, wilbe so colde, as wee shall find no relieue in it. Therefore it is not without cause that Moses here magnifieth Gods mightie power, and saith that hee is terrible, to the ende that the people might therby assure themselues and say, very well, it is true that we be nothing in comparison of our enemies, but what for that? What maner a one is God? Seeing he saith that he wilbe our captain, & that we shalbe vnder his protection: what can all the men in the world, or all creatures doe? Is there any thing that can withstande the power of God? Againe, what is his maiestie? If he list to shew it: they that nowadayes are ouerlorded in their owne pride, shall out of hand be put to vtter confusion. For if God make the mountaines and Rocks to melt, and the earth to wash away at his presence: what shal become of mē with their frailtie? Thus ye see to what purpose and ende we ought to applie this saying, That *God is mighty and terrible*. It serueth not to dismay vs: for we know y whensoeuer we resort vnto him, we be alwayes receiued to mercie, his throne is not dreadfull to the beleeuers, but it is the throne of grace and goodnes. Wherfore if we see that our enemies make vs afraid, & that (to our seeming) they be as Wolues to swallow vs vp, & we as sheep in comparison of them: very wel, let vs resort to our God. And what maner a one is he? O, wee must not onely conceiue

Rom. 4. 18.

Psal. 97. 5.

this word de God: but wee muſt alſo attribute him his qualities therewithall, namely that hee is mightie and terrible: and then let vs not be afraide. For all the rage that our enemies do caſt and ſome our, is but a ſmoke, & God will make it to fade all away, as ſoone as it pleaſeth him to ſhewe his maieſtie: and we be ſure hee will doe it, becauſe he hath promiſed it. Therefore let vs ſo benefite our ſelues by this promiſe, that whenſoeuer we be aſtoniſhed, or in any doubt or griefe of minde, wee alwaies haue recourſe thither and ſay, Our God is mightie. And why? Wherein will he vtter his mightines? Alas, it is true that he might wel vtter it in confounding & deſtroying vs: but he is patient, gentle, & meeke, and hee wil not haue vs to feele his force to our
Matt. 23. 37. harme: but rather he wil haue vs to feele his paſſing fatherly goodnes. All his deſire is to gather vs vnder his wings as a henne that broodeth her litle chickins. And it is a ſingular comfort vnto vs, when we know ỳ he wil be ſo louing & fauourable towards vs, and yet neuertheleſſe will bee knowen to be mightie and terrible in the ouerthrowing of our enemies, and in ouercomming all thinges that are againſt vs. Therefore let vs put our truſt therein. But yet therewithall let vs beware that wee abuſe not his promiſes. For if wee will haue him to ſhewe himſelfe vnto vs: we muſt bee a quiet people to himwarde and abide vnder the couert of his wings, and not play the wilde beaſtes in running away from him. For the hypocrites will brag wel ynough that they haue God on their ſide: but yet for al that, they ſhrink away from him, and let him alone. Now then let vs learne to ghe in ſuch wiſe to our God, as we may truſt in him and repoſe our ſelues vpon him. And in ſo dooing, let vs beare in minde what he commandeth, and examine our faultes according to his worde: and then ſhall we finde by experience, that he meant not to beguile vs, when he told vs ỳ he would be in the mids of vs mightie and terrible to diſcomfit al our enemies.

Now by the way Moſes addeth an exception, ſaying: *that God will not deſtroy all the enemies of his people out of hande.* And why? *Leaſt the beaſts of the field* (ſaith he) *ſhould ſet themſelues againſt thee: But thou ſhalt weede them out by litle and litle. Thou ſhalt diſpatch euen their kinges: and to bee ſhort, thou ſhalt not leaue any thing at all of thoſe nations.* Here Moſes giueth the people a very neceſſary warning, in telling them after what manner they ſhoulde proceede. For otherwiſe they might haue taken ſome euill conceite at their comming into the lande of Chanaan: and if they had not rooted out their enemies immediatly all at once: they might haue imagined with themſelues, what is become of Gods promiſes? It ſhoulde ſeeme that hee hath mocked vs. Therefore doeth Moſes holde them in awe, ſaying: It is true that your God wil diſcomfit all your enemies, but yet ſhall not that be done ſo ſoone as you woulde wiſhe, howbeit aſſure your ſelues there is good reaſon that hee ſhoulde ſo deale with you, and therefore put no diſtruſt in your God. For hee ſeeth that the lande woulde bee repleniſhed with wilde beaſtes, and they would bee ſo many enemies to make warre vpon you. God then doeth this to your benefite, in that hee will not haue the whole land to bee vtterly ridde of all enemies. For if your enemies ſhould be all deſtroied immediately vpon your comming into the lande: you coulde not repleniſh it againe vpon the ſudden, to defende your ſelues from the wilde beaſtes. Nowe we haue to note here, firſt that God intended to correct the peoples ouergreat haſt, by ſhewing them that they ſhould hold themſelues in peace and quiet, vntill God had put them in ful poſſeſſion of the whole lande. For it is the proper nature of faith to tary Gods leiſure, as the Apoſtle affirmeth in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, Heb. 10. 37. alledging this text of Abacuc, that if God delay Hab. 2. 3. the performance of his promiſes, wee muſt tary his leiſure, and not bee ouerhaſtie: for they ſhall come to paſſe time ynough, that is to ſay, they ſhall bee perfourmed in their due ſeaſon. Then let vs marke that faith cannot bee in vs without patience, that is to witte, without tarying of Gods leyſure, till it pleaſe him to execute the thing that hee hath ſpoken and ſaide, and without aſſigning or ſetting of any terme as men commonly doe, who are ſo bolde as to take vpon them to make God ſubiect to their wil. Let vs beware of ſuch ouerſtatelineſſe, and let vs rather learne to bridle our ſelues, til God diſpoſe of things accordingly as hee gaue ſentence of them afore by his owne mouth. And that accordeth with this ſaying of the Prophet Eſay: Our power ſhalbe in ſilence and reſt. Then muſt Eſay. 30. 15. we be ſtil and quiet, if we intend to do God ỳ honor to truſt in him, and to ſhew ỳ we doe it vnfeynedly. And here our Lorde had a regarde to bridle his people. For aſmuch (ſaith he) as mẽs affections are ouerhaſtie & headieſter it not giue you though your enemies bee not deſtroied all out of hand. Let that ſerue for the firſt point.

And herewithal let vs marke alſo, that here God ment to ſhew the reaſon why he differreth and delayeth the performaunce of the things that he determineth, and bringeth them not to paſſe out of hand. Truely he is not bound to doe it. Should God giue vs an account of his doings? If he worke not after our liking, is hee bounde to tell vs why? Ought not wee rather to ſtoope to him, and to ſay, Yea Lord, we bee ignorante, yea and euen ſtarke blinde, and it belongeth to thee onely to be wiſe? Foraſmuch as there is nothing but follie and vanitie in vs: rule thou vs according to thy prouidence. It were meete that we ſhould deale after that faſhion: but we ſee howe God yeeldeth to our rawneſſe. For inaſmuch as wee bee tikliſh, and cannot finde in our heartes to bee contented with his pleaſure, and to reſt wholly vpon it: here he ſheweth vs a reaſon for it. So then let vs mark wel ỳ inеſtimable goodnes of our God, in abaſing himſelf ſo far, as to ſhewe vs the reaſon why he doth things, according as Moſes telleth ỳ people of Iſrael here. For he hath an eie to your benefite, leaſt ỳ wild beaſts ſhould deuour you: for they would multiply, & there be not folke ynow of you to manure ỳ whole lande, but there would be diuers places which ſhould ỳ

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vninhabited. Knowe ye therefore that whereas your God destroyeth not all your enemies out of hand, it is for your benefite, and it were not expedient for you that it should be otherwise. And so in effect Moses telleth the people heere, that Gods delaying to giue them full victorie, was to their benefit and welfare. Therefore let vs mark well, that if God make not such hast as we would haue him, he hath an eye to our welfare, so as he procureth the thing that is best for vs, though we perceiue it not at the first. True it is that wee weene our selues to bee wise and well aduised: and thereuppon wee take vpon vs to iudge that God is ouer slowe, and wee woulde fayne thrust him foreward straite wayes by the shoulders to cause him to make more haste. But (as I said) that is bicause wee knowe not what is good for vs, but wee imagine that we bee beguiled euery turning of a hand. God therefore must bee wise for vs, and see more clearely than wee doe, and dispose thinges, not after our liking (for that were ynough to marre all:) but after as hee himselfe knowes to bee good. And in the meane while we must shut our eyes, and doe nothing but glorifie him in his prouidence. And if wee perceyue not at the first why he worketh after that fashion: well, let vs tarie patiently till he shew vs why he made delay and woulde not satisfie our desires. This doctrine cannot bee fully declared as nowe, but yet must wee make an abridgement of it to conclude withall. Likewise now adayes wee may happen to languish all our life long. Now if we should hasten God to deliuer vs: what a thing were it? We would faine be in a paradise here aforehand: and that were the next way to rocke vs asleepe in the world. God therefore is fayne to wake vs by keeping vs occupyed with store of troubles and vexations: and that makes vs to long continually for the heauenly lyfe. Wee forget this geere at the first: but GOD maketh vs to perceyue howe frayle wee bee, by wayting with all patience and humilitie, to bee gouerned by him as he thinketh good. Finally he sheweth how greatly it is for our benefite to be beaten with his roddes. And therefore doeth hee make vs to passe through many troubles, and to bee greatly vexed and tormented. And if there were none other enemies to withstand vs than such as are spoken of here: wel, wee might hap to doe wel ynough with them, for they be men. But wee bee dayly assaulted by the diuel and by sinne: and wee would faine ouercome them at the first push, and obtaine victorie against Satan, and against all the temptations of the world. But what a thing were that? Our pride would be intollerable, wee would thinke our selues to bee Gods, wee would not passe to call any more vpon God, nor to sigh and mourne for our own weakenesse, wee shoulde not tell what it were to mislike of our selues, nor to vnderstand that there is none which hath all power in him but onely God. So then although God haue assured vs that we shall haue the vpper hand of all our enemies: yet shall not y be performed at y first brunt. And why? Bicause it were not good for vs. True it is that wild beastes would not come and deuour vs: but wee haue pride and vainegloric, and wee bee sotted with selfweening. And that deuilish ouerlustinesse would carie vs away, so as wee should fall asleepe in our vanities and delightes, and that would bee worse to vs than all the wilde beastes in the worlde. And therefore let vs assure our selues, that Gods leisurely working, as it were by degrees and by lyne and by leuell: is to our benefite. For coulde he be letted to accomplish all his worke in one minute of an houre? No: but he listeth not to doe it so soone. And therefore let vs learne to keepe the spirituall rest or Sabboth as it is spoken of in the fifth Chapter, that is to say, to imprison our wit, reason and will, and all that euer wee haue besides, and to hold them in such awe, as none but onely God may haue the rule of vs, and dispose of all things at his will. And moreouer, let vs go on when he leadeth vs the way. For that is no breaking of the Sabboth. To occupie our selues euerie man in the charge that God calleth him vnto, and to doe our duties faithfully euery man in his vocation, according to the measure of grace that GOD hath giuen him, are the workes of God, and we must vnderstand that it is God which woorketh them in vs. But yet for all that wee must not bee too hastie, as who shoulde say that God were at our commaundement, or that wee would haue him doe what wee list and when wee list: but all our wisedome must bee to submit our selues to his will. The thing then which wee haue to remember vpon this text that we may fare the better by it: is that we must learne to bee obedient to our God all the time of this our mortall and transitorie life, not doubting but that at length he will vanquish Satan and all that is against vs, and turne euen those things to our benefite and saluation, which we thinke as now to be hurtful and harmfull to vs.

Deut. 5. 14. Esa. 58. 13.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue doone, so as wee may bee drawen to a right repentaunce, and learne more and more to distrust our selues and to settle our trust in him: and that when wee haue imbraced his promises, wee may fare the better by them by applying our selues to his seruice, so as wee may not be vnprofitable in the world, but that as soone as his spirit dwelleth in vs, it may forthwith auaile vs, and shewe by effect that he hath not adopted vs in vaine in our Lord Iesus Christ, so as wee may grow in the same knowledge more and more till he haue throughly accomplished it in vs, and that wee haue the full measure of it, wherof we haue but a very small portion as now. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On VVedneſday the xiiij. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lvij. Sermon which is the ſeuenth vpon the ſeuenth Chapter.

22.23.24 And the Lord &c.

25 Thou ſhalt burne the images of their Gods with fire. And neither couet ne take thou to thee the golde or ſiluer that is vpon them, for feare leaſt it turne to thy decay. For ſuch things are abhomination to the Lord thy God.

26 Therefore thou ſhalt not bring anie abhomination into thine houſe, leaſt thou thy ſelfe become accurſed as well as it. But thou ſhalt abhorre it and loath it vtterly: for it is a curſed thing.

YEſterday I began to ſhew that we muſt be conſtant vnto the end in truſting vnto God, & in holding of our ſelues to his promiſes, though the thing that he ſpeaketh be not performed out of hande, nor his determination put in execution by and by: for he hath alwayes good reaſon to make delay thereof. True it is that wee perceiue it not, and that is becauſe our eyeſight extendeth not farre. We ſee euen among men, that ſuch as haue lued long time, and haue had moſt experience of thinges, haue moſt ſtay of themſelues, and are not ſo haſtie to doe and attempt things, as younger folkes are, which caſt no perils but runne all on head. A yong man hauing a whot braine, wil needs diſpatch al things out of hand in one day. But he that hath ſome ſtay of himſelfe by reaſon of much experience, will looke about him how to diſpoſe his matters, and to doe his things in good order. Now there is no compariſon betweene God and men. It is not to be ſaide that he is an olde expert artificer (as men terme it): for all thinges are euer preſent vnto him, and euer haue bin ſince the creation of the worlde: and againe, his will is the rule of all wiſedome and right. Sith it is ſo, let vs forbeare to be ouerhaſtie, and if it pleaſe him to let vs linger for a time, let vs beare it patiently. Moreouer wee haue to note the thing that was declared yeſterday in a word or twaine: that is to wit, that if GOD deliuer vs not from all troubles and vexations out of hande: it is thorough our fault. For as ſoone as one miſchiefe is paſt, we procure another to come in the neck of it. This is not to be wited vpon God, nor vpon the ſtate of the life wherein wee bee. But we our ſelues are ſo fruitfull in bringing forth of euill, that although God purge vs of neuer ſo much, yet will the ſeede of it ſpring vp newe againe, and yeelde manifolde increaſe by and by after. That (ſay I) proceedeth of our ſinfulneſſe. And therefore let vs marke well, that if God ſet vs not in quiet at the firſt daſhe, but ſuffer vs to haue enemies to grieue vs and vexe vs: it is becauſe it is not for our benefite nor for our ſaluation, that hee ſhould maintaine vs in too great eaſe. And for proofe thereof (as I ſaide) wee could well finde in our heartes to amend the euil in other folkes, but we thinke not vpon it in our ſelues: and yet is that the end which we ought to begin at. If we wil be good iudges to condéne other mens faultes: we muſt firſt looke to our owne: & we muſt not only bethinke vs of thoſe which are knowen to vs: but wee muſt alſo paſſe yet further, to craue pardon of God for the faults that are better knowen to him than to our ſelues. And beſides that, let vs bee well aduiſed, that we proceede ſoberly in that behalfe. For it may come to paſſe, that he which ſhal haue ſhewed ſome good zeale in chaſtiſing the faulte of his neighbour, ſhall not onely fall into the like fault himſelfe: but alſo doe much worſe. Seeing then that we be ſo inclined vnto euill, let vs vnderſtand that it is good for vs that God ſhoulde exerciſe vs after the maner that Moſes ſpeaketh of here. For the wilde beaſts neede not to come to worke vs diſpleaſure, or to pick out our eyes: wee haue anoyances and deceits ynowe in our ſelues. Why then is it that our Lord ſuffereth vs to be ſo ſore vexed & troubled outwardly by men? but bicauſe we haue as it were an hoſt within vs, ranged in aray againſt God and his lawe? Therefore is hee faine to ſtoppe vs and to keepe vs occupyed by other men: and that is to our benefite.

Furthermore, God is faine to leaue vs ſtill in our infirmities, becauſe that if he ſhould giue vs the full perfection, there is none of vs all but he would aduaunce himſelfe too much and be too proud. It is certain that we haue victorie alredie againſt Satan, as it was purchaſed for vs in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: but yet muſt we bee faine to endure many encounters, and many rough aſſaultes, yea and to bee brought to ſo great perplexities, as we ſhal not wote which way to turne vs, but wee ſhall haue ouer much adoe to withſtand our owne vices, and the great number of imperfections that are in vs. And why is that? Euen to humble vs. In deede we haue a promiſe that God will vanquiſhe Satan, and thruſt him downe as it were vnder our feete, as S. Paul ſpeaketh of it in the ſixteenth of the Romanes: But yet ſhall not that be done at the firſt day: to the intente wee may haue cauſe to praiſe God, in that wee ſee our ſelues ſo fraile, and yet hee giueth vs ſtrength to holde on our way ſtill continually. Yee ſee then that wee muſt keepe ſtil our way in walking through this worlde: for it is a iourney as the Scripture alſo terme

termeth it. Nowe then, let vs fully determine with our selues to suffer it patiently, if God delay to giue vs full victorie of our enemies, yea euen of our ghostly enemies, assuring our selues that he doeth it not without iust cause. But yet must wee bee fully perswaded of another point also, namely that although we linger a long time, and things be out of order as in respect of the world, and God inlighten vs not, but let vs alone in great distresse: yet he wil giue vs the vpper hand in the ende. Wee must be fully resolued of that: for without such certaintie wee could not haue any courage one minute of an houre, but wee should quaile out of hand; and it would seeme to vs that the diuell should ouerwhelme vs. And specially when wee were to fight against our own lustes, howe might wee get the vpper hand of them? And if wee finde our selues so combered to day: what shall wee finde to morrowe? The mischiefe will increase continually: and the great number of our owne experiences do shew vs that wee neede none other thing to ouerthrowe vs. Then coulde wee not holde out, vnlesse wee were fully and throughly out of doubt that the promise of God should bee wholly accomplished vnto vs, and y in the end our enemies shal not be able to stand before our faces. Therfore let vs fight boldly against Sathan, and against all the lustes of our owne flesshe: and we shall ouercome them, so wee haue Iesus Christ for our Captaine. For we must be hopelesse as in respect of our selues, and not imagin that our owne strength can suffice: but wee must learne to call vppon him that is able to helpe vs at our neede. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in mind yea and euen in respecte of this present life. Let vs not doubt but that although we be faine to passe through many miseries, yet notwithstanding all shall turne to our benefite and welfare in the end. Let vs beare this saying well in mind, so as wee may fare the better by it, yea euen in such sorte as wee yeeld not to murmur against God, though hee graunt not our desires at the first. And in so doing we shall haue inuincible constancie to keepe on our way still, though it seeme neuer so hard vnto vs. And although we see neuer so many perils: yet shall we haue such constancie, as to hold on still till wee bee come to our wayes end. For why? Gods promising of vs to giue vs full victorie, is not to disappoint vs: he is faithfull in his sayings. Nevertheless, if it please him to make as though he regarded not thinges, wee must not take vpon vs to set him any terme, but let him dispose matters according to his owne infinite wisedome.

Psal.50.15.

1.Thess.5.3

Yea and Moses sayeth that euen *Kings shall be deliuered into the people of Israels handes.* As if hee should say, that there is not any power or strength so great that ought to dismay vs. And this saying is not added without cause. For euery thing of nothing will dasle our eyes, and make vs to forget the mightinesse of Gods promises. For if we perceiue any greatnesse in men and that our enemies are of abilitie to trouble vs: wee beare our selues on hand that all is mard, and by and by we be halfe straught at it. True it is that our presumptuousnesse blindeth vs ouermuch, so as we perceiue not the daungers when we bee once minded to followe our owne foolish rashnesse. But when wee should obey God, and doe our dewty: the whisking of a flie ouerthwart our faces will turne vs away by and by. For this cause doth Moses say expressly, that wee must not bee dismayed for any greatnesse of the world. In so much that although our enimies shine as the Sunne, although they perke vp neuer so high, although they seeme to haue neuer so many meanes wherewith to ouerwhelme vs at the first brunt: yet must wee not bee discouraged for all that. And why? Let vs consider what Gods hand is, and then will all thinges vanish away which we feare as in respect of the world, so as we shall see that it is but vanitie. For who is he that can withstand him that made all thinges and vpholdeth all thinges still by his power? Can not our Lord as well bring all thinges to naught, as hee made the world of nothing? Yes: and whensoeuer he listeth to doe it, it is enough for him to speake the woord, that is to say to vtter his will. Now then, seeing that the creatures haue not any state or being further foorth than God voutsafeth to maintaine them, can they stop the bringing to passe of his good purpose? No: and therefore let vs learne to yeeld God so much honour, as to make none accounte of all worldly greatnesse, strength, and power, in comparison of him, and to knowe that hee can cast them all downe when hee thinketh good. Loe what wee haue to marke. And thereby we may see what a happinesse it is to be able to rest vpon God. For whe men stay vpon their own strength, although they vaunt themselues, flatter themselues, and besot themselues neuer so much in their owne presumption: yet is it a wonder to see how they be toppled downe in the turning of a hand: and God also laugheth their pride to scorne. But when we haue the ground of Gods promises to rest vppon, which assure vs that wee can neuer quaile: then may we be bould to defie the world and all the creatures therein. And although we bee nothing of our selues: yet shall wee haue enough whereof to glory, and wee may well tryumph aforehand, forasmuch God is on our side. But what? Wee see that men are so wedded to themselues, as they cannot by any meanes be rid of this diuelish ouerweening wherewith they be as it were bewitched, but that they will euer bee drawing of somewhat to themselues, insomuch that it is vnpossible to plucke them backe vnto God, and to make them to ground and settle themselues vppon him. But yet is not this doctrine written in vaine. And therefore let vs vnderstand thereby, that if our Lorde doe send vs vexations, and wee linger in a number of torments in this world: it is to exercise vs withall. And why? To the ende that euery of vs shoulde examine himselfe to amend his faultes, and not sticke so much at other mens faultes [as to forget our owne,] but to thinke vpon our selues first, and consider that wee haue neede to bee handled roughly, so as wee shall no sooner haue escaped

Psal.104.28 29.

Rom.9.19.

Rom.8.31.

ped one trouble, but wee shall by and by meete with another, vnlesse wee turne againe to him that is able to defend vs. Therefore wee must shape our selues to it all our lyfe long, and behaue our selues after such a sorte, as wee haue our eyes continually fastened vppon our God, assuring our selues that his executing of his iudgementes in our sighte, is to the ende to holde vs in awe, and to make vs beware that wee intangle not our selues in our leawd lustes to abyde in them: for they bee tootoo daungerous enemyes. Let vs beware wee resemble not those whome wee see that GOD coulde not abyde, and let vs conclude thereuppon, that the same matter concerneth vs, that is to wit, that wee must profite our selues by such instruction. Thus ye see in effect what wee haue to marke vpon this text of Moses.

Now he addeth immediatly, *That the Israelites must burne all the Images of their Gods in the fire, and not so much as saue the golde and siluer of them: for feare* (sayeth hee) *least thou bee snared by it, or that it serue to thy decay.* For the Hebrewe woorde that Moses vseth heere, signifyeth sometymes to bee snared, and sometimes to stumble by meeting with some wicked iob or stoppe. And he vsed a word deriued of the same Verbe heretofore when he said, Keepe thy selfe from their idoles, for that will bee thy decay, or that will marre all: the which two sayings come both to one ende. And therefore yee see wee must not stande vppon termes, it is ynough for vs that wee knowe the true meaning of them. Heere GOD warneth his people, that if they cast any fansie or liking to the idoles of the heathen, or to the things that serued their superstitions: it will turne to their ouerthrowe like a nette or snare, so as they shall bee caught and snarled in it, and to bee shorte, it will bee as a pit for them to fall headlong into. That is the effect of the matter which is tolde vs here. And nowe againe he addeth a seconde threate, *Euerie whit of it* (saieth he) *is accursed or interdyted* (as men commonly terme it,) or forbidden. *Therefore beware: for thy GOD misliketh it, and hee cannot away with the thinges that haue beene so defiled with the seruice of Idols. Take heede therefore that thou leaue not any whit of it: beware that thou defyle not thy house with it. For if any of it come within thy doores, the vengeaunce and wrath of GOD will immediately come in with it.* That is the pith of the thinges which wee haue to marke heere. The matter in question, is that the people shoulde not commit idolatrie: but GOD addeth a further commaundement of greater rigour: which is, that they shoulde burne all that euer had serued about the idols, though there were no superstition in them. As howe? If the people shoulde haue taken to them selues the Golde, Siluer, Precious stones, or other Iewelles that were about the idoles: it had beene as a filthinesse that is lothsome in Gods sight. And if they shoulde haue alledged, wee doo it not for any deuotions sake, for wee knowe it was a heynous matter to haue abused Gods creatures after that fashion;

Deut. 7. 16.

but wee take them to our owne vse, yea and euen to serue GOD withall: [that allegation woulde not haue gone for payment:] For God on the contrarie part will haue them to bee all burned. And so wee see howe greatly he is displeased with idolatrie, in that folke are so straitly forbidden heere to apply any of all the thinges to their owne vse, which shall haue bin defyled aforetimes with superstition. And thereuppon must wee also note, that the purenesse of Gods seruice is the thing that he is most chary of aboue all other thinges. Will wee then direct our lyfe after such a sorte as God may allowe of it? Let vs looke that wee honour him, yea and that wee honour him after such maniere, as we seeke not to haue some faire shew of vertue onely to the worldward: but so follow simply whatsoeuer God ordeineth. For we may seeme to bee as Angels of Paradise, & yet in the meane while God shall esteeme vs as diuels. Though we liue neuer so honestly & vnblamably among men, yet doth it not folow ỳ therfore we be discharged before God. And why? For although I be no cheefe in stealing away my neighbours gold and siluer: to what purpose shal that serue mee, if I rob God of his honour? Though I be no theefe to men, yet am I a false traitor to God. If I speake no euil of any mortall man, & yet fal to blaspheming of the liuing God: what a dealing is ỳ? Now then let vs mark, ỳ the faultes which are committed against Gods Maiestie, are much grieuouser and heynouser than all the offences & wrongs that can be done against our neighbors. And it is a lesson which we ought to marke well: for wee see that men make smal account of it now adayes. If any wrong bee doone to a man, the partie must bee condemned for it. But if Gods glorie be defaced, and himselfe spyted all the wayes that can bee, what for that? Men do but wring their mouthes aside at it, with who findes any fault with me for it? and in the meane while God hath no man to take his part, but there are ynow ỳ will take part against him. If any blasphemie, any outrage, any lewdnes, or any wickednes be committed, that in Gods word is openly troden vnder foote: no man thinkes vpon that. But for the fauour of men, we wil not sticke to maintaine euen the euil: and as for the number of the zealous, it is very small. Hardly shall a man finde one among a hundred, ỳ wil put forth himselfe to maintaine Gods quarrell: & yet his doing of it shal bee but coldly neither. But ỳ wicked shal alwaies finde champions ynow, to fight against God & his righteousnesse. And yet for al ỳ, we consider not ỳ in so doing we iustle against God, & that is too hard a match for vs, so as we shalbe driuen to feele ỳ he is so hard a stone, ỳ whosoeuer iustleth or rusheth against him, doth but go about to bruse & breake himself in peeces: & finally if it fall, it will quash them all to sitters ỳ set themselues against him. Then let vs mark that it is not ynough for vs to haue liued with our neighbors without doing any wrong or harme: for God maketh more account of his honor than he doth of all the things in the world. Therefore the offences that are committed against his Maiestie, are ỳ heynouseſt of all other.

And

And why? There is not a more precious & deare thing than his seruice. And that doeth he shewe vs here, in that we see he will haue the pureneſſe of his seruice maintained, vndefiled of any superstition. And he can so ill away with idolaters, that he cannot abide, the things which had bin dedicated to idolatrie beforetimes, should bee suffered to remaine in the worlde, but will haue them rid away quite and cleane. And hereupon we may gather what vengeance is prepared for such as haue peruerted and corrupted the true seruice of God, and the pure Religion. Although they alledge neuer so fayre excuses, and pretend to haue doone it vppon good intent as they terme it: yet will not GOD receyue those things for payment. And why? For he will haue obedience aboue all things: & he knoweth which is the true rule of seruing him well and duely: he hath shewed vs it, & therefore we must holde vs to it. Otherwise wee may well protest that our intent is to serue GOD: howbeit our seruice is not doone to him but vnto idols, when we inuent what we our selues thinke good. As for example, whereas the Papistes protest, that their meaning is to serue GOD with their Masse, & with all other their baggage and Ceremonies: it is true that they may well rest thereuppon confusedly: but in the meane while God disclaimeth and disliketh euery whit of it: for it is the diuel whom they serue in deed. And why? For there is not any thing there, which is not manifestly found to be against Gods word and his trueth. Therefore it is not ynough to pretend Gods name: (for we see that the worlde hath not ceassed to abuse that fayre colour at all times:) But wee must holde vs to Gods commandement: for without that, there is nothing but vtter corruption.

And nowe let vs marke well the reason that Moses addeth: that is to wit that it *shall bee as a snare to catche the people, or that it shall be their ouerthrow.* Heere we haue to marke, first of all what our frailtie is. For although wee minde not to doe euill at the first dashe: yet will it amaze vs to see howe the deuill will haue intrapped vs out of hande, by his wiles which wee perceiued not. Most commonly, if a man bee tolde of his fault, when hee hath doone amisse: hee thinketh not (to his owne seeming) that his doinges are euill. And why? Bycause he perceiueth it not. Surely if we were well aduised, we should espy Sathans guiles a farre off: and it is a point of wisedome which Saincte Paule attributeth to the faithfull. You (sayth hee) doe knowe his wiles, so as yee can beware of them. Yea, but hee speaketh of such as suffer themselues to be gouerned by Gods spirite, which giueth them good discretion and aduisednes: but as for vs, wee shet our eyes wilfully, and beare our selues on hande that it is enough for vs so wee knowe not the euill. But we be not competent iudges in our owne case. And againe our owne affections blinde vs, and are as towels to keepe vs from seeing three fingers bredth before our noses. Yet notwithstanding we ceasse not to bee hampered in Sathans snares, so as hee holdeth vs as his pray, bycause wee bee not watchfull enough in taking good heede to our selues, accordingly as Moses sheweth vs heere, in telling the people that if they tooke to them the riches of the heathen, and the gold and siluer of their Idoles: all would turne to their decay. And this is not saide without cause. For when we meete with the furtherances of idolatrie, for as much as wee bee giuen thereto alreadie by nature: it is a woonder to see howe soone wee bee snarled in it. For the Diuell sheweth vs not his snares at the first, vntill wee bee falne into them. But GOD who foreseeth all thinges, warneth vs of them aforehand, to the ende wee shoulde wake and keepe good watch, and not giue Satan any enterance to winne vs to him or to intrappe vs. So then let vs marke generally, that to keepe our selues from all offence against GOD, wee must preuent the occasions of euill. For he that casteth himselfe headlong into any hazard, tempteth GOD. Wee bee not so strong as to bee able to outstande euill, when wee fall to iustling against it. For wee see howe wee bee daunted at euerie shadowe of it: and what will become of vs when wee shall bee put to the pinche? Seeing then that men doo feele such frailtie in themselues: they ought not to seeke occasions. For if a man fling himselfe wilfully into the fyre, doeth hee not make open warre against God? Yes: and euen so doe wee, when we take occasions to doe euill. If a man yeeld to a thing, seemeth not to be any great vice at the first he perceiueth it not, howbeit he proceedeth from the lesser to the greater, and from euill to woorse, vntill at last he fall into the ditch. Men shall not perceiue at the first, that daunsing is a bait of whoredome, and a tricke of bawdry to marre all. Men perceiue not at the first, that wanton songs serue to impeach & corrupt good maners, as the scripture speaketh of them: and therfore they thinke not of it. Men perceiue not y playing and gaming are daungerous, or rather mischieuous, yea and that they serue to destroy mens houses & to make hauocke of all: y they be as a seede or roote whence all vngodlineſſe groweth to spyte GOD withall: that they breede occasions of strife, debate, quarels, swearing, and all manner of naughtineſſe: that they bee a meane to impouerish such as otherwise might beare an honest porte and countenaunce: and to bee shorte, that they bee meanes to make Christians to become bruite beastes. Men perceiue not all these thinges, neither make they accoume to keep themselues from them. But yet for all that, the diuell is the founder of them, who increaseth the mischiefe continually, and God also doeth giue him the bridle, bycause wee vouchsafe not to receiue the warning that hee geueth vs, wee bee worthy to perishe and to tumble into the pit to breake our neckes. Now then let vs marke, that to eschew the offences to Godward, that may lead vs to destruction, we must also shun the occasions of them a farre off. Mark that for one point.

And aboue all things, for as much as we haue

such a cursed inclination of nature, that idolatrie is as it were rooted in vs, so as euery of vs is able to keepe a schoole of it, and to bee Doctors of it without any further teaching: therefore doeth it stand vs on hande to shun all furtherances thereof. Nowe then whereas some nowe adayes will needes rowe betweene two streames, and beare folke in hand that men may beare with the time, graunting that men may well cut off the things that are vtterly intollerable and manifestly against God, but yet [auowching] that the things may well bee borne with, which are eyther indifferent, or not vtterly euil. I say that they which speake after that fashion, doe shewe full well that they haue no right meaning in them, nor any desire that there should be any such reformation as were meete to be had. And yet notwithstanding, the worlde is full of such disguisers, which would faine haue a particoloured fashion of seruing God, & a religion ỳ were neither fish nor flesh (as mé say,) but half of one sute & half of another, as is said in ỳ prouerb. But for our part let vs vnderstand, ỳ in as much as we be giue to idolatrie, it standeth vs on hand to flee the further from it, that wee meete not with any of the thinges that may leade vs to it. For if there bee any thing that may drawe vs that way, by and by wee be seduced, yea and we bee infected with it inwardly, like a man that hath a secrete disease within him which he perceiueth not, and yet is neuer the lesse but rather the more in daunger, bicause the mischiefe is vnespyed. Euen so is it with vs: If wee retayne still the furtheraunces and occasions of idolatry and superstition, wee shalbe ouertaken vnwares by Sathans suttlery which we marked not. Thus ye see what wee haue to remember, considering the snares and trappes that draw vs to destruction, as Moses speaketh of them heere.

Nowe let vs come to the second threat which he addeth. Hee sayeth, *It is an abhomination* [or lothsomenesse] *before God: and therefore that euerie man must beware of the bringing in of such abhomination for feare of being accursed.* It should seeme heere that Gods rigour was too great, in forbidding the vse of gold and siluer. For are they not Gods good creatures, and such as may bee put to good vse? And although some men haue abused the thinges which God did put into their hands: doth it follow that they haue the power to defile his creatures, and to corrupt and marre them? No: For we heare how Sainct Paule saith, Tit.1.15. that all thinges are pure and cleane to such as haue cleane consciences before God: and there is no vncleannesse, but that which proceedeth of our selues. How is it then that hee forbiddeth folke to couet that gold or siluer? Let vs marke that this lawe is a parte of the auncient order whereto God ment to binde the Iewes: and I haue tould you already that the ten verses haue Matt.5.18. one euerlasting rule, which God hath giuen to continue to the worldes end. If wee minde to haue a doctrine that shall please and like God, our life must be conformable to the law that is contcined in the ten commaundementes: howbeit, this present commaundement serued but for an order: like as when Christen magistrates make lawes nowadayes, are they against Gods woord? No: but they doe it in way of gouernement and ciuill order, that their people may be held the better in the feare of God and in the right religion. Now then this law whereby God forbad the coueting of golde and siluer, serued but for a time. For God trained vp that people like little babes. And Sainct Paule alleadgeth the same similitude, which may bee as a solution to the doubt that might be moued vppon this present place. When little children are vnder Tutors and gouernours, they bee held in the feare and awe, and they inioy not their goods and liberty at their own will, insomuch that their state seemeth to bee a bondage, and yet notwithstanding they be free, yea and heires too, but they be not of age to haue the guiding and gouerning of themselues. Euen so the people of olde time were in straiter subiection vnder the lawe, than we bee nowadayes [vnder the Gospell,] by reason whereof it is lawfull for vs to vse the things which we may put to a good vse. For otherwise the Papistes might starue vs. They would fall to making of their coniurings vppon Corne and wine: now if we might not be so bolde as to eate of the Corne that were so charmed, or to drinke of the wine that weere so coniured: if we might not touch any thing which they had defiled with their pelting trash: wee should be faine to starue for hunger. But they haue not any power ouer the creatures of God, in so much that they continue pure of themselues, spyte of all their abhomanations. Neuertheleſſe it was Gods will to hold the people of old time in awe, after the maner of yong children as I said afore. But he hath giuen vs greater libertie at this day. And what maner of libertie? Not a licentious libertie to do what wee list: for S. Paule addeth that exception, that although we haue greater libertie nowadayes than the Iewes had, yet must wee not therefore lay the bridle in our neckes: but we must haue a speciall care to behaue our selues honestly, and to be constant in seruing GOD purely. For as I said, wee shall alwayes be weake, and may easily swarue aside to idolatrie: and therefore wee must cut off all occasions thereof. And yet notwithstanding, wee may vse ỳ things that are good of themselues: yea, so we doe without giuing any cause of offence, and beeing that wee wipe away all that may induce vs to euill and to the corrupting of Gods seruice. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vpon this place. For it behoueth vs to marke well the resemblance that is betweene vs and the Iewes, and the diuersitie that is betweene [the libertie of] the Lawe, and the libertie that God giueth vs now a dayes. But yet must wee moderate this libertie in such sort, as it turne not into loosenes to giue ouer our selues to euil, knowing that we bee but too much inclined thereunto, and wee should be yet much more prouoked vnto it, if we would needes haue furtherances and seeke occasions thereof. And in this respect was Achan stoned to death for stealing of the [wedge] gage that was about the puppets [of the Chaldeans.]

nitte]. Surely his intent was not to builde any altar with them: but hee was led to it by his couetousnesse, [which made him beleeue] that if he could filche and conuey them away cleanly, hee should saue so much by it. But all the people were faine to be accursed for it, vntill it was bewrayed. Lottes were cast: and when Iosua had made him to hold vp his hand to put him to his othe, saying, My sonne giue glory vnto God immediatly vpon his confessing of the crime wherof he was accused, hee was stoned to death, onely for stealing of certeine of the thinges that had bin forbidden. Yet had hee not robbed any person: hee might well haue sayd, who can complayne of me? But hee had done against Gods commaundement. Therefore let vs marke well, that whereas GOD dealeth more freely with vs nowadayes, so as we may vse the thinges ỹ were earst defiled by ỹ vnbeleuers, & which haue bin applyed aforetimes to superstition: we neuertheless must cast away all that euer may drawe vs vnto euill. For if wee should keepe stil images & such other lyke thinges: it were the next way to pull to vs still some euill inconuenience, so as mẽ might conceiue some hope of returning againe to the superstitions of the time past. And therefore let vs beware of all such thinges.

Now whereas it is sayd, *Beware thou bring not cursednesse into thy house*: herby we be put in minde ỹ instead of going forward and of profiting our selues we not onely go backe, but also worke our owne ouerthrow, when we vse vnlawfull meanes & such as displease God. And ỹ is a very notable rule. Trueth it is that the matter which Moses speaketh of here, is idolatrie, & he sayth ỹ whosoeuer they be which take to thẽselues the golde & the siluer ỹ hath serued to that purpose: they shal defile their howses & prouoke Gods wrath, and in stead of gathering treasure to their profit, they shall but rake vp a fire to consume all ỹ they haue in the end. That is Moseses meaning. But we both may and ought to gather a generaller doctrine vppon this matter: namely that whereas it is sayd, that it is a bringing in of cursednesse into our howses: it serueth to shewe vs ỹ when men imagine to benefite themselues by it, they doe but prouoke Gods wrath against themselues & throw themselues headlong into destruction. As how? They that heape vp goods by hooke & by crooke, they that pill & poll, they ỹ eate vp & deuoure, they that filch al ỹ comes in their way, they ỹ vse craft and subtiltie to rake other mens goods vnto them: doe beare thẽselues in hand ỹ they worke wonders, & that they shall builde them houses, and make immortall monuments not onely of wood & stone, but also of euerlasting renowne, so as their children shall haue whereof to triumph after their decease. But yet for all their gathering & heaping vp of goods, what do they? they doe but pile vp a stacke of wood and coale, whereunder lyeth Gods wrath as a fire hidden within it. In deede it shall not kindle at the first day: but in the end the flame will burst out, so as all shall be consumed anon after. Now if wee did marke this well, surely wee would not bring Gods curse into our houses as we doe, and as most men doe. What is to be done then?

First and formost let vs marke, that all such as defile themselues with Churchtheft, cannot scape the punishment which Moses denounceth in this place. I say that all they bee Churchrobbers, which haue taken to them the goods of the Church, of which sort are the priestes, the Monkes, and the rest of the stinking rable of the popish cleargie, who haue deuowred and still doe deuowre all that was dedicated vnto God. Now then, if we also doe the like: shall it not be ỹ next way to bring Gods curse into our howses? Yes surely. Therefore let not vs offend in the same thinges which we haue condemned in thẽ ỹ liued amisse: but let vs keepe our selues from them. And if we intend to prosper: let vs assure our selues there is none other meanes thereof than the blessing of God. But we know that God hath not promised his blessing to any other, thẽ such as trauell faithfully for their liuing, & earne their bread with rightfull labor: which offer no man wrong, but content themselues with their meane state, so as if they be rich, they couet not more and more, or if they be poore, they be contented with their estate. To such folke hath God promised his blessing. Now if I doe otherwise, so as I beguile my neighbor, so as I deale crookedly, so as I labor to inrich my selfe by violence and robberie: what doe I then? should I looke for the blessing that God hath promised? Wee must not thinke to binde him, when wee fall to spiting of him so wilfully: nor to haue his blessing light vpon vs, when we fall to straying out of the right way, shaking off his yoke & bridle frõ our necke: but we must cõtrarywise looke ỹ he should curse vs, & that his wrath shold light vpõ vs, & not only vpõ our selues, but also vpon our childrẽ. And so we see what instructiõ we ought to gather vpõ this place. Namely ỹ euery of vs ought to look to himself, & ỹ if we purpose to haue God to keepe vs through his fauor & goodnesse: our howses must not be defiled with robberie & deceit, neither must our hands be imbrued with stealing & filching: but to be short, we must be cleane from all spottes. Yea & we must beware that we keepe ỹ order which our Lord hath commaunded vs: which is, ỹ he which is desirous to bee blessed in his owne person & in his household, must looke wel to it ỹ god be serued & honored in his house, that there be no filthinesse lurking any where, ỹ there be no whordom, no swearing, nor no other disorder, ỹ there be not any thing against God, nor any euil bolstered or borne out. If we doe so, then shall wee prosper better than wee doe: and although things fal not out as we would wishe to the worldward: yet will God graunt vs the grace to bee contented with his only blessing, which wil satisfy vs more than if we had all ỹ heapes of golde & siluer that were possible to be imagined. But on ỹ contrary part, if a man haue not a care to keepe his house pure and cleane as a tẽple of God: ỹ thing ỹ Moses speaketh here must needs be performed, ỹ is to wit, Gods curse must come into it, accordingly as it is sayd in ỹ prophet Zacharie, that this same curse possessed al ỹ houses of that time, because iniquitie reigned in thẽ and

Psal. 128. 2.

Matt. 6. 33.

Zach. 5. 3. 4.

departed

departed not from them. Will wee then haue God to shed out his blessing vppon vs? Let vs be sure that we cleanse both our selues & our houses from all filthinesse: and then will the curse depart from thence out of hand. But if wee cease not to prouoke Gods wrath by abusing his patience too long: hee will kindle a fire that shall neuer be quenched: and if wee fall still asleepe, hee will wake vs to our cost: and when we think our selues to be escaped, then shall wee be new to begin. And therefore let vs be circumspect to preuent the mischiefe, specially sith wee be warned, yea & warned by our God himself. Wherein hee sheweth vs what a care he hath, both of our worldly welfare, and of our saluation.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God w acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to vouchsafe to make vs feele the better than wee haue done, so as it may make vs to resort vnto him, & to be sorie for our sinnes, and to condemne them, & that we be not so frowarde as to spite him, & to harden our selues, but that we may haue a meeke & pliable heart, to receiue al his warninges & correctiõs in such wise, as we may haue the skill to fare ỹ better by them. And so let vs say, Almighty God heauenly father, &c

On Thursday the fifteenth of August. 1555.

The Lviij Sermon which is the first vppon the eight Chapter.

Keepe al the commaundementes which I haue commaunded you this day to do them: that yee may liue and encrease, and go in and possesse the land by right of inheritance, which the Lord swore to your fathers.

2 And be mindfull of al the way wherethrough the Lord thy GOD hath made thee to walk these fortie yeares in the wildernesse: to the intent to afflict and try thee, that hee might knowe what is in thine hart, and see whether thou wouldest keepe his commaundements or no.

3 Hee afflicted thee, and made thee to endure hunger, and fedde thee with Manna which neither thou, nor thy fathers knew, to make thee to know that man lyueth not onely by bread, but that man lyueth by all that euer commeth out of the mouth of the Lord.

4 Thy rayment hath not worne vpon thee, neyther hath thy foote been swolne all these fortie yeares.

HEre againe Moses sheweth ỹ people, ỹ God gaue not his law in vain, but that his will is to haue it kept and that is the way for vs also to fare ỹ better by it. True it is, that whensoeuer any man speaketh to vs in Gods name, we must haue our eares open to heare what is tolde vs: for by that meane doth faith come. But yet must we bring our handes and feete with vs also, to offer them obediently vnto God, & to imploy all the power that hee hath giuen vs in his seruice. Therefore let vs not come hither onely to haue our eares beaten with the thinges that are preached vnto vs: but let vs also apply them to our vse. Instruction must be matched with practise: or else we shall neuer knowe what hath bin shewed vs and taught vs. And so we see what we haue to beare in minde. Moreouer let vs marke, that Moses thinketh it not enough to haue sayd these things at once and away: but he repeteth them again for a larger confirmation. *Looke* (sayth he) *that thou keepe the commaundements which I inioyne thee* not to the end thou maist knowe them w thy fingers endes, or bee able to vtter them with thy mouth: that is not enough: *but thou must put them in execution*. And to confirme this matter the better, hee addeth a promise, saying: *That thou mayst liue, and increase, and go into the land which the Lord thy God did sweare vnto thy Fathers*. This hath beene expounded alreadie heretofore: and there remaineth no more to doe, but only to renewe the remembrance thereof, according also as we see that ỹ was the intent of Moses, or rather of ỹ holy Ghost. Now thẽ, our Lord alloreth vs to him by promises, of purpose to giue vs ỹ better corage to serue him: & he doth it of his own free goodnesse, without being bound thereto. For he needed no more but to say the word: he hath authoritie to commaund vs what he listeth, and it is our part to obey him. Why then doth he ad his promises, but to win vs by louingnesse lyke a father, who though he haue al soueraignitie ouer his childe: doeth neuertheles vse gentlenes in promising, to ỹ inset his child shall serue him with the cherefuller heart? True it is that the child is bound thereto aforehand by nature: but yet when hee seeth his father so wil-

Rom. 10. 17.

Rom. 12. 1.

right towardes him, as to offer him more than his duenesse moueth him the more, if he be not too too vnkind & lewdely disposed. Therefore let vs learne that in this case God stoopeth to vs, as if he were a mortall man. Yet is not that any derogation to his maiestie: but rather a recorde of his infinite goodnesse, in that he vseth not his right with rigor, but forbeareth it and applyeth himselfe after that fashion vnto vs, to doe the thinges which hee knoweth to be meete for our rudenesse. And therefore whensoeuer wee heare that God promiseth to prosper vs, if wee honor and serue him: Let vs vnderstand ỳ his so dooing is of free goodnesse, to win vs the better, & because he is loth to vse rigor towardes vs as he might doe. But yet for all this, we must not imagin that he is bound to yeelde vs any recompence or reward for our seruice. For it is not for vs to enter into account in this behalfe, as though wee could win any thing by it: but wee must receiue whatsoeuer hee offereth vs as of his free gift, knowing our selues to bee so much the more bound vnto him.

Moreouer let vs marke what hath bin tolde vs heretofore: namely that the land which Moses promiseth here vnto the people, had bin promised already fourehundred yeeres afore, whē none of them all was yet borne: & therfore God had not an eye to anie of their deseruinges. But now he saith that they should inioy the promise which God had made them of his owne mere goodnesse. And so we haue to gather in effect, that all ỳ euer we receyue at Gods hand, springeth out of none other fountaine than onely his meere mercie, because he is good, because hee hath pitie vpon vs, because he hath not any respect to our worthinesse but onely to himselfe, & because it pleaseth him to be so bountiful towards vs. Marke ỳ for a speciall poynt. But yet for all ỳ, if we will well inioy his benefites, if we will haue them auaileable to our saluatiō, & if we wil haue the continual possession of them: we on our side must looke to answere to ỳ grace ỳ God sheweth vs. And how shall we answere it? Verily not by shrinking away frō him, not by refusing ỳ things ỳ he offereth vs to drawe vs to him: but by knowing the right & lawful vse of the benefites which he bestoweth vpō vs, so as we loue him & glorify him for them, & euery of vs spend himselfe in his seruice. Therefore whēsoeuer our Lord shall haue done vs any good: let vs vnderstand ỳ the same cōmeth not for aught on our behalf, but rather ỳ we be so much ỳ more beholdē vnto him. And to ỳ end we may possesse & inioy the same benefites, & ỳ they may profite vs to our soules healthdet vs be well aduised therewithall, ỳ wee be ỳ more prouoked thereby to serue God, forasmuch as he sheweth himself so liberal towards vs. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to gather vpon that text.

Now Moses addeth, *that the people must bethinke them of all the iourney whereby the Lord their God led them.* This bethinking of themselues was very needefull. And if we were wise & well aduised, we would bethink vs better than we doe, of ỳ things which our Lorde sheweth vs throughout all our lyfe. For both the aduersities & also the prosperities which he sendeth vs, are instructiōs which we ought to marke well, & this present lyfe is as a schoole wherein we ought to cal to minde that lesson both euening & morning. But what? Although God doe the office of a good schoolemaister, & neuer leaue teaching of vs: yet there is none of vs that taketh heede of it, but ỳ time is lost, we be lyke children that are hardened or become trueandes, so as doe ỳ maister what he can, the childe doth but laugh him to skorne, he giues not his minde at all to learning, but his wittes are wandering abroad, & either he giueth himself to follie & lewdnesse, or else runnes loytering vp & downe the streetes when hee should haue his booke in his hād. At ỳ same point are wee: For we haue ỳ booke opē before vs, & as lōg as we bee in this world, God teacheth vs by all maner of meanes to loue him & to feare him, and to put our trust in him and to submit our selues to his good will. If he send vs blessings, it is to this end that wee should learne, to giue our selues wholy ouer vnto him. If he afflict vs, it is to waken vs, that we should liue in his feare. If he send vs any neede, or hold vs in any distresse: it is as a quickening of vs vp to call vpon him, & to flee to him for refuge. If he giue vs any taste of his fauor: it is to the end we should be the better confirmed, not onely that he will helpe vs during this mortall lyfe, but also that hee will bring vs to the kingdome of heauen: and thereof must wee be fully resolued. Thus ye see how God neuer ceaseth to rehearse our lesson to vs: and yet doth none of vs giue heede to it, but we wander away in our owne imaginations, the pleasures of this world doe cary vs away, and euery of vs is so combered with these vanities, that wee haue no leasure at all to thinke vppon our God, or vpon the thinges that he sheweth vs.

Gen. 3. 14

Yet notwithstanding, it is not for naught that Moses sayth here, *Bethinke thee of the way wherethrough the Lorde thy God hath led thee.* True it is that the people of Israell had peculiar instructions, so as a number of thinges befell them in their trauelling through the wildernesse, which belong not vnto vs in these dayes: but yet was that a figure of mans lyfe. The wildernesse (say I) wherein the people were by the space of fortie yeeres, was as a mirrour of this earthly wayfaring of ours, wherethrough wee must passe vntill GOD take vs hence into his rest. Lykewise the resting place of the land of Chanaan (accordingly as it is named in the fourescore and fifteenth psalme) was as a warrant of the endlesse lyfe that is prepared for vs, and wherein wee shall no more bee tossed and turmoyled as we be in this world. Now seeing it is so: Let vs note that as the Iewes were exhorted to remember the iourney wherein God had led them through the wildernesse: so now the chiefe poynt of our duetie is to cōsider that inasmuch as God gouerneth vs, we liue through his fatherly care, so as he guideth all our steppes which we haue to goe or come. And it behoueth vs to bethinke vs well of all the time of our lyfe, & to consider throwly what we haue had experience

Psal. 95. 11.

rience of in this world. True it is that we thinke oftentimes both vppon the good and vppon the euill which we haue receiued: but that is cleane contrary to the intent of our God. For our thinking vppon our aduersities is not to knowe them to be as rods wherewith God beateth vs for our chastisement. No, it is but to frette and chafe against him, and to gather matter to grudge at, saying, what will become of this? Shall I alwayes be new to begin? It should seeme that God intendeth to confound me presently: for my affliction was great enough afore: and was it meete that hee shoulde increase it yet more? After ỳ maner doe we gather a summe of all the miseries which we haue felt from our childehode to our old age. Howbeit that is but to sharpé our selues against God, whereas we should rather thinke thus: Goe to, my God hath not ceased to chastise me euen from my childhood vpward: and if I had returned vnto him, surely he would haue spared me: but he was faine to dubble his stripes, & to hold on still, because I haue alwayes waxed harder & harder, & rebelled against him: & ought not ỳ to haue suffised me if I had not bin quite paste grace? But yet for all this, I hold on still mine accustomed trade: neuertheless he ceaseth not to waken me vp with afflictions. He is loth that I should welter in mine owne dung, and yet doe I continue still in my stubbornesse: and what will come of it in the end? After this maner (say I) must we quicken vp our selues, & call to remembraunce the whole time of our lyfe, or elsse we shall neuer bethinke vs of the aduersities that we haue indured, but with murmuring & grudging against God. In lyke case is it with prosperitie. If God make vs to prosper, & afterward cast some affliction vppon vs: wee be the more greeued at it, insomuch ỳ in stead of saying with Iob, wee haue receiued good at the Lordes hand, & why should we not receiue euill also? (for when he doth vs good, he is not vnwilling to continue it, & his ceasing of it, is not for that he is become nigardly, or vnable to doe vs good any more: but because he knoweth it to be expedient for vs to be so exercised, that he may try our patience: & so ought we to thinke:) But what? we on the contrary part say thus: it comes to my minde that I was well at mine ease, and I had this & that. To be short, wee coulde finde in our heartes to serue Satan, so wee might haue prosperitie, & we seeke to make our selues merry, bearing our selues on hand in ỳ meane while, that it is but lost labor to serue God. Thus wee see how men turne to the cleane contrary, both the prosperitie & the aduersitie ỳ God sendeth them. But when we should learne any thing, our remembraunce is very short: for if God haue afflicted vs for a time, we neuer think of it after. In deede as long as the crosse indureth, wee can skill to sigh & to play the hypocrites, & to pretend that if God would voutsafe to abate his rigor, we will become little Angels: but as soone as he withdraweth his hand from vs, our nature falles by and by to his olde byasse, wee doe but shake our eares a little, & we neuer thinke more vpon his corrections to doe our selues any good by them. If God send vs any prosperitie, we haue forgotten them out of hand. Insomuch that whē we haue once crammed our selues full, in stead of yeelding him thanks, we fal to kicking against him lyke ouerpampered iades, as shall be declared in the two & thirtith chapter. ye see thē that our wittes are very short in remēbring the way wherethrough God hath led vs. As touching goods, they serue vs not to stirre vs vp to loue our God, and to put our trust in him & to call vpon him. As touching aduersitie, it serueth not to humble vs, nor to make vs renounce ỳ world, nor to cause vs to bethinke vs of our sinnes, that wee might be sory for them: and craue forgiuenesse: but rather to the cleane contrarie. Now then seeing we be so faultie, wee haue the more needé to marke well this text, & the exhortation that Moses maketh to vs here, that we may remember the way whereby God leadeth vs. So then, let vs dayly haue an eye to ỳ things whereof we shal haue had experience during this transitory lyfe. How hath God dealt with mee euer since I was borne? I haue waded through an hundred thowsand miseries, & he hath deliuered me from them all: & ought not this to make me thinke him to be my father, and to put my selfe wholy into his protection? Againe, I haue bin cumbred a number of wayes: and God hath alwayes had an eye to me, & brought me home againe to himselfe. How oftentimes haue I tempted him, casting my selfe vp to the spoyle, and running into the snares of Satan? And yet my God would not let me perish. Now ought not I to perceiue his goodnesse therein? Ought I not to betake my selfe to his keeping with stirer trust? Moreouer my God hath visited me with a great sorte of afflictions: and should I still rebell against him? Shall I not bee tamed for all the stripes that I haue receiued at his rodde? Shall God haue lost his labor in chastising me? After this maner must we bethinke vs, both in our prosperitie and in aduersitie: and that not for once and away, but with such imprinting of it in our hearts, as we may haue it so ingraued there ỳ it may neuer be blotted out. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vppon the text of Moses.

Iob. 2. 10.

Now hee speaketh expressely of the afflictions which the people had indured in the wildernesse: as if hee shoulde say that these afflictions heere are profitable for men, so they can vse them well, and referre them to their right end. It is not without cause that Moses vttereth this thing here: inasmuch as it seemeth at the first, that we cānot thinke vpon our aduersities without griefe and grudging, so as they should prouoke vs to repine against God, and consequently to shrinke away from him. For we know there is nothing more against our nature, than to bee poore, sicke, diseased, or afflicted with any miserie: they bee thinges which wee hate. And therefore when God smiteth vs, it seemeth to be the next way to withdrawe vs from him. But Moses telleth vs, that if we were so wise and well disposed as wisely to apply to our vse the afflictions that God sendeth vs: thy shoulde rather

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teach vs to returne home to him. *The Lorde thy God* (sayth he) *hath scourged thee*. And to what end? *To knowe what was in thy heart, and whether thou wouldest keepe his commaundements or no*. Here Moses sheweth, first that Gods afflicting of vs is as an examination to trye what we bee, and how wee be minded. In deede, prosperitie also is a good triall to bewray what is in mens heartes. For if a man be any thing at ease, he ouershootes himselfe, and pleasures corrupt vs yea and vtterly dull vs. If a man bee riche, wheras hee was taken to haue bin lowly and meeke, hee will bewray his pride and crueltie. If a man bee in authoritie, hee becommeth intollerable. And so yee see that GOD may try what is in vs and take experience of it, euen by making vs to prosper. But yet is pouertie set downe here of set purpose, because it is the meane whereby God tryeth whether wee bee subiect to him or no. And why? For patience (as men say) is a singular vertue: but how may it bee knowen that wee bee patient, but by aduersitie? Therefore when God sendeth vs aduersities that are hard and troublesome to vs: then doth hee as it were lay open our hartes. For if wee abide quietly vnder his hand, and suffer him to deale with vs according to his good will, so as wee prayse his name though he handle vs roughly: it is a token that wee loue him in deed, and that hypocrisie taketh no place at all in vs. And therefore it is not without cause, that Moses intending to shewe how God tryeth vs; and prooueth vs, speaketh heere expreslly of afflictions.

Now wee haue to gather vpon this text, that it is no woonder though God afflict vs diuerse wayes. And why so? For it is expedient for vs to bee fitted and to haue it knowen what is in vs: There is not a more needefull and profitable thing for vs: and that is done by afflictions. Therefore must wee submit our selues to them, and vnderstand that they neuer bee superfluous or more than needeth. Mark that for one point. Yea and vnto the same end must wee apply this saying of the Apostle, that it is the very meane whereby to try our obedience. For hee vseth the same word, and setteth downe Iesus Christ for an example. For although hee be the mirror & paterne of all righteousnesse, yet was he faine to passe vnder Gods scourges. And why? Euen to the end that his obedience might be knowen. And that which is shewed vs in the person of our Lord Iesus Christ: good reason would that the same should bee accomplished in vs that are his members. Now is there any thing more requisite, than to knowe whether wee bee obedient to God or no? And that is not knowen but by aduersitie, when thinges fall out contrary to our desire, and God handleth vs in such sort as our flesshe and nature striue against it. When we be in that case, if we can hold our selues in subiection to God, to say, in deed Lord this is hard for me to beare, it goeth against my stomacke, it is cleane contrary to my nature, but yet howsoeuer I fare I renounce mine owne will: I would faine haue health, but sith it pleaseth thee to leaue me sicke, thy name be blessed for it: I could finde in my heart to be rich, and to haue mine owne ease and pleasure, but thou wilt haue me to be poore & needy. I would be in honor & credit, & thou wilt haue me to liue in reproche and shame: and good reason it is O Lorde that wee should haue the humilitie to submit our selues to whatsoeuer it pleaseth thee to sende vs, and not that wee should followe our owne fansies when we be come to such a sacrifice of renouncing all our affections and all our owne wilthen is our obedience rightly knowen. For what matter is it to say amen, when God followeth our desires, and handleth vs according to the lyking of our owne flesshe? How is there any vertue in vs? And therefore let vs remember wel this text, where Moses telleth vs that Gods afflicting of vs, is to try what we be. For we might set a faire face vpon thinges, and pretend to loue and honor God: and yet notwithstanding all should be but counterfetting and leasing. But when wee bee handled roughly, and God sheweth himselfe as our enemie, so as wee bee prouoked to rebellion, and would faine striue against him if it were Lawfull: and yet notwithstanding wee continue still as Lambes, so as wee bowe downe our neckes vnder his yoke, and forsake all our owne affections to obey him: that (say I) is a due tryall of vs. And that is the cause why the holy scripture lykeneth aduersitie to a furnace. Lyke as golde and siluer are tryed by fire: so must God bee faine to try and examine vs by afflictions. 2. Pet. 4. 12.

But here it might bee demaunded, whether God doe not knowe what we be without tryall? Let vs marke that it is not to bee surmised that God is ignorant of any thing or that he needeth to try vs after the maner of men: but it is the common speach of the holy scripture, to attribute the thinges to God which are peculiar to men. For if it should speake to vs of his maiestie according to the worthinesse thereof, we should bee vtterly rauished, and yet knowe neuer the more what were sayd to vs. God therefore to vtter himselfe, is faine to descend from his owne highnesse and to transfigure himselfe, to the end wee may knowe so much of him as is for our behoofe. To be short, let vs vnderstand that God knoweth what is in mes hearts, though he should let them alone as they bee. For it is sayd in the psalme, Shal not hee that made the heart knowe it? Yes: but yet for all that, it behoueth vs to bee brought to the touchstone. Not that God hath any neede of it on his behalfe: but it is done for our owne sakes. Now then, wheras it is sayd in this text, that Gods will was to trye the people of Israel: let vs marke the meaning thereof is, that God intended to shewe in deed, and to bewray in trueth what that people was of whom it was his will to haue open record and proofe, to the end they might not vse any odde shiftes to keepe their naughtinesse from discouering. Now then, Gods afflicting of vs is not for that hee hath any neede to sift vs narrowly: but because wee on our side haue neede to be so tryed. For wee see how men beleeue wonderously wel of their own strength. So long as God letteth them alone in rest, they thinke there is Psal. 33. 15. & 94. 9.

nothing but substantiall stoutnesse in them. But if God doe but pricke them: by and by the venim commeth out, which was hidden within before. Such as made faire wether before, and were very skilfull in preaching of Gods goodnesse, and in teaching men how they ought to rest thereupon, fall to gnashing of their teeth when they themselues are afflicted, and can no more tell what patientnesse is, or how to glorify God. Therefore is God faine to draw vs forth into the light. For as long as he handleth vs gently, we dwell as it were in couert, and wee lye hidde in darkenesse. But as soone as aduersitie commeth, we learne to perceiue what we be. Whereas afore, there seemed to be nothing but perfect obedientnesse in vs: then wee perceiue how our flesh is ful of stubbornnesse, & we could finde in our heartes to withstand God. That then is the tryall which Moses speaketh of.

Therefore to be short, this text must be referred to our selues, and we must take heede to apply it well to our own benefite, and consider that we be vtterly ignorant, and that the loue of our selues doth so blinde vs, yea and quite stoppe our eyes, that we bee besotted with fond follie, vntill God haue cleansed vs of it in deede, and shewed vs our own shame by open proofe. Again it is a good tryall also when God vouchsafeth to giue vs power to beare our afflictions patiently. For we haue cause to glorify him for his vpholding of vs by his hand: and we must alwayes beleeue y wee could not indure any thing, vnlesse we were strengthened by the holy Ghost. Therfore when we haue ouercome any temptation, and passed thorowe any aduersitie meekely: let vs assure our selues that God ayded vs. And so yee see it is a good tryall that commeth to vs by afflictions, & that it is the way for vs to gather instruction by this text, where it is sayd that Gods afflicting of his people, was to the end to searche what was in their hearts.

And here is expresse mention made of the heart. For it is not enough to haue a faire showe to the worldward. Those whom God letteth alone in quiet and pleasure, may well haue many goodly vertues worthie of commendatiō: but in the meane while their heart is hidden and wrapped vp within, so as it is not knowen what they be vntill God discouer them. For prosperitie is as a cloke that hideth much vncleanesse. If a man delight in his riches, in his credit, in his quietnesse, or in his ease: men see not what hee is but rather doe stay vppon the outward appearance, which doth euen dim & dazle their eyes: but in the meane while they looke not vpon that which is within. And like as a faire garment may hide many fowle deformities: so doth prosperitie hide a man that he can not be knowen what he is. But if God afflict him, hee layeth him bare by and by, insomuch that if hee haue any vice in him, then it appeareth both to himselfe & to others, so as we be driuē to humble our selues, whereas before wee had nothing but vanitie in vs to deceiue our selues withall. And whereas wee stoode too much in our own conceites: now we see there was no cause why we should doe so. Thus ye see what Moses meant in saying y God intended to try what was in his peoples hearts, by afflicting thē after y fashion in the wildernes.

Now hereby we see yet better the thing that I haue touched afore: namely that afflictions are more than necessarie and profitable for vs. And therefore let vs learne to beare them more patiently than we haue bin wont to doe, seeing our Lord hath layd that condition vppon vs, & that they be furtherances of our saluation, and there is not any thing woorse and deadlyer to men, than to be so blinded as not to know what is in themselues. Seeing that man is transitorie: wherein can hee glorie but onely in GOD, who is his power and strength? Now then if hee bee so proude, as hee not onely despiseth him of whom hee holdeth all thinges, but also falleth to push with his hornes against his maiestie in despite of him: is there any thing more pernicious? No: and yet can not this be amended otherwise than by affliction. Ought wee to take sickenesse in euill part, seeing that God doth thereby make vs to renounce our owne nature, to drawe vs to himselfe? No: and therefore let vs learne to obey our God: and let vs bethinke vs of this lesson whensoeuer we be so sorrowful in our afflictions: and when wee be tempted to grudge against God, let vs thinke that: yea verily, but yet is this to our benefite. In deede it is hard and troublesome, but God playeth the phisition, and purgeth vs of our diseases which else would be deadly, and is incurable by any other meanes. That (say I) is the thing which we haue to note, that we may fare well by the warning that Moses giueth vs heere.

Now hee addeth immediately, *that God had suffered his people to hunger and thirst, and had fed them with Manna which was a foode that they were not acquainted with, nor yet their fathers: and that in so doing was to the ende that they might know, that Man liueth not onely by bread, but by euery word that commeth out of the mouth of God, doth man liue.* Here Moses meant to giue a particular lesson: which is, that GOD teacheth his people to seeke their sustenance in him. And it is a very good lesson. Truely when we say that God giueth vs our dayly or ordinary bread, it seemeth at the first blushe to bee but a childishe thing. And soothly men teach little children to pray vnto GOD, when they would haue their breakefastes. Yea and in very deede there are a sorte of ouerweening fooles, who neuertheles doe take themselues to bee very wise, and are chamed to bee great doctors, which haue held opinion that it is not meete for Christians to pray to GOD for bodily sustenaunce, but that they must tende to a higher and more exquisite perfection. Yea, but in the meane while, is it not a tending to great perfection, when wee can pray GOD to bee our fosterfather, and when wee can knowe his goodnesse towardes vs? Yes: and for proofe thereof, wherein doth the beleefe or vnbeleefe of men shewe it selfe moste? Surely euen in the maintenaunce of this transitory life. In deede that is not the chiefe point

of our faith. For we must looke vp to the euerlasting inheritance that is promised vs. But yet is the thing true which I say now: that is to wit, that our beleefe and also our vnbeleefe shew thémselues more in that behalfe, than in any other. For if a man can trust in God that he will maintaine him in this mortall lyfe: surely he will also hope for all the rest. And on the contrary part, when wee wante foode, or haue not helpes at our own wishing: by and by we be out of heart and vexed with vnquietnesse. And so our vnbeleefe bewrayes it selfe in the ouercarefulnesse which we haue for this earthly lyfe. Now therefore, let vs marke well that wee haue greatly profited, not onely for one day but also for all our life lóg, whé we haue once learned throughly to commit our selues to Gods prouidence, to be fed by his hand, and to receiue sustenance by his grace. When we be come to that point, then are wee mounted very high, and thereby wee shall learne to trust in him for the heauenly lyfe, and for all thinges belonging thereunto. And so is Moses meaning in this text: namely that the people should be throughly perswaded, that God will nourish them, and that they should not trust either in bread or wine or in any other foode, but consider that it is Gods peculiar office to maintaine them by his power. Let that serue for one poynt.

And Moses alledgeth the feeding of the people with Manna in the wildernesse. The Lorde (saith hee) did let thee indure hunger, and sent thee Manna from heauen as a warrant to assure thee that hee will alwayes bee thy father. And although he make the earth to yeeld thee fruite in bringing forth both corne and wine: and although thou haue both flesshe, & fish, & whitemeate to nourish thee withall: yet doth not thy God cease to maintaine thee by his power. Therefore thou must looke that way, and not haue thy minde tyed to the dead creatures, as though they gaue thee lyfe, or as though thou receiuedst thy strength of them. Assure thy selfe it is thy God that nourisheth & susteineth thee. And truely the Manna cõtinued not alway with the people of Israell. But if God worke a thing for a time: wee must profit our selues by it euer after, although the thing continue not still. If wee should remember the thinges that GOD sheweth vs, no longer than wee see them with our eyes: wee should bee too brutish. Therefore when wee haue once seene any instruction: we must beare it in minde all the dayes of our lyfe. In lyke case is it concerning the Manna. God fed his people with it by the space of fortie yeeres. Now must wee learne thereby to the worldes end, that wee be fed by the same power whereby that people was. In deed the meanes are farre other: (for wee nowadayes doe eate of the bread which the earth yeeldeth, and we haue other kindes of foode to susteine vs withall:) but is that any derogation to the heauenly power? Is it not God that breatheth lyfe into vs, so as wee bee susteined by him? Yes: and therefore whensoeuer wee eate bread, let vs learne not to stay vpon that, but to cal to minde that GOD nourished his people without bread, without wine, and without any other victels. And to what end? Hee wrought not that miracle to haue it buryed. Was it but onely to the end that ỹ people of that time should be taught by it that God was their father? No no: but we must apply the same storie to our instruction in these dayes too: that is to wit, that although GOD send vs bread and wine, yet he ceaseth not to feede vs still for all that. So then let vs marke well, that the miracles which God hath wrought, neuertheless must serue for our instruction, although wee behold them not presently at this day. And specially whereas heere is mention made of the Manna: let it be an euerlasting president to vs, to teach vs that God hath a care of his creatures, and that we haue our sustenaunce and preseruation at his hand: so that although hee make the Sunne to shine, yet doth the light come from himselfe: and although hee giue strength to the earth, so as wee take sustenaunce and nourishment from out of the bowels of it, yet is it hee himselfe that worketh after that fashion. And let vs alwayes hold this for a rule, that our lyfe with all the appurtenances thereof dependeth vpon the onely hand of GOD, and that wee must haue our whole recourse vnto him. That is the meaning of Moses.

Howbeit to the end we may knowe it yet better, wee haue to marke first of all, that whereas hee sayth *that man is nourished by euery worde that commeth out of the mouth of God*: hee speaketh not but of this presét life. There are which take it to bee spoken of the spiritual lyfe of our soules. In deede it is a good doctrine of it selfe, ỹ we liue not only in this life as Oxen and Asses, but ỹ we haue also a better and excellenter life, inasmuch as God quickeneth our soules by his worde, and knitteth vs to himselfe so as hee vpholdeth vs by the power of his holy spirit, which is the fountaine of life. All this is true, and it behoueth vs to acknowledge it so to bee, as I sayd afore. But yet as concerning the vnderstanding of this text, Moses goeth no further but to shewe vs that we liue by euery word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, that is to say, we liue by the blessing which GOD giueth vs. For the doctrine that hee treateth of heere, is not that our soules are quickened to saluation because wee bee taught by the holy scripture: Moses meant not that thing: but rather hee sheweth vs that bread hath not any power of it selfe, forasmuch as it is but a dead thing. And can a senselesse creature haue power to giue vs mouing? No. Can a dead thing haue power to giue vs life? No surely, that can it not. How then can bread and wine which haue no lyfe of themselues, bee able to giue lyfe vnto men? How can they make vs to liue? It seemeth that we gather strength of bread. For whé a man is brought low with ouerlong fasting, & pined w̃ hunger: whereas he was as good as half dead before, if he eate meate, by and by he is as it were renewed & set vp againe. In deed ỹ bread is ỹ meane to refresh men, & God serueth his owne turn by it: but yet

for all that, shall wee tye our lyfe to bread and wine? No: but wee must consider that although God haue set that order in nature: yet notwithstanding it serueth not to bereaue him of his prayse, nor to rob him of his right: but rather, his vttering of his power by his creatures, serueth to shewe that he hath them all in his hand, and can dispose of them after his own good pleasure. That is the thing which wee haue to remẽber cõcerning these wordes, where Moses saith, *that man liueth by euery word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God*. And in deede wee cannot haue a better expounder of this text, than our Lorde Iesus Christ: for hee applying this text to himselfe, sheweth that hee should bee susteined by trusting in God, although hee wanted bread. In deede I can not dispatch this matter at this present: but yet must wee beare somewhat of it away, to the end that the rest may be y better set forth to morrowe. See then how our Lorde Iesus Christ expounded the wordes of Moses. He was tẽpted by Satan to turne stones into bread. And with what intent? Verily as though he could not haue liued without bread. But hee sheweth that although he wanted bread, yet hee should not faile to bee susteined by the power of GOD his father. For why? It is not by bread (saith hee) that man doth liue: that is to say, God is not bound by any necessitie to vse bread, whẽ he will susteine vs. If an earthly father will susteine his children, hee must needes haue bread: and if hee haue none, he will weepe and say, alas my children, I can not but bee in great griefe of minde, to see you in this necessitie: if I coulde feede you with mine owne bloud, I would doe it. So then, a father shall not alwayes haue wherewith to mainteine his children: but it is not so with God, for he is not bound to any necessitie. Now then, doth bread faile through the whole world? Is there such drought as the earth can yeelde no substance? Yet doth not God faile to bee almightie still, and to haue wherewith to maintaine those that are his. Thus yee see how Iesus Christ did beate backe the diuels temptation, by telling him that wee must not imagine Gods power to be shut vp within his creatures, but that we must learne to trust in him, not douting but that he can finde meanes well enough to maintaine vs, yea euen though all things faile vs. If he giue vs bread: let vs eate of it: for wee must not tempt him. But if all meane helps faile, let vs betake our selues to him that is almightie, and to his onely power, which shall alwayes haue his course, though there be no meane help at all. Yee see then how Moseses meaning is, that euen in respect of this transitorie lyfe, wee must not be so beastly as to hang our groynes vppon the bread and meate, as though our life lay hidden there. But when we haue wherewith to feede our selues, let vs lift our eyes vpward to acknowledge that it is God which hath set that order in nature. And againe, if wee haue little let vs bee contented with it, and pray God to make it effectuall, as though it were Manna frõ heauen, so as one morsel may feede vs and make vs as lustie, as if we had all the abundance of the world. And if we bee driuen to pouertie, let vs proceede yet further, and pray God to supply our want, and let vs put this sentence in practise, *that man liueth not onely by bread*, that is to say, he is not susteined alonely by these ordinary meanes: but although he were at vtter necessitie and wanted all thinges, yet would not God faile to succor him. And therefore let vs resort vnto him, and to the secrete power whereby we bee susteined, that wee may bee so mainteined by the same, as we may liue in him, and by him, and al through his onely meere goodnesse.

Matt. 4. 4.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe to pitie vs: that seeing wee be so wretched creatures, that although he haue a care to bring vs back against to him, yet notwithstanding wee would fainst striue against him: it may please him so to purge vs from all stubbornesse, as our whole seeking may bee to submit our selues to his wil: and that bee suffer vs not to bee giuen still to our owne wicked affections, and to the lustes of our flesh: but rather that hee correct them, yea and that in such sorte, as we may seeke to mount vpward, and to passe in such wise through this world, as wee may alwayes remember that it is but a wayfaring, to the intent wee may keepe on still in the marke whereunto our Lord calleth vs. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

Matt. 4. 4.

On Fryday the xvj. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lix. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the eight Chapter.

3. 4 He afflicted thee &c.

5 Knowe thou therfore in thyne hart, that the Lord thy God nurtured thee as a man nurtureth hys owne child.

6 Therefore keepe thou the commaundementes of the Lord thy God, by walking in his wayes, and by fearing him.

7 For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land wherein are riuers of water, fountaines and ſpringes which come out of the valleys and hilles,

8 A land

8 A land of wheate, and barely, of Vines, figtrees, and Poungarnets: a lande wherein are Oliuetrees, Oyle, and honnie.

9 A lande wherein thou shalt eate bread without scarcetie, so as thou shalt not want any thing in it: a Lande whose stones are iron, and out of whose hils thou shalt digge brasse.

YEsterday wee sawe first of all, how the myracle that GOD wrought in feeding his people with Manna by the space of fortie yeeres togither in the wildernesse, ought to serue for euer. And therewithall was shewed the ende thereof: that is to wit, that the Iewes ought to haue considered, that it is not the bread ỹ maintaineth a man, neither is the power of our lyfe shut vp within it: but rather it is God ỹ breatheth liuelinesse into vs, and which giueth the breade that nature wherby it is able to sustaine vs. And so we see ỹ the matter here concerneth not the life of our soules, but that God sheweth vs howe this slightfull and transitorie life is maintayned by his onely power: so that, whether wee haue meate and drinke, or whether we suffer hunger, wee must alwayes haue recourse to Gods goodnesse, assuring our selues that he is our foster father, and that our life is in his hand, and that it is his office to preserue it in good plight. That is the summe of the things which wee haue to remember here. And ye haue seene also howe our Lord Iesus vsed the same text, as was declared in fewe wordes: but yet must we lay forth the residue of the things a little more at length.

Now then wee haue to marke, that if GOD giue vs abundance, our minds must not be wedded to it: for can the bread quicken vs, seeing it is a dead thing? Although God vse it as an instrument, it is not to deface his owne commendation, no more than when he giueth vs light by the Sunne. For we knowe that in the creation of the world, light was made before the Sunne was created. And why? To the intent we should not conuey the honour of God vnto creatures. Therefore let vs so vse the light of the Sunne, as wee acknowledge therewithall, that there is but onely one God, to whom the glorie of that benefite ought to bee yeelded. And when wee haue bread to eate, it is not the bread that sustaineth vs, but it is God, who powreth out his goodnesse continually vpon vs. Although he apply those meanes to our vse: yet is it he himselfe that worketh, it is he that is the author of them. And in that respect is it that hee saith hee will breake the staffe of breade. True it is that hee threatneth to shut vp the heauen as if it were iron, and to make the earth to bee of brasse, so that when the earth crieth out to the heauen, the heauen shall not heare it. God then when he intendeth to send barrennesse vppon a land, vseth such meanes as he thinketh good: by reason whereof wee haue not wherewith to sustaine our selues: in so much that when the grounde hath borne a haruest good and great ynough, yet wil God wel ynough diminish it and make it so moulder away, yea and when the corne is caried to the mill, it shall consume in the grinding: and when it is brought from the mill to the ouen, if it bee measured or weied againe, it shall not hold full weighs and measure. Howbeit, we must come to this point, that the strength which bread hath, is not of ỹ bread it selfe, but of Gods breathing of this woord into it whereof Moses speaketh here: that is to wit, that when God will haue vs to bee nourished and susteined by the bread, he vttereth his goodnesse towards vs, by making vs to feele his blessing which sheadeth it selfe into it after a secret fashion. Albeit that we behold it not with our eyesight, yet must wee be throughly perswaded of it by faith. Then let vs marke well, that when wee haue whereof to feede, we must not be so doulish as to think that the power is inclosed in the breade or in any other vittles or drinkes: but that therein God vttereth his goodnesse towardes vs, and sheadeth it into vs, as we see the raine come from heauen which moisteneth ỹ earth and giueth it strength: On the other side if wee haue want: let vs vnderstand that God can sustaine vs by turning bread into Manna, that is to say: if all ordinarie meanes fayle vs, God will prouide for vs after another fashion, as wee see hee remedied the necessitie of his people, when they were in the wildernes: And for ỹ same cause did our Lord Iesus Christ answere Satan, it is written that man liueth not by bread only, but by euery word that commeth out of the mouth of God. For Sathan tempted him to distrust, vnder colour that in the wildernesse God sent him not the thinges that were expedient to liue withall. He had not any foode there, and yet in the meane while he was pinched, with hunger as a mortall man: for he vouchsafed to become subiect to our passions or sufferinges. Now heere vpon, Sathan taketh occasion to enter vppon him, saying: Seeing thou art the sonne of God, shouldest thou want any thing? Is it not reason that all creatures should serue thee? yes: for thou art the heire of the world. Thou hast no bread: and therefore thou must be faine to try the power of God, that these stones may bee turned into bread, or else thou seest how thy God forsaketh thee, for if he had a care of thee, thou shouldest perceiue his blessing and fauour, so as thou shouldest haue heere wherwith to susteine thee. Now thé seeing thou wantest such helpes, it is a signe that God hath no regard of thee. But Iesus Christ aunswereth hereunto: I shalbe susteined well enough though bread faile mee. And why? For the life of man dependeth not vpon theie meanes. And surely God were of very small and weake force, if hee could not helpe a man but by breade: he should be no better than an earthly man. A riche man can doe welinough, if hee haue wherewith: but if he fall into pouerty, he must be faine to begge

Leui. 26. 26.

Matt. 4. 4.

himselfe. And so should it bee [by your saying,] with God. But although there were neuer a whit of bread in the world: yet hath he alwayes his word in his mouth, that is to wit, hee needes no more but to say the worde. Like as he created the worlde of nothing, by vttering his will that it pleased him to haue it so: and all thinges were made and are maintained still at this day in their state, by his onely commaundement: so can he maintaine those that are his, as he thinketh good. He needeth no more but to breath foorth his secrete power: and all shall be as well satisfied, as if they had their fill of meate and drinke. According to this lesson, if God at any time withdrawe our foode and make vs to feele necessitie: let vs learne to waite vpon him, and to rest vpon his prouidence, praying him to supply our want: and wee shall finde that this is not written in vaine.

Nowe then wee see there is a dubble vse in this doctrine, and that wee must apply it as well to the time of abundance, as to the time of scarcitie. When wee haue great store of things, let not that stop our eyes to make vs trust too much to them: assuring our selues that our eating of the bread can not sustaine vs, except GOD giue it force. For if he once breake the staffe of it: there will bee no more leaning vnto it, it will rather bee but a griefe to vs. For wee must alwayes marke this similitude, that as a weake man stayeth himselfe vpon a staffe: so GOD strengtheneth our powers agayne by bread and drinke. But if the staffe bee broken: to what purpose will it serue, but to breake his neeke that shall trust vnto it? Then let vs learne to trust vnto GOD and to leane vnto him in our abundaunce, and to giue him thankes for vouchsafyng to make his creatures to serue our turne after that fashion: and let vs beware that wee conuey not ouer his power and prayse to any other thing. For that were to make an idoll of the bread. God hath ordayned it to doe vs seruice, and hee hath put it in subiection to vs: and shall wee notwithstanding goe and worshippe it? If the bread [of it selfe] doe sustayne vs, hath it not the office of God, so as GOD must sit still like an idle and dead thing? Let vs beware that wee make not idols of the benefites which God bestoweth vppon vs: for that were an intollerable vnthankfulnesse. Thus much concerning abundance. And therefore let not riche men thinke they can forbeare Gods helpe bicause they haue their garners well stuffed and stored: for if God doe but blowe vppon them, all vanisheth away. When they haue the morsels in their mouthes: they shall sticke faste in their throtes: and when they haue their bellyes crammed neuer so full, yet shall they receiue no nourishment by it, except God giue it them by his secret working. By this meanes shal all of vs liue in humilitie, and such as are wel stored shall not ceasse to make this prayer without hypocrisie: Giue vs this day our dayly bread. For otherwise, were it not a mocking of God, if a man should thinke himselfe to be well ynough prouided, bicause hee hath great store of corne and wine, or bicause he hath money in his purse and rentes comming in, or bicause he perceyueth himselfe to be throughly furnished and stored of all things? Howe shall he craue his dayly bread at Gods hand, vnlesse he knowe that the thinges which he hath are nothing, and that GOD must bee faine to worke, yea and to continue his secrete operation alwayes? If that were not: a man might defye GOD and bidde scorne of him, as in verie deede he might well ynough forbeare him. But if wee bee fully resolued of this lesson in our hearetes, that nothing sustayneth vs but onely GOD: it will put vs in minde to praye him, to continue his fatherlyng of vs to morrowe as well as he hath fedde vs to day, notwithstanding that we haue a whole yeeres prouision before hand. For wee must alwayes consider, that all that euer we haue without him, is nothing.

Againe, in time of pouertie, it is a great comfort vnto vs that wee may resorte to our God, and beseeche him to haue pitie vppon vs, and [bee sure] that although there were no bread in the worlde, yet he will not fayle to sustaine vs by his power. Seeing then that wee haue this promise, it ought to bee an incouragement vnto vs to pray boldly, and to reioyce, and not to torment our selues out of measure, as they that thinke there is no God at all in heauen, when they see not the helpes wherewith they bee acquainted. And why is that? Bicause wee tye all Gods power to our eyesight and outward sense. Therefore let vs beware of such fondnesse, and let vs put this lesson in vre. And truely God sheweth vs the experience thereof euen still at this day. If wee had our eyes open: wee should perceiue that this is not written in vaine. For yee see that euen they which are best fed receiue no benefite by their meate, whereas in the meane while the children ỹ are neither wel fed nor wel clad, are neuertheless both fat & lustie, & thriue well to see to. What eate they? For want of good sustenaunce, they eate thinges that may hurt them: & yet notwithstanding God maketh them to grow and increase, by turning the things into good iuice, which might ingender euill nourishment. Wee bee sure that wee see this. So then, let vs marke well that our Lord hath left still in the world some remnant of the thing that Moses witnesseth heere. And let vs marke moreouer, that the worde which is spoken of here, betokeneth ỹ power or operation, like as when the Apostle sayeth in the first to the Hebrewes, that Christ hath the fulnesse of the whole Godhead in him, & that he beareth vp the whole world by his word: according wherunto also it is said in the Psalme, ỹ the Heauens were created by ỹ word, and ỹ the same word shewed it selfe there: so as God shewed by his stablishing of ỹ order of nature, ỹ it is he in whō al things haue their being. Ye see then how he worketh towards vs, & that he needeth not to trauel with great labour and paines taking: it is inough if he do but say ỹ word, ỹ is to say if he do but vtter his good pleasure, for ỹ performance will follow by & by therwithall.

But

But by the way we haue here a reſemblance to gather: That if our bodies be nouriſhed and ſuſtained by Gods woord, that is to wit, by the ſecrete power which he breatheth into bread, wine, and all other vittels: much rather are our ſoules nouriſhed by his doctrine that is dayly preached vnto vs. In deede, that is not the meaning of this text, as is ſhewed afore: but yet for all that, when God hath once taught vs what this temporal lyfe is, and ſhewed vs that it dependeth wholly vppon his power and grace: he will haue the ſame to conuey vs yet higher. For when we know that God ſheweth himſelfe a father to vs in giuing vs meate and drink: we muſt alſo paſſe on to the heauenly heritage. [Wee muſt conſider] that his adopting of vs to be his children, is not to feede vs in this worlde like brute beaſtes: but to drawe vs to the euerlaſting lyfe. And therefore when wee perceyue the operation and power of this ſecret word of God in the nouriſhing of our bodyes: wee muſt mount vp hygher, and conſider that our ſoules are not fed neither with bread nor with wine, but ỳ they haue a priciouſer foode, namely that God giueth them life by nouriſhing them to the ſaluation that is prepared for vs. Therefore when we haue ſought our foode at Gods hand, and giuen him thankes for our meate and drink, ſtaying our ſelues altogether vpõ the truſt of his goodneſſe, in hope that hee will alwayes be our fofterfather, yea euen in the time of extreame dearthe: let vs aſſure our ſelues that he will neuer faile vs any more, ſpecially in reſpecte of our ſoules, for as much as that is the thing aboue all other, whereby hee intendeth to certifie vs that he taketh vs for his children. Thus yee ſee how we ought to put this text in vre.

Hebr.12.9.

And heerewithall let vs marke that it was meete that the people of Iſrael ſhould acknowledge the benefite that is ſpoken of in the pſalm Pſal.78.25. where it is ſayd that man was fed with Angels foode. For the prophet, to magnifie Gods grace the more in that hee had fed his people with Manna, ſaieth that when they were a hungred, God ſent the bread from heauen, ſo as mortal & earthly men did eate ỳ bread of Angels. Not that the Angels are fed with Manna: (for they be ſpirits, which haue no neede of meate & drink:) but ỳ the Prophet ment to ſhew that it was an excellent thing, and ỳ whereas ỳ earth yeeldeth foode vnto vs, the heauens were opened vnto them, & mortall men did after a ſorte communicate with the inhabiters of heauen. This ſo great benefite and prerogatiue ought to be acknowledged of ỳ Iewes: but yet the inſtruction that commeth of the thinges that God ſhewed at that time, ought to indure for euer. And therfore although we neuer ſaw the Manna: yet muſt we giue ſuch credit to the things which God did at that time, as to apply the ſame to our owne inſtruction at this day. And that was the cauſe alſo why God willed a Cup to be filled with Manna, and to bee kept in the Tabernacle with the Arke of his Couenant: that although the people [which were to come] ſaw not the wonders that had bin wrought in the wildernes: yet notwithſtãding they might haue a memoriall thereof, to put them alwayes in mind of it, that they might profit them ſelues by it. Then let vs vnderſtand, that although God ſend vs not Manna from heauen nowadays: yet he wil not haue vs to doubt, but that he hath ſuch a care to ſuſteine vs, as we ſhall perceiue he doth not tell vs for nought in this text, that the woord which proceedeth out of his mouth, is the thing whereby wee liue, and whence wee take all our ſuſtenance.

Nowe Moſes addeth immediately, *That their garmentes were not worne, nor the people ſore ſwolne in the wildernes by the ſpace of fortie yeares*. And thereuppon he concludeth thus, *Know then with thine heart*, for ſo is it woord for woord: but the meaning thereof is; Aſſure thy ſelfe in thine heart, that as a man nurtureth his owne child, ſo hath God nurtured thee. Now then like as God did feede that people with heauẽly foode, ſo did he cloth them myraculouſly: for otherwiſe their apparell would ſoone haue bin worne out. But God prouided for it, ỳ of al thoſe fortie yeeres together they were ſhod & clad with the ſame rayment & ſhooes, which they brought with them out of Egypt. And it is a preſident which muſt aſſure vs, ỳ although we be clothed with ỳ wooll of Sheep, & haue linnen to weare: yet notwithſtanding it is God ỳ giueth vs continually wherwith to feed & cloth vs: & ſo long as he liſteth to make ỳ helpes auailable which he giueth vs, he will ſo bleſſe them as one Coate ſhall laſt vs our three coates, yea and a whole dooſen ſhall not do ſo much as one alone when God liſteth to curſe them. Likewiſe when he breatheth his bleſſing & fauor into bread, one ounce of it ſhall do more than a whole pounde otherwiſe: and when hee liſteth to breake the ſtaffe of bread, a pound ſhall not do ſo much ſeruice as halfe an ounce. This is the meaning of Moſes in this text. And therefore let vs marke, that if God liſt to proſper vs, we muſt haue ſuch contentatiõ as we be not too eagre and carefull for it as wee commonly be, bearing our ſelues on hande that the earth ſhoulde faile vs, if wee made not the better prouiſion to haue all things aforehand. And what a thing is that? It is true that we ought to thinke vpon our needes. But how? Firſt by calling vpon God, ſaying: Alas Lord, wee bee much poorer and wretchedder creatures than any beaſts in the world: for dogges, aſſes and all other beaſtes are coted with their owne ſkinnes, and they be ynough for them: but if a man be naked, hee ſtarueth out of hand. So Lord, we be the pooreſt and miſerableſt of all other creatures. All beaſtes can find their foode in the fields: but as for vs, if we be not riuiſhed, we decay by and by. God then doth well vouchſafe that we ſhould haue a care to prouide for our neceſſities. Howbeit, that is to the end we ſhold reſort to him referring our ſelues to his fatherly goodneſſe. Againe, we muſt trauell according to the skill ỳ he giueth vs, we muſt not ſpare our ſelues, we muſt folowe ỳ meanes that he appointeth vs, we muſt not be laſie and ſlothfull: for he wil not haue vs to be ydle, nor to be as blocks. But yet muſt this carefulneſſe be bridled, ỳ it vex vs not too much, & we muſt alwayes plucke vp

Matt.6.32.

a good heart to call vpon God, and commit our selues vnto him, assuring our selues that he will neuer faile vs. That is the care which God willeth vs to haue. Neuertheless wee must also put the thing in practise that is spoken here: that is to wit, that God will giue vs sufficient to serue our turne, so as if we want cote or shooes, he will either prouide vs of them, or else make one paire of soles to doe vs more seruice than a dooszen, when it pleaseth him. And we may see this with our eyes. For they that are warmest clad, fayle not for all that to bee as it were halfe dead thorowe colde: and on the other side, whereas it seemeth that poore folke should starue and bee frosen with yce a hundred times [ere the yeere goe about:] God warmeth them, yea and they bee so preserued, as though he kept them in a stooue, or as though some Phistio were alwaies at hand with them, ministring good remedies to them to saue them from the colde. After that maner doeth God worke. And that is the cause why that in the time of the Law, God commanded that all newe things should be blessed, to the ende that men should thinke vpon him, & consider thus with themselues: Go to, I haue a newe garment, and I must looke that I thanke him for it which gaue it mee. For seeing it pleaseth my God to clothe mee thus, and to giue me this apparell to vse it as mine owne: it becommeth me to acknowledge that it is of his goodnesse and mercie that I am so prouided for. Yee see then, that the intent why he caused all things to bee dedicated vnto him which men should occupie: was that they should acknowledge the giuer of them, and that if he blessed not the helps which he had giuen them, all was nothing and nought-woorth. And as for now adayes, although wee haue not the like Ceremonie: yet must we hold still the truth thereof.

Leui. 23. 10. 14. 23. 23. & Num. 15. 20

Nowe for a conclusion Moses addeth, *Knowe thou in thy Heart, that as a father nourisheth his owne childe, so hath thy God nourished thee.* In deede the hebrew woord that Moses vseth in this place, signifieth sometimes to *Chastise*: and therefore it might be taken as if he sayd thus: Know thou that the intent of thy God in all the afflictions which thou hast indured, hath beene to correct thy faultes: that like as a man intending to reforme his child when he hath doone a misse, taketh the rod by and by in his hande: so likewise thy God hath chastised thee, not suffering thee to become an vnruly and froward child, but holding thee alwaies vnder awe. And this doctrine were very good: but the same woord doth by a similitude betoken likewise all instruction and good gouernment. No doubt but the intent of Moses in this place, was to make a generall conclusion of the matters that hee had treated of. For hee had spoken of Afflictions, and hee had spoken likewise of Gods benefites, and of his leading of the people, al the time y they were in the wilderneesse. Now therefore, to all those matters he applieth this finall sentence, saying: know thou that thy God hath nurtured thee after a gentle and louing fashion, so as thou needest not to wander farre, or to make long vagaries to know whether thy God hath beene with thee or no: he hath applyed himselfe to thee as familiarly as may bee: Is not the instruction that he hath giuen thee, so familiar as no man can frame himselfe more familiar? That therefore is the meaning of Moses.

And whereas he saieth, *Know thou in thy heart* It is to the end that men should bee the diligenter in applying y things to their instructio, which God teacheth them. For it is pitie to see howe dull wee bee of our selues. Although God vseth himselfe familiarly vnto vs: yet doe not we see him a whit. And what is the cause thereof? A man that is dulsighted and hath sore eyes, discerneth not things well though they be layd afore him. Nowe, wee bee not onely dimsighted, but also starke blinde in Gods workes. True it is that he must bee faine to inlighten vs: but yet must wee also doe our indeuour, and apply our mindes to judge well of his workes, when it pleaseth him to shewe them to vs. And so it is not a needelesse speech of Moses, to say know thou in thy heart. As if he should say, euerie man must enter into himselfe, and indeuour earnestly to know the grace and goodnesse of God. We must not slumber in that case, but euery of vs must do his diligence to the vttermost. To bee short, these sayinges, Let men inforce themselues, and let men streine themselues, are well woorth the noting. For when God teacheth vs, by and by euery of vs must enter into his owne heart.

And now againe, whereas hee sayth *that God taught [or trained] his people, as a man doth his children*: It is to cut off al occasion of starting holes, that men might not pretend any ignorance. For in as much as thinges are declared here according to our rudenesse: wee cannot excuse our selues by saying that our wit is too dul, and that we be vnable to mount so high: for this doctrine is giuen vs familiarly ynough. To the end therefore that no man might take occasion of excuse, Moses sayth at a woord, what? hath not thy God taught thee after a commō fashion and as men doe? When a father intendeth to teach his child, will he do more than thy God hath doone to thee? Nowe sith it is so: these thinges were not spoken for that time onely: but our Lord woorketh after the same maner yet still at this day, so as wee may perceiue the thinges that Moses telleth them heere. In deede Gods woorkes are likened to a bottomlesse pit, and it is not lawfull for vs to bee so inquisitiue of his doings, as to seeke to know all the reasons of them: for we be not able to conceiue them: and therefore (as we haue seene in Iob,) we must be contented to see the outleetes of his woorkes. And this similitude importeth much, where it is saide that wee see but the outleets, that is to say the outermost partes of Gods woorkes. As for to attaine to the middes of them, or to search al that which lyeth hidden within: that is vtterly impossible. And let vs beware of rushing so farre, for God would surely punish our rashnesse. But yet must wee looke vppon the outleetes and lides or bondes of Gods woorkes, and take such rules of them as wee may learne so much of them as

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may bee for our welfare and ſaluation. If wee doe ſo: wee ſhall perceiue that God applyeth himſelfe to our rudeneſſe, and that hee dealeth with vs after the maner of men, that teach little children, inſtructing vs in ſuch wiſe as wee cannot ſay to him, yea, but I am not as an Angell of heauen to comprehend Gods doings. For (as I ſaid) God vouchſafeth to ſtoope to vs: & to the intent wee ſhould vnderſtand his workes, he becommeth familiar with vs. Of whom is it long then ỳ we profit not by the inſtructions that he giueth vs? For wee cannot ſay but ỳ he manifeſteth himſelfe to vs ſo many ways, ỳ there is no more excuſe for vs if we knowe him not. Verily euen by the order of nature, wee may knowe him generally, as by the ſeaſons of the yeere, by the growing of fruites vpon the earth, and by the ſhining of the Sunne, the Moone, and ỳ ſtarres. Euen by theſe thinges may we ſee that our Lord hath applied himſelfe wholly vnto vs, and to the feebleneſſe of our vnderſtanding, and that he hath (as it were) transfigured himſelfe, by taking vppon him the perſon of a man, to the end that we might know him. Again, when he ſcourgeth vs, doe wee not ſee that hee handleth vs as a father handleth his owne children? If he ſee a man wax ouerluſtie and malapert: after hee hath borne a while with him, he taketh the rod in his hand. For on the one ſide he warneth vs by his word. And afterward if he ſmite vs with his hand, doth hee not vſe the greater kindneſſe towardes vs, to the intent wee ſhoulde receiue his corrections to our benefite? Againe, when he ſendeth vs of his benefites, it is all one as if a father being deſirous to winne his childe by gentleneſſe, ſhoulde ſay vnto him, My Sonne, what wilt thou doe? Who ſhall maintaine thee when thou art gone away from mee? Here thou haſt alwayes whereon to liue: thou ſeeſt howe I take paines for thee: get thee to a ſtraunger, and ſee if hee will deale better with thee. Nowe then like as a father will ſpeake after that maner to his childe: ſo doeth our Lorde ſhewe himſelfe vnto vs, and hee matcheth his worde with his deeds: that is to ſay, whereas he ſendeth vs proſperitie and quietneſſe, he telleth vs alſo that it is to allure vs to him, that his gentlenes might winne vs to him, and make vs to returne familiarly vnto him, and to depart from our ſinnes. Sith it is ſo: let vs learne that there will be no excuſe for vs, if we take not inſtruction by al the order which God keepeth to teach vs withall in this worlde. For why? Hee behaueth himſelfe like a mortal man towards vs, and worketh not after the manner of his owne incomprehenſible maieſtie, becauſe it woulde confounde vs. Wee be too weake to mount ſo high: and therefore hee ſtoopeth vnto vs. Seeing then that hee dealeth ſo friendly on his behalfe: Let not vs be ſo ſlouthfull, as not to enter into our owne harts, and to conſider thinges accordingly, and to inforce our ſelues to beare Gods benefites well in minde, ſo as we take inſtruction by them as wee ought to do. Thus ye ſee what we haue to mark vpon that place.

Nowe Moſes ſheweth to what end he exhorted the people to deeme well of Gods workes: namely to the end they might keepe al his commaundementes, to walke in his wayes, and to feare him. *Keepe the commaundements of the Lorde thy God* (ſaith he) *that thou maiſt walke in his wayes and feare him.* Firſt wee haue to marke here, that Moſes ſendeth the people to the Lawe, as to the perfect and chief doctrine of our whole life. And it is a point well worthie to bee marked. For thereuppon we haue to gather, that when God hath taught vs neuer ſo many wayes, yet ſhall they neuer boote vs, vnleſſe wee haue recourſe vnto his worde. Beholde, the Infidels can well ynough ſearch the ſecrets of nature, they can well not onely alledge reaſons, but alſo ſay, this is done after this faſhion. Yea and they haue deemed God to bee good, righteous, and wiſe, & wee ſee that the heathen Philoſophers knewe Gods workes ſo farre, as they couldе take of his maieſtie. But what? It was all confuſedly, and in the end they vaniſhed away in their owne imaginations, ſo as they neuer attained to the point whereto they ſhould haue come. Then let vs vnderſtande that all is to no purpoſe, vntill wee haue Gods doctrine for all perfection. True it is that the things which we behold in the worlde, and all the inſtructions which God giueth vs thereby, are good and profitable helpes: but yet for all that, the marke that we muſt ſhoote at is the doctrine [of his worde,] ſo as wee ſet all our wittes vppon that, to the ende wee wander not out of the way. For if a man ſhoote, and haue no marke to ſhoote at: what doth hee elſe but loſe all his ſhotte? Euen ſo is it with vs: we may well ſhoote, that is to ſay, we may take paine to know Gods works: but what ſhall we gaine by it, if we haue not the ſaide marke to ſhoote at? It ſhalbe but loſt labour. And this marke is not to be choſen at our owne diſcretion: but God muſt ſet vs vp our whyte: and that white is the Lawe, the Prophets, and the Goſpel. And ſo ye ſee that that is the cauſe why Moſes hauing ſpoken of ỳ wonders which the people had ſeene, & hauing told them that the ſame ought to ſerue to their inſtruction, and hauing exhorted the faithfull to profite wel in that ſchoole: ſendeth them backe againe to the word. *Keepe the commaundements of the Lord thy God*, ſaith hee: and afterward he addeth, *that thou maiſt walke in his wayes.*

Pſal. 1. 9. 8.

Rom. 1. 20.

Here wee haue to note, that whenſoeuer wee ſwarue from Gods word, wee ſhal but wander, as hath beene ſhewed heretofore: and we may well goe vp and downe, but wee ſhal be neuer the further forwarde: Let men breake their ſhankes as much as they liſt, & yet ſhal they either go back, or elſe find theſelues all in one place ſtill, vnleſſe they know ỳ way which they ought to keepe. For let vs mark wel ỳ our own ways are croked, and ỳ there is nothing but ſtraying and wandering in vaine. And therfore God will haue vs to walk in his ways, which are ſtrait and leuell. In ſaying ſo, Moſes ſetteth down a cõpariſon of things cõtrarie. As if he ſhould ſay, Wretched folk, ye thinke to further your ſelues when ye walk in your own ways, by deuiſing euery man a ſundry way at his owne pleaſure. But what? Yee doe but marre your

Gen. 6. 12. Deut. 32. 4. Pſal. 119. 58 & 143. 10.

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your selues in vaine: for God will haue men to walke in his wayes, that is to say, in the wayes that he sheweth them, and he will haue them to be followed. Therefore let vs learne to submitte our selues to Gods worde, knowing well that our life shall neuer be well ordered, except wee obey him. Yea and whereas hee saith *the wayes of the Lord* in the plurall number: wee must apply it to that which hath beene saide heretofore: that is to wit, that God hath giuen vs so full a doctrine, as wee cannot alledge that it is not ynough, or that more may bee added to it. Let vs marke that our Lorde will not fayle vs in any thing. Therfore let vs not be wise in our own conceit, but let vs aske counsel of him. And if wee doubt that wee goe astray, or if we bee afraide of wandering vp and downe: let vs keepe his way, and wee can not goe amisse. For why? God hath not made one way onely: but he hath shewed vs all his wayes, that is to say, all that euer is requisite to make a man walke aright, so as wee can neuer goe amisse, if wee followe the direction that he setteth afore vs. Nowe hee addeth hereunto, *To the ende that we should feare the Lord*. Herein hee sheweth to what ende God gaue vs his Lawe. Why will he haue men to keepe it? To doe him homage aboue all thinges. For wee knowe that he receiueth neither harme nor benefite by vs. What can wee doe to him? Our seruing of him is not to aduauntage him any whit: for hee hath no neede of any thing. Againe what riches haue we to increase him withall? Why then hath hee giuen vs his lawe, but to the ende that wee should dedicate our whole life vnto him, and by keeping his commaundementes shewe our selues willing to bee subiect vnto him, and that hee hath all souereine dominion ouer vs? That is the thing which is meant by the feare that Moses speaketh of heere. And let vs note that he meaneth not a slauish feare-fulnesse, that is to say, that men should submitte themselues to him as inforced: but that wee should stand in reuerend awe of him, not onely as of our master but also as of our father. The feare which GOD requireth, is matched with heartie loue: so as wee bee gladde and faine to serue him. And why? Because it is good reason that we should be his, and that he shoulde haue the gouerning of vs, & that we should frame our liues according to his wil. And so yee see what is the chiefe point in the keeping of the Lawe.

Iob. 35.7. & Psal. 16.2. & 50.10. & Act. 17.25. & Rom. 8.15 & 2. Tim. 1.7

Furthermore let vs mark, that it is not ynough for men to liue vprightly, so as they abstaine from all euill and vice, and deale in such sort as nothing but vertue can bee founde in them: For a man may well bee chast, and abstaine from all wrong, anoyance, deceit, blasphemie, and lewd talke: and yet shall all this be nothing worth, except he referre all to the said end of offering vp of himselfe in sacrifice vnto God. Vertues therefore are not of estimation in themselues, so as it may bee saide, O this is an excellent fellowe in vertue, he hath done this and that, he hath abstayned from all euill: but wee must goe on further to the vertue of all vertues, the fountaine and welspring of all holinesse, righteousnesse, and vpright dealing: namely that wee tende to our God, seeking to honour and glorifie him, and to bee wholly his and vnder his gouernement. When wee bee at that point: then is our life well ordered. But wee may make the faireſt shewe in the worlde, and yet if wee haue not respect to our God, to submit our selues to him that his name may bee exalted and magnified, & that he may haue his due right at our handes: all is but leasing, be it neuer so highly esteemed. Yee see then in effect that the thing which wee haue to remember, is ỳ when God hath shewed vs his workes, then doth he call vs to his worde, telling vs that that is the thing whereunto wee must holde our selues without wandering here and there: and thirdly that if wee will haue our life well ordered, wee must alwayes haue our eye vpon the thing that he commandeth. And howe is that? Euen to honour him in such sort, as wee come to him with a free and cleare hart, to serue him, & to dedicate our selues to him: & also liue among our neighbors without working any deceit or wrong to any man, & without ouershooting of our selues into any outrage. But yet the chief point is ỳ God haue his due, ỳ is to wit, that he gouerne vs, and be glorified by al our life, because it is good reason that he should haue vs at his deuotion, and that we shoulde bee subiect to him, forsomuch as we bee beholden to him for all good things. And we must not only do so because he is our maker and hath soueraine dominion ouer vs: but we must also loue him because he is our father. And againe, seeing he bestoweth so many benefits vpon vs: we ought at leastwise to yeelde him his due reuerence.

And that is the cause why Moses addeth in the end, *God will bring thee into the Land which hath promised thee, a rich and wealthie Lande, a Land that is full of all good thinges, wherein there is plenty of wheate, barly, wyne, honny, and Oyle*, and of all other thinges. And this is saide to prouoke the people the more, to the feare that was spoken of before. For truely if wee feele nothing but rigour at Gods hande: wee may wel yeelde to him, but it will bee but perforce, it will not bee with a free will, there will bee nothing but hypocrisie in all our life. Indeede wee will not faile to pretende a faire countenãce of seruing our God: but our doing of it will bee by constreint, like as they which haue done euill may well go on still, howbeit that is but for feare of stripes, and in the meane while they haue no lust nor good will to it. But when wee haue once marked well the good turnes that God doeth vs: then are we the more moued and prouoked to honour him, knowing that wee ought to yeelde him a willing and freehearted reuerence, so as our whole seeking bee to make an offering of our selues vnto him, and to sacrifice euen our liues to him. To that ende then doeth Moses alledge the good turnes which God was about to doe vnto his people. And hee not onely speaketh of the former benefites which they ought to haue borne well in minde: but he saieth also, when thy God shall haue brought thee into the Lande: then put forth thy selfe to serue him with the better

courage, accordingly as he goeth through with his benefites towardes thee.

Now let vs kneele down in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to touch vs in such wise, as we may be drawen to true repentance: and ỳ forasmuch as we be wretched creatures ỳ haue neede to bee sustained by him euery minute of an houre, we may resort to his bountifulnesse, assuring our selues that although wee had all the abundance of the world, yet could we not bee sustained and nourished by it, except his hand were stretched out ouer vs to blesse vs: and therefore that wee may depend wholly vpon his blessing, & vpon his grace, and drawe out of that fountaine of his which can neuer drie vp: and that when we are once filled therewith, we may learne to thanke him for his gracious goodnesse, so as his feeding of vs here beneath, may not tie vs to this transitorie life like brute beastes, but rather make vs to know that we must alwayes trauel towards the heauenly life, whereunto it may please him to guide vs, & to bring vs euer neerer and neerer vnto it, vntill he haue brought vs fully thither, for the sake & by the meanes of his welbeloued sonne our Lord Iesus Christ. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and Nations, &c.

On Wednesday the xxj. of Auguſt. 1555.

The threescore Sermon, which is the third vpon the eight Chapter.

10 Thou shalt eate and be filled, and blesse the Lorde thy God for the good land which he shall haue giuen thee.

11 Take heede that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commaundements, Lawes, and Ordinances, which I commaund thee this day:

12 To the ende that when thou shalt haue eaten and beene satisfied, and haue builded faire houses and dwelt in them:

13 And that thine Oxen and sheepe are multiplyed, and thy siluer and golde are increased, and all that thou hast is multiplied:

14 Thy heart do not then swel, and thou forget the Lord thy God which hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage.

IF God commaund vs to be patient in aduersitie, wee thinke it a hard thing: and yet is it good reason that we should passe that way, seeing wee haue a paterne and image thereof in our Lorde Iesus Christ, vnto whome wee must bee like fashioned, if wee will bee Gods children, not onely in suffering quietly the afflictions which hee sendeth vs in this present lyfe, but also in being readie and obedient to him euen to the death. Yee see then that it is a most rightful condition: and yet we on our side doe finde it combersome. And why? Bicause we be too nyce, and our selfe loue doeth so carie vs away, that wee can not abyde to suffer any thing. Nowe if we bewraye great vnthankefulnesse and faulte in this: much more doe wee bewraye the same when we cannot so conceiue of Gods benefites, as to bee thankefull to him for them. Herein (say I) wee shewe our selues to bee too too lewd. For if GOD deale gently with vs and shewe himselfe fatherlike towards vs: must it not needs be ỳ we are worse than brute beasts, if we vouchsafe not to lift vp our eyes towards heauē, to yeld him some acknowledgmēt of his goodnes. Now although this be a detestable vice: yet is it cōmō & too cōmon amōg men. And if euery mā looke into himself: in maner al shal find themselues guilty of it. If there were no further than ỳ outward Ceremonie of thanksgiuing: yet is it apparant that men make none account of it. Doe all men beare in minde to call vppon Gods name when they sit downe to the table? Or when they haue taken their repast, doe they remember to acknowledge that they bee beholden to him for their life, and for all things else that are requisite for their sustenance? Nay rather, they chop downe to the table like Swyne, and start vp like dogges, so as there is no tydings nor remembrance of Gods name among them, but to their seeming it is a spice of moonkish hypocrisie or popeholinesse to thanke God. Loe howe farre the worlde is out of square: Howbeit when we haue praised God both at the beginning and at the ending of our repast, yet is not that ynough to discharge vs. Therefore if we faile in that: we bee double vnhappie. For what will wee doe in the greater things, if wee cannot performe the lesser? For this manner of calling vpon God is as good as nothing, I meane in comparison of the knowledge that lyeth hidden vnder it, and which hath a liuely roote, which shall bee treated of more largely anon. For if men cannot finde in their hearts to discharge their duetie in the lesser thinges, as in the lifting vp of their handes, and in yeelding some praise vnto God by some outward signes: I pray you howe

will

1. Cor. 4. 10. 1. Pet. 2. 21

will they doe that which is commaunded them here, that is to wit, how will they bleſſe God in all their whole life, which is the harder thing to doe? Therefore let vs marke, that this vnthankfulneſſe of forgetting God, and of yeelding no ſigne of acknowledgement of his benefites, is an ordinarie vice. But although it be ſorye yet ſayle they not to be blameworthie for it: neither let vs thinke to iuſtifie or excuſe our ſelues by wicked cuſtome as a number do, which would faine make a bucklar of it againſt God, bearing themſelues on hand, that foraſmuch as [the ouerſlipping of thankeſgiuing vnto God] is ſo common a thing among men, therefore it is lawfull for them to doe ſo alſo: But that will bee no excuſe for vs, as I ſaide afore. For although there be not a commoner thing than this leaudnes of forgetting God which is daily ſeene amõg men: doth it followe that therefore their fault ſhould not be imputed vnto them? No no: but the more y one of them haue hardened another, and al of thẽ are become bruiſh, & haue cõſpired againſt God: ſo much the more horrible muſt their vengeance be.

And therefore let vs marke firſt of al, that the warning which Moſes giueth vs here, (that is to wit, *that when we be full fed we ſhould doo kindly vpon God*, that is to ſay, yeeld him his due praiſe,) is no more than needeth. For if wee did it of our owne accord, ſo as euery man gaue his minde to it: we ſhould not neede to be put in minde of it by others. But foraſmuch as we bee negligent: the holy Ghoſt is faine to pricke vs forward, and to quicken vs vp as he doeth in this text. And ſith wee ſee that the thing which God requireth of vs is ſo reaſonable, and ſuch as wee ought to haue learned aforehãd by nature: let vs be dubble aſhamed to continue ſtill vnluſtie, and at leaſtwiſe not to be touched with ſuch warning. It ought to ſhame vs aforehand, that God ſhould bee faine to tell vs of the thing which euen litle children ought to knowe. For ſeeing hee is ſo liberall as to feede vs and to nouriſh vs: let vs at the leaſt call him our father, and ſhewe that wee thinke our ſelues beholden to him for that benefite. Ye ſee then how it is to our great ſhame, that God muſt be faine to ſtirre vs vp to y thing, which euen nature ought to haue taught vs. But if we continue weltring ſtil in that brutiſhneſſe: what excuſe will there remaine for vs?] None at all:] and therefore let vs practiſe this leſſon: that when GOD filleth vs, wee at leaſtewiſe yeelde him thankes, and ſhew that wee haue not forgotten the authour of all welfare.

Here a man might demaund, why God ſaith no more, but that men ſhoulde praiſe him and bleſſe him in the time of proſperitie? (For that (as I ſaide) is not all that a Chriſtian man hath to doe. Hee muſt proceede yet further: that is to wit, when it pleaſeth God to ſend vs trouble, anguiſh, pouertie, ſickeneſſe, iniurie, reproche, [and ſuch other things]: wee muſt bee obedient to him, and bowe downe our neckes in all caſes, to receiue his yoke & to beare it without gainſaying or ſtriuing. Therein (ſay I) lyeth the perfect true vertue [of obedience]: namely when God ſhall rule vs after his good pleaſure, and we like well of all his doings towards vs, and are euer ready to bowe and to ſtoope vnto his hande, whether it be to liue or to die. And ſo al the ſeruice that we can doe vnto God, is nothing without patience. For one of the chiefe ſacrifices that he requireth, is that wee ſhould quietly endure all the aduerſitie that hee ſendeth vs. And why then maketh he no mention of it here? The reaſon is, firſt becauſe his deſire is to deale gently with vs. And if we on our ſide could ſuffer it, ſurely we ſhould be priuiledged from all the aduerſities that trouble vs. For had a man no leaud luſtes in him, were he not wedded to the world, were hee forward to ſubmitte himſelfe to Gods will in all thinges, had hee no ſeede of vanitie or pride in him, nor were hee not ſoned in his owne delightes: GOD woulde maintaine him here as in an earthly Paradiſe. For his ſcourging of vs is of neceſſitie, becauſe he ſeeth that wee haue neede of ſuch medicines. To bee ſhort, if wee were ſound in our ſoules: God would deale with vs as with ſtrong folke, to whõ men miniſter neither medicines, nor pilles, nor purgations, nor any ſuch other things. But foraſmuch as he ſeeth that wee be diſeaſed: he is faine to cut vs our morſels, and to binde vs to ſuch diet as hee knoweth to bee good for vs. He is faine to let vs bloud, and to giue vs bitter drinkes, pilles, and ſuch like thinges. Yea and moreouer he is faine nowe and then to ſcare vs, when he perceiueth our diſeaſes to be otherwiſe vncurable. Let vs marke therefore that in this place God hath ſpoken according to his owne nature, becauſe hee is inclyned of himſelfe to deale gently with men, and is deſirous to giue vs our fill of his benefites, and to holde vs as it were in his lappe, as a mother doeth her owne childe. After that manner would GOD deale with vs, if wee could beare it.

And that is the cauſe why hee ſaith, *When thy God ſhall haue brought thee into the good lande, and there haue filled thee with his benefites: Looke to thy wife that thou bleſſe his name*. Wherefore let vs marke the order which God keepeth in exhorting vs to ſerue him. The firſt point is that foraſmuch as he is deſirous to ſhewe himſelfe a father towardes vs: his ſhewing of himſelfe to be ſuch a one, ſhould mooue vs and make vs the willinger to honour him, & to loue him ſo much the more: and that ſeeing he handleth vs ſo gently, wee alſo ſhoulde acknowledge it and glorifie him for it al our life long: and that as he is a father towards vs, ſo we ſhould bee as children towardes him. (That ſay I) is the ende that we muſt begin at. But on the contrarie part, forſmuch as we be wildeheaded children, of nature froward, vnruly, & leawd: God is faine to ſcourge vs, and to chaſtiſe vs, and tame vs with hauing. Sith it is ſo: let vs learne, that if God ſhewe vs an angry looke & frowne vpon vs, or liſt to deale roughly with vs becauſe hee ſeeth vs abuſe his benefites, and that we haue not honored him as wee ought to doe: wee muſt not harden our

hearts

hearts against him, nor take occasion to withdrawe our selues from his obedience: neither must wee play these vnthriftes that forsake their fathers houses, and run gadding abrode at randon, as though they liked better of the galowes than of their inheritance. Let vs refraine from misbehauing our selues after ỹ fashion against our God, and let vs learne to submit our selues meekly vnder his hand, assuring our selues that if he afflict vs he hath good reason to do it. And although we perceiue not ỹ cause why he doth it let vs do him the honour to submit our selues to him, and to shut our owne eyes, that he may dispose of vs according to his own wisedom which is vnknowen to vs. After this manner must wee come from the acknowledgment of Gods benefites, to the subiection which we ought to yeelde vnto him, to humble our selues vnder his mightie hand, whensoeuer he listeth to chastise vs or to tame vs for our stubbornesse, and to cleanse vs of our vices and wicked lustes, and of the infirmities which he knoweth to be in vs.

And now proceeding with that which I haue touched alreadie: let vs marke that it is not ynough for vs to pray vnto God with our mouths onely: but it must bee as a helpe to conuey vs further, namely to the dedicating of our whole lyfe vnto him, accordingly as Moses sheweth here, adding: *Then shalt not forget the Lord thy God, to dispise his Commandements, statutes, & Lawes, which I inioyne thee this day.* Hereby he sheweth vs that to yeeld thankes vnto God is a good & holy exercise: but yet it is not all ỹ we haue to doe: our life must be answerable to our tongue, and as we haue protested our selues to bee beholden vnto God, so must we shew it by our deedes. That is ỹ cause why it is expresly said, beware thou forget not thy God by foreslowing to keepe al his commandements and Lawes. Now first of all Moses sheweth here, whence this vnthankfulnes of mẽ springeth, ỹ they acknowledge not ỹ party which hath done them so much good, but forget him vtterly. And may ỹ excuse vs? Nay it rather maketh our fault the heynouser, when we think not vpon God, seeing he setteth his goodnes before our eyes, so as wee may beholde him therein, & we haue as faire presidents of him there as if he were liuely painted before vs in a table, & yet we looke not vpon him. If God withheld himself from vs, so as we found no fauour at his hand, and he suffered vs to linger in all maner of miserie, without giuing vs any succour when we called vppon him: yet were that no sufficient excuse, that wee shoulde not seeke him. For it is the meane whereby hee quickeneth vs vp to call vpon him the more earnestly. Neuertheless, wee might haue some colour to say, Alas I wote not what to doe, for God seemeth to be gone quite and cleane from me, & it is no marueil though I set not my minde vppon him, for I haue no meane to allure mee thereto. But nowe contrariwise, seeing hee offereth himselfe to vs, and maketh vs to perceyue his goodnesse, so as we might euen feele him by groping though we were blind: must it not needs bee that we be worse than froward, if we thinke not vpon him? Yes, and yet we see this naughtinesse to bee ordinarie among men. For why? When wee bee once full, wee beare our selues on hand that wee haue no more neede of Gods helpe. If necessitie pinch vs, then we come running to him. But if he send vs the worlde at will, wee become as it were drunken in our delights, all our seeking is to wade deeper and deeper, and to bee short, wee neuer come to God but by constraint. Wherein we see that all the prayers which wee make vnto him when hee afflicteth vs, are but fained and vntrue. For then wee will confesse well ynough, that wee be miserable creatures if he pitie vs not. But what? As soone as he hath withdrawen his hand, we neuer think vpon him more. Therefore it is a token that all was but hypocrisie in vs before, & that we were not rightly and syncerely minded. Now then we shall not faile to be ỹ grieuouslier condemned, if we forget our God when he draweth neere to vs. For the moe good turnes that he doeth vs, the moe signes and recordes haue we that he is willing to be our father, and to take vs for his children, and that hee sheweth himselfe in such sort vnto vs, as we cannot but know him. If this will not moue vs, our cursednesse is double. And therefore let vs learne that when our God hath made vs wealthie, we must not play the beastly folke, which despise God when they haue the world at wil, as who should say they had ynough of their owne to content themselues withall: but wee must bethinke vs of two things. First (as I saide) that if our Lord be liberall to vs, his comming to vs and his shewing of himself so familiar & friendly towardes vs, is to the end we shoulde know him ỹ better. That is for ỹ first point. And again for the second, let vs vnderstand that if we haue abundance to day, we may bee bereft of it in a minute of an houre, so as ỹ man that thinks himselfe well stored, shall finde himselfe naked, bare, and poore, in lesse than the turning of a hande. Why so? Because God auengeth himselfe of the saide vnthankfulnesse. And it is good reason also that hee shoulde not suffer men to forget him, when hee hath shewed himselfe after that fashion vnto them. Wherefore let vs vnderstande, that when we be in prosperitie wee haue the iuster cause to call vppon God, not onely to shewe that wee bee bounde vnto him for the good that he hath done vs alreadie: but also to shewe that the goods which we possesse were nothing, if he should not continue them and maintaine vs in them. These are the things which wee must beare in minde.

And therefore let vs marke, that the more God powreth out his benefits vpon vs, the more ought we to be quickened vp by them to thinke the better vppon him. But what? Wee bee farre wyde from the hauing of any such discretion with vs: and therefore haue wee so much the more neede to bethinke vs of this lesson that is shewed vs here, considering what hath happened in all ages. As for the vnbeleeuers, they are often enough vpbraided, that when God sends them the world most at will, then do they most kicke against him, and shewe themPsal. 73. 5. 9

selues most stubborne and rebellious. But as touching them ẏ call themselues beleeuers: euẽ
Deut.32.15 in them also is the same vice blamed by ẏ holy scripture. And not without cause: for we see that euen the children of God haue bin subiect to it. What is written of Ezechias? Although he was
2.Kin.20.13 Esa.39.2.& 2.kin.18.5. a peereleſſe perle and mirror of all holines: yet wee see that as soone as God gaue him ease, he was no more mindfull to thinke vpon him. Yea and at what point was euẽ Dauid himself? See-
1.Sam.21.2. ing then that this misdealing fell euen vpõ them ẏ were as halfe Angels in this world: let vs be the watchfuller, & let euery of vs labour to redresse himselfe both earely & late. And seeing there is such slowneſſe in vs, let the same spurre vs forewarde to bethinke vs of Gods grace, ẏ his name may be blessed and magnified by vs. Yea & Moses doeth expressly make a comparison here, betweene Gods former guiding of his people, and his leading of them through the wildernes with his afflicting of thẽ there, after he had brought them out of the thraldome of Egypt, to the end ẏ the same might prouoke them the more to be thankfull vnto God. For when we haue once felt many miseries, & God hath deliuered vs from them: if it moue vs not the more to yeeld him his due praise, it is the fouler & hainouser fault. And that is the cause why Moses speaketh of it. But what? We see how the people of old time behaued themselues. After this deliuerãce, God deliuered his people another time from the captiuitie of Babylon, wherein he reached out his arme after so noble a fashion, as the Prophetes could neuer thinke themselues to haue spoken ynough of his power which he shewed therein. Neuertheleſſe, they were no sooner returned home, but euery man was busie about the buil-
Zac.1.16.17 Agge.1.8.9 ding of his owne house, & Gods temple was let alone, no man made account of it. It lay open to raine & snowe, so as the sacrifices & al the order of the Church lay dead. And what was ẏ cause thereof? Euen priuate profit, which possessed al such as had receiued that benefit at Gods hand. And how fare wee nowe adayes I praye you? For if our Lord giue vs rest & ease, then in stead of knowing our shepheard like good sheepe, we play the wild beasts with him, and fall to kicking at him. And what are we the better by remembring our former miseries? Without going any further, in what plyght haue they bin, which at this present are well at their ease and rest? And yet are they so farre off from faring the better by it, that it grieueth them at the heart that any man should tell them of it. They would haue all the things buryed which they haue indured aforetimes, & also the benefites which they haue receiued since, and in the meane while become brutish like swine. They could finde in their hearts (say I) to aduance thẽselues against God, without being aknowen ẏ they bee beholden to him for any thing: They neuer passe for the procuring of Gods honor, neither regard they how much they be bound vnto him. But euery man in the meane season followes his owne likings. One burnes in couetousneſſe, and another in vaine glorie, seeking to be aduaunced to authoritie and honour, and to bee taken to be I wot not what. Thus ye see at what point they bee, which will needes be taken to bee greatest and zealousest Christians. Now then seeing it is not onely among ẏ Iewes ẏ this foule vnthankfulnes hath reigned, but that wee also are steyned, yea and vnmeasurablie attainted with it at this day: Let vs be sure that ẏ holy Ghost warneth vs also, & ẏ this doctrine of Moseses pointeth at vs too. Nowe therefore let vs followe his saying: that is to wit, that our life must bee answerable to our speech, so as wee may shewe that wee play not the hypocrites in praysing God. Indeede the mouth must doe his office, and euery man must inure himselfe to praise God: and if wee doe it not, our leawdneſſe is apparant euen to litle children. For they that sit downe to the table, and when they haue filled their bellies rise vp againe without shewing any signe of feare or reuerence to Godward, deserue to haue litle children to spitte in their faces, or else to haue dung cast vpon them, as they that defie nature. For the very Asses and Oxen obserue a naturall order in their feeding. Such folke doe spite GOD through their intemperance and exceſſe, and finally would haue his name abolished, as they shewe wellynough. Therefore are they vnto monsters, whome men ought euen to abhorre. But yet must wee not stay there. For heere is a rule giuen vs to pray in such sort vnto God with our mouth, as our life may beare witnesse therewithall, that our praying to him is done truly and vnfeynedly. For if when wee haue prouoked with our mouth, that God is our father and shewed himselfe liberall to vs, and that wee liue by his grace, and that he giueth vs all things which he knoweth to bee for our welfare: we after wee haue saide so, doe giue our selues to all naughtinesse, and take leaue to exempt our selues from all subiection wherto shal our thanksgiuing serue which we haue yeelded with our tongues, but to be as a bond to hold our noses to ẏ grindestone, so as wee may haue no shift to helpe our selues? Then let vs learne to sing vnto God with such melodie as Moses speaketh of here: ẏ is to wit, as our whole life agree with our mouth, and as god be honored truly and effectually.

Nowe herewithall let vs marke well howe he adderh, *Take good heede, that when thou hast eaten and drunke thy fill, and builded thee faire houses, and increased thy Cattell: thy heart doe not swell, and thou forgete the Lord thy God.* Here Moses bringeth vs to the very welhead of ẏ naughtinesse that I haue touched already. Men are vnthankeful & forget god though he shew him selfe friendly vnto thẽ, and their praying to him w̃ their tongues is but feining. And wherof commeth that? Moses saith ẏ it commeth of ẏ loftines of the heart. But let vs mark wel, ẏ in so saying he tanteth mens selfewening, in chalenging ẏ things to thẽselues which belong alonely vnto God, as he will expresse yet better in ẏ end: but all cannot be spoken at once. Then if God haue done vs any good, no doubt but it will inforce vs to graunte in wordes that it is so indeede: but yet for all that, wee will not fayle to father all thinges either

vppon our owne wisedome, or vppon our good fortune, or vpon one thing or other. And therefore no maruell though we bee so besotted therwithal, that we thinke no more vpon God. For why? Is there any greater or horribler blindnes, than for men to bee so proude as to set vp their bristles and to knowe themselues no more, but contrariwise to imagine themselues to bee that which they be not? Nowe then, when men are caried away with this false opinion of selfesti-
mation: they bee so ouerblinded as they haue neither reason nor wit, insomuch that tell them what a man can, they passe not for it, but continue still in their wilfulnesse. Therefore let vs beware of this Highmindednesse which Moses speaketh of here. And that we may be the warer to keepe our selues from it: let vs assure our selues that euery one of vs haue as it were a roote of it in vs, vntill God haue rid vs of it. In deede there are some to bee seene which are modest, so as if God aduance them to honour or wealth, yee shall not perceiue any pride or chaunge at all in them. If they become great whereas they were little before: ye shall see them holde an euen hande, and continue still gentle. But whersoeuer wee see that: let vs note that God hath wrought there, or else it were vnpossible. For not without cause are Lowelinesse and meekenes fathered vpon his holy spirit. When the holy scripture speaketh of those vertues, exhorting men to be mielde, & not to grow proud, but rather to liue quietly with their inferiors: it saith that they be singular gifts of ỹ holy ghost. Againe, we see they be verie rare gifts. For howe do most men behaue themselues when they bee aduaunced? [Mieldly?] Nay contrariwise we see they be intollerable, as who shoulde saye they came out of the cloudes. But let them beware that they tumble not downe: for there is no loftines so high, which God cannot cast downe, if men stande in their owne conceites and forget themselues. Neuertheless, the worlde sees that this is too too common, and there is a double vnthankfulnes in it. For first they consider not that the wealth which they haue, cõmeth from aboue: but their hearts are hardened in that behalfe. And secondly they fall not to consider with themselues afterwarde, that they bee not worthy of it, to the end they might humble themselues & thank God for it. But contrariwise they be so malicious, as they could find in their harts that all the grace of God in the world were suppressed. Wee see this apparantly in those which cannot abide to offer God the sacrifice of praise that Moses speaks of here: that is to wit, to giue ouer themselues vnto him with all humilitie, & not to challendge any vertue at all to thẽselues.

Now, that we may so do: let vs ad that which hath bin touched: that is to wit, ỹ as God chastised his people in the wildernes, so was he also their guide and leader. So then, let vs marke well, that after he hath rebuked the pride that is in vs, and told vs that if God reach out his hand to aduaunce vs, our heart must not be puffed vp therefore, but we must walk on stil in mieldnesse and awfulnes [towards God,] yea and be gentle louing and courteous towards our neighbours: he bringeth vs backe to consider what we were, when God vouchsafed to aduaunce vs to worship, riches, and such other like thinges. Nowe if we could take hold of this: surely whereas we set vp our bristles, we would all of vs cast downe our eyes continually. True it is that when God hath deliuered vs from our miseries, we must put thẽ quite out of our minde, euen of purpose to bee no more disquieted with the griefe that we haue indured, after that God hath once asswaged it after that fashion: but yet is it not ment that we shoulde neuer thinke vpon it more. For why? It must alwayes bee as a lookingglasse for vs to holde vs in awe, that we play not the loose colts: Then if a man bee rich, and God haue increased him, let him bethinke himselfe from whence comes this to me? Indeede if a man bee rich by inheritance: he is the more bounde vnto God, so as hee ought to acknowledge thus, beholde what a number of goods God hath prouided for me euen before I was borne, so as I haue wherewith to content me, and although I bee not one pennie increased, yet haue I alreadie more than I need. Such acknowledgement ought they to yeld (say I), which are welthy by succession or inheritance. And when a mans goods are of his owne gathering: let him alwayes haue this regard, I was once poore, and howe am I come to the state wherein I see my selfe as now? It is not meete I should cast a scarfe before mine eyes in this case to forget God: but it behoueth mee to acknowledge his liberalitie towardes mee, and that I am beholden to his free mercie for all that euer I haue. After this manner ought hee that is growen rich, to bethinke him of his former pouertie. For it will serue to bridle him, that he shall not be so misaduised as to wax stout against God, or to deale cruelly with his neighbours, by oppressing or reiecting thẽ that seeme to bee his inferiours: but rather practise this warning of S. Pauls, of applying our selues to the meanest sort, that is to say, that although there seeme to bee some cause that we shoulde exalt our selues: yet we must yeelde vnto them and stoope to our God. Let him that is aduanced in degree think thus: Alas am I worthy of it? Hath God brought me to this for my faire eyes sakes? No: but forasmuch as it hath pleased him to exalt me, it becommeth me to acknowledge what I was before. For had not God looked mercifully vppon me, I should not onely haue continued in my former state: but also gone to decay, yea and vtterly come to nought. Nowe if a man bethinke himself after this fashion: surely he wil behaue himselfe mieldly, and not bee so lustie as to holde scorne of others. And wee haue the more neede to marke wel this doctrine, forasmuch as wee see that the haultinesse of heart which Moses speakes of here, is not a single or dubble mischiefe, but such a one as draweth a long tayle of manie inconueniences after it. What is this aduauncing of our selues whereas wee shoulde humble our selues? Is it not (as yee woulde say) a defying of God, and a proclayming of open warre against him? Yes: but

1. Cor. 3. 21. & 1. Tim. 6. 17.

alas hee is too ſtrong an aduerſarie. It is ſaid ỳ God will caſt downe the eyelids of the proud. Beholde, God proclaymeth warre not for a day or for a yeere, but for euer, againſt all ſuch as exalt themſelues: and yet in the meane while wee ceaſe not to waxe proude continually more and more. And what thinke wee to winne by ſo doing? On the other ſide, if vnthankfulneſſe be ſo intollerable towards men: howe much more heynous will it be towardes God? If a poore man haue his dinner ſent him: hee can well ynough tell that hee had it not before. Some man hath had pittie of him, and ſendes him Corne, breade, or wine. Nowe if hee deuour it and cramme himſelfe full, and in the meane while conſider not who did him that good turne: will not men ſay hee is a hoggiſh vilane? hee is not worthie to haue any good done vnto him. And yet this vnthankfulneſſe toucheth but a mortall man. Beholde, God reacheth vs his hand from heauen, and wheras the earth bringeth foorth fruites for vs: it is the hande of God that beſtoweth thoſe benefites vppon vs. Nowe if wee vouchſafe not to lift vp our eyes vnto him when hee commeth ſo vnto vs, but muſſell with our groynes in the earth, or elſe thinke thoſe thinges to be of our owne getting and deſeruing: I pray you is not ſuch vnthankefulneſſe too too deteſtable? Yes: and yet moreouer it is matched with ſcorneful-neſſe towards our neighbours. For if wee cannot finde in our heartes to diſcharge our duetie towardes God, what will wee doe towardes our neighbours? So then, pride doeth euer carie crueltie with it: that is to ſaye, they that foade themſelues ſo in their owne naughtineſſe, are alwayes churliſh towards their neighbours, and their churliſhnes is alwais matched with ſpite & enuie. Inſomuch that if wee bee not perſwaded that God giueth vs all thinges of his owne free goodneſſe, & that it belongeth to him to maine-taine vs in the poſſeſſion of our goods: whenſoeuer wee ſee any man in whom Gods gifts ſhine forth, wee ſhall fall to oppreſſing of him, & wee ſhalbe loth that he ſhould be preferred. And that is yet another ouer outrageous leawdnes. Now therefore ſeeing that this ouerloftines of minde carieth ſo many vyces with it, and maketh vs guiltie ſo many wayes before God, yea & that euen the worlde it ſelfe perceiueth ỳ ſhameful-nes therof, and may wel abhor it: Let vs learn to ſubmit our ſelues to ỳ which Moſes ſaith here, ỳ is to wit, let not our harts be puffed vp when our Lord hath increaſed and multiplied vs.

Pſal. 18, 28.

Hee doeth not ſimply condemne that men ſhoulde growe wealthie: for Gods bleſſing is of ſuch force, that ſuch as are no great wiſhers, do neuertheleſſe attaine to ỳ things which they neuer looked for, and God outgoeth their deſires, ſo that whereas they were contented with their ſlender ſtate, he ſendeth them much more. Wel then, this of it ſelfe is not to be condemned. Not withſtanding, let vs learne to keepe our heartes from ſwelling, and to be alwayes poore in ſpirit. Although we haue riches, yet let vs be readie to forgo them whenſoeuer it ſhal pleaſe God: let vs not bee wedded to them: let vs not delight to feede our ſelues with them vnmeaſurablie: neither let vs make them an occaſion to trouble and to oppreſſe our neighbors. That is the thing which we haue to remember vpon this text.

Wherefore let vs mark that it is no wonder to ſee ſo ſmall continuance of things in this world, & ſo many alterations from day to day. For why? Thoſe to whom God hath ſhewed himſelf moſt liberall, do giue ouer themſelues to all naughti-nes, & moſt forget him: and therefore is he iuſte to withdrawe his fauour & goodnes from them, and to ſend them ſcarcetie as they bee worthy. Wee ſee what cauſed Ieroboam to turne away from the true religion. God had reached him his hande, and aduanced him to the kingdome, yea euen whē he neuer thought of it. The Prophet came to him w̄ this meſſage: God wil giue thē eleuen tribes of Iſrael, ſo as there ſhall remaine but one & a halfe in ỳ houſe of Dauid. Now as ſone as he was thus made king beyond his hope, he thought thus with himſelf: Seing I am in poſ-ſeſſion of ỳ kingdome, it ſtandeth me on hand to looke about me how I may maintaine my ſelf in it. And the beſt way is to prouide ỳ the people go no more to the Temple of Ieruſalem to worſhip there. For ỳ would be a meane to turne them away from my obedience, and to make them to fall away from me: which thing they cannot do if they haue temples heere at home, that they may worſhip the God ỳ is within the countrie of mine owne Iuriſdiction. Thus yee ſee how Ie-boam corrupted ỳ whole ſeruice of God, in hope to maintaine his owne kingdom by it. And what was ỳ cauſe thereof? Euen ỳ he remembred no more of whom hee held his royal crowne, and how it came vnto him of Gods meere free goodnes: but blinded himſelf in ſuch ſort, ỳ he thought to maintaine himſelfe euen as it were in deſpite of God. But we ſee it was the cauſe of horrible de-ſtruction: ſo as ỳ people was vtterly cōſumed, & Gods vengeance neuer departed frō thē. Sith it is ſo, let vs learne ỳ the more our Lorde ſheweth himſelfe to vs, ỳ more muſt we on our ſide lue in ſuch modeſty, as we alwayes do him homage for the good turnes ỳ hee hath done vs, and as ỳ re-membrance of ỳ miſeries which we haue felt, & of the ſlender & wretched ſtate wherin we haue bin, may quicken vs vp & prouoke vs the more, to loue our God for ſhewing himſelfe ſo friendly to vs, & to honor him for giuing vs ſuch occaſion thereof by his beſtowing of benefites vppon vs which we neuer looked for. That is the effect of the things which we haue to marke vppon this text. And we ſee nowadayes what need we haue to bethinke our ſelues of the good ỳ God hath done vs. For what a one hath he ſhewed himſelf towardes vs? I meane if it were but euen in reſpect of the goods of this worlde. Let vs not ſpeake of euerie one ſeuerally, but generally of this place where wee bee. Alas, it was in op-preſſion and bondage, and it ſeemed to haue beene a place appointed to vtter ruine, ſo as there was no hope of recouery as in reſpect of ỳ world. And yet hath God not only planted his worde here, but alſo added freedome moreouer,

and also giuen vs quietnesse, as wee see. All other Countries are troubled, vexed and as good as deliuered vp to the spoile: and in the meane while God giueth vs respit here. And is not that to the end that wee should haue the more leasure to serue and honour him? Yes: and yet contrariwise the worlde seeth what lewdnesse and loosenesse raigneth nowe more than euer afore: so that the more rest wee haue, the more doe we striue against God, and wee haue no minde to bethinke vs howe bountifull hee hath shewed himselfe towardes vs. Therefore let vs see that we liue in feare, and whereas we haue beene in some miserie, and God hath had pitie vppon vs to rid vs of it: let vs vnderstand that his so doing was bicause he was loth that wee should perish. Hee hath reached out his hand and ouercome our malice, he hath fought with his goodnesse against our naughtinesse: and ought not that patientnesse of his, to breake our heartes the more [though they were neuer so hard?] Ought wee not to thinke vpon those thinges otherwise than we doe? Is not necessitie still present before vs? Yes. Then let vs marke that Moses spake not alonely to the people of olde time: but that this exhortation belongeth to vs also at this day.

And generally let vs vnderstand further, that euery of vs ought to consider well with himselfe, in what case and in what plight God found him, when he vouchsafed to choose vs and to call vs to his Gospell. Alas in what taking were wee? We were borne the heires of euerlasting death, vnder the tyrannie of Satan: and God adopted vs to bee his children. In what wretchednesse are wee borne euen in respect of the world? And God sheweth himselfe a father to vs euen from our mothers wombe, as is saide of it in the two and twentith Psalme. Againe, let euerie of vs bethinke himselfe howe many perils and daungers he hath passed through: and howe GOD hath deliuered vs from them all. Seeing then that wee doe liue in this world, haue wee not good cause to minde Gods benefites continually without ceassing, yea and to liue meekely therewithall? Yes: for when wee haue cast vp our account, I pray you what cause haue wee to bee proude? I meane euen of those that are of greatest abilitie, and beare a goodly porte of vertue and wisedome, and of all things else that can bee named. Alas, if all bee well examined, haue wee not good cause euerichone of vs to cast downe our eyes? And seeing that GOD doeth vs good euen while wee bee asleepe, and while wee thinke not vppon it: are wee not dubble bound vnto him? Yes verily. Therefore let vs knowe these thinges, and let vs profite our selues by the things that Moses telleth vs heere, so as euery of vs in his state and calling, both great and small, may all serue God, and for the performing thereof humble our selues and not stand in our owne conceites, but alwayes haue a care to call vpon him on whom we depend. And let vs knowe also, that the way to prayse God aright, is both to magnifie his name, and also to make our life correspondent thereunto, so as we shewe by our deedes, that we bee willing to giue ouer our selues wholly vnto him.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, that being cast downe in our selues, wee may seeke none other meanes than to resort vnto him, and to pray him to hold vs vp with his hand, and specially to strengthen vs with the power of his holy spirite, so as wee may fight in his seruice, and ouercome al the assaultes of Satan, the worlde, and sinne, euen vntill he haue gathered vs into his kingdome. And so let vs all say, Almighty God heauenly, &c.

On Munday the xxvj. of August. 1555.

The Lxj. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the eight Chapter.

14 Thy heart doe not then swell, and thou forget the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage.

15 And led thee through the great and terrible wildernesse, full of Serpentes that spouted fire, and of Scorpions, and of dryth without water. But hee brought thee water from out of the hard rocke.

16 And fed thee in the wildernesse with Manna, which thy fathers knew not: of purpose to afflict thee, and to trye thee, that hee might doe thee good afterward.

17 That thou mightest not say in thy hart, mine own power, and the strength of mine owne hand haue gotten mee these goods:

18 But that thou mightest remember the Lorde thy God. For it is hee that gaue thee this power to get these goods, to the intent to make good the couenant which he had sworne to thy fathers, as appeareth this day.

19 But if thou forget the Lord thy God, and walke after straunge Gods,

and serue them, and bow down before them: I protest vnto you this day that you shall surely perishe.

20 As the Lord destroyeth the Nations before you: so shall you perishe, because yee haue not obeyed the voyce of the Lord your God.

HEre wee must goe foreward still with the matter which Moses had touched afore, and which I haue partly expounded already; which is that he telleth the people what fauour had bin shewed them in Gods deliuering of them from the bondage of Egypt, and in his leading of them through the wilderneſse, which thinges were not doone but of Gods wonderfull goodneſse. For when we haue beene in aduersitie, and God hath deliuered vs from it, and done vs good: his mercie hath the greater beautie, and becommeth the better knowen to vs, if the aduersitie bee set before vs againe, and that wee bee put in minde of it. That then is the meaning of Moses. To the intent that the people shoulde not fall asleepe in their pleasures, he sayeth vnto them, consider in what plyght and taking yee were, whē God reached you his hand to succour you. Consider by what means he brought you into this land where he giueth you rest at this time. Bee mindfull of those thinges, and ye shall haue cause to say that ye haue found so great mercie, as there is no excuse for ye if ye forget it. And he speaketh purposely of the Manna, not to the same ende that he spake of it a while ago: but to doe the people to vnderstand, that they had bin fedde after such a straunge fashion, as had not bin commonly seene. Behold (saith he,) ye haue liued this fortie yeeres togither without bread or vittels. God hath fed ye with Manna, which was a thing vnknowen: and he gaue you a new kinde of drinke: for he made freth water to come out of the drie and hard rocke for you. Thus chaunged he the order of nature, that yee might the better perceiue the presence of his Maiestie. True it is (as hath bin declared heretofore) that when the earth bringeth foorth corne, it is through Gods blessing of it, & through his breathing of that power into it, howbeit we perceiue it not. For wee despise the things that are common among vs, and whē we speake of the course of nature, wee perswade our selues y God should be excluded, and that he should beare no sway at all. Now bicause we bee so dull: it was Gods will to alter the things that are ordinarie among mē, and to appoint his people to bee fed with Manna, and to drink of the water which he had made to come out of the hard rocke. That then serued to shewe his people his heauenly power the better, that they might be driuen to thinke, wee bee not nourished after the maner of men. Beholde, God vttereth himselfe in this behalfe, and withdraweth vs from the world, as though wee were going vnto him, or as though the heauens were set open vnto vs, that we might the better behold his goodneſse and power, and perceiue that it is he that hath deliuered vs, and maintaineth vs.

Finally Moses declareth *how it was Gods will to afflict and try his people, to the ende they shoulde not say, It is mine owne power and mine owne strength that hath gotten me this abundance.* And here wee haue to note, first the order which God keepeth in teaching his people: which is, to begin with afflictions as Moses expresseth here. And so must it be: or else we shall neuer bee well taught, except our Lord haue made vs to feele hunger and thirst, and to indure pouertie and aduersitie. We knowe what pride is in men by nature: they be wedded to themselues and stand in their own conceits, and vntil God haue subdewed them by force, they be besotted with vaine selfesoothing. Moreouer when they be full fed, they fall to lacking against God and acknowledge him not for their mayster. Therefore to bring vs to lowlinesse and obedience, God is faine to afflict vs. Marke that for one point. And God maketh this triall that Moses speaketh of, not for that he needeth to search vs, as I haue declared heretofore (for mortall men are faine to make some tryall, bycause they knowe not what is in folkes hearte. But God hath no neede thereof: all thinges are knowne vnto him) but he speaketh after the maner of men when he layeth things open, and discouereth them whether there be any fayning or hypocrisie in them, or whether their heart be right, so as they walke roundly and sincerely. Whē God discouereth & bewrayeth these things he is said to search, examine, and try men. Howbeit his so doeing is not for himselfe, but for vs. For we see how men stand in their own conceite, bearing themselues on hande that there is nothing in them but perfect vertue and holinesse: but if God nip them a little, by and by the byle bursteth, and out comes the poyson. Thus yee see why it is sayd that God trieth vs.

And here wee haue to beare in mind, that if God afflict vs oftentimes, wee must not think it straunge, considering the needefulnesse thereof. For if hee should let vs alone in our delightes, and handle euery of vs according to our owne liking: what a thing were that? Wee would neuer submit our selues vnder his yoke, we should not know what it is to feare him, wee should not skill what it is to humble our selues vnder his hand, we should not know what it is to call vpon him, and to seeke all our welfare in him. Seeing then that afflictions are so beneficiall let vs learn to beare them patiently, and to submit our selues to them willingly, though they goe against our stomacks. Here is expresse mention made of humilitie and obedience. For first of all, if men continue in their loftinesse: they cannot bowe to obey God & to serue him, but they wil needes haue the brydle layd loose vpon their necke, & be let alone to follow their own wicked affections and lustes. Yee see then what stubbornesse is rooted in vs, vntil God correct it by mainforce. And so there is no obedience, vnlesse men be bowed

beate down with maine ſtrokes, neither is there any lowlines in them, til then. And why? Bicauſe they ſooth themſelues, and take maruelouſly vpon them, bearing themſelues on hande that they want nothing, but that they bee very able men, vntill God haue prooued the contrary vpon them. And that is the thing which Moſes expreſſeth in this text when he ſaith, *It was Gods will ſo to afflict thee.* And to what end? *To the end thou ſhouldeſt not ſay, It is mine owne ſtrength and myne owne power that haue gotten mee this aboundance.* Wee ſee that when GOD ſuffereth the order of nature to proceede, he that is riche thinketh not that his wealth commeth from heauē, or that God did ſet any hand to it: but he ſayth that all came to him by inheritaunce, or by ſucceſſion, or that he hath gotten it by his own trauell and policie. Thus doe men euer aduaunce themſelues, vntill our Lord ſhew them that they be nothing, nor nothing can do, and make them to feele it ſpite of their hartes. Therefore were the people of Iſraell fed after a wonderfull faſhion by the ſpace of fortie yeeres together in the wilderneſſe, to the intent that when they were come into the land that had bin promiſed them and did eate meate, they ſhoulde thinke thus: True it is that as nowe God giueth mee meate, but it was not alwayes ſo: the time hath beene that hee fed mee with Manna: therefore muſt I needes conclude that mine own power hath not purchaſed me the things that I poſſeſſe: I cannot ſay that I my ſelfe am ỹ founder of them: I muſt do homage to my God for them, and hold them al of him: I muſt accept them as of his free gifte, that he may let me inioy them ſtill: for I am worthy to bee bereft of them, if I acknowledge not that they come of him. Now albeit that this inſtruction ſerued for the people of olde tyme: yet belonges it alſo vnto vs, to the end that ſuch as poſſeſſe goods may vnderſtande, that they haue none other intereſt in them, than bycauſe God hath bleſſed them, and powred out his fauour & bountie vpon them. True it is that God reſpecteth not the worthines of men in this caſe: for oftentimes he giueth riches to the wicked, to ỹ intent it ſhould turn to their ſorer condemnatiō. Foraſmuch as he hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo liberall towards them: they muſt come to accoūt & be puniſhed dubble, if they benefite not themſelues by the fauour that was ſhewed them. Yet notwithſtanding we muſt take this for a generall rule, ỹ men attaine not to riches by their owne power, wiſedome, or trauell, but onely by Gods bleſſing, whereof it hath pleaſed him to giue a continuall preſident, which ſerueth not onely for the Iewes but alſo for vs, ſo as it behoueth vs to vnderſtand, that although ſome ſeeme to be inriched by their greate diligence, yet is it Gods bleſſing, which worketh with them after that faſhion: and that wheras otherſome are riche before they be borne, ſo as their auncetors haue purchaſed them great poſſeſſions, yet doe none of theſe things happen to them by chaunce, but Gods prouidence ouerruleth all. We muſt (ſay I) referre all theſe things to that which is told vs in the Pſalme namely ỹ a man may well riſe earely and go late to bed, drinke water & eate browne bread not half his fill: & yet ſhall he nothing auaile by it, vnleſſe God reache out his hand and goodnes. On ỹ contrarie part, ſometimes he will cauſe goods to light vpō his children as they lie aſleepe. And ỹ ſheweth vs ỹ men beguile themſelues, if they thinke to inrich thēſelues by their owne power: and ỹ they be ſtark mad if they become proud, as though their goods came to thē by their owne meanes. For in ſo doing they blaſpheme God, & rob him of his peculiar honor: & therefore is it good reaſon ỹ they alſo ſhould be bereft of the things ỹ he hath giuen them. As for example, if a Vaſſall ſhoulde ſtep vp againſt his lord to whō he hath promiſed fealtie & homage, & refuſe all the dueties ỹ he is bound vnto: his goods ſhould be ſeaſed, & he be turned out of all ỹ euer he hath, & wel worthy. Now behold here, God dealeth his benefits vnto vs as vnto his Vaſſals, reſeruing ỹ royalties ſtill to himſelf, ſo as he wil be knowne to bee chief Lord of ỹ fee: & it is good reaſon ỹ he ſhould be ſo, ſpecially ſeeing he doth it not for his own benefit but for ours. Now if we be ſo malitious and froward as to defraud him, & to ſet him beſides his right: ſhould he not bereaue vs of the goods ỹ he had giuen vs and make vs poore againe, ỹ he may driue vs of force to ſue vnto him? Yes: & ſo ye ſee whence ỹ chaūges come which we beholde in the worlde, that whereas a houſe is riche and wealthy and neuer like to decay: a man ſhall be at his wits endes to ſee it conſume and ebbe away. I ſpeake not onely of houſes of meane Citizens: but alſo of ỹ houſes of great Lordes, which haue ſo many thouſande poundes of yeerely Rent: it is a wonder to ſee howe they waſte away, firſt to the halfe, then to a third part, & finally to nothing. And how may this come to paſſe? It ſhoulde ſeeme that God makes paſtime, and taketh pleaſure in turning of worldly thinges vpſide downe: howbeit, that is bicauſe of our vnthankfulneſſe. For as much as men hold not the things with good conſcience, which he hath put into their hands: it is meete ỹ they ſhould be diſpatched of them. Therefore it ſtandeth vs ſo much the more on hand, to marke well this doctrine ỹ is contained in theſe words, *Thy God afflicted thee, yea euen of purpoſe that thou ſhouldeſt not now ſay, It is mine owne hand that hath gotten me this aboundance.* That if loue & good will cannot perſwade vs to come to ſo much reaſon, as to glorifie God by acknowledging our ſelues to holde all thinges of him: at leaſtwiſe his ſcourging of vs may make vs to thinke it, and driue vs by ſome meanes to bee mindefull of his grace, ſo as wee may fare the better by the examples that hee hath giuen vs at all times, and not onely haue an eye to the things that wee haue ſeene in our owne life, but alſo to the thinges which are reported to vs in the holy ſcripture, to haue bin done long ago: I ſay let vs call them to remembrance, bicauſe God will haue them to ſerue for our inſtructiō. Now if we be vnthankfull to our God in theſe ſmall things: what wil wee bee in the greater things? [much more vnthankefull,] as the worlde ſeeth. And if wee haue needs to bee tamed by afflictions,

leaſt wee ſhould bee puffed vp with pride for our meate and drinke: ſurely we ought much more to be taught by ſuch meanes, in ſpirituall matters. For Gods honour is more greeuouſly impeached in theſe caſes: and yet we ſee that men are moſt inclyned y way. Truly it is too great & vntollerable leaudneſſe already, when mortall men furmiſe themſelues to be fed and ſuſteined by their owne power and labour: their yeelding of commendation to their owne policie for their meate and drinke, is already too ſhameful a preſumption. But if they not onely imagin themſelues to be ſuſteined by their own paines taking and trauell, but alſo perſwade themſelues, that they get the kingdome of heauen, and become the children of God, and liue in holineſſe, and all through their owne free will: is not God thereby robbed of the praiſe that is due to him alone? Yes: for he is not onely bereft of his right in theſe flightfull and tranſitorie thinges of the world: but alſo the chiefe part of his honour is taken from him, that is to wit, that he correcteth the naughtineſſe which is in vs, that he quickeneth vs through his goodneſſe, that he calleth vs to ſaluation, and that all the goodneſſe which wee haue, ſhould be acknowledged to come of him. And yet notwithſtanding, wee ſee howe Freewill hath beene magnified, and euen at this day one of the greateſt controuerſies which we haue with the papiſtes, is that they cannot bee made to beleeue, that men are vtterly corrupted and mard, and that they be not onely weake, but alſo vtterly vnable to doe any good. In deede they will well ynough graunt that there is ſome feebleneſſe and faultie infirmitie in men: but yet to their ſeeming there is ſtill ſome power in them, and that if God doe but helpe vs and ſupply our weakeneſſe, it is ynough. But when men ouerſhoote themſelues ſo farre, and will needes chalenge a diuine power to themſelues: Is it not meete that they ſhould bee beaten backe, and that God ſhoulde ſubdue them by force, and make them to ſtoope, yea and beate downe and break aſunder the diuliſh pride that is in them? Yes. And indeede that is the very cauſe why hee handleth vs in this tranſitory life, as he handled his people in the deſert. For the life that wee lead here beneath, is anſwerable to the iorney which the people of Iſraell made thoſe fortie yeeres in the wilderneſſe. We be fed heere with bread and wine: but yet neuertheleſſe we craue our ordinary foode at Gods hand as if he ſent vs Manna from heauen. And verily we bee in this world, as in a wilderneſſe: we ſee what daungers hem vs in on all ſides: God is faine to guide vs, and to make vs perceiue his preſence ſo many wayes, as we may well think that the wildernes was a true figure of our ſtate ſuch as it is at this day. For as yet God letteth vs alone in our infirmities, we feele our ſelues in pitifull plight, we be ſo weake as we neede not any thing to caſt vs downe, the deuill doth drawe vs into his netres, we be deſtitute of al grace, we ſee what troubles doe ſtop our eyes, and we wote not what to ſay, neither on which ſide to turne vs. And why doth God handle vs ſo? Why be we not here as in an earthly paradiſe? Bycauſe we haue neede to be nurtured after that faſhion: for otherwiſe what woulde become of our pride? Wee woulde not thinke ourſelues beholden to God for any thing, but euery of vs would make an ydoll of himſelfe, and worſhippe himſelfe in his owne conceite. Therefore is our Lord fayne to afflict vs, and to ſhewe vs what wee bee, to the ende to make vs ſtoope, and thereby to teache vs to glorifie him. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke vppon this text of Moſeſes: where hee ſayth, *Thy God eſtabliſhed thee in the wilderneſſe.*

And ſo let vs know y Gods chaſtiſing of vs all our life long, is not only to ſubdue vs to his will, to the intent wee ſhould bee obedient: but alſo and chiefely to humble vs, that wee might not preſume any thing of our ſelues, but vtterly diſtruſt our owne ſtrength and abilitie, and reſort vnto him: and moreouer that when he giueth vs proſperitie, wee ſhould conſider whence it commeth, for it is not in our owne power to compaſſe it: and finally that wee ſhould not doe as a nomber of hypocrites doe, who wil welynough confeſſe themſelues to bee in rufull caſe, and that they bee wretched creatures: but as ſoone as God hath releeued them and deliuered them from their bondage, they fall to ſtouting againſt him, and thinke no more vpon the miſerie that is paſt. Nowe then it is not ynough for vs to condemne our ſelues when we be pinched by Gods hand, and to ſay, In deede it is true that if God ſuccoured mee not I ſhould bee deſtitute of all that might doe mee good: but alſo when God ſhall haue giuen vs all that we can wiſh, and we feele his bleſſing abundantly, euen then muſt we bee warer than euer wee were that wee forget him not, and we muſt not compare the time preſent, with the time that wee haue ouerpaſt, as thus: what had become of mee, if God had not reached mee his hand? I had beene vndone a hundred thouſand times. And hath not his maner of ſuccouring me beene wonderfull? Should I now chalenge any thing to my ſelfe? Thus ye ſee how that euen in the time of our abundance, that is to ſay, euen when God giueth vs our harts deſire, wee muſt alwayes bee mindefull of our former aduerſitie, and that in ſuch ſorte, as the honour may redound alonely vnto God, as meete is it ſhould. That is the thing which we haue to beare away in effect vpon thoſe wordes of Moſes.

Nowe hee addeth, *Thou ſhalt remember the Lorde thy God, that it is hee which hath giuen thee abilitie to get all the goods which thou haſt.* Here Moſes intended to preuent all that euer men can aledge on their owne behalfe. For they bee but too much giuen continually to ſeek ſome colour and ſhew that their welth cõmeth of themſelues. When men take paines for their liuing, they haue an eye to their owne policie, whether they be of ſufficient abilitie & skill or no: that is y thing which they looke at. It ſeemeth then, that when a man hath traueled for his liuing, he had at leaſtwiſe a good and forewarde wit, hee was vigilant, hee tooke good opportunities, hee ſhunned the things that might doe him dam-

sure: and therfore men should doe him wrong to say he did nothing to it, and that it was the free gift of God: for experience is against it. But Moses answereth to all this, saying that although men take neuer so much paynes, and streine themselues, and haue neuer so good forecast to shift for themselues, and bee neuer so well aduised and discreete: yet must not God be bereft of his honor. For why? who is it that giueth men discretion, aptnesse of body, strength to indure paynes, furtherances, and helpes? Is it not God that putteth all thinges into their handes? And yet is not this all. For God must also blesse all the benefites that he giueth vs: or else though a man be neuer so highly aduaunced, God needeth no more but to giue him a tickle with his litle finger, or to blowe vppon him, and by and by all is quite swept away: all is but as an herbe that is greene in the morning, which withereth and dryeth away as soone as the sunne shineth vpon it, as is sayd in the Psalme, Then let vs marke wel, that Moses added not this saying wout cause, namely ỳ we must thinke our selues beholden to God for all thinges, and acknowledge that it is hee which giueth vs the power to get goods. And vnder the word *Power* his intent is to comprehend all that euer we can attribute to our selues, whether it be of naturall abilitie and handsomnesse to doe thinges, or of helpes and meanes ỳ wee haue to further vs withall. For vnlesse God gouerne & guide vs with his hand: surely all ỳ we can doe is to no purpose, but all shall goe cleane contrary to our intent. And in deed we see how ỳ ablest men that are, do deceiue thẽselues, & men need not teach them any deceites (as they say) in respect of ỳ world. God laugheth at their fondnesse in making their discourses, & at their reckoning wout their hoste, & in the end ouerthroweth all. And so, by ỳ word *Power* or *Strẽgth*, Moses meant not onely ỳ health & disposition of body to trauel, & the wit & discretion of minde which wee ought to haue: but also the hauing of thinges in our handes, and Gods blessing of thẽ, that he make our labor come to good passe, so as it fall out to our benefite. If we beare this lesson well in minde, it wil doe vs good al our lyfe long, so as prosperitie shall not blinde vs, neither shall we fall asleepe to forget our God: but wee shall vnderstand ỳ when he giueth vs wealth, we must thinke our selues beholden to him for it, and by what meanes soeuer it came to vs, ỳ glory thereof must not therefore redownd vnto vs, but bee reserued vnto him, as to the partie that bestoweth his benefites vppon vs, distributing them as hee himselfe thinketh good, and giuing to euery man such portion of them as hee listeth, not for any desert of ours, but to make vs feele his goodnesse. Be wee once throughly perswaded of this, we will thereby take warning not to abuse our abundance, as they doe which ouershoote themselues into al vnrulynesse, which mount vp into pride, and which are giuen to pomp and vanitie to make a showe of themselues. I say we shal be restrained from all these vices. For it not for any desert of ours that God giueth vs riches. Wherfore is it then? To draw vs to him, that we might haue him to be our Sauiour, & finde him beneficiall & kinde towardes vs. Therefore wee must vse his benefites soberly and measurably: & besides that, we must not be giuen to lustinesse & brauery in vanting our selues to ỳ worldward. Finally we must not think to haue a state of perpetuitie in our goods, as though they might not be taken from vs: but we must alwayes put them into Gods hand, so as if he giue vs abundance to day, we in yeelding him thankes for the same, should be ready to beare pouertie with patience to morrowe. By that meanes ye see ỳ neither riches nor any other like thing shal dazle our eyes to make vs stand too much in our owne conceit, and to glorie in our selues. For wee will alwayes thinke thus: what am I, but ỳ it pleaseth my God to giue mee more goods than hee doth to my neighbors? He may take thẽ away againe whensoeuer it pleaseth him. Then must I not imagin that I haue deserued aught: but I am the more bound to my God, in that he hath voutsafed to make me thus to feele his fauor. And I must not be proude of it: for that were a kicking against my maister that feedeth me. Therefore must I abate the fatnesse which would prouoke mee to pride, and in the ende make mee to forgette God.

Phil. 4. 12.

Againe, when wee be thus humbled as touching the transitorie thinges of this world: let vs repaire to the principall point, which is, that when our Lord shall haue strengthened vs with his holy spirite, so as wee shall haue fought manfully against all the temptations of the world, and haue serued him in such wise as it may bee sayd of vs, that we haue giuẽ good example vnto others: yet we be not caryed away with folish vaineglory: but consider thus wt our selues, It is my God that hath giuen me this power. Why am not I as bad as the woorst naughtipacke in ỳ world? why am I not caryed away with blinde & beastly lustes to giue my selfe to all leawdnesse, but because my God preserueth mee? I haue had incounters that were hard to beare: & how happeneth it ỳ I haue gotten the vpper hand of them? It is my God that gaue it me. They therfore to whom God giueth the power of his holy Ghost, must acknowledge themselues so much ỳ more bound vnto him, and that they haue not ỳ power by natural inheritance, but by Gods gift, to ỳ end ỳ he onely should be glorifyed wt all humilitie, & ỳ we should not play ỳ lying hypocrits, as they doe which confesse wt their mouthes ỳ it is God which hath graunted them ỳ grace, & yet cease not to perswade them selues ỳ it commeth of their owne freewill. But let vs vtterly emptie & quite rid our selues of such ouerweening: & let vs confesse truely ỳ we know our selues to haue all thinges of God. And if this be to be acknowledged in bread & wine: what ought to be done concerning the heauẽly life, & in ỳ thinges ỳ belong peculiarly to god, & are aboue ỳ rech of mã? It should seeme ỳ men are able euen of nature to get thẽselues meate & drinke: but whẽ it cõmeth to ỳ making of them selues Gods childrẽ, & cõpanions of the Angels & that they should leade a holy life: in ỳ case they haue nothing of their owne.

Deut. 8. 17.

Psal. 37. 2.

Deut. 32. 8.

Deut. 4. 7.

owne. And therefore when wee thinke vppon the corruption wherein wee bee by the sin of Adam, and consider that God hath cleansed vs frō it: let vs assure our selues it is Gods free gift, as wel as is his continual maintaining of vs, and his strengthening of vs at our neede.

Rom. 3. 26. & 5. 15. & Eph. 2. 8. 9.

After that Moses hath spoken so: he addeth, *That if the people turne away from GOD and serue strange Gods: God will bee angry with them, and they shall perish as the people did whom hee was about to cast downe before them.* You shall perish *after the same maner* sayth hee. Moseses adding of this threat, is to waken them vp the better, which cannot thinke vppon God when they bee too full fed with the good that he hath done them. And it happeneth well neere continually to all men, that if God warne them gently, and deale friendly with them, and let them sit at rest as it were in his lap: then it is no speaking to them: for they giue him the deafe eare, and abuse his fauour by tempting his patience, and the more that hee spareth them, the lesse doe they seeme to regard his loue and fauour. Therefore doth it behooue men to be wakened and quickened vp with threateninges. It is true, that God indeuoreth as much as is possible to win vs by gentlenesse and not by constreint. But when he seeth vs so hardharted, that if hee speake gently vnto vs, we make but a mocke of his doctrine, and voutsafe not to thinke vppon it: then doth hee adde threatenings. After the same maner dealeth Moses both here & in many other places, and it is the common order of speach of the holy Ghost throughout al ỹ holy scripture. Then let vs marke well, that God for his parte is loth to speake otherwise than gently vnto vs, and would faine so waken vs as we should come to him willingly. But our naughtinesse and lewdnesse bewrayeth it selfe, in that in stead of comming to him, we retire from him. Seeing he allureth vs gently, speaking to vs as a father, or father as a mother to her little children: must it not needes be that we be too froward, when we turne our backes vpon him, and despise him for shewing himselfe so louing to vs? Yes: & yet is it an ordinary vice among vs. And therefore let vs not thinke it straunge, though we heare threatninges oftentimes in ỹ holy scripture, and that God setteth his wrath before vs: & that we be so rebuked when we come at Sermons. For why? Let euery man looke into himselfe: and if God should alwayes set his promises afore vs & say, come my children, come: let vs see if that would suffice. Nay contrary wise we see how euery man abuseth such goodnesse. And therefore whensoeuer there is any sharpenesse or vehemencie in the doctrine that is set forth vnto vs in ỹ name of God: let vs vnderstand that our naughtinesse requireth it, and that without it we should continue still in our filthinesse & rotte in our owne doung, so as there would be no meanes to pluck vs out of it, because euery man delightes in his owne destruction. And if we were not afraid of Gods iudgement, neuer would any of vs all play the iudge towardes himselfe, but we would think our selues to be scaped out of Gods hand, and euery of vs would winke at his owne faultes. For although God cite vs to his iudgement seate, & indite vs there to make vs ashamed: yet cease we not to sleepe still in our sinnes. And what would we then doe if we were not threatned? So then is is not without cause, that the holy Ghost hauing vsed gentlenesse, falleth to roughnesse. For it is meete that men shoulde bee so dealt withall, and that God should not onely wring them by ỹ eares, but also stryke them hard, to the intent to bowe them, ỹ they may yeeld themselues teachable and be disposed to come vnto him, which thing they would neuer doe with their good will.

And now Moses sayth expressly, *If you forget the Lord your God, and goe after strange Gods:* Whereby he doth vs to vnderstand, ỹ inasmuch as the Israelites had bin trayned in the sound doctrine, and in the right religion: they could not turne away to superstition and idolatrie, but through vnthankefulnesse in forgetting God. For why? If God haue once taught vs his truth, and manifested himselfe to vs: it ought to suffice vs, because it is so greate a light as we cannot passe amisse, but of wilfulnesse. If a man that walketh at noonedayes doe run against a stone or tumble into a ditch, can hee say I see it not? Hee seeth playnely, and besides that, hee hath the Sunne to guide him: and how can hee then excuse himselfe? Euen so is it with vs: When God hath inlightned vs by giuing vs his worde, we can no more walke in darkenesse, insomuch that if wee rush against any thing, it is through our owne wilfulnesse: and if wee fall into the ditch, wee our selues are too blame for it. That is the thing which Moses meant in saying, *If ye goe after strange Gods, yee forget the Lord your God.* The poore Paynims that were in those dayes, had more to excuse themselues withall than the Iewes had, because God shewed not himselfe vnto them. But forasmuch as the people of Israell had receiued Gods lawe, so as hee had set them in the way of saluation: they could not say We knowe him not, according to the solemne protestation which wee shall see that Moses maketh in the two and thirtith Chapter. I call heauen and earth to witnesse this day (sayth hee) that I haue set you in the way of saluation, so as yee cannot henceforth alledge that yee haue not heard any thing, or that if yee had bin taught, yee would haue done your indeuour to liue according to Gods will. I haue shewed it you sufficiently, therefore followe it.

Now must wee benefite our selues by this doctrine, and apply it to our vse nowadayes. For the Papistes, Turkes, and Paynims liue in ignorance, and no maruell at all. True it is that yet for all that they shal not faile to be condemned before God. But yet are wee much more blameworthie than they, if wee sticke not to our God. And why? For hee hath sent vs the pure doctrine of his Gospell, hee hath vouchsafed to giue vs the vnderstanding of his trueth, so as wee may now discerne betweene good and euil. Now if wee turne againe to our olde superstitions, can wee say wee were deceiued through ignorance? No: but God will alwayes holde vs

at this day, that we haue forsaken him lyke backsliders, and broken our faith lyke periured and disloyall kaytifes. Yee see then that the thing which wee haue to marke vppon this place, is that when God hath manifested himselfe to vs by his worde, so as wee knowe the way of saluation: it behoueth vs to be the more circumspect, and to hold our selues the faster to the pureneſſe of his doctrine. For if wee swarue from it, it is because wee haue forgotten our God, that is to say, wee haue wilfully turned our backe vppon him, and forsaken him after our knowing of him. In deede this is layd to the charge of all men in generall, I meane euen of the ignoranteſt: for God manifesteth himselfe to all men, euen by heauen and earth though he doe no more. But heere the case concerneth Gods word, which is the familiar maner of shewing himselfe to vs. And had we this lesson wel printed in our hearts so as wee could bethinke vs to benefite our selues by the thinges that are shewed vs nowadayes in the Gospell: wee would neuer forget our God, to step aside after superstitions.

Notwithstanding, let vs marke by the way, that if other sinnes bee intollerable before God: hee abhorreth idolatrie and the corruption of his seruice aboue all other crimes. In deede if a man that knoweth the Gospel doe giue himselfe to deceite and extorsion, or be ful of pride, crueltie, and malice, or cast himself into whoredome and other filthineſſe and infection: God will surely punish him: for it is too great a prouoking of him, when wee defile our selues so, after he hath sanctifyed vs. But if wee decline to idolatrie: that is not a priuate offence, springing onely of infirmitie that caryeth vs away: but it is an vtter renouncing of God, it is a giuing of him ouer, as though wee intended to haue no more to doe with him. And wee must marke moreouer, that although an vpright, honest, chaste and sober conuersation be a parte of Gods seruice: yet the chiefe seruing of him, is to put our trust in him, to honor him, to call vpon him, and to professe him to bee our onely God. But when wee fall to making of idols, and set them vp in his place: is it not a robbing of him of his Godhead? Can wee make any more open warre against him? Is it not all one as if we would plucke him downe from heauen, and put him from the gouernment of the world? Yes. Seeing then that the corrupting of Gods seruice bringeth so horrible confusion: let vs not thinke it strange that Moses should tel the Israelites here, that if they gaue themselues lewdly to idolatrie, *God would consume them:* Yea and that not by gentle and fauorable meanes as in way of chastisement: *but by roosing of them out quite and cleane, as the people should be roosed out which had dwelt before them in the land that hee had promised them*. The thing was not yet don but yet Moses speaketh of it as of a thing that was most certeine to them.

And surely Gods promise ought to beare great sway with vs, when hee behighteth vs any goods and so ought his threatnings to bee taken to bee as sure, when he cannot draw vs to him by gentleneſſe. And that is the cause why Moses sayth, *I protest vnto you this day*. Now by this saying we bee warned that God taketh as it were a solemn recognisance of vs, when he sendeth vs his word: and that the faithfull preaching thereof is as an open proclamation to summon vs and to cite vs. Lyke as when a man refuseth to doe his duetie, then to the intent he may answere to the Lawe, hee is cited, and his aduersary commenceth sute against him: euen so doth God deale with vs. For (as I sayd afore) hee desireth no more but that we should come to him by gentleneſſe and friendly dealing. But yet if wee bee slowe and negligent, so as hee cannot allure vs to him: then doth he enter his sute and make protestation against vs after this maner: wel then, I haue done what I could to win you, and yet notwithstanding yee haue bin stubborne still towardes me, and therefore I protest against you. He sendeth his ministers as his proctors, yea and hee sendeth them with solemne commission, as if some Notary were by to make a publike instrument, [as if hee should say,] I protest against you that it was not long of mee that yee were not rid out of the destruction wherein yee are: if ye perish, the fault is in your selues. Wherefore let vs mark this well, to the end that when wee come to a Sermon, or reade the holy scriptures, if we finde any sowreneſſe or vehemencie that greeueth vs: wee doe not therefore forbeare to receiue the thinges that are told vs in Gods name, assuring our selues it is the greateſt benefite that can befall vs, to suffer our selues to bee so rebuked by Gods word, forasmuch as it bringeth vs to him by repentance. And therefore let vs see that we bee not bereft of such a benefite by our owne lewdneſſe.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, so as we may be brought to true repentance, to mortify all our wicked lustes, that wee may be wholy subiect vnto him, desiring nothing but to please him in al respects, and to lead our liues according to his holy commaundementes: and that although we be weake, yet wee may not ceaſe to goe foreward still towardes our wayes end through his power, assuring our selues that hee will haue his hand continually stretched out ouer vs to strengthen vs, vntill hee haue giuen vs full victorie ouer all assaultes, and finally taken vs vp into the glorie which hee hath promised vs in the kingdome of heauen. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On

On Tewſday the xxvij. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lxij. Sermon, which is the firſt vpon the ninth Chapter.

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2 A people greate and tall, euen the children of the Enakims whome thou haſt knowen, and of whom thou haſt heard ſay, who is hee that can ſtand againſt the children of Enacke?

3 Knowe thou therefore this day, that the Lord thy God goeth before thee as a burning fire: he will deſtroy them and ſubdue them before thy face, he will driue them out and rid them away, as the Lord hath ſaid to thee.

4 And when the Lord thy God ſhall haue caſt them out before thy face: ſay not thou in thy heart, The Lord hath brought mee into this lande to poſſeſſe it, for my righteouſneſſe ſake: for the Lorde hath driuen out theſe Nations before thy face for their wickedneſſe.

5 It is not through thine owne righteouſneſſe or for the rightneſſe of thy heart, that thou art come to the poſſeſſion of their Land. But for the wickedneſſe of thoſe nations, hath the Lord thy God driuen them out before thy face: and to performe the word which the Lord thy God ſware to thy fathers Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob.

6 Knowe thou therefore that it is not for thine owne righteouſneſſe that the Lorde thy God hath giuen thee this good land to poſſeſſe: for thou art a ſtiffnecked people.

WE haue two extreme vices in vs. The one is that if God promiſe vs any thing, and we find it hard: we bee vtterly diſmayed, & to our ſeeming there is no way for God to performe the thing that he hath ſpoken: wherein we deface his power, and yeelde him not his due honor. For as ſoone as God hath ſayd the worde: although the thing ſeeme vtterly vnpoſſible: yet ought wee to conclude, that hee will finde meanes wel ynough to bring it to paſſe. And why? For his power is infinite and ought not to bee meaſured after our imagination. Therefore wee muſt glorify the Lorde, ſaying: Alas my God: in deed I am at my wits end in this caſe: but I leaue ỹ matter in thy hand, thou canſt worke after ſuch a faſhion as I cannot now comprehend. But in ſtead of honoring the Lord after that maner, wee bee full of douting and vnbeleefe, and fal to skanning whether God wil be as good as his worde or no. And if any let come in our way, wee thinke wee be diſappointed of our hope.

Pſal. 33. 9.

Rom. 9, 19. Eſa. 40, 18.

Alſo there is another extremitie on the contrarie part: which is, ỹ when God hath brought thinges to paſſe, and matters are diſpatched, we father the doing of them vppon our ſelues, as though God were no body, and forgetting the perplexitie wherein wee were before, we bolne our ſelues with fond ouerweening, to ſet out our owne prayſe. Thus is God robbed of his honor two wayes: and it is our maner of dealing in all caſes.

For as I ſayd, if wee thinke the thing to bee hard: wee perſwade our ſelues that it ſhall neuer come to paſſe: And when it is done, we deface his working, and indeuour to take the prayſe of it to our ſelues, and we be ſo vnthankfull to him, that wee would haue him pluckt out of his ſeate. For this cauſe Moſes maketh ſuch an exhortation here, as wherein hee reproueth both partes. For on the one ſide hee ſayth, Hearken, yee bee now at the point to enter into the lande that was promiſed you. Nowe I am ſure you will bee afraid: for ye muſt fight againſt great and ſtrong Nations, which doe farre ſurmount you euery way. It may bee therefore that yee will be diſmayed and out of hart, and thereupon turne head, ſo ye ſhall be diſappointed of the heritage that God hath promiſed you. But plucke you vp a good courage in him, and aſſure your ſelues that it is through his power that you muſt conquere ỹ land of Chanaan, your God will be your guide:

Gen. 15. 16.

and ye muſt vnderſtande that he is a deuouring fire, to conſume all your enimies. Therefore be not afraide for any thing that ye ſhal ſee, but aſſure your ſelues that the power of God paſſeth all capacitie of man. Now then, if you finde your ſelues abaſhed: ſtay, and let God goe through with his worke, and he will ſhewe that he can (without help of man) conſume all thoſe againſt whome he hath armed himſelfe in his wrath. Be mindfull therefore of the power of your God, & truſt thereunto, and be bolde to reſt vpon it. That is the firſt point which Moſes toucheth here, and it ſerueth to correct the ſaid diſtruſt withall, namely, that men looke no further but whether a thing be eaſie or no, & therupon conclude ſo fondly, that they make not ſuch account of God as they ought to do. Beware (ſaith Moſes) that yee imbace not the power of your God, through any imagination of vnbeeliefe.

And afterwarde he commeth to the ſeconde part, and telleth them that when God ſhall haue giuen them the vpper hande of their enimies, they muſt not boaſt themſelues of it, as though it proceeded of their owne worthineſſe, deſert, abilitie, power, or skill. And why? *For God* (ſaith he) *will driue out thoſe nations becauſe of their wickednes.* And to confirme this withall, I haue tolde you alreadie heretofore, that determinate ſentence was concluded & giuen againſt thoſe nations, foure hundred yeares afore, and that God had taryed patiently for them, to ſee if there were any amendment and conuerſion. But when they continued hardharted ſtill, and that the miſchief increaſed more and more: was it not reaſon, God ſhould execute his iudgement? Yes verily. So then the Iewes are warned that they ſhoulde not be puffed vp with any vaine ſelfeweening, as though they had beene worthie to bee placed in the land of Chanaan: but rather conſider that God executed his vengeance vpon thoſe nations for their euil life, & therefore that they which ſhoulde ſucceede them, ought to humble themſelues the more. And moreouer, that if they compared themſelues with their enimies, there was no cauſe why they ſhould thinke themſelues to haue the better eaſe, or that they ought to be preferred before them: I ſay, there was no cauſe why they ſhould haue any ſuch conceit. For Moſes telleth them, that the couenant which God had made with their fathers, was concluded long afore any of them were borne: whereupon it followeth, that God had no reſpect to their deſerues. I haue tolde you moreouer that the ſame couenant was freebeſtowed: for it was not grounded vppon any ſeruice of men, but Gods intent therein was to ſet foorth his owne goodneſſe and mercie. Yeſee then that the Iſraelites are bereft of al power and glorie, and that all worldly loftineſſe is here beaten downe, ſo as onely God muſt bee knowen to be good and righteous, and men are bounde to him in all caſes, inſomuch that they muſt keepe their mouthes ſhut, and not boaſt of their owne power or vertue, as though they were folke of good abilitie. That in effect is the thing that is treated of in the text which I haue rehearſed.

And theſe two vices which Moſes rebuketh, reigned not onely at ſome one time: but they reigne ſtill at this day, and we haue them rooted in our nature. Therefore let vs marke well that this doctrine is directed to vs at this day, and that it behoueth vs to benefite our ſelues by it. So then, as touching the firſt point, let vs call to minde the leſſon that is ſhewed vs by the example of our father Abraham, when it is ſaide, that he beleeued beyond hope, giuing glorie to him that had made the promiſe, in beleeuing him to be able to bring the ſame to paſſe. Lo here a generall rule for all the faithfull: which is, that if they purpoſe to leane vnto Gods promiſes, they muſt not deeme of them after their owne witte and imagination: (for what a thing were that?) but they muſt aſſure them ſelues that God hath meanes in his hande, which are vnknowen to them, and which they conceiue not, and that it is enough for them to haue his word, which is the infallible trueth. This reacheth verie farre: but it ſhall ſuffice for this preſent, to gather a ſhort ſumme of it. For when God calleth vs to him, if wee conſider but what wee our ſelues are: ſurely wee ſhalbee vtterly diſmayed. As for example, when God promiſed iſſue vnto Abraham, he was a man alreadie decayed and ſore broken, as well with age as with trauell that he had endured. His wife alſo was paſt the age of childbearing, and moreouer ſhe had beene barren all the time of her life: it might ſeeme then that God had mocked him in promiſing him iſſue. But what? hee had not an eye to his owne bodie which was forworne and broken with age, (as ſayeth Sainct Paul:) neither had hee an eye whether his wife were able to conceiue or no: but ſeeing that God had ſpoken the worde, hee reſted thereupon, aſſuring himſelfe that foraſmuch as God is faithfull, he ſhoulde not be diſappointed in truſting vnto him. And after the ſame maner muſt wee deale, ſeeing wee haue ſo faire a looking glaſſe. For (as I ſaide) if wee haue an eye to our owne frailtie: in reſpect of our bodies wee be but carions and rottenneſſe: and yet doth God promiſe vs the glorie of his euerlaſting kingdome. Doth the thing ſeeme poſſible to vs? yet then we faile of our duetie euery minute of an houre: and yet doth God promiſe vs ſuch ſtrength as ſhall get the vpper hande of the whole worlde. Let Satan do the worſt he can, and let al the powers of hell imbattell themſelues againſt vs: and yet ſhall wee neuer be ouercome. Where nowe ſhall wee finde this ſtrength? So then it may ſeeme that GOD dalyeth with vs, when hee promiſeth vs the things which we cannot conceiue, ne reache vnto by our owne vnderſtanding. But what? Wee muſt mount vp higher, and wee muſt ſubmit our ſelues to him with ſuch humilitie and ſubiection, as to acknowledge that he is able to performe his promiſe towardes vs in all things whatſoeuer he hath ſpoken. And how? We knowe not that: that paſſeth our capacitie: but let vs haue our eye vppon God. For

Rom. 4. 18. 20. 21.

Deu. 15. 16.

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5 It is not through thine owne righteouſneſſe or for the rightneſſe of thy heart, that thou art come to the poſſeſſion of their Land. But for the wickedneſſe of thoſe nations, hath the Lord thy God driuen them out before thy face: and to performe the word which the Lord thy God ſware to thy fathers Abraham, Iſaak, and Iacob.

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Gen.15.16.

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and ye muſt vnderſtande that he is a deuouring fire, to conſume all your enimies. Therefore be not afraide for any thing that ye ſhal ſee, but aſſure your ſelues that the power of God paſſeth all capacitie of man. Now then, if you finde your ſelues abaſhed: ſtay, and let God goe through with his worke, and he will ſhewe that he can (without help of man) conſume all thoſe againſt whome he hath armed himſelfe in his wrath. Be mindfull therefore of the power of your God, & truſt thereunto, and be bolde to reſt vpon it. That is the firſt point which Moſes toucheth here, and it ſerueth to correct the ſaid diſtruſt withall, namely, that men looke no further but whether a thing be eaſie or no, & therupon conclude ſo fondly, that they make not ſuch account of God as they ought to do. Beware (ſaith Moſes) that yee imbace not the power of your God, through any imagination of vnbeeliefe.

And afterwarde he commeth to the ſeconde part, and telleth them that when God ſhall haue giuen them the vpper hande of their enimies, they muſt not boaſt themſelues of it, as though it proceeded of their owne worthineſſe, deſert, abilitie, power, or skill. And why? *For God* (ſaith he) *will driue out thoſe nations becauſe of their wickedneſſe*. And to confirme this withall, I haue tolde you alreadie heretofore, that determinate ſentence was concluded & giuen againſt thoſe Gen.15.16. nations, foure hundred yeares afore, and that God had taryed patiently for them, to ſee if there were any amendment and conuerſion. But when they continued hardharted ſtill, and that the miſchief increaſed more and more: was it not reaſon y God ſhould execute his iudgement? Yes verily. So then the Iewes are warned that they ſhoulde not be puffed vp with any vaine ſelfweening, as though they had beene worthie to bee placed in the land of Chanaan: but rather conſider that God executed his vengeance vpon thoſe nations for their euil life, & therefore that they which ſhoulde ſucceede them, ought to humble themſelues the more. And moreouer, that if they compared themſelues with their enimies, there was no cauſe why they ſhould thinke themſelues to haue the better caſe, or that they ought to be preferred before them: I ſay, there was no cauſe why they ſhould haue any ſuch conceit. For Moſes telleth them, that the couenant which God had made with their fathers, was concluded long afore any of them were borne: whereupon it followeth, that God had no reſpect to their deſertes. I haue tolde you moreouer that the ſame couenant was freebeſtowed: for it was not grounded vppon any ſeruice of men, but Gods intent therein was to ſet foorth his owne goodneſſe and mercie. Yeſee then that the Iſraelites are bereft of al power and glorie, and that all worldly loftineſſe is here beaten downe, ſo as onely God muſt bee knowen to be good and righteous, and men are bounde to him in all caſes, inſomuch that they muſt keepe their mouthes ſhut, and not boaſt of their owne power or vertue, as though they were folke of good abilitie. That in effect is the thing that is treated of in the text which I haue rehearſed.

And theſe two vices which Moſes rebuketh, reigned not onely at ſome one time: but they reigne ſtill at this day, and we haue them rooted in our nature. Therefore let vs marke well that this doctrine is directed to vs at this day, and that it behoueth vs to beneſite our ſelues by it. So then, as touching the firſt point, let vs call to minde the leſſon that is ſhewed vs by the example of our father Abraham, when it is ſaide, that he beleeued beyond hope, giuing glorie to him that had made the promiſe, in beleeuing him to be able to bring the ſame to paſſe. Lo here a generall rule for all the faithfull: which is, that if they purpoſe to leane vnto Gods promiſes, they muſt not deeme of them after their owne witte and imagination: (for what a thing were that?) but they muſt aſſure them ſelues that God hath meanes in his hande, which are vnknowen to them, and which they conceiue not, and that it is enough for them to haue his word, which is the infallible trueth. This reacheth verie farre: but it ſhall ſuffice for this preſent, to gather a ſhort ſumme of it. For when God calleth vs to him, if wee conſider but what wee our ſelues are: ſurely wee ſhalbee vtterly diſmayed. As for example, when God promiſed iſſue vnto Abraham, he was a man alreadie decayed and ſore broken, as well with age as with trauell that he had endured. His wife alſo was paſt the age of childbearing, and moreouer ſhe had beene barren all the time of her life: it might ſeeme then that God had mocked him in promiſing him iſſue. But what? hee had not an eye to his owne bodie which was forworne and broken with age, (as ſayeth Sainct Paul:) neither had hee an eye whether his wife were able to conceiue or no: but ſeeing that God had ſpoken the worde, hee reſted thereupon, aſſuring himſelfe that foraſmuch as God is faithfull, he ſhoulde not be diſappointed in truſting vnto him. And after the ſame maner muſt wee deale, ſeeing wee haue ſo faire a looking glaſſe. For (as I ſaide) if wee haue an eye to our owne frailtie: in reſpect of our bodies wee be but carions and rottenneſſe: and yet doth God promiſe vs the glorie of his euerlaſting kingdome. Doth the thing ſeeme poſſible to vs? yet then we faile of our duetie euery minute of an houre: and yet doth God promiſe vs ſuch ſtrength as ſhall get the vpper hande of the whole worlde. Let Satan do the worſt he can, and let al the powers of hell imbattell themſelues againſt vs: and yet ſhall wee neuer be ouercome. Where nowe ſhall wee finde this ſtrength? So then it may ſeeme that GOD dalyeth with vs, when hee promiſeth vs the things which we cannot conceiue, ne reache vnto by our owne vnderſtanding. But what? Wee muſt mount vp higher, and wee muſt ſubmit our ſelues to him with ſuch humilitie and ſubiection, as to acknowledge that he is able to performe his promiſe towardes vs in all things whatſoeuer he hath ſpoken. And how? We knowe not that: that paſſeth our capacitie: but let vs haue our eye vppon God. For

the chiefe honour that he requireth at our hãds,
1.Sa.15.22. and the verie sacrifice that hee requireth, is that wee shoulde acknowledge his worde to bee the verie vndoubted trueth, notwithstanding that our wit and imagination tell vs the cleane contrarie.
Abac.2.1. And that is the cause why the Prophet Abacucke sayeth that hee will goe vp into his tower to keepe watche. When the case concerneth faith, wee must not stay here beneath vppon the earth, neither must wee looke but before our noses as they saye: but we must learne to goe vp into our tower, that is to saye, to discharge our selues of all worldly incumbrances, and to consider, that if wee haue not pitched
Hebr.6.19. our anker in heauen as the Apostle sayeth, wee shalbee tossed with such stormes and whirlewindes, as will swallowe vs vp. Looke mee vpon them that sayle on the sea. If they spye a storme, they cast Anker, for that is their trust. Though there come neuer so great waues, and although their vessell bee weatherbeaten and driuen to and fro, yet doeth their Anker preserue them. And hee vseth this similitude, to shewe vs that our ankerholde must reache vp into heauen, and that wee must conclude boldly, that Gods saying of the worde is ynough. For hee is not variable as mortall men are. Againe, hee is not lauish in promising fondly, without knowing whether hee bee able to performe or no. But if hee speake a thing and performe it not out of hande: let vs assure our selues that his meaning is to humble vs thereby, though we conceiue not his dealings. And therefore let vs remember at one worde, that wee must take God for our guyde and leader all our life long. If wee be weake, let vs leane vnto his strength. If wee haue strong and mightie enemies: let vs hope that beeing vnder the keeping and protection of our God, wee shalbee preserued from all daunger, and our enemies shall not be able to do any thing against vs.

And nowe let vs applie this doctrine to our owne vse two manner of wayes. For wee be assailed on all sides in this worlde, both in body & in soule. Wee see what the Church of God is nowadayes: wee be but a small handful of folke, and our enemies are a huge multitude: they seeme able ynough to eat vs vp at one bit: wee be like sheepe without any strength, and they bee like rauening wolues full of crueltie, they haue all the might and power of the worlde on their side. Thus yee see in what plight and taking the faithfull are at this day. Neuertheless sith wee heare that our Lorde broodeth vs vnder his winges, and wilbe the preseruer of our life, assuring vs y he wilbe both a wal a rempire and a dytche vnto vs: let vs trust thereunto, and not doubt but hee will preserue vs. Although the worlde practise what it can against vs, yet shall wee bee alwayes safe, so wee flee for refuge to our God, and grounde our selues vppon the
Psal.116.15. promise that hee hath made vs, which is, that both our life and our death are precious in his sight. And that is the cause why Moses vseth this preface: *Hearken O Israel.* It is not a needelesse speache: but forasmuch as wee be tempted to vnbeleefe, and cannot holde our selues to God and sticke to his promises, because the combrances of this worlde haue gotten the vpper hand of vs alreadie: therefore doth God exhort vs to harken to his worde, and hee wakeneth vs vp, to the ende wee shoulde not lye still asleepe, but vnderstande, that hee is able to ouercome all the daungers wherwith wee be besotted and affayled in this worlde. Now then, as concerning our worldly enemies, which practise the destruction of our bodyes: let vs not doubt but God is able to withstande them. Againe, there is the diuel, there are infinite temptations, and wee haue warre euery man within him selfe, so as sinne dwelleth in vs which is the worst and deadliest enemie that we haue. But yet let vs not doubt but wee shall well ynough wade out, seeing it is sayde that God will be our leader. For although our strength be weake or rather none at all: yet will God reach vs his hande, so as wee shalbee vnuanquishable. And when it seemeth that wee shoulde bee vterly ouerthrowen: wee shalbee holde vp by the power of our God. Therfore let vs put our trust in him: let vs rest vppon his promise: and let vs not be afrayde that wee shalbee deceiued. On the contrarie parte wee cannot trust to our selues (bee it neuer so little): but God will laugh such ouerweening to skorne: insomuch that if wee put our trust in creatures, wee must needes bee deceiued and beguyled. But if the case concerne the yeelding of glory vnto God let vs not bee afrayde, that our boldnesse shall turne vs to shame, as the Scripture saith in a number of places.

And Moses plainly sayeth here, *that God shall be their leader*, yea, and euen as a consuming fire to destroy all thinges that shalbee against them. This is not added without cause. For when wee be disposed to further our owne fearfulnesse, wee exalt the power of our enemies aboue measure, and of little dwarfes wee make Gyants. And what will wee doe then, when our enemies be tall and strong in deede? Wee will much more astonished at them. But yet doeth Moses tell vs here, that wee must not feede such doutes and distrustes. And for the same cause hee vseth this similitude, that Gods fighting for vs shall not bee after the common fashion: but that hee wilbee as a fire to deuoure all. Albeit then that wee haue neither sworde, speare, gunne, nor other artillerie: yet let it suffise vs to knowe, that God hath meanes ynough to helpe vs withall, which wee know not of. And because this cannot bee so well expressed as were requisite: hee sayeth that if wee see a fire, wee knowe it is able to burne vp a forest, a citie, or a whole countrie: and therefore wee ought not to doute, but that God is strong ynough for our enemies, seeing hee is a consuming fire. So likewise, when Dauid intendeth to comfort himselfe in the middest of his greatest troubles, so as hee seemeth to be hemmed in on all sydes, and readie to be swallowed vp into the gulfes of hel, we heare how he oftentimes sayeth that God is a consuming fire, & assureth himselfe that

that all they which set themselues after that fashion against him, shalbe consumed thereof, and they that conspire his death shalbe deuowred of that fire which consumeth all things. After this maner must we put this saying of Moses in practise. And from hence hath Dauid drawen his saide doctrine, as from the fountaine that serued all the other Prophets to gather right comfort of, wherewith to resist and ouercome all the troubles that coulde befall them: and the same also is the cause why Moses declareth that God is a consuming fire to dispatche all the enimies of his people. Also Dauid fleeth therunto for refuge, whensoeuer hee seeth great armies imbattled against him, so as he is as a man past hope [of victorie,] and is as good as banished out of his owne countrie, yea and moreouer there are so manie that practise his destruction, that he is vexed out of all measure. Yee see then that he is as a wretched man in vtter extremitie, and as a silie creature past hope of recouerie: and yet for all that, hee ceasseth not to make his boast, that hee will neuer bee afrayd as long as hee hath God on his side. And after the same manner doeth Sainct Paul conclude: If God bee on our side, who shalbe against vs? Not that wee shall not haue store of enimies: but that they shall not bee able to preuayle against vs. They shall make their triumphes aforehande, but the victorie shall goe with vs, if wee haue God for our defence. Nowe wee see the reason of this similitude. In the fourth Chapter of this booke Moses vsed the like saying, but it was to another purpose. For there his meaning was to stirre vp the people to feare and warinesse. And in deede wee haue neede to knowe that God is a consuming fire two wayes. The one is the same that wee haue seene in the fourth chapiter, which is also alleaged by the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, who expoundeth this text faithfully, saying: My frendes, it is a dreadfull thing to fall into the handes of the liuing God: let vs beware howe wee dally with such a Lorde, and let vs receiue his worde with all reuerence, or else wee shall finde therein that God is a fire to consume vs. In deed when God commeth to vs and calleth vs vnto him, hee allureth vs graciously, and hee sheweth vs all manner of gentlenesse and fatherly louing kindnesse. But yet howsoeuer he deale, his meaning is not that men should abuse his goodnesse, as we see these scorners do, of whō there is euer too great store. We see a nūber of scorners in these days which skoffe at Gods worde, bearing themselues on hande, that he which reigneth in heauen, hath no authoritie ouer them. They ouershoote themselues with desperate malapertnesse, and bewray themselues to haue no more religion than dogs, & yet they perswade themselues that they may mocke with God after that fashion in al matters, & yet notwithstanding that they shall skape vnpunished. Now forasmuch as men are so thankelesse, & do set vp their hellish bristles against god to despise his goodnes, it is saide, that they shall feele him to be a consuming fire. Although hee shewe himselfe a father, & auowe vs to be as his children, so as he will hold vs & nourish vs in his lappe, of purpose that we should behaue our selues mildly towardes him, & yeld him his due honor and loue: yet if we abuse his gracious fauour, so as we yeeld him no reuerence nor subiection: then in steed of feeling his fatherly louing kindnesse, wee shall finde him a consuming fire to deuour vs. Thus yee see howe wee must first of all take holde of that which Moses sayeth here, to the intent wee may liue in awe, feare, and humilitie, and alwayes holde our selues vnder the yoke and obedience of him that hath adopted vs, and be true children towardes him as he is a father towardes vs.

Howbeit let vs marke herewithall, that he is a consuming fire to deuour our enemies. When wee see our enemies threaten vs, and that they become proude and stately against vs, so as it may seeme that they shoulde destroy vs with their onely lookes: let vs take holde of Gods power to comfort vs in all our afflictions, and let vs consider that it is ynough for vs that God is a consuming fire. Thus ye see howe we must apply this doctrine to double vse: first, that it may bee as a brydle to holde vs in awe and subiection vnder our God: and secondly that it may bee as a bulwarke to outstande all temptations. When wee bee striken in feare, because wee heare that our enemies doe practise all that euer they can against vs: and that it is in their hande to ouerthrowe vs and destroy vs: yet let vs come still backe to this point and say, Well then, and what shall our God doe? Thinke wee that he sitteth ydle in heauen? In deede it may well bee that for a time hee will suffer vs to bee vexed, and to haue our neckes vnder the sworde, and to bee as silly sheepe led to the slaughter: but yet for all that, our life is precious in his sight, because hee hath chosen vs to bee his heritage. And although hee suffer vs to bee troubled for a time, yet in the ende hee will make vs to perceiue that hee was alwayes at hande with vs, so as wee shall haue continuall cause to glorifie him, specially when wee shall see that hee shall haue ouerthrowen all those which now haue their whole swindge against vs, in comparison of whom wee be nothing at all. Thus much concerning the saying wherein God is called a consuming fire.

Now Moses commeth to the seconde matter which wee haue touched, which ought to be wel marked: namely, that when God hath helped & succoured vs, and done more for vs than wee looked for, or than our witte could conceiue: we must yeeld him his deserued glorie, so as wee be not sotted with pride and ouerweening, to challengde that to our selues which belongeth alonly vnto God: let vs beware of such vnthankfulnesse. Againe, let vs not imagine that God serueth his turne by vs, in respect of any worthinesse of ours: but let vs vnderstand that his choosing of vs is onely in respect of his owne good will. Wee shall not finde any deseruing at all in our selues in this behalfe: but it is of his onely free mercie, which hee will haue vs to magnifie aboue all things.

True it is, that Moſes ſpeaketh here of the lande of Chanaan. But if men cannot deſerue any thing in this worlde in reſpect of tranſitorie things: howe ſhall they deſerue euerlaſting life? If I cannot winne a little peece of grounde: how ſhall I winne a whole realme? So then, let vs marke that of the things that are ſayd here, wee muſt gather a generall doctrine, which is, that if the children of Iſrael were put in poſſeſſion of the lande that had beene promiſed them, not for their owne righteouſneſſe ſake, but through Gods free goodneſſe: it is much more reaſon that when we ſpeake of the heauenly life, and of the inheritance of the heauenly glorie, wee ſhoulde not dreame vppon any power of our owne, but acknowledge that God hath vttered his righteouſneſſe and ſhewed his goodneſſe in his vouchſafing to chooſe vs. And let vs marke well the argumentes and reaſons which Moſes alleageth here, to pull downe all pride withall, that men might not take occaſion to vaunt themſelues. *God* (ſayeth hee) *hath driuen out theſe people before you*. That is one point. So then, wil wee bee rid of all vaineglorie? Let vs beholde our ſelues aduiſedly in thoſe whome God puniſheth, and againſt whome he vſeth his extreme rigour. Are wee any better than they? In deede a number of vs can well flatter our ſelues: but yet wee recken without our hoſte, wee come all of Adams corrupt raſe, wee be all forlorne and damned by nature. What is to be done then? Surely if wee conſider well what wee bee: it will ſuffice to beate downe all our preſumption. It is ſaide in the prouerbe, that hee which knoweth himſelfe beſt, ſettes leaſt by himſelfe: but it is ill put in vre. And wee muſt not ſaye, hee ſetteth little by himſelfe: but wee muſt paſſe yet farther: namely, that hee which knoweth himſelfe well, may ſet nothing at all by himſelfe, but rather vtterly abaſe himſelfe, and bee vtterly aſhamed of himſelfe. And hereyee ſee what the true knowledge of a mans ſelfe is. Humilitie or lowlineſſe is not a counterfaiting to doe little before God, or to vſe ſome niſe ceremonies: but a through examining and ſifting of a mans ſelfe, ſo as hee acknowledge that there is neither wiſedome, power, righteouſneſſe, nor aught elſe in him, whereof hee may boaſt: but rather conſider on the contrarie parte, that wee bee full of vanitie, leaſing, and vnfaithfulneſſe, that wee bee vnruly and rebellious againſt God, that wee bee fraught full of wicked luſtes, that there is a ſea of all naughtineſſe in vs, and that the faireſt ſhewe of vertue which wee haue, is but filth and dung before God. Lo howe the Scripture ſpeaketh of vs: lo howe it blazeth our armes. Nowe therefore, when men haue well conſidered themſelues: they muſt make this compariſon. Alas, I ſee Gods wrath lye vppon ſuch a man or ſuch a woman, yea and vppon ſuch great and excellent nations. Wee ſee a great number nowadayes which are farre off from the light of life, whereas in the meane while the Goſpell is preached vnto vs, and the way into Gods kingdome is ſet open vnto vs. And yet for all this, are wee better worthie of it than they? Wherein? Let vs looke a little vppon our owne deſeruinges, and let vs alledge all that is poſſible to bee deuiſed. Why then doeth God preferre vs before them? Becauſe it pleaſeth him ſo to doe. So then, looke howe many wretched caſtawayes wee ſee ſtraying away from God, and looke how many ſilly ſoules wee ſee puniſhed at Gods hande: let them all bee as lookingglaſſes for vs to behold our ſelues in, and to make vs conclude, that if God liſted to ſhewe himſelfe a iudge in handling vs after our deſertes, wee ſhoulde bee no more ſpared than they bee, and that our ſtanding is through his free goodneſſe, in aſmuch as hee beareth with vs, and vouchſafeth to ſhewe himſelfe fauourable. Lo what light wee ought to take of Gods mercie towardes vs, when wee ſee his vengeance vppon the vnbeleeuers and rebelles, accordingly alſo as Saint Paul telleth vs in the Epiſtle to the Romanes, that we ſhoulde be vterly damned with the wicked, if God ſpared vs not of his owne free goodneſſe. And that is ſaide vnto vs to the intent wee ſhoulde not take any fonde conceit in our ſelues, that might puffe vs vp and make vs drunken. For if wee giue not God the glorie, acknowledging his goodneſſe to be the thing that wee reſt vppon: ſurely hee muſt needes make vs feele to our coſt, that wee bee not worthie to finde ſuch mercie and fauour at his hande. Thus yee ſee why Moſes tolde the Iewes, *that the Chananites & their neighbours ſhoulde bee deſtroyed at Gods hande for their ſinnes ſake*. Well then, the Iewes might haue replyed at the firſt bluſh, If God puniſh them becauſe of their ſinnes: his putting of vs in their place, is a token that hee findeth vs to bee better and righteouſer than them. It is not ſo. For Moſes declareth, that Gods chooſing of the Iewes (as ſhalbee ſhewed more fully hereafter) was not for that they were worthier: for they were much more incorrigible than thoſe nations: and yet did God chooſe them. Now then, let vs learne to profite our ſelues by all the chaſticementes which wee ſee, and which God ſheweth vs in this worlde. And forſmuch as the blowes light not vppon our ſelues, let vs not forbeare to come to his ſchoole and to humble our ſelues vnto him. For wee haue deſerued to bee touched as roughly by God, as they haue done which are damned. But what? As I ſaide afore, he beareth with vs. That is the firſt argument.

Pſal.62.10. & Luk.16.15 & Ro.3.6,7.

The ſeconde is this: *When the Lord ſhall haue driuen out the people before thee*. Here Moſes cuteth off all the fonde bragges wherewith men deceiue themſelues. As howe? If wee had not played the tall fellowes in fighting manfully againſt our enemies, what had become of vs? We had ſtrong enemies, they were mightie and puiſſant, they had huge fortreſſes and munitions, they were tall of ſtature like Gyants, and wee were but dwarfes in compariſon of them: and therefore it ſtoode vs on bande to pluche vp ſtout courage. Moſes wypeth away all this ſaying: Ye ſilly ſoules, it is your God that fought for you, it was not your ſelues. So then, let vs learne

learne, that although God vse our seruice, and wee seeme to do somewhat: yet the work is not ours, it is alwayes his that worketh it by vs, and which breatheth his secrete power into vs. Wee haue nothing of our owne, whereof wee may boast, but God must alwayes be acknowledged to bee the author of his owne. This is the seconde reason which Moses alleageth here, to teach the people that they should not be proud, not beleeue marueilously of their owne power, so as they shoulde say, I haue done this or that, I haue brought this or that to passe. No (sayeth he) thy God is he that driueth out nations, and rooteth them out.

Nowe if this were saide of temporall enemies: what is to be sayde of Satan, and of the enemies of our soules? Are wee able to ouercome them? Will the bringing of our owne free will, our merites, and our good workes bee able to ouercome the diuel, the worlde, death it selfe, and hell? No, but the blinde wretches are well apayd that they may bee deceiued in bearing themselues in hande that they can do much, & that they be verie able folke. Yet notwithstanding, they bee disgraced heere by the holye Ghost, and it is tolde vs that nothing wee be, ne nothing can do of our selues: but that all ỹ good Phil.2.13. which wee do commeth of God, and it is he that doeth it in vs. For if a man cannot stirre one finger towardes the sauing of this transitorie life: can he saue his soule vnto the kingdome of heauen? If a man cannot doe any thing against his aduersarie which is a mortall and fraile creature as well as himselfe: howe shal he ouercome the worlde, and all the diuels in hell? So then, let vs learne to deceiue our selues no more with these fonde imaginations, in thinking our selues to haue free will to doe this and that: but let vs knowe that if God reache vs his hand, then shall wee be able to stand through him & not through our selues. Saint Paul glorieth sufficiently: but Phil.4.13. howe is that? I can doe all thinges (sayeth hee) through Iesus Christ which strengtheneth mee. He sayeth he can doe all thinges: and by that meane he defyeth the diuell, (which maner of boldnesse wee see he vseth chiefely in the Epistle to the Philippians:) but yet he reserueth nothing to himselfe. He sayeth that he is strengthened by Iesus Christ. Then if wee be strengthened from aboue: wee shall get the vpper hande: But yet (as I sayd) wee must alwayes acknowledge how it is God that strengtheneth vs, and that it is in him and by him that wee stande out and get the victorie.

The thirde reason that Moses alleageth is this: *that God in setting his people in possession of the promised lande, had an eye to the promise which he had made and sworne to Abraham, Isaac, & Iacob.* Hereby the Iewes are put in minde, that God chose them not as more worthie, more noble, & more excellent than other men, as hath beene shewed alreadie: but because hee had made promise to their forefathers. But nowe let vs see what cause moued and led God to giue this lande to Abraham and to his seede. If he had had an eye to mans worthinesse: Abraham deserued much more than any other, to haue beene set in possession of that lande. And yet contrariwise, his dwelling there was but as a stranger, he was driuen out of it, and hee was so farre off from hauing of it at his commaundement, that he was Heb.11.9. kept euen from water, not onely when he would haue borowed it at other mennes pittes, but also when he had digged pittes by his owne labour: both hee and his successours were driuen from Gen.21.25. them. Lo how the holy Patriarches were tossed too and fro, and how men mocked them & did them many outrages & wrongs, and of all that while they had not one foote of grounde more than a burying place. In so much that at length, Iacob was driuen to pay for the grounde where Gen.32.18. & 33.19. & 46.1. he lodged and pitched his tents: and finally constrayned to goe into the lande of Egypt, by reason of dearth which draue him out of the lande of Chanaan. Now seeing that the holie fathers were not putte in possession of it during their liues: shall wee say that their posteritie were worthier than they? No: it followeth then that Gods couenãt was merely of free gift, and that he had no respect to any desertes of mẽ. And why? Because he loued that people. Wee must not aske whether he founde any vertue in them or no: but it must suffice vs that hee listed to magnifie his mercie. As if he should say, I seek no cause in men to doe them good. But I find it in my selfe. For of men that are worthie to bee vtterly reiected, I choose out some and take them to bee my children, to the intent they shoulde giue mee all the prayse thereof. That is the thing which Moses had an eye vnto, in alleaging the couenant which God had made with their fathers. Nowe wee knowe (as I said afore) that this couenant was made before these people were borne. They could not say that God regarded what they were, as some phantasticall persons do, which say that God foresawe what men woulde be. If he doe but foresee: surely he shall finde vs all diuels, that is to say vnhappie and cursed creatures, full of all wickednesse, and such as haue nothing but vtter abhomination in vs. Those are the thinges that God shall finde in vs, if he doe but foresee. Nay, if he wil haue vs good: he him selfe must frame vs thereto: for wee bee his workemanship as sayeth Saint Paul in the seconde to the Ephesians. And Eph.2.10. the same is also expressed plainly in the foure-score and fifteenth Psalme, where it is sayde Psal.95.6. that it is he that made vs. And Dauid in that place speaketh not of Gods first creating of vs, when wee were set into the worlde as his creatures: but hee meaneth it of his reforming of vs by his grace. Nowe then, if God did but foresee things: then sawe he nothing in vs but vtter rebellion and wickednesse. To bee short wee bee damnable in all respects, and heires of endlesse death. And therefore if hee chose vs before wee had done either good or euill: it was to magnifie his owne grace, as Saint Paul declareth in the nyenth to the Romanes. Rom.9.11. And so yee may see what Moses telleth vs here.

But nowe must wee come backe againe

True it is, that Moſes ſpeaketh here of the lande of Chanaan. But if men cannot deſerue any thing in this worlde in reſpect of tranſitorie things: howe ſhall they deſerue euerlaſting life? If I cannot winne a little peece of grounde: how ſhall I winne a whole realme? So then, let vs marke that of the things that are ſayd here, wee muſt gather a generall doctrine, which is, that if the children of Iſrael were put in poſſeſſion of the lande that had beene promiſed them, not for their owne righteouſneſſe ſake, but through Gods free goodneſſe: it is much more reaſon that when we ſpeake of the heauenly life, and of the inheritance of the heauenly glorie, wee ſhoulde not dreame vppon any power of our owne, but acknowledge that God hath vttered his righteouſneſſe and ſhewed his goodneſſe in his vouchſafing to chooſe vs. And let vs marke well the argumentes and reaſons which Moſes alleageth here, to pull downe all pride withall, that men might not take occaſion to vaunt themſelues. *God* (ſayeth hee) *hath driuen out theſe people before you*. That is one point. So then, wil wee bee rid of all vaineglorie? Let vs beholde our ſelues aduiſedly in thoſe whome God puniſheth, and againſt whome he vſeth his extreme rigour. Are wee any better than they? In deede a number of vs can well flatter our ſelues: but yet wee recken without our hoſte, wee come all of Adams corrupt raſe, wee be all forlorne and damned by nature. What is to be done then? Surely if wee conſider well what wee bee: it will ſuffice to beate downe all our preſumption. It is ſaide in the prouerbe, that hee which knoweth himſelfe beſt, ſettes leaſt by himſelfe: but it is ill put in vre. And wee muſt not ſaye, hee ſetteth little by himſelfe: but wee muſt paſſe yet farther: namely, that hee which knoweth himſelfe well, may ſet nothing at all by himſelfe, but rather vtterly abaſe himſelfe, and bee vtterly aſhamed of himſelfe. And here yee ſee what the true knowledge of a mans ſelfe is. Humilitie or lowlineſſe is not a counterfaiting to doe little before God, or to vſe ſome niſe ceremonies: but a through examining and ſifting of a mans ſelfe, ſo as hee acknowledge that there is neither wiſedome, power, righteouſneſſe, nor aught elſe in him, whereof hee may boaſt: but rather conſider on the contrarie parte, that wee bee full of vanitie, leaſing, and vnfaithfulneſſe, that wee bee vnruly and rebellious againſt God, that wee bee fraught full of wicked luſtes, that there is a ſea of all naughtineſſe in vs, and that the faireſt ſhewe of vertue which wee haue, is but filth and dung before God. Lo howe the Scripture ſpeaketh of vs: lo howe it blazeth our armes. Nowe therefore, when men haue well conſidered themſelues: they muſt make this compariſon. Alas, I ſee Gods wrath lye vppon ſuch a man or ſuch a woman, yea and vppon ſuch great and excellent nations. Wee ſee a great number nowadayes which are farre off from the light of life, whereas in the meane while the Goſpell is preached vnto vs, and the way into Gods kingdome is ſet open vnto vs. And yet for all this, are wee better worthie of it than they? Wherein? Let vs looke a little vppon our owne deſeruinges, and let vs alledge all that is poſſible to bee deuiſed. Why then doeth God preferre vs before them? Becauſe it pleaſeth him ſo to doe. So then, looke howe many wretched caſtawayes wee ſee ſtraying away from God, and looke how many ſilly ſoules wee ſee puniſhed at Gods hande: let them all bee as lookingglaſſes for vs to behold our ſelues in, and to make vs conclude, that if God liſted to ſhewe himſelfe a iudge in handling vs after our deſertes, wee ſhoulde bee no more ſpared than they bee, and that our ſtanding is through his free goodneſſe, in aſmuch as hee beareth with vs, and vouchſafeth to ſhewe himſelfe fauourable. Lo what light wee ought to take at Gods mercie towardes vs, when wee ſee his vengeance vppon the vnbeleeuers and rebelles, accordingly alſo as Saint Paul telleth vs in the Epiſtle to the Romanes, that we ſhoulde be vterly damned with the wicked, if God ſpared vs not of his owne free goodneſſe. And that is ſaide vnto vs to the intent wee ſhoulde not take any fonde conceit in our ſelues, that might puffe vs vp and make vs drunken. For if wee giue not God the glorie, acknowledging his goodneſſe to be the thing that wee reſt vppon: lurely hee muſt needes make vs feele to our coſt, that wee bee not worthie to finde ſuch mercie and fauour at his hande. Thus yee ſee why Moſes tolde the Iewes, *that the Chananites & their neighbours ſhoulde bee deſtroyed at Gods hande for their ſinnes ſake*. Well then, the Iewes might haue replyed at the firſt bluſh, If God puniſh them becauſe of their ſinnes: his putting of vs in their place, is a token that hee findeth vs to bee better and righteouſer than them. It is not ſo. For Moſes declareth, that Gods chooſing of the Iewes (as ſhalbee ſhewed more fully hereafter) was not for that they were worthier: for they were much more incorrigible than thoſe nations: and yet did God chooſe them. Now then, let vs learne to profite our ſelues by all the chaſticementes which wee ſee, and which God ſheweth vs in this worlde. And foraſmuch as the blowes light not vppon our ſelues, let vs not forbeare to come to his ſchoole and to humble our ſelues vnto him. For wee haue deſerued to bee touched as roughly by God, as they haue done which are damned. But what? As I ſaide afore, he beareth with vs. That is the firſt argument.

Pſal. 62. 10. & Luk. 16. 15 & Ro. 8. 6, 7.

Deut. 9. 4.

Pſal. 147.

The ſeconde is this: *When the Lord ſhall haue driuen out the people before thee*. Here Moſes cutteth off all the fonde bragges wherewith men deceiue themſelues. As howe? If wee had not played the tall fellowes in fighting manfully againſt our enemies, what had become of vs? We had ſtrong enemies, they were mightie and puiſſant, they had huge fortreſſes and munitions, they were tall of ſtature like Gyants, and wee were but dwarfes in compariſon of them: and therefore it ſtoode vs on bande to pluche vp a ſtout courage. Moſes wypeth away all this ſaying: Ye ſilly ſoules, it is your God that fought for you, it was not your ſelues. So then, let vs learne

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The thirde reason that Moses alleageth is this: *that God in seising his people in possession of the promised lande, had an eye to the promise which he had made and sworne to Abraham, Isaac, & Iacob.* Hereby the Iewes are put in minde, that God chose them not as more worthie, more noble, & more excellent than other men, as hath beene shewed alreadie: but because hee had made promise to their forefathers. But nowe let vs see what cause moued and led God to giue this lande to Abraham and to his seede. If he had had an eye to mans worthinesse: Abraham deserued much more than any other, to haue beene set in possession of that lande. And yet contrariwise, his dwelling there was but as a stranger, he was driuen out of it, and hee was so farre off from hauing of it at his commaundement, that he was Heb.11.9. kept euen from water, not onely when he would haue borowed it at other mennes pittes, but also when he had digged pittes by his owne labour: both hee and his successours were driuen from Gen.21.25. them. Lo how the holy Patriarches were tossed too and fro, and how men mocked them & did them many outrages & wrongs, and of all that while they had not one foote of grounde more than a burying place. In so much that at length, Iacob was driuen to pay for the grounde where Gen.32.18. & 33.19.& he lodged and pitched his tents: and finally constrayned to goe into the lande of Egypt, by reason of dearth which draue him out of the lande of Chanaan. Now seeing that the holie fathers were not putte in possession of it during their liues: shall wee say that their posteritie were worthier than they? No: it followeth then that Gods couenãt was merely of free gift, and that he had no respect to any desertes of mẽ. And why? Because he loued that people. Wee must not aske whether he founde any vertue in them or no: but it must suffice vs that hee listed to magnifie his mercie. As if he should say, I seek no cause in men to doe them good. But I find it in my selfe. For of men that are worthie to bee vtterly reiected, I choose out some and take them to bee my children, to the intent they shoulde giue mee all the prayse thereof. That is the thing which Moses had an eye vnto, in alleaging the couenant which God had made with their fathers. Nowe wee knowe (as I said afore) that this couenant was made before these people were borne. They could not say that God regarded what they were, as some phantasticall persons do, which say that God foresawe what men woulde be. If he doe but foresee: surely he shall finde vs all diuels, that is to say vnhappie and cursed creatures, full of all wickednesse, and such as haue nothing but vtter abhomination in vs. Those are the thinges that God shall finde in vs, if he doe but foresee. Nay, if he wil haue vs good: he him selfe must frame vs thereto: for wee bee his workemanship as sayeth Saint Paul in the seconde to the Ephesians. And Eph.2.10. the same is also expressed plainly in the fourescore and fifteenth Psalme, where it is sayde Psal.95.6. that it is he that made vs. And Dauid in that place speaketh not of Gods first creating of vs, when wee were set into the worlde as his creatures: but hee meaneth it of his reforming of vs by his grace. Nowe then, if God did but foresee things: then sawe he nothing in vs but vtter rebellion and wickednesse. To bee short wee bee damnable in all respects, and heires of endlesse death. And therefore if hee chose vs before wee had done either good or euill: it was to magnifie his owne grace, as Saint Paul declareth in the nyenth to the Romanes. Rom.9.21. And so yee may see what Moses telleth vs here.

But nowe must wee come backe againe

to the sayde comparison that I touched afore: which is, that if God woulde haue the saide couenant which hee made concerning the lande of Chanaan and the temporal succession, to bee knowen to be of his free goodnesse: it is much more reason, that when he calleth vs to be heires of his kingdome, and sheweth him selfe to bee our God and Sauiour, his goodnesse shoulde haue the highest degree, and all respectes of deseruing be layde awaye, so as men shoulde not imagine themselues to haue I wote not what power of their owne, to preuent Gods goodnesse. Then let vs marke well, that Gods calling of vs, and his vouchsafing to inlighten vs in the beliefe of his Gospell: is because he had chosen vs, not onely from our mothers wombes, but also before the worlde was created, yea, and because it pleased him to haue vs and to take vs for his owne, euen before all eternitie. And so wee haue no cause to alleage any thing at all in our owne behalfe, but rather to bee ashamed of our selues, that God may onely bee exalted, and haue all praise giuen vnto him. Furthermore let vs consider well, that wee knowe not why God hath preferred vs before others: for it is only he that putteth a difference betwixt vs, as sayth Saint Paul to the Corinthians. Who is he (saith Paul) that maketh thee to excell? And in deede God sheweth vs matter ynough why hee shoulde altogether cast vs downe, in so much that when the faithfull haue throughly examined what is in themselues: they see nothing there but vtter wretchednesse, and those are they that knowe them selues best. What is the cause that a number become so proude? It is for that they keepe aloofe from God, and are so full of hypocrisie that they take vice to bee vertue, and (which woorse is) doe sooth themselues in their vices, filth, and wretchednesse. But the faithfull beeing well wakened, doe consider what Gods iustice is. After they haue well examined themselues, they haue an eye to their faultes, and without flattering of themselues, they take Gods worde to them to discouer all the naughtinesse in them, whereby they knowe howe to condemne themselues in good earneſt, & they hinder not themselues through any hypocrisie. Therefore when God commeth to the faithfull, they acknowledge their owne misdeedes and hate them in their hearts. And when God hath refourmed them, so as they feele that hee hath wrought in them by his holye Ghoste: they father all vppon his free goodnesse, knowing well that there is no thing in them woorthie to bee made account of.

Ephes. 1. 4.

2. Cor. 4. 7.

And let vs marke herewithall, that sith our Lorde vouchsafed to keepe the couenaunt which hee sware to the holy Patriarches: wee neede not to dout but that hee will keepe and perfourme the promise at this day, whereby he hath willingly bounde himselfe vnto vs. The worde *Sweare* is set downe, because God considering mennes frailne, thinkes it not ynough to make them a single promise, as I haue tolde you heretofore: but also hath vouchsafed to sweare, that they might haue the better warrant to rest vppon him and vppon his sayings. In deede God ought to bee heard and obeyed, though hee giue but his bare worde: but yet he condescendeth to our infirmitie, and so hath hee vouchsafed to doe euen from the beginning, so as hee hath not thought it ynough to giue vs his bare worde, but hee hath also warranted it with a solemne othe. Wherefore, if in these dayes there rise any dout concerning our saluation, yea, or but euen concerning this transitorie life: if wee dout what shall become of vs let vs haue an eye to his promises, assuring our selues that they bee warranted to the vttermost, to the intent wee shoulde haue no cause to cast any dout of them at all. Beholde our God sweareth, and yet wee charge him with vnfaithfulnesse: yea, and wee accuse him, not onely of vntrueth, but also of trecherie, yea, and euen of periurie: and what a diuelish blasphemie is that? So then, let vs learne to sticke to the promises that are so well warranted vnto vs, vnlesse wee will bee blamed for blaspheming God after that fashion.

And let vs marke moreouer, that if he haue kept the promise which hee made to Abraham, who was but a poore mortall man, and confirmed the same to Isaac and Iacob, who were but weake creatures though they had receiued ma- Heb. uer so excellent giftes of grace: wee may much better trust that hee will not fayle vs in the couenant which hee hath made with vs, by the hande of our Lorde Iesus Christ the king of glorie and head of Angels, which is the fountayne of all righteousnesse and holinesse.

So then, wee see howe this doctrine belongeth vnto vs, at leastwise, if wee stop not our eares, and forsake not the thinges that are offered vs through the great bountifulnesse of our God, as wee see the moste parte of the worlde doeth nowadayes, seeking altogither to blinde their owne eyes, that they might not knowe any whit at all of the thinges that are vttred them concerning Gods promises. Let a man call them to the Gospell, let him shewe them the way of saluation, and they wote not what it meaneth, they take no taste of it. And why? Because some of them bee traytours and hypocrites, some be open despisers of Gods maiestie, and othersome bee so forepossessed of their owne wicked affections, as they will not giue any eare vnto God, nor suffer him to haue any entrance in vnto them. But as for vs, let vs looke that wee submit our selues willingly to his sayings, and receiue his worde with awe and reuerence, and bee readie to fight vnder the Ensigne of our Captaine Iesus Christ, in resisting all the temptations of this worlde stoutly, and in ridding awaye of all our wicked lustes.

And in so dooing, let vs not dout but that as GOD adopted vs before wee were borne, and chose vs of his owne mercie, and hath called vs to his Gospel, and receiueth vs presently into his protection: so in the ende hee will bring vs to his euerlasting inheritaunce, to

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enioye the endeleſſe glorie which hee hath promiſed vs.

Nowe lette vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe ſo to cleanſe vs of them, as wee may bee ledde to true repentaunce, and learne to miſlike more of our ſelues than we haue done, that wee may hate the ſinnes whereby we prouoke him to diſpleaſure, and hee ſo arme vs with his ſtrength as wee quayle not: and againe that foraſmuch as this life is a continuall battell, we may not be ſlothfull nor fall aſleepe, but euerie man indeuor to make the ſtrength of the hol. Ghoſt auayleable vnto him, ſo as it may make vs to get the vpper hande of all our ghoſtly enemies, euen vntill GOD haue taken vs hence into his reſt. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not only to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxviii of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lxiij. Sermon which is the ſeconde vpon the ninth Chapter.

6 Knowe ye therefore &c.

7 Remember and forget not that thou diddeſt anger the Lord thy God in the wilderneſſe. Euen from the day that yee came out of the land of Egypt, vnto the time that you came vnto this place, you haue rebelled againſt the Lord.

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to the sayde comparison that I touched afore: which is, that if God woulde haue the saide couenant which hee made concerning the lande of Chanaan and the temporal succession, to bee knowen to be of his free goodnesse: it is much more reason, that when he calleth vs to be heires of his kingdome, and sheweth him selfe to bee our God and Sauiour, his goodnesse shoulde haue the highest degree, and all respectes of deseruing be layde awaye, so as men shoulde not imagine themselues to haue I wote not what power of their owne, to preuent Gods goodnesse. Then let vs marke well, that Gods calling of vs, and his vouchsafing to inlighten vs in the beliefe of his Gospell: is because he had chosen vs, not onely from our mothers wombes, but also before the worlde was created, yea, and because it pleased him to haue vs and to take vs for his owne, euen before all eternitie. And so wee haue no cause to alleage any thing at all in our owne behalfe, but rather to bee ashamed of our selues, that God may onely bee exalted, and haue all praise giuen vnto him. Furthermore let vs consider well, that wee knowe not why God hath preferred vs before others: for it is only he that putteth a difference betwixt vs, as sayth Saint Paul to the Corinthians. Who is he (saith Paul) that maketh thee to excell? And in deede God sheweth vs matter ynough why hee shoulde altogether cast vs downe, in so much that when the faithfull haue throughly examined what is in themselues: they see nothing there but vtter wretchednesse, and those are they that knowe them selues best. What is the cause that a number become so proude? It is for that they keepe aloofe from God, and are so full of hypocrisie that they take vice to bee vertue, and (which woorse is) doe sooth themselues in their vices, filth, and wretchednesse. But the faithfull beeing well wakened, doe consider what Gods iustice is. After they haue well examined themselues, they haue an eye to their faultes, and without flattering of themselues, they take Gods worde to them to discouer all the naughtinesse in them, whereby they knowe howe to condemne themselues in good earnest, & they hinder not themselues through any hypocrisie. Therefore when God commeth to the faithfull, they acknowledge their owne misdeedes and hate them in their hearts. And when God hath reformed them, so as they feele that hee hath wrought in them by his holye Ghoste: they father all vppon his free goodnesse, knowing well that there is no thing in them woorthie to bee made account of.

Ephes. 1. 4.

1. Cor. 4. 7.

And let vs marke herewithall, that sith our Lorde vouchsafed to keepe the couenaunt which hee sware to the holy Patriarches: wee neede not to dout but that hee will keepe and perfourme the promise at this day, whereby he hath willingly bounde himselfe vnto vs. The worde *Sweare* is set downe, because God considering mennes frailtie, thinkes it not ynough to make them a single promise, as I haue tolde you heretofore: but also hath vouchsafed to sweare, that they might haue the better warrant to rest vppon him and vppon his sayinges. In deede God ought to bee heard and obeyed, though hee giue but his bare worde: but yet he condescendeth to our infirmitie, and so hath hee vouchsafed to doe euen from the beginning, so as hee hath not thought it ynough to giue vs his bare worde, but hee hath also warranted it with a solemne othe. Wherefore, if in these dayes there rise any dout concerning our saluation, yea, or but euen concerning this transitorie life: if wee dout what shall become of vs let vs haue an eye to his promises, assuring our selues that they bee warranted to the vttermost, to the intent wee shoulde haue no cause to cast any dout of them at all. Beholde our God sweareth, and yet wee charge him with vnfaithfulnesse: yea, and wee accuse him, not onely of vntrueth, but also of trecherie, yea, and euen of periurie: and what a diuelish blasphemie is that? So then, let vs learne to sticke to the promises that are so well warranted vnto vs, vnlesse wee will bee blamed for blaspheming God after that fashion.

And let vs marke moreouer, that if he haue kept the promise which hee made to Abraham, who was but a poore mortall man, and confirmed the same to Isaac and Iacob, who were but weake creatures though they had receiued neuer so excellent giftes of grace: wee may much better trust that hee will not fayle vs in the couenant which hee hath made with vs, by the hande of our Lorde Iesus Christ the king of glorie and head of Angels, which is the fountayne of all righteousnesse and holinesse. Heb. 1.

So then, wee see howe this doctrine belongeth vnto vs, at leastwise, if wee stop not our eares, and forsake not the thinges that are offered vs through the great bountifulnesse of our God, as wee see the moste parte of the worlde doeth nowadayes, seeking altogither to blinde their owne eyes, that they might not knowe any whit at all of the thinges that are tolde them concerning Gods promises. Let a man call them to the Gospell, let him shewe them the way of saluation, and they wote not what it meaneth, they take no taste of it. And why? Because some of them bee traytours and hypocrites, some be open despisers of Gods maiestie, and othersome bee so forepossessed of their owne wicked affections, as they will not giue any eare vnto God, nor suffer him to haue any entrance in vnto them. But as for vs, let vs looke that wee submit our selues willingly to his sayings, and receiue his worde with awe and reuerence, and bee readie to fight vnder the Ensigne of our Captaine Iesus Christ, in resisting all the temptations of this worlde stoutly, and in ridding awaye of all our wicked lustes.

And in so dooing, let vs not dout but that as GOD adopted vs before wee were borne, and chose vs of his owne mercie, and hath called vs to his Gospel, and receiueth vs presently into his protection: so in the ende hee will bring vs to his euerlasting inheritance, to

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enioye the endeleſſe glorie which hee hath promiſed vs.

Nowe lette vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe ſo to cleanſe vs of them, as wee may bee ledde to true repentaunce, and learne to miſlike more of our ſelues than we haue done, that wee may hate the ſinnes whereby we prouoke him to diſpleaſure, and hee ſo arme vs with his ſtrength as wee quayle not: and againe that foraſmuch as this life is a continuall battell, we may not be ſlothfull nor fall aſleepe, but euerie man indeuor to make the ſtrength of the holy Ghoſt auayleable vnto him, ſo as it may make vs to get the vpper hande of all our ghoſtly enemies, euen vntill GOD haue taken vs hence into his reſt. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not only to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxviii of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lxiij. Sermon which is the ſeconde vpon the ninth Chapter.

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onely endeuour to iustifie themselues, but also proceede so farre, as euen to accuse God. And that is the cause why he sayeth by his prophete Esaie, Well then, let vs goe to lawe together, and let there be some vmper betwixt vs, to see who shall haue the better hande. True it is that God can not be subiect to any iudge or vmper, for his maiestie can not beare it. But hee laugheth mens cursed statelinesse to scorne, in y they repyne so against him, and would bring him downe (as it were to the barre) againste them, to weete who had the better case. God therefore in respect of such presumptuousnesse, sayeth, I am contented to haue the matter debated and discussed, I will alleage my reasons and you shall alleadge yours, and men shall discerne who hath the right and who hath the wrong. Nowe, hee speaketh not after the same fashion heere: but he telleth the people in one worde, that if they pretende any righteousnesse of their owne, he can well disproue them. And for certainetie thereof, knowe yee (sayeth Moses) *that yee bee a Stiffenecked people.*

Esa. 43.26.

We see that this doctrine is more than needefull nowe adayes. For if euer men were puffed vppe with pride: if euer they were setled in hypocrisie: wee see it is nowe in these dayes. GOD is mocked with open mouth, and yet the wickeddest sorte will needes be highliest exalted, and that no man shoulde bee so bolde as to open his lippes against them. So muche the more therefore hath this doctrine neede to bee set foorth, that all loftinesse may bee beaten downe, and no man presume anie more to exalt him selfe: to that poynt must wee come.

Wee see that euen among the Papists, they that holde this opinion most, namely that men are iustified by their workes, are leaudest losselles in all their conuersation. Looke me vpon these hypocrites, and vppon all the doctors of poperie: when they intende to maintaine their owne merites, and that men are not iustified by fayth: they crie out with full throte and open mouth, What? Ought not Christians to be a holy people sanctified vnto God? And ought not the holie Ghoste to gouerne vs? Ought we not to leade an Angelicall life? And yet for all this, yee shall see them to be whoremongers, drunkardes, periurers, traytours, full of vnfaithfulnesse, guyle, and extortion, so as there shall not be one sparke of feare towardes GOD, or of honestie towardes man in them. And yet notwithstanding, they pretende to bee the earnestest defenders of merites, and the deuoutest persons that can be: insomuch that to heare them, yee would thinke there were nothing but holinesse in them, when as in the meane whyle their life is most detestable, and shamefull, as all the worlde may playnely see. But yet doe men deceiue themselues after that fashion. And for that cause hath Moses sette downe this text, not onely for his owne time, but also as a rule for vs to practise to the worldes ende.

Therefore when wee bee tempted with ouerweening, so as our flesh prouoketh vs to presume I worte not howe to magnifie ourselues: lette vs remember what is sayde heere, [and let vs thinke thus with our selues:] Howe nowe? Consider what thou arte, and howe thou hast liued. If thou shouldest come to account before GOD, couldest thou go through with it? Considerest thou not that thou arte one of the miserablest kaytifes in the worlde? And when thou goest about to aduaunce thyselfe: is it not a robbing of GOD of his righteousnesse, that he might not be knowen to bee as he is in deede? Yes: For Gods righteousnesse can not otherwise shine foorth, vnlesse we be vtterly confounded, so as we be condemned and hee onely iustified, and that wee acknowledge the same willingly. Hee then that will haue anie righteousnesse of his owne, doeth certainely defie GOD, and make warre against him. And therefore must wee haue an eye to this warning: How nowe? What is thy life? 'Art thou able to make answere when thou shalt be cited to the iudgement seate of thy maker? And therewithall lette vs consider howe it is sayde, that for euerie poynte which wee bee able to alleadge for our selues, GOD is able to alleadge a thousande against vs, so as we must needes be confounded. Thus yee see howe men shoulde be ledde to the considering of their liues, when they bee puffed vppe with any pryde, and bee desirous to iustifie themselues, that is to say, to chalendge anie deserte or worthinesse before GOD. And to make the Iewes vtterly condemned, Moses telleth them expresly that they were a stiffenecked people. This similitude is taken of beastes that shoulde beare the yoke. For if they bee sturdie and will not bowe their neckes to beare the yooke: they can doe a manne no seruice, they be vnprofitable: nay rather they do much harme in striking with their hornes, they breake all thinges asunder, and in steede of going forewarde, they drawe backe. In this respecte Moses declareth in one worde, that stiffenecked folke can by no meanes bee taken for righteous.

Iob 31.6. & Psal. 62.

Ier. 7.22.

And for the better vnderstanding hereof, lette vs marke howe it is sayde, that obedience is better than all the sacrifices in the worlde. 1. Sam. 15.22. Then lette vs beare in minde, that if men will needes chalendge righteousnesse to themselues, they must examine well whether they bowe downe their neckes to submit themselues wholely vnto God. For if they haue not that all the rest is nothing. They may well vaunt themselues before men: but yet all their vertues are no better than dunge, vntill they bee come so farre as to beare Gods yoke, that is to say, to behaue themselues according to his will, and t offer their life vnto him that hee may haue the ouer ruling of them, as hee lysteth, so as they bee contented to obey him simplye and without exception. Thus yee see that our trewe righteousnesse is obedience

dience: yea and such an obedience, as seeketh not to please mortall men, but the liuing God. And it is a point which we ought to marke well: for hereby the doctrine that I declared afore, is the better confirmed. Men doe alwayes surmise some meriting or deserving in themselues at their owne pleasure. When they will bee taken for holy and righteous, they haue their priuate deuotions, but in the meane while they make none account of beeing disobedient to GOD. Contrariwise it is tolde vs heere, that God requireth nothing more than obedience. For all that euer we can bring him of our owne, is nothing: but he tryeth whether we loue him and honour him or no, by telling vs his will, and by laying as it were a bridle or a yooke vpon our neckes, as if he shoulde say: Bee plyable vnder mee, come not perking vp with your heades against mee, sette not vppe your crestes, ne playe not the wylde coltes: but dispose your selues to order your liues according to my Lawes & commandements. That is the thing whereto GOD hath an eye. Not that he reapeth anie commoditie by vs, neither that wee can doe him anie harme: but because it is a true proofe that wee bee willing to honour him, when wee suffer him to gouerne vs, and runne not euerie man vpon his owne heade, but leaue to him his dewe souerainetie and dominion, saying: Lorde we be thy poore cattell, directe thou vs according to thine owne will. For we haue neither witte nor reason in vs, our lustes are vtterly frowarde. Nowe therefore reigne thou ouer vs O Lorde, and let thy lawe bee as a yooke and a bridle to vs. And it is the same thing also which hee meaneth by the sentence that I alleadged out of the first of Samuel, namely that obedience is better than al the Sacrifices in the worlde. Also the same thing is confirmed by Ieremie, saying: When thy fathers cam out of Egypt, did I require sacrifices or such other thinges at their handes? In deede God commaunded sacrifices: but yet the chiefe thing that hee required, was that they shoulde obey his voyce. The thing that God aimed at, the thing wherein all our righteousnesse consisteth, is to herken to his speeche, that his authoritie may weye with vs, so as wee fall not to replying to bee wise of our selues, nor to doe what wee thinke good: but that hee onely may haue the maistrie, and wee no more but open our eares and be heedeful to receiue his doctrin, yea and to receiue it in such wise as it may be as a yoke or bridle as I sayde afore, and ouer rule vs without any gainesaying. And heereby it appeareth, that if men bee not milde in submitting themselues wholely to Gods will: farewell all their honestie, their life is but leaude. For why? Whereas is nothing but disobedience, there is not any righteousnes, because the foundation of all righteousnesse and of all good behauiour, is to bee reformed according to the good will of GOD. We must not bring our owne meeteyeard nor our owne measure in this behalfe: but onely GOD himselfe must speake and be the iudge to discerne betwene good and bad: for it is hee to whome it belongeth to acquit or condemne. And hee alloweth or disalloweth what he himselfe thinkes good: and there remayneth nothing for vs but to say Amen, by allowing whatsoeuer hee thinketh good, and by condemning whatsoeuer he misliketh.

Iob.35.6.7. & Psal.16.2

Ier.7.22.

And Moses thinkes it not enough to haue sayde in one worde, *Thou art a stiffenecked people*: but he addeth therewithall, *Remember and forgesse not that thou diddest anger the Lorde thy God in the wildernesse, and howe many times ye haue disobeyed him, from the day that hee brought you out of the lande of Egypt, euen vnto this present time of his bringing of you vnto this place*. Nowe whereas he sayeth, *Remember and forgesse not*: it serueth to quicken them vppe the better, because men doe still couer their missedeedes, and as soone as they finde neuer so little a shadowe, or peece of colour to ouerlay their offences withall: they doe but wring their mouthes awrye, and by and by they thinke themselues verie righteous. Wee see howe it happened to our father Adam: it was no long time ere hee went to seeke figge leaues to couer himselfe withal. But as soone as he hadde offended, and GOD rebuked him, and that hee felt his owne rebellion and disobedience: what did hee? Whereas he shoulde haue come vnto GOD, and confessed his fault, that hee might haue obteined mercie and forgiuenesse: he runnes among the leaues and beares himselfe in hande that hee was wel couered, and that GOD shoulde see him no more, so he had some litle shadowe to hide himselfe withall. We put the same still in vre daily: wee haue no sooner committed anie faulte, but by and by we fall to shifting, and wee beate our braynes and wittes to finde out some lurkinghoole that GOD might not espye vs. To bee shorte, there is none of vs but hee makes a denne of theeues of his owne heart, vntill our Lorde doe touch him to the quicke, to bring vs to the simplicitie of acknowledgeing our faults. Nowe if we be so much inclined to disguise ourselues [out of hande,] by seeking shiftes and couertes to withstande Gods vengeance: what will we doe in length of time? Will wee not vtterly forgoe the remembraunce of our sinnes altogether? Yes: and that is the cause why Moses sayde, *Remember thy selfe and forgesse not*. It hadde beene ynough for him to haue sayde, *Remember thy selfe*. But forasmuch as men doe what they can to rocke themselues asleepe, and seeke meanes to sooth themselues: Moses doeth as it were twitch them by the eare heere, saying: Goe to sirs, it is not for you to fall a sleepe in this matter: although your nature be inclined thereto, yet must you not burie your sinnes, but yee must beare them still in minde, and sette them before your eyes, and then shall yee haue cause ynough to humble yourselues. Thus are we warned here, to bethinke vs oftentimes of the faultes that wee haue committed, and to beware that wee seeke not vaine colours, ne thinke not that wee haue spedde well, when wee haue founde some trifling shifte to iustifie our selues with all: but to learne to cast our

Gen.3.7.

selues

ſelues vtterly downe, and to miſlike of ourſelues, and to bee as men condemned, ſo as there remayne none other ſhift for vs, than to flee for refuge to the infinite mercie of our GOD. That is the greateſt benefite that wee can deuiſe to worke to our ſelues, all our life long. But howe ſhall wee be brought to it? By the knowingof our faultes. Now then, in ſteede of ſhunning it as a matter of greefe, and whereas weebe loth to thinke vpon the offences that haue prouoked Gods wrath: let euerie of vs bethinke himſelfe of them early and late, and let vs enter into the examination of our ſelues, to ſay, Alas, howe haue I liued in this worlde? Againe, lette vs not thinke vppon other folkes faultes, to make a buckler of them as wee bee wont to doe: but let vs call all our owne life to minde, nowe one ſinne, and nowe an other, and let vs caſt foorth our ſighes and ſobbes before GOD as witneſſes that wee be not willing to beſot our ſelues, nor to burie our ſelues in our owne dunge by welt'ring in it: but rather that wee woulde faine attaine to his righteouſneſſe, as whoſe indeuour is to hate and abhorre our ſinnes, and to magnifie Gods grace towardes vs. Which thing can not bee doone, vnleſſe our ſinnes miſlike vs, and wee thinke thus with our ſelues: Well then, needes muſt GOD haue vſed greate goodneſſe towardes mee, ſeeing he hath called me at ſuch time as I was forlorne. Againe, ſince his calling of mee, howe oft haue I deſerued to bee ſhaken off, and to be quite cutte off from his Church? And yet for all that, hee beareth with mee vnto this houre, and continueth his goodneſſe towardes mee ſtill. Thus ye ſee howe wee muſt bethinke vs of our ſinnes, to the ende that Gods goodneſſe may be knowen, and that wee may not onelie taſte of it, but alſo be fully ſatisfied with it.

And furthermore, according to Saint Paules exhortation, which is, that euery man ſhoulde quicken and ſpurre vppe himſelfe, when he ſeeeth his fleſhe willing to drawe him to forgetfulneſſe: Let vs not thinke it ſtraunge, though it be ſome greefe to vs at the firſt to thinke vppon our ſinnes. For why? wee be inclined to the fayde hypocriſie: but yet muſt we fight againſt it, and beware that wee feede it not. And ſo lette vs practiſe the thing that Moſes telleth vs here: which is, *not to forget*. As howe? nor that we can alwayes minde it, as reaſon woulde wee ſhoulde: but that the deceiuer foade vs not in our owne vaine flatteries, ſo that although hee ſtoppe our eyes for a time, yet God doe take away the towell, and make vs to ſee our owne diſhoneſtie in open light, ſo as wee be aſhamed of it. And therefore, when wee bethinke vs of our ſinnes and offences, let vs looke into our 2. Cor. 11. 31 ſelues, and quicke our ſelues vp: for we muſt play the iudges towards our ſelues, if we will obtaine mercie before GOD. Yea and if we will yeelde Iosua 7. 19. him the dewe prayſe of his grace: wee muſt come to the acknowledgement of our ſinnes. And that muſt not be done for once onely, but euerie of vs muſt giue himſelfe to examination both euening and morning, and vpon the knowledge of one faulte, wee muſt goe to the fiſting out of an other. Trewe it is that in this caſe there is no meaſure, neither can we be too circumſpect. But yet muſt men miſlike of themſelues ſo farre, as to learne to glorifie GOD accordingly: that is to ſay, to reſerue no prayſe, at all to themſelues, no not one graines waight, but to yeelde all goodneſſe vnto him alone, and to acknowledge that there is nothing but euill in themſelues. Thus yee ſee whereunto the knowledge of our ſinnes ought to leade vs. And we muſt neuer ceaſe, vntil we be come thither: and when we be come thither, we muſt continue in it ſtill. For at euerie turne we ſhall ſtumble into this blindneſſe againe, ſo as wee ſhall be prouder than we were afore, according as wee ſee that ſuch as haue liued in humilitie, doe in the ende become greateſt truſters to their owne witte, when they haue once forgotten themſelues. So then lette vs alwayes beare this leſſon in minde vnto our liues ende, for humilitie is ſo perfecte a vertue, as wee ſhall neuer finde it ſo ſubſtantially in vs as we woulde wiſhe. And therefore muſt we continue in the fayde endeuour, vntill wee be quite ridde of all the preſumptuouſneſſe of our fleſhe. For pryde is the ſinne that will bee laſt corrected, and it is the roote of all other offences. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember vpon this text where Moſes ſayth, Remember thy ſelfe, and forgette not the faultes which thou haſt committed. Pſal. 95. 10.

Nowe he addeth, *Howe thou diddeſt anger thy God in the wilderneſſe*. I haue tolde yee brefly alreadie, that the people were ſo muche the leſſe to be excuſed, for that they hauing knowen the wonders which GOD had wrought at their comming out of Ægypt, ceaſſed not to bee ſo malitious and frowarde, as to ſpitte out their poyſon againſt GOD. If they hadde done it afore, truely yet they hadde beene worthie of blame: but yet had their ſinne beene more tollerable. But nowe hadde God vttered his mightie arme in deliuering thoſe wretches out of the cruell bondage wherein they were: and yet notwithſtanding, euen after Gods working in that wiſe, and after they had ſeene the apparaunt ſignes of his maieſtie, they ceaſe not to ſtriue againſt him ſtill: and muſt it not needes be that the deuill poſſeſſeth them, and that they bee as good as bewitched with their owne malice? So then it is not without cauſe that Moſes noteth here the place of the wilderneſſe, to the ende that the people might bee the more humbled, and feele the greateneſſe and hougeneſſe of the offences which they had committed, foraſmuch as they were al at one poynt as if GOD had not vttered himſelfe vnto them at all. For it may fall out that fillie ſoules which neuer taſted of Gods trueth nor of his workes, ſhall ouerſhoote themſelues and be caried away. But ſeeing that GOD came ſo neere vnto the Iewes and tolde them, I am your Sauiour, I take you into my protection, I will make you to feele my power as though I came downe from heauen in mine owne perſon, and

dwelt visibly among you: I say when God speaketh after that fashion, and bindeth himselfe by his deedes, and yet for all that there is nothing in them but rebellion: must it not needes bee a desperate frowardenesse? Yes verily. And it is as a warning to make vs look to our selues. For seeing that GOD sheweth himselfe familiarly to vs for our welfare: hee bindeth vs so much the more vnto him, as hath beene declared heretofore. Therefore lette vs looke that we prouoke him not when hee hath made vs to feele his goodnesse: but let vs bee the more obedient vnto him, knowing that his intent in vouchsafing to succour vs, is that wee shoulde be moued thereby to honour him and serue him the better. And on the other side we shall be the more blameworthie, when GOD shall haue visited vs by his grace. As for example when he giueth vs his worde, he sheweth thereby that he hath a care of our saluation: so that if we benefite not our selues thereby in seruing him, surely wee deserue the grecuouser vengeance.

And Moses alleageth not heere the sinnes of one day: but hee telleth the people that they wente on still from euill to worse, euen since their comming out of Egypt, knowe ye (sayeth he) that ye haue euer beene disobedient to your God, euen vnto this day. There had passed at that time the space of fourtie yeares, and
Psal.95.10. that was a tiall long ynough, as is sayde in the fourescorce and fifteenth Psalme. For there GOD sheweth his inestimable patientnesse, which he vsed in bearing with the wilfull and intollerable malitiousnesse of that people, by the space of fourtie yeares together. But Moses reckeneth not the yeares heere: for that was a thing well ynough knowen to those whome he spake vnto. It was ynough for him to say, reckon you howe long it is agoe since your GOD brought you out of the bondage of Egypt: hee hath ledde you through the wilderneſſe, hee hath shewed himselfe alwayes present with you: & yet haue you not knowen him of al the while. Had yee missed but once onely, yet hadde ye well deserued to be chastised. But what? Seeing yee haue had so many warninges, so manie threatninges, so manie rebukes, and so many punishmentes; yea and so manie benefites also at Gods hande: and yet notwithstanding yee holde on still, and growe worse and worse in steede of amending: must it not needes bee sayde that ye be vtterly past recoueric? Yes: for our Lorde hath not lefte anie thing vndoone, that might bring yee backe into the right way: and yet for all that, yee haue continued stubbourne still, and withstoode him to the vttermost. Nowe therefore lette vs marke well this text where our Lorde vpbrayeth men, not with some one faulte, but with a continuall stubbornesse against him, in holding on still in their wilfulnesse, insomuch that though hee correct them both by deedes and wordes, yet are they still imbrewed with their sinnes, and delight and welter themselues in them. For wee see what is in vs. Trueth it is that wee woulde at the first sight condemne the thinges that are reported here of the Iewes: but we must also apply all those thinges to our instruction, according as it is sayde that that people must serue vs as a lookingglasse to beholde our selues in. Therefore lette vs beare in minde the thinges that Moses noteth heere. For whereas hee sayeth, *euer sithe the day*: hee comprehendeth all their rebellions that are rehearsed as well in the booke of Exodus, as in the booke of Numbers. There it is shewed, that as soone as the people were passed the wilderneſſe, by and by they fell to murmuring. Howe nowe, sayde they? was there not roome ynough to burie vs in Egypt? So that whereas they shoulde haue sayde, Alas Lorde, in deede thou haste beene singularly gratious vnto vs in deliuering vs from so painefull and miserable a life as wee were in: for we were taken but as wretched beastes; we were vtterly oppressed vnder the cruelties of the wicked and of thine enemies: and soothly Lorde this goodnesse of thine deserueth well to bee magnified: but yet thou bestowest thy selfe vppon vs after an other fashion: for in the wilderneſſe, we were destitute of all foode, so as wee shoulde haue beene fayne to dye for hunger, if thou haddest not pitied vs: and not onely so, but thou hast helde on still in succouring vs as we resorted to thee: therefore lette it please thee to beare with our weakeneſſe, and to feede vs as if wee were sillie birdes: for it is thou that feedest the Rauens and other foules, and wee be creatures formed after thine owne image: nay moreouer we be the people whome thou hast chosen: nowe therefore seeing thou haste vouchsafed to adopt vs for thy children, shewe vs at leastwise as much fauour as thou doest to other nations that are not so neere thee as wee are: whereas the people shoulde haue come with all lowelinesse to acknowledge the former good turnes that GOD had doone them, and thereby haue assured themselues with certainetie of fayth, that he woulde holde on still for the time to come: in steede of doing so, they sayde: Was there not roome enough in Egypt to burie vs in? They did quite and cleane forgette the fauour which they had receiued at Gods hande. And againe, when they were in necessitie, they came not to him with intreataunce, but with murmuring, rayling and accusing. Likewise when Manna had beene giuen them from heauen, and they had eaten of it: yet they demaunded drinke after an other fashion. They aske their almes with the sworde in their fist. Like as the theefe that woulde cutte the throte of a trauciler: so these leaude loselles fel to spyting of GOD the seconde time, saying: Yea in deede wee haue Manna to feed on, but we must haue drinke too. Yea and when GOD had giuen them drinke, and made a streame to gushe out of the rockes y would not suffice them neither. For the Manna was soo vnsauorie a food for them, they would needs haue varietie. They had stil Mãna & Manna, & they were glutted with it: & yet notwithstanding it was a good & sauorly nourishment.

Psal.104.29 & 147.9.

Exod.14.11 & 16.3.

Exod.17.2. Numb.20.3

Numb.11.4 32.

Besides

Beſides this, they were not driuen to till the grounde, they were not faine to trouble themſelues much with the earning of their liuing: for God gaue them both meate and drinke: and yet notwithſtanding they cryed out vpon him ſtill, Giue, giue: Their luſts were ſo inordinate, that they prouoked Gods vengeance againſt themſelues, by murmuring againſt him for wante of fleſhe. Loe heare a marueilous thankeleſneſſe. Well then, they had fleſh: but that was to choke them euen with their delicate morſelles, inſomuch that while the meate was yet in their throtes, Gods wrath was ſo kindled vpon them, that they payed very deere for their ſhotte, becauſe they were not contented with the ineſtimable good that God had done them. For the Manna was a heauenly foode, yea and a Pſal. 78. 25. foode of Angelles as it is layde in the Pſalme. But although they felt Gods puniſhmentes, and both ſawe and felt the vengeance that ouerwhelmed them: yet notwithſtading they ceaſed not to prouoke him to angernewe againe, after other faſhions, ſomtimes by committing whordome, ſometimes by banding againſt Moſes and Aaron, ſometime by murmuring, and ſometime by rayling. To be ſhort, there was neither ende nor meaſure of their doinges. And therefore not without cauſe doeth Moſes ſay vnto them heere, *Bethinke you of the great number of faultes which you haue committed euer ſince the day that you came out of the lande of Egypt, euen vnto this preſent time that God hath brought you into this Lande.*

Whereas he ſayeth, *God hath brought you*: it ſerueth to quicken them vppe the better. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, Who hath beene your leader? Leaude folke as ye be, your GOD hath well mainteyned, guided, and ledde you: hee hath vpholde you and helped you in all your neceſſities: and yet will you needes come and ſette vp your briſtles thus againſt him? Nowe ſith wee heare this of the Iewes: lette it not make vs to blame them: but lette it make vs behoulde our ſelues in their perſons, and conſider howe neere this example toucheth vs, that euerie of vs may looke into himſelfe, and all of vs acknowledge generally that wee bee no better than they. And for proofe thereof, we be not in a wilderneſſe, neither is there a time of fortie yeares ſette a forehande vnto vs: but lette euerie of vs take his whole life, euen from the time that GOD did put vs into this worlde, vnto our buryingday. Howe liue wee? God for his part powreth out ſo many benefites vpon vs, as wee haue good cauſe to ſerue and honour him, yea though there were no more than that which he hath done alreadie. But ſeeing hee continueth in doing vs good ſtill: is it not ynough to ſoften our heartes, though they were of yron or ſteele? Yes verily: and yet wee ceaſe not to ſpite him by going on ſtill from euil to worſe. Nowe then like as Moſes vpbrayded the Iewes with their continuaunce in euill dooing: ſo lette euerie of vs conſider, that our prouoking of our GOD hath not beene for once onelie: but that whereas wee ſhould haue beene drawen vnto him, wee haue ſtrunke away from him and rebelled againſt him. And whereas wee ſhoulde haue offered our ſelues readily to beare his yooke: wee haue beene ſo ſtubborne as hee coulde not wealde vs: and one naughtineſſe hath ſo drawen on another, that our ſinnes are come to a horrible confuſed heape. Thus then muſt we compare our ſelues with thoſe to whome Moſes ſpeaketh here.

Here it might be demaunded, howe Moſes can ſay that they which liued at that time, had rebelled againſt GOD euer ſince the time that they came out of Ægypt. For at that time the moſt parte of them were babes, or at leaſtwiſe not of full yeares of diſcretion. For we haue ſeene expreſſely in the firſt Chapter, that GOD was minded to haue deſtroyed all that companie, euen young children and all. For they that were come to mans eſtate, had made themſelues vnworthie to enioye the inheritaunce that was promiſed them, and they were baniſhed and ſhutte out from it. Howe then doeth Moſes vpbrayde them that they had not ceaſed to prouoke Gods wrath continually? For they might haue replyed: Howe ſo? Though our fathers miſſe behaued themſelues, ſo as they were vnthankefull, diſobedient, rebellious, and full of murmuring and wicked luſtes: ſhoulde thoſe thinges bee layde vpon vs? No: for wee coulde not doe withall. But let vs marke that heere the whole bodie of the people is ſo blamed, that the children are rightly condemned in the perſons of their fathers. For it was ſtill one bodie: and whereas the fathers behaued themſelues naughtily and wickedly: the children amended not, but continued in the ſame euill, as is to bee ſeene. And therefore foraſmuch as the children linked in with their fathers: it is meete that they ſhould be knit vp as it were all in one bundle, and that GOD ſhould condemne them all in generall. And after the ſame maner are they ſpoken of in the foureſcore & ninth, and alſo in the twoſcore and eighteenth Pſalmes. For there the Lorde ſayth, Remember your ſelues howe you were diſobedient to me in the wilderneſſe. And afterwarde the prophete rehearſeth their faultes againe, howe oftentimes they had misbehaued themſelues: and thereupon concludeth, that they had alwaies perſiſted in euill, euen frō their firſt entering into the lande of Chanaan. Inſomuch that if the fathers liued naughtily in the wilderneſſe, their children followed the ſame trade, yea and became much worſe. For when they were once in poſſeſſion of the heritage which was Gods reſting place: they ſhould haue giuen themſelues to the ſeruing and honoring of him to the vttermoſt of their power. But all their indeuour was to defile the lande which God had hallowed to himſelfe, by filling it full of ſuperſtition and ydolatrie. God gaue them the inheritaunce freely, as if he ſhould haue ſayde, I aske no more of you but that ye ſerue me, acknowledging that I haue beene a good louing father to you, and that I haue alwayes maintayned and kept you. But in ſteede of doing homage to

God

God for these things, the people fel to setting vp of idols, borowing all the corruptions of the heathen, and bringing in false and counterfet Religions. Ye see then that they deserued well to be estraunged and quite cut of from God. Also wee see that the prophetes did continually vpbraide the children of Israell with their vnthankfulnes, yea euen generally, according also as euery man was giltie thereof. And S. Steuen hath declared my sayd reason yet better. For he sayth, ye haue euer resisted the holy Ghost, like as your fathers did afore you. If the Iewes of that time had quietly submitted themselues to the Gospell, and receaued Iesus Christ as their sauiour, so as they had honored and imbraced him with fayth and repentance: S. Steuen would not haue gone about to rip vp the shame of their forefathers. For that was hidden. But for as much as they turned all thinges vpside downe, and beleeued not the Gospell, but forsooke the grace of God, and trampled it vnder their feete, aduauncing themselues with diueliſh pride and furie, to abolish the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and to deface the goodnesse that GOD had shewed them: it was requisite that the sinnes of their fathers should be put into their account, and that God should set himselfe against them, to condemne the malicious wilfulnesse of that people, and the faultes that had beene committed by the space of two or three thousand yeeres afore. And therefore let vs learne, that although God pardon the offences of our fathers that haue doone amisse: yet shall they not fayle to remayne still of record in his regists, if we hold on and continue like vnto them. Will we then haue the sinnes of our forefathers buried, and ỹ God should forget thē and not call vs to accoumpt for them? Let vs looke that we be the carefuller to keepe our selues from being like to them. And so ye see how it is expedient for vs to thinke vpon the sinnes that haue bin cōmitted before we were borne. Let vs consider thus: Alas I was yet vnborne at that time: but howe shall I do, if my forefathers haue done amisse, and that I for my part bee put in among them? For it is saide that God gathereth together the sins of the fathers vnto the third & fourth generation, to let them fall vpon their children. Then doe we deserue to be destroyed and to perish, if God listed to vse rigour towardes vs. For the saide threat of the law is rightful, and might iustly be executed vpon our heads: and if he spare vs, it is of his owne mere goodnesse. For to what purpose should we put ouer the fault to our fathers, of prouoking Gods wrath both against themselues and vs: when we our selues continue in their wickednes? Ought not the vengeance to be dubble, when we on our part haue cleaued to their sinnes as well as they? Thus ye see what we haue to remember vppon this place, where Moses doeth not onely blame them that liued in his time for the things then presently committed: but also moreouer charge them with all the transgressions that their fathers had committed, from their comming out of Egypt, vnto that day. Nowe then the thing that we haue to marke heere in effect, is that men doe not onely marre themselues, by bearing themselues on hande that they bee righteous, for want of considering their sinnes throughly: but also that they puffe vp themselues with pride, so as they will needes make God beleeue that blacke is white. And therfore let it prouoke vs to condemn our selues willingly according to this doctrine of Moses. So then, let vs acknowledge our sinnes truly and vnfeynedly, ỹ we may so mislike of thē, as there may not one drop of fond presumptuousnesse remain in vs, but that we may be vtterly cast downe, and acknoweledge that there is nothing but vtter wretchednesse in vs, and that we be beholden to God for all goodnesse, so as we haue it of his free gift, and not as in recompence of any reward for any merit or desert of ours, but onely of his own free mercy which he hath vsed towardes vs. So farre then must we come of necessitie. And for performance hereof, let vs euening & morning inforce and indeuour our selues to call to minde the faults that we haue committed. And that we may enter into this triall and examination of our selues: let vs bethinke vs both of our owne sinnes and of the sinnes of our forefathers, and let vs assure our selues that if God woulde play the Iudge with vs, wee shoulde not onely bee vtterly rooted out, for our owne faultes which are yet freshe in our remembrance, but also all the euill that hath beene committed before we were borne, might iustly be called backe againe vpon our heades, seeing wee be wrapped in the same offences that our auncetors were. Therefore let vs thinke well vpon these things: that wee may magnifie the goodnesse of our God in bearing with vs. And to the intent wee play not the hypocrites: let vs marke well how it is sayde, that it is ynough to haue prouoked GOD alreadie. For when they haue fought against God and his worde, and haue behaued themselues lewdly all the time of their lyfe: yet at their death they make no conscience to say, I thought I did as wel in fighting against God, as if I had fought against the Pope and the Masse. [What a thing is it] to vse such speech? Is it not apparant that such folke are vtterly past recouerie, as haue their consciences so dulled, and that the diuell carieth them away, so as they can no more be sorie for their sinnes, (which, as sayeth S. Paule, is the full measure of all confusion:) when such graceleſse creatures will needes iustifie themselues after that sort with so vaine coūterfures? Let vs marke well then, that wee must not alleage, I thought so: but it is ynough that we haue prouoked our God. And if moreouer our owne conscience accuse vs thereof: what will become of vs? Will God in the meane while become as a dead idoll which seeth not our offences at all? A man thinketh his owne wayes to bee good, sayeth Salomon: but our Lorde holdeth the balance in his hand and weyeth our woorkes. And Saint Iohn telleth vs, that if wee feele any heartbyting in our conscience: the same iudgeth vs alreadie: and what will become of vs then, when wee come before God? Doeth not he see clearer than our owne consciences?

1.Tim.4.2.

Prou.16.2.

1.Iohn 3.20

Yes: and therefore let vs marke wel that we shal win nothing by flattering of our selues: but God must be faine to woorke so in vs, as we may bee ouermaistred and vtterly cast downe to say, Alas if GOD should not spare vs wee were vndoone. And moreouer let vs knowe, that our true righteousnesse, (I meane not to glory of it, but to seeke it to our benefite): is to beare Gods yoke, so as wee liue not after our owne lustes and lykinges, but that if it please GOD to exercise vs with afflictions, wee shewe by all maner of patience, that wee haue a necke plyable vnder him. Finally for as much as his lawe ought to serue vs for a brydle: let vs suffer our selues to bee ruled and gouerned by his hand, so as we be not giuen to our owne foolishe deuotions, ne come replying to him with this and that, but be contented to let our GOD try our obedience, seeing hee hath giuen vs his lawe. Then let vs see that our life bee framed according to his will, which is the onely rule of well dooing: and let vs submit our selues wholy thereunto, as we see we be warned heereby Moses.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good GOD with acknowledgment of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe to touche vs with them to the quicke and to take from vs all blynde foldinges of hypocrisie, that nothing may keepe vs from being ashamed and cast downe in our selues vntill wee bee raysed agayne by fayth and hope of his goodnesse and mercie: praying him also that when hee hath once made vs to feele our diseases, it may please him to salue with the grace of his holy spirite, so as wee may liue according to his good will. And so let vs all say, Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xxix. of August. 1555.

The Lxiij Sermon which is the third vppon the ninth Chapter.

8 Also ye prouoked the Lord to anger in Horeb: for the which, the Lord was wroth with you to destroy you.

9 When I went vp into the Mount to fetch the two tables of stone, euen the tables of the Couenant which the Lord had made with you, and had taryed in the Mount fortie dayes and fortie nightes, without eating of bread or drinking of water:

10 Then the Lord gaue mee the two tables of stone, written with the finger of God, wherein were contentes according to all the woordes which the Lorde had spoken to you on the Mountaine, from the middes of the fire, in the day of your assembling togither.

11 And it came to passe that in the ende of fortie dayes and fortie nightes, the Lord gaue mee the two tables of stone, euen the tables of the Couenant.

12 Then said the Lord vnto mee, vp and get thee downe quickly from hence: for thy people whome thou broughtest out of Egypt haue marred all. They bee suddainly turned aside from the way that I commaunded them, and haue made them a molten image.

WE sawe yesterday howe Moses did cast the people in the teeth with their malicious stubbornnesse, in that they had not ceassed from dooing of euill, euen since GOD had deliuered them from the thraldome of Egypt. And surely it was an ill acknowledging of such a benefite, to spyte him so wilfully, which had beene their Redeemer and Father. But nowe he alleageth a greater faulte of theirs, and farre more outrageous: that the remembraunce thereof myght leade them yet further, namely to bethinke themselues of all their former offences, and to confesse that they had beene a fo-

wfrowarde and in maner desperate people in all respectes. And hee putteth them in minde, *that euen while Gods lawe was a giuing to them in Mount Horeb or Sinay, they prouoked Gods vengeance by making of a molten image:* This is not set downe without cause. For if euer God shewed himselfe to holde men in his obedience: it was then. For the lawe was not giuen after an ordinarie maner: but Gods maiestie appeared so visiblie in the doing thereof, that the people was sore abashed at it. Beholde, the Mountayne was full of fire, lightninges, and smoke: the ayre was heard to rore: the Trumpets sounded: and to be short, there were such a number of tokens of Gods presence, that the people was constrained to say, Let not the Lord speake vnto vs, for then are we but dead. After this, Moses was on the Mount as one separated from the companie of men, and as an Angel of God, exempted from mortall state, so as hee needed neither meate nor drink, which was such a mytacle as ought well to haue rauished y people to the seruing of God. And yet for all this, they reiected all that had bin taught them, and not tarying so much as the end of one yeere, but euen before fortie dayes were expired, they said they wist not what was become of Moses, terming him scornfully the fellow that had brought them out of Egypt. What can wee tell what is become of this fellowe, sayde they? And therefore let vs haue some God to goe before vs. Yet had they beene taught familiarly ynough: For God shewed himselfe to them both euening and morning, he led them a nightes by a signe of fire, and a days he stretched out a cloud ouer them: and yet woulde they needes haue a God that shold be present with thē. And what maner of God? forsooth a puppet. Beholde, God had shewed the people his wonderfull power, he had made them to feele it, they knewe themselues to bee safe ynough vnder his protection, and yet all this was nothing with them: they will needes haue a calfe, a dead thing, a corruptible thing, to make it their God. Was it not a hellishe furiousnesse when they became so brutishe? Seeing they had so lately euen with in freshe remembraunce hearde the lawe vttered vnto them, and that Moses was but gone aside: it was as if God had separated them all from this earthly life in the person of that one man. Hee ment to communicate himselfe familiarly vnto them, as it were by taking them vp into heauen: and in the meane while they become so vnthankefull and rebellious, that when hee manifested himselfe to them, they stopped their eyes and would not see, but defaced his maiestie and infinite power. Whereby? Euen by a dead thing which was an ydoll. Surely such contempt, such vnthankfulnesse, such beastlynesse should haue made the Iewes ashamed. And that is the cause why Moses speaketh expresly of that horrible crime which they had committed, in that they would needes haue an ydoll to go before them, that is to say, some visible signe whereby it might be said that God was among them. Thus see wee now the meaning of this text.

But wee must marke diligently all the circumstances which are set downe here. *Remember* (sayeth he) *howe ye prouoked Gods wrath in Mount Horeb.* That mountaine ought to haue bin sanctified, bicause God had chosen it to giue his Lawe there, in respect whereof it is a place that is innobled to the worlds end. For sith it pleased God to vtter his will there, which is the rule of al righteousnesse, and there to make his couenant with the children of Abraham: ought not that place to haue beene acknowledged as holy? Not vppon any superstition: but by putting the people the better in minde to honour their God as ofte as they speake of Mount Sinay. It is a mountaine in the wildernes, which aforetimes bare no renowne: & now it became as an earthly Paradise, so as God shewed his Maiestie there. Seeing that God had saide vnto Moses, The place where thou standest is holy, put off thy shooes: so as he required a speciall reuerence bicause he was minded to shewe himselfe there: and ought not the selfe same reason to preuaile in respect of Mount Sinay? But so farre off were the people from being allured to honour God a hundred or a thousande yeeres after, by acknowledging the singular benefite which hee had bestowed vpon them there: that they started away from him and fell to spyting of him, euen while the lawe was a giuing, & whyle Moses was yet vpon the Mount. So then Moses ment here to make their sinne more heauie by shewing them that it was like as if a mā should come and as it were dispitefully rushe into a Church, where folke were assembled togither to pray vnto God and to heare his word and to receiue his sacraments: and there commit some villanie or leaudnesse that might breede offence. And were not such a sinne so much the heinouser? Yes: and so was it with them. Therefore when we reade it, the very haire ought to stand vp vppon our heades. Neuertheless we must vnderstand, that this is set downe as a lookingglasse for vs, to see that we should be no better than they if wee were not withheld by the holy Ghost. Let vs consider what men are. These were a people whome God had chosen from among all others: he had giuen them his doctrine: he had shewed them his lawe: and yet for all that, they giue ouer themselues to so cursed a thing. Although then that God come vnto vs, yet is it certayne that we may start way, if hee hold vs not backe, not onely by his teaching of vs, but also by the power of his holy spirite. Now the law had bin published to this people, so as they sinned not through ignoraunce, neither could they say, We wote not how to serue God, we are to bee borne withall though wee deuise wayes on our owne head: for beholde, GOD had vttered his will plainely vnto them, and therefore they shoulde haue stayed thereuppon, and obeyed it simply without adding any thing vnto it. But notwithstanding all this teaching, they cast away his whole doctrine, and ceasse not to ouershoote themselues, as much as if they had neuer knowen any thing. Seeing it is so: let vs learne that men may well preach vnto vs: but when we haue had

Exod. 3. 5.

our eares neuer so much beare with Gods truth, yet shall we not faile to turn the clean contrarie way, except he print the things in our hearts, which men shall haue vttered vnto vs with their mouthes: I say, imprinted them in our hearts, & made vs to vnderstand ỳ that is the thing which wee must sticke vnto. That is the thing which we haue to remember vppon that text.

And whereas Moses rehearseth *how hee was vppon the Mount by the space of fortie dayes and forties nights together without eating or drinking:* let vs note that that was doone for the better authorising of the lawe, that it might be receiued with the greater reuerence, and that men might knowe it was not a worldely thing. And hereby we see that the communicating of Gods word vnto vs is a matter of great importance, so as we neede not to doubt but it commeth of him, and that we ought to submit our selues vnto it. If we haue not that: there will bee no religion among vs. Indeede wee may well ynough surmise our selues to haue it: but the cheefe groundworke of religion, that is to say of faith and of the seruice of God, is to be sure of our doctrine. For if wee go but by weening: as ỳ paynims, Turks, & al Idolaters doe: and as the Papists doe in dreaming vppon their good intentes: it is but a toye, it is but a building in the aire and vpon imagination. Therefore let vs marke well, that the first enterance to serue God, and to be allowed of him, is to bee throughly sure of our rule, so as we say not I thought this had beene good, it seemed so to me, it was tolde me so: but that wee haue Gods woord for our guide, and then let vs go on hardly, wee cannot go amisse as long as we followe that way: for our leader will neuer deceaue vs, wee shall not be beguiled in obeying him. That then is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde, for as much as we see that God hath so auowed and authorised his woord, as he sheweth plainly that men ought no more to call it in question or to doubt of it. But although we see that this is verye needefull for vs: yet doe wee see that the worlde makes none account of it. Whereof comes it that the Papistes are so wilfull at this day: but byeause they shut their eyes at the thinges that I haue nowe touched? For if a man examine throughly all that euer they haue, surely hee shall synde that they can alledge none other reason than their owne imagination. They can not maintaine the thinges which they terme Gods sertice and the articles of their faith, otherwise thā by their owne reason, onely bicause other men haue saide it, and they beleeue it without further inquirie. Therfore are they alwayes in a mamering, without any stay or stedines: And yet ye see they be so wilfull, ỳ they raile against God & his word, & worke it all the spite they can, & if a mā go about to shew them their faults & ouersights, they be so stubborne as he can nothing preuaile with them. Wherefore let vs be ỳ circumspecter in marking the things ỳ are set heere before our eyes: which is, ỳ we knowe not what Religion or Christianitie is, or whether our faith be substāti-all or no: vnlesse we be sure ỳ we haue the rule of Gods seruice from God himself, & that our religion is grounded vpon the same. Marke that for one point.

But wo worth vs if we despise the law and make no account of it, seeing it hath bin published with such warrantise as Moses reporteth in this text. Behold, the law is auowed by God himselfe: and what surer warrant shoulde men require than ỳ? Could God deuise to warrant his law more than he hath done? no: and yet notwithstanding after the hearing of ỳ doctrine & contents therof, we do but nod our heads at it, or rather we be not moued nor touched at al w it: may we see there is nothing but coldnesse in vs, & a great number of vs do euen spite it and gnash our teeth at it. Now then if wee rebell against God after hee hath so warranted the truth of his lawe: what excuse shall wee haue? Is it not a fighting against the maiestie of GOD? Yes verily. And therefore all the despisers of GOD, may well pretende what excuse they list: but yet are they conuicted of open warre making against GOD, and against his eternall maiestie, and against his diuine and heauenly power. Why so? For God in publishing his law, came as neere men as he could, and as neere as they could away with. In deede God shewed not himselfe as hee is: for wee bee not of capacitie to receiue such knowledge of him: but it is certaine that he shewed himselfe according to the small ability and slendernesse of men, specially at the publishing of his lawe. And I meane not only the Lawe, but also the prophets, which were added as an appurtenance thereunto, bicause they be the expounders thereof. Against what proue is there of the Gospell? God did not only shake the earth at that tyme: but also (as saith the prophet Aggeus, and as is alleaged by the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrewes) hee did shake both heauen and earth, so as there was a greater maiesty vttered at the preaching of the Gospell, than at the publishing of the lawe. Nowe then, sith it is so (sayth the Apostle) ỳ the Lawe which bringeth nothing but terror vnto men, was so magnified: what ought the Gospell to bee? For the law was but a shadow & figure of the things which we haue nowe shewed vs perfectly in the Gospell. In the Gospell God sheweth himselfe face to face, to ỳ intent ỳ we should be transformed to his glory. Sith it is so, what a curse pul we vpon our heads, in ỳ we do not hearke vnto God with all reuerence, & shew that it is he whom we worship, & to whom we be willing to dedicate al our senses, all our affections, & all our thoughts? If we be not brought so lowe as to heare and receiue the doctrine of the lawe and the Gospell with all humilitie and reuerence: we fight openly against the whole power and glory of God.

And herewithall we haue to marke also, after what maner it is that God warranteth his lawe, to the intent it may bee of authoritie among men, and that they may submit themselues to it. It is by fathering of it vppon himselfe: and that is one point more, well worth the marking. For God sheweth vs thereby, ỳ he will not haue vs to leane vnto men, but to looke singly vnto him,

that

that wee may haue a true and assured faith. So long then as our mindes runne vppon creatures: wee shall alwayes bee in a mamering. Albeit that wee may conceiue some wilfull opinion in our head: yet shall it vanish quite away at length, vntill wee bee come to this poynt, that wee bee sure it is GOD that hath taught vs it, and that it is hee of whome wee holde all that wee haue. When wee bee so assured: then haue wee a right faith: but wee see howe the world forgetteth that. For is there any question of the hearing of GOD in the Popedome? Nay verily, they woorke all the abhominations that are against Gods woorde, and their dooyng thereof is matched with foule shamelesse-nesse, as it were euen in vtter despyte of God. For they will needes haue the Gospell set aside, and that men should bee the sticklers in that behalfe, to intermingle whatsoeuer they themselues thinke good. Wee see then that this hath beene ill put in vre. And therefore let vs for our part remember, that when God meant to magnifie his Lawe, he saide not, Here is a wise man that shall tell you good things: but he tooke vp Moses to him, and he gaue tokens from heauen as if he should haue protested thus: It is I my self, I will haue ye to take all things that shal be vttered by Moses, as things that come from me. For I am not hidden in this case. Although I speake to you by the mouth of a mortal man: yet ye see he hath all of mee, and he hath not deuised any thing of himselfe or of his owne braine. And to what ende was Moses so exempted from the state of all other men? It is not possible ỳ a man which is accustomed to eate & drink, should fast by the space of fortie dayes and fortie nights together. Then must it needes bee concluded, that God intended to shew in effect, how he himselfe was the author of the Law, and the giuer thereof by Moses. And although Moses was so excellent a person: yet was hee but a seruant, he was not the maister of the house, neyther did he challendge any thing to himselfe, but deliuered the thinges faithfully from hand to hande, which he had receiued.

Nowe seeing that GOD reserued to himselfe the gouerning of his Church, and the giuing of the rule whereunto he woulde haue all men to holde themselues, so as euen Moses should not passe the boundes thereof: what shal other men doe nowe adayes? Wee shall see at length that God neuer raised vp a greater Prophet, no nor the like among his people. There was neuer any [that matched him or went beyond him,] but onely Iesus Christ the head of all Prophets. And good reason it is ỳ he should bee aboue Moses, which hath the soueraintie of all, considering that he is aboue the Angels, and euen the euerlasting GOD manifested in the flesh, and our Mediatour, exalted to the right hand of God his father, to sit as his Lieuetenant, of purpose that all knees shoulde bow before him. So then, wee see how shameleſſe the Pope and all his rable haue beene, in vsurping such libertie to forge articles of fayth, to make lawes for mens soules, and to bring the Churche in such bondage, as to burie all pure doctrine, that their owne dreames and dotages which they had deuised contrarie to Gods woorde, myght bee followed. And therefore let vs beare well in minde, that when wee studye to honour men, wee robbe God of his honour: and when wee adde any thing at all to his woorde, wee become backslyders. That is a poynt which wee must bee fully resolued of, or else wee shall haue no certaintie in our Religion and fayth. In deede the Papistes haue some showe of humilitie, in that they say, and why shoulde not men obserue the commaundementes of our holy mother the Church? For although it bee more than needeth, yet notwithstanding, will not GOD accept it? There is nothing more commendable than humilitie: but yet for all their humbling of themselues before men, they rush with their hornes against God. But if they ment to doe GOD his due honour: they shoulde not giue men the thing, which belongeth alonely vnto him. For if they fall to mingling of the leauen and corruption of their own imaginations, with the puerneſſe of Gods woord: it is more than if they medled heauen and earth together. For it is easie to discerne Gods creatures one from another: and although there bee neuer so much oddes betwixt them, yet is there more agreement betweene them, than there is betweene mennes inuentions and Gods woorde. And therefore when they fall to mingling of their owne fansies with it, and take leaue to make Lawes at their owne pleasure: all is out of fashion, all is out of order, there is not any more pureneſſe. Now then, whereas the Papistes alleage their humbleneſſe in obseruing the commaundementes of their Church, or rather hellish synagogue: it is but a diueliſh ouerweening, where through they aduaunce themselues openly against GOD, in commending their own follie and beastlineſſe as highly, as though their owne inuentions were farre greater and exquisiter perfection, than the wisedome of God. Thus yee see what we haue to remember concerning this poinct, where Moses reporteth ỳ he neither ate bread nor dranke water, of all the while that he was vpon the mount.

Wee see heere to what end he forbare meate and drink. It was not to set vp some fast, neither indeede was there any euer ordeined, he did it not to make a rule of it: but rather it was Gods intent to woorke such a miracle as might not be drawen to a common example, of purpose to authorise his Lawe, as hath beene sayde afore. And herein it appeareth what a fondneſſe it was to make the lenton fast, and to binde men to fast fortie dayes after the example of Iesus Christe, vnder colour that hee had forborne meate and drinke so long together. Surely the fasting of our Lorde Iesus Christ, was to shewe that the Gospell ought not to bee lesse esteemed than the Lawe: and wee see that the lyke befell to Helias, who was betweene them both. Wherefore did Moses and Helias appeare at the transfiguring

Coloſ. 2. 23.

Matt. 4. 2.

1. King. 19. 8. Matt. 17. 3.

of Iesus Christ vppon the Mount, but to shew the agreement that was betweene the Lawe and the Gospell? And wee see hereby, that Helias was as it were betweene both, that is to say, betweene Moses and Christ. For hee restored the Lawe and the pure Religion that had beene corrupted afore. And so ye see that Moses and Helias agree in such sorte with Iesus Christ, that they not onely come to humble themselues to him, but also declare that he onely is the ende and perfection of the Lawe, and that hee is the partie to whome all must bee referred. Againe, when our Lorde Iesus Christ fasted, that is to say, when he abstained from meate and drinke by the space of fortie dayes together: he did it not yerely, but onely once in all his lyfe, at such tyme as hee was to enter vppon the execution of his office, which was committed vnto him by GOD his father: yea and hee did it by way of myracle. Nowe then is it not a turning of all thinges topsiturvie, when men will drawe it to an ordinarie, and make a common rule of it? Is it not an open mocking of Iesus Christ? Is it not a defacing of Gods myracle, as though they woulde spitte at his power? Yes surely. Wee see then what a blindnesse it was. And although this superstition be very auncient, in so much ỳ Satan had brought in ỳ diuelish errour, euen before there was any Pope: yet ought wee to mislike it and abhorre it. For it is not a simple abuse, it is not a fond deuotion, such as men are woont to haue: but it is a blasphemie against Iesus Christe, it is a policie of Satan to deface the honour of the Gospell, and to make vs forget the thing ỳ the holy ghost amed at, which is that we might know how the lawe & the Gospel are no earthly doctrines, nor of mans inuention, but altogether heauenly and of God, to the end that we should stoope vnto them.

Yet for all this, it is not meant that fasting is not good and holy. For though wee make no Lentfast, yet are there other fastes which are commaunded vs in the holy Scripture: that is to wit, first of all stayednesse and sobrietie all our life long, so as wee glut not our selues one day to forbeare another for it, but vse the benefites measurably which God hath bestowed vppon vs: that they which haue abundance abuse it not in superfluitie. And ouf fasting must bee to restraine and brydle our selues willingly aswell from meate and drinke, as from all other thinges wherein wee may commit excesse or disorder, so as wee forbeare them willingly, as I sayde afore. As for these that haue not verie well wherewith to finde themselues, let them be contented with their pouertie, and take it patiently with thankesgiuing vnto God. Againe if our Lorde afflict vs, or ỳ we bee in any distresse: let vs resort to fasting, of purpose to dispose our selues to prayer and supplication, and to lifte vppe our heartes the better vnto GOD, humbling our selues and acknowledging our faults vnto him. Let our fastings be as spurres to drive vs to god, to present ourselues before him as wretched offenders, to craue mercie and forgiuenes at his hand. These are the fastings which ỳ holy scripture alloweth, notwithstanding the said superstition inuéted by ỳ diuell to deface Gods word, & the diuine power ỳ was shewed in Moses, but more fully in our Lord Iesus Christ. For he fasted not as compelled by others: but of his owne free will, to shewe that although he was like vs in all things sauing only sinne: yet could he well haue beene exempted from fasting, as in deede hee was not a hungred nor a thirst of all the whyle he fasted. And why? For hee had laide aside the state that he tooke vppon him. Although hee was vnder the shape of a seruaunt: yet notwithstanding, that seruauntship bare no sway in him by the space of those fortie dayes. Now let vs proceede further.

Moses addeth that *at the same tyme he received two tables, euen two tables of stone, the two tables that were written with the finger of GOD, the tables of the commaundements which God had made with* sayth hee. This serued to make the Iewes the more ashamed, of their exceeding great vnfaithfulnesse towardes GOD. For if I and another were to make a bargayne, and in the meane tyme while the partie were causing the couenaunte and conueyaunce to bee ingrosed, I on the other side should practise some deuise to betray him while hee trusted mee: what a villanie were that? Shoulde I not bee a double false catife? Yes: for if a man conclude a bargayne, and afterward breake it or teare the writinges in peeces, hee shalbe punished. But if the one partie goe through with good and faithfull meaning, and the other partie marre all with crafte and treacherie, vnder pretence of quietnesse and friendly dealing: what is to bee sayd of that? Euen after the same maner dealt the Iewes. For God taketh Moses aside. And to what purpose, but to woorke the welfare of his people, and to assure them that their religion was a true warrant of their saluation, and that they walked not at all aduenture as all other nations of the earth did? Thereuppon he maketh an autenticall instrument of the lawe that he had giuen them, that the remembraunce thereof might continue for euer, and not bee such a doctrine as should bee forgotten. Now while God was thus working the welfare of his people: they recompensed him so euill, that they fell to vtter defying of him, and would needes haue a newe God. Wee see then howe Moses ment to inhaunce their euill dealing, that they might bee the more ashamed, by knowing the horriblenesse of the crime which they had committed. And the same belongeth to vs also at this day. For we see that God ceaseth not to renewe the remembraunce of his couenaunt. True it is that hee published his lawe once for all, and likewise his Gospell. But yet for all that, wee haue both his lawe and his Gospell in wryting also, and moreouer it is dayly preached vnto vs. Now then, if wee prouoke Gods wrath and anger, by falsifying our faith which we gaue and promised in baptisme: doeth it not make vs the more vnexcusable? Yes surely.

And

And therefore to holde our ſelues the better in awe & feare of God: let vs vnderſtand that gods ordeyning of the miniſters of his worde, and his gracious dealing with vs in cauſing the ſame to be preached and expounded vnto vs afterward, is to put vs in minde of his couenant, that wee ſhoulde put it in practiſe: [and therefore] let vs pray him that nothing may turne vs from it. Let vs vnderſtande that: and then ſhall we haue the more conſtancie and ſtedfaſtneſſe to obey him. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vppon that text.

Furthermore, let vs marke that God thought it not ynough to proclaime his Lawe, but he did alſo put it in writing. And why? becauſe men are ſhorte witted in bearing away the trueth. Therefore is our Lorde faine to prouide for it, & to warne vs to looke well to all thinges, becauſe we be ſo feeble. Had the Iewes done their duetie, Gods ſpeaking to them had beene ynough: for he had giuen his lawe in ſo ſmall roome, as euerie man might count it vpon his fingers ends, Theſe are the ten commaundementes, in theſe hath God comprehended his whole wil, which is the rule of good life, All this doctrine (ſay I) is comprehended in ten verſes. Ye ſee then that the people had beene taught familiarly ynough. Now if they that heard Gods voyce vpon the mount had done their duetie: they ſhould haue taught their children, ſo as the doctrine might haue beene kept in mind from the father to the childe. For God had taught them familiarly ynough, as I ſaide afore. Inſomuch that he had willed them to make their ornaments of ſentences of the lawe, ſo as in ſteed of bracelets and other pretie toyes, which foolkes do weare to make themſelues gay: all the deckings of his people ſhoulde be to haue the ſentences of the lawe written & ingraued about them, that which way ſoeuer they turned their eyes, they might ſtill haue ſome marke to put them in minde of Gods lawe. Howbeit, to the ende they ſhoulde haue a more certaine remembrance therof like as men haue bin wont to ingraue their leages in ſome tables of braſſe or ſtone: ſo God took ſtone to write and ingraue his lawe in. It was not his pleaſure to vſe paper or parchment: but to haue his law written in ſtone, [and that was done] not by handicraft, (for hee borowed no workemanſhip of man in that behalfe,) but with his owne finger. Not that God hath anie handes: but that the holy ſcripture ſpeaketh ſo by a reſemblance as if it were ſaide, the lawe was not written or ingrauen by mans hand: but God approoued and ratified it by way of myracle. Now then ſith it is ſo: let vs learne that God hath prouided well for the aſſuring of our faith, to the intente we ſhould not be put to any great paine or hardneſſe to knowe what wee ought to follow. True it is that the worlde will runne into al lewdenes, as we ſee it doeth, and the examples thereof are no tyfe. It is pitie to ſee howe oft the Iewes ſwarued aſide vnto idolatrie: it ſemed that gods name ſhould haue beene aboliſhed among thē: all was out of order: they had ſo groſſe ſuperſtitions, as a man coulde not diſcerne betweene them and the heathen: they had ſo imbaced theſelues, as there remained not any more certaintie among them. But yet for al that ſuch as were diſpoſed to ſerue God helde alwayes this point ſtill, that they ſticked to the certaine doctrine. And why? For Gods will was ſet downe in writing. When ſuperſtitions were to bee corrected: the meane to doe it was not harde. For why? The lawe was written. That is the thing which wee muſt ſticke vnto if wee will obey our God: and if wee forſake that doctrine, God will alſo forſake vs. VVe ſee then that God hath prouided ſufficiently for the ſuretie of his people, that their faith might not be doutfull, but firme and conſtant. As for vs nowe adayes, wee haue more than the fathers had in the time of the lawe. For wee haue both the lawe and the prophetes, and alſo the goſpell. What is to bee done then? They that alleadge in theſe dayes, I wote not which way to turne mee, I ſee diſputinges, debates, and contrarietie of opinions, & therefore I will let all alone in ſuſpence: [muſt conſider alſo with themſelues,] Yea? hath God loſt his labour in ſetting downe his lawe in writing, and in adding the expoſition thereof by his prophetes, to the ende that wee might the better knowe that the goſpel is the true and full laccompliſhment thereof? Shall wee accuſe God as though hee had left vs at randome, ſo as wee ſhoulde not knowe what wee haue to doe, when he hath giuen vs his infallible trueth, and tolde vs that we can neuer be deceiued in obeying the things that proceede out of his mouth? So then let vs vnderſtande, that whereas the worlde goes aſtray, and is ill inſtructed: the onely cauſe therof is mens own vnthankfulnes. For why? there is inough prouided to make vs walk in the broade daylight, ſo as wee may defile the ſuperſtitions of the faithles, and not ſuffer things to hang any longer in ſuſpence, if we haue God reigning ouer vs. Whereby wee ſee that Gods ſpeaking was not for one day onely: but of purpoſe that the ſame ſhoulde continue ſtill euen to the worldes ende. Therefore let vs go on boldly, ſeeing we haue the doctrine of the holy ſcripture: and let vs aſſure our ſelues that that is the thing which wee muſt holde vs to, ſo as we muſt not any more ſay, whither ſhoulde we go? That is the way, let vs walke therein, as Moſes proteſteth hereafter. Trueth it is that in thoſe two tables are not conteyned all the things that are written in Exodus, Leuiticus, and the booke which we doe nowe expounde: thoſe tables are but an abridgement of them, and they conteyne but ten verſes. Neuertheleſſe, our Lord meant to ſhewe by thoſe two tables, that all the things which Moſes left in writing, were of him.

Deut. 13. 5. & Eſa. 30. 21.

So then, here are two thinges: That is to wit, that Gods will was there ſhoulde bee ſcripture, like as when couenants are ſet downe in writing, or leages are ingrauen in tables of braſſe, & euen ſo was it his will that there ſhoulde be a perpetuall memoriall of his lawe, that men might take no occaſion to turne away from it. And he made thoſe two tables, not to ſhewe any cunning of man therin: but to ingraue his law in the with-

out mans hande, that it might bee knowen that the same came of him. As touching Gods writting twice in the two stones: we wil treate thereof hereafter: For it is meete that things shoulde be set downe in order, and therefore I will not medle with them nowe.

Nowe remayneth howe Moses addeth, that after the tearme of fortie dayes, God saide vnto him, *Vp and get thee downe apace: for this people haue soone marred themselues, by forgetting mee*, and the fauour that I haue shewed them. Here Moses goeth on still with his matter, shewing the people that their reuolting and starting away so soone from GOD was too too shamefull and detestable. True it is that although they had holde out foure hundred yea or a thousande yeares, yet had they not beene to be excused. But now when as they fell to making of an idol, and did set vp a Puppet within fortie dayes space, euen whyle God was about the furtherance of their benefite and welfare, (as I saide afore) when Moses was taken vp as it were into the companie of Angels, by reason whereof they shoulde rather haue thought thus, Goe too, in the person of that one man wee bee after a sorte separated from the rest of mankinde, and God sanctifieth vs to himselfe, and therewithall bringeth vs into his kingdome, to the intent wee should not haue any earthlinesse in our religion: What a lewde dealing was that? For this cause Moses saith, that God commanded him to get him downe in hast, because the people were marred out of hande, so as they were falne to making of a newe God, euen while the lawe was a writing, and whyle God was confirming of his couenaunt with them. And it is plainely saide that they were marred: *Beholde* (saith God) *they haue marred*. For the worde which hee vseth, betokeneth no more, but *they haue marred*, without other addition. And indeed it was a right marring of them, that is to say of the Iewes, who became lewde backesliders and periured kaytifes, vtterly turning away from the trueth and rule of God, and finally from all order both heauenly and earthly. For wherein consisteth our pureness, but in obeying GOD? 2.Cor.11.2. According to this similitude of Saint Paules, that like as a woman is a lawfull and faithfull wife as long as shee keepeth herselfe chast to her husbande: so all the chastitie which God requireth of vs, is that wee shoulde sticke alonely to his worde. Then if wee fall to making of idols: it is a vilanous marring of our selues, wee become like common harlotes that giue ouer their bodies to all commers, leauing their owne husbandes, and yeelding themselues to euerie whoremaister and ruffian. Euen so is it with vs. And after the same maner was this people marred out of hande. Yea and wee marre the maiestie of God also, as much as in vs lieth, when wee followe our owne foolishe inuentions. True it is that wee cannot touch his maiestie to doe it any harme: but yet are wee guiltie thereof (as sayth Saint Paul,) because we turne the truth into a lie, and make all thinges false: and moreouer turne the order of nature vpside downe, by forsaking Gods pure doctrine, so as wee bereaue him of his soueraigne right that hee cannot reigne ouer vs, when wee fall to setting vp idols and deade thinges in his roome, and doe the thinges which we our selues haue inuented. So then it is not for nought that our Lord saith not in plaine wordes, This people haue made them an Idoll: but hee saith, This people haue marred, that is to say, they haue turned all vpside downe.

Wherefore let vs marke well, that whensoeuer we steppe aside from the pureness of Gods worde, wee make a shamefull marring, we practise our owne destruction, wee leaue nothing whole and sounde, and to bee short, we bee guiltie of mingling heauen and earth together, and of the vtter defacing of Gods maiestie. So much the more therefore doeth it standc vs on hande to submitte our selues to Gods pure worde, and to see that wee inuent nothing of our owne heads, nor bring vp anie new religion: but hold our selues to the thinges which our Lorde hath tolde vs, forasmuch as hee alloweth not anie thing but that. Afterwards hee addeth the residue, which I cannot expound as nowe: but it shall suffice (as I haue saide alreadie) that we haue this bonde of our God, that we dare not so farre as to reiect his trueth: but that we abide in obedience to his worde, as hee hath giuen it vs in writing, and as it is his will to haue it dayly preached vnto vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue doone, that we may be drawen to such repentance, as our whole desire may be to be quite rid of our fleshly affections and lustes, to giue our selues vnto him, and to holde vs in vnder his awe, as wee may bring nothing of our owne deuising, but that when our owne conscience findeth fault with vs, wee may so much the more yeelde our selues guiltie, and neuer away from his obedience: and that forasmuch as wee can not fullie satisfie and performe his Lawe in this worlde, it may please him of his infinite goodnesse to beare with vs, vntil hee haue throughly corrected the euill which he knoweth to bee yet still remayning in vs. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but also to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On

On Friday the xxx. of Auguſt. 1555.

The Lxv. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the ninth Chapter.

13 Wherefore the Lord ſpake vnto mee, ſaying: I haue ſeene this people, and beholde, it is a ſtiffenecked people.

14 Let mee alone, I will deſtroy them, and put out the name of them from vnder heauen, and I will make thee to growe into a mightier and greater Nation than they bee.

I Began to ſhewe you yeſterday, howe foule and curſed the fauke was which Moſes vpbraideth the people withal in this place: and that the cauſe why hee did ſet it before the, was to the end they ſhould be ſ better humbled therby. And here he addeth a recorde of the greatneſſe of that fauk, in that it prouoked Gods wrath ſo ſore, that hee would haue deſtroyed and rooted out that people, and put out the remembrance of them for euer. Nowe if God doe meaſure his anger; and can skill to puniſhe mens offences according to the greatneſſe of them: it muſt needes bee concluded that this offence was verie horrible, ſeeing that God hauing deliuered his people, and hauing wrought ſo many miracles for them, woulde neuertheleſſe ſo wipe them out as they ſhoulde neuer bee ſpoken of more. That then was the meaning of Moſes: verily as if hee ſhoulde ſaye, yee wretched foolke, conſider what yee bee and what yee haue beene. For whereas yee were redeemed by the hande of GOD, you by reuolting from him after yee hadde receiued ſuch fauour, deſerued to haue beene ſo rooted out, as no remembraunce of you might haue remayned in the worlde, and ſentence thereof was giuen alſo. Hadde not I intreated for you, GOD hadde determined to haue deſtroyed you. Nowe goe make your bragges, imagine I wote not what of your ſelues, impute your obteyning of this lande to your owne righteouſneſſe, to your owne power, or to ſome other thing elſe. Nay contrariwiſe, yee ſee what yee haue done: yee haue (to the vttermoſt of your power) vndoone the deliueraunce of your ſelues whiche GOD hadde wrought, yee haue forſaken the ſaluation that was promiſed you, and the inheritaunce that was prepared for you: and to be ſhort it was meet that God ſhould haue powred out his horrible vengeaunce vppon you. Therefore learne to magnifie his mercie, conſidering that yee haue prouoked him ſo ſore: Thus yee ſee in effect whereto this ſaying of Moſes is to be referred.

But by the way wee muſt marke the words that hee vſeth. *I haue ſeene this people* (ſaith he) *and lo it is a ſtiffenecked people*. Heere GOD ſheweth that he hath iuſt cauſe to make cleane riddance of this people, foraſmuchas they were paſt amendement. True it is that GOD might well thunder downe vppon all menne, without ſhewing them why or wherefore, and all mouthes ought to bee ſhutte. For wee winne nothing by replying againſt him, and in murmuring at his chaſtiſementes. For hee ſhall euer bee founde to bee righteous as is ſayde in the one and fiftith Pſalme, and whoſoeuer blaſphemeth him ſhall bee put to ſhame. Yet notwithſtanding, heere God ſheweth why hee had determined to puniſhe the Iewes ſo roughly, to the intent that Moſes ſhoulde bee the better contented. I haue ſeene (ſayth hee) that this people is a ſtiffenecked people. Heereby hee doeth vs to vnderſtande, that when wee once fall to malicious wilfulneſſe, it is all one as if wee were rotten in our ſinnes, and that there is none other remedie, but that GOD muſt put to his hande to deſtroy vs vtterly. Pſal, 51. 6.

In deede the leaſt fauke that wee committe doeth well deſerue that GOD ſhoulde vſe extreeme rigour: but yet doeth hee moderate himſelfe, according to this ſaying of the holy Scripture, that hee is ſlowe to wrath and longſuffering. GOD then ſpareth vs, and vſeth not rigour againſt vs at the firſte daſhe. But when hee ſeeth vs ſo harde hearted that hee canne not winne vs by patience, and that wee bee ſo ſtubborne as hee can not amende vs, nor make vs ſtoope vnder his hande: then is hee fayne to worke after another faſhion, and to ſtriue no lōger with thē, according to this ſaying Pſal, 103. 8.

in the

Gen.6.3. in the sixth Chapter of Genesis, Why should my spirit striue any longer with men? For I see there is nothing but corruption in them: and therefore I will no more goe to law with them: I must be faine to condemne them and to execute my iudgement vppon them: for it is to no purpose to indite them any more, they be too much conuicted alreadie. Sith it is so, let vs be well ware, that although wee bee fraile, yet at leastwise we bee not wilfull in persisting in our sinnes, to delight in them, and to feede them: but let vs returne againe vnto God out of hande, beeing sorie that we haue offended him. And if he threaten vs, or shewe vs any signe of his wrath: let vs by and by stoope and not suffer anie stubbornes to take place in vs. For if we deale stubbornly & wilfully with him, we shal be driuen to abide the condemnation that is sette downe here, spyte of our teethe: [namely] I haue seene this people, it is a stiffenecked people, and therefore I must needes roote them out. Marke this for one poynt, that here men are warned to examine themselues, and vppon acknowledgement of their faults, to humble them selues before God, and to lay downe all pride and sturdinesse, so as God may not finde them stiffenecked, but pliable.

1.Pet.5.6. And that is it which Saint Peter meaneth where hee saieth, Humble your selues vnder the mightie hande of your God, that yee bee not handled roughly in the day of your visitation. In speaking of the mightie hande of GOD, hee sheweth vs that if wee fight against it, wee shall finde it too harde for vs. True it is that at the firste men thinke they winne much by chafing vppon the bit, and by standing stubbornely against God: but in the ende they shall finde that Saint Peter did not without cause tearme his hand a mighrie hand, to confounde all such as set themselues against it. Then is there none other shift, but to stoope vnder it, and to receiue the strokes obediently, when it striketh vs, assuring vs that it striketh vs iustly. And if it touch vs not, let vs not tarie till God shewe himselfe our enemie, but rather let vs preuent his wrath: Thus ye see what we haue to remember vpon this text.

Also there is one other poynt. *I haue seene this people* (saith God,) *and is a stiffenecked people.* Hereby hee meaneth that hee knewe well enough by experience, that the leawdenesse of that people was vtterly vnrecouerable. True it is that God needeth not to make long inquisition after the manner of men: for all thinges are present vnto him, and length of time can tel him no more than hee knoweth alreadie. But the scripture vseth such speech, to doe vs to vnderstand that God goeth not to worke at aduenture as men commonly doe, who fall to punishing oftentimes before they knowe the trueth or haue inquired of it. God then sheweth here, that hee neuer lifteth vp his hande to chastice vs, but vpon good deliberation, knowing what is in vs, and hauing well considered whether there bee any meane to reclaime vs or no. Seeing hee taketh so great paine, needes must wee come to our last condemnation, if we bee wilful stubborne. Thus yee see what Moses meant by these wordes, *See* and *Beholde*. And it is all one as if God woulde prooue his saying by such experience thereof as were throughly knowen, and shewe as it were with his finger, that that people was not to bee delte withall, and that the verie creatures might well iudge of their naughtinesse, that it was vtterly vnexcusable. In deede wee doe not alwayes perceyue that God hath made inquisition of our sinnes: but yet shall wee finde it so in the end. And for the same cause, when hee minded to destroye Sodome and Gomorre, he said expressely, that hee came downe to weete howe thinges were: Gen.18.21. and that although the crie came vp to his eares into heauen, and that their sinne was so great, that euen the verie heauens roong of it: yet vouchsafed hee to examine their doinges neerlier: not that hee needed so to doe, as in respect of himselfe: but to shewe vs that his iudge was rightfull and blamelesse. As oft therefore as God punisheth vs, let vs learne to knowe that wee haue lyen too long asleepe, and that he in the meane while watched, and that wee make nowe pay ỹ arrearages because we amended not in due time. And if GOD seeme ouerhastie in punishing vs: let vs consider that wee tooke not the time when it was offered vs, and when hee gaue vs space of repentance to turne vnto him, Ioh.3.22. 5.14. but rather were blinded without owne hypocrisie, and that is the cause why God layeth his hand so roughly vpon vs.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moses addeth. Hee saith that God beeing in minde to destroy the people, saide vnto him: *Let me alone that I may destroy this people, & that their name may bee put out from vnder heauen, so as it may neuer be spoken of more.* It shoulde seeme that God was letted here by Moses, when hee saith: *Let mee alone.* Nowe it were vnbeseeming his power that hee coulde not execute the thing that hee had determined with himselfe, but that a man shoulde withstande him and restraine his libertie in doeing the thing that hee had purposed. Howe may this bee vnderstoode? True it is that Moses was not of authoritie to restraine Gods iudgement: but here wee see the infinite goodnesse of him, who though he owe not any thing to men, vouchsafeth notwithstanding to doe it for their sakes. And let vs marke especially, that God doeth so binde himselfe to our prayers and supplications, that they bee as it were restraintes of his wrath: so that whereas diuerse times hee woulde destroye all: hee is as it were chaunged, if wee come and humble our selues before him. Not that hee altereth his purpose: wee must not surmise any repentaunce in God, that hee shoulde turne backe agayne and bee better aduised, or bethinke himselfe better what hee had to doe, as wee doe, who bee subiect to diuerse passions, and also to alteration: there is no such thing in God, there is no altering of the thing which hee hath once determined. But this is taken after the manner of men, and much that to make vs vnderstande what is for our profite, God is faine to bowe downe from his

his high maiestie where vnto wee bee not able to attaine, and to vse similitudes meete for our rawnesse and infirmitie. Therefore hee sayeth that when we pray, it is all one as if wee did cast a barre in his way, to stoppe his wrath that it shoulde not vtterly consume vs. And why? Because that hee of his owne accorde hath wilingly and without constraint made couenaunt with vs, that whensoeuer wee pray vnto him, hee will performe all our requestes, so as wee shall not bee disappointed in calling vppon him, but shall alwayes perceiue that hee was willing to graunt our will and desire, according as it is said in the hundred and fiue and fortith psalme, The Lorde performeth the willes of them that feare him. Surely it is a worde that ought to pearce our heartes, when it is saide that GOD doeth the will of men. Nowe who is hee? and what are wee? Wee bewretched creatures, such as ought to bee ashamed to shewe themselues before GOD. And as for to bring either will or desire of our owne thither: it ought to dismay vs, and to make vs say, Alas Lorde, doe what pleaseth thee, for it is not meete for vs to put foorth anie desire or affection of ours: for what are wee but wretched creatures? But surelie Gods will is that wee shoulde craue of him so it bee obediently, for according to Saint Iohns saying in his Canonicall Epistle, we must not pray to him at aladuenture, nor alleadge our owne fancies to restrayne GOD to our desires, wee muste not vse such boldenesse: but when we haue submitted our heartes obedient-he to our God: then if wee pray to him for anything that is to our welfare, hee liketh well of it, and hee will pleasure vs in graunting it, as though there were such a couenaunt and league betweene him and vs, as might not bee broken. Seeing that God stoopeth so lowe as to graunt vs our requestes: what woulde wee more? But he doeth it, and that doeth he well shewe in this text. *Let mee alone* sayth hee to Moses. Hee seemeth here to speake as it were to some companion or fellow of his. And why doeth hee not destroy Moses too, as hee might well doe if hee listed. Is Moses then able to slay him, or to abridge him of his libertie? No: but as I saide afore, GOD doth so binde himselfe, that the prayers which are made vnto him, doe stay the execution of his vengeance. And that is the cause why that in the rehearsing of this storie in the Psalme, it is sayde there expresselie, that if Moses had not set himselfe in the breache, all hadde beene marde. There the Prophete vseth a similitude: like as when a Towne is battered with the Cannon, there is such a breach made as the enemies may enter, to sacke the towne and to put all to the sworde. Euen so is it in this case: when Gods wrath was once kindled against his people, hee had battered them by & by with his said threate, and had made a breach vppon them so as there remayned no more but to enter. But beholde, Moses setteth himselfe in the breach, that is to say he standeth vp against God and maketh intercessiō to him for the people, so as he stoppeth the breach againe, and stayeth Gods wrath from going anie further. And this is not reported for Moses onely: But our Lorde declareth thereby what strength our prayers & supplicatiōs haue, when they be well ordered, so as wee come to him with such zeale as becommeth vs, and with such faith and humilitie as hee requireth. And we must remember what Saint Iames saith of Helias: namelie that he made it to raine, and also did shut vp the heauens and caused drought, alonely by his prayers. Loe here an incredible thing, y when the Prophet openeth his mouth to pray vnto God, he hath power to shut vp the heauens, and to bring a generall famine euerywhere, to punishe the Idolatrous king & al those that tooke part with him in his wickednesse: and that afterwarde when he came to God againe, & desired raine, he opened the heauens againe and all the streames thereof, so as the earth was then plentifully watered. Neuertheless the intent of S. Iames is not, that our knowing hereof should be to magnifie the power of Helias, or to say that hee had that graunted vnto him as a speciall priuiledge, but to giue vs a rule whereby to perceiue howe auailable the prayer of a righteous man is, and so to incourage vs to pray vnto God. For seeing that the Prophet Helias could both shut the heauens and open them againe by his prayers: let vs not doubte but that wee shall be hearde, when wee call vppon the name of God: And that when the bottomlesse gulfes are opened, we shall shutte them againe: insomuch that euen when the wicked shall seme to haue the worlde at will, then wil GOD roote them out at our request. Therefore let vs pray boldely, vppon trust of the promises that God hath giuen vs, and our prayers shall bee of such force, that they shall euen chaunge the order of nature if neede bee. As for example we see that at the saying of Iosua, the sunne stayed, and stood still a day and a night together, without any night betwixte the one day and the other.

Iames 5.17.

Iosua.10.12 13.

Sith wee see these thinges: let vs not say: That was but for once, or such a holy man or Saint had such power: but let vs vnderstande that it was our Lordes intent to shewe vs that although heauen and earth were mingled together, and all thinges as confused as might bee: yet if we resort to him, putting our whole truste in him, hee can well remedie the thinges that seeme to vs to be furtheste out of order, and then shall we see the fruit which our prayers yeeld vs. Thus ye see what we haue to marke vppon this text where GOD willeth Moses to let him alone.

Yet notwithstanding wee must marke herewithall that it is a thing to bee wished, to haue such fooles among vs as maye make intercession and supplications to GOD: For wee see what coldnesse is in most of vs. Sometimes in a whole nation and in euery great multitude of people, ye shall not find twentie or ten persōs that haue a right zeale to pray vnto God and are disposed thereto as is requisite. And how shoulde we do if they stoode not in the breach?

Sure-

Surely wee shoulde be left bare, accordingly al-
Exod. 32.25 so as the same similitude is alleadged in Exodus, that the people had made themselues bare of his protection, by making the golden calfe. For they had no more any God to maintaine them. And euen so would it befall vs also that we shold make our selues bare euery day, by putting our selues out of the protection of our God: were it not that some do set themselues in the breach. And therefore let vs learne that oftentimes God spareth vs, because there are some y make intercession for vs, euen whome wee knowe not of. And let vs thinke vppon it the more, for asmuch as euerie of vs feeleth himselfe colde in praying, and that wee goe not to it with such corage and earnestnesse as God commaundeth. [Let euery of vs bethinke our selues thus:] Alas, if I were alone, and all the worlde were like mee: what woulde become of it? We might perishe for wee are not worthie that GOD shoulde regarde vs. But wee must vnderstande, that it is not our Lordes will that wee shoulde perishe, when hee ordeyneth men to come before him after that maner. And therefore howsoeuer wee fare, after wee haue rebuked our selues, let vs proceede to this zeale of praying both for our selues and for other men, and let vs not doubt but God will haue pitie vppon vs, yea and euen forgiue our neighbours also at our request. Trueth it is that in this case wee must not bring any ouerweening with vs, to ausaunce our selues as though we coulde further the saluation of other men: but we must take it as God sheweth it. Beholde I am not worthie that God should heare me my selfe: and yet notwithstanding hee vouchsafeth to heare mee, not onely for my selfe, or for three or foure moe: but also for a whole nation. Let euerie of vs doe this, and let vs consider howe mercifull our God is to vs, seeing hee not onely vouchsafeth to regarde vs our selues, vs wretched sinners, vs that haue turned our backes vpon him, vs that haue not ceased to prouoke his wrath against vs: but also vouchsafeth for our sakes, to accepte our prayers and supplications not onely for our priuate friendes, but also for his whole Church. For it behoueth vs to pray generally for all the faithful, yea and for them who we know not, yea
2. Tim. 2. 1. and moreouer euen for the vnbeleeuers if there bee anie meane to conuert them. Seeing that God heareth vs after that fashion, euen for the furtheste straungers in the worlde, for those that are vnknowen to vs, yea and euen for such as are not yet of his house, nor of his flocke, but are as stray sheepe: is it not a meane to make vs to trust in him, and to pray vnto him with such
Iam. 1. 6. certeintie, as wee come not to him like wauering reedes, (as saith Saint Iames) but with assuredneesse that hee wil heare vs, and that our prayers shall not bee vnauailable, because wee resort vnto him and haue recourse vnto him vpon trust of his promise?

And hereby wee see howe greatly the wretched worlde hath beene abused by making intercession to Saincts. When men read that Moses was hearde, and likewise Helias: they concluded thereupon, O then must we resort to the Heesaincts and sheesaincts, and they must be our aduocates and Patrons to God. Yea but the meaning of the holy scripture is cleane contrarie, as I haue declared alreadie, according to the saying of Saint Iames. For when God sayth so: it is not to make vs to runne vnto Moses: but it is to the ende that by his example we shoulde not doubt to pray also: for the promises belong to vs as well as to him. Like as Moses trusted not in his owne goodnesse, ne preased before God as more worthie than the rest of the people: but only as knowing that God called & allured him thereunto: so also let vs nowe grounde our selues vppon the promises whereby God incourageth vs to come vnto him, yea and to come without doubting that hee will reach vs his hande, euen without regarding whether there bee any worthinesse in vs or no. For wee shall finde none in vs: but it is enough for vs that our Lorde biddeth vs come, and our obeying of him liketh him better than all the vertues that wee coulde bring with vs, if there were any in vs. Therefore it is too grosse an ouersight, that whereas God incourageth vs to come vnto him with prayer and supplication after the example of the holy Prophetes: we thereupon shoulde contrariwise make them our Patrons and Aduocates to shift our selues from repayring vnto him. Againe on the otherside, although Moses prayed for the people while he was in this worlde: Doeth it followe that the same charge is committed to him nowe still in heauen? Doeth the scripture tell vs that Moses maketh intercession for vs still? So then, it is as it were a dragging of the holy scripture by the haire of the heade, (as men say,) and a racking of it to falsehoode, when the thinges that are spoken of men aliue, are wrested to them dead. Therefore let vs holde vs contented with this common doctrine, that is to wit that euerie of vs must take heart to pray vnto God, because his promises are made to all men without exception. For our petitions are not grounded vppon our owne worthinesse: but vppon Gods goodnesse, in that he sheweth himselfe so free hearted as to reach out his hande to receyue vs. Heerewithall let vs praye for another, and let vs not doubt but wee shall bee hearde. And although wee bee colde, and slouthfull: yet let vs vnderstande that GOD heareth his Church, so that although we come not to him so freely, and with so earnest and wel disposed minde as we should doe: yet doth he pitie vs, because hee not onely hath eare to our seuerall requestes: but also accepteth the generall prayers that are made by the whole Church, in our behalfe and fauour: and therefore let vs occupie our selues therein as long as wee liue. As for those whome God hath taken out of this worlde, for asmuch as the holie scripture telleth vs not anie thing of them let not vs fall to thrusting in of our owne imaginations and dotages in that behalfe: for either wee muste pray in faith, or else wee shall neuer bee hearde. And what is meant by

faith

faith? That wee shoulde bee taught by Gods worde. Saint Paul settes it downe for an vnchaungeable order, that wee canne not call vppon God, vnlesse wee knowe his trueth, and that the Gospell haue beene preached vnto vs, as is saide in the tenth to the Romanes. And let vs assure our selues, that as manie as steppe aside from this rule, are as stray beastes, and their prayers shall neuer boote them, for they doe but vnhallow the name of GOD, because they haue not the warrantes of his promises in their heartes.

Now let vs passe further: It is said, *I will make of thee a mightier and greater people than this*. Here GOD sheweth Moses, that there is no cause why hee shoulde bee afraide, that the good will which hee hadde shewed towardes that people shoulde bee lost, or that hee was raised vppe to vaine to be a worker of their redemption, and of the welfare that was promised them. *I will make of thee another people*, saith he. But Moses is not contented with that: for hee maketh intercession still vnto GOD. And this is not added without cause: but rather to make vs to knowe that Moses regarded not himselfe, but that forgetting himselfe hee sought the welfare of those that were cõmitted to his charge. That is the thing in effecte which wee haue to beare in minde vppon this place.

Neuertheleſſe it might bee demaunded heere, whether it were enough for GOD to raise vppe a newe people or no, seeing the promise was made to Abraham and his offspring. Howe then? Coulde hee destroye this people, without vnsaying his owne worde, and without calling back of his owne promise? No, but hereby we be done to vnderstand, that we must not bee ouerinquisitiue of Gods iudgementes, but deale soberly, and modestlie with them. For if wee enter into too deepe ransaking of them, wee shall finde them such a bottomlesse pitte, as wee shall neuer gette out of them. Therefore let it suffice vs that if GOD had listed to haue dispatched that people, hee coulde haue founde meanes to haue performed his promise, so as it shoulde not haue beene in vaine. For (as it is saide) had hee not beene able to haue rayſed vppe children to Abraham euen out of stones? Then must not wee binde GOD to our meanes, nor to the common order of nature, seeing hee is to vs incomprehensible: but wee must consider that hee is able to worke after such a sorte, as will vtterly abashe vs, and wee shall not knowe which way hee went to worke.

Thus ye see that the thing which wee haue to marke in this text, is that when Gods iudgementes passe our capacitie, we must not fall to ransaking of them by peecemeale out of measure: for (as saith Salomon in the fiue and twentith Chapter of the Prouerbes) it is his glorie to keepe thinges hidden, so that although he shewe vs not why hee doeth this or that, yet is not his glorie thereby diminished, but rather increased. For it sheweth men their own weakenesse, to the ende they shoulde learne to liue in lowlinesse, and not thinke too well of their owne wisedome. Marke that for a speciall point.

But here are yet other thinges which deserue to be looked vnto more neerely. And first of all, whereas it is saide that Moses ceased not to make intercession: that may seeme strange. For I haue tolde you alreadie that our prayers are faultie, if they be not directed by faith: & faith importeth that wee bee sure of Gods will, according to Saint Iohns exhortation, where hee saith that if wee intende to pray aright, we must followe Gods ordinaunce, and not our owne likinges. Sith it is so: howe durst Moses in this text sue vnto God contrarie to his expresse forbidding, so as although GOD say, Let mee alone, I will not heare thee speake of it anie more, this people must needes perishe: yet doth Moses make intreatance still? Wherein he may peraduenture seeme vnportunate, yea and that hee is minded euen to spite him, or at least wise to shewe some kinde of disobedience? Nay we must note, that Moses neuer shewed himselfe more obedient than in this, forasmuch as y trust of the promise that God had made could not be wrested from him by so forcible a temptation, needes must it bee that hee was throughly setled in faith, when God speaketh to him after such a sorte, and telleth him, I am determined to destroy this people: and yet Moses maketh intercession stil, as though he woulde let him of his purpose. And why? Is it for that hee discrediteth God, or for that hee beleeueth not his threatning as the vnbeleeuers doe, who commonly make but a mocke of it when God speaketh to them of his wrath? No: Moses dealeth not so: but this is his leaningstocke: behold, God hath made his couenaunt with Abraham, and that couenaunt must needes bee vnchaungeable. For it dependeth not vppon the desertes of men, but is grounded vppon Gods owne free goodnesse. Moses knewe this: and therefore when hee hearde GOD speake of the destroying of that people: he fell as it were to setting of himselfe against it, vppon assuraunce of the promise that had beene made. True it is that he saith nothing of it: but yet was it a thing throughly knowen to the people, that at the ende of foure hundreth yeares, they shoulde be put in possession of the inheritaunce which God had promised them. Moses then helde himselfe to Gods couenaunt, which was vnchaungeable and to stande in force for euer. Though men bee neuer so wicked: yet will God of his goodnesse surmount all their sinnes, so as his worde must needes come to effect. But nowe had GOD raunsomed his people, and the tearme was fully come wherein they shoulde inioye his promise: therefore was it of necessitie that all these thinges shoulde bee doone, and Moses doeth God the honour, to keepe him to that which hee had sayde. Nowe that hee is assaulted with greeuous temptation, euen as though it were cannon shot, hee persisteth neuertheleſſe in the same faith, and it is not a faith that flickereth as a shaddowe, but a faith con-

conceyued of the worde and couenaunt of God, a faith that shoulde stande fast setled and vnmouable. We see howe that Moses neuer obeyed GOD better, than when hee withstoode the threatening which God made. But yet doeth not this resolue the whole question. For a man might replie: Howe so? Beholde, God speaketh continually: why then doeth Moses beleeue one of his sayinges more than other? Againe there is an other doubte. Seeing that God is vnuariable and hath but one single will: why speaketh he otherwise than hee had determined in himselfe? For in so doing hee shoulde deale double, which thing wee knowe can in no wise agree with his nature. As touching the first question, let vs marke that forasmuch as Moses was gouerned by the holy Ghost, and was fullie perswaded that it behooued him to sticke to the promise which was made to Abraham, and therefore gaue credite to the same: hee considered also therewithall, that Gods threatening was iust, and that he might iustly execute it: for else his praying had beene but a mockerie. Hee sawe the daunger that hung ouer the people, and was readie to fall vppon them. But forasmuch as he thought there was a remedy, though GOD had saide, Let me alone: hee falleth to intreataunce againe. And that serueth to shew the heynousnesse of the offence, and of the fault that had beene committed. For such an enormitie as that was, deserued well ỹ vtter destruction of the people. Moses then is so gouerned by the holy Ghoste, that although his will seeme contrarie to Gods will: yet neuertheless hee knoweth what wee ought to followe. But it seemeth that Abraham did the cleane contrarie. For God had promised him to blesse Isaac, and to raise vp a people of his seed, whom he woulde take to himselfe. And yet notwithstanding he commaundeth Abraham to slea Isaac with his owne handes. Nowe it seemeth that after the example which is set vs downe here, he shoulde rather haue saide, Lorde thou hast promised mee that my sonne Isaac shall beget a seede whereby salution shall be sent vnto the worlde: therefore he must needes liue. But Abraham is gouerned by the holy Ghoste, and knoweth that hee ought to obey GOD simplie without gayneſaying: for hee coulde well haue stirred vp seede from out of the ashes of Isaac when he had beene deade. So then let vs marke that when such temptations as these doe incounter the faithfull, so as God seemeth to bee contrarie to himselfe: he sayeth not to gouerne them by his holy spirite, and to giue them such wisedome and discretion, as they holde themselues alwayes to the thing that is good and belonging to their duetie, and neuer doubt at al of Gods worde. And therefore let vs beseech God to teach vs his will, and let vs doe our indeuour in seeking his worde: and surely hee will neuer suffer vs to goe astray, nor to doe amisse, but forasmuchas he knoweth vs to be vnskilfull and easie to be led away to and fro, he will hold vs backe by his holie spirit, and giue vs discretion to discerne what hee commaundeth. For like as he fayled neither Moses, nor Abraham, no more also will he faile vs.

Gen. 22. 2.

As touching the seconde question, where it was demaunded howe it may be that GOD shoulde say one thing and meane an other: (for that is contrarie to his nature, in somuch as hee nameth himselfe the trueth, and therefore must needes shewe himselfe to bee so indeede) we must marke that in saying so, hee speaketh not peremptorilie, but with condition, though the condition be not expressed. Therefore we must haue an eye to the ende whereunto thes wordes are referred: and then shall wee finde that there is no contrarietie in them. God had saide to Abraham, thy seede shall bee holde in bondage: but about a foure hundred yeres hence I will performe the promise that I haue made thee.

Needes nowe muste this free promise of God be performed: for it dependeth not vppon men: it is not saide, conditionally that their offspring behaue themselues well: but Gods intent is to bee vnchaungeable in his determination. And therefore whereas he saith here to Moses, Let me alone, I will make cleane riddance of this people: it is as if he shoulde say, This people hath deserued to be vtterly destroyed: for seeing they be past amendement, what shall I doe more? I haue tried them a number of wayes, I haue experience of them, I haue borne gentlie with them, I haue chastised them, and yet will they not bee reclaimed, neither by faire meanes nor by foule. Seeing then that they be past recouerie, they must needs be vtterly rooted out and perish. Yea, but yet is there this, *Let mee alone.* His vsing of that speech includeth a condition: as if he shoulde say, Here am I redie to doe the office of a iudge: what remaineth nowe to doe, but to thunder downe vppon this people, and to make cleane dispatche of them? Onely make thou no intercession for them.

Iebuk. 7.

Nowe wee see yet better the thing which I touched afore: that is to wit, that God was farre off from cutting off of Moses, or from casting him out that he shoulde not pray: but hee did rather sharpen him thereunto. As if hee shoulde say: But for thee this people shoulde be destroyed. For if I shoulde handle them according to their desertes: I shoulde confounde them. And forasmuch as they be so wilfull that they be past amendement. It is time nowe to execute my sentence. It is too muche I will make no moe wordes: But I will graunt thus much at thy request, that if thou make intercession to me, I will be restrayned by it. Now then wee see these two questions well resolued and the profite that redoundeth of this text. Namely firste that the force of our prayers is shewed vs here, when we pray vnto God faithfullie.

And secondly we see that daungers ought to prouoke vs the more. The more that Gods wrath is vttered vnto vs, the more ought we to be moued to pray vnto God: because it is not he draue vs thereto by force. And wee must not

pray alonly for our selues, nor haue a care of our saluation onely, nor onely feare the daungers that hang ouer our heades: but wee must also take care for our neighbors, and when we heare Gods threateninges, they must waken vs, and make vs to come before him, saying, Alas Lord, heere is a sorte of wretched creatures which must needes perish, if thou be so disposed. Therfore let vs bee prouoked to feare, the more for Gods shewing of his wrath vnto vs, and for the hearing of his threates: For hee vttereth his iudgementes vnto vs to the ende that we should preuent them. For when GOD giueth sentence vppon our sinnes, it is alwayes with this condition, that hee doeth it not with out giuing of vs some respit to remedie the mischeefe, so wee seeke the remedie by such meanes as he commaundeth in his worde. And so yee see what we haue to remember vppon the example of Moses.

To bee shorte, wee see that it is not lawfull for men to put forth themselues to make prayer and supplication: except they haue the promise and be sure that it is Gods good will that they shoulde doe so. But GOD will giue them such a zeale, as the temptations which shall crosse them shall not stay them from going on forwarde, though it seeme to themselues that GOD is not minded to heare them, but rather to put them backe and to shake them quite off. Therefore let vs not cease to resorte vnto him as it were importunately. For the importunateneſse whereof our Lorde Iesus Christe speaketh, in reporting the similitude concerning a widow ỹ had to do with a wicked iudge: made ỹ iudge ashamed though he were a naughtie and frowarde man. But surely when wee come to GOD, we neede not to bee importunate: for Iesus Christ telleth vs, that if wee finde mercie in men that are lewde and ill minded towardes vs: we shall much more obtayne fauour at Gods hande, who tarieth not till we come vnto him, but calleth and allureth vs to him. Seeing then that he is so friendlie, let vs not be afraide that we shall not obteyne our requestes. But yet for all that, let vs not giue ouer with once praying vnto him as it were for fashions sake: but let vs holde out to the ende, yea and euen be importunate vppon him, Although he seeme vnwilling to heare vs, and let vs alone in our distresses, yea and that to our seeming our miserie doeth still increase: yet notwithstanding let not vs fayle to holde on still, resting vppon his promise which he hath giuen vs, which is certayne and vnfallible: that is to wit, that hee will neuer faile those which come vnto him and call vpon him in trueth.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done heretofore, and that forasmuch as wee knowe what neede wee haue to pray, (insomuch that euerie minute of an houre wee runne in daunger of endlesse death and are like to perishe both bodie and soule:) it may please him to inflame vs so by his holie spirite, as we may call vppon him vnfaynedlie, and be more carefull to doe it and to exercise our selues in it at all times, as prouoked thereto by the great neede which wee haue thereof, considering the miseries where through wee shoulde perishe, if wee were not succoured by him and by his grace: and that in the meane whyle it may please him to beare with vs in our infirmities, and not suffer vs to be rent off from ỹ bodie of his Church, but make vs to perceiue by experience, that the prayers which are made through the whole worlde are auailable to his chosen, and ỹ their prayers also do auaile vs, so as the same may stablishe vs continuallie more & more, in the holie vnion which he hath made with vs in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, reducing all poore ignorant people, into the right way of saluation, out of the bondage of errour and darkenesse: and that for this purpose it woulde please him, to rayse vp true and faithfull ministers of his worde, which may not seeke their owne profite and ambition, but the glorifying of his holy name, and the saluation of his poore flocke. On the other side, &c.

On Saturday the xxxi. of August. 1555.

The Lxvj Sermon which is the fifth vppon the ninth Chapter.

15 Then turned I mee, and went downe the Hill, and the hill burned with fire, and I had the two tables of the Couenant in my two hands.
16 Then looked I, and behold yee had sinned against the Lord your God: and

had made a molten Calfe, and were turned out of hand from the way which the Lord your God had commaunded you.

17 Then tooke I the two tables and caſt them out of my two handes, and brake them before your eies:

18 And I fell downe flat before the Lorde fortie dayes and fortie nightes as afore, without eating breade or drinking water, for all your ſinnes which you had committed in dooing euill in the ſight of the Lord, by prouoking him to wrath.

19 For I was afrayde of the anger and wrath wherewith the Lord was diſpleſſed againſt you to deſtroy you. And the Lorde hearde mee that time alſo.

20 Likewiſe the Lord was ſore angrie with Aaron to deſtroy him: but I prayed alſo for Aaron the ſame time.

21 Then tooke I your ſinne which you had made, that is to wit the Calfe, and burnt it with fire, and ſtomped it and grounde it throughlie euen vntill it was ſmall as duſt, and caſt the duſt thereof in the brooke that came downe from the hill.

HEre Moſes declareth the great good zeale that hee had, at ſuche time as he ſawe God ſo ſore offended with the Iewes for making the golden calfe, and for their forſaking of their Redeemer to giue themſelues ouer to a deade thing, rather than to him of whoſe power they had had experience ſo manie wayes. Nowe he ſaith that *hee had the two tables in his handes, and that when hee ſawe the people ſo faine away to Idolatrie, hee brake them in peeces.* Heere it might bee asked, whether Moſes were not caried with ouerhaſtie moode. For we haue ſeene that thoſe two tables were written with Gods owne hande, ſo as there was not anie workemanſhippe of man in them, but that the ingrauing of the tenne commaundementes in them, was of Gods owne doing. Nowe then, that Moſes threwe downe Gods handie worke after that faſhion, notwithſtanding that the people had ſinned: it ſeemeth not to proceede of any modeſtie, but rather of too vnaduiſed zeale and oueruiolent headineſſe. We muſt not preſume to iudge of ſuch odde things: for wee ſee that God gouerneth his ſeruauntes by his holie ſpirit, and we knowe that ſometimes hee ſtirreth vp his faithfull ones to doe his pleaſure by extraordinarie meanes. And although wee may not make a certain rule of it: yet is not the deed it ſelfe to bee blamed. Numb. 25.6. Wee ſee what happened vnto Phinees. For although he was not ordeined to be a iudge, but onely to bee a prieſt: yet did he execute Iuſtice vpon the adulterer, & the adulteſſe which had defiled the Sanctuarie. God allowed his doing, and there is recorde of it in the holie ſcripture, and yet notwithſtanding it was a peculiar deede which wee may not follow, without a ſpecial mouing of the holy Ghoſt. Pſal. 106.30. 31. As much is to be ſaide of the thing which wee reade of in this texte, where Moſes brake the two tables, which thing hee did not through haſtie moode, but as ledde therto by a zeale to Godwarde, and GOD ſhewed himſelfe therein, of purpoſe to doe the people to vnderſtande, how heynous their tranſgreſſion was. It is ſaide that Moſes was ſent of God to bring downe his couenaunt, and to bee as in his ſteede, whom hee ſerued. And therefore his deede was as it were a declaring to the people, that his couenant was broken and torne in peeces. Beholde (ſaith God) It is true I haue choſen you, I haue couenaunted with you, I haue ſhewed my ſelfe to be your God, and the couenantes were ingrauen in two ſtones, that they might remaine in perpetuall remembrance. But now haue you broken your faith to me, and therefore muſt I for my part forſake you, and diſanull the couenant that was made betwixt vs. Thus we ſee that Moſes did not anie thing at aduenture, nor was driuen by fleſhly affection but that God ſheweth the people by him, that he gaue them ouer and tooke them not for his, for vtterly diſclaimed them. For the verie bonde of the vnion, was the obedience of the people in ſubmitting themſelues vnto his lawe, and their acknowledging of him to be their god, and their worſhipping of him, notwithſtanding that there were infirmities in them. But they make them a calfe of golde, and vtterly forſake the religion that was appointed them. And foraſmuch as they did ſo: it was good reaſon that God ſhould ſhake them off, and make as it were an vtter diuorce between himſelfe & them for euer. Marke that for one point.

But nowe by the way, this ſeemeth to diſagree with that which Moſes addeth: that is to wit, that he ſhoulde breake the two tables with his owne handes, as it were of purpoſe to ſeparate God and the people aſunder: & yet notwithſtanding make interceſſion for them, yea & after ſuch a ſort (as it is ſaid in Exodus) as he was not cõtented to intreate God only w prayers & ſupplications: but alſo was inflamed with ſuch zeale, Exod. 32. 32.

as hee beſought God (if it were poſſible) to take him out of this life, yea and euen to wipe him out of the booke of life, ſo as hee might bee accurſed, conditionallie that the people might eſcape. Here are two thinges which ſeeme verie diſagreeable at the firſt ſight: namely, that hee ſhoulde bee ſo angrie, and that hee ſhoulde on Gods behalfe breake and diſanul the couenant, as who ſhoulde ſay he meant to baniſh the people from the kingdome of heauen, and from all hope of ſaluation, yea and euen from the inheritaunce that was promiſed them: and that yet notwithſtanding, he ſhould go and offer himſelfe to GOD, to bee puniſhed for the peoples ſakes, and to beare their curſe both in his bodie and in his ſoule. But herein we ſee, that Gods ſeruauntes may well haue a burning zeale to execute their charge: and yet for all that, not ceaſe to haue pitie & compaſſion on ſuch as periſhe, and whome they be inforced to hate, and againſt whome they bee driuen to bee ſharpe and rough. And Moſeſes zeale ſhewed it ſelfe, not onely in breaking both the Tables, but alſo in his doing of the execution that we reade of in Exodus. For he did not onely rebuke the people ſharpely: but alſo commaunded the Leuites to halowe their handes. And howe? By killing all that euer they mette with. Dedicate your ſelues this day vnto the Lorde ſayth hee. So was that tribe choſen to doe that execution. And although they were ordeyned to the ſeruice of the ſanctuarie: yet is it tolde them that they muſt conſecrate their handes vnto GOD. And after what manner? By ſleaing their brethren, ſo as they ſpared not any man for kinreds ſake. Indeede yee bee all of Abrahams houſe (ſaith he): but yet muſt you execute vengeaunce this day, for the offence that hath beene commmitted againſt GOD, in making the calfe. Loe here another token, that Moſes was ſo out of patience with the people, as he had no kindenceſſe in him, ne meant to forgiue the tranſgreſſion that had beene cõmitted againſt GOD: and yet for all this, he is contented to yeelde his owne perſon to aunſwere for them, not onely by ſuſteyning ſome bodilie puniſhment: but alſo by beeing euen damned for them, if it were poſſible. But wee muſt alwayes come backe to that which I haue touched alreadie: that is to wit, that Gods ſeruauntes haue alwayes ſuch a care of the welfare of them that are cõmitted to their charge: that they had leauer to periſh themſelues, than to ſee thoſe goe to deſtruction, of whoſe ſaluation there was ſome hope. And yet notwithſtanding they ceaſe not for all that, to be ſharpe and rough when God commaundeth them to doe their duetie, not vppon crueltie, that they haue not compaſſion ſtill vppon the wretched ſinners: but becauſe it is not in their owne libertie and choyce to ſhewe mercie, but they muſt haue reſpecte to their office, and vnto Gods will, that they followe the ſame. Both theſe thinges are ſhewed vs here in Moſes: and we ſee that all the Prophetes haue vſed the like manner of dealing. It may well ſeeme that they haue no regarde to ſpare the people. For they threaten Gods wrathe, they curſe, they condemne, and to bee ſhorte, they ſeeme to bring nothing with them but thunder clappes: and yet notwithſtanding wee ſee they were led with ſuch pitie and carefulneſſe, that they beſought God to ſhewe fauour to ſuch as were vnworthie of it. Who will giue teares vnto mine eyes, ſaith the Prophete Ieremie: I could well finde in mine hearte to melt into water, to bewaile the ſinnes of my countriefolke. And yet in the meane ſeaſon howe ſpeaketh hee? Vſeth he mild tearmes to rebuke the people with gentleneſſe? Nay, hee cryeth out againſt them as though hee had forgotten all naturall affection. So then we ſee that theſe two things agree verie well: that is to wit, that thoſe whome GOD chooſeth to ſet foorth his worde, may well regarde the welfare and benefite of the wretched ſinners that are committed to their charge, and bee euen ſorie and exceedingly greeued at the heart to ſee them goe to deſtruction: and yet for all that, not forbeare to ſhewe ſignes of rigour, ſo farre foorth as their office requireth, and as they needes muſt for the ſeruing of God.

Ier. 9, 1.

Exod. 32, 27 & 29.

Furthermore as touching the requeſt of Moſes: it is a ſtraunge caſe that hee ſhoulde deſire to be wiped out of the booke that God had written: for he knewe well it was vnpoſſible. He was not ſo ignoraunt but that hee knewe Gods determination to bee vnchaungeable, and that his chooſing of thoſe that are his can not by anie meanes be altered. And therefore this requeſt ſeemeth to be vnordinate, yea and vtterly diſagreeing to faith. But we muſt marke that in this zeale Moſes reſpected not preciſely what was poſſible to bee doone: but onely meant to pray God that he being but one man might periſhe rather than the whole people ſhoulde periſhe, ſo as hee himſelfe might aunſwere for all the euill that had beene doone if it were poſſible. And beſides that, wee haue to marke here, that Moſes matched Gods glorie with the welfare of the people to whome the promiſes were giuen. For he perſwadeth himſelfe that it was not poſſible that that people ſhoulde bee vtterly rooted out, but that Gods trueth muſt bee aboliſhed therewithall, becauſe God had bound himſelfe to the offspring of Abraham: and therfore that if that people had beene cut off, God ſhoulde haue ſeemed to be variable. He couldе well haue found out ſome meane incomprehenſible to man: but Moſes coulde iudge no further than he was able to conceiue. Now then forasmuch as he was at his wittes ende in this caſe, and God was to be found faithfull and ſoothfaſt by performing of his couenant: therefore doth he forget himſelfe, and is caried away rather to offer himſelfe as it were in a ſacrifice of curſing, than that Gods name ſhould be blaſphemed, or that it might be ſaid that hee had not kept promiſe, or that he had changed his purpoſe. Hereby we ſee that Moſes might pray faithfully: and yet notwithſtanding not looke ſimplie & alonely to the right of the caſe. How might ỹ be done? He was moued thereto by a paſſion, howe beeit

Exod. 32, 32

not by a cholerike and fleshlie passion, but by such a zealous passion to Godward, as caried him aboue all state of man. Neuerthelater (as I haue saide afore), these things must not bee drawen to a generall rule, (for we haue not the spirite of Moses): but yet must we goe so farre with him, as we had leauer that the whole world shoulde goe to destruction, than Gods glorie shouldbe defaced, or ỹ he should not be worshipped, or that the honour of his iustice, wisedome, goodnesse, and power shoulde not bee reserued vnto him. To be short, we ought to prefer Gods glorie, not onely before all bodilie goods, but also euen before the saluation of our soules. And although that that bee harde for vs to doe: yet must wee inforce our selues vnto it. We see how Saint Paul did the like for the Iewes, and he was lead by the same reason which led Moses. I could finde in my heart (saith he) to bee accursed for my kinsefolkes sake. It was not humane pitie that mooued him thereunto: but his eye was alwayes vppon the promise that had beene made to the ofspring of Abraham, in respect whereof it behoued God to keepe still some remnant of that peoples seede, or else the infidels and vnbeleeuers would haue reported him to haue bin a lyer, and they would haue skorned the law & al the promises. Wherefore to the ende that Gods name shoulde not come to such reproch: Saint Paul offereth himself to be accursed, if need be, and yet was hee well assured, that God woulde neuer suffer him to scape out of the hande of his Leader, who had taken him into his keeping. But it is not for vs to enter into such disputatiõs. For as I saide, Moses is contented to be rauished with such zeale, as hee had leauer that both himselfe and all the worlde beside shoulde perishe, than to see Gods name skorned, or that the vnbeleeuers should haue their mouthes opened to blaspheme him. That is the thing which wee haue to marke vppon the prayer of Moses.

Rom. 9. 3.

But yet therewithall let vs come backe againe to that which is rehearsed here, *concerning his breaking of the two tables*. Herein we see that how pitifull soeuer Gods seruantes are towardes the wretched creatures which perish, yet must they not vse anie such mercie as may nourishe the euill, but be careful to doe the thing that God cõmaundeth them, without swaruing one way or other. Sometimes men are so moued with foolishe pitie, that they offende God: and vpon opinion to doe good to those whome they beare with, they increase the euil still in them, and are a cause of their greater decay. To be short, men stand so much in their owne conceits, that they wil needes exceede and go beyond God in mercie. And this is seene in all cases. Howbeit, if a man examine their affections narrowly: he shall find that their so doing procedeth not of louing kindnes: for one while they be sharpe & rough, and there is nothing with them but destroying: and anon after in ỹ turning of a hand, ye shal see them in another moode, so as they wil needs be verie pitiful. But after what maner? In going beyond their dutie, without regard what God hath ordeined: and (which worse is) they will not be alwais shewing of mercy where there is no repentance, whereby they cast wood into the fire to make gods wrath burn ỹ whotter against vs. And therefore when they whome God hath put in office do see offences committed: they will not in any wise leaue them vnpunished. For why? If they suffer the mischeefe to settle & to take: it will grow worse and worse till it become vncurable. For ye see howe diseases become incurable, when the parties be not purged in due time and place. We must remember how the Apostle saith, ỹ we must beware we suffer not euil weeds to grow, but we must pluck them vp betimes: for if we doe not, they will so ouergrow vs as we shall not be able to destroy them when we would, but they will stoppe our eyes, and so keepe downe good seede, as it can neuer thriue. After that manner will God punish our negligence, when we be not diligent in doing our duetie to take away euill from among vs. Thus ye see what we haue to marke. But let vs also applie this lesson to our instruction.

Let such as haue the charge of teaching, learneerely to themselues and thinke well vpon it, and beare in minde what God commaunded them, that they may discharge themselues thereof: or else they may well make couerings, but God will ask them an accoũt of ỹ things that he had inioyned them. Againe on the otherside, when we heare our vices and sinnes sharpely rebuked by Gods worde, and rough threateninges spoken vs, so as it may seeme that our teachers intend to deliuer vs into Gods hande to bee punished by him according to our desertes, let vs not thinke it straunge, as a number do, who would haue vs but onely to grease and annoynt their scabs, in steed of handling them as they should be, & cannot abide to be rebuked roughlie. But what? They would be flattered to the end they might perishe without feeling of it. Contrariwise we see ỹ to be taught aright, we must be rebuked and threatened, yea and that with such sharpenesse and vehemencie, as wee may be driuen to bethinke vs of our offences, and to humble our selues before God as becommeth vs. That is the thing which wee haue to remember in that wee see that Moses was so chafed at the peoples transgression, that hee brake the two Tables immediately, and afterwards drewe out the swoorde, to punishe such as had so violated Gods seruice, and incouraged his tribe to doe the like. Let vs not thinke but that Moses was wounded to the quicke with griefe and compassion, when hee was faine to doe execution with his owne hands. For wee know he was a meeke and kinde hearted man, and inclined to good and holie pitie aboue all others. But yet doth it behoue him to discharge his duetie, or else hee had beene vnfaithfull towards God.

Moreouer whereas he saith, *I looked, & behold you had offended your God, by making your selues a calfe of mettall, and yee were turned out of the way which he had appointed you*: this looking of his was because God had certified him thereof: but yet so-

behoued it him to beare witnesse of their deede [with his owne eyes]. And whereas Iosua sayde it seemed to bee some battell: Moses answered that it was not so, for as much as some of them made not signes of mirth, and othersome signes of feare and sorrowe: but all the whole multitude was merrie and ioyfull: and therefore (quoth hee) there must needes bee some other matter in it. At his comming downe hee sawe them daunsing as it were vppon fond deuotion, according to the maner of Idolaters, who think themselues to serue their Gods very well by such foolish and wanton toyes. And so the Israelites tooke this dancing of theirs to be a peece of Gods seruice: wherfore Moses executed the punishment afore mentioned. But as touching this text, the onely thing that we haue to marke, is the thing which we spake of euen now, and which we haue spoken of afore: namely that hee vpbraydeth the Iewes with their suddeine starting aside from the way which GOD had shewed them. For the welspring of the mischeefe was, that they held not themselues to the rule that is conteyned in the Lawe. Wee see then that the cause of all ruine and destruction, is our fickleneesse in turning away from Gods woorde. For as soone as wee passe those boundes and swarue neuer so little aside: by and by wee runne astray into vtter destruction. And therefore it standeth vs so much the more on hande to holde our selues warily in obedience to our GOD, specially when hee hath beene so gracious vnto vs, as to set vs in the righte way. For hee vouchsafeth not so to guide all men. Trueth it is that all men, yea euen those which neuer hearde one woorde of teaching, haue inough to make them vnexcusable. But as for vs, wee ought to make singular account of this priuiledge, that GOD calleth vs to him, that hee taketh vs into his gouernment, and that hee sheweth vs the way of saluation. Sith wee haue that, wee cannot goe astray, so wee hearken to the doctrine that is set foorth to vs in Gods name. But if wee despise such a benefite: then are we worthy of too too much blame. And therefore let vs learne to submit our selues simply to Gods word, or else wee shall open the gate to all wickednesse, accordingly as it is sayd that men marre all and turne all vpside downe, when they start aside from the said way. Then is there but one way to walke well and rightly in: which is to obey our GOD, and not to giue any credite to our owne wit and imagination, nor to giue heade to our owne inuentions: but to abide as it were fast linked to the thinges that GOD commaundeth and appoynteth vs. Those are the thinges which wee must sticke by: and if wee doe not, wee bee vnhappie and forlorne creatures. For we shall go on from euill to euil, and there will bee no ende nor measure of our disorderednes, as we see it be fell to this people, who hauing once let go Gods woorde, fell into so grosse and beastly superstition, as to woorship a Calfe of their owne making: and they became so madde that they spared not any thing so fouly to defile themselues in offending GOD after that fashion. For when Aaron willed them to bring him al their ornaments and Iewels: it was to the ende to haue made them loth to haue had an Idoll of that price. But there was neither man nor woman which brought not their ornamentes and all the costly Iewelles which they had. Those graceleesse wretches were so caryed away, and the diuell possessed them with such furie, that they passed not to spoile themselues of all their substance, nor cared what cost they were at, so they might haue an ydoll. And by this example are wee warned to raine our selues short and not to let our selues loose, least we happen to start neuer so little aside from Gods pure doctrine, & from the Religion which he sheweth vs in his woord.

There is yet another thing to bee noted in y breaking of these Tables: which is, that GOD intended to shewe by way of a figure, that his once writing of his Lawe was not ynough for vs, but that it behoued vs to haue it double ingrosed. Trueth it is that Moseses rehearsing of it in this text, is to another end: but yet is there no inconuenience in this also. Likewyse when Moses tooke a veyle or scarfe to put before his face, bycause the people coulde not abyde the glorie and great brightnesse that shone therein, it was to magnifye the Lawe, according as Saint Paule declareth: and the verie storie it selfe sheweth sufficiently, that it behoued Moses to be knowen thereby to bee as an Angell, and not to bee taken any more to be within the common state of a mortall man, in somuch that his countenaunce shone as bright as the sunne, which the people could not abide, & that was to put them in minde of their owne weakeneesse and frayltie. That was the cheefe cause why Moses wore a veile to hide his face withall. But yet herewithall Saint Paule sticketh not to say, that God shewed euen then aforehand by way of figure, that there should befall such a dimneesse and blindneesse vppon the Iewes, that whensoeuer they red the Lawe or heard it preached, they should haue as it were a veile before their eyes, so as they should not see a whitte. And Saint Paule sayth that this thing was accomplished euen in his time among the Iewes. Forthey red Moses continually in their Synagogues: and yet they continued as starke beastes as the heathen, so as they became brutish through their owne foolish fancies, and could not perceiue Gods trueth at all. For Saint Paule telleth them, that all the Lawe is nothing without Iesus Christ: it is but as a dead thing, bycause Iesus Christ is as the soule and perfection thereof. So then, as touching the breaking of the Tables: it was the foresayd cause that moued Moses to doe it: that is to wit, to shewe the people that God disclaimed them, as if hee had sayd, your God giueth you ouer, and hath diuorced himselfe from you. For in as much as your wickednesse hath separated you from him: it is good reason that hee also should stand discharged of his promise, and

Exod. 34. 30. 33.

2. Cor. 3. 7.

2. Cor. 3. 13. 14. 15.

Col. 2. 17.

be no more bound to so malicious & froward a people as you be, who haue vsed such vnfaithfulnes towards him. That then is the first reason.

But there is also another cause: which is, that wee haue as it were a figure or image, that Gods once writing of his Lawe is not ynough for vs: but that wee haue neede of a second wryting of it, to the intent it may auaile vs, and the doctrine thereof benefite vs by shewing it selfe to bee liuely and of effectuall force and power. And that is the thing which the Prophetes
Ier. 31.32, 33. meane in saying, that GOD will make a new Couenaunt with his faythfull ones, not as hee did with their fathers in Egype, but by writing his Lawe in their heartes, and by ingrauing it in their bowels. And therefore let vs marke well that GOD meant to doe vs to vnderstand, that his wryting of his Lawe in the two tables of stone, was by and by voyd and of none effect. And why? Bycause that, if God doe but write his Lawe, or cause it to bee preached to vs onely by woorde of mouth: there will neuer bee any holde or tacke in it: and hee sheweth that the blame thereof is in our selues, bycause wee bee not stedfast in keeping the promise that wee haue made vnto GOD, but become variable, and starte aside out of hand. God for his part, doth well performe whatsoeuer hee promiseth vs: but wee breake off all acquaintance and vnion with him, so as we be cut off and banished from him, and wee bereaue our selues of all the promises that he offered vs: and therefore after he hath once written his law, he must be faine to turne againe and write it the second tyme. As how? For figures doe not alwaies represent the full truth, but there is oftentimes some difference. Then let vs marke that the figure varieth from the truth which God sheweth vs and maketh vs to perceiue. For hee writeth not his Law the second time in stones: but rather whereas our hartes were hard before, he chaungeth them and maketh them softe: and in stead of
Ezec. 11.19. & 36.26. stony heartes (as sayeth Ezechiell,) he giueth vs hearts of flesh: that is to say, hee softeneth our heartes and maketh them pliable, to the intent wee shoulde receaue his Lawe, and haue it ingrauen in vs, and be able to doe and to follow whatsoeuer he commaundeth vs. Therefore let vs beare this figure well in mynde, for as much as it is for our benefite. In deede as concerning the first reason, it behooueth vs to bethinke our selues well when GOD hath called vs. For if we corrupt his seruice, or alter religion at our owne pleasure: although there be no Moses to breake the tables of stone: yet hath God shewed once for all, that he is alyenated from vs, and that hee will haue vs to bee as straungers to his house. Trueth it is that his election is without repentaunce: yet notwithExod 33.19. standing (as it is sayd in Exodus,) hee will saue whom hee listeth. Howbeit, if wee sticke not purely to his woorde: it is all one as if wee fell out with him, and playd the fugitiue and vnruly children: and hee will not suffer vs to despise his couenaunt after that maner, without auenging of himselfe of such vnthankfulnesse. And hee hath shewed vs at that tyme in the person of Moses, that hee giueth ouer and forsaketh all those, which turne away from the truth and holde not themselues to it, so that for his part hee will haue no more to doe with them, nor any more acquaintance with them. Wherefore let vs beware that this horrible sentence bee not cast vppon vs, and whensoeuer our Lorde shall haue called vs, let it serue to hold vs in awe and feare. But yet let vs know also, that it is not ynough for vs to haue our eares beaten with Gods commaundements, and to haue them set before vs, and to be incouraged to keepe them: for God must bee fayne to worke within our hartes, or else all the teaching in the world wil stand vs in no stead: it wil bee a sound ringing in the ayre, whereof no profite will redownd. Nowe then, come wee to haue Gods woorde? In deede wee ought to make account of the fauour that hee sheweth vs in causing it to bee preached vnto vs: but yet let vs assure our selues that that would but turne to our greater condemnation, if he ingraued it not in our heartes. What is to bee done then? We must discharge our selues of all selftrust, offering our selues that wee shall be but euill scholers, vntill GOD haue taught vs by his holy spirite. Notwithstanding that hee shall haue vsed men as his instrumentes, to bring vs to the knowledge of his trueth: yet must hee himselfe bore our eares, that we may hearken to him, and hee must touch our hearts and soften them, that we may receiue ye doctrine which is vttered vnto vs. Wherefore let vs learne to mislike our selues, by acknowledging our owne sinne and wretchednesse: and therewithall let vs pray him to woorke in such sort, as the things which we shall haue heard and vnderstoode, bee not a witnesse against vs of our rebellioustesse, and that wee haue beene foolke past amendment. And so, as ofte as wee come to any sermon, or read the holy Scripture: let vs pray God to touche vs inwardly, and to make the doctrine vsaylable which wee shall haue heard, so as it may not bee spoken to the stones, but to such as haue beene foretaught by his holy spirite. Thus ye see what wee haue to marke vppon that place.

Now for the attainement of this second writing, wee must not goe to Moses, but to our Lord Iesus Christ. For it is he that hath brought vs the holy Ghost, and the renewment whereby our heartes are refourmed to the obeying of GOD, and whereby they bee circumcised that they may be dedicated to his seruice. Thus if Moses be compared to our Lord Iesus Christ, hee is but a minister of the letter. And why? Bycause hee coulde goe no further than he had commission, which was, to set foorth Gods doctrine. But it belonged to Iesus Christ to giue light to that which Moses had vttered, and to giue strength thereunto. And how was that? By his holy spirit. True it is that Saint Paule nameth himselfe a minister of the spirite. Howbeit, that is not to deface his Master: it is not to drawe to himselfe the thing that belongeth

geth to the sonne of GOD: but it is to shewe that our Lorde Iesus Christ vttereth his grace now adayes by the preaching of his Gospell. As howe? Let vs marke first of all, that the renewing of vs and the writing of Gods Lawe in our heartes, thereby to fashion vs according to the righteousnes contayned in ỹ same: is referred alonely to the sonne of God, and that it is he which giueth vs the will to followe God his Father and to obey him. For he hath the spirit of the feare of God, hee hath the spirite of all righteousnesse, hee hath the spirite of trueth, as is sayde in the eleuenth Chapter of the Prophet Esay. So then let vs marke, that wee must resort to our Lorde Iesus Christ when wee bee put in minde of our duetie. When it is tolde vs what GOD requireth of vs, wee must thinke thus: Alas Lorde Iesus, it is true in deede that heere wee haue knowledge of the thing that is good and ryghtfull: but what? Wee haue another Lawe cleane contrarie to it in our selues: which is, that wee doe but chafe and fret at GOD when wee bee taught: and when his Lawe is alleaged vnto vs, wee doo the cleane contrarie to that which is contayned there: and therefore thou must bee fayne to chaunge vs, and to make vs new creatures: for to that ende is the spirite giuen vs, which thou communicatest vnto vs, by bearing vs recorde that wee bee members of thy body. And againe, hath Iesus Christ once giuen vs this will? Hee giueth vs also abilitie to perfourme the same desire, and strengtheneth vs so against all temptations, as wee shall neuer bee ouercome by them. Yee see then that wee must hye vs to our Lorde Iesus Christ, assuring our selues that that prerogatiue and honour belongeth to none but onely him. Yet notwithstanding this saying of S. Paules is true also, that all such as preach the Gospell are spirituall ministers, [that is to say] they set not foorth a dead letter and vnprofitable doctrine, but withall they bring Gods spirit. And howe is that? Is it by their owne breathing? No: For our Lorde Iesus Christ did well shewe by his breathing vppon his disciples, that the holy Ghost proceedeth from none but himselfe alone. But Saint Paules meaning is, that Iesus Christ worketh continually, to the ende wee shoulde beleeue in him. True it is that we shall not see him heere personally present: how then shall wee bee sure, that hee wryteth Gods Lawe in our heartes? Let vs not alleage any of those thinges. For seeing that Iesus Christ is the ende and perfection of the lawe, yea and the very life of it (as I sayde afore:) let vs not thinke but that hee printeth Gods Lawe in our heartes by the preaching of the Gospell. So then let vs not doubt but GOD will perfourme that grace in vs. And although the partie that preacheth vnto vs bee but a mortall man, and the wordes which hee vttereth vnto vs with his mouth, doe vanish anon after away in the ayre: yet let not vs doubt but Iesus Christ will for all that doe his dewtie, as Sainte Paule declareth in the same place. And in deede, the faithfull haue experience thereof: For wee shoulde neuer haue so much as any thought at all of comming vnto GOD, or of doing any good: vnlesse wee were fully resolued of this grounde, namely that it behoueth vs to bee throughly setled and constant: all the which proceedeth of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Therefore whensoeuer wee feele that GOD draweth vs vnto him, let vs vnderstande that hee sheweth vs howe wee bee members of the body of his sonne, bycause wee haue the holy Ghost, by whome wee bee altered and reformed, and by whome also his Lawe is written newe againe in our heartes. Thus yee see what wee haue to beare in minde.

Eph.4.7.

Rom.8.26. 1.Cor.6.15. 19.

Moreouer, let vs marke that whereas Moses telleth the people *that God heard him for that time*: it is to the ende they shoulde not abuse Gods goodnesse, but vnderstand their offence to haue beene so horrible, that if they did so any more and tempted GOD agayne afterwarde: they shoulde finde no mercye. The intent then of Moses in this place, was to holde the people in awe. Truely wee ought to bee fully perswaded of this, that if GOD finde vs repentaunt for our sinnes, hee will euer bee ready to forgiue all that wee haue committed. Let vs but onely make towardes him, and hee will reache vs his hande. Yet is it not ment that we should take leaue to doe euill vnder colour that GOD is so mercifull to wretched sinners, that as soone as they returne vnto him, hee preuenteth them and is ready to receaue them and imbrace them aforehand. This (say I) must not make vs the more inclined to doe euill, but wee must vnderstand that when God hath forgiuen vs once, we must no more fall backe againe. For then do we tempt him and abuse his patience, which is the next way to shutte vs out of the gate of saluation, and to disappoint our selues vtterly of all the mercy which hee was minded to haue vsed towardes vs. True it is that although we shall haue offended twentie or thirtie times, yet doth God tell vs that he will haue pittie vpon vs. But I speake as nowe of those that take libertie to offend, and say, seeing I haue found God so gentle and pittifull, I shall surely bee receiued of him at all tymes. Surely when men stande so vppon Gods mercie, and vnder pretence thereof, doe eyther become negligent, or else giue ouer themselues to all naughtinesse: it is all one as if they renounced all the promises of their saluation. Therefore let vs marke well the saying that is set downe heere. God (sayth Moses) heard mee. And howe? for that tyme: to the ende that the people shoulde thinke thus with themselues. Alas, it is a wonder that euer we obteined pardon, and it must needes astonish vs still, that God woulde rid vs out of such danger as wee were fallen into, considering howe deadly and ouer deadly the fall was. Now then seeing that God hath shewed himself so friendly towardes vs: let vs beware that wee prouoke not his wrath any more. For if wee fall backe agayne,

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wee cannot tell what may befall vs: After that maner muſt wretched ſinners, (when they bee tempted to doe amiſſe,) brydle and reſtraine themſelues by ſetting Gods promiſes before their eyes, howbeit in ſuch ſorte as they become not the boulder to doe euill, but as they may haue recourſe to Gods mercy when they haue doone amiſſe, and liue in the greater awe euer after. Thus ye ſee whereof wee be put in mind in this text.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgment of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to feele them, as wee may learne to ſigh and grone for them all out life time, and finde mercie at his hand when we ſeeke it with faith: and to refourme vs in ſuch wiſe, as we may not peruert his woorde and the pureneſſe of his ſeruice: but that ſeeing hee hath ſhewed vs the way of ſaluation, it may pleaſe him to grant vs the grace to perſeuer therein all the tyme of our life, ſo as wee forſaking all our wicked luſtes and affections, may walke on in his obedience: and moreouer to beare with vs in all our infirmities, vntill hee haue ridde vs quite and cleane of them all, and clothed vs againe with his owne righteouſneſſe, that wee may bee partakers of his glory, which he hath promiſed vs for our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes ſake. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the iiij. of September. 1555.

The Lxvii. Sermon, which is the ſixth vpon the ninth Chapter.

20 Likewiſe the Lorde was ſore angry with Aaron, to haue deſtroyed him: but at the ſame tyme I prayed alſo for Aaron.

21 Then tooke I the ſinne which you had made, that is to wit the Calfe and burnt it in the fire, and brake it and brayed it throughly, vntill it was as ſmall as duſt: and I caſt the duſt thereof in the brooke that came downe from the hill.

22 Alſo yee prouoked him to wrath in Thaberah, and in Maſa, and in Cibrothhathauah.

23 When the Lorde ſent you from Cades barne, ſaying, go vp and poſſeſſe the Lande which I haue giuen you: Then rebelled you againſt the commaundement of the Lorde your GOD, and beleeued him not, neither obeyed you his voyce.

24 Yee haue beene diſobedient to the Lorde, euer ſince the tyme that I haue knowne you.

AFter that Moſes had ſpoken of the faulte which the people had committed in making the golden Calfe to worſhip it: now hee ſheweth that Aaron was to bee blamed for that cryme, for as much as hee being then the gouernour of the people, had not indeuored to withſtand them with ſuch ſtourneſſe as he ought to haue doone. For ſuch as bee magiſtrates ſhall haue a harder account to make, than ſuch as are priuate perſons. Nowe then, Aaron ought to haue taught the people, and to haue withſtoode their euill dealinges euen to the death. True it is that when Aaron ſawe that the people would needes haue an Idoll to worſhip, hee told them ſ it was wickednesſe ſo to doe: and when he could by no meanes wey with them, he deuiſed another ſhift, and laboured to driue them from their deſire, by requiring their Iewelles and ornaments and the things which they did ſet moſt ſtore by. For hee thought that by that meanes, that fancie would bee put out of their head. Yee ſee then that Aaron conſented not to their euil, but would faine haue letted it, howbeit that was not with ſuch ſtoutneſſe as hee ought to haue doone. For hee ſhoulde rather haue hazarded his life, than to haue conſented to Idolatrie, whereby GODS honour and true ſeruice was corrupted, by conueying of it ouer ſo leaudly to a puppit that was but a dead and ſenſleſſe thing. Ought not Aaron to haue beene ſo zealous, as rather to haue hazarded his owne perſon for it? ſpecially ſeeing that GOD had put him in ſo honorable a charge? For hee was the highe prieſt. And although he was not yet conſecrated into his office: yet knewe hee well ynough whereunto he was ordeined. And therefore there was no excuſe at all for him.

Nowe vppon this text wee haue to gather, that thoſe to whome GOD hath giuen charge to gouerne his people, are not diſcharged by

not consenting vnto euill, or by not beeing the authors thereof: but they must withstand it to the vttermost, and bee of such inuincible stoutnesse, as not to swarue aside for any importunatenesse. Although they see great trubbles and hurlyburlies, yet must not their courages be abated therfore, but they must stil stand in the mayntenaunce of that which is good. And although they see themselues in daunger, so as there is none other remedie but only by praying GOD to take them into his protection: yet must they not swarue a side from theire office to eschewe the daunger. And therfore had not Aaron escaped vnpunished at Gods hande, if his brother Moses had not interated for him. Let not vs thinke nowadayes that God hath altered his mind: but let vs mark, that as many as haue not withstoode euill to the vttermoste, shalbe wrapped all in one condemnation with the offenders, and Gods vengeance must consume them all together. For hee that letteth euill slip, or preuenteth it not if he can, doth giue libertie to doe euill. It is a saying euen of the heathen, who to rebuke the negligence and coldnesse of magistrates and officers of iustice, haue alledged this prouerbe, That if hee which ought to hinder euill doe wink at it, it is all one as if hee proclamed leaue and liberty to doe euill by the soundo of a trumpet, and hee shall beare the blame of it before God. And in deede that prouerbe was commonly vsed, to do vs to vnderstand that God will not hold them excused, which haue beene so colde in executing their office. Now if the worlde condemne them: what will become of them, when they come before the heauenly Iudge? So then, Magistrates are heere warned of their duety, namely that when they see any euill, they must withstand it. Although they bee not armed with worldly force: yet must they rather forgoe their liues, than yeelde in such sorte as the mischiefe may get the maysterie and the vpper hande through their cowardlyneſſe. Let Lordes of theirs looke well to themselues: for although men acquite them; yet shall they not bee quitte before GOD if they playe the blinkardes, and let naughtinesse slippe when they see God offended. If they see the right peruerted, and doe not manfully withstand it: they must yeelde account for it. And moreouer, God will bring them to shame before the world, that they may feele the condemnation aforehand, which is prepared for them before him: and therefore let euery man looke neerely to himselfe.

And let vs marke generally, that as many as withdrawe not themselues from the companie of the wicked, are taken as accessaries before God, though they confederate not themselues with them, if they make no countenance to withstand them when they see them go about any euill. Wee heare howe S. Paule sayeth to all the faithfull both great and small, Haue no fellowship with wicked workes, but rebuke them. Then doeth it stande vs on hande to beware that wee bee not partakers in euill, and to protest openly that wee like not of it. But yet is not that ynough: for wee must shewe our selues to bee enemyes of the wicked, and take parte against them. And they that doe not so, are too cowardly: and that dissimulation of theirs shalbe esteemed as treason before God. But what? Men see howe the world goeth. For nowadayes there can no friendship bee mainteyned, except men bolster their neighbours in their euill doinges. Folke doe mocke GOD openly to his face, and yet are they readie to beare open defyaunce, if men reache them not their handes to take parte with them in all offences agaynst GOD. But yet shall not this rule bee chaunged for all that: wee may well inharden our selues in our wicked customes: but yet will not GOD fayle to iudge vs, yea euen according to this rule. And therefore let vs not thinke that he should transforme himselfe, when wee take inordinate leaue to doe euill. And when wee bee come into possession, and haue taken couert vnder pretence that others did so as well as wee: let vs not thinke that wee shall scape for all that, but let vs forbeare that wee bee not wrapped in the vengeaunce which God pronounceth against sinners, for want of withstanding them to the vttermost of our power. All men without exception ought so doe so, as I sayde afore: but yet they that are in authoritie ought to take good heede that they shewe the way vnto others.

After that Moses hath spoken of this offence: hee addeth yet other examples, to shewe that the people coulde not boast of any righteousnesse of their owne, nor alleage that GOD had chosen them for their vertues sakes, or for any worthinesse or deserte that was in them. Therefore hee sayeth, *Remember, what yee did in Thaberah*, that is to say, in the *Burning*. It was a place so named, bicause that there, GOD sent downe fyre from heauen to consume a part of the Campe. And afterwarde in *Masa*, which signifieth temptation, and was another place, so named bycause the people tempted GOD there. And againe in *Meriba*, that is to say *Strife* or *Contention*. Remember also what yee did at *Kibroth Thaauh*, that is to say, at the graues of lust. For GOD sent as it were a plague vpon all the people, so as a great multitude of them dyed for their wicked lust in that they longed for flesshe, and woulde not bee contented with the Manna. This foode is too lothsome (quoth they,) wee can not away with it, it goeth against our stomackes, for wee see nothing else but alwayes Manna Manna, wee will haue some flesshmeate. Ye see then ỹ the wicked lust of ỹ people was ỹ cause of their ruine & destruction. Finally Moses rehearseth here ỹ thing that he had said afore, concerning the rebellion which the people committed when they should haue entred into ỹ land. For they distrusted gods promise, & would needs send spies to learne how things went. They trusted more to their own policie & eyesight, than to Gods worde. By reason whereof Gods wrath was so kindled against thẽ, that

Numb. 11. 3.

Exod. 17. 7.

Num. 11. 34.

that he gaue flatte sentence that none of them shoulde enter into the promised heritage, saue onely Iosua, and Caleb the sonne of Iephuneh, bicause those two had behaued thēselues faithfully. But as for the people, they should be led about by the space of fortie yeeres, vntill their carkesses were rooted in the wildernesse, according to the threat which God had vttered with his owne mouth. That is the content of this part of the text.

Now let vs marke first of all, that to make the Iewes vnderstand the meaning of Moses, or rather of the holy ghost: it behoued them to bee warned to set their former faultes before their eyes, that they might not bee so fond as to presume any thing at all vppon their owne worthynesse, or vppon their owne power: but to abase themselues vtterly, acknowledging that GOD found not any thing in them why hee shoulde chose them, but that all came of his owne free goodnesse. Now if Moses were faine to vse such exhortation to the Iewes: let vs vnderstand that we also haue as much neede of it nowadayes as they. The end therefore which we must begin at, is this: that wee must cast downe ourselues, and not be lifted vp with any presumption, nor vaunt our selues through any foolish ouerweening: but acknowledge our selues to be voyd of all deseruing, and that there is not any grace or righteousnesse in vs, for the which we might obtaine loue at Gods hand. And therefore must he needes preuent vs with his free goodnesse. Marke that for a speciall poynt. But howe may men abase themselues after that fashion? Wee will neuer doe it of our owne accord. In deede if euery of vs looke well vppon himselfe, it must needes bee that wee bee as it were bewitched, if wee bee not induced to mislike of our selues, and to be ashamed and vtterly at our wits end. For what is man? Let him search throughly what is in him, both in bodie and in soule: and surely wee shall finde euen from the most to the least of vs, that there is nothing in vs but vtter shame and confusion, as I sayd afore. Neuertheles, euery of vs abuseth himselfe through this follie, so as we beare our selues on hand that our vices are vertues. And although our life be as leaude as may be, and our sinnes most outrageous and horrible: Yet to our owne seeming there is nothing in vs but perfect righteousnesse and soundenesse. See see then that men beguile themselues. And therefore it is requisite that we shoulde bee held shorte, and haue our faultes layde afore vs, not onely some one or two faultes, but also all the faultes of our whole life: so as we may know that we haue offended our GOD so grieuously, that it behoueth vs to bee ouerwhelmed with shame and reproche: and that if wee shoulde goe about to lift vp our heades, it were meete that wee should bee thrust backe, and that GOD should knock vs harde vppon the pates with a cudgell, to shew vs that our pride is diuelishe against him. Then let vs marke that Moses spake not onely to the Iewes: but that the same lesson is toulde vnto vs at this day: in so much that if wee will yeeld glory vnto GOD, we must be bereft of all prayse, and not presume any whit at all of our owne vertues, but assure our selues that there is not aught in vs but vtter vanitie.

Furthermore for as much as wee come not to such myldenesse of our one accorde: let vs haue an eye to our sinnes, and not tary till God open his bookes of account as he will doe at the last day, for then it will be too late for vs to yeeld our selues guilty. But let vs bethinke vs of our sinnes now while he summoneth vs by his word, and whyle hee warneth vs aforehande. Let euery of vs submit himselfe as a wretched offender before his Iudge, and let vs acknowledge our selues to bee iustly accused, yea conuicted of infinite faults, before God. And when we haue bethought vs of one offence, let the same minister occasion to vs to bethinke vs of another. And to bee shorte, let vs both generally and particularly practise this lesson of considering what wee bee, yea euen without flattering of our selues, that all the good which wee receyue at Gods hand may bee fastned vpon him, and the honour which he reserueth to himselfe remaine whole and vnmaimed vnto him. Let vs not couet to inriche our selues with the thinges which wee haue borrowed of him: let vs not seeke to attyre and decke our selues with his feathers: but let vs acknowledge that it is of his owne free goodnesse that he vouchsafeth to shew himself so liberall, though he be not bound thereto. And for our parte, seeing we cannot bring any deserts vnto him, but are guiltie in all cases and all respectes, the infinitie of his inestimable mercy must be faine to beare with vs, or else wee would be deadly enimies to him, & he should be driuen to thunder downe vpon vs. Thus yee see what wee haue to marke generally vpon this text.

But nowe let vs come to the storie which Moses toucheth heere. Hee speaketh full of *Thaberah*, which betokeneth *burning*, as I sayde afore. For there the people were chastised with burning, bycause they murmured at their trauelling through the wildernesse. O (quoth they,) shall wee neuer come to an ende? Wee doo but runne vp and downe heere, wee bee fayne to remooue our tentes from place to place, wee bee driuen to carie our stuffe vppon our shoulders, and why bee wee not rather in some place of rest, discharged of such trauell? But alas, these wretches considered not that GODS displeasure was to bee accomplished, according to his othe, which was that none of them should enter into the promised lande. They should haue thought, Alas, wee deserue to bee drowned in the bottome of hell, and GOD is contented to send vs a temporall correction. Although he bee not minded to bring vs into his earthly resting place: yet notwithstanding hee giueth vs respit to bethinke vs of our sinnes, and to sue to him for pardon. For albeit that he make vs to feele some rigour, and it behoueth vs to beare the markes of his displeasure all our life long by being depriued of the inhery-

inheritance which he had promised vs: yet notwithstanding we ought therewithall to acknowledge his goodnesse, in that he will not haue vs to perishe euerlastingly as we wel deserue. But they considered none of all this, neither considered they that they were in as happy plight as they could wish. They had the Manna downe from heauen, they tooke no paine to make prouision for themselues, they needed no more but to guther it vp & to take euery man his measure of it, they were all fed, yea and that with a good & sauory foode. Yet considered they none of all this, but grudged at their ouerlong iourney. And what cause had they so to doe? First they were priuiledged from the curse that was layd vppon all mankinde. We be set in this world to leade a painefull lyfe: & man was ordeyned to labor euen before he had sinned: for it is vnkindly that we should be idle & vnprofitable. Moreouer the trauell that God inioyneth vs now, serueth not onely to keepe vs occupyed, but also to hold vs, so as we may be inforced to shrink vnder our burthē, & to grone for our sins sake. Now thē this people had good cause to submit themselues quietly, when God led them so through the wildernesse. And therefore it is no maruell though fyre came from heauen to burne vp part of their tents, and though Gods wrath appeared after that fashion to make thē abashed. Yet notwithstanding, so little did this amend them, that they fell to murmuring by and by again, because they had none other foode but Manna. God had warned thē enough that they shoulde no more prouoke him, & they should at leastwise haue learned it by experience, seeing they felt the blowes. But they hardened themselues againe against God: and although he had made them to feele his hand so roughly: yet say they, what shall become of vs? our soule withereth, and wee pine away to the death. For here is nothing for vs but Manna, we would faine haue some fleshmeate. Well: They haue their desire: but that is to their cost. For while the meate was yet in their mouthes, Gods wrath fell vppon them, so as they were driuen at length to know ỳ they ought to haue bin contented with so good and happie a state as God had giuē them. In remembrance whereof the same place was named *the Graues of Lust*. Also there was another murmuring for water, insomuch that whereas they should haue craued water of God, they fell to storming against Moses, & would haue stoned him. For these causes it was Gods will that the markes of their disobedience should be printed vpon them that they might remēber their naughtinesse as long as they liued vppon the earth, & therefore he named those two places, the one *Massa*, and the other *Meriba*. As if he should say, yee haue striued with me, and are entered into contention against me, as though yee would bid me battell. Ye haue tempted me because ye knowe not yet my power, which hath shewed it selfe so many wayes vnto you. Thus much concerning the stories which Moses reheārseth here. In deede they deserue to bee layd forth more at length. Howbeit forasmuch as we haue here but a rehearsall of them as it were at a glaunce: we must deale so as we may profite by them, and take so much of them as may serue for our instruction.

Now then, seeing that God was so sore greeued with the murmuring of that people, in that they abode not the trauell patiently which he had layde vppon them: let vs note that there will be neuer the more excuse for vs nowadayes if we bow not downe our shoulders to beare the burthen meekely, without striuing against God. First there is this earthly wayfaring, whereunto God hath made vs subiect in this worlde. Although God gaue many men rest, so as they neuer goe frō home nor (as ye would say) out of their nests: yet are we misaduised if we passe not through this world as birdes vpon a bough, & be not as straungers in it. For else God disclaymeth vs & giueth vs ouer. Sith it is so: they that setle themselues in this world as though they should neuer goe out of it, doe banish themselues from Gods kingdome: and shewe ỳ the kingdome of heauen belongeth not vnto them. And let them not beguile thēselues by protesting that their intent is not so: for God hath auowed it to bee so, and the Apostle sayth expresly, ỳ forasmuch as ỳ fathers were as poore straungers here beneath: therefore did God also vouchsafe to call them his children. Now then as for them that are ashamed to be called straungers in this world: they must goe seeke their inheritance with the diuell: for they haue neither part nor portiō with God. And now must we apply ỳ thinges to our benefit which it pleaseth God to send vs. Wee see what miseries doe cōmonly hem vs in, insomuch that euen ỳ tenderest sort & such as seeme to haue ỳ world at will, are most feeble & weake, and are troubled wᵗ a nūber of griefes & vexations. Howbeit let euery man looke vpon himselfe, and according as God dealeth with vs, so let vs patiētly receiue ỳ afflictions ỳ he sendeth vs. If our state be hard and combersom, let vs not thinke ỳ if we murmure at it, our murmuring shall vanish away into the aire, but ỳ we must come to a reckoning for it before God. For if God send not down fyre from heauen after the same maner ỳ he did visibly punishe the Iewes for their murmuring: it is so much the woorse for vs. For if he winke at it, & punish vs not out of hand: his vengeance must needes be ỳ sorer & more terrible. And therefore let vs learne to liue vnder obedience to our God. Although wee be not handled as we would be in this earthly and slightful lyfe, but are faine to be trotting vp and downe: so as when wee woulde liue in rest, God driueth vs from place to place, and when we would faine be discharged of care, then are we most vexed: let vs receiue all that euer God sendeth vs, and let vs make our reckoning to passe through this worlde, after the same maner that this people were conueied through the wildernes. And let vs learne to practise this saying of our Lord Iesus Christ, that we must beare our crosse after him. Lyke as when a man goeth into the countrie, hee takes vp his trusse vpon his necke, and caryeth such thinges with him as he shall haue neede of: so must we bee loden with such fardell as God listeth to lay

Exod. 16.3.

Num. 11.4.

Num. 20.13.

Heb. 11.16.

Mat. 10.38. & 16.24.

vppon vs. And let vs not looke one at another: for God intendeth not to handle vs all alike. Let such as haue most vexation of al, vnderstand that God doth it not without cause. And let such as haue lesse, thanke God for his bearing with their frailtie. But yet for all that, howsoeuer we fare, let vs beware that wee stand not in contention with God, by grudging that hee letteth vs not alone in such quietnesse as our flesshe woulde wishe and desire: for we wote not what is for our owne profite. Marke that for a speciall point.

But on the contrarie part, we see how men are giuen, not onely to their ease and commoditie: but also to superfluitie and wantonnesse, so as it should seeme that they wil needes be merie & driue away all care, whether God will or no. Whereas by the aduersities which God sendeth vs, he putteth vs in minde of our sinnes, and laboreth to withdraw vs from this world, as though he spurred vs forward to make the more hast vnto him: we not only cānot abide it, but also seeke meanes to rush forth into all inordinate pleasure, euen with open rebellion against him. If God spare vs: thē are we the more vnruly, whereas we should call our selues home vnto goodnes, and liue in the greater awe. And therefore let vs be aduised to benefite our selues by the example that is contained here.

As concerning the *Temptation* or *Swife*: let vs vnderstand that if necessitie pinch vs, so as we be driuen to any streite and know not where to become: we must resorte to our God with all lowlinesse, beseeching him to prouide a remedie for our neede: but yet in the meane while wee must be contented with his good will. If it please him to haue vs to languishe: let vs hold downe our neckes, and let vs not haue the stifnecked-nesse which Moses cōdemned heretofore in the people of old time. Also let vs vnderstand that it is Gods owne working, when he vouchsafeth to vphold vs in such sort as wee doe not vtterly quaile. For although wee doe hardly drag our limbes after vs, & we seeme euen to be at the last cast: yet doe we still feele some taste of the goodnesse of our God. Howsoeuer the world go with vs, let vs learne that wee must not tempt him, that is to say, wee must not giue our selues the bridle to aske this or that, but referre our selues wholy to his good will, and be so gouerned by him, as we may alwayes yeelde him his due obedience, and not raunge after our owne lustes lyke wilde beastes, as though wee would push at him with our hornes, but that if wee wishe the thing which seemeth expedient for vs, we doe it alwayes with this condition that God shall haue the maisterie of vs, and ouerrule all our passions and desires. If our minde moue vs to wishe or to say, I would faine haue this or that: Let vs looke that God haue the ouerruling of vs, and that we submit our selues so vnto him, as al our thoughts affections and lykinges be framed vnto his will, though it seeme neuer so hard vnto vs. Thus ye see what wee haue to note concerning the temptation that Moses speaketh of here, and concerning the strife at such time as the people were in a chafe and murmured against GOD.

And let vs knowe moreouer that wee bee no competent Iudges in owne case, least wee seeke fond excuses as wee be wont to doe. We will not be acknowen that we accuse God, though it bee so in deede: We will say wee intend not to aduance our selues against him to defy him: but yet is it so in deede. Yea and whereas the people were driuen to name the places of *Meriba* & *Masa*: they did it not of their owne good will, but it was Gods will that those names should remaine as presidentes of their rebellioustesse. Therefore let vs learne, that if wee bee not wholy obedient vnto God, so as we doe not any thing but by his good wil and leasure: our tempting of him is a prouoking of his wrath, as though we made a kinde of defiance to him. Afterwards followed the offence which the people committed in requiring flesh to eat. They held not themselues contented with Manna, but they would needes haue such vittels as they themselues liked: and they were not contented simply with flesh neither, but they would needes haue sauce, yea and daintie sauce to it. For they longed for the Garlike and Onyons and other like thinges which they had had in Egypt, and they would needes haue GOD to feede them with the same geere in the wildernesse. But it was a diuelish longing, which made them so refuse the sustenāce that God had giuen thē. Besides, what more? They had Manna daily from heauen, to feed vpō as much as they would: so as they might wel perceiue that God maintayned them by his power, but that seemed vnsauery to them. And why? Because it came of God. They would needes haue whatsoeuer they themselues liked, as it were in spite of him: insomuch that they fretted and chafed at his bringing of them out of Egypt, as who shoulde say they held skorne of the deliuerance which he had wrought for them. Sith wee see this, let vs looke to our selues, and let vs know that this fault is set forth vnto vs, to make vs beware that wee bee not guiltie of the lyke.

For wee must vnderstand that GOD maketh vs Iudges of the people of old time, to the ende that euery of vs shoulde condemne our selues in our owne cases. For why? If wee bee Iudges of suche as haue done amisse: thinke wee that GOD seeth not much clearelyer than wee? Now he is so gracious as to put ouer his office vnto vs, to the ende that euery of vs shoulde haue an eye to himselfe, and hauing pleaded guiltie, bee cast downe and humbled before him. Therefore let vs marke that the rehearsall of this storie, ought to leade vs to the condemning of our owne wicked affections, and make vs to consider what our lustes are, wherethrough wee cease not to prouoke the wrath of our God. And let vs marke first of all, that looke how many lustes

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are in our flesh: so many armed folkes haue we, which aduaunce themselues against God. And for the same cause doth Saint Paul say, that all the imaginations, conceites, and affections of our nature, serue to prouoke vs to fight against the righteousnesse of our God. And therefore whensoeuer we chance to lust after any thing, let not our flesshe ouermaister vs. And why? For all our senses are so corrupted: that although (to our seeming) the end of our wishes be good: yet notwithstanding, some excesse will euer be mingled with them, and God shall haue somewhat in them whereat to finde fault. And how faire and beautifull soeuer our desires are to the outward showe, there is alwayes some vice in them: and what shall wee then say of the sinfull lustes, which wee be driuen to condemne euen by our owne naturall iudgement? When a man desireth to haue wherewith to find his household, and trauelleth to get it: truely that desire is good of it selfe. But yet the same is matched with impatience, or with vnstayednesse, or with ouergreat care, or with vnbeliefe: and to be short God shall alwayes finde somewhat amisse in our desires, which of their owne nature are not euil. Howbeit, if a man rush out into pilling, and polling, and scratching, to beguile and deceiue his neighbor: is it not much worse than to haue a desire that might seeme good of it selfe? Though a man purpose to liue neuer so quietly with his wife, yet shall it alwayes be mingled with some worldly affections, so as our corruptiō wil needes bewray it selfe still, euen in the best thinges: and what will become of vs then, if wee giue our selues the bridle to whoredome? As much is to be sayd of all other thinges. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that although our desires appeare not to bee euill: yet are they euer matched with some vice & vnrighteousnesse before God. Beſides this,] wee haue also our fleshly lusts which make vs to shake off Gods yoke, so as wee cast our selues (as aduenture) some into blasphemie, some into gluttonie, some into vnruliness, some into wantonnesse, some into lecherie, some into extortion, some into crueltie, some into robberie, and other some into al maner of wickednesse. Now then, deserue not our lustes that God should rise vp to destroy vs for them, when wee be come to that poynt? Yes: for if the people of Israell had graues of luste: what shall become of vs? And therefore let vs learne that when we read these stories, God giueth vs warning to enter into ỹ examination of our faults, that vppon the knowing of them, wee shoulde craue forgiuenesse of them, and fall to such repentance, as may wholy tame vs and make vs flee vnto him, and not be giuen any more to our vices. But that is vnpossible for vs to doe, vntill wee haue so ouermastered our selues, as to mislyke our owne affections with full purpose to renounce them. Vntill a man bee subdued after that fashion, it is vnpossible for him to yeeld obedience vnto God, how faire apparance of vertue soeuer he haue. But what? So farre off are wee from minding these thinges, that by all lykelyhoode wee doe nothing else but blindfolde our eyes, that wee might not see our sinnes to seeke conuenient remedie for them. See here how the Iewes were condemned for requiring of water, and yet were they ready to dy for thirst. Yea, but the cause why they were not to bee excused, was for that they required it with murmuring. Whereas they should haue sayd, Lord thou knoweſt what is expedient for vs better thā wee our selues doe, and therefore wee referre our selues to thee, prouide thou for vs: in steade of vsing such humilitie, they fall to repining and storming. Now wee must not doe so: but wee must patiently tary Gods leasure, when hee giueth vs not thinges so soone as wee aske them: for hee can well skill to prouide for all our needes. In deed if it pleased him, hee could well content vs and giue vs all our wishes: but his will is not to maintaine vs here in such abundance, as wee might take occasion to holde skorne of the good that hee doth vs, and to despise it by treading it vnder our feete. Hee will haue vs to be meeke and lowly, that wee may learne to resorte vnto him. When a man is in poore estate, he beareth himselfe on hand that if God would giue him wherewith to maintaine himselfe plenteously, he would be wholy giuen to be thankefull towardes him for his pitying of him. But let him once come to wealth, and let God deale bountifully with him: and what will he doe? He wil lift vp himselfe against God, and forget him in such sorte, as if hee were not the same man that he was before. And this vice is tootoo common: insomuch that the more our Lord increaseth his benefites towardes vs, the more doe we seeme wilfull in despising him, and his so doing sharpneth our vnthankfulnesse and malice. And therefore let vs consider, that the thinges which are tolde vs concerning ỹ Iewes, belong vnto vs, forasmuch as we haue the lyke or greater vices in vs, than were in them: & we must vnderstand that Gods intent is to teach vs by them.

And specially whereas mention is made of their wilfull stubbornesse at *Cades Barne*, where they refused to goe foreward to enter into the inheritance that was promised them: let vs vnderstand that we be no lesse worthie of blame at this day before God, for that he cannot hold vs in, to make vs goe through with our course. To what purpose hath GOD called vs into his Church? It is (as I sayd afore) to the end that in passing through this world, wee shoulde not be wedded to it, but vse it altogether as a wayfaring, and as a straunge countrie, trauelling still through it towardes heauen. For beholde, our Lord cryeth to vs both early and late, that wee should goe on still to come vnto him. But we on the contrary part, voutsafe not to remoue one foote to goe to him: but in stead of setting forward we retire back, or else sit snugging still in our owne slothfulnesse. We see it is so. Now then, forasmuch as our Lord findeth vs so lazie and stubborne, that in stead of plucking vp a chearefull courage to goe foreward, and to hold on our course vntill wee bee come to the ende of it, wee resist him and are loth to passe any fur-

Numb. 14.

ther: Let vs vnderstand ỳ this story is told vs, to cast vs vtterly down in our selues, so as we should not seeke any worthinesse in our owne persons, (as in deede there is none in vs:) But yelde God the whole prayse of his benefites, knowing that he is not bound at all on his side, but that hee doth all thinges of his own meere free goodnes and infinite mercie: and therefore that wee on our side ought to sigh, beseeching him to correct vs and reforme vs according to his will. And for the better perceiuing hereof, I pray you after what sort goe we forward when God calleth vs? Wee partly limp, and partely make many a false step. Let euery man examine himselfe, and see how foreward hee hath bin since the time that God hath reached him his hand. True it is that euen before wee knew the Gospell, wee were already without excuse of our rebelling against our God: but now seeing hee hath inlightened vs by his word, and shewed vs the way of saluation, and setteth his will before vs, saying, come, and reacheth vs his hand to guide vs: if of all this while wee haue not vouchsafed to come vnto him, how shall wee excuse our selues? Let euery of vs consider how hee dischargeth himselfe: and afterward let vs haue an eye to the common state. Wee can well speake of Gospellyke reformation, and it is a maruell to heare how wee will talke: but yet for all that, our filthinesse is so stinking, as is lothsome to beholde: and GOD needeth not to goe vp into his iudgement seate to giue sentence of it, for the very infidels and ignoraunt sorte can bee our Iudges. And of a trueth they may bee a great shame to vs, seeing our lyfe is so leawde and wicked, that euen the silie blinde sorte of Papistes may laugh vs to skorne. And surely if vtter confusion shoulde fall vppon our heades: wee haue well deserued it. For by our meanes Gods name is blasphemed: and yet notwithstanding wee regarde it not. Howbeit, the more that wee beforte our selues after that fashion in our vaine selfeflatterie: the more will GOD make vs feele in the end, that hee will not suffer his chastisements to bee lost.

Rom. 1. 20.

To bee shorte, let vs remember how Moses sayth heere, *Euer sines the time that I haue known you, you haue alwayes bin rebellious against God.* And this *Rebelliousnesse* whereof he speaketh is expressed lykewise in this saying *that they resisted the mouth of God distrusting him and in crossing his will.* Now then, if we wil know what it is to be rebellious: let vs first of all looke what God hath spoken. For the thing wherein hee intendeth to trye vs, is whether wee be willing to submit our selues simply in all respectes to his worde, after hee hath beene so gratious vnto vs as to teach vs. What else is the holy scripture, but an vttering or declaring of Gods will? And therefore all that euer is conteined there, is as though GOD opened his holy mouth, to tell vs what he requireth at our hand. Then if our lyfe bee not fully correspondent to Gods worde, whereof wee make profession: beholde, God complayneth of vs, and accuseth vs of rebelling against his mouth. And there are two partes of this rebelliousnesse. The one is when we distrust Gods promises, and the other is when wee disobey his commandement: & those two be the summe of all that is to bee learned in Gods word. When wee haue tossed and turned ouer the leaues of all the holy scripture neuer so much, there are but these two pointes contained in it: that is to wit, ỳ for as much as God being desirous to bee our father and Sauiour, openeth vs the infinite treasures of his mercie, calling vs to him, and setting his free goodnesse and free loue before vs: wee should beleeue his promises and rest wholly vppon them, saying, Lorde seeing thou art so freehearted as to offer thy selfe thus vnto vs: behold, wee cast all our care vpon thee, and hope for all welfare through thy bountifulnesse. The first thing then which we haue to doe, is to settle our selues vppon Gods promises, when he offereth them vnto vs. Secondly there is the obedience which God requireth, as if he should say vnto vs: Go to, I will haue ye to liue in such wise, as ye obey me and yeeld me such seruice, as your cõming to me be of your own accord. And here Moses saith ỳ the people were alwayes rebellious against Gods mouth, forasmuch as they obeyed not his commandements, nor trusted in his promises. Nowe let vs looke into our selues where is the faith ỳ we boast of? In deede we do wel vnough say ỳ we beleeue the Gospel: but if gods promises touched vs effectually, there would be another maner of stedfastnesse in vs, and we would not bow with euery winde like waueryng reedes, as we do. Our vnbeliefe bewrayes it self & we be too much conuicted of it: insomuch as we cannot trust God euen in worldly things. And if we cannot trust to him for small things, how is it possible that we should trust to him, for the euerlasting life? We haue dayly experience of his succour and helpe: & yet do we doubt thereof still. And how shall we then trust in him who the case concerneth inuisible things, as the lyfe to come which is hidden from vs till God discouer it vnto vs? Againe, doeth not this rebelliousnesse of ours in resisting him, shew it self in al our whole life? In deede wee will make signes of willingnesse to serue God: but yet is all but counterfetting. For let vs see if any of vs doo liue so faithfully and vprightly as wee ought to doo? Where is the louing kindnesse and charitie that ought to bee among the faithfull, and among Gods children? Nay, we bee rather like Cattes and dogges. And when the case requireth that wee should agree togither in well doeing, the worlde sees howe wee goe to worke. It may seeme that wee haue conspyred to goe the cleane contrarie way to that which God willeth and ordaineth. And this is not to be greatly wondered at. For if in things that are small and light, we shewe our selues to haue no great Christianitie in vs: we wil shew no lesse lewdnesse, when wee come to the thinges that are greater and more excellent. I cal them small things in comparison of the feare of God and the loue of his worde, which men may say they

for

ſee not in vs. For as concerning thoſe ſmall thinges, if we intend to make any countenance of deuocion to Godward: we can well abide that men ſhould condemne both extortion, deceit, cruelty, periurie, and ſuch other vices. When we come to Sermons, we can welinough pretend ỳ there is ſome agreement among vs, and ſpecially when we receiue the Lords ſupper: & yet notwithſtanding euē in that behalf there appeareth ſuch contempt of God, as we ought to be aſhamed of it. For I know that vpon the laſt Lordes day while we were miniſtring of the cōmunion, and while we ſhould haue aſſembled altogither, to make a general proteſtatiō of our faith, and to offer vp our praiers vnto God: about two hūdred people were occupied in gaming. In their going by before the Sermon began, a man would haue thought they had bin prepared to the Communion: but their mindes are ſo vppon their playing, that they ſpend euery Sabboth day in ſuch vnthriftineſſe. And it is meete that this ſhould bee tolde them openly, ſeeing it is apparant; & that euen little children perceiue the ſhamefulneſſe of it. Now then, let vs marke in feawe wordes, that Moſes ſpake not for his owne time onely, but for vs alſo in theſe dayes, who bee warned in the perſon of the Iewes to be aſhamed of our ſelues, and therewithall to ſeeke ỳ meanes that our God may receiue vs to pitie and mercie: which is, that after we haue acknowledged how guiltie wee bee before God: euerie of vs may learne, not onely to condemne our ſelues, but alſo to bow downe our neckes to craue forgiueneſſe of our former faultes at Gods hand, to the ende that being acquit by him, wee may alſo be guided and gouerned by his holy ſpirit: & that whereas wee haue bin ſtubborne againſt him heretofore, ſo as he could by no meanes weeld vs, wee may learne to yeeld our ſelues ſo obediently to him, that in ſtead of being as woode beaſtes, we may become meeke and mylde vnto him as ſheepe and lambes, and giue eare vnto his voyce, giuing it ſuch ſuperioritie ouer vs, as we may vtterly forſake all things that may hinder our honoring and ſeruing of him.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, ſo as wee may yeelde our ſelues to him with true repentance, & continue therein not for one day onely, but all our life long: and ỳ therewithal it may pleaſe him to beare with vs in all our infirmities, euen vntill he haue rid vs quite and cleane of them. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie GOD heauenly Father, &c.

On Munday the ix. of September. 1555.

The Lxviij. Sermon which is the ſeuenth vpon the ninth Chapter.

15 Then humbled I my ſelfe before the Lord fortie dayes and fortie nightes, for I humbled my ſelfe becauſe the Lord had ſaid that he would deſtroy you.

16 And I prayed to the Lord & ſaid: Lord God, deſtroy not thy people and thine heritage, which thou haſt gotten by thy mightie power, and whom thou haſt brought out of Egypt by ſtrong hand.

17 Bethinke thee of thy ſeruants Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob. Haue not an eye to the ſtubbornneſſe of this people, nor to their misbeleefe, nor to their ſinne:

18 Leaſt the inhabiters of the land from whence thou haſt brought vs, do ſay: bycauſe the Lorde could not bring them into the land wherof he had ſpoken to them, or becauſe he hated them: therefore hath he brought them forth to kill them in the wilderneſſe.

19 Moreouer, they be thy people, and thine heritage, whom thou haſt brought out with thy great power, and with thine arme ſtretched out.

MOſes goeth foreward here with the matter that he had begunne afore: which was, to make the people vnderſtand howe great the faulte was which they had committed. For wheras he boaſteth of Gods hearing of him, he doeth not to the intent the people ſhould thinke themſelues ſo much the more beholden to him therefore: that is not the thing which he looketh at: but that the people ſhould thenceforth liue in awe and humilitie, and beare in minde the faulte that they had committed, and conſider howe they had well deſerued to haue beene vtterly

rooted out if God had not shewed them mercie. And he sayth *that after he had lyen vpon the ground fortie dayes and fortie nightes*, he was heard: and this is to the end that by such circumstance, the people may the better learne, that if GOD had not hearkened to that vehement and earnest prayer of his, they had beene vtterly vndone. It is an extraordinarie thing, that a man should continue sighing and weeping before God, fortie dayes and fortie nightes together: and no doubt but this power was giuen to Moses by miracle, lyke as was his fasting of fortie dayes and fortie nightes before. And to what purpose? To the end that the Lawe might bee the better authorized thereby. For it might well seeme that the couenant which God had made with the people, was quite broken and vtterly disanulled: and therefore it was expedient that Moses should once againe be separated from the company of men fortie dayes and fortie nightes, that by that meanes, new authoritie might be purchased. But yet for all that, we must marke well, that whereas Moses forbare meate and drinke fortie dayes and fortie nightes together, it was not done by humaine power, neither was it (to speake properly) a fast of sobrietie: (for hee was exempted from hunger and thirst:) but it was done to the end that the Lawe should be receiued with the greater reuerence, forasmuch as it came not of men, but Moses came downe from the mountaine as if an Angel had come downe from heauen. And his praying was for the sinnes of the people, that God would not looke vppon the idolatrie that had bin committed, but hold on still in his owne purpose. For although Moses had broken the tables, and that he had done it through the impulsion of Gods spirit: yet notwithstanding, (as hath bin said already,) he ceased not to haue compassion vppon the people which was worthie to haue bin rooted out. That is the effect of the matter which wee must looke vnto here.

And thereby we be put in minde, that if God forgiue vs any fall or offence, wee must not so forget it, but we must bethinke our selues to liue in the greater awe, and consider all our lyfe long how greatly we be bound vnto God for vttering so great goodnesse vnto vs. There are a number to bee seene, which doe but wring their mouthes when they woulde haue their faultes forgiuen them, and they neuer passe to thinke any more vppon them, to yeelde God his deserued prayse. Contrariwise it is shewed vs here by the example of the Iewes, that although God bee mercifull to vs, and list not to call our faultes to account: yet must not wee therefore thrust them vnder foote, but rather cal them to minde euery day, that it may first of all prouoke vs to repentance, assuring our selues that wee may fall eftsoone, if God preserue vs not: and secondly [make vs to consider] that we stand not but through his free mercie: and finally incourage vs to magnify his name for drawing vs out of y dungeon whereinto we were fallen. Seeing then that we be so much bound vnto him, let vs bee the willinger to serue and honor him. Thus yee see in effect what wee haue to remember vppon this place.

Besides this, let vs marke well by the example of Moses, that it is not enough to pray vnto God in two or three wordes and as it were in poste: but that wee must continue in praying without being weary. And that is a poynt right necessarie to bee marked. For whereas there are many faults in vs, this is one of the greatest, that we cannot settle our selues vnto prayer, but wee bee fleeting, so as our mouthes are no sooner opened, but our wittes are by and by wandering elsewhere. And besides that, if we haue prayed vnto God once, wee thinke it enough and too much. Contrariwise we see that Moses was fortie dayes together, in continuall mourning for the offence of the people. Therefore in our praying vnto God, let vs learne to haue the perseuerance whereunto our Lorde Iesus exhorteth vs, saying that we must be importunate, and that it is not enough for vs to haue vttered our griefe vnto GOD lightly and once for all: but that we must resorte to him still, vntill he haue heard our requestes. Now then, here is a second lesson which we haue to gather vppon this place: which is, that in praying vnto God, we must haue a setlednesse of holding out to the end.

Also this praying of Moseses, sheweth vs what their duetie is, which haue the charge of other folke: namely, to pray to God to pitie such as shall haue offended. For it is not enough for such as haue publique charge to discharge their duetie to the worldewarde: but they must also turne vnto God. Wee see how the Apostles say that they must not onely preach the Gospell, but also giue themselues to prayer and supplication. Now, this belongeth to all the faithfull. For to pray vnto God is the chiefe duetie of our faith. And forasmuch as the Apostles had the chiefe charge of the Church it behoued this calling vpon God, to belong chiefly vnto them. And that is the cause why Saint Paul sayth, that hee humbleth himselfe for the Corinthians: as who should say hee ought to beare the chastisement of their sins in his owne person. For inasmuch as God had set him ouer that Church, it behooued him to beare the chiefe burden vppon his shoulders. Therefore such as haue the charge of preaching Gods word and of teaching in the Church, must not onely imploy themselues that way, but also to prayer. And chiefly when they see things go amisse, and disorders among the people: then ought they most specially to resorte vnto GOD, that he may prouide a remedie for it. This is the thing that is shewed vs by the example of Moses, in that it is sayd that hee taryed not till the people resorted to God for mercie, but sweed them the way, as he whom God had appointed to beare the burthen of the people, and to procure their welfare.

Now let vs come to the forme of the prayer that Moses maketh. *Lord God* (saith he) *destroy not the people of thine heritage who thou hast redeemed by thy mighty power & strong hand, out of the land*

land of Egypt. Bethinke thy selfe of thy seruauntes Abraham, Isaac, and Iacobe and haue not an eye to the stubbornesse of this people, nor to their wickednesse, nor to their offence. Here we see what it is that Moses alledgeth vnto God: namely, his gracious fauour wherethrough he had chosen the ofspring of Abraham. And so we see here a good rule for vs to keepe in praying vnto God: which is, that if we intende to obtain our requests at his hand, we must not presume vppon any thing that is in our selues, but rather alledge his own goodnesse which hee hath made vs to feele. As if wee should say, Lord, go forward with thy work, thou hast begunne to call vs to thee, wee bee as much beholden to thy goodnesse as is possible: therefore holde thou on stil, finish the thing that thou hast begun, and let not thy worke stay vnperfected, as it is saide in the hundreth and eight and thirtith Psalme. And it is such a doctrine as wee may gather, vppon all the prayers that are conteined in the holy scripture.

Psal. 138.

Nowe wheras Moses saith *thy people, and thine inheritance*: he meaneth not that the people had purchased that dignitie themselues. It was a great honour that any one people of all mankinde shoulde be called Gods inheritance. Deserued they to bee in that estimation? Moses addeth immediatly, that *there was nothing but stubbornesse, wickednesse, and sinne in them.* It followeth then that all is to be referred to the free adoption, wherethrough God had chosen that people, as if hee shoulde say, I will haue the house of Abraham to reigne ouer it, there will I dwell, that Psal. 132.14. shalbe my Church, there wil I rest. God in so saying, had not respect whether the people were worthy of it or no: and it appeared by the effect, that they were a spitefull people: but whatsoeuer they were, God had made the said promise, which was not grounded vppon any deserts of man. The thing then that Moses setteth vs downe here, is this: Lorde haue mercy vpon thy people, and vpon thine heritage. And so, when wee resort to God to craue forgiuenesse of our sinnes, let vs learne to make none other enterance to finde fauour and to be hearde, than by alledging the benefites that we haue erst receiued at his hande. That (say I) is the gate that we must enter at in praying vnto God. Albeit we haue offended him and be neuer so wretched sinners: yet notwithstanding inasmuch as hee hath chosen vs for his flocke, and vouchsafed to vtter himselfe to vs, and to giue vs assurance that hee is our father and sauiour: wee may presse familiarly vnto him, hauing so sure a pledge of his goodnesse. But yet let vs beware of presumption, that wee seeke not any thing in our selues wherewith to binde God vnto vs, for we bee vtterly voide of any such thing: but let vs be contēted to offer vnto him y things which we hold of him: and in doing him homage for his benefites, let vs take corage to call vpon him, assuring our selues that he will continue thē still, & that as he hath shewed himself liberall towards vs heretofore, so he wil giue vs assurance y he wil not faile vs hereafter. This in effect is the thing which we haue to remember in this saying of Moses, where he calleth the Iewes Gods people and heritage.

Now he addeth, *that God had brought them out of the land of Egypt by his mightie power and with a strong hand*, cuē to make it knowen that they were his inheritance, by a vysible token, and by the apparant effect of it. True it is that the people shold haue grounded themselues vpon the promise: and Moses hath followed the same order here. For he saith not first, Lorde y haste brought vs out of Egypt, and afterward vpheld vs by thy power when thou madest vs to passe through y wilderneste: but he saith expresly, we be thy people and thine inheritance. And wherupon rested he? Vpon the promise, because God had spoken the word, saying, I will bee the Sauiour of thy lynage. But yet therewithall hee letteth not to alledge the saide deliuerance also, to proue that God counted that people for his heritage. For when God deliuered the Iewes out of Egypt, & reached them his hand to bring them out: wher of came it? It was as a sealing of the couenant that had beene made by worde of mouth. God (say I) did shewe as then, that the former promising vnto Abraham, that he would be the God of his linage, was not in vaine. And for the same cause doth Moses set down both twaine of them here. He beginneth with the promise, and afterward addeth what insued thereof: that is to wit the deliuerance, which was a sure warrant that he ment not to beguile his seruaunt Abraham, when he tolde him as I haue tolde you before. Wherfore let vs briefly beare in mind that if we intend to haue accesse vnto god to rest vpon his goodnes, we must beginne at his worde: and afterward we must also acknowledge the benefites that wee haue felt at his hande. And if we haue founde that hee hath not beguiled vs by his promises, it is as a former warrant whereby hee intendeth to confirme and assure vs the better. Loe heere a goodly matching, namely that wee yeelde such honour vnto Gods worde, as to trust assuredly thereunto: and therewithall that we be not thankelesse for the goodnesse which he hath shewed vs indeede; but make the same to serue vs as a president to ratifie our faith, to the ende that his worde haue the greater shewe and power in vs, and wee bee the more proueked to call vppon him, not doubting at all but that wee shall finde him the same that hee hath shewed himselfe to be, euen to the ende. Thus yee see howe it behoueth vs to put the order in vre which Moses keepeth here, first in setting down Gods promise whereby he had adopted y people of Israel, & afterward in adding y he had delmered them out of the lande of Egypt, thereby ratifying the thing that he had spoken to his seruaunt Abraham.

Gen. 17.7.

Now he addeth *that God should not haue an eye to the peoples stubbornesse, wickednesse, or offence.* This is not added without cause. For when we come to pray God to performe his promise, and to bring the grace of his adoption to his ende: in the meane whyle our owne consciences vpbraid vs, so as wee see well that we be guilty before him: it is ynough to foreclose y way to

our prayers. For when wee offende God, wee breake his couenant as much as in vs lyes, and we stop him from performing of his promise. To be short, we deserue to be giuen ouer of the Lord, when wee keepe not faith and troth towardes him. For this cause doth Moses say here, *Lorde haue not an eye to the stubbornesse of this people.* So then, it is not ynough for vs to pray God to goe through with the thing that he shall haue begun in vs, and to bring his grace to perfection: but wee must expressly pray him, that although hee finde faultes and offences in vs, (as indeede the number of them is infinite): yet that he forbeare not to take vs still for his people: and that although we deserue to be forsaken of him for our sinnes inasmuch as wee haue broken his couenant, yet notwithstanding he cease not to keepe promise with vs still, and to make vs feele ỹ fruit thereof, and to forgiue our sinnes in such wise, as we may neuer cease to continue in his adoption: & that although our straying away was ynough to bereaue vs of the inheriting of our saluation, yet notwithstanding hee cease not to take vs for his children still. To bee short, whensoeuer wee resort vnto God, wee must acknowledge our sins with all humilitie. For it will be to no purpose for vs to say, Lorde thou hast promised vs, thou hast tolde vs that thou of thy goodnesse wilt bee merciful to vs, thou hast declared that thou wilt bee our father, wee haue thy promise: it will not boote vs to say all these thinges: for all shall bee ouerthrowen with one worde, because wee haue done amisse, and haue not kept the course whervnto God called vs, but haue drawen cleane backe. Therfore we be warned, that whensoeuer we pray vnto God, wee must acknowledge our faultes, and confesse them freely, that God may not cease to haue pitie vppon vs, specially when wee shall haue committed any grosse fault, as this people had done in committing abhominable ydolatrie. The greater then that our sinnes bee, the more let vs cast downe and humble our selues, to craue pardon of our God by confessing wherin we haue offended him. After that manner must we deale. And it is certaine, that if euerie of vs consider well his owne life without flatterie, he shall finde himself exceedingly indaungered vnto God, and we shall always haue good cause to be ashamed of our selues. And therefore when we pray, let vs beare these two things in remembrance: namely, that although we be neuer so wretched, yet notwithstanding forasmuch as God hath chosen vs for his people, wee must come to him familiarly and without doubting, for he guideth vs thither and openeth vs ỹ gate by his promise, & that must be our grounde to stande vpon. Againe, we must bethinke vs of our sinnes, so as we may feele them & be deadly wounded by them, to the ende we may bee sorie for them before God, & beseech him (notwithstanding our vnworthines) to applie his promises to our saluation, when it shall haue pleased him to bury our sinnes & to receiue vs to mercy. Yea & let vs mark well ỹ wordes ỹ are set downe here, *the stubbornes of the people, their wickednes, and their sin.* For Moses here maketh not a ceremonious confession as these shameless fort doe, that is to say, in manner the greater part, when they haue done amisse, do beare themselues in hand that it is ynough to haue saide in one woorde, I grant it is a fault: but ye must cõsider I am a man, I am not as a timberlog. It is ynough for them (say I) that they excuse not thẽselues altogether. But we must come after another fashion, as we see by example here. For first of all Moses setteth downe *Stubbornes*: shewing thereby that there was a horrible rebeliousnes in that people. Now he addeth *wickednes*: wherin he betokeneth ỹ the people were starke naught: for ỹ word that he vseth, importeth such a leawdnes, that they which are so termed are disordered in their whole life. And lastly he addeth *Sinne*, that is to say ỹ particular fault which they had committed, namely their offence in making themselues an ydol. And so we see that he acknowledgeth the peoples offences in good earnest, to condemne them.

Nowe like as Moses speaketh here of the people: so do we see that Daniel speaketh of himself for in his report howe he confessed his own sin and the sinnes of the people, he saieth, Lord we haue sinned, wee haue offended thee, wee haue done wickedly, we bee transgressors, our sinnes are outragious, and our iniquities are exceeding great. Daniel goeth not to worke by halues in confessing that himselfe and the rest of the people had done amisse and deserued to bee chastised at Gods hande: but he saith flatly, we be wicked and we haue behaued our selues leawdly, we haue beene disobedient and vntrue to our God, we haue prouoked his wrath too much, and we be cursed and damned, vnlesse God powre out ỹ infinite treasures of his mercy vppon vs. Ye see then how the true confession which God requireth at our handes, is not to come to him and to say in one worde, I haue done amisse: but to be so abashed as to acknowledge our selues blameworthy in all respects, and to be dismayed at the remembrance of our offences, like wretched offenders not looking to haue our indictements read vnto vs, not to haue articles alledged against vs, but accusing our selues aforehand in such sort as God may accept our submission when we shall haue examined our faults throughly, not only in generall but also in particular. And in verie deede, after that Moses had spoken of *Stubbornesse* and wickednes: he addeth the *Offence* that ỹ people had committed. Whereby hee meaneth that it is not ynough to say, we were conceiued in sinne, it is horrible to see howe all things are out of order in our whole life: but when we haue offended God any maner of way, we must vnderstand it, as we see how Dauid cõfesseth generally ỹ there was nothing in him but vtter corrupcõ, and ỹ he brought nothing w̃ him from his mothers wombe but ỹ inheriting of death, & therwithall faileth not to confesse ỹ sin particularlie which he had committed, not wrapping it vp amõg ỹ other to make as though he wist not of it: but setting down both twaine of thẽ, as we see ỹ Moses doth in this text. Wherefore when we shall haue committed any offence, let vs learne to feele it, & to confesse it freely before God. And let the same lead vs yet

further: that is to wit, to haue an eye to the offences of our whole life, and to acknowledge our selues altogether indangered vnto God, except hee receiue vs to mercie. And aboue all thinges, let vs acknowledge the hardnesse of our hearts, in that wee cannot submit our selues to God because wee be stubborne against him, and all the affections of our flesh are at enmitie with him. After that manner (say I) must we confesse our faults, if we minde to obtaine forgiuenesse of them. For as for them ỹ come to God ceremoniously, cõfessing thẽselues to haue done amisse, and not being touched to the quicke with their lewdnesse, nor minding to acknowledge it in their hearts: they doe but play mockeholyday, and they shall feele with whom they haue to do, and that God is not an earthly iudge that can be deceiued when men craue pardon feynedly. And therefore when we pray vnto God, let euerie of vs quicken vp himselfe in acknowledging our faults better than we haue bin wont to do: & let the same so pull vs downe, as wee may not wote what to say, but thus, Alas Lord what should become of vs if it were not for thine inestimable mercie? For beholde, wee be euen as it were vterly ouerwhelmed: and though we knewe but the hundreth part of the offences that wee haue committed, surely it were ynough to sinke vs downe to the bottomlesse pit, vnlesse thou remedy it. And as for thee that iudgest after a farre other fashion: howe shoulde we be able to stand in thy presence, if thou wouldest vse thy rigour towards vs? Loe here the right lowlinesse which God commaundeth: which is, that when wee be so ashamed of our sinnes as we wote not what to say, wee flee for refuge to Gods mercy hoping ỹ howsoeuer the case stand, he of his great goodnesse wil not refuse to take vs to mercie.

Nowe to the ende that Moses may obtaine his requeſt, hee beseecheth God expreſly *to bee mindfull of his seruaunts Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob*: and that was by reason of the couenant that he had made with them, for in the same couenant there was this article, I will be thy God and the God of thy seede after thee. Yee see here howe God took the children of Abraham before they were borne, adopting them to bee his Church, and to be inheriters not onely of the Lande of Chanaan, but also of the kingdome of heauen. But how doe the children of Abraham behaue themselues? Leawdly. They falsifie their faith vnto God and become backesliders, so as they deserue to be cut off from his house. Lorde (saith Moses) haue not an eye to their faultes and offences, but bee mindfull of thy couenant which thou madest with thy seruaunts Abraham Isaac, and Iacob. Nowe wee see to what purpose Moses alledgeth here the holy Patriarks. It is not to make them Aduocates and Patrons before God as the Papistes doe, who alledge these textes to proue their owne forgeries of hauing the saints to bee their intercessors. What, say they? Is it not written that God should bee mindfull of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, and yet they were deade long afore? Seeing that the fathers vsed such speech, why shoulde not the saincts alreadie deceased bee made patrons and aduocates, to make intercession for them that are aliue? Surely this commeth of too grosse beastlinesse. For they consider not in what manner Moses alledgeth these persons. I haue tolde you it afore: for God had promised them that hee woulde bee the sauiour of their linage, and had giuen them his promise as a pledge, not only on their owne behalfe, but also for all their successours. And that is ỹ cause why Iacob at his death or a little before, said, let my name be called vpõ ouer Ephraim and Manasses, for his meaning was to make two tribes of them, notwithstanding that they had both but one heade, that is to wit Ioseph first of al, & he intended that he shold haue a double portion. Why so? Iacob was in Egypt, not onely as a poore straunger like to haue starued for hunger if he had not come thither: but also as a man shaken off in scorne & disdain. It is manifest that the Egyptians shunned the Iewes, and accounted them as vncleane people. Neuertheless although Iacob had not any house of his owne, but was there as a slaue & banished thither as into an odde nooke of ỹ realm: yet notwithstanding hee assigneth a double portion to Ephraim and Manasses. But [in so doing] hee had an eye to the promise that God had made to him; That is the cause why hee saieth, Let my name bee called vppon ouer them, and let them bee taken and esteemed as two of mine owne children. According hereunto it is saide, that God shoulde remember Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, as we see in Exodus, where God intending to acquaint himselfe with his people, alledgeth the same for a preface: as if he should say, I haue bounde my selfe in the hande of Abraham. And therby he sendeth them back to the promise as it was made and set downe in Genesis, where God saide, that in the ende of fourehundred yeares, after they had beene oppressed with grieuous tyranny, he woulde deliuer them. Nowe then, it is not to be doubted, but that Moseses alledging of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, is to ỹ end that God should performe his couenant in deede, and not cease to be constant in his purpose and in discharging of his promise, notwithstanding the wickednes of mẽ. And so we see how the Papistes haue falsly abused the holy scripture, yea & shewed themselues so shameleſse and fond, that euen little children may perceiue their beastlinesse. Wherefore we ought so little to be moued with these texts: that they do rather make wholly against them. And so ye see why Moses alledgeth Abraham, Isaac, & Iacob. He groundeth himselfe vpon Gods word.

Likewise when wee pray, before wee open our mouth wee must be taught of God, hee must direct vs by his worde, for wee cannot call vpon him rightly, except hee haue first preuented vs and called vs to him, so as wee bee sure that hee will heare vs. For as for the man that doubteth and floteth like the waues of the sea (saieth Sainct Iames), let him not looke to obtaine any thing. So then our prayers boote vs not at all, without certaintie of faith. Now let vs see whence wee may gette such certaintie

Deut. 8.3.

Exod. 3.15.16

Gen. 15.13. 16.

Rom. 10.14.

Iam. 1.6.7.

of

of faith. Surely euen by Gods worde, and that is it that Moſes hath followed. Hee knewe the promiſe that had proceeded out of Gods mouth, wherupon he reſteth, & therupon maketh mention of Abraham Iſaac & Iacob. And why? For it was they ỹ had receiued the promiſe, as well in their owne behalfe, as in the behalf of their ſucceſſors. But now do we ſee that we haue a Mediator to ratifie the new couenant that God hath made with vs. Before Ieſus Chriſt came into the worlde, Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob were as mediators after a ſort, becauſe they receiued ỹ promiſe in the name of ỹ whole Church. But nowe God ſendeth vs backe to his only ſonne, in whoſe perſon it is his will to ratifie all that euer he had promiſed. How then ſhall we haue any certainty, except we repaire to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and pray to God his father to remember him, & not to looke at vs, as in verie deede the auncient fathers haue ſhewed vs the good way alreadie in the time of the ſhadows, although they had not the trueth ſo fully as wee haue it in the Goſpel? For ſince the time that the kingdome was ſetled in the houſe of Dauid, and this promiſe made, He ſhalbe my ſon: we ſee that ỹ fathers prayed after this manner: Lord looke vpon the countenance of thy Chriſt or thine anointed. But they ſpake of Dauids ſucceſſors. It is true: Howbeit foraſmuch as that temporall kingdome was a figure of the kingdome that is prepared for vs in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: ỹ auncient fathers looked thereat as it were to behold Ieſus Chriſt in a glaſſe. Now then ſeeing ỹ the ſonne of God is come, & hath tolde vs ỹ it is hee to whom we muſt repayre: what excuſe wil there be for vs, if we roue heere and there, and ſeeke other mediators to reſort vnto? Is it not a bereauing of Gods ſonne of his office? yes: for hee is not as was Abraham, or as was Dauid and al his linage: but hee is the true high prieſt which hath appeaſed Gods wrath towardes vs. And hee hath not onely receiued the couenaunt, ſo as he may ſay that God hath tolde him that hee will accept all ſuch as ſubmit themſelues vnto him: but he hath alſo ratified the ſame couenant with his owne bloud: that is the ſeale which he hath ſet vnto it. Then if men will not bee contented with ſuch confirmation of Gods promiſes as is made in the perſon of his ſonne: is it not a treading of his bloude vnder foote to the vttermoſt of their power, and a ſtriuing to make it of none effect? Yes: and ſo we ſee that this text is ſo little able to arme the Papiſts, that it doth rather condemne them of vnthankfulneſſe before God, in that they haue (to the vttermoſt of their power) diſabled the grace that was brought them by the ſonne of God, and not conſidered that Gods adopting of vs was in his hand and by his means, who hath accompliſhed Gods promiſes in ſuch wiſe by his bloude as we may aſſure our ſelues of them without any doubting. Therefore let vs mark wel that whenſoeuer we ſeeke any patrons and aduocats, it is an aboliſhing of the death & paſſion of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and therwithall an vtter diſanulling of all Gods promiſes, which ought to bee ſprinkled with his bloud, according as wee ſee howe it was commaunded in the Lawe, that the booke ſhould be beſprinkled with the bloude of the ſolemne ſacrifice that was to be offered. When a ſacrifice was to be offred, the bloud of it was to be reſerued, & ſprinkled vppon the tabernacle, vppon the altar, and vpon the booke of the Law: to doe vs to wit, that there is none other meane to aſſure vs of Gods promiſes, than by the beſprinkling of them with the bloude of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For as for ſuch as runne gadding after their owne imaginations, ſaying wee muſt haue ſuch a patrone and ſuch an aduocate: they (as much as in them lyeth) ſo drayne and drie vp the bloude of Gods ſonne, as it may giue no more force to the promiſes to aſſure vs of our ſaluation.

Pſal. 27. & 84. 10. & 132. 10.

Heb. 9. 11. 12 14.

Furthermore let vs marke that the Papiſts haue in all reſpects defaced ỹ office of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For by their making of the ſaintes to be their patrons & aduocates, they haue alſo made thē as good as mediators, ſo as we ſhould obtaine fauour at Gods hand by their meanes. They ſay not onely Lorde heare the prayer of ſuch a one or ſuch a one: but alſo, for his prayers ſake or for his deſerts ſake. But both theſe things belong peculiarly to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. For to ſeeke to the merits or deſertes of men, is to ſtay vpon a craſed or broken reede, and that is the next way to make vs tumble downe, yea and it is as the ſliuers of a reede that will alſo wound vs beſides our falling. Wherefore let vs vnderſtand, that in ſo doing wee forſake the ſonne of God and bereaue him of his office.

Againe, as touching prayer and ſupplication, it is true that we ought to pray one for another as long as wee liue vppon the earth: and we haue ſeene the example thereof in Moſes: yea and wee haue ſeene it in ſuch wiſe, as ſufficeth to ſhewe vs that our prayers are not vaine nor vnprofitable, but that God maketh them auailable and heareth them, when wee pray one for another: Howbeit, that is but while we liue aliue. Moreouer, if wee fall to ſeeking of patrones and aduocates vppon our owne heades, without any warrant of holy ſcripture: it is no great a deſpiſing of God. For wee follow not the manner of praying which God hath ordeyned, and therefore it is a diueliſh malapertneſſe for men to preſume to enter into the kingdome of heauen, there to appoint officers, as though God had made them Lord great maſters there. Nowe then let vs learne that wee muſt let our Lord Ieſus Chriſt alone with the office of aduocate, that hee may be our ſpokeſman for vs, & giue vs acceſſe & means to be accepted at Gods hand. Moreouer, we muſt not imagine any meriting or deſeruing in any mortall creature, no not euen in the Angels of heauē, but we receiue ỹ meriting of Ieſus Chriſt, which thing was not in ỹ holy Patriarks, nor in Dauid, nor in any of his ſucceſſors, for God adopted them freely. But it was his will that in Ieſus Chriſt our ſinnes ſhould bee wyped out, and our debts diſcharged, and ỹ by his obedience righteouſneſſe ſhoulde bee purchaſed vnto vs. That therefore is the thing that wee muſt reſorte vnto.

Wher-

Wherefore let vs learne, that if the fathers of olde time, when they minded to obtaine fauour at Gods hand, alledged Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, and consequently Dauid in his order, because he was ordeined to be a figure of our Lord Iesus Christ: if this were vsed in the time that things were yet darke: wee ought to take good heede that wee swarue not to the right hand nor to the left, now that God hath reuealed himselfe fully vnto vsbut that we direct our faith to Iesus Christ, assuring our selues that for his sake God his father hath adopted vs, and liketh well of vs by his meanes, and graunteth vs our requestes. Besides this, forasmuch as ỹ scripture saith that he is giuẽ vs to be our aduocate, that he maketh intercession for vs, and that for his sake we may rest vpon Gods mercie: Let vs not doubt but he will shewe himselfe fauourable vnto vs. Seeing that the scripture fathereth these thinges vppon Iesus Christ, let vs beware that wee rob him not of them, and that we play not the Papistes, who by their praying to their Hesaincts & Shesaints, doe well shewe that Iesus Christ sufficeth them not, and that because they pretende the name of God, they prouoke his vengeance more and more against them. We see also howe God hath blinded them & giuen them vp to a hellish rage, so as they thinke it not ynough to say, These are our patrons and aduocates: but also they make no difference betweene God, and a sainct that they haue forged of their owne braine. For they say, Our father which art in heauen, as wel kneeling before a puppet, as if they spake to GOD himselfe. But yet howe make they their prayers? I shall not neede to speake heere, neither of the Apostles not of the Prophetes: for they haue saincts which neuer were in the world. And although they take the prophets and Apostles, yet they pray to them as to God, and with the same speech and stile. We see then that they are vtterly brutish, and that God hath giuen them vp to a reprobate sense. And it is good reason, because they haue robbed Christ of his dignitie wherein God his father had set him, and are not contented with him as with their only aduocate and intercessor, but are run astray here & there. Therfore it is meete that God should withdraw himselfe from them and forsake them, that they might fall into such extremitie as wee see they be falne into. Wherefore let vs for our part beware that wee hold fast the simplicitie which the scripture sheweth vs: that is to wit, that in calling vpon God, we haue our eye vpon our Lorde Iesus Christ: and againe that in asmuch as God hath stablished his couenãt for euer in his name, we doubt not but that we be heard as oft as wee come vnto God by him, and that he is mercifull vnto vs.

1. Iohn 2. 1.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our sins, praying him to make vs feele them ỹ better, that we may acknowledge them rightly both with heart & mouth, and bee brought to true amendment, & be so humbled, ỹ by glorifying him as he is worthy, and by acknowledging what goodnes he vseth towards vs, we may be prouoked to serue him with the better corage: and he beare with vs in our infirmities as long as we be in this worlde, vntill we be come to him into his heauẽly kingdom, & he haue made vs partakers of his endlesse glorie. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not only to vs, &c.

On Tewsday the x. of September. 1555.

The Lxix. Sermon, which is the first vpon the tenth Chapter.

THe same time the Lorde saide, cut thee two tables of stone like the first, and come vp to mee into the mountaine, and make thee an Arke of wood.

2 And I will write in those Tables, the wordes that were written in the former tables, which thou hast broken: and thou shalt put them in the Arke.

3 So I made an Arke of Setimwood, and hewed two tables like the first, and went vp into the mountaine, hauing the two tables in my hande:

4 Then wrate he in the Tables as he had written afore, euen the tenne sayings which the Lorde had spoken vpon the mountaine, from the middes of the fire in the day of your comming together. And afterwarde the Lorde gaue them to me,

5 And I turned me, and went downe from the hill, and put them into the Ark which I had made: and they were there as the Lord had commaunded me.

6 And the children of Israel departed from Beroth of the children of Iaacan towards Mosera, where Aaron died, and was buried there. And Eleazar his sonne executed the office of high priest in his stead.

7 From

7 From thence they went towarde Gadgad, and from Gadgad towards Gesbatha, in the Countrie where running riuers are.

8 The same time the Lord sorted out the tribe of Leuie, to beare the Arke of the Lords couenant, and to stande in the Lords presence, to minister vnto him, and to blesse in his name, euen to this day.

WE haue seen alredie here tofore the thing ỳ Moses rehearseth here, ỳ is to wit, ỳ God wrate new againe ỳ ten cõmãdements of his law in two Tables of stone: & that was done to the end ỳ the people should the better consider, that the couenant which God had made with them, was of his own onely mercy. For we see how God had giuen ouer ỳ people and it was all one as if he had thrust them into the comm6 aray of other men, which are vtterly accursed and estraunged from God. Truely Gods former choosing of ỳ people, was of his owne free goodnes. For (as we haue seen) none of them was yet borne, when he made his promise with his seruant Abraham: & therefore needes must they acknowledge ỳ his choosing of them, was not in respect of any desert of their owne. Howbeit forasmuch as men labour al that they can, to darken Gods free fauor, & seeke pretie fond deuises to chalenge to themselues some peece of their own saluation: it was expedient to haue it fully shewed, ỳ God receiued ỳ people to mercy againe the second time, without any respect whether they were worthie of it or no, but onely of his owne mere goodnesse. Men are of opinion, ỳ when God chose them, he foresawe what maner of ones they should be, accordingly as we see how this diuelish errour hath alwayes raigned, and ỳ there are yet still some fantastical persons, which wil needes haue Gods election to be grounded vpon his foreknowledge, ỳ is to say, when God chose whom he listed before the making of ỳ world, they fall to glosing thereupon, ỳ he foreknew who should be worthy of it, & therfore marked them out for the same purpose, and in the same respect preferred them before those whom he knew would become wicked. But ỳ is cleane contrarie to ỳ teaching of the holy scripture. For ỳ teacheth vs, ỳ the cause of Gods chosing of vs is taken from out of himself, ỳ is to say, of his owne only free goodnes: for he shal neuer finde any thing in vs, why he should be inclined to loue vs. Howbeit to the end ỳ this may be the better perceiued in the things which God hath shewed vs in the people of Israel: he chose ỳ offspring of Abraham. And wherefore? Abrahã was a fillie soule, he had neither nobilitie nor worship in him, he was not of any great reputation to the worldward: & yet notwithstanding God marked him out, & chose him alone & his houshold fro all others. And what maner of houshold was it? Was there yet any likelyhood in it? Nay. Abraham was yet childishe, hee was barrain, hee was vtterly past hope of euer hauing any issue. Now then Gods choosing of Abrahã, was when he was as a blocke alreadie dead aforehand: and therefore S. Paule saith, ỳ in the person of Abraham, God shewed ỳ he chose the thinges which are not, of purpose to giue them being. And for ỳ same cause it is said in the first Chapter of ỳ first Epistle to the Corinthians, ỳ we be of God, that is to say, ỳ he giueth vs being vnto saluation, because he hath vouchsafed to choose vs for we be nothing at all in our selues. Yet notwithstanding, this people made great account of themselues, & bare themselues in hand that they were better than al ỳ world. For the which cause, the couenant & adoption ỳ god had made with that linage was broken off: & so ye see that the people of Israel were reiected at God hands. Yet & wel worthy were they to bee abhorred, inasmuch ỳ this sentence of condemnation was alredy giuen vpon them, that they should bee rooted out of ỳ world, & the remembrance of them be vtterly destroyed. So little cause then had the children of Israel to make any boast of themselues, or to vaunt vpon them aboue the heathẽ: ỳ they were thus beneath them, and vtterly disclaimed and condemned at Gods hand, as whom hee shewed to haue nothing else but curse dnesse in them. Now therefore it behoueth them to know: ỳ whereas God giueth them his Law, & teacheth them, & performeth his promise towards them all this is done of so high & infinite fauor, as ought in maner to make them astonished. For what a thing was it, ỳ God after ỳ breaking of ỳ tables of the couenant, did yet still vouchsafe to haue pity vpon ỳ wretched people? Beholde, the two tables were not writtẽ by mans hand, but by gods hãd, ỳ is to say by his power: & ỳ was a myracle. And what shal a man say to it, ỳ Gods own workmanship should be defaced? Was it not meete that ỳ people which were the cause therof, should haue perished vtterly? If we make cõparison betwene Gods word, & mens saluation: surely Gods word is far ỳ preciouser. But behold, ỳ word of God ỳ is written, I meane ỳ writing ỳ was set down in ỳ two tables of stone, came as it were from heauen, & was not ỳ workmanship of man: God himselfe wrought it of his own power. What punishment then ought they to receiue, which committed so great and heinous a fault, as ỳ the thing which God had ingrauen with his own hand, was found to be broken & brought to nought for it? We see then ỳ God magnified his inestimable goodnes towards this people, in ỳ he vouchsafed ỳ the two tables should be made new againe, and that his

Eph. 2. 3.

Eph. 1. 4.

Rom. 3. 22.

1. Cor. 1. 30.

Rom. 4. 17.

Deut. 10. 4.

Deut. 9. 29.

Deut. 10. 5.

Exod. 34. 1.

Exod. 34. 28.

Deut. 10. 2.

Exod. 32. 19.

Exod. 34. 1

law should be registred in them new againe, as a perpetuall monument that he was the protector of Abrahams linage, & intended to keepe them to himself for his own flock. Therefore it is not without cause, that Moses maketh mention here of his making of the two tables new againe, & of his offering of them vnto God, & of the writing of the ten cómandements in them. Surely, it was a thing worthie of remembrance, & wherein mé ought to exercise thémselues day & night, to know ỳ God hauing entred freely in league with ỳ one house, was not contented with that alone, but although their successours became a frowarde and crabbed nation, vtterly rebellious & as full of shameful churlishnes as might be: yet he ceassed not to continue his couenant, yea, & moreouer to renew it againe with them, & to set it in the former state.

And herein we see ỳ he had not an eye to mé, nor to their worthines, but wil haue thé to think themselues beholden to him for al things: insomuch that he ouercommeth al ỳ lewdnes & frowardnes of men by his goodnes, adopting euen those to be of his house & to be his heirs, which shew themselues vnworthie of the good that he had done for them. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in mind. And we must marke that Moses spake not for his own time onely; but that the same doctrine toucheth vs as much or more at this day, than euer it did them: specially if wee can consider the likenes ỳ is betweene vs & the people of old time. In deede we haue not nowadayes the law written in tables of stone; but wee haue Gods grace much largelier towardes vs, & which deserueth to be much more highly esteemed, because we be sure that he taketh vs for his church, & wil haue vs to be ruled by him. Now let vs see whence this proceedeth, & what is ỳ cause thereof. True it is ỳ if we haue an eye to ỳ things ỳ were giuen vs in our father Adam, we be creatures shaped after the image of God. But we (to ỳ vttermost of our power) haue defaced Gods image in vs, & wee be so marred & corrupted by original sin, that God disclaimeth vs, & we be not worthie to be counted his creatures: & yet for all that, he vouchsafeth to gather vs to himself. For in baptisme we haue gods couenant ingraued as it were in our bodies; whereby he doth vs to vnderstand, ỳ he vouchsafeth to take vs for his people & inheritance. Now haue we any worthines whereby to attaine to so great a benefit? Alas, no: for we be giltie aforehand of ỳ defacing of gods image. True it is ỳ that commeth of ỳ roote of ỳ first man: but yet are not we our selues faultles. Againe, how haue we withdrawen our selues fró God, euen after baptisme? for we haue not onely cómitted small faults, as befalleth to ỳ faithfull to do: but also in the time of our idolatrie & superstitiõ, we haue brought to nothing al ỳ grace that was promised vs in baptisme, wee haue renounced the saluation that was purchaced vs by our Lord Iesus Christ, we haue forsaken our god, & we haue broken the spirituall wedlocke which hee had contracted with vs, so as there hath bin nothing in vs but corruption, by gadding away after our own superstitions: & yet for al this, he hath not failed to returne vnto vs, & to bring vs back againe into the way of saluation. Sith we see this, ought it not to be a sufficient proofe of Gods infinit goodnes towards vs, to make vs lay away al fond imagination of deseruing, & to acknowledge our selues beholden to God for all things? Yes: & it is the same thing ỳ I alleaged cuẽ now out of S. Pauls sayings, where God sheweth vs, ỳ we be of him, not in respect that we be men, but in respect ỳ we be his workmãship, according as it is shewed in the second to the Ephesians, ỳ he hath shaped vs: for otherwise there is nothing but wickednes in vs, because our nature will alwayes be found to be vtterly frowarde & accursed. Thus ye see ỳ comparison which we ought to make betweene our selues & the people of olde time, to bring our selues low & to make our selues perceiue ỳ wee be the more bound vnto God for ỳ free mercie which he hath bestowed vppon vs, in vouchsafing to take vs to be of his Church, in which respect we be (say I) more bound vnto him than were the Iewes.

1.Cor.1.30.

Eph.2.10.

Now it is true ỳ gods writing of his law in two tables of stone (as I haue declared already herebefore specially in the first place) was to ỳ intent ỳ his doctrine should abide sure. For he had an eye to ỳ cómon trade among men, who vpon the making of leags & alliances, are wont to haue thé ingrauen in stone or brasse. After ỳ same maner it was Gods wil ỳ his law should, for ỳ better continuance therof, be grauen in two stones. Ye see then how God doth as it were passe a solemn couenant. Neuertheless wee must therwithall also come to the figure: namely, ỳ the writing of the law after ỳ fashion in a cupple of stones, serued to shew ỳ it was not ynough for folke to haue ỳ law giuen thé, & to vnderstand it: vnlesse it were ingrauen in their hearts. For we must come to ỳ similitude ỳ is made by ỳ prophets. For although God shewed his law to be sufficiently authorised by vouchsafing to ingraue it so in these stones: yet did he giue an incling ỳ that would nothing boote, verily because ỳ true tables wherein it behoueth vs to write the doctrine of God, are our harts; howbeit not as they be by nature. For what maner of ones are they? Euẽ of stone as it is said of them in Ezechiel. So then, let vs marke that ỳ letter of ỳ law is nothing worth, vntil god worke in vs by his holy spirit. And that is the cause why he hath promised to make a newe couenant, not after the maner ỳ hee made it with the fathers: for, that continued not, saith he. And why? Hee sheweth ỳ the blame & fault therof is in men, because they turne away & runne at rouers as soon as God hath called them, & neuer follow him at all. Although they pretend to make great account of his grace: yet is there no stedinesse in them, but rather vtter lightnesse; for by and by they fling away after their own wicked affectiõs. The couenant of God then, yea though it were written in stones, could not hold them in. And why so? Not for that God abode not faithful on his part, or that hee persisted not to shewe that his choosing of Abrahãs linage was not in vaine: but for that they were bereft & disappointed of that great benefite, & dispossessed of Gods free-

Exod.11.19. & 36.26.

Ier.31.32. 33.

bestowed blessing, through their owne vnfaithfulnesse. And therefore it is requisite that God should speake to vs after another fashion: that is to wit, that he should not only write his law with his owne hand in stones, but also write it in our hearts, by correcting the hardnesse that is in thé of nature, and also by making them fleshie harts, so as they may bee soft & supple to receiue ỹ ingraving which he shal put into them. Ye see then that the thing which we haue to beare in mind, if we intend to fare the better by this present storie, is that like as Moses acknowledged himselfe exceedingly bound vnto his God for the fauour which he had shewed to his people: so ought we also to bethink vs, how abundantly God hath vttered the treasures of his goodnes towardes vs. For not only we be accursed by nature: but also we haue forsaken him after his adopting of vs, & wee haue not made account of him as of our father. And yet for all this, he hath reached vs his hand, & set vs in our former state againe; & he hath not only taken vs into his fauour againe, & giuen vs his worde to teache vs thereby, nor only deliuered vs his law written in ỹ two stones: 2.Cor.3.3. but he hath also reformed & softened our harts, so that whereas erst there was nothing but hardnesse in them, he hath now drawen them to obedience, to receiue quietly ỹ things that are told vs in his name, at leastwise if wee be his. For all they to whome the Gospell is preached, are not of ỹ nomber. But let euery of vs examin himselfe, & we shal perceiue ỹ God in sending his Gospell to be preached vnto vs, is ready & forwarde to giue vs his grace, if we our selues bee not the let. True it is ỹ his Election doth always beare sway: but yet do not men faile to be in the fault, if the Gospel profit thé not, accordingly as S. Paul declareth, 2.Cor.4.3.4 ỹ the diuel must needs haue blinded our eyes, if we see not ỹ light that shineth there, seing ỹ the image of God sheweth it selfe there so euidently. Wherfore let vs marke, ỹ if Moses vpbraided the Iewes, (& that iustly) with the vnthankfulnes whereof they were giltie: much more ought we now to cast down our eyes, & to stand in awe, & to be vtterly abashed before God. And in ỹ same respect, we haue more cause to magnifie the grace of our God, than had the auncient fathers, which were in the time that the law was written but only in two tables of stone.

Furthermore we haue to marke the figure ỹ is comprehended vnder these words, *Make thee two tables smooth & bring them to mee.* For therby god sheweth the order & right maner of proceeding to be wel taught at his hand: namely ỹ wee must bring ỹ tables polished or made smooth for him to write his law in, & ỹ afterward he must write in them. True it is, that we cannot do this of our own selfmouing, but he must direct vs thereto by his holy spirite. Notwithstanding, it is to bee noted, that God bestoweth two distinct graces vpon vs. The one is in preuenting vs, to the intent wee shoulde be readie and forwarde to yeelde him obedience: and the other is in inlightening vs, and in giuing vs a present affection to serue him as soone as wee knowe his will. This woulde be darke, if it were not opened more at large: but I hope that anon it shalbe veric haste to vs.

Before men are brought to the faith, and before they be acquainted with the doctrine of the Gospel to be ridde of all ignorance: they may haue some good preparatiue aforehande to say, Alas I woulde faine giue eare to my God, let him but onely shewe mee his good pleasure, and lo I am readie to embrace it, so as hee shal leade mee whither he will. Let him but laye the bridle on my necke, or raine mee one way or other, & I will followe him and submit my selfe to him with all obedience. Such disposition is to bee seene in silie ignorant soules, before God haue throughly instructed them. They haue not faith, but an entrance vnto faith, in asmuch as they are prepared to submit themselues to whatsoeuer God shall commaund them. Now cometh this inmouing, of men, or of their owne nature? No, it is of Gods working in their hearts, who maketh ỹ preparation there by the grace of his holy spirit. For by nature we can no skill but to go clean contrarie to Gods wil. And although men haue some deuotion, & make profese thereof: yet is all but hypocrisie, there is no truth nor soundnes in them. Therfore whesoeuer we finde any good forwardnes to serue God: it is of his own working in vs, & it is he that giueth vs that grace. In deede it is said here, *Bring mee do tables, & let them bee hewen smooth with thy hands.* This charge was giuen to Moses. And what then? Can he do it of himselfe? No, but because God hath taught him aforehande, and prepared him to the doing thereof. Ye see then that that is one grace which God bestoweth: and yet nuertheless, God sheweth vs that it is our dutie to do it, though wee cannot do it of our owne abilitie, that is to saye, though wee bee not able to do it of our owne selfmouing, or power, for looke what is our duetie to doe, it is good right that God shoulde require it. Therefore let vs learne, that to profite well in Gods doctrine, wee must bring smoothe or plaine tables. For why? Wee see that moste men haue rough and rugged myndes, so as nothing can bee written vppon them.

True it is, that they will resort to Sermons. But what for that? They be forepossessed with their owne lewde lustes: they bee so bemyred in them, as is horrible to see: and againe, they bee full of thornes, there is nothing but vice and vncleanesse in them: all is so out of order, that a man cannot tell howe to write one lesson in them. Yee shall see othersome which haue had their eares sufficiently beaten, and the Gospel hath beene preached to them all their life long: and yet are they nothing the better for it, because they bring not smooth tables with them, that is to say, they bee not disposed to receiue Gods worde. Thus yee see what wee haue to gather, vpon Gods commaunding of Moses to make the two tables smooth.

Now if we intend to profite well in Gods doctrine, wee must not haue our hartes like roughhewen stones, where no writing can bee discerned, but all shalbe blurred doe ỹ writer what hee can

can: but we muſt haue our harts ſmoothed, that is to ſay, quite & cleane rid from al impediments that may hinder our obedience towardes God. And for as much as we haue not that of nature: we muſt pray God to be ſo gracious vnto vs, as to make vs able to ſmooth our hearts ſo well, as we may rid them of all vices & corruptions, and meeken the ſturdines that is in vs, when wee ſee our ſelues drag cleane backe from the wil of our God; ſo as we may haue a deſire to ouercome & ſubdue the ſame. The hammers & chiſils which we muſt vſe to poliſh our harts withal, are theſe: namely, to miſlike of our ſinnes & to be grieued at them, & thereupon to condemne our ſelues, & to exerciſe our ſelues in ſo doing: for euery of vs muſt inforce & compel himſelfe by violence to ſtoop vnto God, & we muſt hold on in ſo doing, what hardnes & gaineſtriuing ſoeuer wee meete withal, ſo as al ỳ loftineſſe of our heartes muſt be pulled down, ỳ nothing may hinder gods ingrauing of his doctrin in them afterward. And when our Lord hath once begon after ỳ maner, he will go through with it, ſo as he will teach vs his wil, & we ſhal profit in it daily more & more. And ſo we ſee ỳ the beginning of our faith, is the ſaid obedientnes wherethrough men offer and yeld vp themſelues in ſacrifice, as if they ſhould ſay, Alas Lord, it is true that I am a ſilly ignorant ſoule, yea & a verie beaſt, for I knowe no reaſon nor wiſdom, but I flee vnto thee, that thou maiſt direct & gouerne mee by thy holy ſpirit. Lo here (ſay I) the ſigne ỳ we be wel diſpoſed aforehand, & this diſpoſednes is as a white vnwritten paper. For if a man bring a black & foule fullyed paper, or which is bedawbed & beſsoubered with myre, & ſay, I would faine be taught, I pray you write me a ſample vpon this paper: it is a flat mockery: for the paper is berayed, & a man cannot write any thing vpon it ỳ can be diſcerned. But if a mã bring cleane paper, & ſay, I ſubmit my ſelfe to you, I beſeech you ſhew me what I haue to do: ỳ is a good forwardneſſe. Or rather to come nerer the ſimilitude which we haue nowe preſently in hande, (that is to wit, the couenant which God hath made with vs) if a man intending to bargaine with another man, ſhould ſay, Go to, to the intent ye may vnderſtand ỳ I am willing to yeld to all reaſon; lo, here is a blanke, write what you will & I agree to it. If a man ſay ſo & ſpeake truly, he ſheweth ỳ his intent is to deale dutifully ỳ the partie with whome he hath to do. But if another being a peece of paper imbrewed with mire & ſay, write what you liſt, I admit it for good: doth he not giue to vnderſtande that he intendeth to breake the whole bargaine, & ỳ he is vnworthie to once open his lippes, as one that purpoſeth not to ſtand to any reaſon at all? So then let vs bring white paper to God, that is to ſay, obedientnes to ſubmit our ſelues vnto him. Although we vnderſtand not his will: yet is that ỳ entrance of our faith. For then doth God traine vs forward to write his worde in our hearts, ſo as we be throughly inſtructed afterward. Ye ſee thẽ that God vouchſafeth a double grace vpon vs: firſt, in that he prepareth our hearts to come vnto him to receiue his doctrin: & ſecondly in that he teacheth & enlighteneth our hearts by his holy ſpirite, framing our hearts & affections aright, to the end we ſhould be faſhioned like vnto his glorie, & ỳ his ſpeaking ſhoulde not bee to our eares only, but much rather to our hearts. Sõ haue we thereupon to conclude, (as I haue ſaide alreadie) ỳ we ſhal neuer attaine to faith, except we haue the ſaid obedientneſſe aforehand. And ỳ is the cauſe why ſo fewe beleeue nowadayes, for they be full of pride, they thruſt God away from them, ſo as he can by no meanes come at them: they take pritch againſt his worde, & reſiſt his trueth, holding ſcorne of their owne profite & welfare. Therefore we muſt vnderſtande, that to be true ſcholers vnto God, the end that wee muſt begin at, muſt be teachablenes. And when we be once in that mind, wee muſt ſuffer him to teache vs, ſo as he may ingraue his learning in our hearts. 2. Cor. 3. 18

By the way wee haue to marke alſo, that it is not for vs to make or frame lawes to ſerue God withall, but that we muſt ſimply bring our tables & let him write in them what he thinkes good. Moſes was a great & excellent Prophet: and yet did not God giue him leaue or liberrie to write any thing in his tables, or to put any thing vnto them, but reſtrained him altogither to ỳ thinges that were written there. And ỳ appeared well in this, in ỳ both the tables were written, not on the one ſide only, but on both, euen to the full, to the intent that no man liuing ſhould ad any thing to them. Seeing then ỳ God wrote his commandements in thoſe two tables himſelfe, & commicted not that charge vnto Moſes: is it lawfull for any mortall creature to ad any inuention of his owne to Gods law? Ye ſee then ỳ the way for vs to put this doctrine in vre, is to beare in minde that if Moſes being ſo excellent a man, and as an Angel of God, might not write or ad any thing to Gods law: much leſſe may we. Wherefore to ſerue God aright, let vs learne ỳ we muſt not take vpon vs to inuent any thing at all, nor to preſume vpon our own deuotions, as we term them: for all ſuch geere wilbe miſliked, but that we muſt bring our tables, that is to ſay, our owne ſelues in ſacrifice, ſo as there bee not any thing written in vs, vntil God ſpeak, & that we receiue ſimply without any gainſaying, whatſoeuer proceedeth out of his mouth. Deut. 12. 32. Exod. 32. 15.

But now that we haue ſo much, let vs marke that which is added: namely howe God cõmanded Moſes & told him, *How his will was that the cheſt or cheſt which he had made*, (that is to ſay, the Arke, cõmonly called the Arke of the couenant) *ſhould be borne or caried by the children of Leui*. And that is the cauſe why he told the people, that the childrẽ of Iſrael ſhould fleet from place to place, *vntill they came to Beroth where Aaron died, and that then God would ſhoote out the Leuites by themſelues.* Surely at the firſt bluſh the ſtorie ſeemeth diſordered. for he ſaith, the children of Iſrael departed from Beroth belonging to the children of Iaacan in Moſera, that is to ſay in ỳ place of mount Hor where Aaron dyed. And it ſeemeth here ỳ Moſes ment to ſay, that Aaron dyed byandby after ỳ God had cauſed the two tables to be made

new againe? But there were fourtie yeares betweene the one and the other. For Aaron dyed at such time as the people had outworne their terme of fourtie yeares, during which time god had forfended them the lande of promise. Now in the ende of that terme, Aaron was depriued of the dignitie of the priesthood, and Eleazer his son was made highpriest in his stead. But here Moses comprehendeth all that had bin done by the space of fourtie yeares, from the publishing of the lawe, vnto the verie same day that he exhorted the people to put themselues in better readinesse to enter into their inheritance, than they had beene in at the beginning. He telleth them that although there had happened many changes in the meane time, yet had God in effect prouided, that his lawe was to bee had alwayes in estimation, & to be honored, and that the world might perceiue that his maiestie was therein, & that all men ought to submit thémselues thereunto. And for that cause doth Moses say, that hee had chosen the children of Leuye, notwithstanding that Aaron had sinned. For to what ende doeth Moses speake here of his brothers death? Euen to make it knowen, that God had shewed fauour towardes the trybe of Leuye, as well as towards all the rest of the people. The trybe of Leuye was chosen to offer sacrifice: it was a prerogatiue which God had giuen them. And were they worthie of it? Could they boast themselues to haue beene more worthie than their brethren? It is true that they executed véngeance vpon the ydolaters, but yet was Moses faine to call them to him, and to command them to sanctifie their handes. Yee must hallowe your hands to the Lord, sayth he: & howe? In slaying those that haue so grieuously offended, and been an occasion of turning all thinges vpside downe. This day therfore it behoueth you to vtter what zeale ye haue towards the maintenance of gods honour, and to sanctifie his name without sparing of your own brethré, or your neerest neighbours, forasmuch as they haue so defaced Gods glorie to the vttermost of their power, & therefore they must be vtterly rooted out. The Leuites did well execute the thing that Moses cõmaunded them: but yet did the high priest Aaron make the golden calfe. True it is that hee withstoode it, or at leastwise consented not to it: but yet did he swarue at length by graunting the peoples importunate request, and therefore was he faine to beare the punishment which GOD tolde him of, saying, thou shalt not come within the land which I will giue vnto my people. Albeit that he represented the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and was a figure of him: although he was a mediatour betweene God and men, so as he made intercession for the sinnes of the people, & offered sacrifices for the reconciling of them to the maiesty of God: yet was he banished out of that lande to his shame, hee dyed, hee was stripped out of his robes before his death, hee was as a man disgraded, and God left him as a dishonoured person, and as a man defaced with perpetuall reproche. Now if God extended such punishment vpon the person of Aaron: what had they deserued which were inferiors to him? So then, Moses telleth them, that Gods choosing of the trybe of Leuye to carrie the Arke, and to be occupyed about his seruice, was not for that they were worthie of it, but because hee was minded to shewe the same thing to the successours of Leuye, which he had spoken of the rest of the whole bodie of Abrahams offspring: namely that they had all things of his only free goodnesse. That is the cause why the death of Aaron is rehearsed here.

But by the way, we see that Moses spared not his own brother. For here he repeteth the sentence ỳ God had giuen & also executed against him, & ỳ was not for ỳ honor of his own house. But what? His meaning was ỳ God should be glorified, & men condemned. Yea & we see that his intent was not to conceale his owne fault, but to shew that God had punished him for it, though there were great cause of excuse in him, & all the blame was to haue bin layd vpon the people, because his ouershooting of himselfe, was but in ỳ one case, & that not through malice, but only through griefe of mind. Yet notwithstanding he accuseth himselfe thereof, he acknowledgeth it openly, & maketh a chronicle of it to continue of record to the worldes end. Sith wee see this, let vs learne, not to be ashamed to confesse our sinnes, & to shew that God is righteous in punishing of vs. Let vs not go about to burie ỳ chastisements that God shall haue sent vpon vs, as wee see a number doe, who when God sendeth neuer so notable punishmentes, couldle finde in their heartes that they shoulde neuer be spoken of. And why? Forsooth because it is not for their honour, worship, or honestie. Verily, as who should say, yee will needes be honorable in spyte of God and his righteousnesse. Is it meete that you shoulde be regarded than the glory of his name? Nowe then, let vs vnderstand that if wee haue committed any fault, and God hath reached out his hande to punishe vs: the same must be rehearsed among vs, and we must think vppon it, and wee must alwayes confesse that God is righteous, and that wee haue well deserued that hee should vse correction towardes vs, sith wee see that Moses beareth not with his owne brother. That is the thing which we haue to beare in mynd.

Howbeit on the other side, let vs vnderstand, that if Aaron was faine to passe through Gods hande, because he did but consent vnto euill, & was punished although he clane not to it: (for to speake properly, his consenting was no consent at all: for he said vnto them, what meane how you ye wretched people? and in scorne of their idolatrie: Lo here thy Gods O Israel (quod he) which brought thee out of the lande of Egypt: as if hee shoulde say, is a calfe become thy redeemer? Aaron then did after a sort withstande them, and yet notwithstanding I call it a consenting, inasmuch as hee swarued and suffered himselfe to be caryed away with their importunateneſse:) Nowe if God (say I) did punish his high priest Aaron after he had aduanced him to so great & so high dignitie: what wil he do to vs

Then.

Exod. 32. 29

Exo. 32. 2. 4.

Hebr. 5. 1. 2

Therefore let vs learne to withold our ſelues frō euil, & by no meanes to conſent thereto: vnleſſe wee intend to wrap our ſelues in condemnation with the wicked, as wee ſee did partly befall vnto Aaron. I ſay but partly, for God vſed mercie towards him, becauſe the puniſhment was but temporall, becauſe it was vpon his body onely, and concerned onely this preſent life. And ſurely God is exceeding gracious & fauourable to vs when he puniſheth vs in our bodies, at ſuch time as we deſerue to be vtterly rooted out, and when he vouchſafeth to be contented with ſome chaſticemēt of this tranſitorie life, he ſheweth therin that he is minded to vſe great gentleneſſe towardes vs. And yet for all that though wee deſerue to periſh with the wicked, when wee reſiſt them not, ne forſake their compānies and confederacies: yet it pleaſeth God to ſpare vs, and to ſhewe himſelfe mercifull towardes vs, though at the leſt, wee doe in our owne bodies ſuffer ſomewhat in reſpect of this preſent life.

Nowe remaineth the reaſon that I haue touched afore: namely, that here is expreſſe mention made of *the Tribe of Leuy, which was ſorted out to vse the Arke of the Couenant.* And Moſes plainly rehearſeth that point, to do vs to vnderſtande, that God authoriſed his law by that meanes, in ỹ it was his wil to haue it caryed after that faſhiō, that it might bee as a ſtandard for the people to reſort vnto. We haue ſeene in the fourth Chapter how God ſayde, thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any likeneſſe or reſemblance: for thou hardeſt the voice of thy God in Horeb, but thou ſaweſt not any ſhape of man, or of beaſt, or of any other creature. The only image of thy God, are ỹ things that he hath writtē w̄ his own hand, ỹ is to ſay ỹ ten cōmandements. Thoſe (ſay I) are the liuely image wherin he wilbe ſeene. And therefore I ſaid it was a ſtandard carried aloft for the people to reſort vnto, as ſoldiers reſort to a ſtandard in a field, to fight the better. So then, it behoued the people to haue their eyes vppon the Arke of the Couenant. And ſpecially foraſmuch as men are not verie forward of themſelues to obey God: it was meete that ỹ Arke of the couenant ſhould be handled with reuerence, & for ỹ ſame purpoſe had God ordeined the prieſtes & Leuites. For al of them were prieſtes; Howbeit, they ỹ caried the Arke were of inferior degree in the dignitie of prieſthod. Neuertheleſſe god had appointed the Leuites to beare ỹ Ark, to ỹ intent it might thereby the better be knowen, ỹ it was a matter of excellent prerogatiue, & that it was no dalying in the caſe: For we ſee ỹ God woulde not ſuffer the Arke to be ſo much as touched, by any other than by the Leuyts: inſomuch ỹ when Dauid remoued the arke, the partie that did but touch it of good zeale, dyed out of hande for ſo doing. When he ſawe the Arke at the point to tumble down, he did but put forth his hand euē of good wil to ſtay it vp from falling, & yet notwithſtanding he was puniſhed grieuouſly for his labor. This may ſeeme to haue bin ouerrigorous. But it ſerueth to ſhew, ỹ it is not in any wiſe lawful to breake the order that God hath ſet. The end is ỹ thing which he hath an eye at. For if we looke no further than to the thing it ſelfe; why might not the Ark haue been handled & caryed of al ỹ people? They were al ſanctified to God, they were all circumciſed, they did all carye about them the marke of the couenant. And why then ſhould ỹ one man dye out of hand for only touching the Arke vpon good will? Verily God had an eye to the ende of the lawe: which was ỹ men ſhoulde wholly obey his worde. For if his worde be deſpiſed: there wilbe nothing but rebelliouſnes againſt him. In deede men will pretend a willingneſſe to honor & ſerue him, but yet is it but counterfeting for all that. Will we then doe true ſeruice vnto God, & ſuch as he accepteth? Al of vs both gret & ſmal muſt ſubmit our ſelues to his worde, & followe the ſinglenes thereof, & therewithall beare in mynd that it is ſo precious a thing, as men muſt not mingle aught of their owne with it: for that were nothing elſe but a corrupting of it. Now foraſmuch as men are not eaſie to be taught this: it was Gods will to ſhewe by a viſible ſigne, howe highly he eſteemeth his own word. That is the cauſe why he ſorted out that tribe from the reſt, to beare the Ark of the couenant. It was Gods will ỹ the Prieſtes which were ſpecially appointed to offer ſacrifice, & to make attonement betwene God & men, & to repreſent the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, Hebr. 5. 2. ſhould beare abroad his word, & that they ſhold preaſe vnto him to bee as mediators betweene him & men. Ye ſee then how it was Gods will, to teache his people humilitie by viſible ſignes and outward ceremonies, to the ende that his worde ſhould be embraced with all reuerence, & continue euermore in good ſtate. But as for vs, wee haue not nowadayes the ceremonie any more, but we haue the trueth, which ought to continue to the worlds end. Therfore whenſoeuer Gods word is preached vnto vs, let vs learne to ſtoope Col. 2. 17. to it, & to know ỹ it is a heauenly doctrine, wherunto it becommeth vs to encline, & that it is not for vs to bring our own fond imaginations in ỹ caſe, for then wo be vnto vs. Neuertheleſſe God granteth vs a ſpecial fauor, in that he inableth vs to beare abroad his word, & maketh it to dwel in vs, whereby he ſheweth that he hath performed Eſa. 66. 21. the thing which he promiſed by his Prophets, ỹ is to wit, that he hath choſen vs for his Leuytes, as ſhalbe declared more at length to morrowe.

Now let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea, euen in ſuch wiſe as it may lead vs to ſuch repentance, that we may be ſorie for them all our life long, & be aſhamed that we haue bin ſo wretched ſinners: And that therwithall wee may be quickened vp to glorifie him the more for the great goodnes which he hath ſhewed vpon vs, & proceede continually more & more in obeying him, to the intent that his law may be the better ingraued in vs by his writing of it in our hartes, & we become the readier to follow the things ỹ he ſhal haue ſhewed vs, ſo as we may be forward to obey him all our life long, & our life be wholy dedicated vnto him. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, &c.

new againe: But there were fourtie yeares betweene the one and the other. For Aaron dyed at such time as the people had outworne their terme of fourtie yeares, during which time god had forfended them the lande of promise. Now in the ende of that terme, Aaron was depriued of the dignitie of the priesthood, and Eleazer his son was made highpriest in his stead. But here Moses comprehendeth all that had bin done by the space of fourtie yeares, from the publishing of the lawe, vnto the verie same day that he exhorted the people to put themselues in better readinesse to enter into their inheritance, than they had beene in at the beginning. He telleth them that although there had happened many changes in the meane time, yet had God in effect prouided, that his lawe was to bee had alwayes in estimation, & to be honored, and that the world might perceiue that his maiestie was therein, & that all men ought to submit théselues thereunto. And for that cause doth Moses say, that hee had chosen the children of Leuye, notwithstanding that Aaron had sinned. For to what ende doeth Moses speake here of his brothers death? Euen to make it knowen, that God had shewed fauour towardes the trybe of Leuye, as well as towards all the rest of the people. The trybe of Leuye was chosen to offer sacrifice: it was a prerogatiue which God had giuen them. And were they worthie of it? Could they boast themselues to haue beene more worthie than their brethren? It is true that they executed vengeance vpon the ydolaters, but yet was Moses faine to call them to him, and to command them
Exod. 32.29 to sanctifie their handes. Yee must hallowe your hands to the Lord, sayth he: & howe? In slaying those that haue so grieuously offended, and been an occasion of turning all thinges vpside downe. This day therfore it behoueth you to vtter what zeale ye haue towards the maintenance of gods honour, and to sanctifie his name without sparing of your own brethré, or your neerest neighbours, forasmuch as they haue so defaced Gods glorie to the vttermost of their power, & therefore they must be vtterly rooted out. The Leuites did well execute the thing that Moses cõ-
Exo. 32.2.4. maunded them: but yet did the high priest Aaron make the golden calfe. True it is that hee withstoode it, or at leastwise consented not to it: but yet did he swarue at length by graunting the peoples importunate request, and therefore was he faine to beare the punishment which GOD tolde him of, saying, thou shalt not come within the land which I will giue vnto my people. Albeit that he represented the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and was a figure of him: although he
Hebr. 5.1. 2 was a mediatour betweene God and men, so as he made intercession for the sinnes of the people, & offered sacrifices for the reconciling of them to the maiesty of God: yet was he banished out of that lande to his shame, hee dyed, hee was stripped out of his robes before his death, hee was as a man disgraded, and God left him as a dishonoured person, and as a man defaced with perpetuall reproche. Now if God extended such punishment vppon the person of Aaron: what had they deserued which were inferiors to him? So then, Moses telleth them, that Gods choosing of the trybe of Leuye to carrie the Arke, and to be occupyed about his seruice, was not for that they were worthie of it, but because hee was minded to shewe the same thing to the successours of Leuye, which he had spoken of the rest of the whole bodie of Abrahams offspring, namely that they had all things of his only free goodnesse. That is the cause why the death of Aaron is rehearsed here.

But by the way, we see that Moses spared not his own brother. For here he repeteth the sentence ỹ God had giuen & also executed against him, & ỹ was not for ỹ honor of his own house. But what? His meaning was ỹ God should be glorified, & men condemned. Yea & we see that his intent was not to conceale his owne fault, but to shew that God had punished him for it, though there were great cause of excuse in him, & all the blame was to haue bin layd vpon the people, because his ouershooting of himselfe, was but in one case, & that not through malice, but only through griefe of mind. Yet notwithstanding he accuseth himselfe thereof, he acknowledgeth it openly, & maketh a chronicle of it to continue of record to the worldes end. Sith wee see this, let vs learne, not to be ashamed to confesse our sinnes, & to shew that God is righteous in punishing of vs. Let vs not go about to burie ỹ chasticements that God shall haue sent vppon vs, as
Deut. 4.35 & 6.4 wee see a number doe, who when God sendeth neuer so notable punishmentes, coulde finde in their hearres that they shoulde neuer be spoken of. And why? Forsooth because it is not for their honour, worship, or honestie. Verily, a who should say, yee will needes be honorable in spyte of God and his righteousnesse. Is it meete that you shoulde be regarded than the glorie of his name? Nowe then, let vs vnderstand that if wee haue commirted any fault, and God haue reached out his hande to punishe vs: the same must be rehearsed among vs, and we must think vppon it, and wee must alwayes confesse that God is righteous, and that wee haue well deserued that hee should vse correction towardes vs, sith wee see that Moses beareth not with his owne brother. That is the thing which we haue to beare in mynd.

Howbeit on the other side, let vs vnderstand, that if Aaron was faine to passe through Gods hande, because he did but consent vnto euill, & was punished although he claue not to it: (for to speake properly, his consenting was no consent at all: for he said vnto them, what meane ye you ye wretched people? and in scorne of their idolatrie: Lo here thy Gods O Israel (quod he) which brought thee out of the lande of Egypt: as if hee shoulde say, is a calfe become thy redeemer? Aaron then did after a sort withstande them, and yet notwithstanding I call it a consenting, inasmuch as hee swarued and suffered himselfe to be caryed away with their impetuositie:) Nowe if God (say I) did punish his high priest Aaron after he had aduanced him to so great & so high dignitie: what will he do vn-

Then

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Now let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea, euen in ſuch wiſe as it may lead vs to ſuch repentance, that we may be ſorie for them all our life long, & be aſhamed that we haue bin ſo wretched ſinners: And that therwithall wee may be quickened vp to glorifie him the more for the great goodnes which he hath ſhewed vpon vs, & proceede continually more & more in obeying him, to the intent that his law may be the better ingraued in vs by his writing of it in our hartes, & we become the readier to follow the things ỹ he ſhal haue ſhewed vs, ſo as we may be forward to obey him all our life long, & our life be wholy dedicated vnto him. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, &c.

On Wedneſday the xi. of September. 1555.

The Lxx. Sermon which is the ſeconde vpon the tenth Chapter.

8 The ſame time the Lord &c.

9 Therefore Leuie had no portion nor inheritaunce with his brethren: but the Lord is his inheritaunce, as the Lord thy God ſayd vnto him.

10 And I taried on the mountaine as I had doone afore, fortie dayes and fortie nightes. And the Lord heard mee that time alſo, ſo as the Lord would not deſtroy thee.

11 But the Lord ſayde vnto mee, vp, get thee hence, and goe before the people, that they may goe and poſſeſſe the Land which I ſware to their fathers to giue them.

WE ſawe yeſterday, how Moſes in this text did magnifie Gods mercie, as well towardes the Leuites, as towardes the whole people. For in ſheweing that Aaron was puniſhed for his fault, it appeareth plainly that all his whole linage deſerued to haue ben diſgraded. Yet notwithſtanding, God of his goodnes vouchſafed ỹ there ſhould bee a certaine number of men appointed to his ſeruice: and them he choſe, not for any worthines that was in them, but only for his owne mercies ſake. For if wee be not worthie of ſo much, as that God ſhould crowde vs into a litle corner of his houſe: how ſhould he aduaunce vs to farre higher degree? That then is the meaning of Moſes. Neuertheleſſe wee muſt marke herewithall the three charges which he ſetteth downe here, & which he reporteth to haue been aſſigned to the Leuites. The firſt is, *To beare the Arke of Gods couenant, & the veſſels of the ſanctuary*: The ſeconde is, *To be at hand to ſerue God*: & the third is, *To bleſſe in the name of God*. Theſe are the three things that were incident to the prieſthod of old time. For as concerning the Sanctuarie with al the appurtenances therof, it was but a figure, which we muſt referre to the ſpiritual temple, that is to wit to Gods church, & to the ſacrifices which are offered vnto him by the faithful, when they dedicate themſelues to him both in bodie & ſoule, by yelding vp their ownſelues, ỹ he may be glorified in them. Marke that for one point. The ſecond is the ſeruice wherof he ſpeaketh: which conſiſteth likewiſe in figure: but the trueth therof is performed toward vs, when ſuch as nowadayes are called to the gouerning of Gods church, do their dutie in offering vp mens ſoules in ſacrifice vnto God, by preaching ỹ goſpell, & in maintaining the order & ſtate of the church, in ſuch wiſe as God be glorified, and the church be cleanſed from all ſtumbling blockes. The third is to bleſſe in Gods name: & that is to yeeld a teſtimonie of Gods goodnes and grace to his people.

Hebr. 8, 5. Rom. 12. 1.

Rom. 15, 6.

Now muſt we applie theſe things to ỹ trueth of them, ỹ we may be edified by them. Let vs (ſay I) haue a regarde to apply theſe three things to their trueth & ſubſtance, which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath brought vs by his comming. It is ſaid here, *that the Leuites muſt beare the veſſels of God*. And this belongeth, not only to the miniſters of the worde, or to ſuch as beare publike office in the church: but alſo to all the faithful in generall. And that is the cauſe why it is ſaid by ỹ prophet Malachie, ỹ the Leuits were made prieſts, which thing I ſay was accompliſhed at the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, at which time the church was aduanced to greater perfection than it was vnder ỹ law. Likewiſe Eſay telleth vs that all men ſhalbe Leuites vnto ỹ Lord. Al the children of Iſrael (ſaith he) ſhal execute the office of prieſthod vnto God. And in the ſame reſpect doth S. Peter ſay, ỹ we be a royal prieſthod. S. Peter ſpeaks not there of any peculiar ſort of people after ỹ maner of ỹ Pope, who hath villanouſly corrupted ỹ ſaid ſentence of his, in attributing it to his owne clergie as he termeth them, ỹ is to wit to ỹ ſtinking rable of his powlſhorn greaſlings: but he attributeth ỹ honorable title to all the faithfull, & to as many as are of the church of God. Moſes could wel ſay euen in his time, Yee be a prieſtly kingdome, ỹ is to ſay a nation holy aboue all others. But S. Peter turning the ſame words, ſaith, ỹ now we be become a royal prieſthod, inaſmuch as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hauing ſhewed himſelf to the world, is ordeined prieſt after the order of Melchizedech, to communicate the ſame grace to ỹ whole church. Therfore let vs marke wel, ỹ this gift of becoming Prieſtes & Leuites, is not a priuilege or prerogatiue grãted to three or four: but inaſmuch as al ỹ things which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt hath receiued of God his father, are common to vs all, & we be made partakers of the ỹ by his meanes: we be of ỹ order & number of ỹ Leuites, that is to ſay, of them that are dedicated vnto god. Not as ỹ people [of Iſrael] were, which held themſelues alooſe in ỹ body of the temple, & worſhipped God afarre of: but we haue a means to preaſe neere him, wee haue familiar acceſſe, ỹ we haue his own ſonne entred afore vs into the Sanctuarie which is not made with mans hand, to bring vs in thither, in whoſe name al the faith-

1 Cor. 6.

Mal. 2.

Iſa. 61.

Exod. 19.

1 Pet. 2.

Iſa. 5 [illegible].

Heb. 5.

Pſal. 110.

Heb. 4.

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ſtill haue libertie to come thither. Thus ye ſee that the thing which wee haue to marke in the firſt place, is that God ſhooled out one tribe of the children of Iſraell to ſerue him in the Sanctuarie: but nowe adayes he hath ſhedde out the ſame grace vpon all beleeuers, and there is no exception, but wee be all made holie to offer ſacrifice to God, and not onely to beare the veſſelles of the temple, but alſo to be the verie veſſelles themſelues. For although our bodies 1 Cor. 6. 19. bee but wretched carcaſſes: yet fayle they not to be the temples of the holy Ghoſt, and Gods will is to be worſhipped in them. Hadde there beene ſayde no more, but that our ſoules are the temples of God: it had beene a verie excellent honour. But ſeeing it is ſayde of our earthly and corruptible bodies, we ſee what goodnes God vttereth towardes vs. And therefore let vs learne that this doctrine belonges to vs, and that this figure which was vnder the lawe concerneth vs at this day, to the end that we ſhould adeauntage our ſelues thereby. And after what manner?

The firſt is that we ſhould magnifie the goodneſſe of our God, in that hee hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo gratious vnto vs, as to choſe vs to be his ſeruauntes, not onely to beare the veſſelles of his temple, but alſo to be the verie temples thémſelues and the altars whereat hee will be worſhipped, both in our bodies and our ſoules, to the intent we ſhould yeelde him, not onely the bodily ſeruice which conſiſteth in ſhadowes and figures, but alſo the true ſpirituall ſeruice by dedicating our ſelues all wholly vnto him. Yee ſee then howe the ende whereat we muſt beginne, is to knowe how greatly we by bounde vnto God for vſing ſuch gratious goodnes towardes vs. Moreoueraccording (as Saint Paul ſheweth vs in the ſecond to the Corinthians,) we muſt take warning to ſeparate our ſelues from all vncleanneſſe, as the prophet cryeth out vnto vs, ſaying: Iſa. 52. Separate your ſelues from all vncleanneſſe, you that carrie the Lordes veſſels. And Saint Paul alleadging the ſame text of Eſay, ſayth that according to the ſame promiſe, it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde giue our ſelues to cleanneſſe both of bodie and ſoule. For in very deede, the prophet Eſaie, in ſaying: Be ye cleane you that beare the Lordes veſſelles, hath not an eye to the time of the figures: but extendeth his doctrine to the kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Nowe then this text muſt needes be performed in vs. But there are not nowe adayes any moe materiall veſſelles as there were in the time of the Lawe: and therefore it followeth that the doctrine thereof muſt bee performed in higher matters: that is to ſay, that inaſmuch as God hath called vs to be members of his ſonne, and by that meane to come ſo neere him as he may dwell in vs & we be his temples: the ſame ſhould prouoke vs to giue our ſelues to all cleanneſſe, which thing wee can not doe but by ſeparating of our ſelues from the corruptions of the world. For wee dwell here among ſuch filthineſſe, as it is not poſſible for vs to ſcape vninfected, vnleſſe we labour to withdrawe our ſelues from it. Yea and there needes no euill to come vpon vs from elſewhere, for euerie of vs ſhall finde ynough in himſelfe. Wherefore lette vs beware that wee turne away from all wicked luſtes, and that we cut off whatſoeuer is defiled in vs, and generally all that euer is of the world, ſo as we may preaſe vnto our God, and haning giuen ouer the world we may be ſo vnited vnto him, as he may auowe vs to be his prieſtes. For if we doe otherwiſe, we ſhalbe dubble accurſed, and we ſhall not be able to excuſe our ſelues but that God hath aduaunced vs high ynough. But what excuſe will there be for vs nowe when our Lorde hath brought vs ſo neere vnto him, and vouchſafed to make vs prieſtes to offer vppe our owne ſelues vnto him, and to make vs his temples, ſo as we ſhould haue a ſpirituall altar erected vnto him in our ſelues? Seeing that God hath brought vs to that point, is it not a horrible treacherie (ſay I) if wee fall to vnhallowe his temple? Nowe then, lette vs vnderſtande, that whenſoeuer this worlde turneth vs away vnto euill, wee offer God greate wrong, in making his temple a ſwynes ſtie, and in vnhallowing the thing that he had hallowed, by cauſing all the corruptions of Sathan and of this worlde to come into his temple. Surely it ought to holde vs in awe and to make vs walke in all ſoundeneſſe, ſo as we giue not ouer our bodies and ſoules to anie diſhoneſtie, ſeeing that God hath ſanctified them to himſelfe. This is the thing which we haue to beare away vpon the firſt part of this text.

Neuertheleſſe lette vs marke that although God haue extended the ſayde grace of making vs all Leuites or Prieſtes, to all the members of his Church: yet hath hee not vtterly aboliſhed the order of his Church, but his will is to haue ſome certaine men appointed to the preaching of his worde. And that is the thing which is ment here in the ſeconde place, where he ſaith, *that they ſhall ſtande before the Lorde to ſerue him, and finally that they ſhall bleſſe in the Lordes name.* The ſame muſt bee put in vre at this day by the miniſters of the worde. For although God haue called vs all in common, to bee ſerued and honoured at our handes: yet doeth he require a ſpeciall ſeruice at their handes whom he ſetteth ouer his Church to be the ſhepheardes thereof, that is to witte, that they ſhould ſhewe the way, and alwayes be in a readineſſe to ſerue God. And this ſeruice importeth that the Leuites ſhoulde maintaine the religion pure and vncorrupted among the people, and ſhewe the Iewes that they ought not to deale with the ſuperſtitions of the heathé, and what God it was which had deliuered them, and to be ſhort, that they ſhoulde alwayes holde the people in obedience to the true faith. And for the ſame cauſe GOD allotted them not any one certaine countrie or ſhire to dwell in, but diſperſed thé throughout the whole lande. We knowe there was not anie one tribe which had not Leuites among them. And why was that? For God could well ynough haue gathered thé together, ſo as they might haue bin all together in Ieruſalem where the temple was, and in the places neere aboutes, and haue had

some portion assigned them as well as the rest of the tribes had. But hee did not so: but his will was that in euerie countrie, citie, shire, and region, there should alwaies be some Leuites, that the people might eueriewhere bee taught, and the seede of faith be eueriewhere spred abroad. For had there beene anie certain countrie assigned to the Leuites: it had beene ynough to haue abolished the remembrance of God, and to haue layde all teaching vnder foote. But forasmuch as God had appointed ỹ tribe of Leuie to preach his worde, and to beare abroade the message of saluation: he gaue them no certaine portion to dwell in, but his will was to haue them dispersed abroade euerywhere. And for proofe thereof, Mal.2.4-5. we knowe howe the prophete sayth that GOD made his couenant with the tribe of Leuie. And what manner of one was it? Euen the couenant of peace, insomuch as he sayde that the priestes are Gods Angels & messengers: men shall seeke the vnderstanding of the lawe at their mouth; & they shal teach them knowledge. We see then ỹ the seruice that is spoken of heere, comprehendeth instruction: insomuch that they whome God had so chosen, had charge to preache the Lawe, and to expound it to the people, that religion might continue vnappaired. And the same is to be obserued nowe adayes among vs. For although all of vs from the most to the least bee priestes: yet notwithstanding it is the duetie of the ministers of the worde, to teach and to shew men the way to GOD, and to bring backe the wretched soules that were in the way to destruction. And that is the cause why Saint Paul sayeth that he is a priest, not after the auncient maner that had beene vnder the Lawe, but to slea men with the sworde of the Gospell, as sacrifices ought to be slayne: after the which maner Saint Rom.15.16. Paul sayeth also, that he had the spirituall sword wherewith to offer vp mens soules vnto GOD. Thus ye see what we haue to remember. And therefore let such as are called to the charge of the preaching of Gods worde, vnderstande that they must streine themselues to the vttermoste, that God may be serued and honoured. And the manner is shewed vs in the text which I al. leadged out of the fifteenth to the Romanes: namely that wee must indeuour to sanctifie all that euer is corrupted in this worlde, and that men must become teachable and meeke, that God may renewe them & accept them for his children. And if we doe so, then is Gods seruice accomplished in vs, after the same manner as it was commaunded to the Leuites in olde time.

Nowe let vs come to the thirde point that is set downe here. It is sayde, *That the Leuites must bleſſe the people in the name of God*. True it is that in the Hebrewe tongue, the worde *Bleſſe* betokeneth to prayse and magnifie God. Howebeit forasmuch as the matter here, concerneth those whom God did specially ordaine to bleſſe in his name: we must fetch the meaning of this text, out of the sixth Chapter of the booke of Numbers, notwithstanding that this maner of speech Numb.6.24 be verie rife in Moses. But in that place there is more expressed: and for that cause haue I rested the text. It is sayde there, that the priestes of the house of Leuie shall bleſſe in the name of God and say: The Lorde bleſſe you and keepe you: the Lorde make his countenaunce to shine vpon you, and graunt you his mercie. The Lord turne his fauourable face towardes you, & bleſſe you. Nowe hereby wee perceiue, that it behoued the Leuites not onely to prayse GOD, as their duetie was to doe: but also to bleſſe the people in his name: For they were two diuerse thinges. So that *To bleſſe the name of God*, is as it were a doing of homage vnto him for all the benefites which hee bestoweth vpon vs, by protesting our selues to holde all thinges of his onely meere goodnesse, and that hee is the author of them, so as without him wee be miserable, and haue not one drop of goodnesse in vs, further forth than he alone maketh vs partakers of it. And so ye see that to bleſſe God and to magnifie his name, is to acknowledge him to be the fountaine of all goodnesse, and that all that euer we haue commeth of him, and of his onely meere free goodnesse. Nowe this belonged to the Leuites, as wee see it was their office to sing, and although that all the people were present there & the prayse of God ought to sounde in al their mouthes: yet notwithstanding the Leuites were to beginne the quire, and to leade the melodie. Neuertheleſſe, they *did also bleſſe in the name of God*. And how was that? They witnessed Gods grace vnto the people: and the same thing taketh place still at this day, in such as are ordeyned ministers of the worde. For to what ende serueth our dayly preaching of the Gospell, but to bleſſe the thinges in Gods name, which were accurſed before? For by nature we are all of vs accurſed and reprobate. And therefore is hee deth vs in hande to be deliuered out of the wretchednesse wherein we be: which to doe, there is none other meane but onely that God shewe himselfe louing and fauorable towardes vs, and that is the bleſſing which is spoken of here. For when the scripture sayth that God bleſſeth men, it is asmuch to say, as that hee sheweth them by effect that he loueth them, and maketh them to feele the fruite & operation of his grace and fatherly adoption. Now therefore when we come to heare the Gospel, let vs consider to what ende it is: that is to wit, to certifie vs that God looketh vpon vs with pittie, euen vpon vs wretched creatures, and that hee setteth vs free from the cursednesse that is in vs, insomuch that although we deserue to be cast off at his hand, yet neuertheleſſe hee sheweth himselfe gratious vnto vs, and that whereas he might with good right bee our enemie, he sheweth himselfe as a father towards vs. Let vs (say I) be well aduised that we make our profit of this doctrine, when it is preached vnto vs. For whereas we be assured by the scriptures, that God sheweth himselfe fauorable to vs, in laying aside all enmitie that was betwixt him and vs by reason of our sinnes: if the same were well printed in our hearts, we would haue an other manner of desire than wee haue, to set forth his prayse. What a treasure is it, that our

our Lord ſheweth himſelfe ſo to vs, as though we ſawe him in his owne perſon? & that he openeth the heauens to aſſure vs that he loueth vs, euen vs which make warre againſt him, inſomuch that wheras he ſhould vtterly miſlike of vs, he vouchſafeth neuertheleſſe to take vs into his fauor, & maketh vs to feele it in very dede. But what? We ſeeke in our own dung euen till we do as it were ſtinke in it, without any care or regard at all. And that is the cauſe of ſuch contépt of the goſpel, & of ſuch vnthankefulnes as is ſeene almoſt euery where. Yet notwithſtanding, it behoueth ỹ faithfull to conſider of how great value it is, ỹ God receiueth them to mercy, & ſheweth himſelfe to be a father to them, & that ſuch as are appointed to preach his word, are as witneſſes to certifie vs ỹ God beareth vs ſuch fatherly loue. Trueth it is ỹ this was accõpliſhed by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, for he was the only prieſt: and ỹ that which wee do, is not to take his office vpon vs, but onely to approue & ratifie the thing ỹ he did. And therefore let vs marke well, that it belongeth onely to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt to aſſure vs of the loue of God his father: but yet doth he alſo witnes it vnto vs, by ỹ mouthes of ſuch as preach the Goſpel in his name. It hath bin told vs herewithall, that the things which were figured vnder ỹ Law, haue bin performed in his perſon. For the high prieſts (when they bleſſed the people) had a ſolemn ceremony of lifting vp of their handes, as though they made an offering vp of all the people vnto God. Likewiſe whẽ Ieſus Chriſt wẽt vp into heauen, he vſed ỹ ſame faſhiõ, by lifting vp his hands to bleſſe his diſciples, in whoſe perſons hee pronounced a general bleſſing vpon ỹ whole body of his Church. We ſee then ỹ the figures of ỹ Lawe belõg to vs at this day, howbeit, not as touching the outward vſe of them, but as in reſpect of the ſubſtance & truth of thẽ. Wherby we be warned to get vs to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who bringeth vs ỹ full accompliſhment of all thinges. And we muſt vnderſtand, ỹ although he be not now conuerſant in ỹ world to bleſſe vs: yet will he haue vs to bee made partakers of the ſame bleſſing by meanes of ỹ goſpel, when it is preached among vs. This is the effect of the thinges which we haue to gather vpon that place.

Now Moſes addeth, *That God hath giuen the Leuites no portion among their brethren, but that he himſelfe would be their portion and heritage.* Yea, but yet for all that, he appointed them ỹ tenthes & firſtfruits, as is ſhewed in the fourth booke of Moſes. Now then, Gods aſſigning of a portion vnto thẽ was in ſuch ſort as they poſſeſſed not any Lande or inheritance, more thã their townes & ſuburbs for their cattell. But yet tooke they the tenthes, firſtfruits, & all other ſuch things of all ỹ people. Herein God had a cõſideration, ỹ ſuch as he mẽt to dedicate to ỹ ſeruing of himſelfe, ſhould be withdrawen frõ all worldly affaires, ỹ they might intend to ỹ ſeruing of God. Gods intent then was, ỹ the Leuits & their children ſhold not giue thẽſelues to husbãdry & ſuch other things. And why? For they had ynough to do to diſcharg thẽſelues of their dutie otherwiſe: ỹ is to wit, in calling vpõ the people to folow Gods cõmandementes, & to keepe his couenant, ſo as religion might continue vnapaired, & faith might haue his full force, & ſo conſequently ỹ God might be honored. Alſo they had the Sacrifices, which ſerued them inſteed of Sacraments, & at ỹ time they were many in nũber, becauſe the people could not otherwiſe be held in order: they would eaſily haue bin marde, if they had not bin reſtreined w many bridles. That therfore was ynough to keep ỹ Leuits occupied. And for the ſame cauſe God gaue thẽ a portion beſide the tithes that they might haue wherwith to finde & mainteine thẽſelues, while they were a doing of their duties.

But th is hath bin corrupted & falſified by the papiſtes. For they haue borne men in hand, that tithes belong to thẽ by Gods Law. And why? becauſe (as they ſay) they belonged to ỹ Leuits. But they conſider not, ỹ the Leuites were inheritors of the land of Chanaan, as well as thoſe ỹ were of the tribes of Iuda, Beniamin, Ephraim, Manaſſes and all ỹ reſidue. In reſpect whereof it was meete they ſhold haue had their portiõ with their brethren. & they ought not to haue bin excluded or baniſhed frõ it: for ỹ inheritance of the land was cõmon to them all: therfore was it meete ỹ they ſhould haue had their part of it. Yea, but God recompenſed them after an other faſhion. It were meete then ỹ the Pope & al his rable, ſhold ſhew how ỹ inheritances of all landes belong to thẽ, & then might they therepon demand their tithes. Thus ye ſee how this text hath bin miſwreſted. But yet for all this, let vs beare in minde howe S. Paul ſaith, ỹ euen at this day it is Gods will ỹ they which preach ỹ goſpel ſhould be nouriſhed and mainteined, as well as the Prieſtes had their liuinges appointed thẽ in old time. S. Paul demãdeth in way of cõpariſon, whether ỹ ſpiritual ſeruice ỹ is yelded to God nowadaies, ought not at the leaſt to be aſmuch eſteemed, as the ſeruice ỹ was vnder the figures of ỹ law? Now it was Gods will, ỹ ſuch as ſerued at the altar, ſhould be mainteined by the altar, therefore it is good reaſon, ỹ ſuch as at this day doe ſerue Gods Church in bringing thẽ his word, ſhould alſo be nouriſhed and mainteined. Thus ye ſee ỹ the way to vnderſtãd this text a right, is to take S. Paul for our expounder thereof. But to conclude peremptorily ỹ tithes belong to the preachers of ỹ goſpel, is to groſſe an abuſe & fondnes. Neuertheles we muſt mark alſo, ỹ it is not our Lords meaning, ỹ ydols or idle bellies, & much leſſe ỹ ſuch as peruert all order & turne vs away from ỹ ſeruing & obeying of God, ſhould be nouriſhed in his Church. Now then if the Shepherdes will needes claime to be found at ỹ common charges of the Church: they muſt looke that they occupie themſelues in the ſeruice of God. As how? It is no title of idlenes, it is no fantaſtie all dignitie, to be called the Shepherde of a Church: but it is a kinde of bondage, howbeit ỹ it be honorable. And therfore ỹ party ỹ is appointed to be a ſhepherd or miniſter muſt looke ỹ he obey God and ſerue his people. For we can not ſerue him ỹ hath put vs in office, but by ſeruing of his Church. Yee ſee then how the Pope & al his hangers on, are diſappointed of the things which they prerend to perrain to them of right. And if they deuour ỹ goods ỹ were apoſted to ſuch as ſerue Gods Church: they muſt be fain

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2.Cor.5.20.

Heb.5.6.

Col.2.17.

Luke 24.50.

Num.18.21.

1.Cor.9.13.

2.Cor.3.6.

to yeelde an account of them in the ende. For the world sees they be but idle bellies and idols, and not onely that, but also deadly enemies to Gods honor, laboring to ouerthrow it to the vttermost of their power. Now then, all this geere must be cut off: for ỹ nourishing & mainteining of thé, is all one as if men were minded to marre all the good seede that is in Gods Church. True it is that where they vsurpe such tyrannie, men may well hope that they shall yeeld a reckening for it before God, and such as are held down in ỹ bondage may well sigh & grone: And although they knowe it to be an intollerable trecherie and extortion, ỹ such exactions should be layde vpon them: yet neuertheleſſe they must bee faine to beare with thé. But whensoeuer ỹ Church shall happen to bee well reformed and well ordered, doutlesse those Cormorantes shall no longer deuour the substance of Gods people after that fashion, but the things ỹ haue bin misused, shalbe brought home to their good & holy vse again, so as they shall serue to the nourishing & mainteining of such as haue ỹ charge of the preaching of Gods word, & also to the releiuing and mainteining of the poore, after ỹ maner of the priestes in the old law, who (as we know) were bound ther vnto, insomuch that their hauing of such portiõ as I haue told you of before, was for ỹ releeuing of the poore, & of such as were in penury. And so ye see how we may profit ourselues by this text.

But by the way, let vs come backe againe to ỹ things ỹ I haue alledged as wel out of ỹ prophet Esay, as out of Zachary, ỹ is to wit, ỹ we in these daies are succeeded in the roome of the Leuites. And sith it is so, let vs marke ỹ although wee possesse inheritances of landes, medowes, and vineyardes in this world, yet we must make light account of thé, without being tied to them, & must put the thing in vre which Saint Paul speaketh of in the seuenth Chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, ỹ is to wit, that he which is rich be as if he possessed nothing. And why? For if wee haue not God for our heritage & portion, wo be to vs. And how may ỹ be, but onely by being discharged of all earthly affections and cares? Although God giue a man riches, yet must he be as a sheepe, meeke & lowely to offer himselfe vnto God, so as nothing may let or hinder him from following his vocation, or from going on still towardes the heauenly life whereunto he is called. Ye see then ỹ the thing which we haue to consider generally in our knowing ỹ God will haue ỹ ministers of his word and the shepherdes of his Church to be nourished and mainteined: is ỹ we must likewise know, ỹ all of vs are a royall priesthood, in respect whereof he wil not haue vs to be so intangled with ỹ goods of this world, that wee should not look vp to him, but ỹ we should run apace through the world, assuring our selues ỹ wee cannot be children of the kingdome of heauen, vnlesse we be strangers here beneath.

2. Cor. 7. 30

2. Cor. 5. 6. & Hebr. 11. 16.

Now after ỹ Moses hath told the sayd things, he addeth yet one word more, which is *Euen vnto this day*. Wherby he meaneth ỹ Gods will was to haue those things obserued. True it is that these things had not at ỹ time indured aboue fourtie yeares: but yet doth Moses put ỹ people in mind of thé, telling them ỹ that order must not be broken, but continued still euen till the cõming of ỹ redeemer. In deede the priestes thémselues were greatly out of order & had marred all, so as they had well deserued ỹ God should vndoe his couenant with thé, & bereaue them of ỹ prerogatiue that he had giuen vnto their father Leuie, according to this text of the prophet Malachie, which saith ỹ God made his couenant with Leuie, but yet forasmuch as the Leuits had shrunk away, & not regarded the promise ỹ they had made vnto God, they deserued to be cut off, and God would curse all their blessings, as if he should say, whé ye thinke ye haue made a great hand, thé will God but blow vpon you, & by & by it wil appeare ỹ all was but shame. Yet notwithstanding ỹ priesthod was to cõtinue still, euen to the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ, & so it did. Likwise let vs mark well nowadaies, ỹ when things be out of frame in the Church, so as all goes to hauoche, ỹ mischief is in deed to be corrected, but yet must not gods ordinãce be therfore disanulled, so as we should let it alone, & not put it in execution, vpõ misliking of the vices & offences that haue set all in a broile: but we must alwaies resort backe to Gods pure rule. We see there haue bin no such deuils incarnate, as those ỹ haue bosted thémselues to be Prelats, Bishops, & shepherdes. Now if vpon misliking of such corruptions, a mã would abolish all order in ỹ Church, so as there should be no ministers, nor any mo folke appointed to teach ỹ people: what elſe were it thã a horrible cõfusion, and a setting open of hell, ỹ all things in the world might goe to hauocke? But let vs keepe still this principle, ỹ mens vices must bee corrected, and gods cõmandemẽt therwithal obserued. Thus ye see what Moses ment, in saying ỹ Gods choosing of ỹ Leuits was not for a day or twain, but to stinue still, that by that meane the Church might be mainteined.

On the otherside, we know ỹ the death of our Lorde Iesus Christ shoulde not come vnto vs in these daies, without ỹ preaching of the Gospel. Therfore if we intend to feele ỹ redemption and soul health ỹ hath bin purchased for vs, the same order must be mainteined still. And howe great store of vices soeuer ther be, let Gods Church be clensed of thé, let all stũblingblocks be remoued out of it, & let not men for all that, cease to haue preachers of Gods worde, & ministers of his sacraments stil: for otherwise it were the next way to cut ỹ Churches throte, & to bring all to vtter desolation. For we know how S. Paul layth ỹ Iesus Christ was giuen to be our peace, and ỹ at his comming he preached it to them ỹ were neere hande, and to them that were farre off. Saint Paul sheweth there, how our Lord Iesus maketh the vertue of his death & passiõ auailable: namely by cõmanding the Gospel to be preached vnto vs, wherby we be don to vnderstand, ỹ God hauing once offered himselfe vnto vs in the person of his son, will continually still hold out to take and accept vs for his children, and confirme the adoption which he hath made of vs, euen vntil we come to the present inioying of the hea-

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uge which he hath promised vs.

Moses hauing spoken so, addeth for a finall conclusion, *that God had heard him, and sayde vnto him, Go thy way and leade this people into the Lande that I promised to their fathers, yea euen with an othe: let them goe in and take possession of it.* Here againe Moses sheweth the people that when they be come into the Lande of promise, they must vnderstande ỳ that befalleth not thé for their owne deseruings, but through Gods great mercy, yea and such mercy as ought to rauishe their wittes to wonder at it: for they had refused all ỳ promises that had beene made vnto them. So then it stoode this people in hand, to be new reared & set vp againe in their former state, through a singular grace. That is the intent of Moses, whereof I haue treated more fully already, and therfore it is ynough as now to touch it. But yet let vs not forget to apply it to our vse, which is, ỳ it behoueth vs to vnderstande, ỳ although God haue called vs to the beleefe of his Gospell, yet so ỳ in respect of this present life, we cease not to shrink away frō him, wherby we were worthy to haue ỳ dore shut against vs, & to be taken as folk vtterly reiected, vnlesse he receiue vs to mercie, and ỳ not for once only, but also in that he must double & treble his mercy vpon vs, in so many sins as we cōmit against him. Now thē, before we can come to the inheritance of the kingdom of heauen, God must bee faine to shewe vs many a time and often, that we haue it not for any worthinesse of our owne, nor for any purchase that we can make of it by our seruice, to say that wee haue earned it: but ỳ his making of vs to be his heires, is of his own meere and freebestowed liberalitie, for none other cause, but that he hath vouchsafed to choose vs, and to beare with vs, and to pardon the infinite offences, whereby we cease not to prouoke him in such wise, as he shold needes roote vs out, if hee ment to vse rigor towards vs. Thus ye see how we should apply this lesson of Moses to our behoofe.

Moreouer it ought also to serue vs for a comfort, that we be not discouraged when we haue offended our God, euen after we haue knowen him and are fallen in traine of walking according to his worde. For though we step a side for a time: yet must not our so doing make vs to despaire, but wee must come backe againe, assuring ourselues that if God herd Moses in the time of the figures of the Lawe, he wil certainely heare him that maketh intercession for vs nowe, that is to wit, his owne onely sonne. For our Lorde Iesus Christ was a priest, not only to die once to purchase saluation for vs, but also to inioy the same office euerlastingly, as in respect of appearing in the sight of God his father, to obtaine forgiuenesse for the sinnes which we commit daily. Let vs marke (I say) that if this grace was granted to the fathers vnder the Lawe, surely wee shall not be disappointed of it as now. Yet notwithstanding it is not ment hereby, ỳ that should make vs the readier or bolder to offend: but we must vnderstande, that when we come before God, wee must acknowledge the faultes ỳ we haue cōmitted, we must be sorie for our misdeeds, & we must beseeche God to bring vs home againe to him. For as for those that hate not their sins, they be so far of from obteining of fauour at Gods hand, ỳ they do the more prouoke his wrath. Contrariwise, when we hate our sins, God looketh no more vpon them, but turneth them out of sight. And this warneth vs, ỳ when God cōtinueth his mercie towardes vs, & reneweth the same daily, and taketh vs into fauour againe after wee haue offended him: his so doing is not to make vs the bolder to do euil, as who wold say we haue made a good market at his hand: let vs beware of such blasphemy: but it must be applied wholly to the faultes ỳ are past. Therefore when there is speaking of Gods mercy & of ỳ forgiuenes of our sins in the holy scripture, we must vnderstand ỳ God sendeth vs backe to the sinnes ỳ are past: & therwithall putteth vs in minde to beware afterward of the danger that we were in afore: warning vs to pray him to gouerne vs with his holy spirit, so as he suffer vs not to be led out of the way, nor to fal to wilfull breaking of ỳ couenāt, which ought to be kept vnuiolated, as well on our part by our faithful obedience, as it is on his part, yea & that with such constancie, ỳ although we offend him daily, yet he ceaseth not to continue stedfast still in his purpose. And to be ỳ better assured of this doctrine, let vs alwais haue recourse to this saying, ỳ the Lande of Chanaan was as an earnest penny of the euerlasting inheritance to the fathers ỳ liued vnder the Law. And so the thinges that are set downe in the holy scripture, must be to vs as a looking glasse or picture, wherein to beholde the maner of Gods guiding of vs, til we be come to the euerlasting life. The people of Israell was chose before they were born, God shewed his fauour to them by the law, & moreouer he chastised them, insomuch ỳ he listed not to put thē in possession of their promised heritage out of hande, as in deede they were not wortie of it, but yet for all ỳ they came into it at the last. And so we perceiue, that our Lord hath not delayed his receiuing of vs till we come vnto him: but ỳ he hath prelented vs, with his infinite goodnes, insomuch ỳ he hath chosen vs before ỳ making of the world, & hath offered vs his grace & confirmed it by the preaching of the Gospel, as well as the Law was published by the hand of Moses. For our Lord Iesus Christ hath vouchsafed to be a faithful witnes of God his father, & of the loue ỳ he bringeth vs. And because he is not abiding any more here below with vs in his own person, he hath appointed his ministers to whō he hath giuen authoritie to preach in his name, & therwithall hath giuen commaundement to all people to receiue them, saying, he that heareth you, heareth me. And he hath giuen them expresse charge to preach the forgiuenes of sins, as if they should drawe the wretched captiue soules out of the bondage of hell. Ye see then how our Lorde Iesus Christ hath vttered the grace that was vnknowen vnto vs before: but wee take small profite by it. For alchough wee were baptised from our infancie, yet when wee come to yeares of discretion, whereby begin we to shew our selues to haue some witte, but by choosing

Heb.11.13. 14.16. 2.Cor.10.11

Eph.2.4

Luke.10.16 & 24.27.

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the euill, as though wee ment to spite God wittingly? And againe beside this, when our Lord teacheth vs, and reformeth vs by his worde, so as he ceaseth not to shewe vs our faultes, to the intent to tame vs and to daunt vs, and to drawe vs to repentaunce: howe dull are we vppon the spurre? After whatefashion deale we? Are wee not so spytefull and stubborne, as a man can not by any meanes win vs? yes, and therefore he is faine to sende vs many chastisements & to make this present life to be as a wildernes to vs to wander vp and downe in, with ỹ feeling of his wrath. For all the miseries wherewith wee be hemmed in, are remembrancers to make vs hang downe our heades, and to make vs perceiue that we be wretched sinners, & that we be worthy, not onely of temporall correction, but also to be sunke downe into hell. Yet notwithstanding, this serueth not to driue vs to dispaire, for we may well assure our selues ỹ God will receiue vs to mercy so we flee to our Lord Iesus Christ. For if Moses were heard who was a wretched sinner: what shall he be, who hath all righteousnesse perfectly in him? and to whō authoritie is giuen to make full attonement betweene God and man? Nowe thē seeing that our Lord Iesus Christ is appointed to be our mediator: let vs not doubt but that although God holde vs in this worlde as poore banished wretches, and withdrawe himselfe from vs, and shrinke aside to outwarde appearaunce: yet we be not bereft of the inheritaunce which he hath promised vs, and purchased for vs by our Lorde Iesus Christ. But howsoeuer wee

Rom. 5.17. & Col. 1.20.

fare, let vs not tempte him, nor abuse his goodnesse but let vs wey wel this speech, where Moses saith *that he was heard for that time also*. For it serueth to holde vs in awe, that wee flatter not our selues when God beareth with vs, but that we submit our selues about vs to amende our faultes, and mortifie our wicked lustes, that we giue not ouerthrowe ouer vnto euill, but haue it and abhorre it, so that God may goe on with the thing that he hath begunne in vs, vntill he haue ridde vs quite and cleane of all worldly leuen, and put vs in possession of the euerlasting life. If we doe so, we may boldely protest that we haue prayed God and that we haue giuen him such glorie as he deserueth, and wee haue cause to reioyce in that we were able to ouercome all the temptations and distrustes that coulde happen vnto vs, and therefore wee shall not needs to doubt but that our good God is and will be merciful vnto vs, though we be not worthy of it.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe to make vs to feele them, as it may serue to mortifie vs daily more & more, that when we perceiue his pleasure, we may flee to his goodnesse and mercy, to obtaine fauour at his hande, that being rid quite and cleane of our vices and corruptions, we may bee so gouerned by the power of his holy spirite, as we may bee one true sacrifice vnto him, by dedicating our selues wholly vnto him through newnesse of life. And so let vs say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xij of September. 1555.

The Lxxj. Sermon, which is the third vpon the tenth Chapter.

12 And nowe O Israell, what doth the Lord thy GOD require of thee, but that thou shouldest feare the Lord thy GOD, and walke in all his wayes, and that thou shouldest loue him, and serue the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soule:

13 And that thou shouldest keepe the commaundementes of the Lorde, and his ordinaunces, which I commaunde thee this day, to the ende it may goe well with thee?

14 Beholde, the heauens, and the heauens of heauens are the Lord thy God, and likewise the earth and all that is therein.

HEre Moses proceedeth with the matter that we haue had these dayes past, that is to witte, that God had vsed marueilous fauor towards his people, in forgiuing them so many and so greeuous offences. It was verie much that they were receiued to mercy, so as they were not dispossessed of ỹ heritage that God had promised them. Now Moses addeth here an other respect, which serueth to make Gods great and infinite goodnes yet better knowen, & to giue it the greater beauty; which is, that he not onely forgaue the people the faults that they had done, but also renued them againe with so gentle and friendly conditions, as might set al men in a wonder to looke vpon it. If a Citie or a countrie haue reuolted against their prince, so as they haue broken their allegeance, although he lift not to vse extreme rigor by putting all to fire and sworde, but be contented to graunt them their liues: yet will he reaue them of all their priuileges, he will lay fines and exactions vpon them, & he will peraduenture deprise them of their ancient liberties, & the poore wretched soules shall grone vnder the burden. I haue cause to remember their offences

yours

yeres after. But Moses sheweth here, that God dealt not so with the Iewes. For when he had once pardoned their offence, he delt with them as if they had neuer done amisse, & their state was as pleasant & amiable, as if they had obeied him in all points as became them. And so ye see the intent of Moses in this place.

He had reported heretofore, how he had bin heard: & nowe he addeth here, *What is it elles the Lord requireth of thee?* He chargeth thee not with any amerciaments, he layeth no punishment vpon thee, he layeth no burden vpō thee to beare thee down ẅ: his only desire is, ẏ thou shouldest loue him, that thou shouldest honor him, ẏ thou shouldest keepe his commandements. And is this any profit to himselfe? No. Euerywhit of it redoundeth to thine own benefite. Was it not ynough to make this peoples heart to melt, though they had bin the wickeddest in ẏ world, when they might say, wheras we had forsaken ẏ Lord, & broken the couenant that he had made with vs, & chosē an ydol in stead of him; he hath not only forgiuen ẏ so hainous cryme, & bin cōtented to take vs stil for his children, & to leaue vs the inheritance ẏ he had promised vs: but also he gouerneth vs after such a fashion, as it might seeme we had deserued al ẏ benefites in ẏ world. Could he deale more kindly with vs, if wee had honored him & giuen our selues wholy to him? Such consideratiō then ought wel to haue meekened the harts of that people; & al though they were hard & stubborne, yet ought they to haue bowed, seeing they knewe that God sought nothing but their benefite & welfare. Thus we see now the intent of Moses, & to what circumstances his sayings are to be referred. Which is, that the people should knowe that God had not only pardoned their fault aforepast, but also was minded to forget it vtterly for euer after: & that in the mean while they should think thus deutifully with thēselues, our God behaueth himselfe towards vs, as if we had neuer offended him, our fault is not a whit appaired, he vseth nothing but gentlenes towardes vs. Marke that for one point.

But now haue we a general sentence to gather vpon the thing ẏ Moses tolde vnto ẏ people. For the doctrine ẏ is contained in ẏ Lawe, belongeth as well to vs, as to thē. Now then o Israell, what requireth thy God of thee? After ẏ same maner doth God speake vnto vs at this day: he sheweth vs his will as a rule to direct our liues by. And what meaneth he in so doing? Let vs marke what he cōmandeth, & see what profit cā redound vnto himselfe by it. Certaine it is ẏ God requireth no more at our handes, but that wee should loue him; & is not that a condition which we shoulde rather chose, than all ẏ kingdoms of the worlde? Yes; for if our God should make vs princes; surely the greatest honour ẏ hee should do vs therin, were but that he should make vs his seruants. We see that such as liue at ease, yea euen men of worshippe & of good reuenue, had leuer to trot to the Court, & to be in seruice with the prince, and to take much toyle, yea and to spende their goods to get estimation; than to play ẏ snudges at home in their own houses, & to liue at rest vpon their owne reuenewes. Behold our God entertaineth vs & keepeth vs in his house, & ẏ not in degree of slauerie, but as his children; insomuch ẏ he calleth vs his inheritance. In deede, were there no further than this, that hee accepteth ẏ seruice of vs, of vs I say which are altogether vnprofitable, & haue nothing but al maner of corruption in vs: wheras notwithstanding hee vouchsafeth to imploy vs to good purpose, & to make vs vessels of honor, soas we shine like perles in his church, whenas of our selues we be but dūg & myre: seeing our God dealeth so gently ẅ vs, what an vnthankfulnes is it, ẏ wee come not to yeeld our selues to him with al obedience? And I pray you what profit shal he reape by vs, when we shal haue serued him neuer so wel? Shal he be ẏ better at ease? Hath he need of our help in any thing? No, but al redoundeth to our welfare, & he intendeth nothing but to our profit. Wo worth vs therefore, yea & dubble wo worth vs, if such goodnes ouercome vs not, & ẏ our harts be not inflamed ẅ a right affection of giuing our selues wholy to our God, to be gouerned by him, so as we suffer him to ouerrule vs, & ẏ we be prest and readie to yeeld to his hand, & to turn euery way as he wil haue vs. That is ẏ thing which we haue to mark vpō this text. So then, whensoeuer the law seemeth ouer rough & sharpe vnto vs, & our wicked lusts tickle vs to spurne against God, so as it is hard for vs to do as he cōmandeth vs: let vs bethink our selues thus: Thou wretched wight, is ẏ law of thy god burdensom & grieuous to thee? what demandeth he of thee? wherat shooteth he? His demand is ẏ thou shouldest loue him, honor him, & serue him: & wilt thou in this case become an vnnatural monster? Shal ẏ life which thy god hath giuen thee, serue to make thee kick against him? wilt thou grieue thy maker who hath created thee & shaped thee, & doeth also maintaine thee? Were it not better ẏ heauen & earth were mingled togither, & ẏ al things were cōfounded, than ẏ it might be said that thou makest no reckening of thy god? nay rather, ẏ thou spitest him of set purpose, insomuch ẏ there is neither lawe nor scripture ẏ can bring thee to such obedience, as to make thee yeeld glory to thy God? Is it not reason ẏ we should serue God, when he vttereth such goodnes towards vs, as to tel vs ẏ he wilbe our father, specially by planting ẏ beleefe of his Gospell in vs? Now then, as the earth when it is lusthe & in good plight doth alwayes bring forth some thing or other, to shewe that it hath heart in it, so, seeing ẏ God hath giuen vs vnderstanding & reason aboue the brute beasts, it becommeth vs to consider ẏ his doing thereof is to the ende that we should knowe him that made vs, of purpose that we should serue & honour him, and stoop to him with al humility, assuring our selues that he ought to haue soueraigne dominiō ouer all creatures. Therfore let vs marke wel, ẏ when soeuer we be tempeed to striue against God, and his lawe seemeth ouer heauie to vs, and our affections fight against it, or go the cleane contrary way from it; then to ouermaister such frowardnesse of our nature, we must bethinke vs as it is told vs here, What is it that thy God requireth

of thee? And then is it certain that we shalbe too too much ashamed of our selues. For what shal we answere before the Angels of heauen, when this saying shalbe laide afore vs? For it shalbee well layd to the charge of all such as haue made none account of obeying God, & of all such as haue despised him and his worde. Yea and although the Angels were not to iudge of it, verily euen the Oxen, the Asses, the dogges & the very stones & trees might be our iudges: for all those creatures retaine a naturall inclination of obeying God. Therfore how shal we do, when we shal be vpbraided with this saying vttered by Gods own holy mouth, What haue I required at your hands? no more but that you should loue mee & honor me. That is the very summe, & effect of al ỹ my law conteineth. I haue loued you, & my desire hath beene to be loued of you. Were you worthie to be receiued & loued of me, when yee drew cleane contrarie to my wil? Lo here wherwith to hold vs in awe, as oft as we cannot finde in our harts to yeld to the obeying of our God, & ỹ his commandements seeme hard & sharp vnto vs. What? Surely our God could not vse greater curtesie towardes vs, than to allure vs to him by louing of vs, to the intent ỹ wee shoulde loue him againe. His meaning is ỹ we should followe him the same way that he hath led vs afore. But now it is certaine, ỹ although God require nothing of vs but to haue the reuerence ỹ hee deserueth: yet can we not serue him & honour him, vntil he haue reformed our harts. And therby it appeareth what frowardnesse there is in all men by originall sinne. Behold God commandeth vs but to loue him & to yeeld him honor: that is all ỹ is conteined in his lawe. And yet we come all of vs so farre short of the perfect performãce of the thing ỹ is commanded, that we cannot so much as thinke a good thought, but we indeuer by all meanes possible to withstande whatsoeuer God commandeth. Therefore let vs learne to be abashed & ashamed of the crabbednes of our nature, seeing we be so wayward as to striue against our God & his righteousnes, yea euen though ỹ things that he requireth be more than rightfull. And so ye see what we haue to marke, when wee feele such a law in our selues, contrary to ỹ lawe ỹ God hath giuen vs.

Rom. 7. 23.

And hereby wee be warned that it is in vaine for men to make protestation, as a number doe, which go about to excuse themselues ỹ they can not giue themselues to God, because of ỹ weaknes & sinfulnes of their nature. Verily, as who would say, that the euil which is in vs should serue vs for our defence. Were not that a mocking of God? Shal a man be acquit at his iudges hand, by confessing himself to be giltie? But here it is shewed vs, that al ỹ hardnes that we haue in vs to obey God, yea euen though it be impossible for vs to moue forward to the performance of the least commandement of the lawe: will not serue to iustifie vs. Why so? Let a man looke well to it, & he shal find that the fault is not in the lawe: for it requireth no more but that wee shoulde serue our God, & therewithal loue him by yelding him his dew reuerence: and what is it to do that? let vs knowe therfore, that the whole fault is in our selues ỹ we obey not our God; & that although we haue no power at all to performe our duetie, yet doth not that discharge vs, seeing that God demãdeth nothing but ỹ which is right & reason.

By the way, we must call to minde what hath beene declared heretofore: namely that as concerning this text, where Moses sheweth ỹ meane how to fulfill the law aright: it is not meant that we must but onely haue our eyes, hands & feete well ruled; but that wee must begin at the reformation of our harts. Thou shalt loue thy God (sayeth he) & serue him. And howe? With all thy soule, & with all thy heart. Then let vs learne, ỹ if we do the things by compulsion which are commanded vs; it is nothing woorth: wee may not thinke that it shall passe in account. And in deed there are diuers that beare countenance fayre ynough afore men, so as they cannot be accused of theft, murther, or whoredome: but in ỹ meane while they be full of wicked lustes, so as they bee readie to burst with them, & it is a corse to them to obey God, neither finde they any taste in his commandements. And therfore al is but hypocrisie, all is but a faire pretence & shewe to the worldward, & (to be short) all is but vanitie and leazing till the heart be wonne vnto God, & vntill we be fully minded & bent to do as God demandeth vs. That (say I) is the ende that we must beginne at, if we will accomplish the lawe throughly. Wherefore let vs not beguile our selues any more as the hypocrites do, with desire that men only should be contented. Let vs vnderstand ỹ we haue to do w^th^ the heauenly Iudge who admitteth no eyeseruice, but looketh to the trueth of ỹ heart. Therfore let vs giue our selues to God with hartie affection, & not content our selues so with ỹ outward workes, ỹ the ende of doing wel should not also be grounded in our hart.

Psal. 51. 12.

Iam. 4. 8.

Besides this, Moses telleth vs ỹ God will not only be *serued & honored, but also loued*. And loue are three words; the one is *Loue*, the other is *Reuerence*, & the third is *Seruice*. Now as touching Reuerence or *Feare*, (for he vseth the same term of feare;) it is not a slauish fearefulnes, but it is ỹ seruiceablenes & honor which we yeld vnto God in submitting our selues vnto him, because we be throughly persuaded that forasmuch as he hath all soueraintie ouer vs, it is good reason that we should be subiect vnto him. First & formost therfore let vs consider, that although God had not spoken to vs to persuade vs to this reuerence, surely euen nature sheweth it vs sufficiently, and it is welynough proued vnto vs in our selues. For although it were neuer told vs that the lewdnes of men is such, as they seeke nothing els but to turne away from God, & to become beastlie by al meanes they can deuise, yea euen wittingly & wilfully: yet our heads & harts are stuffed to full of that lesson, as we cãnot be ignorant of it. And therfore it standeth vs greatly in hand to beare in mind what this word reuerẽce or feare importeth, that is to wit, that God ought to be honored of all his creatures, & that seeing we be his, we ought to offer our selues to be subiect to him.

Also it importeth, that when we thinke vpon God,

God, wee ſhould hallowe his name, that is to ſay, not imagine any thing of him to the derogation of his glorie, but yeeld honor to his righteouſnes, wiſdome & power. This is the firſt point which Moſes ſetteth downe here, cõcerning obedience and the right obſeruing of the Lawe.

Now this reuerence requireth alſo loue. For God wilbee honored with harty affection. If we reuerence his maieſtie, & yet ſtand in feare of it, ſo as it is a terror to vs: then would wee wiſh that there were no God at all, and wee coulde fynd in our heartes to plucke him out of his ſeate, if it were poſſible. As many as woorſhip God vppon no further grounde, but for that they are ſure they cannot ſcape his hãd, & becauſe they know him tobe their maker; thoſe (ſay I) being not touched with any free loue, wil ſhunne God; and when they heare any ſpeaking of him, it grieueth them inſomuch that if it were in their choyce & power, they woulde plucke him out of his ſeat if they could, as I ſaid afore. So then, it is not poſſible for vs to feare God, (I meane to yeelde him right reuerence, ſo as we beare a hartie god will to him, & haue a feeling of his goodnes towards vs, & ỹ he is the place where we muſt ſeeke al our welfare) vnleſſe we loue him. Therefore if wee haue not this loue, there wilbe no reuerence at all. Wherfore let vs learne, ỹ God requireth free-will offerings, that is to ſay, that our offering of our ſelues vnto him ſhould not be of force or cõſtraint, but with ſuch deuotion as wee ſhould bee Pſal.40.8. deſirous to ſerue him, & as we might proteſt with Dauid, not onely that wee ſet more ſtore by his law than by gold & ſiluer; but alſo that it is more ſweete & pleaſant to vs, than honie. Thus ye ſee what the ſecond worde *Loue* importeth.

The third worde is *Seruice*. For if wee make pretence to worſhip God with ceremonies and gewgawes as they ſay, & in ỹ mean while do him no true ſeruice in deede: is it not a mocking of him? If men beare folkes in hande ỹ their intent is to honor God, & that they loue him, & ſubmit themſelues to him; & in the meane ſeaſon make but a ſimſlam of it when God ſetteth forth his commandements vnto them: what a preſumptuouſnes were that? And likewiſe what a matter were it, if they ſhould ſhewe no proofe wherby a man might perceiue, ỹ his loue which he ſpeaketh of here is rooted in their heart? Then let vs learne, ỹ we muſt ſhewe by our deedes that wee loue & feare God. And what are the doings that muſt beare witneſſe therof? Euen our ſeruing of him, ỹ is to wit, when we play not the looſe colts by taking leaue to do euery man after his owne luſt & liking; but ſuffer God to ouerrule vs, ſo as our whole deſire be that he ſhould hold ỹ raines of the bridle, & we yeld euery way vnder his hãd to turne to & fro according to his good wil. And ſo we ſee ỹ the way whereby wee muſt ſhewe our ſelues to loue God, is by our ſeruing of him.

Howbeit, foraſmuch as men are giuen to deuiſe ſeruices of their own brain, & do make boaſt that they glorifie God when they haue followed their owne fooliſh inuentions: Moſes rebuketh this ouerboldneſſe of men, and this curioſitie of theirs, telling them that the ſeruice of God conſiſteth *in keeping the commandements & ordinances which he deliuereth to them in the name of God.* Now then we ſee here, that our Lorde hath cut off all our fond inuentions, ỹ we ſhould not imagine to ſerue him any more after our owne fancie. For why? He will haue obedience, & hee eſteemeth more of that than of al the ſacrifices in ỹ world. 1.Sa.15.22. Had this point beene wel obſerued, there would not be ſuch diſputing as is ſeene nowadayes, among ſuch as beare the name of Chriſtians. For the Papiſts may good cheape ſay, that a mã may fulfil the law of God. And why? Becauſe they neuer wiſt what end or what mark God aymed at. They think it ynough for a man to be able to diſcharge himſelf to ỹ worldward; & ſo they make God like a litle babe, by reaſon wherof they ſay it is a blaſphemie to ſaye that wee cannot perfourme the law. For they neuer came to the trial of it. The deſpiſers of God ſtepforth here & ſay, that the lawe is eaſie, when as notwithſtanding they neuer put ſo much as their little finger towards the doing of it. But when we haue well weyed the things that are conteyned here; wee ſhal finde that it is not ſo eaſie a matter. Againe if we compare the law with our own frowardnes, we ſhal find that the law were eaſie ynough of it ſelf, if we were as wel diſpoſed as we ought to be. But we come farre ſhort of being Angels; & wee had neede of an angelical nature to the obeying of Gods law. For it draweth vs from the world, and leadeth vs vp to heauen: and we go ỹ cleane contrarie way. Againe, when the ſeruing of god commeth in queſtion, it wil not ſuffice vs to play the hypocrites & to ſay, wel, this or that is to be done, & in the meane while to ouerhip ỹ chiefe point: but when it is ſaid that wee muſt loue our GOD with all our hearte; wee come to the wel head, and to the verie roote, which is that GOD requireth ſuch a ſoundeneſſe, as not onely wee ſhould doe whatſoeuer hee cõmandeth vs, but alſo haue a pleaſure in it, ſo as our chiefe delight ſhould be therin, and when we ſee an agreeablenes betwene God & our affections, we ſhould be gladder therof than if wee had obtained all our fleſhly deſires & likings. Againe, men ſhould not be doutfull of the meanes howe to ſerue God as wee ſee the worlde hath alwayes beene, by ſwaruing from the rule that is contained in Gods worde. What is it that is termed Gods ſeruice in the Popedome nowadayes, but fanſies that men haue deuiſed without any reaſon? And no maruel. For (to their ſeeming) Gods law was of no great importance, neither did they buſie their heads greatly about it. And therefore needs muſt they inuent a great number of other ſmall trifles. But they that giue themſelues to Gods lawe, doe ſee, there is cauſe for them to ſaye thus; Alas, although I take neuer ſo much paine, yet can I not compaſſe it, but alwayes I come ſhort of my wayes ende. Nay (which more is) all my inforcing of my ſelfe is in vaine: in ſo much that if my God were not mercifull to mee, to giue mee power & ſtrength, I ſhoulde goe cleane backewarde, and contrarie to his will.

As for the Papiſts, they had no regard of this,

but inuented a sorte of gewgawes to serue God withall; as setting vp of candles before puppets, gadding on pilgrimage, hearing of masses, taking of holy water, and all the rest of their pelting trash. But such as knowe what it is to keepe the lawe, do neuer set their myndes vppon such childish bawbles. But when men knowe not howe to serue God aright, then they rome wandring here and there. Therefore let vs beare in mynde, that here our Lord hath declared which is the true seruice that hee liketh and alloweth of; namely the following of his commaundementes, so as men deale not after their owne fansie and liking, but holde themselues to his worde; and as it were bridling and keeping themselues captiue, do attẽpt nothing but that which they knowe to bee the pleasure of their God. Thus you see in effect what wee haue to gather vppon this text.

Nowe for a conclusion, heere Moses *setteth foorth commaundements for the welfare of the people.* Whereas hee sayeth *that he setteth them foorth*, it is to take away all excuses of ignorance, and to quayle mennes fooliish curiositie, that woulde stye aboue the cloudes to knowe Gods will. Yee see then howe GOD maketh vs vnexcusable, when hee sendeth vs his worde, and commaundeth it to be preached vnto vs. Could he make him selfe more familiar vnto vs, than by sending mortall men as his messengers vnto vs, to speake vnto vs in his name, and to giue vs vnderstanding of his will by their meanes? Then if wee saye that wee knowe not Gods will, you see here is wherewith to disproove vs; for God hath giuen vs his worde in writing, so as wee neede not to seeke for it: and therefore it ought to be sufficiently knowen vnto vs. Nowe then let vs also learne to receiue it with reuerence & humilitie: and when we heare mortal men speaking vnto vs, let vs assure our selues, that wee must not measure the maiestie of Gods worde by their persons. But wee must haue an eye to him from whome it commeth, and which is the author of it, that wee may submit our selues wholly vnto it. Therefore let vs not haue these diuelish fansies with vs, as some dreamers haue, which say, O that God woulde speake to mee from heauen, I woulde faine haue some reuelation. Let it content vs that God cõmeth down vnto vs, to make vs priuie to his will: for that is it which Moses ment, in saying that hee did set foorth Gods commaundements: as if hee had saide, that men neede not to goe farre to seeke him. And in the ende hee sheweth, that all this tendeth to the welfare of the people, so as God seeketh not any benefite to himselfe, for he needeth not to borowe aught of vs, neither can wee do him any pleasure: wee can doe him neither good nor harme, all thinges are his: according to the eyght Psalme, and also the fiftith Psalme, where it is saide, that all the beastes in the feelde are in his possession, and that if hee be hungrie or want any thing he needeth not to seeke it at our handes. Why then requireth he to be serued of vs? It is for our benefit, for that there can not be a greater good turne vnto men, than to be the seruants of their maker. Then let vs vnderstand, that whereas our Lord layeth not the bridle loose vpon our necke, but gouerneth vs himselfe, and holdeth vs vnder his obedience, thereby to moue vs to serue him the more willingly: hee doeth it to our benefite and respecteth nothing but our welfare. Yet notwithstanding it is true that the lawe will finde vs all gilti, & that when God hath shewed vs all that is good and right: that doctrine doeth so litle benefite vs, that it rather bringeth vs death, and wee bee cursed by it. For it is a looking glasse wherein to see that wee bee Gods enemies: and it is a keye to open the gates of hell. And how then commeth it to passe that God shoulde procure our welfare, and yet notwithstanding wee shoulde receiue nothing but harme by it? That is not of it selfe; but it falleth out by another meane, that is to saye by our owne fault. Then let vs vnderstande, that Gods lawe (if wee consider it in it selfe) is vnto vs a doctrine of welfare, whereby God commeth neere vnto vs to bee our father and to make vs finde life in him, that by his calling of our life, wee might sticke vnto him, and thereby bee made partakers of his benefites, & in the ende attayne to the heritage of the heauenly life. But herewithal we be so froward and ful of corruption, that the law can serue vs to no other purpose, but to curse vs, & to make vs perceiue how lothsome we be vnto God, in as much as we be his deadly enemies, & so we haue double cause to be abashed & afraid, & ashamed of our selues, when we see ỹ the good is so conuerted to our harm: & it is more than if ỹ nature of ỹ same were changed by our infection. Woulde not make vs to loth our selues, if we should finde such foule & vyle smokes in vs, as shoulde darken and quench the light of the sunne? yes verily. Now we see that Gods law is the light of our life: and yet we not only dim it, but also turn it into ỹ darknes of death; & it is vnpossible ỹ it should guide vs in any other steed, vntil our Lord Iesus Christ haue wrought in vs, & reformed vs by his holy spirit, & by writing his lawe newe againe in our hearts. For asmuch then as we see ỹ men turne life into death, light into darknes, & benefite into bane: alas, ought we not to be exceedingly ashamed? yes, but yet must not ỹ put vs out of conceit of ỹ doctrin of ỹ law, so as we should not loue it, howbeit ỹ we cãnot performe it, vntil god haue chãged our harts to cause vs to submit our selues vnto him, and haue made vs newe creatures in our lord Iesus christ. True it is ỹ the setting forth of ỹ law vnto vs, is not for nought: but yet must we needes perceiue by experience, ỹ vntill God hath brought vs home again vnto him, ỹ doctrin of his law wil serue for nothing but to cõdemne vs. But when he hath once wrought in vs by his holy spirit: then shal wee perceiue that in setting forth his law vnto vs, he procureth our benefite & welfare, according as is saide of it here by Moses. And so you heare what we haue to gather vpõ this text. But Moses doth yet better confirme the matter that wee haue seene; which is, that God helde not his people downe like slaues, nor handled them roughly to be reuenged of thẽ, & so make

Iob 35.7. & Psal. 16.2.

Psal. 8.7. & 50.10.

Deut. 5.5.

to make them seele the offence they had committed, but that he handled them after a gentle and louing fashion. Now then (saith he) hath the euerlasting thy God any neede of thee? Behold (saith he) *the heauens, yea, and the heauens of heauens are Gods*. As if he should say, you think that God would fain haue a people, as though he could not forbeare to be without them. Hath not hee the skyes at commandement? hath not he his heauenly host? hath he not whole millions of Angels? hath hee not peaceable dominion in heauen? Yes, and therefore ye must not imagine any more, that his choosing of you was to better his owne estate by you. If hee shoulde destroy you, and make quite riddance of you, should his raigne ceasse? No, no, and for proofe therof, he hath no neede of men. Againe, besides that, is not the earth and all thinges in it, in his possession? Yes. What is the cause then that hee hath not taken and chosen other nations to him as wel as you? Is it for that you are nobler, or mightier, or worthier in any respect, than the rest, as it is mentioned in the seuenth Chapter? No. It is certaine that the Iewes were not better than the Gentiles: insomuch that if they should haue beene compared with them, they shoulde haue found themselues to haue bin neither nobler of linage, nor richer in substance, nor vertuouser in life, nor to haue excelled them in any thing. What is the cause then (saith Moses) that God hath vouchsafed to take you for his people, and that he hath let all others alone; & reached you his hand to gouern you? Sought he his own profite or aduantage? No. Seing then that you be so greatly bold vnto him, serue him w^t the better wil.

Here we see in effect two things. The one is, Moses his confirming of the Israelites still in the doctrine y^t we haue heard; which is, y^t all of them shoulde learne to glorifie God for their welfare, acknowledging themselues beholden to him for all good things, so as they haue not any worthines or deseruinges to vaunt themselues of, but must exalt their God & vtterly abase themselues. Marke y^t for the one point. And out of this proceedeth the other point; which is, that such as haue had such experience of Gods goodnes towards themselues, & are taught aforehand to glorifie god, must take courage to serue him y^t more frankly, & offer themselues to God with a more zelous will, to be quietly gouerned & ouerruled by him. Thus ye see y^t two pointes that are to be gathered vpon that text. Yea & let vs mark well, how it is not without cause y^t Moses standeth so much vpon y^t doctrine. For wee see how the vnthankfulnes of men is so great, y^t they labor continually to deface Gods goodnes, by reason of y^t cursed roote of pride & loftines which cannot be quite & cleane taken from vs. Men then do alwayes beare themselues in hand, y^t they be somwhat worth, & therupon they stand in their own conceits, yea euen as it were in despite of God. Although God lay on sure loade vpon our heads with beedes, yet ceasse wee not to set vp our brisles stil, & to grunt at him, & to think there is yet some vertue or power in vs. For this cause Moses thinks it not ynough to haue said once or twice, you must father all your welfare vpon the onely fauour of God: but he returneth eftsoone to the confirming of the same doctrine, to the intent that mens cackling might be y^t better stilled, and that such as deceiue themselues through their vaine imaginations, might learne to conclude in the end, y^t it is not for vs to looke for any valour or worthines in our selues, but that we must yeld God that which belongeth peculiarly vnto him, namely, that his calling of vs, his choosing of vs, & his maintaining of vs; & likewise our hauing of his word, & our reteining of some order in the Church, come altogither of him, so as we cannot say we haue gotten them by our owne skil, cunning or strength. Thus much concerning y^t first point.

Nowe for our better confirmation herein, let vs compare our selues with the Angels & with all the world besides, & let vs think thus: what are we? Truely, if we go no further than to our owne selues, we may haue our eies dazeled, & we know y^t naturaly men do so beset themselues, y^t they be as good as bewitched with the fond imaginatiō of their own worthines. Therefore if we should looke no further than to our selues, it would seem to vs y^t we be something worth: but if wee looke further of, & fall to considering with our selues, What are other men? Do they not set as much or more by themselues than we do? yes: & if there were a third partie to play y^t iudge, would he not make more account of them than of vs? Yes. For to outward showe there is much more greatnes, riches, worthines, & honor, there is much more discretion & wisedom in them than in vs. What is the cause then y^t God hath chosen vs, & let the others go? Haue we any thing wherof we may be proud? Alas, no, if we be not ouerfarre besotted in our own fond imaginations. But if we cannot yet be brought to this reason by cōparing ourselues with all the worlde beside: let vs mount vp a litle higher & come to y^t Angels of heauen. Could not God haue contented himselfe with his Angels, wout cōming vnto vs? We be but poore wormes, there is nothing but rottennesse in vs, & yet god vouchsafeth to seeke vs. His wil is to haue vs to be his children, not only to enioy his gifts & benefits here beneath, but also to aduance vs vp to his heauenly kingdom. And for what deserts of ours? [None at al.] Wherefore seeing we cannot be so beaten down at one blow, as to come humble our selues vnto God; let vs wey well these words of Moses, & bethink vs of the thing that is told vs here; namely *that the heauēs of heauens are the lords*. For Moses thinkes it not ynough to say simply *the heauēs*: but he inlargeth his speech yet further, & saith, *the heauens of heauens*. It had been ynough to haue saide *the heauens*, for seeing that y^t earth (how wide and houge so euer it be) is nothing in comparison of the vnmeasurable greatnes of the skyes: y^t only word *heauens* ought wel to haue sufficed. But Moses inteded to expresse it yet more in saying *the heauens, yea euē the heauēs of heauēs*. In respect wherof he repeteth those words three times: as if he should say, God can find a kingdō large & gret ynough, & of such widnes as he shal not need to com borow some litle

Deut. 5.9.

but inuented a sorte of gewgawes to serue God withall; as setting vp of candles before puppets, gadding on pilgrimage, hearing of masses, taking of holy water, and all the rest of their pelting trash. But such as knowe what it is to keepe the lawe, do neuer set their myndes vppon such childish bawbles. But when men knowe not howe to serue God aright, then they rome wandring here and there. Therefore let vs beare in mynde, that here our Lord hath declared which is the true seruice that hee liketh and alloweth of; namely the following of his commaundementes, so as men deale not after their owne fansie and liking, but holde themselues to his worde; and as it were bridling and keeping them selues captiue, do attẽpt nothing but that which they knowe to bee the pleasure of their God. Thus you see in effect what wee haue to gather vppon this text.

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For asmuch then as we see ỹ men turne life into death, light into darknes, & benefit into bane: alas, ought we not to be exceedingly abashed? yes, but yet must not ỹ put vs out of conceit of ỹ doctrin of ỹ law, so as we should not loue it, howbeit ỹ we cãnot performe it, vntil god haue chãged our harts to cause vs to submit our selues vnto him, and haue made vs newe creatures in our lord Iesus christ. True it is ỹ the setting forth of ỹ law vnto vs, is not for nought: but yet must we needes perceiue by experience, ỹ vntill God hath brought vs home again vnto him, ỹ doctrin of his law wil serue for nothing but to cõdemne vs. But when he hath once wrought in vs by his holy spirit, then shal wee perceiue that in setting forth his law vnto vs, he procureth our benefite & welfare, according as is saide of it here by Moses. And so you heare what we haue to gather vpõ this text. 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Iob 35.7. & Psal.16.2.

Psal.8.7.& 50.10.

to make them feele the offence they had committed, but that he handled them after a gentle and louing fashion. Now then (saith he) hath the euerlasting thy God any neede of thee? Behold (saith he) *the heauens, yea, and the heauens of heauens are Gods*. As if he should say, you think that God would fain haue a people, as though he could not forbeare to be without them. Hath not hee the skyes at commandement? hath not he his heauenly host? hath he not whole millions of Angels? hath hee not peaceable dominion in heauen? Yes, and therefore ye must not imagine any more, that his choosing of you was to better his owne estate by you. If hee shoulde destroy you, and make quite riddance of you, should his might ceasse? No, no, and for proofe therof, he hath no neede of men. Againe, besides that, is not the earth and all thinges in it, in his possession? Yes: What is the cause then that hee hath not taken and chosen other nations to him as wel as you? Is it for that you are nobler, or mightier, or worthier in any respect, than the rest, as it is mentioned in the seuenth Chapter? No. It is certaine that the Iewes were not better than the Gentiles: insomuch that if they should haue beene compared with them, they shoulde haue found themselues to haue bin neither nobler of linage, nor richer in substance, nor vertuouser in life, nor to haue excelled them in any thing. What is the cause then (saith Moses) that God hath vouchsafed to take you for his people, and that he hath let all others alone; & reached you his hand to gouern you? Sought he his own profite or aduantage? No. Seing then that you be so greatly bound vnto him, serue him w the better wil.

Here we see in effect two things. The one is Moses his confirming of the Israelites still in the doctrine y we haue heard; which is, y all of them shoulde learne to glorifie God for their welfare, acknowledging themselues beholden to him for all good things, so as they haue not any worthines or deseruinges to vaunt themselues of, but rather rak their God & vtterly abase themselues. Marke y for the one point. And out of this proceedeth the other point; which is, that such as haue had such experience of Gods goodnes towards themselues, & are taught aforehand to glorifie god, must take courage to serue him y more frankly, & offer themselues to God with a more zelous will, to be quietly gouerned & ouerruled by him. Thus ye see y two pointes that are to be gathered vpon that text. Yea & let vs mark well, how it is not without cause y Moses standeth so much vpon y doctrine. For wee see how the vnthankfulnes of men is so great, y they labor continually to deface Gods goodnes, by reason of y enirled roote of pride & loftines which cannot be quite & cleane taken from vs. Men then do alwayes beare themselues in hand, y they be somwhat worth, & therupon they stand in their own conceits, yea euen as it were in despite of God. Although God lay on sure loade vpon our heads with beetles, yet ceasse wee not to set vp our brisse tils, & to grunt at him, & to think there is yet some vertue or power in vs. For this cause Moses thinks it not ynough to haue said once or twice, you must father all your welfare vpon the onely fauour of God: but he returneth eftsoone to the confirming of the same doctrine, to the intent that mens cackling might be y better stilled, and that such as deceiue themselues through their vaine imaginations, might learne to conclude in the end, y it is not for vs to looke for any valour or worthines in our selues, but that we must yeld God that which belongeth peculiarly vnto him, namely, that his calling of vs, his choosing of vs, & his maintaining of vs; & likewise our hauing of his word, & our reteining of some order in the Church, come altogither of him, so as we cannot say we haue gotten them by our owne skil, cunning or strength. Thus much concerning y first point.

Nowe for our better confirmation herein, let vs compare our selues with the Angels & with all the world besides, & let vs think thus: what are we? Truely, if we go no further than to our owne selues, we may haue our eies dazeled, & we know y naturaly men do so besot themselues, y they be as good as bewitched with the fond imaginatiõ of their own worthines. Therefore if we should looke no further than to our selues, it would seem to vs y we be something worth: but if wee looke further of, & fall to considering with our selues, What are other men? Do they not set as much or more by themselues than we do? yes: & if there were a third partie to play y iudge, would he not make more account of them than of vs? Yes. For to outward showe there is much more greatnes, riches, worthines, & honor; there is much more discretion & wisedom in them than in vs. What is the cause then y God hath chosen vs, & let the others go? Haue we any thing wherof we may be proud? Alas, no, if we be not ouerfarre besotted in our own fond imaginations. But if we cannot yet be brought to this reason by cõparing ourselues with all the worlde beside: let vs mount vp a litle higher & come to y Angels of heauen. Could not God haue contented himselfe with his Angels, wout cõming vnto vs? We be but poore wormes, there is nothing but rottennesse in vs, & yet god vouchsafeth to seeke vs. His wil is to haue vs to be his children, not only to enioy his gifts & benefits here beneath, but also to aduance vs vp to his heauenly kingdom. And for what deserts of ours? [None at al.] Wherefore seeing we cannot be so beaten down at one blow, as to come humble our selues vnto God; let vs wey well these words of Moses, & bethink vs of the thing that is told vs here; namely *y the heauẽs of heauens are the lords*. For Moses thinkes it not ynough to say simply *the heauẽs*: but he inlargeth his speech yet further, & saith, *the heauens of heauens*. It had been ynough to haue saide *the heauens*, for seeing that y earth (how wide and houge so euer it be) is nothing in comparison of the vnmeasurable greatnes of the skyes: y only word *heauens* ought wel to haue sufficed. But Moses intẽded to expresse it yet more in saying *the heauens*, yea euẽ *the heauẽs of heauẽs*. In respect wherof he repeteth those words three times: as if he should say, God can find a kingdõ large & great ynough, & of such widnes as he shal not need to com borow some litle

corner in the world to lodge in: he needeth not to seeke in darke caues for any thing wherewith to set foorth his glorye. Men are but wormes; they be but like frogges in a puddle of myre; and shal God come downe here belowe, to make his glorie shine there? Hath he not his heauenly power, to shewe there aboue that he hath soueraine dominion ouer all creatures? Must he be faine to stande to our courtesie for the dooing of any thing? So then, we see that men must not onely become drunken & beastlike, but also starke diuels through pride, if this declaration of Moses make them not to stoope, & to acknowledge it to be good reasō that God should be glorified euery where, and that they ought not to reserue to themselues any whit of the praise of their owne saluation or welfare.

Now furthermore Moses addeth, that Gods *affection towards that people, & his louing of them to choose their seede, proceeded onely of his own good will.* Your God (saith he) hath dominion ouer heauen & earth; And yet notwithstanding he hath vouchsafed to be your Lord. What is the cause therof? Moses hath shewed it alreadie. But yet hee addeth (for greater confirmation) that God did cast an erneſt free good wil towards this people. The first word which he vseth, signifieth sometime to cleaue vnto, & sometime to take pleasure. But here the proper & natural meaning of it is, that God tooke pleasure in that people, so that he acquainted himself with them through a free loue: for he addeth the worde Loue thereunto. Ye see then, that willing pleasure went afore, & afterward loue ensued of it, and it serueth to shewe, that it is a fondnesse for men to imagine ỹ there is any cause why God should loue one more than another, saue onely that it is his pleasure so to do. Moses could not haue expressed this more plainly, than by saying that it was Gods good pleasure. That is the verie fountaine; and out of that fountaine springeth afterward the loue. Let vs learne then, that God must first loue vs, and that we must feele the same by effect in vs; and yet notwithstanding we must not stay stil at that loue. But to the ende wee may the better finde ỹ it is a free loue, we must proceede to Gods pleasure or will; that is to say, wee must knowe, that he respected neither one thing nor other, whereby to be persuaded and moued to that loue, but that he sought the cause of it in him self; and because it liked him, therefore he lifted it. That is the thing that Moses hath declared in this text. Howbeit for as much as we cannot as nowe proceede any farther, let vs beare away but this lesson, that as oft as there is any speaking of our saluation, wee must not seeke ỹ cause of it anywhere elſe, than in God; & that being vtterly naked of all goodnes, we must confesse our selues to be vtterly accursed, but that God pitying vs, and mynding to shewe vs mercie, draweth vs out of the cursednes wherein we were, in which respect, for as much as he calleth & allureth vs to the saluation which he hath purchased so dearly for vs, we must not dout but ỹ he wil bring vs thither, at leastwise if we abide stedfast in his couenant, & yet neuertheleſſe, that because wee cannot haue such stedfastnes of our selues, hee wil hold vs vp & strengthen vs by his holy spirit, to the end that feeling his power in vs, wee may be the more incouraged to serue him, and not be vnthankfull for so great goodnesse as he hath shewed vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs so to feele them, as we may continually mislike them more and more, and in so doing returne vnto him, as to ỹ onely partie that can remedie our diseases, and set vs vp againe by pardoning our offences, so as we may feele the sweetenes that is in him, and the bitternesse of our afflictions may not make vs to mislike of his seruice, but rather ỹ we may be the more affectioned vnto it, so as by ỹ meane we may be framed vnto his righteousnes, & vnto ỹ obeying of him, vntil we be gathered into the company of his Angels. That it may please him to grant this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the xiij. of September. 1555.

The Lxxii. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the tenth Chapter.

15 Yet notwithstanding the Lorde hath through loue acquainted himselfe with thy fathers, and loued them, and chosen their seede after them, that is to wit, euen you aboue all people, as appeareth this day.

16 Therefore cutte away the foreskin of your heartes, and harden not your neckes from henceforth.

17 For the Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great, mightie and terrible God, which regardeth not anie mans person, nor taketh anie gifte.

We

WE haue to lay foorth more at large, the sentẽce that was begun yesterday, which is, that here Moses declareth vnto the Iewes, that all the goodnesse which they had, proceeded of Gods loue, yea euen of free loue. For his louing of them aboue all other people was not for that they were worthier, but because it so pleased him. Moreouer, he addeth that God tooke not Abraham onely, but also all his ofspring into his fauour, so as his choosing of the people, proceeded thereof. Wherof commeth it then, that the Iewes were so preferred before all the rest of the worlde? If we say it was because they were better than the rest, ỳ is a manifest gainsaying of God, who will haue vs to acknowledge his only fauour & goodnes in that behalfe. Then let vs conclude, ỳ God sought not the cause thereof elswhere than in himselfe: But ỳ his will was to lay forth the infinite treasures of his mercy, to shew that he was not indetted to any creature, but that his bearing of good will towardes them, is for ỳ he himselfe is good, and therfore all things are to be referred to his praise according as the scripture sheweth that his chosing of his church in all ages hath beene to that end. Nowe we see in effect what this doctrine meaneth.

Yesterday it was declared what was the vse of it, namely that men should be humbled in themselues, to exalt Gods goodnes, & thereupon take the better courage to serue him. For how greatly are we bound vnto him, seeing he hath vouchsafed to take vs for his heritage, & to adopt vs to be his children, whereas in the meane season he hath reiected others that were like vnto vs? For if it be demanded wherein we differ from other men: there wil no difference be found in respect of our selues. And therfore, seeing that God hath esteemed vs so highly, we are bound to serue him and to giue our selues wholly vnto him. But by the way let vs marke, that there is a generall election belonging to all this people, which election deserueth well to be had in estimation. But yet should not al auaile, except euery man were made partaker of it particularly in himselfe. This would be darkesum, if it were not declared more at large. But it wil become easie ynough, if we cal to minde, first what Moses teacheth here, and which wee haue seene already heretofore: namely that God chose Abrahams ofspring out of the whole worlde. And why? because it pleased him. All the world was his (as hath beene declared already) and al nations were alike neere vnto him, and in equall degree as that ofspring was that was to come of Abrahã. Nay: (which more is) he chose a people ỳ had no being, and of whõ there was no hope. For Abraham was like a drie timberlogge, and therefore was there no hope that euer he could haue any ofspring. Sara his wife was barrẽ & both of them drooped for age, and their bodies were withered, so as God chose the thing which was not, and his promise seemed as it were to hang in the ayre, without foundation to rest vpon. And yet notwithstãding, by vertue of the promise wherein God sayde that hee would blesse Abrahãs lynage, there must needes come a people, as shall be shewed in the next lecture. See here I pray you the election of God, wherby he putteth such difference betwene the lynage of Abraham and all the rest of the world, that he made the same linage his Church of purpose that the signes of his fauour and of his couenant should remaine there, and that his name should be called vpon there, so as he offered the promises of saluation to them that descended of the same race and lynage, & the redeemer ỳ was to be sent into the worlde, was set forth vnto thẽ that they might be gathered together vnder him. Loe here (I say) a general election that belonged to al the children of Abraham, and yet was that grace to be confirmed by faith but in a parte of them, & in some of them. For we see that many of them were cut off, not for that they were not Abrahams children, in respect of the flesh and the worlde: But for that they were not his children in spirite and before God, which was the chiefe point, as S. Paul declareth. As for those which were vnbeleeuers and vnthrifties, and imbraced not the promise that was made vnto Abraham with true faith, those were set beside the inheritance. In deede they were accounted for his children: howbeit, that was but as Ismael was who was not lawfully begotten. Now then Gods generall election which extended to the whole people, was not sufficient: But it behoued euerie man to be partaker of it in his own peculiar behalfe. And how was ỳ to be done? by faith. But let vs see from whence faith proceedeth, but only of Gods wil, in that he vouchsafeth to confirm his fauor towardes whõ he thought good. Therfore chose he whom he listed out of this people, and sealed his promise in their hearts by his holy spirite, so as they were made partakers of his trueth, & it tooke full and perfect effect in them. Lo here the double election of God. The one extendeth to the whole people, because circumcision was giuen indifferently to all, both smal and great, and the promises likewise were common. But yet for all that, God was faine to adde a seconde grace, by touching the hearts of his chosen, namely of such as he listed to reserue to himselfe, and those came vnto him, & he made them to receiue the benefit that was offered them. And in deede, we see that the greatest number of that people haue bin cast off, and as it were banished from Gods fauour, so as there remained but a small remnant of them, not onely at some one time, but also euen after the captiuity of Babilon, according to this foresaying of the prophet Esay: Although thou wart neuer so many in nũber, so as thy folke were as the sande of the sea, yet shall the reminant of you be very small ỳ God wil saue. For the hypocrites abused Gods promise falsly. And because it was sayd ỳ the people should be in multitude as the sande of the sea, they bragged at the sight of a great number, and in the meane while dispised God. But he telleth them that he coulde aswell diminish them, as he had multiplied them: so as there should remaine but a small portion of them. And so it came to passe, insomuch as the prophet sayth, ỳ if God had not reserued

Gen. 17. 5.

Rom. 2. 28. & 9. 7. 8.

Ephes. 1. 4.

Eph. 1. 13. 14.

Esa. 10. 22.

Esa. 1. 9.

serued some seede, the countrie of Iuda had bin as Sodom & Gomorre, & God had vtterly rooted them out as they had well deserued.

Now is this very profitable for vs. For nowadayes, when it is tolde vs ỳ we haue the pure doctrine of ỳ Gospel preached vnto vs, & we haue the sacrament of baptism for the warrant of our saluation, ỳ is one choice that God maketh of vs. We be no better than other men, ỳ are drowned in ydolatrie & abhominations, on whō God hath not vouchsafed to looke w̄ such pity, as to make ỳ truth of his gospel to shine vpon thē: but hath let thē alone as destitute of all things, so as there is nothing but horrible cōfusion amongest them; & yet in the meane season, he taketh vs between his armes, and into his bosome, vouchsafing to cause his word to be preached vnto vs, whereby we see Iesus Christ who inlightneth vs as ỳ day-sun of righteousnes, & we haue the sacramentes whereof we knowe the vse. Lo here one choise ỳ God maketh of vs, which is well worthy to be esteemed, wherin it behoueth vs to cōsider Gods only infinite goodnes, for ỳ he espieth nothing in vs, for ỳ which he should preferre vs, before such as are nobler thā we, & haue much more thā we to outward appearance. But yet is it not ynough for vs to be so chosē of God as ỳ he taketh vs into his house, admitteth vs to bee of his flocke, & dwelleth among vs; euery of vs must haue an eie to himself, so as ỳ gospel be not preached in vain nor we beare the bare name of Christians, without shewing ỳ effect of it in our deedes. For vntil our adoptiō be sealed by ỳ holy Ghost, let vs not thinke ỳ it auaileth vs any whit to haue herd the word of God: but it shal turne to our double condemnation, because ỳ when God had chosen vs, we offended him; whē he had entered into a couenant with vs, wee brake our faithfull promise which wee had made & plighted vnto him; and therfore me must be punished ỳ more greuously. But whē we haue once a warrant in our hearts, ỳ his promises belong vnto vs, & are behighted vnto vs, by reason ỳ we receiue them w̄ true obedience, & sticke to our Lord Iesus Christ, suffring him to gouerne vs: ỳ is a sure seale of Gods chosing of vs, so as we not onely haue the outwarde apparance of it before men, but also the truth of it before our God. And like as Abrahā was made the father of all ỳ faithfull before God: so are we made his children in spirit & truth, and not only as in respect of adoption to ỳ world. Thus we see what we haue to gather vpō this text, & vpō this declaration ỳ Moses maketh here to the Iewes.

1.Pet.1.10.

Rom.4.11.

And for the same cause he addeth the exhortation which we haue read, in that he willeth *the Iewes to circumcise their hearts, and to beware that they harden not their necks any more*. Good reason it is that men should submit themselues to God after ỳ maner by forsaking thēselues, seeing that his seeking to win vs to him is not for any cōmoditie to himselfe, (as was shewed yesterday,) but because hee is desirous of our welfare, so as hee putteth vs not to the doing of any thing which redoundeth not to our own benefit & profit. Seeing then ỳ God respecteth nothing but vs in his alluring of vs to come vnto him: should we drag backe in that case? Or should wee haue proude and lofty heartes to aduaunce our selues against him? Nowe for the better vnderstanding of this doctrine, let vs note that Moses had an eye vnto outward signe that was giuen at that time to the Iewes, after the same maner that wee haue baptisme at this day. For circumcision serued to two endes. First, God thereby condemned all mankinde and all that is of mans owne nature, shewing them thereby, that all of it is euill. And secondely he gaue hope of saluation in ỳ seede of Abraham, accordingly as he had promised. To this purpose (say I) serued ỳ figure of circumcision, namely to put the Iewes in minde, ỳ frō their mothers wombe, they brought nothing with thē but condemnation, & that all ỳ euer was of man was cursed before God, because it had nothing in it but sinne & corruption. Secondarily again they were comforted, forasmuch as they saw that God promised them saluation, by the seede of man, and ỳ he receiued them into fauour, and iustified thē of purpose to haue them seperated frō all ỳ rest of the worlde. Seeing the Iewes had this prerogatiue, surely if they had not meant to deface Gods power as much as in thē lay, they should haue made their circumcision inuisible, by cutting off al ỳ euer was of their owne nature, assuring themselues ỳ men can not please God, vntill they haue giuen ouer the thinges ỳ were their owne. Hereunto had Moses an eye when he sayd, *Circumcise your hearts this day*. For their seruing of ỳ figure was nothing, except they considered to what end God ment to lead them by it. They beguiled themselues with ỳ visible signe, and ỳ was ynough to thē: for Satan hath alwaies this policie with him, to make men bide their wits about the thinges ỳ they see with their eyes as whereunto he seeth them inclined. For all our seeking is to content God with faire countrey, and though we neuer come nie him in verie deede, yet would we fain pay him with a sort of peking trifles. The Iewes then esteemed their circumcision ynough & too much, but yet in so doing they abused it, because they regarded not thing ỳ God ment to shew thē therby, but were tied altogether to ỳ visible signe. Therfore doth Moses rebuke them, saying: thinke not ỳ the hauing of circumcision in your bodies, is all ỳ you haue to doe: for Gods giuing of ỳ signe vnto you, was to help your infirmity, of purpose to leade you further therby, namely to bring you to true repentāce. For when ye once perceiue ỳ al ỳ euer is of your own nature bringeth nothing but curse, you shall see that all of it is to be done quite and cleane away. Therefore bethinke ye to mortifie your selues: as if he should say, Circumcision consisteth not in the outwarde paring away of the fleshe, but the trueth thereof is within: it is your heartes that must bee circumcised. Moses his meaning hereby, is not to condemne the outwarde signe: but to shewe the true vse of it, which folke had corrupted through superstition and hypocrisie. Accordingly whereunto Ioel sayth, Rend your heartes, & not your garments. Wherin his meaning is, not that men should no more shew any token of repentance by humbling them-

themselues before God, but to shew that all that euer men do by outwarde signes, (as by rending of the hayre from their heades and beardes, by much weeping, by knocking vpon their brests, and by al other maner of gestures that may shew them to be abashed, & in maner out of comfort before God) is nothing, except ỳ hart be broken afore. Euen so, circumcision is vtterly vnprofitable, vnles ỳ hart be circumcised as wel as ỳ body.

Now we see the meaning of Moses, but it will become the plainer & easier vnto vs, if we come to our baptisme. I haue already touched the likenesse that is betweene these two sacraments: and it is all one, as if a man should say vnto vs nowe adayes, if you would ỳ God should take you for his people and heritage, yee must be baptised in your soules. What? baptised in our soules? Yea for south. For the water that is cast vpon our bodies is nothing, if wee haue not the trueth of it, namely that we be so plunged vnder the water, as if we were in a graue: that is to say, ỳ it maketh vs to die in our selues, so as our owne affections, our owne thoughtes, our owne witte, our owne reason, and our owne wisedome beare not any more sway in vs; but ỳ we suffer our selues, to be gouerned by God, so as all our fleshly lustes bee subdued and held in captiuitie vnder him, and vnder his yoke. Therefore if a man would shew vs the true meaning of our baptisme, he shoulde say, looke that yee be baptised within. And for the same cause also doeth Saint Paule in the seconde to the Romans, sette downe a difference betweene the circumcision of the letter, and the circumcision of the spirite: And he sayeth that the one is inwarde, and the other outward. Whereas he termeth it the Circumcision of the letter, it is by a similitude, for he hath an eye to the worde. To what purpose serueth the reading of Gods Law, and of the Gospel, if it touch vs not inwardely? Verily if euery of vs haue his Bible in print, and yet let it alone, what doe we elle but make it vnholy by our not applying of so great a treasure to our vse, & by our not imploying of the same to our profite according to the intent of our God? Euen so standeth the case with the sacramentes sayeth Saint Paule. For they be but as a dead letter, so long as wee haue no more but the visible signes, it is but a gay appearance and shew before men: But the whole matter consisteth in hauing the trueth before God. Wil we haue the true Circumcision? then must it be inwardly, that is to say, in the Spirite. That is to say, God must worke there. So we see nowe that the meaning of Moses was, that folke shoulde not boast vainely of the bare name of God, nor of the wearing of his badge, without the trueth of it, so as they could shewe the power thereof: but that they should fare the better by the signe that is giuen them to warrant their adoption, to the entent it might appeare that God hath not without cause separated them from the heathen, which were as good as banished out of his church, & had no acquaintāce at al with him.

Againe we see that this doctrin toucheth and concerneth vs nowadayes, because we haue baptisme which serueth to the same vse ỳ circumcision did, namely to lead vs to repentance. Therfore must we apply it to our vse. And forasmuch as God hath vouchsafed to giue vs a seale of the fatherly loue which hee beareth vs, and that it pleased him to gather vs into his Church, and to shew ỳ he hath taken vs vnto himself to be heirs of his kingdome: Let not vs disappoint our selues of such a benefite through our owne lewdenesse and vnthankefulnesse; but lette vs endeuour to fare the better by it, by beeing washed in our soules, that is to say, by mortifying our owne imaginations, reasons, and lustes, and by offering vp of our selues in sacrifice vnto god, to the ende that he may renewe vs, and that nothing else but his spirite may reigne in vs, so as hee may beare the whole swaye. This exhortation is made vnto the Iewes, because it was their dutie to apply their sacramentes vnto such ende. Neuertheless let vs marke, that it is not in our power to performe the thing ỳ is required here. For although the Iewes ought to haue bin circūcised in their hearres; yet was it verie necessary that God should worke in ỳ behalfe. Likewise it standeth vs in hande nowadayes, to mortifie our selues, & we be cōmanded so to do; but yet must wee be faine to resort vnto God, who reserueth to himselfe ỳ office of renewing our soules. And that is the cause why it is sayd ỳ our Lorde Iesus Christ is only he which baptiseth with fire & the holy Ghost. For if a man ỳ ministreth baptisme, had power to regenerate, then had he in himself the power, maiestie, & glory, which is giuen to ỳ sonne of God. But our baptising is only with water, ỳ is to say, we haue but the signe of baptisme cōmitted vnto vs, yet notwithstanding, our doing is not in vaine: for we must needes be faithfull witnesses of God. And forasmuch as we doe it in his name; we must not thinke ỳ the thing is voide & vnprofitable. But yet for all that, it behoueth vs to resort to our Lord Iesus Christ, and to consider ỳ our ministring of baptisme in his Church, is by his authoritie, & therefore that it belongeth vnto him to make it auaileable & that it is only his spirit wherby we be regenerate. For if euerie man could wash his own soule: it might be sayde that the minister baptiseth with water, and ỳ euerie man baptiseth himselfe with truth; but it can not be sayd so: for that were as much as to robbe Gods sonne of the thing that is peculiar vnto him. He hath reserued that honour to himselfe, & neuer giuen it to any creature, no not vnto ỳ Angels of heauen. Therefore let vs vnderstand, that nowadayes when it is tolde vs, that we must make the outwarde signe auailable vnto vs, by being baptised in our soules: we must therewithall immediately submit our selues vnto God, praying him to performe the thing by the power of his holy spirit, which he representeth to vs outwardly by the figure thereof; and to mortifie and renewe vs in suchwise, as we may haue the trueth of baptisme sealed vppe and ingrauen in our soules. In like case was it with the people of olde time.

Rom. 4. Col. 2.12.

Rom. 2.28.

Iohn 1.33.

True it is that here Moses exhorteth ỳ Iewes to Circumcise their hearres: but yet we shall see hereafter, howe he will say, the Lorde our God Deut. 30.6.

will

will circumcise your hearts, it may well seeme at the first sight, ỳ these two thinges stande not wel together, but that there is some contrarietie in them: and yet they agree both together very well. For (as I haue touched afore) it is our dutie to be circumcised; that is to say, to cut off all that is of our owne nature, and to ridde it quite away, ỳ God may reigne in vs. But doe wee discharge our selues thereof? No: but God must be faine to supply our want: And therefore it is he that Circumciseth vs. Why then doeth he commaunde vs to doe it, seeing wee haue neither power nor abilitie to doe it? It is to the ende that we should be sorie at the sight of our owne wretchednes, and ỳ seeing wee faile, and are so blame worthy, we should on the other side resort vnto our God, condemning our selues, & on ỳ other side be ẽcoraged to desire him to do ỳ which wee our selues can not. There is yet one other reason, ỳ whereas God doth all in vs, yet he calleth his doing ours, and will haue euerie of vs to endeuour ourselues, though he be the worker of it. Thus it is he ỳ doth all, notwithstanding that we be not as blockes; For he hath giuen vs a will by nature. Neuertheleſſe that will is wicked, but he correcteth it and maketh it good; & his working is after such a sort, as he will haue vs to indeuour our selues lustily like good men of warre; in so much ỳ although we do nothing, & that that which we do cõmeth of him; yet will he haue vs to haue such feeling of his power, as to ouercom all tẽptations, & be circumcised in our hearts, by renewing of our minds, & by forsaking alour own affections, to fight against Satan, vntil wee haue gotten the vpper hande.

But yet by the way we must vnderstand, that this serueth not to magnifie our owne free wil as the Papists haue imagined. We haue shewed already, ỳ we be so litle able by nature to come vnto God, that we drawe cleane backe frõ him. Neuertheleſſe to the intent to shew vs plainly what our duetie is, he sayeth vnto vs, do it: & although we be not able to set hand to the worke, no, nor to put forth a finger towardes it: yet doth he cõmand vs to do our duty, notwithstanding ỳ we be vtterly vnable by any meanes to perform it. And that is to the end ỳ we seeing our defaulte, should be the more ashamed of it, & humble our selues before God, and againe ỳ we should be prouoked to pray him to worke in vs, seeing it is he ỳ doth all in vs, notwithstanding ỳ it be his will, that we should be ỳ instrumentes of the power of his holy spirit. For as he is so gracious vnto vs, as to impute his owne doings vnto vs & to make vs partakers of thẽ: so also it is his will, ỳ we should acknowledge and take them for our owne.

And now to go forward with the matter that I haue touched already, let vs beare wel in mind that if our hearts be not circumcised, we shalbe condemned of falshood, for breaking of the promise, ỳ we haue made to our God, as this people were, who therefore were oftentimes vpbrayded with the vncircumcisednes of their hearts. The Prophetes cried out oftentimes to the Iewes, come on your waies with your circumcision. You beare your selues in hand that God is greatly beholden vnto you, because you beare his marke. But you deale too leaudly w̃ him, & ye abuse his name with too wicked trecherie. That marke was giuen you to make you holy, & yet notwithstanding ye be defiled, insomuch ỳ ye ly welteringe in your owne dung, & (which worse is) ye make your circumcision a cloke of hypocrisie to couer your wickednes withall: So that if ye were stripped naked, ye would be ashamed to see your own filthinesse. But now because ye haue Circumcision, yee imagine ỳ that should hide all your vncleanneſſe; and thereupon yee fall to spyting of God, by your corrupting & falsifying of ỳ thing which he had ordeined for your welfare & profit. Away therefore ye vncircumcised, worse than the verie heathen themselues. Away ye people of Chanaan, your father was an Amorrhite and your mother an Hethite: that is to say, ye be worse than the veriestes naughtipackes in the worlde. Hence ye Harlottes birdes, come yee hither to boast that Abraham was your father? Go seeke your anceters somwhere elſe: for ye be bastards and vnworthie to be counted Abrahams childr̃ or seede. We see howe the prophetes did cutte the combes of the prating Iewes, to the intent they should not brag any more of their circumcision, yea and euen Saint Steuen vseth the same maner of speech in the seuenth of the Actes. Go to ye vncircumcised of heart & stiffenecked people (sayeth he) ye be like your fathers, who hath always rebelled against God, & you follow their footesteppes, or rather ye goe on from euill to worse. And think we that such vpbraidinges concerne not vs nowadayes? Yes: For if we be once baptised, wee shall pay deere for our defiling of the water which God had dedicated to so holy & sacred an vse. In deede the water of it selfe is nothing; but when it is once ioyned to the word, there is as it were an authenticall seale which God hath ingrauen in it. Nowe hee that counterfaiteth ỳ seale of a Prince, shal hee not be punished? Beholde, this is the seale of God, which serueth not to seale conueiances of earthly possessions; as Landes, Meadowes, Vineyardes, and Lordeshippes: but to assure vs that we be called to the heauenly life; it is such a seale as bringeth warrant with it, that we be washed cleane from our sinnes by the bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ, and regenerated againe by his holy spirite; and shal we breake all this, & scape vnpunished? Thus let vs looke well about vs and consider, that our Baptisme will cost vs very deare if we make it not auailable, so as it may take effect in vs by being truely baptised in our soules.

And he addeth immediatly, *Harden not your necks any more.* We haue expounded the like similitude heretofore: but yet must I tell ye briefly in this text, ỳ by this figuratiue speech which I am about to expound, Moses ment to expresse that the Iewes circumcising of their hearts, was their submitting of themselues vnto God by receiuing his yoke, so as they kicked no more against him like wilde colts. Ye see then ỳ the thing which God requireth at our hands in that he will haue vs to be renewed, is that we should be obedient vnto him. And hereby wee be warned, that as long

Ier. 4. 4 & 9. 25.

long as men abide in their owne nature, they be rebelles against God, and doe nothing else but spite him by drawing the contrary way from his righteousnes, so as (to be short) they be enemies to all goodnesse. And for proofe thereof, God requireth no more but that we should bow down our neckes vnto him, and beare his yoke meekely. That is the whole perfection of our life; and the greatest holinesse that God commandeth, is that men shoulde mortifie all their wicked affections, according to the former saying, that they should bee circumcised to please God, that is to say, they must die to liue well, that is to wit, God must ridde them of all that is their owne, if he intend to haue any good of them. Then let vs beare in minde that there will bee nothing but stubbornesse in vs, to make vs to lift vp ourselues against God, and to play the wilde beastes, so long as we abide in our own nature. To be short as long as a man foloweth his owne inclination; hee must needes be at warre with God, and all goodnes: for there is not that veine in him, which tendeth not altogether to euill. Nowe let vs go bragge of our owne freewill, and say that men may well binde God to thē by their good works and deserues, as the papistes haue imagined. For when the Papists heare that God commandeth vs to doe any thing; they conclude thereupon by and by, that then it is in our power to doe it. Yes, but (as I sayde before) God respecteth not our abilitie or power, but our duetie. Neither passeth he for the gay appearance or outwarde showe, to accept the thinges that carrie a faire countenance to the worldwarde. But the thing Matt.11.30. that liketh me (sayth he) is ỹ ye receiue my yoke which I lay vpon you, not by tyranny or cruelty, but of fauour & good will, so as it shal be sweete and amiable to you, if you can inure yourselues to it with humilitie. Thinke not ỹ I come to bee pleased with your faire cōtenances. In deed ye can well ynough pretende outwardly, to be as lowly & meeke as sheepe in hearing the voice of your shepheard: but inwardly ye be as stallfedde bulls, ready to strike at him w your hornes; ye be wolues & foxes; there is nothing in you but pride & cruelnie; there is nothing but hypocrisie, guile, & spitefulnes; ye be of so sturdy nature, ỹ it is vnpossible to tame ye: & therfore it behoueth you to be quite & clean changed, or else ye can neuer away w my yoke, but ye wil be like wilde beasts, so as I shal not be neuer able to cōpasse you. Such then are we by nature, & such do we cōtinue still vntil god haue reformed vs by his grace, & we see the proof of it here before our eyes. And yet not withstanding we wil nedes stil magnifie our own reason & say we haue some seedes of goodnes in vs, so as we be inclined vnto goodnes, & can help to further Gods grace, so he aid vs, & so we make a hotchpotch of halfe figs & half reysons as they say. True it is ỹ God stirreth vs vp & putteth vs forward (say they;) but we go on of our own self mouing: & afterward as he increaseth his grace, so do we put to our collup; and finally our atteyning to ỹ accōplishment of our enterprises, commeth of our owne wisedom, strength & forwardnes. But Moses giueth no place to such follies; but contrariwise, he sheweth, that (spite of our teeth) this sentence of cōdemnation must nedes stande, namely that if we intende to be obedient vnto God, we must first & foremost be circumcised, so as all ỹ is of the world must be killed in vs. Let that serue for one point.

And herewithall we haue to marke, that (as hath bin tolde vs oftentimes) God maketh more account of obedience, than of all the precious things ỹ men imagine thēselues to haue. For in all ages men haue inuented fond deuotions, and they haue borne thēselues in hand ỹ they should please God well ynough, with deuising of apes toyes of their own brain. But cōtrariwise, ỹ thing ỹ God requireth of vs, is ỹ we should submit our selues to him & say; Lord reigne thou ouer vs, & be thou our only master, so as al our righteousnes & holines may be to frame our selues according to thy worde, & not to make long vagaries to inuent this or that; but to holde ourselues contented with thy single will, to yeeld to ỹ which thou cōmandest, & to beare thy yoke quietly; yea and to learn to stoop & to bow down our necks vnto it, though it seeme painefull to vs. That is ỹ subiectiō which God requireth at our hands. Whereas Moses saith: *Harden not your neckes any more*, he rebuketh the Iewes for their former life, as if he should say, It is enough & too much ỹ ye haue hitherto bin stubborn against your God: according to this former saying of his heretofore, Frō ỹ first day ỹ I was acquainted with you vnto this hour, Deut.9.7. I haue seene nothing but naughtines & frowardnes in you. He rehearseth ỹ same here, as a thing ỹ should make them ashamed. For we like not to haue our former faults laid in our dish. As soone as a man doth but touch them, because our eares are nice, it is a corsie vnto vs, & we thinke ỹ all such thinges should be buried in forgetfulnes, so as they should neuer be remēbred any more. In deed if we our selues did beare thē well in mind, it should not neede to tell vs of them any more; but we see how euery of vs falleth asleepe in thē; & it greeueth vs to come to any backereckening of the offences that we haue committed against God. We cast them a great way behinde vs, it is a matter of heauinesse to vs: and yet ought wee to bethinke our selues diligently both euen and morne of our former faultes. Howbeit not to be rechlesse of them, or to fall into despaire for thē; but to be sorie in such wise for them, as we may walke more warely than wee haue done, and be thankefull to God for his goodnes in ỹ hee hath vouchsafed to correct vs, as I haue declared often heretofore. Ye see then how men ought to haue good remembrance of their faults, though they were neuer warned thereof by others. But what doe we? Wee forget them, and can not abide that any man should tell vs of them: and that is a doubling of the fault. Therefore let vs assure ourselues, that it is needefull for vs to be tolde of our sins oftentimes, and to be put in remembraunce of them. And that is the cause why Moses sayth againe; Harden not your harts any more. He doth not alonely warne the Iewes but also therewithall accuse them, telling them that euen vnto that time they hadde behaued

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themselues so ill; as it was verie requisite for thē to be done to vnderstand, that it was but a fondnesse for them to boast themselues to be Gods people.

Nowe to the intent we may learne to put this doctrine in practise as it ought to be; Let vs vnderstande, that such as will needes harden themselues in naughtinesse, shalbe destroyed by God who will make them to feele ỹ force of his power according to this saying of his, If ye fall to stubLeuit.26.23 bornes with me, I will deale stubbornly with you 24. againe. And it is all one with this saying of the Psal.18.27. xviij. Psalme, With the frowarde I wilbe froward, and I wil deale roughly with such as harden thēselues against me. Then let vs learne that Gods intent is to lay a yoke vppon our neckes by his worde, of purpose to bring vs in subiection to his righteousnesse: And all is for our benefite. Insomuch that although it bee so vnpossible for vs to fulfill the Lawe, that wee can not so much as put foorth one of our litle fingers to the furtheraunce of it, no nor once thinke a good thought: yet is that yoke gentle & amiable of it selfe, and all the harme of it commeth of our selues. For if wee will not bowe downe our neckes, but strout them out as hard as if they were steele or brasse; so as in steede of being as Oxen to labour, or as sheep to heare the voyce of our shepherd, we become sturdy buls and fall to striking with rage & furie to shake off the yoke, so as we not only followe not the worde, but also shake off all subiection, and inharden ourselues against God. what excuse will there be for vs, seeing wee yeelde not ourselues vnto him willingly to be taught at his hande? Yet for all that, we see how the world goeth. God therefore must be faine to ouermaster vs, & to tame vs by maine hande. And in verie deede, looke what afflictions soeuer light vpon vs, we ought to take thē as strokes of Gods hād, to make vs bowe our neckes vnder him, and to become tractable and obedient. But when we go awke and cleane contrary after that fashion, thē doth he threaten vs thus by Moses, I will deale stubbornely as well as you. He vseth that terme of purpose, to the intent ỹ men should not dally with him. For at the first blush the saying might seeme straunge which I alledged out of the xviij Psal.18.27. Psalme; namely, that hee will deale frowardely with such as are froward. For howe can that be? Can God be frowarde? No: But it is all one as if he shoulde say: yee shall finde in me a greater hardnesse than yours is: Let vs incounter togethe, and see which of vs is stoutest and best able to holde out. I tell you, it is you that are like to be confounded and go to wrecke. And therfore let vs leaue our naughtinesse, and repaire vnto God while he calleth vs; and when we be come to him, let vs suffer ourselues to be gouerned by his holy spirite, which is, the spirit of meekenesse, that we may submit our selues obediently vnto him. And for perfourmaunce thereof, lette vs marke the lesson that Moses addeth immediatly.

The euerlasting thy God (sayeth he) *is the God of Gods, a great, a mighty, & a strong God: yea but let vs marke also, that he doth not accept* (that is to say, regard) *mens persons*; but iudgeth according to the truth. Beware therefore ỹ ye trust not any more in your circūcision nor in such like thinges, but beare in mind that God wil haue your seruice to be such, as your hearts may be wholly dedicated vnto him: and that he wold haue you to submit your selues vnto him, so as he may haue you in his possession, and you enioy the inheritance which hee promised to your fathers, and which belongeth vnto you. Gods greatnesse which Moses speaketh of in this place, is the first foundation which wee must lay whereby to take courage to serue him. For if there be no certaintie in our religion, wee shall alwayes make but a colde worke of it, and if it bee mached with any wilfulnesse, it will make vs to stande in our owne conceites, yea and starke fooles: so as there shall be no trueth nor right in our doinges. Howe so euer the case stande, I say if men bee not sure who the GOD is whome they worshippe; they shall but runne a straye and at randonne, without anye zeale to serue him. For although the Papistes bee so greatly giuen to their idolatrie, that to their owne seeming they haue sure houlde of the things that they haue imagined: yet it is but a doubtfull opinion and surmise, which deceiueth them. In deede they doe their seruice with many ceremonies; but if a man come to the searching of their heartes, hee shall finde them alwayes doubting, and so snarled in their superstitions, that they knowe not where they be. And namely whensoeuer they be pinched with aduersitie, then doeth the venime breake out, so as they shewe that they wote not whether there is a GOD or no, but by blaspheming of him, by gnashing their teeth against him, by finding fault with him, and by accusing him of crueltie, for punishing them (as they suppose) without their deseruing. Loe in what taking all they be, which followe their owne fancies in case of religion. True it is that the Idolaters become so beastly in their superstitions, that they followe them with a burning affection, as the prophetes say; who vpbrayde the Iewes that they had were like stoned horses neying after mares, that is to witte, they were so dissolutely minded, that their doinges were not counted as an ordinarie kinde of whooredome, but as a villanie vsed against nature. Likewise in the Popedome is it not seene that such as are taken to bee the earnestest maintainers of their religion, are rather carried away with rage, than moued with any true zeale to Godwarde? Yes certainely, and thereby they doe the more bewraye their owne leawdenesse and shame. In deede they be bolde ynough to skorne vs, as though wee were turned away from the right religion: but lette it suffice vs, that wee may alwayes vpbrayde them that they knowe not what GOD they worshippe, whereas wee on our side haue good warrant of the doctrine ỹ we follow, and are sure that God accepteth the seruice which we yeelde vnto him according thereunto, and that in so doing we may boldly offer our selues vnto him.

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Yee see then that vnlesse we bee sure of our religion, we shall neuer haue any right ordred zele, nor hearts disposed to serue God. And that is the cause why Moses sayeth heere, Go too, ye be not as the heathen that go at aduenture, weening that they doe well in seruing their Idolles, howbeit that it be but a weening, so as they know not what the Gods be whom they serue, for it is but a fancie of their owne deuising. But your God is the God that made heauen and earth, it is he that hath reueiled himselfe vnto you. Now then, if yee followe them that haue not the like assurance, and fall to disguising of Gods seruice: what excuse will there bee for you? Were it not meete that ye should rather giue ouer both your bodyes and soules to him, so as hee might bee honoured at your handes all your life long? And so we see here the intent of Moses as concerning this text.

Rom 12.1. 1.Cor.6. 20.

Now let vs learne heereby, that wee can neuer rule our liues to Gods lyking, vnlesse we first knowe him. For what a thing is it if wee thinke we liue vprightly, and in the meane while know not the God whom we ought to serue? For when is our life to bee counted good and holy? When it is spent in the honouring of God: that is the finall ende of it. For if wee knowe not what God it is, nor what his will is, well may we toyle our selues all our life long, and yet shall all of it bee but confusion. It is as if a man should runne gadding ouer the fieldes, he might well breake his shinnes, and tyre his whole body, and yet be neuer the further forewarde, but rather the swiftlyer hee runneth, the further is he off from his iourneyes ende. Wee see then that all thinges are out of order in the Popedome, because they bee blinde and ignoraunt, and wote not what God they serue, nor what Saint they should make their vowes vnto, as sayth their owne prouerbe. Insomuch that when they haue tyred themselues with trotting vp and downe, they wote not where they bee, but are newe to seeke in their imaginations, whereas to knowe God as hee hath shewed himselfe to vs in his worde, that they might yeeld him the reuerence which is dewe vnto him: they can no skill of it, neither is there any tydings of it among them. But as for vs, if wee intende to knowe the true seruice of GOD, and to obey him throughly, the first poynt that wee must come vnto, must be to knowe him. Indeede this lesson cannot be dispatched at this present, and therefore it shall suffice vs to knowe in one worde for a conclusion, that it is an inestimable treasure to vs, when it pleaseth GOD to shew himselfe vnto vs, so as wee bee sure that our religion is good, and that he alloweth it, and that we goe not by opinion or by weening, as these wretched beastes doe, which suffer themselues to bee lead by the nose, as not hauing any certaine rule whereby to guide and to gouerne themselues. Marke that for one poynt.

And for the second poynt let vs marke also, that for as much as our God is great and terrible, it behoueth vs to be humbled vnder his mightie hand, and to learne to walke in such wise in his feare, as wee not onely be abashed at his Maiestie, but also besides our honoring of him with feare and reuerence, wee repaire and resort vnto him without any doubting that he is our father.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgment of our sinnes, praying him to touche vs still more and more, so as wee may bee made to knowe that wee haue nothing but stubbornesse and naughtinesse in vs, and therefore may seeke to him for the spirit of meekenesse, lowelinesse, and feare, that being reformed by his grace, wee may seeke to amend our whole liues according to his righteousnesse, and fight continually against our wicked lustes, vntill we bee discharged of this mortall body, and be gathered vp into his kingdome: Beseeching him further to graunt vs such grace as wee may neuer ceasse to followe him whither soeuer hee calleth vs, and in the meane while to beare with our infirmities, till he haue rid vs quite and cleane of them: and that for as much as we haue now our Lord Iesus Christ, who is the end of the law, and the substance and truth of the Sacramentes that hee hath giuen vs, it may please him to graunt vs the grace to be so washed in our harres through the power of the holy Ghost, as all our filthinesse may be purged and cleansed, so as in the end we may be wholy transformed into his glory. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

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17 For the Lord &c.

18 Who doth right to the fatherlesse and widowe, and loueth the straunger to giue him foode and rayment.

19 Therefore loue the straunger: for you your selues haue beene straungers in the land of Egypt.

20 Thou shalt feare the Lorde thy God, and serue him, and sticke to him, and sweare by his name.

themselues so ill; as it was verie requisite for thē to be done to vnderstand, that it was but a fondnesse for them to boast themselues to be Gods people.

Nowe to the intent we may learne to put this doctrine in practise as it ought to be; Let vs vnderstande, that such as will needes harden themselues in naughtinesse, shalbe destroyed by God who will make them to feele ỳ force of his power according to this saying of his, If ye fall to stubbornes with me, I will deale stubbornly with you againe. And it is all one with this saying of the xviij. Psalme, With the frowarde I wilbe froward, and I wil deale roughly with such as harden thēselues against me. Then let vs learne that Gods intent is to lay a yoke vppon our neckes by his worde, of purpose to bring vs in subiection to his righteousnesse: And all is for our benefite. Insomuch that although it bee so vnpossible for vs to fulfill the Lawe, that wee can not so much as put foorth one of our litle fingers to the furtherance of it, no nor once thinke a good thought: yet is that yoke gentle & amiable of it selfe, and all the harme of it commeth of our selues. For if wee will not bowe downe our neckes, but strout them out as hard as if they were steele or brasse; so as in steede of being as Oxen to labour, or as sheep to heare the voyce of our shepherd, we become sturdy buls and fall to striking with rage & furie to shake off the yoke, so as we not only followe not the worde, but also shake off all subiection, and inharden ourselues against God. what excuse will there be for vs, seeing wee yeelde not ourselues vnto him willingly to be taught at his hande? Yet for all that, we see how the world goeth. God therefore must be faine to ouermaster vs, & to tame vs by maine hande. And in verie deede, looke what afflictions soeuer light vpon vs, we ought to take thē as strokes of Gods hād, to make vs bowe our neckes vnder him, and to become tractable and obedient. But when we go awke and cleane contrary after that fashion, thē doth he threaten vs thus by Moses, I will deale stubbornely as well as you. He vseth that terme of purpose, to the intent ỳ men should not dally with him. For at the first blush the saying might seeme straunge which I alledged out of the xviij Psalme; namely, that hee will deale frowardely with such as are froward. For howe can that be? Can God be frowarde? No: But it is all one as if he shoulde say: yee shall finde in me a greater hardnesse than yours is: Let vs incounter together, and see which of vs is stoutest and best able to holde out. I tell you, it is you that are like to be confounded and go to wrecke. And therfore let vs leaue our naughtinesse, and repaire vnto God while he calleth vs; and when we be come to him, let vs suffer ourselues to be gouerned by his holy spirite, which is, the spirit of meekenesse, that we may submit our selues obediently vnto him. And for perfourmaunce thereof, lette vs marke the lesson that Moses addeth immediatly.

Leuit. 26. 23 24.

Psal. 18. 27.

Psal. 18. 27.

The euerlasting thy God (sayeth he) *is the God of Gods, a great, a mightie, & a strong God: yea but let vs marke also, that he doth not accept* (that is to say, regard) *mens persons*; but iudgeth according to the truth. Beware therefore ỳ ye trust not any more in your circūcision nor in such like thinges, but beare in mind that God wil haue your seruice to be such, as your hearts may be wholly dedicated vnto him: and that he wold haue you to submit your selues vnto him, so as he may haue you in his possession, and you enioy the inheritance which hee promised to your fathers, and which belongeth vnto you. Gods greatnesse which Moses speaketh of in this place, is the first foundation which wee must lay whereby to take courage to serue him. For if there be no certaintie in our religion, wee shall alwayes make but a colde worke of it, and if it bee macched with any wilfulnesse, it will make vs to stande in our owne conceites, yea and starke fooles; so as there shall be no trueth nor right in our doinges. Howe so euer the case stande, I say if men bee not sure who the GOD is whome they worshippe; they shall but runne a straye and at randonne, without anye zeale to serue him. For although the Papistes bee so greatly giuen to their idolatrie, that to their owne seeming they haue sure houlde of the things that they haue imagined: yet it is but a doubtfull opinion and surmise, which deceiueth them. In deede they doe their seruice with many ceremonies; but if a man come to the searching of their heartes, hee shall finde them alwayes doubting, and so snarled in their superstitions, that they knowe not where they be. And mooly whensoeuer they be pinched with aduersitie, then doeth the venime breake out, so as they shewe that they were not whether there is a GOD or no, but by blaspheming of him, by gnashing their teeth against him, by finding faulr with him, and by accusing him of cruelte, for punishing them (as they suppose) without their deseruing. Loe in what taking all they be, which followe their owne fancies in case of religion. True it is that the Idolsters become so beastly in their superstitions, that they followe them with a burning affection, as the prophetes say, who vpbrayde the Iewes that they were like stoned horses neying after mares, that is to witte, they were so diuelishly minded, that their doinges were not counted as an ordinarie kinde of whooredome, but as a villanous euen against nature. Likewise in the Popedome is it not seene that such as are taken to bee the earnestest maintainers of their religion, are rather carried away with rage, than moued with any true zeale to Godwarde? Yes certainely: and thereby they doe the more bewraye their owne leawdenesse and shame. In deede they be bolde ynough to skorne vs, as though wee were turned away from the right religion: but lette it suffice vs, that wee may alwayes vpbrayde them that they knowe not what GOD they worshippe, whereas wee on our side haue good warrant of the doctrine ỳ we follow, and are sure that God accepteth the seruice which we yeelde vnto him according thereunto, and that in so doing we may boldly offer our selues vnto him.

Ye

Ye see then that vnlesse we bee sure of our religion, we shall neuer haue any right ordred zele, nor hearts disposed to serue God. And that is the cause why Moses sayeth heere, Go too, ye be not as the heathen that go at al aduenture, weening that they doe well in seruing their Idolles, howbeit that it be but a weening, so as they know not what the Gods be whom they serue, for it is but a fancie of their owne deuising. But your God is the God that made heauen and earth, it is he that hath reueiled himselfe vnto you. Now then, if yee followe them that haue not the like assurance, and fall to disguising of Gods seruice: what excuse will there bee for you? Were it not meete that ye should rather giue ouer both your bodyes and soules to him, so as hee might bee honoured at your handes all your life long? And so we see here the intent of Moses as concerning this text.

1 Tim. 1. 2. 1. Cor. 6. 20.

Now let vs learne heereby, that wee can neuer rule our liues to Gods lyking, vnlesse we first knowe him. For what a thing is it if wee thinke we liue vprightly, and in the meane while know not the God whom we ought to serue? For when is our life to bee counted good and holy? When it is spent in the honouring of God: that is the finall ende of it. For if wee knowe not what God it is, nor what his will is, well may we toyle our selues all our life long, and yet shall all of it bee but confusion. It is as if a man should runne gadding ouer the feeldes, he might well breake his shinnes, and tyre his whole body, and yet be neuer the further forewarde, but rather the swiftlyer hee runneth, the further is he off from his iourneyes ende. Wee see then that all thinges are out of order in the Popedome, because they bee blinde and ignoraunt, and wote not what God they serue, nor what Saint they should make their vowes vnto, as sayth their owne prouerbe. Insomuch that when they haue tyred themselues with trotting vp and downe, they wote not where they bee, but are newe to seeke in their imaginations, whereas to knowe God as hee hath shewed himselfe to vs in his woord, that they might yeeld him the reuerence which is dewe vnto him: they can no skill of it, neither is there any tydings of it among them. But as for vs, if wee intende to knowe the true seruice of GOD, and to obey him throughly, the first poynt that wee must come vnto, must be to knowe him. Indeede this lesson cannot be dispatched at this present, and therefore it shall suffice vs to knowe in one worde for a conclusion, that it is an inestimable treasure to vs, when it pleaseth GOD to shew himselfe vnto vs, so as wee bee sure that our religion is good, and that he alloweth it, and that we goe not by opinion or by weening, as these wretched beastes doe, which suffer themselues to bee lead by the nose, as not hauing any certaine rule whereby to guide and to gouerne themselues. Marke that for one poynt.

And for the second poynt let vs marke also, that for as much as our God is great and terrible, it behoueth vs to be humbled vnder his mightie hand, and to learne to walke in such wise in his feare, as wee not onely be abashed at his Maiestie, but also besides our honoring of him with feare and reuerence, wee repaire and resort vnto him without any doubting that he is our father.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgment of our sinnes, praying him to touche vs still more and more, so as wee may bee made to knowe that wee haue nothing but stubbornnesse and naughtinesse in vs, and therefore may seeke to him for the spirit of meekenesse, lowelinesse, and feare, that being reformed by his grace, wee may seeke to amend our whole liues according to his righteousnesse, and fight continually against our wicked lustes, vntill we bee discharged of this mortall body, and be gathered vp into his kingdome: Beseeching him further to graunt vs such grace as wee may neuer ceasse to followe him whither soeuer hee calleth vs, and in the meane while to beare with our infirmities, till he haue rid vs quite and cleane of them: and that for as much as we haue now our Lord Iesus Christ, who is the end of the law, and the substance and truth of the Sacramentes that hee hath giuen vs, it may please him to graunt vs the grace to be so washed in our hartes through the power of the holy Ghost, as all our filthinesse may be purged and cleansed, so as in the end we may be wholy transformed into his glory. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

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19 Therefore loue the straunger: for you your selues haue beene straungers in the land of Egypt.

20 Thou shalt feare the Lorde thy God, and serue him, and sticke to him, and sweare by his name.

21 Hee is thy praise, hee is thy God, who hath doone those great and terrible thinges for thee, which thine eyes haue seene.

WE sawe yesterday, that to haue a right zele and affection in seruing GOD, wee must bee sure that the religion which wee holde of, is good and allowed of him. For so long as we stand in doubt, it is vnpossible for vs to goe on with a free courage: we shall alwayes goe limping and as constrained: and if there bee any earnest minde in vs, the same proceedeth of an insensibleness, and not for that wee bee giuen in good earnest to serue the GOD whom wee knowe not. And therefore wee must bee well and dewly instructed, eare wee can bee disposed to doe well. And that is the cause why Moses saith expresly heere, that the GOD which vttered himselfe by the Law, and shewed himselfe afore to the Patriarkes, is the God of Gods, and that there is not any other to bee sought: insomuch that although wee were very well disposed, and that wee were neuer so full of deuotion (as they say:) yet should all that euer wee Rom.14.23. were able to doe bee nothing woorth, without faith. Therefore wee must bee sure and knowe, that wee doe not any thing in vaine, nor at aladuenture: but that we followe Gods will, and that he liketh well of our dooinges.

Now Moses hauing tould the people, that this Lawe was the Lawe of the liuing God; addeth now further, *that hee is great, strong, and terrible.* For wee see how men take leaue to despise God, and ouersotte themselues so much in their pride and presumption, as they cannot bee brought to any subiection. To the ende therefore that men should not dally with such a Lord, he sayth expresly that the God which willed his Lawe to bee publshed vnto them at that tyme, is great, mighty, & dreadfull. His terming of him *Great*, is to shew what honour is dew to him. His terming of him *strong* or *mightie*, is to withhold men from standing against him. And his terming of him *terrible* or *dreadfull*, is to make vs knowe that if he doe but touch vs with his hand, wee must needes be vndone. Therefore let vs beware we despise him not: and when he calleth vs before his Maiestie, let vs tremble and quake for feare, that we may come with right humilitie. Thus do we now see Moseses meaning. And therefore let vs marke, that if we wil direct our liues aright, wee must haue pure doctrine, that our religion may be grounded vppon Gods truth, so as wee may be sure that the doctrine which we professe, is infallible, & therewithall we must beware that when we know God, we set not light by him, but ỳ our knowing of him doe bring a lowelines with it, so as we submit our selues wholly to the honoring of him ỳ is so high and incomprehensible, Iob.41.16. before whom the very Angels themselues doe tremble. Ye see then how the thing which wee haue to mark, is ỳ men shal neuer know God, vntill they haue gotten such feeling of the infinite glory that is in him, as maketh them to stoope, yea & to make none account at al of themselues, that they may giue ouer themselues wholly to the honoring & seruing of him. But this is very yll put in vre. For euen they that make greatest boast of their profiting in the Gospell, can skill to babble well ynough, & they beare themselues in hand ỳ they be iolly fellowes, when they can prattle at pleasure, though it be without any reuerence at all. And we see how the holy scripture is shamefully abused nowe adayes by a number of mens discourfing of it as it were but of a fable, or to shew the fineneſſe of their wit, by raunging into curious and vnprofitable questions. Thus ye see how Gods word is abused now adayes in mens pleasures, without any feare or reuerence, for want of cõsidering that which Moses telleth here, that is to wit, ỳ when we resort vnto God, wee must bethinke vs of the dreadfull Maiestie that is in him, that it may bridle vs and holde vs in subiection to him, and make vs to yeeld him such honour, as to be abashed at his speaking to vs, vntill we haue conceiued what he saith to vs & vpon the knowledge thereof, to be ready and forward in obeying the same, without any gainsaiyng. And so ye see what we haue to gather vpõ this text, where he saith ỳ the God which hath vttered himselfe by the Law, is great & terrible.

Certaine it is that GOD intendeth not to driue vs away from him, but rather to win vs to him by gentlenes. But yet must we bee fayne to bee tamed, bicause of the pride that is in vs, least wee growe bold to offend him, and cannot finde in our hearts to be inured to his yoke, than the which there is not any thing more hard for vs to doe. Wee must (I say) bee first subdued by the feare or terrour that Moses speaketh of here, before wee can conceiue Gods goodnesse. But yet must it be so tempered, as we shunne not his good instruction, ne bee so dismaied as to refuse Gods word out of hand; but as it may be as a preparatiue, to make vs good scholers, and to drawe our wittes to such a teachableneſſe, as all that euer we haue of nature may be done away, and nothing may hinder vs to receiue his doctrine without gainsaying, but ỳ his word (besides that wee loue it) may also bee reuerenced at our handes, and we follow it by submitting our selues to it alwayes and in all cases.

Now after that Moses hath said so, he addeth *that God hath no respect of person, nor receiueth any rewards.* Whereas he saieth ỳ he hath no respect of persons, his meaning is that there is no fauor to be had at his hand for the things that men are willingly mooued with. For this word *Person* betokeneth the outward appearance. It is not taken here nor in any other places of the scripture, for ỳ which we meane by the word person when we say, Lo here is one person, Lo here are two persons: but it is taken for riches, pouertie, birth, nobilitie, or honour. All things therefore ỳ carie an outward showe before men, to moue vs to fauor them or to hate them, to honour them or despyse them, all those things (I say) are comprehended vnder the word Person, for they be

as vitors. And after that maner is it sayd that God accepteth no mans person. To what purpose now doeth Moses speake thereof? It is bicause that the great ones perceiuing themselues to bee borne out by the world, thinke they may doe as much before God, & thereupon become proude. If a man haue once won credit, so as mē dare not open their mouthes against his misbehauiour, but he dasheth thē out of countenance as many as stand against him: he beares himselfe in hand ỹ he may beare as great sway with God, & thereupon playes ỹ prince among them. That is the cause why a nūber ouershoote themselues, & cast away all feare of God. For when they see men feare them & stand in awe of them, or whē they see men commend them and fauour them: Then they thinke they haue won the gole, then they fal to triumphing, & they beare themselues in hand ỹ they should no more bee called to account. Now bicause men ouershoote themselues after ỹ fashion: Moses summoneth them to gods Ps.143. iudgement, which is done according to trueth, after which maner S. Paul speaketh of it where he expoundeth this same saying, ỹ God hath no respect of persons. He iudgeth truly (saith he) according to the deede & according to righteousnesse, so as men must not thinke they shall fare euer the better for their alleaging this or that.

Furthermore he signifieth therewithall, ỹ God is not contented with eyseruice, but hath respect to the trueneſſe of the heart, & not to ỹ outward seeming of things, as is said in the first booke of Samuel. And so we haue to marke, ỹ although a 1. Sam. 9. man be great to the worldward, yet he must not lift vp his head or his necke against God. For they shal gaine nothing by it, bicause all ỹ greatnes of the world, is but as smoke before him. And on the otherside they ỹ are vnderlings, must not thinke that God will beare with them the more for ỹ, as they now and then moue mortall men to compassion thereby. Therefore away with all these things that muster afore our eyes, & whereby we be moued to loue or hatred: for all this is neither heere nor there before God: When we come before him, the first thing ỹ he will loke vpon, is our harts: and although they be now wrapped vp, and (to our owne seeming) we haue lurking holes to hide vs in: yet shall all be laid open. Therefore let vs not beguile our selues in ỹ behalfe. Again, let vs consider, that God will iudge according to ỹ truth of the deede. We may well face out matters for a while, as we do bicause we be naturaly giuen to hipocrisie: but al ỹ paintings and all ỹ gay colours ỹ we pretend as now, shalbe wiped quite & cleane away when we come once before God. Therefore let vs walke vprightly & with a pure hart, & in especially let vs rule all our workes by his law, knowing ỹ he hath no respect of persons, & let ỹ bridle vs all. Let such as are in authority & of power to grieue ỹ inferior & weaker sorte, forbeare to do so. And on the otherside let the weaker beare in minde, that God will not faile to iudge them for all that, bicause he is not an accepter of persons: & therefore let vs bring nothing with vs but righteousnesse & soundnesse of conscience before him, for nothing will passe for payment but onely that.

It is not without cause, that Moses addeth yet further, *that God taketh no rewards.* If a man aske vs whether God be like mortal iudges that wil be corrupted with bribes & money: truely there is none of vs all but wil say no: yea and it is such a blasphemie to say otherwise, ỹ euen the wickedst persons ỹ are would abhorre it. For they woulde say, what hath God to do with gold and siluer? Is God corruptible? But yet for all that, wee ceasse not to deeme that thing of him which we know to be false. And how so? Bicause ỹ as we see that worldly iudges are corrupted, insomuch that if a mā grease them in ỹ hand, they wil suffer themselues to be caried away, and whereas they had done him wrong afore, they will nowe doe him right, & they be to be bound & chaunged euery way: we beare our selues in hand ỹ God will bee dealt with after ỹ same maner. We will not speak it with open mouth: but surely men would neuer be so bold to doe euill, if they did not transfigure God, & beare themselues in hand ỹ he is plyable, & such a one as wil be won by rewards. But let vs come to the ordinarie custome of al ages. What is the meanes wherewith men thinke to pacifie God in ỹ Popedome, but by setting vp of tapers, by burning of perfumes, & by doing such other pretie trifles? It seemeth to them ỹ he shold hold himselfe contented with such payments, as if a man brought a bribe to an earthly iudge to corrupt him & to win him wall. But this had not his first beginning in Poperie. The Iewes were deceiued therwith. Also ỹ heathen men had ỹ same superstitiō, notwithstanding ỹ some of them misliked it, I meane some of thē whose bookes wee haue, insomuch ỹ they haue cried out against it, saying: what intend ye to do ye wretched folke? When ye haue giuen your selues to deceit, theft, open wrong, cruelie, extortion, & all maner of wickednesse, ye come by & by to reconcile your selues vnto God. And howe? By bringing him some part of ỹ bootie. But forasmuch as ỹ guise of ỹ Popedome is best knowne vnto vs, let vs see what is done there. Whē a mā hath pilled & polled his fill, if he giue some Cope to ỹ Church, if he build some chappel, if he found some Masses, if he cause some puppets to be made, or if he doe some other such gewgawe: thats a fellow alone, God is well recompenced at his hand, he needes not to doubt of ỹ forgiuenes of all his sinnes before God: If he doe but offer him a peece of the bootie, he is wel ynough contented, his mouth is so stopt ỹ he cā demand no more. In deede men wil not say thus, but yet is it so neuertheleſſe. For whereof comes it ỹ the wicked surmise all their wicked deeds to be couered, but of ỹ they imagin themselues to haue compounded w God, so as he knowes not what to say any more, when they haue once as it were bribed him after that sort with some present? Now then bicause the world doth daly so with God, & beareth it self in hand that it can agree with him for rewards: Moses saith on the contrarie, that God is not like mortall men, nor will yeeld a whitte for all that: and therfore he wold not haue men to beguile themselues. For if we desire to be reconciled vnto him Persius Satyra 2.

when we haue offended him; there is none other way for vs, but to cast our selues downe, and to come to him with a sory heart for it. For as it is
Psal. 51.19. said in the psalme, that is the sacrifice which hee accepteth aboue all: And when he receiueth vs into his fauor, let vs assure our selues that it is for ỹ paimentes sake, which was made in the person of our lord Iesus Christ. Wherfore let vs not presume to bring him any thing of our own, but let vs borrow ellewhere, that which we haue not in our selues. Yet for all this, it behoueth vs to hate sin, if we meane ỹ God should admit vs into his
1. Cor. 11. 31. fauour. Yea and we must condemne the euill ỹ we know to be in our selues, if we intend to be acquite of it. And therfore let vs not come any more with our owne vaine fancies, vpon hope to pacifie God with such pelting trash, or by likening him to a corrupted Iudge, that will haue his eyes blinded with rewardes: let vs not imagin any such thing in him, but let vs walke soundly.

Nowe then wee see howe Moses intent was to bridle vs, by shewing vs what the nature of God is: and he exhorteth vs to feare him bicause he is terrible. And again, for as much as he regardeth no mans person, let vs put away all pride & presumption. Let the great ones know ỹ they shall gain nothing by their stoutnes, but ỹ al creatures must stoope to him. Finally let vs not think that when we haue offended God, we shal please him again with this fond shift of offering him some amends for it. For he doth so greatly abhorre & loath sin, as he can by no meanes away with it, neither is there any payment in the world ỹ can make satisfactiō for it. What is to be done then, but to resort simply & plainely to out God, submitting our selues vnto him, & seeking nothing else at his hand but to be reformed by him, so as al ỹ euer he misliketh may be corrected & cast downe in vs? Furthermore when as it is saide ỹ God taketh no rewards, we bee done to vnderstand, ỹ (as much as in vs lieth) we defile ỹ blood of our Lord Iesus Christ, which is the only payment & satisfaction for our sinnes, when we bee bolder to sin vnder pretence of reconciling our selues vnto God. They (I say) ỹ take such libertie to doe euill, defile the blood of our Lorde Iesus Christ, as if they trampled it vnder foote. For to say ỹ when we haue done a fault, we may be discharged of it by bringing some raunsome or recompence for it, were a plaine declaration ỹ we loue not our gold & siluer at all. If a man shoulde breake all lawe bicause he is sure he hath to doe with corrupt iudges, whose fauour he shal win w his purse, and yet notwithstanding for all his offending after ỹ sort, had no care howe he wasted & consumed his money, men would say he were witles. But we haue not any other means wherby to be reconciled vnto God, than ỹ only blood of our Lord Iesus Christ. Now then if we fall to lashing of it out after ỹ fashion wout discretion, is it not a token of too villanous contempt? Yes. And therfore let vs learne to hold our selues to ỹ inestimable price ỹ was paide for our raunsome: let vs learn (I say) to hold our selues in the feare of God, so as we giue not our selues ouer vnto euil. And therewall let vs learne also, to behaue our selues in such wise towardes our neighbort, as ỹ mightie greeue not the weeke and feeble. For although we may scape in this world, yet when we come before the heauenly iudge, we shall be punished double for our abusing of our power & credite after ỹ fashion. According wherevnto S. Paule warneth maisters ỹ they should not mistreat their seruants: for God (saith he) iudgeth without respect of persons. Wherby he sheweth, that such as are set in high estate & authoritie, ought to abstaine vtterly from al crueltie & pride. For why? They may well be serued of the same sorte themselues. And it is not for the to think themselues to haue ỹ better hand bicause that as now they haue ỹ vauntage & are in better degree for al ỹ geere shalbe dasht, when it cōmeth before God. Thus ye see what we haue to beare in minde.

Now for a further declaration he addeth, *that God doeth right to the fatherlesse, the widowe and the straunger: & that God hath a care of the straunger, in giue him clothing & foode.* Yea & he telleth ỹ Israel that they had bin straungers in ỹ land of Egypt, & therefore they ought to be mindefull of ỹ state of theirs, that they might vse all maner of gentleneesse towards straungers. This serueth for the proofe of ỹ doctrine which I touched euen now, ỹ is to wit, ỹ god hath no respect of persons. And in ỹ respect doth Moses say, ỹ the widowes, fatherlesse, and straungers shal be vexed in this world, they shall haue none to beare them out, men shall suffer the widowes to be troubled, the fatherlesse shalbe made a pray, straungers shalbe laid open to all iniuries, & no mā shall withstand it. And why? For in as much as they beare no countenance in this world, nor haue any kinsfolke or friends to maintaine them: it seemeth ỹ they may be put to ỹ bearing of al things: ỹ is the custome of ỹ world. But contrariwise it is said here, ỹ God is a defender of the fatherlesse, a maintainer of the widowes, & a protector of straungers. This is vtterly against ỹ cōmon custome of men. For (as I haue said alreadie) men are giuen to pleasuring of such as may stād them in some stead again: Kinsfolk & friends will help one another, & in the meane while poore people are forlaid. But see here how God dealeth ỹ cleane contrarie way. When he sees men trust in their own staies, and in their own strength, he leaueth them alone, as if he should say to them, Very well, ply what ye can doe of your selues. For commonly when means are profered vs in this world whereby to helpe vs, we despise God, & we beare our selues in hand, that wee may well ynough forbeare him. Not that wee will so say; but for as much as fewe folke doe call vppon God when the world fauoureth them: therefore doth God also make no account of them. Behold, it is the widowe, the straunger, and the fatherlesse, that are constrained to make their mone vnto him, and when they haue looked about them, they finde no fauour nor helpe among men. They shalbe dalyed withall, and although some fayre promises be made them, all is but holywater of the court as they terme it: in so much that the poore soules wote not where to become. This kinde of intreatance driueth them to God, & he par-

hearkeneth to their sighes & complaints. And so we see, that by such examples, Moses hath well confirmed the lesson which he had set downe; namely that God respecteth no persons. For the things that are despised in the world, are precious in his sight: and whom men hold scorne to bestowe a looke vpon; them doth he giue good care vnto.

Sith it is so, let vs mark for the first point, that if wee vexe such as are without defence in the world, God will set himselfe as an aduersarie against vs. And surely, were wee well perswaded therof, we wold be more afraid to offend a poore fatherlesse child, a widow, or a straunger, than to offend those that are best friended, and are able to reuenge themselues to the worldwarde. But what? Our vnbeliefe bewrayes it selfe in that behalf: in so much that if there be a man that is riche, mightie and well propped vp, we dare not withstand him. And although he haue doone vs some wrong, yet we put it vp meekly, & dare not complaine of it, & much lesse dare we lift vp our hand against him. But as for a poore man, we will not rane till hee haue doone vs some wrong or outrage, we wil be at hoste with him aforehand. For why? Wee feare not that he will be euen with vs; he may not bee so bolde as once to murmur against vs. And if he doe, wee can put a barre in his way, with who are you sir? He shall obtayne no right in Law. And if he doe, yet shall he haue the worse end of ỹ staffe. Thus stand we in feare of men if they be armed with any power, but in ỹ meane while we feare not God, who declareth himselfe to be the defender of all poore folkes ỹ are destitute of help. If we beleeued ỹ holy scripture, surely this only one saying of Moses would more abash vs, than all the worldly consideratiõs that could befall vs. On the contrary part, when we be so bold in troubling poore folks; it is a toke that we believe not any whit of al that is conteined in the holy scripture, and that we bee worse than heathen folke: And yet for all that, it is the comon fashion of ỹ world. But herby it appereth, ỹ nowadays vnbeleef ouerflowcth ỹ whole earth, like a water flud. In deede it is a horrible thing: but yet is it so, & it cannot be denied. What is to be done then? Let vs loke into our selues. If the Armes of a common weale or of a prince bee set vpon a house, or vpon a peece of land, no man dareth presume into it, for it were a breaking of his alegance and not a priuate offence. Behold, God setteth his armes or badge vpon ỹ widowe, the fatherles, and the straunger, & he telleth vs that hee hath taken them into his protection. Now if a man fal to troubling of them, & deale outragiously with them: is it not an open despising of God, and a defying of him, as it were to bid him battaile? In deede we wil not take it so, but God wil not referre himselfe to our vaine opinion and fancie. Whatsoeuer come of it, let vs marke well, that although the widowes bee shaken off as to the worldward, though fatherles children bee put to the spoyle, though poore straungers be skorned and troden vnder foote: yet doth God set neuertheles store by them, but hath his eyes continually vpon them, and will surely maintayne them. And therefore vnles we purpose to haue God our aduersary, and that he should shew himselfe to bee our deadly enemy; let vs abstaine from all wrong dealing, extorsion outrage, deceite, and malice, towards those that are friendlesse in respect of the world, and vtterly destitute of all shiftes, and after a sorte set open to the spoyle, as I said afore. Let vs not oppresse them, least God set himselfe against vs, & shew himselfe to be their continuall shield. Mark well this first fruite which wee haue to gather of the said lesson that was giuen to the Iewes in old tyme, to the end that if we feare not the punishment of men, we may yet be afraid of the determinate sentence that God setteth downe: which is, that hee will not ouerslip the wrongfull trubling of poore folke, without shewing of himselfe to be on their side, and that he hath taken their quarell in hand, according to this saying, *that he will doe them right.*

He saies not, only that he loueth them, or that he pitieth them; but that he will doe them right. Now then, if we see that the Iudges on earth do but mocke poore folks when they come to them for succour, and ỹ in stead of helping them they do but skorne them, let vs vnderstand that those Iudges must come before the heauenly Iudge, who will surely punish both those whome he had put in commission to defend poore folke, and also those that haue abused the liberty which they had in this world, by dooing the more euill because they saw they might scape vnpunyshed. God therefore looketh vpon them, and yet maketh as though he saw them not, for a time; so as if men misintreat poore folkes, be they widowes, fatherlesse, or straungers, in deede he setteth not himselfe against their dooings at the first, but when hee hath let them take their pleasure a while, then layes he his hand vppon all such as haue passed their bounder in doing outrage to the feeble and little ones; and specially vppon such as haue not doone their office when they were in authoritie to doe Iustice, nor haue succoured poore soules when they were oppressed. For God must needes redresse such enormities, and shew such persons their negligence, by setting himselfe against them, as against the corrupters of the lawe when it was put into their hand. And so ye see what Moses ment, in saying ỹ God doth right to such as are wrongfully trode vnder foote, and are not regarded in the world.

By the way, wee haue also great comforte to receiue of this text: so that if wee be destitute of worldly helpes, our God here taketh vs into his tuition; yea and he taryeth not till we come vnto him, but telleth vs that he is our defence, and ỹ he will be our maintainer. Now then although poore folk be wronged, and haue neuer so much violence offered them, so as they be in maner troden vnder foote: haue they not wherewith to content thẽselues, sith they know ỹ God looketh vpon them with pitie, and will in ỹ end stretch foorth his mighty hand to succour them? True it is ỹ they must bee exercised with patience so lõg as pleaseth God: but yet if they be not too vnthankfull, they haue well wherwith to content

themselues, in that they be sure ỹ God neuer forgetteth them, but succoureth them, & keepeth a register of all ỹ wrongs ỹ are done vnto them, to bring thē to account in time conuenient. Howbeit to the intent wee may inioy this comfort, let vs note also, ỹ it is not ynough for men to be fatherlesse or straungers, or for womē to be husbandlesse; but wee must also be truely distressed before God, so as we humble our selues & resort to him for rescue whē men afflict vs wrongfully. For if a straūger be prouder than he ỹ is at home in his owne countrey and among his friendes: it is in vaine for him to trust ỹ God wil be ỹ defender of his welfare. When a straunger is so lordly, ỹ he will take more vpon him than ỹ partie that hath wherewith to helpe himselfe: he may goe seeke his maintenaunce elswhere than at Gods hand; for he shal not finde it there. But if a straūger perceiuing himselfe destitute of all worldly helpe, & yet ỹ God is on his side, do call vpō him & put himself wholly into his hands; surely then shal he finde at length, ỹ Gods promising to doe right to ỹ straūger, is not in vaine. If a widow play the shee diuell, in troubling and vexing of other folks, and ỹ there is more to do with her than ẇ a dosen men: let her not thinke ỹ God will trouble himselfe for her. But if a widow be helplesse, & behaue her selfe meekely, & seeke no further than to liue peaceably with al men: such a one wil the heauenly Iudge receiue into his protection. In like case standeth it with the fatherlesse. If they giue themselues to naughtines, shaking off all yoke, & become vnthrifts in spite of God & the world; they beguile themselues if they think that God fauoreth them, vnder pretence of this doctrine. And therefore let vs marke well, ỹ this is set downe expressely for such as suffer afflictions patiently, & auenge not themselues, but put their case into Gods hands. Although then that such folke be scorned of the world, and poynted at with the finger, and triumphed at by such as treade them vnder foote: yet doeth God take their case in hand, and will surely shewe it how long so euer he delay. Wherefore let vs learne hereby, to comfort our selues in our afflictions: which is, by being tamed and made to stoope, so as we seeke to be pitied at Gods hand, & referre our whole case vnto him, casting all our cares & sorowes into his lap. And again, let vs be wel aduised, ỹ although the world giue vs leaue to doe euil, so as we may vex & trouble men at our pleasure; yet shal we not scape Gods wrath: wel may we wrangle with him, but it shall not boote vs at all. Thus ye see what we haue to remember vpon that text.

To be short, let vs marke, that here Moses intended to commend equitie and vprightnes vnto vs. I say he sheweth vs how our Lord will bee serued at our handes: namely by behauing our selues plainely with our neighbors, so as we offer no violence or wrong to any body, & specially to the weaker sort, and to such as haue no maintenance at mās hand. God then will not haue vs to serue him with Ceremonies, but wee must deale iustly and vprightly, so as we yeelde euery man his right. That is the true seruing of God, as is shewed vs oftentimes in the holy scripture. And frō thence also is it, ỹ the Prophets haue drawen these sayings, That God requireth mercie & not sacrifice; That God wil haue vs to liue amōg our neighbours without doing harme to any body; That he wil haue al violence to ceasse, & that he wil haue al crueltie & deceite to be farre frō vs. The Prophets haue good store of such exhortations: & the fountaine whereout of they haue fetched them, is this doctrine of Moses, ỹ God wil not be serued with I wote not what superstitions as men are wont to do, who vse much pompe & gloriousnes in seruing God with faire temples, goodly pictures, gay imagerie, sweete perfumes, ringing of bels, setting vp of tapers, & such other pelting trash. They beare themselues in hand ỹ God delighteth in such things: & that when they play vpō their Organs, they make him to daūce as if he were a little babe. But let not vs beate our heads about such small trifles; for God wil be serued ẇ truth, righteousnes, & soundnes of heart. Againe he will haue vs to indeuour to serue our neighbors: for we haue nothing else ỹ is worth the bringing vnto him: but he wil haue vs to communicate togither, so as euery of vs according to his abilitie, do straine his wits to succour them ỹ haue need of help, & in any wise to beware that we take not libertie to doe any hurt or harme to any body. Now then let vs marke wel the meane of seruing our God according to his wil, that we trāsforme him not by our vaine folly, by taking our selues in hand, ỹ he is wel honored when we bring in our own pelting trash, as it were to dāze his eyes withall, which thing is impossible.

Now after that Moses hath shewed that God is terrible, and that it is not for vs to dally with so great a Lorde, who can well ynough hamper vs if we rebel against him; and therefore that it behoueth vs to liue vprightly, & to pitie ỹ poore, & to succor them ỹ are oppressed, so as we offer no crueltie nor tyrannie to ỹ weaker sort, & to such as are destitute of friends to support them: moreouer all this he addeth, *that God is the praise of his people.* And it is to ỹ end to win their heartily gentlenes & friendly dealing. And herein we se ỹ God omitteth not any thing whereby to draw vs to him, but ỹ after he hath vsed threatnings & put vs in feare, to make vs to stoope & to stand in awe of him, he commeth like a father ỹ should flatter his childe, & vseth myld & gentle words rather than his fatherly authoritie. That ye se how our Lord laboreth by al meanes to win vs, & therfore so much ỹ more to blame are we, and ỹ lesse to be excused, if we cannot be bowed neither by faire meanes nor by foule, seeing that our Lord trieth al ỹ waies to the wood, to draw vs to him. Therefore doeth Moses purposely say, *That God is the praise of his people, & that he had done great & terrible things for their sakes.* For this cause he saith, first of all that God is their praise. And by that speech hee meaneth, that when wee once know God, and he hath shewed himself to vs by his word; his will is that wee should glorifie him. Marke that for one point.

Secondly he putteth ỹ people in remembrāce *of the great miracles that he had done for their sakes*

going out of the land of Egypt. For they were as masks or tokens of Gods goodnes, so as ỳ people could not but be conuicted of vnthankfulnesse, forasmuch as God had vttered himselfe as familiarly as was possible, to shewe himselfe fauorable to Abrahams posteritie. To be short, we see how God not onely vseth his dominion & right of soueraintie, which hee hath ouer vs to make vs subiect to his lawe and commaundementes: but also commeth to vs as a father, and vttereth as mield and gracious louingnesse towardes vs, as can be; and all to the end to breake the hardnesse of our harts. Insomuch that if wee bee not moued at his maiestie, or if we yeelde him not such reuerence as we ought to doe in respect of his soueraintie ouer vs: at least wise yet ought we to be meekened, seeing he stoopeth to vs, & cõmeth downe frõ his seate vnto vs, as if he should say, Wel sirs, assure yourselues I am your father, and therefore I pray you consider well the good that I haue done you, and whereby I haue witnessed my fauour towardes you, and let it moue you at leastwise to loue and serue me. That is the very principall meaning of Moses.

But yet by the way, let vs marke also that God is neuer duely honored at our hands, vnles we lay all our glorie vpon him. For wheras he is termed our prayse, by ỳ word he bereaueth vs of al glorie, & sheweth vs ỳ there is not any thing in vs, whereof we ought to be proude. Therefore let a man set as much store by himselfe as he listeth, yet in the end he shal come to shame, so as he shall perceiue there is not one drop of goodnesse in himselfe. What is to be done then? Let vs resort right forth to our God, to seeke al goodnes in him, & let vs glorifie him for shewing himselfe so liberall towards vs, ỳ wee may also make our boast thereof, according as it is saide by Ieremie, that the rich man must forget his riches, and the strong man his strength, & the wise man his wisdome, and all that euer is of man must be beaten downe, that wee may fetch our glory at Gods hand, knowing that it is he that executeth righteousnes, iudgement, and mercie. Thus yee see what wee haue to remember in this worde, where Moses saith that God is the praise of his people. And if we be not moued by that which is tolde vs in the holy scripture, at least wise yet let vs open our eyes, and let the often experience of Gods benefits frame vs to such humility as wee may not presume to commend ourselues any more, but onely haue our mouthes open to praise and magnifie the thinges that wee shall haue receiued at Gods hand. For sith he sheweth vs so many waies, that all our welfare consisteth in him, and that it commeth only of him, if we wil shut our eyes at it like a sort of blockeheads, and vouchsafe not ne list not to hold our selues to the thing that is throughly knowen and apparãt: surely we shalbe conuicted of bereauing God of his praise, & of bringing him to nothing as much as in vs lieth, for his benefits are infinit towards vs. And therfore let vs learn by this lesson, to acknowledge the benefits throughly which God hath bestowed vpon vs: for they be a sufficient busines to keepe vs occupied. If we gather our wits about vs to consider Gods goodnes towards vs, we shal find that we ought to seeke our whole praise no where els than only in him. And for that cause doth Moses adde, *Is it he that hath done the great and terrible things which your eyes haue seene.* As if he shold say, God needeth not to seek here & there for record, or for iudges to arreigne you: for (spite of your teeth) it shalbe proued to your faces, that your God is great, mightie, and terrible. For you were ỳ miserablest creatures in the world, you were in bondage like bruit beasts; and your God loued you so deerely, that he hath stretched out his arme against the Realme of Egypt, that stately & excellent Realme, ỳ realme so renoumed, wherein all the wisedome of the world was inclosed, insomuch ỳ hee hath made more account of your welfare, than of ỳ Realme. Sith it is so, know ye that it is not for you to glory any more of your selues, but to glorie onely of him. Assure your selues ỳ looke howe manie benefits you haue receiued at his hand, so many records haue you to be wray your lewdnes and vnthankfulnes, if ye acknowledge them not vnto him. And so by the example that is set vs downe here, let vs learne to acknowledge gods gratious goodnes, & to lay it vp in minde, and to make a good memorial thereof, & to call it often to remembrance, that wee may be prouoked thereby to yeld al glory vnto God, & to confesse that for our parts we be fillie and wretched creatures, in whom there is nothing but condemnation, and therefore there belongeth nothing to vs but wrath, & it is only God to whom all the glory & praise of our welfare perteyneth. Wherefore let it suffice vs that he is ours, and that hauing giuen himself vnto vs, he vouchsafeth also to make his benefits common vnto vs. Rom. 8. 32.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the presence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs to perceiue them throughly, and that therwithal we may so know the greatnes of his maiestie, as it may moue vs to submit our selues to the obeying of him, and draw vs to such subiection, as we may frame our selues to his wil, and bee no more intangled and wrapped in worldly things; but that we may bee so rid of them, as all our seeking may be to dedicate our selues wholy vnto him, ỳ he may acknowledge & accept vs for his people, & haue his hãd alwayes stretched out to succor vs at our neede. And that in the meane while we may patiently beare al the aduersities that he shall sende vs for the tryal of our obedience, & so apply our selues thereunto, as wee may not fayle to take comfort in his goodnes, and to rest vppon the same, til he haue made vs to feele ỳ things perfectly, whereof hee hath giuen vs a tast alreadie in this transitorie life. That it may please him to grant this grace, not onely to vs, but also to al people & nations of the earth. &c.

On Wednesday the xviij of September. 1555.

The Lxxiiij. Sermon, in which the laſt verſe of the tenth Chapter is expounded, and this is the firſt Sermon vpon the eleuenth Chapter.

22 Thy fathers went downe into Egypt, in number threeſcore and ten ſoules: and now the Lord thy God hath made thee in multitude as the ſtars of the skie.

The eleuenth Chapter.

LOue the Lorde thy God therefore, and keepe his appointmentes, Ordinances, Lawes, and Commaundementes for euer.

2 And conſider you this day (for I ſpeake not to your children which haue neither knowen nor ſeene [them]) the inſtruction of the Lord your God, his greatneſſe, his mightie hande, and his ſtretched out arme,

3 And his wonders and workes which hee did in the middes of Egypt, vnto Pharao king of Egypt and all his Land:

4 And what he did to the hoſt of the Egyptians, vnto their horſes & Charets, when the Lord brought the waters of the read ſea vpon their faces when they purſued you, and how the Lord deſtroyed them vnto this day.

HAue alreadie ſhewed ỹ meaning of Moſes, how that by rehearſinge ỹ wonders ỹ GOD had wrought for the deliuering of his people out of captiuity he ſhewed the Iewes that they ought to haue bin the more conformable to him, in reſpect of the fauor and loue which he had ſhewed to them at al times. For he had alwayes ſhewed by his doings, that his promiſing to take Abraham & all his ofspring into his protection, was not in vain. Ye ſee then an euident proofe ỹ God hauing receiued Abrahams ofspring into his free fauour, hath alſo confirmed it by deedes & experience. And thereupon it is to be concluded, that if that people had not beene altogether froward, they ought of reaſon to haue ſerued God. And that is the point that Moſes ſhot at. Conſider with your ſelues (ſaith he) if ye be not bounde to giue your ſelues wholy to the obeying of your God. For *he hath multiplied you as the ſtars of the skie.* Through his gratious goodnes you are become ſo great a nũber, ỹ euen you your ſelues may be aſtoniſhed at it. To be ſhort, if ye look vpõ your body, ỹ is to ſay your ſtare; you cãnot but ſee ſuch a wõderful fauor of your God, as you could neuer haue once looked for or hoped. Sith it is ſo, there is now no excuſe for you if you cannot find in your hartes to glorifie his name, ſeeing he hath ſhewed him ſelfe ſo good & merciful towards you. That is ỹ ſũme of ỹ matter ỹ Moſes intended to ſet down.

Gen. 15. 5.

And he ſpeaketh expreſly of the ſtars of the skie, becauſe of the promiſe. For God ſpeaking to his ſeruãt Abrahã, ſhewed him in a viſion ỹ multitude of the ſtars, which is infinite. Euen as they be paſt reckening (ſaith god) ſo alſo ſhal thy ſeed be. Now then the meaning of Moſes in this text is, ỹ Gods ſaying ſo was not in vain, & that Abraham was not diſappointed of his hope in reſting altogether vpon ỹ promiſe: for we ſee the thing performed before our eies. And this is wel worth the noting. For if God haue done vs any good, we wil indeed for maners ſake ſay it was he ỹ did it: but to be throughly perſuaded of it in our hart, that is a very hard thing. Therefore is it neceſſarie in reſpect of ſuch rudenes, ỹ we ſhould be condemned by Gods word, to the end we may better conſider of his hand & power. As for example: if we had neuer read any whit of holy ſcripture, & yet notwithſtanding god ſhould haue deliuered vs frõ ſome aduerſitie: to ſay ỹ truth our own naturall wit would put vs in mind, to bind our ſelues indetted to God for ỹ ſame. But when we be exerciſed in the holy ſcriptures, and haue ſeene there ỹ God reſerueth to himſelf the ſtate of death, & that it is in him to ſuccor vs, yea euen after a ſtrange faſhion when al ſeemeth to be vtterly forlorne; ſo as if we call vpon him, he will heare our ſighes: the performance therefore maketh it the eaſier for vs to conceiue his goodnes, becauſe we be taught aforehand, the ſame thing which we come to find by experience. For why? The word ỹ went afore, is as a lampe to giue vs light. Of our owne nature we be as it were blind. True it is that God inlightneth vs by his holy ſpirit: but yet are we ſtill in darknes & cannot ſee two fingers bredth afore vs. But whẽ God teacheth vs by his word, ỹ is as a lampe to guide vs & ſhew vs our way. Therfore let vs marke wel ỹ profit our ſelues by the benefits ỹ God beſtoweth vpõ vs, it is good, yea & needful for vs to be put in mind of his promiſes, & to compare the time when God had promiſed it, & now he hath performed it: here we ſee a teſtimony ỹ he is alwaies faithful in his ſayings, & ỹ a man may ſafely reſt vpõ his truth. That is ỹ thing which Moſes ſheweth vs in this text,

text, in that he speaketh not simply of the great multitude whereinto the people had bin increased, but also saith ỳ God had multiplied them as the starres of the skie, to the intent that euery mã should think vpon ỳ promise which was vniuersally knowen among them, & thereby confirme themselues, inasmuch as God had so kept touch with his seruãt Abraham: & euery mãn consider thus in himself, Indeed we ought to receiue gods simple & single word, although the effecte of it were not seene. But now that Gods hande & his mouth go ioinly together, so as he hath shewed a true proofe of his presẽce before our eyes, and that he meant not to disappoint the hope of his seruants; we know ỳ our God hath a care of vs, & forgat vs not at such time as we were in the land of Egypt. For ỳ time of the peoples abode there was as a kinde of buriall in their graues, so as it might haue seemed ỳ all Gods promises had bin quite dashed. Whẽ he drew Abraham out of the land ỳ he was borne in, he said vnto him, I giue thee al this land frõ one side to another, to thee & to thine ofspring for euer. And yet for al this, yee see howe Abraham did but soiourne there as a strãger: he was hunted & faine to fleet frõ place to place, & he trotted vp and downe like a poore man that had not a corner to hide him in. The like befel to his sonne Isaac, Iacob was banished thence during al the flower of his youth, & when he returned thither againe, hee was faine to remoue oftentimes in his old age, and in the ende God conueied him away into Egypt. Thus was ỳ house as it were broken vp & cleane banished out of the countrie. And where is the lande of Chanaan which was the heritage ỳ God had promised thẽ? They were bereft of it. Indeed Iacob caused his body to bee conueied thither againe when he was dead: but yet did the people abide still in Egypt, & god seemed to haue mocked thẽ in saying, ye shal inherit this land. But when god brought them again out of the captiuitie & cruell tyranny wherein they were, it was as a rising again frõ the dead, & as a taking of them againe out of their graues. So then, ỳ people are exhorted in this text, to vnderstand that they ought to impute this redemption of theirs to the promise that had beene made long time before.

And we on our side haue generally a very profitable lesson: which is this. As oft as we fal asleep and minde not Gods benefits so sufficiently as might make vs to perceiue his working & power: we must resort to his promises, ỳ they may be as a light vnto vs to shew vs the good way. Let that serue for one point. And now by the way, we see how God vttered his power in multiplying the people after ỳ fashion. For who would haue looked that of threescore & ten persõs there should haue issued seuenhundred thousand & aboue? It is incredible (if wee looke no further than to the course of nature) ỳ in three hũdred yeres, threescore & ten persons shold increase & multiply to so great a number. Had there come of them ten thousand or twentie thousand, it might wel haue bin imputed to the course of nature. But when it came to a hundred thousande, or a two or three hundred thousand, yea & to so huge a number as seuen hundred thousand; al men must needes be abashed at it, & it was not to be thought ỳ euer it could haue bin possible. But we must not mesure Gods power by our wit: for it was his wil to work after that strange & vnaccustomed fashion, that men might be driuen to think it to be his worke. For if God worke after an ordinary maner w vs, we be so vnthankful, ỳ we take the thing to happen by chance, or by our own policie, or by some mans fauor, or other meane which we haue fould in ỳ world: & we bereaue God continually of his honour. In deed we wil not say ỳ we purpose any such thing; nay, we protest the cleane contrarie: but yet for al ỳ, men are so wickedly giuen, ỳ they alwaies deface Gods power & goodnesse to the vttermost ỳ they can. God therfeore is faine to bring vs perforce to the acknowledging of his works, so as we must be compelled to confesse ỳ it is he which helpeth & succoureth vs. Let vs mark wel then, ỳ when he multiplied his people after ỳ sort, he meant to work a myracle that had neuer bin looked for, to the intent ỳ men should no more doubt that it was he that spake vnto Abraham, & that he had not in vain promised him to become ỳ defẽder of him & of al his ofspring. Nowadais there ar a sort of skoffers, who to make al things doubtful, wil caui] after this maner: Is it possible ỳ in so short a space of time, threescore & ten persons should grow to so huge a number as seauen hundred thousand? Is it possible? Yea, & if that people had bin increased but after an ordinarie maner, what would they say then? Came not this of other men? & should we then say that god gouerneth vs? Why? ỳ order of nature afordeth as much. After ỳ maner would the mockers prate. And therby we see the lewdnes ỳ is in mẽ. For if God goe not beyond the ordinarie course of nature, they haue no sight at al to discerne his hand, but (to their seeming) it is fortune or their own wisdom, or some inferior meane of ỳ world. And on the other side, if God lift vp his mighty hand, & do a thing beyond mans capacitie, and such as men would haue thought coulde neuer haue bin done: then wil they say, how coms this to passe? And they could find in their harts euen to deface gods power quite & clean, vnder color ỳ it surmounteth their reason & capacity. But for our part, let vs learne to do god so much honor, (for so hee well deserueth) as not to iudge of his workes after our own fansy, specially when they be miraculous.

And here wee haue as it were a looking glasse, wherein to see how God raiseth vp his Church, according also to this his speaking of it by his prophet Esay, Loke backe to the quarrie of stone (saith he) whereout of ye were hewen, haue an eye to the womb of your mother Sara. Loke vpõ Abraham your father: was not he alone? yes, & yet haue I now made you manie in number, as ỳ thing it selfe declareth. In that place God likeneth Saraes womb to a quarrie of stone. See here (saith he) from whence ye be come. Howe is it possible that such a multitude of people as you be nowe growen vnto, shoulde be drawen out of one quarrie of stone? And yet notwithstanding, from thence haue I fetched you, all of you are come

Gen. 15. 5.

Esa. 51. 1. 2.

come from out of that spring. For as for your father Abraham, what was hee? A fillie olde man forworne and broken with yeares. Who would haue looked for such a people from out of him? Nowe then, learne to knowe that it is I which haue so multiplied you, and that you bee beholden to me, for al that euer you haue. Thus ye see ỹ the thing which we haue to gather, is that whē God calleth his Church & giueth it a being, his working is after such a sort in that behalfe, that (as saith Saint Paul in the first chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians) it may well be saide that it is he of whom wee haue our being. And his meaning is not that wee were but created of him as mortall men onely: but that he hath gathered vs together to bee his people, and that he was inclined to the doing thereof, without anie likelihoode giuen on our behalfe. Therefore let vs first and foremost beare well in minde, to be as it were astonished at the power that God hath shewed, so as wee may reuerence the thing that passeth our small capacitie. And therewithal let vs vnderstand, that the maner of Gods raising vp of his Church, is, that where nothing was afore, but men reckened that all shoulde haue gone to wracke: there men are at their wits end to see howe thinges fall out cleane contrarie, as we finde by often experience. True it is that the people which receiue the doctrine of the Gospell, are but a handefull in comparison of them that refuse it: but yet was it not thought, that thinges shoulde euer haue spred so farre abroad as they haue doone. For when God stirred vp the poore Frier, yea euen out of a Cloyster or Cel: who woulde haue thought, that from thence the Gospell shoulde haue beene spredde farre and wide, and that so manie folke woulde haue submitted themselues vnto it? Againe we see that although the whole worlde haue conspired to oppresse this doctrine, and that the power of the enemies thereof bee such, as they be like enough to swallow it vp quite and cleane: yet doth not God cease to augment his Church stil continually. It is seene what crueltie is executed against al her children: & yet notwithstanding she holdeth on stil. Seeing then that in our time God hath gone beyonde all hope and all imagination of man: let vs vnderstand that hee hath renewed the remembrance of that which is spoken here by Moses: namely that out of nothing, it hath pleased him to raise vp a kingdom to himselfe in this worlde, insomuch that at this day there is as great a nūber of his, as euer there was at anie time. If a man compare the children of Abraham, with such as haue some knowledge of the Gospell nowadayes, it is certaine that the number of the present sort is farre the greater. And therefore let vs learne to magnifie ỹ goodnes & power of our God. And to the end ỹ Gods glory may be the greater, let vs vnderstand that we come vp of nothing, & let it be considered ỹ it is he which hath stretched out his hand, so as al must be fathered vpō him, and he must be acknowledged to be the author of all. Thus ye see what we haue to marke vpon that place.

1. Cor. 1. 28. & 2. 6.

Furthermore the people are warned, not to glorie of their owne greatnes, as if it were saide, whatsoeuer you possesse, you haue obteined it at Gods hand, and therefore doe him homage for it with al humilitie. Therefore whensoeuer our Lord increaseth vs, so as we haue greater prosperitie than we looked for: let it not blinde vs, nor shut vp our eyes, but let vs alwayes remember to haue our eyes vppon Gods hand, who had promised to haue pitie vpon vs, & hath also shewed vs it by experience. And so ye see in effect what we haue to marke, where Moses speaketh of the increase of ỹ church. For like as God raiseth vp a people where none was to be seene afore: so also is it his will to repaire his church again with his owne hande. And to be short, the holy scripture sheweth vs, ỹ forasmuch as the Church is ỹ spiritual kingdom of our Lord Iesus Christ: he wil also worke after a marueilous fashion, when ỹ case concerneth ỹ preseruation thereof. Therfore let vs trust in him by all meanes. Let vs not doubte but ỹ he which multiplyed ỹ offspring of Abrahā as the starres of the skie, is as wel able to do ỹ like with vs stil at this day: & therfore let vs not be afraid but that God can wel skil how to set vp his Church again, when it seemeth at ỹ point to be vtterly ouerthrowen. And this is accomplished cheefly in our Lord Iesus Christ, as the scripture sheweth vs. For al ỹ euer was before his cōming was but a shadow of ỹ things ỹ are nowadayes in their perfection. Therfore when ỹ whole world seemeth vnto vs to be vtterly voide of beleeuing & that al is forlorne & as a wast wilderne, let vs loke vp to ỹ starres of heauen, & both consider and hope ỹ our Lord which did once raise vp so huge a multitude out of threescore & ten persons, can likwise do asmuch for his church at this day. And when he hath done it, let it not be vnto vs as a dreame, but let vs be amased & astonished at it, forasmuch as it shal haue surmounted our natural wit and reason. But let vs come now to ỹ conclusion ỹ Moses maketh. *Therefore loue the Lord your God, keepe his Lawes, his statutes, his commandements, his rights, & his ordinances, all for euer.* Here ỹ we be done to vnderstand, ỹ when wee once knowe Gods grace, we must bee the more inflamed to giue our selues wholy to the seruing of him, accordingly as S. Paul found not a more vehement & effectual perswasiō, than ỹ same where he saith, Brethren I beseech ye & adiure ye by the pitie & mercie which God hath shewed towardes you. Because S. Paul saw men slow & negligent, yea & ỹ euen the faithfull, (for it is they to whō he directeth his doctrine) haue need to be quickened vp & pricked forward: therfore to giue the more liuelines to his exhortatiō, he taketh this for his ground, & saith: brethren, I beseech ye by ỹ mercifulnes of God. As if hee should say how hardharted soeuer you be, yet must ỹ great number of ỹ gratious good turnes which God hath done for you, haue some power to mone you, & to set your harts on fire. Were your harts as cold as ice, yet must you needs be moued, & you cannot but feele how gratious and liberall your God hath shewed himselfe towardes you. Nowe therefore whensoeuer we finde not our selues sufficiently disposed to serue God, but ỹ we be held back and hin-

hindred by the vanities of this world, and by our own fleshly lusts, let vs put this saying of S. Pauls in vre: & when we be intangled in our delightes, let vs come backe again & say: what? Shal God haue lost his labor in shewing himself so good towards vs? & shal we become vnprofitable people towards him? We be his Vineyarde, and he hath dressed vs, & we bring him forth no fruit but wild sower & bitter fruit, such as were able to choke one: & shal we by our naughtines defeat ỹ grace that God hath shewed towardes vs? After such manner ought euery of vs to rebuke himselfe, when we liue not as we ought to do. But when in steed of going forward, we go back, or els lie welring in our own idlenes: let vs bethink vs of gods benefits, & keepe a register or booke of remembrance of them: & therupon fal to concluding ỹ there remaineth no excuse for vs, if we make not some acknowledgement vnto God, of ỹ mercie ỹ he hath shewed towards vs. That was the thing ỹ Moses amed at. Therfore loue ỹ lord your god (saith he) seeing you know him to be such a one.

And further besides ỹ thing that we haue sene alreadie; which is ỹ the true performance of the law beginneth at the louing of God: here Moses telleth vs, ỹ Gods intent is not to be feared like a prince ỹ desires no more but to haue his subiects to stand in awe of him, & therfore will not suffer any man so much as once to quetch against him, but wil haue thé to do al ỹ he cõmãdeth thé: but ỹ God cõmeth to vs after a more louing maner. Truly if we consider wel what the princes of the earth are, they be but smoke or verie wormes of ỹ earth: but yet are they to be honored, bicause god hath printed his marke vpon thé. Albeit ỹ they be nothing of thémselues: yet are they so ful of pride, ỹ their subiects must be faine to put it vp quietly at their hands, though they would set their feete vpõ the throtes of them. And they be so far of frõ considering themselues to be shepherds or herdmen, or to owe any duetie or good demeanor towards their people: ỹ to their owne seeming, the world was created alonly for themselues. They passe not for meeke & quiet reuerence: but they wil needs haue an inforced & constreined bondage. But behold, Our God whose maiestie is so great, ỹ euen the Angels of heauen are faine to stoupe vnder it, euen he I say stoopeth downe vnto vs, & saith, loue me. He could haue said, stand in feare of me, & trẽble at my speech, or else ye shal feele that there is such a glory in mee, as ye must needes be ouerwhelmed by it. Nay, he vseth no such spech, but saith: true it is ỹ I am to be feared, for I haue soueraine dominion ouer heauen and earth, & therefore it is not for any man to dalie with me as with his fellow, for if he be so malapert with me, he cannot but go away with confusion. Now then, my desire is ỹ men should reuerence me: but yet would I also ỹ you should come familiarly vnto me, & ỹ ye should come boldly as to your father. And ỹ is the cause why I require loue at your hands as the cheefest thing ỹ I like best of. Loue me therefore, & shew your selues to beare me hartie good wil. For my mind is not to draw you to me by constraint of feare, my mind is not to rule ye like Oxen & asses. My intent is to hold ye as my children, without exercising anie tyrannical lordlines ouer you. I would haue but a fatherly authority ouer you, & ỹ you likewise should serue me with a childly loue, & giue your selues wholy & obediently vnto me. Thus see ye ỹ two points which we haue to note in Moseses concluding, ỹ the people shold loue ỹ euerlasting their God. For if we will performe gods law well, we must first & formost loue him before al things. Wel may we be busie with our feet & hands, so as we shalbe blameles before men: & yet shal all be nothing, except God possesse our affections, and ỹ we serue him with a good wil, & with a free and vnfeined hart. That is the one point. The other is, ỹ we must vnderstand how God applieth himself to vs, & fashioneth himself to our capacitie, in that his wil is not ỹ we should stand in feare & terror of him, but ỹ we should take him for our father, according to his calling of vs, which is so gentle and so full of allurement, as though he would set vs in his lap, because he hath adopted vs to bee his children. That is the effect of the things which we haue to remember here.

Now as touching that Moses addeth; *that men should keepe gods obseruãces, his statutes, his iudgemẽts, his rights, his ordinances, his cõmandements, & his decrees*: I haue declared already here tofore why he setteth downe so many words. For it had been enough for him to haue said shortly, Keep the cõmandemẽts of your god; you haue his law, which is the certain rule, hold your selues to ỹ. But Moses thinking it not inough to haue spoké simply after ỹ maner, to the intent to expresse the contents of the law, & what doctrine we haue to gather therof, setteth downe *Statutes, Commandements, rights, ordinances, & obseruances*. And why is that? To doe vs to vnderstand, that there we haue the ful perfection of al holines. We know ỹ in al ages men haue bin tickleheaded: & that their failing to serue god simply & purely, hath sprong of this that euery man would needs be casting of some peece or collup of his own making, to the things that God had commanded. And thereof come al the superstitions that are at this day in ỹ worlde. The very ground (say I) from whence al the diuelish superstitions wherewith gods seruice hath beene corrupted, is that men haue not thought it enough to haue obserued the things that God commanded, vnles euery man added somewhat more of his owne deuising. But now God to hold his people in awe, saith thus: In my law ye haue *rights, ordinances, statutes, &c.* And to be short, whé ye haue throughly examined the rule ỹ I haue giuen you, ye shal find it perfect & without want of any thing. Therefore play not the loose colts: but be contéted to serue me simply, according to my will: & ad not any thing of your own braine. Ye see then ỹ as wel in this text as in other without nũber, (for ye shal find at ỹ lest two hundred of the like) Moses indeuoreth to magnifie Gods law, to the intent ỹ men should not esteeme it to be of vnsufficiẽt authority, or but as able to teach vs by halfes: but ỹ they should know it to be their duty to hold thémselues wholy to it, so submitting thémselues to ỹ same, as they may giue ouer their own wit, & not take vpõ them to be wise in their opinion, but

but onely aunswere: Let GOD bee obeyed,
2.Chro.16. 36. according to the praiers which he hath cõmanded folke to make with this solemne protestation Amen, so as there may not be any replying at all to ỳ which God hath once vttered with his mouth. And that is the verie cause why the word *Keepe*, is set downe here. For men wil needs haue manie things to keep, and they beare thẽselues in hand, that they haue kept the law very well, after what fashion so euer it be. But our Lord telleth vs that we haue things enough to keep and to obserue, in following his lawe, so as we neede not to adde any thing to it.

Furthermore to the intent ỳ the people may be the more moued, Moses confirming here the matter ỳ we heard euen now, saith thus: *Bethinke you therefore: for it is not spoken to your children which haue neither seen nor heard of it, but to you your selues which are witnesses of the great myracles, mightfull workes, and tokens which God shewed in bringing you out of the land of Egypt, and specially in your passing of the read sea, where he wrought with a wõderful power.* For what a thing was it ỳ the sea shronk aside to make you way to passe through it? And that afterward it swallowed vp al your enemies, that followed you with so great puissance, ỳ you thought your selues vtterly vndone? You haue seen those thinges with your eyes saith he. What a thing were it then, if ye should forget such wonderfull workes of God, and suffer them to vanish away? Might it be imputed to any ignorance? No, but to vnthankefulnes, & it were malicious spitefulnes for you to tread the thinges so vnder foote, which God hath shewed vnto you.

And wheras he saith. *It is not spoke to your children which haue neither seen nor heard of it*: He meaneth ỳ he speaketh not of thẽ as shal be spoken afterward. True it is that at this day when we reade the storie of the deliuerance that was wrought at that time, we ought to be moued at it. For it is an euerlasting euidence of the care which God hath had of his Church. And in ỳ same we haue a liuely picture to shew vs how God draweth vs as it were out of the dungeon and gulf of death, by chosing vs to be of his house, and therefore it behoueth vs to make our profit of the thinges that were done then, although we saw them not. But here Moses reasoneth thus by comparison. If I speake to your children (saith he) yet were it their dutie to make their profit of ỳ things which they were taught: and although they haue not seene the things with their eyes, yet ought this recording of them, to do them good. But as for you, ye ought to be better aduised in taking heed to the things ỳ God hath shewed you. For your thankfulnesse is dubble, & much sorer shal your condemnation be, if you profit not by thẽ. What can ye alledge for your selues, if ye giue not your selues wholie to the magnifying of such grace, that is to say if ye honor not God, seing he hath bought you so dearly, and shewed that he setteth so great store by your welfare? Seeing that God hath shewed himselfe to be such a one towardes you, what is your dutie? Here we be put in mind that when our Lord hath made vs to find fauour by experience, if we profit not by it to serue him with the better courage and earnester zeale, it must of necessitie come to account, & we shal looke for more horrible damnation in respect of such vnthãkfulnes. But now let vs see what we be come the better by gods benefits. Hath it not sufficiently seene & perceiued in our time, how he hath helped vs at our neede, & howe he hath stretched out his mightie hande? If euery man would acknowledge for his own part, how many waies god hath shewed himselfe bountiful towards him, surely we should be at our wits end. Again let vs loke vpõ the state of ỳ Church in general. Hath not godwrought after such a sort as also in our daies, as if we be not very monsters, or at leastwise worse than bruit beasts, we must needs perceiue by his miracles, ỳ he ment to shew vs how he reigneth in heauẽ? But now let vs see how euery of vs is stirred vp therby, to serue him. For it should seeme we seeke nothing else but meanes to hid our eyes withal, and ỳ we beleeue not those thinges which are & ought to be most euident to vs. Yet was not this doctrine vttred to vs al. For if God haue shewed vs by his deeds, that he dwelleth amõg vs, & haue reached out his hand frõ heauen, to proue ỳ all power belongeth vnto him, and ỳ he wilbe ỳ sauior of his church, & yet we beleeue it not, but play ỳ blind buffards, and turne our backs vpon him, shutting our eyes wilfully when we should take most heed to them: in what wise ỳ Lord hath shewed himselfe to be ỳ father & sauior, both of our selues & of all his: what excuse will there be for vs? Ye see then here is a lesson ỳ toucheth vs. For if euer God vttered himselfe: surely we of our time haue seen such deeds of his, as are worthy of remembrance. And whẽ men shal reherse thẽ a hundred yeres hereafter, (if ỳ world indure so long) it is certain ỳ they shal serue to make them ashamed ỳ shal haue heard thẽ spoken of, so we may welsay (as is said by ỳ prophets) ỳ the strãgenes of the same make their eares to glow ỳ shal heare of them. For ỳ is ỳ maner of speech which the Prophets vse in such cases. And we haue seene these things, and had experience of them. Now if ỳ reporting of them in time to come, ought to moue ỳ people ỳ shal come then: although they shall haue had none other knowledge of thẽ: ought not we much rather to be moued by them now presently? Ought they not to pearce our hearts? Must not Satan needs haue vtterly sotted vs, whẽ after such perceiuing of gods benefits & power, we see nothing at all but go on stil & conceiue nothing? Is such blockishnes to be borne with? No verily. And therefore let vs bethink ourselues, & consider wel how god hath wrought in gathering vs together, & so that we can worship him purely as he requireth. Who is he, (be he a citizen borne or a straunger) which hath not cause to say, lo how my God hath so vttered himselfe to me, as if I had seene his hand come downe from heauen to me in some visible shape? For what hope had they which were here townsmen borne, to be either in liberty or to be but eũe a mean people? Insomuch as it seemed ỳ al should haue gone to wrack, & come to vtter ruine ere this time. As touching ỳ Gospel, this citie was but a hellish gulfe of superstition and

and dimelisshnes, (as was to be seen euerywhere) and al maner of abuses, ydolatries & practises of Satan did so reigne in it, as there was no likelyhood that euer there shold haue bin any roome for Gods grace. And therefore those whom God hath visited so louingly, and to whom hee hath vouchsafed to come home into their houses to seeke them out, haue good cause to glorifie him. And as for them ỳ are come out of forrein countries, and are gathered together here as it were into one flocke, what can they say, but that our Lord hath performed ỳ thing towardes them at this day, which he spake so long ago by his prophet Esay: namely that he would make charyots and wagons trotte apace through the world, to bring folke from al coasts to serue & worship him in his Church? Nowe then if we looke not vp at such things, surely it wilbe no excuse or shift for vs, to say: I thought not on these things, because they were not knowen to me: for God sheweth vs thē apparantly ynough, so as we need but to opē our eyes to see them. Thus ye see how we ought to practise this lesson nowadays, where it is said, I speake not to your children which might reply that they neuer sawe nor heard of these things. For looke what you ought to know as cōcerning Gods power, he hath done you to vnderstand it by his deeds.

And now by the way let vs be contented with the experience which we haue had of the goodnesse and power of our God, in his redeeming of vs from ỳ endles confusion wherin we be al born in Adam. For what is our original? Whence doth God draw vs when he vouchsafeth to haue vs to be of his flock? Frō our mothers womb we bring nothing with vs but vtter cursednes: we be heires of endlesse death: wee be forlorne & damned: if God should iudge vs after our deserts, he should needs be our enemy and aduersary, and imploy all his power against vs. Now if our nature be so graceless & frowarde, that as long as it beareth sway in vs, it bendeth it selfe against God: must we not needs also wage battel against him? Yes: for looke how many lusts be in vs, so many defiances are there, as if our purpose were to arme him to vengeance against vs. Yet notwithstanding it hath pleased him to pull vs backe. When God taketh vs so to him to be his people and of his household, it is more than was his deliuering of the Iewes out of the thraldome of Egypt. For that was but a figure of this redemption that is wrought by our Lord Iesus Christ. For his deliuering of vs is not from thraldom to some earthly & mortal prince: but from the gulf of hel & from Satans bonds. Where doth God take vs, when he vouchsafeth to call vs to him, & to make vs feele his grace? Must some messenger be faine to bring vs newes from farre? Let euery of vs looke vpon himselfe, and we shall finde that as in respect of our selues, our state is nothing but eternal death. Therefore to applie this doctrine to our vse, wee must vnderstand ỳ when God calleth any of vs to him, it is more than if hee had rid vs out of all the bondages and slaueries of this worlde, yea euen of the cruellest that could bee indured. Let vs know that: and also let vs apply our selues aduisedly to the cōsidering of Gods worke: for that is the thing whereto the scripture bringeth vs, to make vs perceiue the benefites that he hath bestowed vpon vs, that wee may fare the better by them. And it is also a way to bring vs to ỳ knowing of God, and to prouoke vs not onely to worship him as our God, and to make vs stoope vnder his glorious maiestie: but also to beare him such a childly loue, as to come vnto him willingly, and to yeelde him such reuerence, as he may accept vs and auow vs to bee his, for our Lorde Iesus Christs sake.

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the heauenly throne of our good God, acknowledging our wretched sinfulnes, ỳ we may be wholly cast downe before him: & yet notwithstanding, praying him to vouchsafe to admit vs in ỳ name of our lord Iesus Christ, so as we may not be shāke off at his hand, though we be worthy of it, but rather ỳ he beare with vs of his infinite goodnes, vntil he haue conueied vs quite & cleane out of this world, & clothed vs againe with his owne righteousnes, & with ỳ perfection which he hath promised vs. And so let vs say, Almighty god &c.

On Munday the xxiij. of September. 1555.

The Lxxv. Sermon which is the second vpon the eleuenth Chapter.

5 And what hee did for you in the wildernesse, vntill yee came vnto this place:

6 And what hee did to Dathan and Abyram the sonnes of Eliab the sonne of Ruben: how the earth opened her throte, and swallowed them vp with their households and Tentes, and with all the substance that was vnder their feete, in the middes of all Israell.

7 For your eyes haue seene all the greate workes of the Lord which hee hath doone.

8 Therfore keepe all the commaundementes which I commaund you this day, that yee may bee strong and goe in and possesse the Land, whereunto you goe to possesse it.

WE haue seene heretofore howe Moses hath tolde vs, that such as haue bin witnesses of Gods wonders, are much lesse to bee excused than such as haue but only heard ỹ things by report, and haue not seene them with their eyes. For when God hath beene so gracious vnto vs as to shewe vs his power to our faces; it must needs be that we bee too blockish, if wee bee not mindfull therof. When our children shal but heare of it, it shal becom thé to be moued at it: & what ought then to bee done in the very presentnesse of the things? Hitherto Moses hath shewed after what manner God had delt with his people through his goodnes, for he had behaued himselfe as an vtter enemie to ỹ Realme of Egypt, to shew him selfe to be the sauiour of the linage of Abraham. It is a benefite that ought to bee very highly esteemed, when God chooseth vs after that sort to be his: which is not for any worthines that he findeth in vs, but of his owne onely goodnes, in that he vouchsafeth to prefer vs before others, so that although we bee no better than they, yet he taketh part with vs, and fighteth for vs at our neede. If folke doe trouble and torment vs, and God be alway ready to succour vs; is it not such a bond, as if we keepe it not vnbroken, the verie world may condemn our malicious frowardnes? Nowe after he hath spoken of the wonders that were wrought in Egypt, & in the passing of the red sea, he telleth them briefly, *that they ought to consider well, how God handled them in the wildernesse.* And vnder that speech hee comprehendeth the thing which we haue seene expounded heretofore: that is to wit, both ỹ great number of benefits which they had receiued at Gods hand, and also his chastisements: for both of them ought to teach vs to feare God, & to walk in his wayes. If he do vs good, it is to draw vs to him by gentlenes, ỹ we should worship him. And if he correct vs for our faults, it is to meeké vs, ỹ we may learn to beare his yoke, & to serue him as becommeth vs. Moses therefore comprehendeth here both twain of them: As if he should say, Seeing ỹ God hath fed you w Manna, without any trauell or labor of your own; ought ye not to giue your selues al wholy to ỹ seruing of him? If a mortal man had kept you in his house & maintained you w foode & apparel, should ye not be so bound vnto him, as your whole life might bee answerable to such a benefite? Behold, God hath maintained you in ỹ wildernes, by sending you Manna from heauen. Now then if ye shold forget such a gracious good turne, what an offence were it? Nay, he hath not only sent you Manna: but he hath also preserued your garmẽts, so as thei haue not bin marred nor outworne by ỹ space of forty yeares together. He hath shewed himself to be your guide in ỹ night, in giuing you a visible sign by fire: & he hath kept you likewise a daytimes from ỹ heate of ỹ sun, by spreading his clouds ouer you. In al sorts he hath tendered you as much as was possible. When ye were thirsty, he made water to come gushing out of ỹ rock that was dry before. To be short, he left nothing vndone, wherby he might shew himself a louing & liberal father towards you. Now then what can you lesse do, than yeeld your selues to ỹ obeying of him? Again, remember what he did when ye murmured against him for your fonde lusts sake. Did ye not then feele his heauy hand for your labor? When ye required flesh, indede he sent it you; but he made ye to pay deare for ỹ shot: for ỹ meat was as good as a choking of you. While the meate was yet in your mouthes, his wrath came downe vpon you. Againe, when yee misbehaued your selues in whoredome, ye know ỹ his hand strake ye in such sort, ỹ a great nũber of people perished among you. When yee were disobedient to his mouth, he set a fire amõg you ỹ consumed you, vntill ỹ brasen serpent was set vp. All manner of wayes therefore haue you bin chastised at Gods hande; so as if ye be not mindfull of it, ye be worse than brute beastes.

Exod. 16. 4.

Deut. 8. 4

Exod. 13. 21.

Exod. 17. 6.

Now after that Moses hath declared al thes chastisemẽts: he inferreth an example ỹ was notable and worthy to be borne in mind aboue all ỹ rest: that is to wit, *of the rebellion that was made by Core, Dathan, and Abiram.* For (as is declared in ỹ sixteenth of ỹ numbers), these three with another of ỹ tribe of Rubé, made insurrection against Aaron, laying to his charge ỹ he had vsurped the priesthood, which was an office of great authority among ỹ people. For Aaron was there as ỹ person of our Lord Iesus Christ, & went into the Sanctuary to make attonement between God & the people. Nowe it spited these men, that they could not come to ỹ like dignity, & therfore vpon enuy they would needs stir the people to a commotion, saying: What? This is a derogation to ỹ prerogatiue ỹ belongeth in common to al of vs are the children of Abraham. God hath sanctified vs, he termeth vs his heritage and a priestly kingdome: & yet ye see here how Aaron and his children haue taken ỹ thing peculiarly to themselues, which belõgeth generally to ỹ whole people. Therfore let vs maintain our right, & not suffer this dignity to be turned to a state of inheritance. This was their pretence: but indeed they did it of great spite. For first of all God had well prouided aforehand, ỹ there shold be no inward or wicked suspition against Aaron, & his children for the priesthoods sake. Moses was ỹ leader of ỹ people; he was ỹ setter of them at liberty, & therfore there was good likelyhood ỹ his offspring should haue bin preferred before all others. He had childrẽ: & yet he took not ỹ priesthood vnto himselfe, but left it to his brother. True it is ỹ he made no choice, god did that. But howsoeuer he fared, to ỹ intent that ỹ law and the thing ỹ depended thereupon shold not be suspected: Gods will was not to doe Moses so much honour as to make him ỹ priest, but he was faine to stand humbly aloofe w the rest of the people worshipping God, when Aaron his brother went to enter the names of ỹ people of Israel into ỹ sanctuary, & to offer sacrifice to God in their behalfe. And where were his childrẽ? They abode in ỹ inferior degree, without aduancemẽt to ỹ dignity, which remained to his brother Aaron. Wherby God shewed that those things were not done vpon ambition or worldly couetousnesse, but that it was his own doing, who had set down the order that shold be

kept

kept in his Church and Temple. Notwithstanding al this, those leawd persons fel to rebelling, & charged Aaron falsly with vsurping ỹ dignitie of ỹ highpriesthood. So was God faine to maintaine his own doing. And thereupon Moses said vnto thẽ, How now? What is Aarõ? As if he shold say, hath he thrust himselfe in of his owne head? No: & now although he be of Gods aduancing to ỹ high and honorable state, yet if ye consider all things aright, hee doth but onely serue you. But those malicious creatures were not contented w̃ that. We be sãctified (said they) we be gods people; & what are you more? In this case god was to put to his hand for ỹ redres of it: And according as was commanded by Moses, To morow (quoth he) let euery of you bring his sensor, & you ỹ are the chief of this rebellion, (for they were as then to ỹ number of two hundred & fifty) come together, & you shall see by your offerings, whether parties seruice is best liked of God. This done he said vnto ỹ people, Assure your selues that if these folk do dye ỹ common death, and ỹ God lay not his hand vpõ them in your sight, so as some horrible & dreadful punishment do not light vppon their heads: I am contẽted ỹ ye shal not esteeme me as sent of God. But if ye perceiue ỹ god make good the thing ỹ I haue vttered with my mouth, then be ye sure that I haue don nothing on mine owne head, but that I haue faithfully performed that which was inioyned me from heauen. Hereupon the earth opened and swallowed vp those rebels ỹ had made the insurrection among the people. And when this was done, ỹ people forbore not to murmur still & to say, See here I pray you, how Moses and Aaron fall to destroying of Gods people. Those whom God hath chosen must be fain to perish at their pleasure, to maintaine their priestly dignitie, and of ỹ same number are we also. What an vnkindnesse is this? Ye see here how God had wrought a myracle that ought to astonish & amase the whole world, yea euen the very brute beasts & al: and yet this people which reported themselues to be chosen and holy, cease not to repine & rebel still of malicious set purpose, against God and his hand that was openly to be seene. God was faine to ratifie Aarons priesthood yet once againe: whereupon he commanded that euery of them should bring a wodden staffe w̃ their names written vpõ them and put them altogether, so as they might not bee discerned asunder but by the sight of the names. These Staues were laid before God in ỹ sanctuary: & when they were taken thence againe, Aarons staffe that had his name vpon it did florish, & al the residue remained drie: wherby God shewed that he had chosen that houle to the Highpriesthood.

Of these things doth Moses here put ỹ people in remembrãce, to do them to vnderstand, first ỹ if they dalyed any more with God by seeking any chaunge, or by attempting any thing against the commandemẽt of his word: they shold feele his vengeance in likewise as they had seene it light vpon Coree, Dathan, & Abiram, and their partakers. Besides this, he telleth them of their vnthankfulnes, how they had prouoked God againe, euẽ after they had felt his iustice: to ỹ intẽt they should no more returne to such doings, because ỹ if they abused Gods patience & bearing with them for ỹ one time, he wold in ỹ end vse ỹ greater rigor against thẽ. And so ye see what ỹ intent of Moses was. Now hereby we be warned to consider wel with our selues, ỹ whensoeuer any fault or offẽce is cõmitted among vs, & God hath laid his hand vppon vs for it: wee ought to beare it so printed in our hearts, as it may make vs *to keepe his commaundements*, as Moses addeth afterward. For it is not ynough for vs to know ỹ bare stories but we must also apply ỹ same to our instruction. So ỹ if god haue corrected vs gently, we must acknowlege his fatherly goodnes towards vs. And from thencefoorth let vs not prouoke him any more, but to ỹ intent we may keepe our selues frõ offending, let it suffice vs to know ỹ he cannot away with sin. That (say I) is ỹ thing wherof we be warned in this text. And herewal let vs also haue such humilitie printed in our hearts, as to be cõtinually sory for the faults ỹ we shall haue committed. And if our God haue bin so gracious as to execute his wrath vppon some others, let vs bee wel ware ỹ we wrap not our selues in ỹ same cõdemnation with them, by taking their part. Nay, let vs shun them a great way off, and let vs haue nothing to doe with them, if wee intende not to prouoke ỹ wrath of our God. That is the effect of the matter which Moses speaks of here. And it is written for our sakes, to the intent that euery of vs should haue an eye to himselfe.

I haue tolde you already, ỹ the thinges which were spoken as then to ỹ people of Israel, do concerne vs likewise. After what sort haue wee felt Gods hand? I meane as well those that are Citizens borne, as those ỹ resort hither from strange Countries. Is there any of vs that hath not perceiued gods wonderful power in his deliuerãce? For hath not this Towne bin as it were appointed to ruine and destruction? Was it not likely ỹ it should vtterly haue perished, and ỹ there was none other remedy as in respect of ỹ world? Yet hath God reached out his hãd after such a fashion, as the world hath seen an incredible alteration. It was as a dreame, men would neuer haue thought it: euen they themselues ỹ did seruice in it, were astonished at it afterward. Nowe then, if this be forgotten, on whom shall we lay ỹ fault? And God hath not only giuen liberty to those ỹ were in bondage, and drawen them out of ỹ gulf of death at such time as it was looked ỹ al should haue gone to hauocke: but also vouchsafed to set vp his kingdome among them. He hath planted his Gospel here, he hath set vp his chayre of estate here, here hath he chosen him a sanctuarie & a place to dwel in. And as touching them that are come from strange Countries, how hath god reached his hand to thẽ? Were not they also as it were in ỹ gulfe of hell, when they were in the cursed popedome? Ye see then how we be gathered here, altogether vnder ỹ hande of God. And therfore wel ought we to esteeme this grace, and not onely to preach it with our mouthes, but also to shew throughout all our whole life, that forasmuch as our Lord hath gotten vs to him, wee be wil-

willing to be his, & thereupon indeuor to please him in al things. Vnlesse we do so, surely there wil be no excuse for vs, but ỳ we shalbe a hundredfold more blameworthy, than those whom God hath let alone, so as they continue still in their old trade, wout finding him so gracious & fauorable towards them. Besides this, Gods working in our behalfe hath not bin for once & away: but if we looke wel vpon his maintaining of the state which he hath stablished in this city; there hath not bin any yeare wherein he hath not renewed his myracles, & made it appeare openly by some notable signe, ỳ he hath had a continuall care of vs, and ỳ he hath neuer forsaken vs. And in deed we be worse than blind, if we perceiue not ỳ our life hãgeth as by a threed. For there needeth but ỳ turning of a hand to dispatch vs: ah one conspiracy was like inough to haue put ỳ whole church of God in daunger of destruction. But yet for all this God hath preserued vs. And after what fashion? We cannot tell. Had we any drop of wisedome, surely as oft as it came to our minde wee wold be astonished at it & say; Lord, how far hast thou exceeded ỳ expectation of men! Againe on the other side let vs mark, let vs marke I say how God hath lifted vp his hande to punish such as went about to trouble ỳ order of his Church, and to ouerthrowe ỳ building which he had set vp by his Gospel. For it is certaine ỳ he hath punished them, to ỳ end that we should take instruction at their cost. He hath bin so gracious to vs as to let vs see and know his vengeance, and yet wee our selues haue beene exempted from it: not for our own deserts, (for there is none of vs al, but vpon due examination of his doings, he shall find him selfe faulty) but because it pleased God to spare vs. Neuertheless hee hath shewed vs as it were with his finger, that it is not for any man to prouoke him: and that if any bodie step vp against him, he shall finde himselfe too hardly ouermatched. This (say I) hath bin tolde vs sufficiently. But what God worketh, and we haue no eyes to see his working: & although we haue, yet do wee wilfully shut them against him. Yea & (to goe no further,) let vs apply this storie to our owne vse. Truly I touch things as soberly as I can; but yet is not ỳ holy scripture written to ỳ end we should but onely know what was done to the people of Israel: but to ỳ end we shold consider the likenes that is betweene them & vs, ỳ when the like matters befal amõg vs, we might do our selues good by the warningpeales that are giuen vs by thẽ.

2. Cor. 10. 11 According wherunto S. Paul saith, that ỳ things which God did at that time, are as a picture for vs to look vpon, to ỳ end we should refer al to our own profite: For ỳ end of time (saith he) is come vpon vs, and we see nowe the perfection of the things which God had but begun as then.

And here is mention made of *Corse, Dathan, and Abiram*, ỳ is to wit, of such as could not abide the obseruing of thinges in such sort as God had then commanded them by Moses. True it is that they professed thẽselues to be Gods chosen, & the children of Abraham: mark ỳ for one point. For they alledged ỳ they were sanctified; their intent was that their circumcision should be as a warrãt for them that they were a holy & sacred generation. But yet for al ỳ, they would none of the preesthood, at leastwise not as God had ordeyned it, but euery of thẽ would haue it to him selfe. Now I pray you, haue not we for our part seene the like rebellion against God & his word? For wherefore hath al the skirmishing bin, both against the doctrine & against ỳ disciplyne of the church with such rage: but to displace the order ỳ God set among vs? When heretikes, (yea euen such heretikes as brought no blasphemies than euer were herd of since there was any christian Church) came hither: they were maintained here with tooth & nayle, & openly, yea euen by such as sate in the seate of Iustice: in so much as they tooke part with them, and shewed them as much fauor as Turkes shoulde haue vnder Mahomet. Afterward when other heretikes came hither to bring in *Frewil* again, & to set it vp to the derogation of Gods grace, blaspheming his election and Prouidence: they had those for their Patrons & Aduocats, which ought to haue bin their Iudges: & those spake for them in our presence, and that with such impudence, as if they had bent them selues like buls to strike vs with their hornes, & to set themselues as stoutly as could be, against God and his doctrine. This haue we seene. Againe, when things were shewed them so plainly by the holy scripture, as would haue beene receiued euen among the very papists, and when so cleare and euident reasons were alledged, as coulde not be gainesaid, which things we not only spake by mouth, but also gaue them the articles in writing, & set downe the sentences of the scripture whereby the truth was pointed to as with ones finger: They were not ashamed to reiect all, but stepped forth proudly still, as it were to say; wee will fight against God whatsoeuer come of it. True it is that they durst not our such sayings with full mouth, for they protested still to hold themselues to the Gospel. O (sayd they) our desire is to haue ỳ Gospel. Ye but what maner of Gospell? A tauernegospel. There was no talking among them of the grace of our Lord Iesus Christ: For it was a cõmon word among them to say, There needs no more to be knowẽ than ỳ which al of vs know, that is to wit, that we must loue God and our neighbour. And what needeth there so much preaching for that matter? If a man replyed hereupon & said vnto thẽ, how can ỳ be? If yee wil haue preaching to ceasse & the Sacraments to be superthrowen, al must the whole order which God hath set in his church be disanulled: Wel (would they say) then let ỳ Gospel be preached simply wout such fanning. And againe as touching ỳ Sacraments, belong they not to vs as well as to you? Why nay would we ỳ there should be no more order kept? Nay we cã minister ỳ supper as wel as you preachers. Such things as these (I say) were seen and herd. But if Corse, Dathan, & Abirã be condemned here by ỳ holy ghost, to haue intẽded subuerting of al order: I pray you what shal a man say of those which haue fought so manifestly against god after this fashion? for these things were not done of ignorãce. Although they be so shamelesse as to say stil, wee haue ment no such thing: yet

their

their malice too too apparant. For had no man ſpoken to them of it, or had no man pointed thē as with his finger to ỹ texts of the ſcripture, ſo as it might haue bin ſaide, ſee here the will of God, there is no difficultie in ỹ matter, it needeth not any ſcanning as though there were any doubtfulnes in it, ſee here ỹ opē text: [they might haue had ſome colour for their pretence]. But ſeing ỹ things were ſo ſhewed vnto them, & yet they cōtinued wilful ſtill: ſee yee not that it was an open making of war againſt God? Is it not to be ſeene alſo what pretence was made by Coree, Dathan & Abiram? Out of queſtion, their ſayings were after this maner: Why? If Aaron haue the high-prieſthod alone to himſelf, he ſhal haue al ſuperiority, & what ſhal we be? Euen ſo ſtandeth ỹ caſe with theſe men: to their ſeeming, al were marde on their ſide, if God ſhould beare ỹ ſway. But god will beare the ſway by this order, and we ſee it is no impeachment at all to the cauill power which is a thing vtterly diſtinct from it, neither can any thing better maintaine Magiſtrates in their ſouerainty, foraſmuch as ỹ order of Gods Church is ſpiritual, ſo as it medleth not with ỹ puniſhing of mens bodies, nor ẅ penalties, nor with impriſonments, nor with ſuch other like things: but all is referred to ỹ word & the ſacraments. Seeing ỹ this is apparant doth it not ſerue better for ỹ ſtabliſhment of Empyres, kingdomes, & Lordſhips: than if there were nothing elſe to be had than a confuſed tyranny, where nothing were reſerued vnto God & to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? And therfore when men ſtreine themſelues to ỹ vttermoſt of their power to ouerthrow ỹ order, do they not fal to ſpitting in ỹ face of Ieſus chriſt to ſpite him withall? For it is his will to reigne among vs, yea & he will haue his kingdom to be in vs. Now thē, when he chooſeth men & ſetteth them vp to gouern his church in his name, is it not too ſhamefil an vnchankfulnes to ſay, we will not admit it, but thruſt it from vs? As who ſhold ſay, they wold make men beleeue ỹ the Conſiſtory were a thing vtterly ſeuered from Geneua it ſelf, wheras God hath granted vs ỹ grace to make it a member of the body. Nowe then, to diſmember Ieſus Chriſt by ſeparating ỹ things which he hath ioyned together, is it not a ſetting of themſelues openly againſt him? We ſee then ỹ theſe rebellions haue happened among vs: & who is to bee blamed for it? Truly ỹ heads of the ſedition are to be ſeene, and ỹ perceiuing of thē hath not bin at ſome one time, or a day or twaine ago, but it is now a ſeuen or eight years ſince it began, inſomuch as Gods children haue bin faine to grone and ſigh vnder their burthen, & to cry out alas, beſeeching God to haue pitie on his poore Church, ſeing it was in ſuch a hurly burly. Things went worſe & worſe, and one licentiouſnes brought in another, ſo as they bare thēſelues in hand ỹ al things were lawful for them. And yet notwithſtanding, of all that while they did but double the ſtings which they had ſek afore in their wicked cōſciences, by thinking thus ẅ thēſelues: What? We can neuer hold out, except we lay our heads together to fortifie our ſelues thus & thus. Herupon they made cōtinually new prouiſions. And after what maner? By practiſing al maner of treaſō & diſloyalty, & by apply ing their minds to al wicked ſhifts for ỹ maintenance of ỹ thing ỹ they had misbegun. But in ỹ end our Lord wrought. And what haue we to cōſider therin? That we be worthy of blame. For although thoſe folk did fight opēly againſt God: yet would he not haue ſuffered ſuch miſeries to haue happened among vs, but for our offences. And therefore let vs conſider ỹ ſeeing he hath ſo puniſhed ỹ parties that came to ſet themſelues apparantly againſt him, & made their reckening to ouerthrow all ỹ he had builded: he hath ſcholed vs at their coſt, & therefore we ought firſt of al to thank him for his ſparing of vs, and that he wrapped vs not in ỹ cōfuſion ỹ was prepared for vs, but hath put a myraculous differēce betwene them & vs. Thus ye ſee that the thing which we haue to marke, is on the one ſide Gods mercy in bearing with vs, & on ỹ other, the puniſhing of a few folk, which ought to ſerue vs for an inſtructiō to teach vs to fare ỹ better by it. For it is certain ỹ thereby God hath ſhewed vs, how it is his wil to haue things go peaſably, & to keep their ordinary courſe according to his worde. For it is not for men to pretend Gods name falſly in this behalf, to ſwarue aſide one way or other. The miniſters of ỹ word & ſuch as are appointed to be preachers, muſt for their part bee able to proteſt before God, & to ſhewe openly before men, ỹ they neither be nor deſire to bee counted any other, than as perſons to whom God hath committed ỹ charge of preaching & of adminiſtring his ſacraments, with ſuch purenes as things may not bee corrupted in ỹ church. Whē it is ſo: let vs vnderſtand ỹ we muſt ſubmit our ſelues thereto, & that we ſhal winne nothing by ſtriuing againſt it, but Gods hand muſt needs be always againſt vs. For he forgetteth not what he hath ordeined, but wil maintaine & defend ỹ ſame continually. Therefore let vs learn to leaue ỹ ſeeking of any change againſt Gods ordinance. Let vs looke vpon the rule that is conteined in the holy ſcripture, & let no man attempt to incounter it by any maner of meanes. Let vs rather die than alter any thing, or attempt any thing againſt our God. Let vs be as ſheepe, if we will haue Ieſus Chriſt to bee our ſhepherd. For whatſoeuer hee is that hath not a meeke heart like a lamb, is vnworthy to be counted of Gods Church, becauſe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt wil not be our ſhepherd, but vpon ỹ condition. That then is the thing which wee haue to beare away in the firſt place. But let vs alſo look wel vpon the maliciouſnes of ỹ Iewiſh people, & take good heede that we become not like them. Sothly it is a terrible caſe ỹ God ſhold ſhew forth his power ſo vpon rebels, ỹ the very earth ſhould open and ſwallow them vp with their wiues and children. There were to the number of 250 that had murmured againſt Moſes and Aaron, which were al rooted out in ỹ open ſight of men, ſo as men ſaw that God wrought from heauen: & yet notwithſtanding complaintes were ſtill caſt foorth againſt Moſes and Aaron, men charged them with al ỹ blame, all ỹ fault was laid in their necks. Seing it was ſo, muſt it not needs be that ỹ people was exceedingly hardharted? Yes: but let vs nowe looke into our ſelues. For we alſo are guilty of the like maliciouſnes nowadays in that

Mat. 16. 24. & Ioh. 10. 27

behalf. For there are a number to be seene which foster poyson in their hearts, & are wilfully wedded to wicked matters, and yet knowe neither why nor wherefore. If a man aske them what it booteth them: they cannot tell, saying that the diuell hath so caryed them away, that they bee easily wonne to maintaine euill matters, and to murmure and grudge: and therwithal they fal to running vpon those that cannot doe withall, for none other cause but ỳ they indeuour to maintaine the things that concerne God. How haue wee had an eye to the thinges which God hath done beyond mans expectation? He wrought of al the while, when no mã thought it. There were neither Iudges, nor people, nor ministers of the word, ỳ euer thought vpon ỳ thinges ỳ are come to passe. Wel: is the thing done & past? and do we not perceiue ỳ God pitied vs in ỳ ende, and that therby he ment to schole vs, and ỳ we shoulde be mindfull of that deed for euer? Why consider we not ỳ he laid his hand vpon vs to humble vs, to ỳ intent we should henceforth liue in al subiection vnder him, & according to his order? Are they not too too vnexcusable, which cannot make their profit therof? Yes surely. For it is as a wilful shutting of their eyes against Gods workes. But no maruel if things be so out of order nowadays. For wee see ỳ in the countries where the Gospel is, there is more inordinate liberty & more leaudnes than is among ỳ papistes. Whereby we may vnderstande, ỳ God doth iustly giue them ouer. For when men haue heard ỳ gospel and will not beleeue it: they must needs alwayes become deuils incarnate and as badde as monsters, so as nothing may be seen in thẽ but cursed disorder. In deede ỳ Papists, forasmuch as they be deadly enemies vnto God, are well worthy of ỳ reprobate minde wherin they be. But as for them that boast of ỳ Gospel, & make a mocke of it, vtterly refusing al good doctrine, & fighting against god: must not God needs vtter greater rigor towards them, as men see he hath done? And a mã needs not to looke far for ỳ matter. Let vs but looke a little about vs, & we shall see ỳ Gods vengeance hath broken out to ỳ vttermost, vppon those vnhappie creatures which doe so refuse his grace dayly offered vnto them. Now then, if those kind of folk conceiue rancor against al goodnes, what get they by it, but ỳ they heape vp stil greater punishment vpon their owne heads? But as for our part, let vs learn to keep our selues in aray vnder ỳ standard of our God: and then let vs assure our selues, ỳ as he made Aarõs rod to florish in spyte of all ỳ rebels, so will he also make ỳ order to florish which he hath set among vs. Let vs wait vpon him, & rest vppon that order: and in ỳ meane while shrowd our selues vnder his wings, and not seeke any thing against his preheminẽce & dignity, but honour him all of vs both great & smal. If we proceede after ỳ fashion, we may wel hope that as he wrought then, so will he continue also towardes vs.

But by the way let vs beare in mind what Moses saith here. *Bethink your selues* (saith he) *euen to keepe the commaundementes which I set before you this day.* Hereby he sheweth vs whereto ỳ minding of the chastisements which we haue perceiued to haue bin done by Gods hand, should serue vs. Namely to bring vs vnto his obedience. For if we think to quit our selues by condemning such as haue so troubled gods order, & gone about to ouerthrow the doctrine of our Lord Iesus Christ: and yet in the meane while do play the same pageants, and followe their footesteppes within an houre after: surely wee shalbe double punished. Wee see what befell to Iehu; and it is a lookingglasse for vs to behold continually. For if a iudge turne his one hand vnto bribes, and punish theeues with the other for his owne profite: is not he himselfe worthy of dubble punishment? Euen so stoode ỳ case w Iehu. True it is ỳ God vsed his seruice in punishing ỳ ydolatries & abhominations of Achabs house: but yet for al that, Iehu himself followed the same, & therfore was God faine to punish him also as a robber, & to vse greater rigor against him than against the house of Achab, though al things were out of order there and ful of wickednes. As much shall befall vs when we shall haue condemned the wicked, and the despisers of God, and such as haue turned quite & cleane against him: if we our selues resemble them afterward. Therfore let vs take heede to ỳ which is spoken heere, which is that God calleth vs home to him, by our beholding of ỳ desolation that men had practised. Very well then, our Lord punisheth them: but his punishing of the wicked is for our benefite. For his meaning is ỳ by their example we shoulde learne to turne head when we haue gone astray, that wheras erst we followed him not, ne framed our liues according to his word, we shold come to attonemẽt again in him, and take heed to our conuersation, ỳ we obserue al the cõmandemẽts which he setteth before vs.

Againe, Moses sheweth vs heere, that it is not ynough for vs to serue God by halues, as men commonly doe to make their market as they list themselues. Indeede we wilbe ashamed so to do, specially if we perceiue that God chastiseth any man for the like doings, and that wee our selues haue found that hee hath vouchsafed to beare with vs, and to shewe himselfe as our father. I say we will be ashamed to disdaine to haue any regarde at all of it. But what? We will set a good face vpon the matter, and we will pretend some shadow of vpright dealing, at leastwise in smal particular matters: but otherwise, wee will holde on stilin our old trace, and we will do such thinges as may wel bewray that in al the rest there was nothing but hypocrisie, so as we went not to work roundly & soundly because we be doubleharted. But god admitteth no such parting of stakes. He saith expresly, Looke about you when I punish such as haue done amisse. For vnlesse ye purpose to wrap your selues in the same curse, ye must not only reforme your liues in one or two points, but also rule your selues throughout according to my law, ye must walk in such vprightnes, as it may be perceiued that ye haue giuen your selues to my seruice, and ỳ your whole seeking is to haue me to be your Lord & master. Thus ye see wherat Moses looked in saying. Therfore do yee all the cõmandements which I set before you this day.

But surely mans frailty is such, as he can neuer attaine to the full performing of the law: but yet must we stil indeuour towards it. When we haue inforced our selues to ỹ vttermost, yet shal we be behind hand stil in many things. And if we enter into accoũt for euery poynt which we shal haue performed, we shall haue failed in a hundred. Therefore let vs acknowledge our faultes: but yet for all that, the marke that wee must shoote at, must be the obeying of our God without exception, so as we make no parting of stakes with him to say, Go to, as for in this thing, I am contented to yeelde to God, but hee must pardon me in that thing, and he must beare with me for the other matter. If we fall to such chaffaring with him, wee shall finde in the ende that our fond ouerweening hath beguiled vs.

And in any wise let vs wey well this saying, where he sayth: *that is to bee himselfe that setteth forth the commaundements of God.* And thereby he bringeth vs back to Gods word in such wise as it is preached, for he wil not haue vs go seeke in the aire, nor yet aboue the clowdes for ỹ knowledge of his wil. We must be contented with his comming downe vnto vs, and with his speaking to vs by the mouthes of men. The rebellious sort haue alwayes sayd that their intent was to serue God: for it were too horrible a thing to be so blasphemous in wordes, as to say that they giue ouer God and will be none of his. Therefore doe they make faire protestations: but in the meane while they tread vnder foote the worde whereby God will be knowen and serued. This hath bin seene in all ages: and we haue found it in these despisers that haue crept in here among vs to corrupt vs, that all their talke hath tended to none other end, but to abolish some peece of the holy scripture. For they haue giuen forth that there is no more neede of the Lawe and the prophets, but that they be quite abolished. And this blasphemie hath bin held or rather flushed out in such sort, as it required to be resisted with stoutnesse. Insomuch as they haue not bin ashamed to spew out such wicked sayings as these in my presence: namely ỹ the old Testament was to be reiected, and belonged not at all vnto vs. And on their Alebenches they made it a common prouerbe, that the hauing of the Gospell was sufficient, that is to say, that wee ought to holde vs contented with these two wordes, A man must loue God, and he must loue his neighbour. Thus ye see how they haue gone about to bring in a Turkishnesse vppon vs, yea and a confusion more horrible than Turkishnesse, in that they durst so openly pronounce all those leawd speaches. Let vs marke then how it is not without cause that Moses sayth here, *The commaundements which I set before you*, as if hee should say: come not hither to protest dissemblingly that your intent is to serue God: but [say flatly] ỹ ye wil not admit his Lawe because it is preched vnto you by me, by me (I say) which am a mortall man as you be and not your God, least ye should make an idoll of me. Alledge none of all these shiftes, sayth he: for God hath ordained me to set forth his Lawe, and he will haue it receiued at my hand. And seeing he hath giuen me that charge and office: it behoueth you on your side to obey. Now againe wee knowe that our Lorde Iesus Christ intendeth not to dwell here visibly in his owne person among vs. Hee hath ordeined Pastors in his Church, and hee will be heard by their meanes: that is the perfection whereunto hee bringeth vs, vntill wee come to that happy meeting, to bee throughly joyned vnto him. Those are the wordes of Saint Paul. Now if wee will not submit our selues to that order: it is as if we would rend asunder the body of Christ as much as in vs lyeth. Therefore let vs beware that wee yeelde due authoritie to Gods word, and accept it reuerently when it is preached vnto vs. So then, whensoeuer we haue to deale with Gods seruice and religion: let vs not fall to fancying of high speculations, as if we would say, Let God shewe me what pleaseth him, and I wil doe it. For that is but a vaine excuse, as wee shall see that Moses himselfe will tell vs hereafter where he sayth: Thou needest not to goe ouer the sea, nor to mount vp into the ayre, nor to goe downe into the deepe, forasmuch as thou hast the worde in thy heart and in thy mouth. And this word (saith S. Paul) is not only that which was preached by Moses: but also the same word of faith which we preach at this day. Sith it is so, let vs beare in minde ỹ God ment as it were to bridle vs by telling vs ỹ it was his wil to make vs subiect vnto him, and ỹ for the bringing thereof to passe, it behoued vs to obserue the doctrine which he did set forth by the hand of Moses. And cõsequently it behoueth our Lord Iesus Christes gouerning of vs nowadays to be such, as we receiue and beleeue whatsoeuer is preached to vs in his name. Ye see thó that the way for Gods word to haue due preheminence and authoritie among vs: is that wee gouerne not our selues after our owne lyking: but hearken to the voyce of Iesus Christ to submit our selues thereto, so as hee may haue the souereintie ouer vs that is giuen him by God his father, and we receiue his word without exception or gainsaying, knowing that that is the meane whereby God intendeth to try what obedience wee yeelde vnto him.

1. Cor. 13. 12

Deut. 30. 11. 12, 13, 14.

Rom. 10. 8.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs perceiue them better than wee haue done heretofore, so as we may fare the better by all the instructions that are giuen vs, as well by the benefites that are dayly bestowed vppon vs at his hand, as by the chastisementes which hee sheweth vs: that thereby we may be brought to feare him, and to honor him by all meanes, and not take vppon vs the name of Christianitie falsely, but become his people in very deede, being separated from all worldly infections, and from all wicked lustes that are contrary to his lawe, or which striue against it. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewſeday the xxiiij of September. 1555.

The Lxxvi. Sermon, which is the third vpon the eleuenth Chapter.

8 Therefore keepe all &c.

9 And that yee may prolong your daies in the lande which the Lorde ſware to your fathers to giue to them and to their ſeede, euen a lande that floweth with milke and honnie.

10 For the land which thou goeſt vnto to poſſeſſe it, is not as the lande of Egypt whence thou cameſt: where thou diddeſt ſow thy ſeede and water it with thy feete as a garden of herbes:

11 But the Lande which thou goeſt vnto to poſſeſſe, is a land wherin are hilles and plaines, and it drinketh raine water from the skie.

12 It is a land which the Lord thy God regardeth: the eyes of the Lorde thy God are continually vpponit, from the beginning of the yeere to the end of the yeere.

13 And if ye be diligent in obeying my commaundementes which I commaunde you this day, ſo as ye loue the Lorde your God, and ſerue him with all your hart and with all your ſoule:

14 Then will I giue the foreraine and the afterraine in ſeaſon vppon your lande, that thou mayeſt gather vp thy Corne, thy Wine, and thyne Oyle.

15 Alſo I will giue thee graſſe vpon the feeld for thy Cattell. So ſhalt thou eate and haue thy fill.

AFter that Moſes hath warned the people to keepe Gods commaundements, now hee harteneth them by ſetting Gods promiſes before them, as if GOD ſhould tell them, that his will was they ſhould not ſerue him but for good wages. And in deede, God perceiuing how loth & ſlowe we be to follow him, allureth vs to it, by promiſing vs that wee ſhall not loſe our labor in ſo doing. Not that he is bound to doe it, or that he intendeth to haue vs as hirelings, or that we can deſerue or earne any thing at his hand: wee muſt rid away all ſuch imaginations. It is meete ỹ wee ſhould yeeld obedience vnto God, though no reward at al were behighted vs. For we ought to loue him for his owne ſake, & not for any recompence that can be looked for. Againe on ỹ other ſide, our affection muſt be francke & free, and not lyke theirs that wil doe nothing, except their profite be alwayes before them. We muſt loue God w a free heart. Thirdly, we can deſerue nothing at all by our doings: doe what we can, God is neuer ỹ more bound vnto vs for it. For we be his already, & what can we bring, which is not due to him already by nature? Yet is he contented to apply himſelfe to our rawneſſe, in ſaying ỹ if we ſerue him, there is a reward ready for vs, ſo as we ſhall not neede to be afraid ỹ our Labor in honoring him ſhoulde be vnprofitable to vs if we indeuour ſo to honor him. Now we ſee what a fondneſſe it is for men to conclude, that becauſe God promiſeth rewarde to ſuch as keepe his Lawe, therfore men can deſerue at his hand: For that is not his meaning: but it is done for our infirmities ſake becauſe God ſeeth that wee haue nede to bee quickened vp. And therfore all the promiſes of the lawe are as ſtrokes with ỹ ſpurre. Beſides this, we muſt alſo come backe to the doctrine of S. Paul, which is, that whatſoeuer promiſe with condition God doe make vs in his lawe, it ſtandes vs in no ſtead. For we on our ſide, in ſteade of performing the thinges ỹ God commaundeth vs, doe goe cleane backe from them, and by that meanes are farre off from all ỹ benefit ỹ is behighted vs there. And whereas the Lawe ſayth, hee that doth theſe thinges ſhall liue in them: that booteth vs nothing at all vntill God of his owne free goodneſſe be attone with vs againe. For then writeth he his lawe in our heartes, and we learne to obey him: which thing we cannot doe by nature. And yet for all that, we doe it not then perfectly, but there is ſtill ſome blemiſh in our doings, ſo as God might iuſtly reiect our workes, becauſe they be altogether ſinfull. Neuertheleſſe hee taketh them in good woorth, and yeeldeth vs reward, not as of ductie, but of his owne good will.

Therefore to come againe to the firſt matter, let vs note ỹ God prouoketh vs to the keping of his commaundements, by ſuch meanes as he knoweth to be moſt conuenient for vs. And that is the cauſe why he ſayth, that if wee be whole his, he alſo is ours: and ỹ if wee draw neere vnto him he will drawe ny vnto vs: & will bleſſe vs, & he wil not only proſper vs in this tranſitorie life but we may wel hope for a far greater reward in ỹ kingdome of heauen. All theſe thinges are told vs: and to what end? Not to puffe vs vp with any vaine preſumption, as though wee were able to deſerue aught at Gods hand, but to incourage vs the more to doe well, ſeeing that our God which

might well exact the performance of all that is conteined in his Lawe, without allowing vs any rewarde at all, doth neuertheleſſe voutſafe to binde himſelfe freely of his owne accord. Marke that for the firſt point. For we ſee here, ỳ Gods promiſing of all theſe thinges to that people, was not for any obedience that they had yelded vnto him; for the land had bin promiſed to their fathers, yea euen by othe, long before they were borne. And if a man ſpeake of the time that was to come: we ſee that God had no reſpect of that, he looketh not that the people ſhould behaue themſelues ſo well as to receiue reward of him for it: but he ſayth; I haue already promiſed you the land, yea I haue promiſed it you for your inheritance, to the intent ye ſhould not thinke ye haue gotten it by your owne purchaſe. And for proofe thereof, I aſſured it vnto you by free gift before you were begotten: but yet if yee intend to inioy it, take heede that yee giue your ſelues to me. Here yee ſee how God preuenteth all deſerning: he regardeth not what wee haue deſerued, but whereas he ſeeth vs to be wretched and deſtitute of all goodneſſe, ſo as he findeth nothing but ſinne in vs, whereby we deſerue to be riuoted: yet neuertheleſſe he of his owne infinite mercie bindeth himſelfe vnto vs, & telleth vs he will doe vs good, as though we had ſerued him according to his law. Marke ỳ for one point.

And thereupon he ceaſeth not to ſay, *Do the things that I haue commanded you, that ye may inioy the kingdom that I haue promiſed you.* The reaſon is, that he will not haue his goodneſſe daly-ed withall. If he be liberall, he will not haue men to abuſe it as they commonly doe. When it is told vs that all this euer we haue at Gods hand, is of his onely free gift: wee beare our ſelues in hand, that we haue leaue to doe euill, and to liue euery man after his owne lyking, and that it is no matter what we doe. But God wil not haue his gracious goodnes ſo diſgraced. For his ſhewing of himſelfe fauorable vnto vs, is to another end and purpoſe: namely to prouoke vs to loue him againe; and that becauſe wee finde him ſo good a father, we ſhould be lykeminded againe towardes him, & behaue our ſelues as his children. That is the thing which Moſes telleth vs here when hee ſayth, Looke that yee obey your God, if ye minde to poſſeſſe the land which he promiſed to your fathers. For on the one ſide he ſheweth that the land of Chanaan was an heritage of free gift: and yet hee forbeareth not to tell them, that they muſt not dallie wt God in abuſing ỳ liberalitie of his, but ſo much the rather both loue him & feare him. And when they ſee that God hath powred out the great riches of his mercie ſo vpon them; the ſame ought to inflame them to ſay, let vs giue ouer our ſelues wholy to our God: Seeing that hee hath ſought vs out at ſuch time as wee were gone from him, & preuented vs wt his goodneſſe, not reſpecting our vnworthineſſe, but taking occaſiõ of himſelf to doe vs good: let it kindle ỳ greater deſire in vs to ſubmit our ſelues to his power and will.

And whereas Moſes ſpeaketh here but onely of the land of Chanaan, & of the fruites that the people ſhould gather there for their finding and ſuſtenance: it is not for that God meant not to leade the faithfull any further than ſo at ỳ time: for it is certeine that they had the promiſe of life after the ſame maner as it is conteined at this day in the Goſpell. And therefore it is horrible blaſphemie againſt God, to ſay ỳ God held the people of olde time lyke ſwine in a ſtye, and that they had no more but a certeine figure of ỳ ſpirituall good thinges which are giuen vs preſently in theſe dayes, as that wretched caytife ſayd which was puniſhed here, who turned all thinges vpſide downe, & was ſo bold as ſo belke out this hereſie, ỳ the olde teſtamẽt was nothing elſe but a figure: inſomuch ỳ euen Abraham the father of all the faithfull, had but a fantaſticall faith and knew not God aright. And for proofe therof (quoth he,) he worſhipped Angels in ſtead of God, & had no knowledge of the euerlaſting lyfe. Loe what curſed ſtuffe here was: for we know (ſaith S. Paul) ỳ the fathers of old time were the childrẽ of God, & heires of ỳ kingdome of heauẽ as well as we. There is but this difference, ỳ they were lyke young children: but yet for all ỳ, they failed not to poſſeſſe ỳ benefite, howbeit ỳ they were ſtil vnder tutors and gouernours, according to ỳ ſimilitude that S. Paul alledgeth there. The auncient fathers had the law & the ceremonies & ſuch other lyke thinges: but yet they wanted not the ſubſtance & trueth alſo. Now then, Gods ſetting forth of the land of Chanaã to the Iewes was not to the intent they ſhould ſtand poring vpon ỳ, lyke ſwine that ſtand muſling with their groyns in their ſwil trough: but vnder the earthly inheritance which he had promiſed to their fathers, he gaue them a taſte of the heauenly heritage, accordingly as we ſee ỳ in their ſacrificing, although they offered brute beaſtes: yet were they made partakers of the redẽption that is purchaſed for vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt; and their offering of ỳ brute beaſtes in ſacrifice, directed thẽ to ỳ redemption ỳ was wrought by the ſonne of God, when he ſhedded his holy bloud to waſhe away our ſpottes and ſinnes. And after the ſame maner was it wt the land of Chanaan. For ſuch was their ſlender capacitie, ỳ it behoued thẽ to be guided that way. The land of Chanaan then, was to thẽ not onely a pledge but alſo an earneſt penny of the heauenly lyfe & endleſſe welfare which the fathers hoped for as well as we, inaſmuch as they had the ſame faith that we haue. So then let vs marke well, that whereas here is mentiõ made of the land of Chanaan, and of Gods maintening of his people there in wealth: it ſerueth not to the end that the Iewes ſhould looke for nothing els but earthly things: but to the end that by taſting of Gods goodnes in this trãſitorie life, they ſhould vnderſtãd that he had prepared thẽ another heritage in heauẽ, which was more worth than al the world.

But our Lord vſeth no ſuch maner of dealing with vs nowadayes. True it is that (as ſaith Saint Paul vnto Timothie) if we walke as becommeth vs, we haue promiſes both of this preſent life, & of ỳ life to come. God telleth vs ỳ he wil not only receiue vs into ỳ euerlaſting life, but alſo ỳ he will

Gal. 4. 1.

Hebr. 9. 13. 28. & 11. 13. 14.

1. Tim. 4. 8.

wil neuer forsake vs so lõg as we be in this world and in this earthly pilgrimage, but will stil haue a care of vs to doe vs good, and to succor vs and prouide for vs in all our needes: howbeit the heauenly lyfe is the chiefe thing, and that is the place whereunto our Lord draweth vs, notwithstanding that he ad this present lyfe to it as an accessorie. And that is done because wee haue a greater light nowadayes, than our forefathers had vnder the Lawe. For Iesus Christ is come downe from heauen, and hath opened the euerlasting kingdome vnto vs: & he is gone vp thither as in our person: for he is risen againe in ỹ nature of man which he took of vs. Ye see then ỹ heauen is now opened: and therefore it is not to be wondered at though God speake in a larger language now, thã he did in the time of the law. For it behoued the people of those dayes to bee led as we see little children are: & (as saith Saint Paule) we be come to mans estate, in comparisõ of them. Yet notwithstanding we may gather hereupon, that God intending to incourage his people to serue him with the better will, telleth them ỹ he will shewe himselfe a father towardes them, euen in respect of this world, howbeit not in all pointes, but onely so farre forth as may giue them some taste and feeling of his fatherly loue, that they may lift vp the eyes of their faith yet higher, and vnderstand that God hath reserued the true blessednesse and perfection of glorie for them, till they be taken out of this worlde and out of this corruptible lyfe. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to gather vppon that text: Yes and it behoueth vs to marke wel this saying, *That thou must be strengthened.*

Iohn 1.51.

Gal 4.4.

Hereby Moses declareth that God for his parte is faithfull, and that when hee hath once spoken the worde, we may well assure our selues of it. But forasmuch as we drag our legges after vs, and although he allure vs to him so gently, and draw towards vs of his owne accord: yet are we lazie & slow in comming vnto him: we haue need to be strengthened. That is the very end ỹ al ỹ promises of the lawe do tend vnto. It is not meant that God should binde himselfe vnto vs as our detter: it is not for that he looketh whether wee haue deserued any thing at all or not: neither is it of purpose to bargaine or indent with vs, as though he should take vp hackencies among vs to serue his turne withall, by constraint: but forasmuch as he sees wee be feeble, and haue not so resolute a minde as were requisite, but are intangled in this world, and held backe with a number of vanities, and wicked affections, and (to be short) are not so liuely as to yeelde our selues vnto his obedience: his purpose is to strengthen vs, and to help vs. He seeth our default, and he remedieth it. Be strõg therefore. And how? Euen by considering thus with your selues: Go to, Our Lord might commaund vs peremptorily at one word: for he hath full souereintie ouer vs, and we be his by nature. And when we haue all of vs streined our selues to the vttermost of our power, yet can wee not doe as we ought to doe. Yet notwithstãding, he will not be serued at our handes wout recompence, but he saith ỹ if we doe but a peece of that which is due to him, he bindeth himselfe to vs for it. Seeth we see this, are we not too leawd if wee bee not touched to the quick, & amend not all slothfulnesse, to go forth vnto God lustily without stopping for any worldly impediмẽt or hinderance? That is ỹ strength which Moses speakes of here.

And he addeth hereunto, *that it is not enough to be entred into the land: but wee must also abide and dwell there:* for if wee haue once receiued the promise of saluation, and God hath blessed vs & made vs to prosper to ỹ worldward: we must not thereupon fall a sleepe, but wee must still follow our cause. We know that this life is a way, and therefore wee must still goe on forward. And whither is it that God calleth vs? Saith he to vs, when ye haue gone on a little way, tary still intangled in the world? No: but we must trauel vpward to the heauenly lyfe. And that can not be done without forsaking the world continually more and more. Then let vs marke well, how it is told vs here, ỹ when God hath once put vs in hope of saluation, so as he hath taken vs into his Church and into his flocke, and begunne to doe vs good: we must not fal asleepe vpon it, but proceede on stil, assuring our selues ỹ al is to no purpose, vnlesse wee hold out to our liues end, without ceasing or failing in the middes of our way. This is it ỹ Moses meant, in saying ỹ when the people were once entered into ỹ lande, it behoued them to haue an eye to ỹ euerlasting inioying & possessing thereof which had bin promised them with the same. Hauing said so, he addeth *that the land of Chanaã is not as the land of Egipt.* And why? *For your being in Egipt* (saith he) *was as it had bin in a garden.* For men doe water their gardens, so as when they haue sowed or set their herbes, they wil haue water at hand to moysten thẽ wal. After ỹ same maner was it with you in ỹ land of Egypt, which is watered partly by cunning, & partly by nature. For we must vnderstãd, ỹ that land hath one propertie which all other landes haue not. We reade not ỹ any other cõtrie of the world is vnmoystened with raine and showers frõ aboue, saue only Egypt. For once a yeere ỹ riuer Nilus ouerfloweth his banckes, according to ỹ growing therof, so doth it bringe thẽ abundance of fruites. Insomuch ỹ if it ouerflowe not aboue fiue or sixe foote deep, it is a token of dearth, as who should say ỹ God threatneth famine to ỹ whole countrie. If it rise to twentie foote or somewhat vpward, well, there will be some abundance. But if it increase to thirtie or fortie foote, then will there be much more ioy in Egypt: they haue none other signe of a good yeere & a fruiteful haruest, than the ouerflowing of Nilus. Whereas all other riuers doe marre the landes where they ouerflowe: and although they be muddie, yet doe they much harme: This riuer, by his ouerflowing, causeth ỹ land to yeeld great abũdance. That is ỹ cause why it is said, ỹ at ỹ time ỹ Israelites had as it were euery man his garden, & were faine to haue water to moistẽ thẽ wall after ỹ maner of ỹ cõtrie, which is cut into many ditches & trẽches to water the land withal: & all this is according to ỹ ordinance

which

which God hath set there. But here Moses telleth the Israelites, that it shall not be so with thē in the land of Chanaan. For why? There is small store of riuers in many of the countries, yea and in the most part of them. True it is that Iordan passeth through it, and there are certaine lakes also: but that is all, and yet one of them serues but to infect the land. For the lake where Sodom stood, did rather marre the countrie, than yeeld any commoditie. And therewithall wee see how the fathers had much adoe to digge pittes, and were in daunger to be vndone with drought: insomuch that they were driuen frō place to place for lacke of water. Ye see then that the land of Chanaan was not watered after the maner of Egypt, neither had it water at hand and at commandement as Egypt had. And therefore is it sayd vnto them, See how God visiteth the land of Egypt but once a yere: and if the riuer flowe lushly ouer all the countrie, it is as good as if he had rayned ouer so much vpon it, so as the Egyptians are sure of a good harueſt, when the riuer hath increased after that fashion. But your God must be faine to send you raine and conuenient moysture from aboue, from the one end of the yeere to the other. When yee haue sowen your seede, ye must waite for raine from aboue, and thinke thus with your selues, Alas Lord, wilt not thou make the seede to increase which wee haue layd into the ground? Now must thou shew that thou regardest vs, and that it is thy wil that our labour shal prosper. And when thou hast sō giuē vs raine, we must be faine to returne againe and looke vp still to heauen, that thou our God must haue thine eyes cōtinually vpon the land, to make it yeelde fruite. For it is not enough for you ỹ your God send you rayne once; but he must be faine to hold on still: for other way there is none to water ỹ land, except your God power out his blessing vppon you from heauen. Otherwise the land must needes lye dry and vntilled. Thus doe we see how Moseses meaning is, to stirre vp the people to liue in awe and feare, and to prouoke them to call vppon God continually, and therewithall to submit themselues to his gouernment, and to consider how great need they haue of his help, so as they may say: Alas Lord, what will become of vs if thou blesse vs not?

Moreouer hee putteth them in minde also, to consider what a fatherly care God had of ỹ land of Chanaan, sith it was his pleasure to raine so vpon it, not for once a yeere onely, but yerely from the beginning of the yere to the ende of it. That is the effect of the thinges that Moses intended to say here. And thereby wee be done to vnderstand, that Gods bringing of vs into distresse and necessitie, is to prouoke vs to repaire vnto him, and to looke vp to his goodnesse, so as wee should not onely haue cause to giue him thankes for his benefites; but also bee driuen to call vpon him by being held at the staues end, and thereupon dayly resorte vnto him. After the same maner, wee see nowadayes how wee haue neede of faire weather; and that not for fower or fiue dayes in a yeere: but as oftē as seed is to be layde into the ground, or the lande is to be tilled; or elſe we see men coulde not put the plough into the ground, nor sowe their corne: if they should, it would rotte immediately, and neuer take roote in the earth. Againe the grapes would rotte vppon the vines and neuer ripen. Neuertheleſſe, when corne is layde into the ground, it requireth rayne; and it is mard if there followe an vnmeasurable drought. Afterward in sōmertime when harueſt commeth, the time must be fit for it, and likewise for dreſſing of vines and for mowing of graſſe. To be short, all the yeere long God calleth vs to him, by making vs to haue neede of him. And although wee were not prouoked at all; yet the very wit and vnderstanding that he giueth vs by nature, may cause vs to see that hee calleth vs dayly to come vnto him, and to put our whole trust in his goodneſſe. This is the thing in effect which we haue to remember vppon this text.

But the chiefe point is to put this lesson well in practise. And therefore whensoeuer we see that our God hath looked vppon vs throughout all the yeere; let vs vnderstand that his intent was to shewe the more familiarly, what a fatherly care he hath ouer vs. For if wee had any riuer lyke to Nilus which watered the land in stead of rayne: wee would thinke thus with our selues; well, now hath God done pitying of vs for this yeere: & it would not touch vs so wel, as when we see ỹ God not onely regardeth vs in the springtime, but also holdeth on all the yeere lōg, so as there is not any one day of all the yere, wherein we may not behold Gods wonderful goodneſſe, in making ỹ earth to yeeld fruite for our sustenance, by considering how he is faine one while to hold ỹ rayne backe vp, & another while to opē the windowes & watergates of heauen, that wee may haue moysture in due season: How hee is faine to send heate, and to asswage it againe: & to send cold and to abate it againe; how hee is faine to send faire weather & fowle, and to temper the one with the other: so as finally, we haue neede of all these diuersities, in their due times and seasons. And sith we see that God prouideth vs of all these thinges; ought wee not to be the better assured that he hath a continuall regard of vs and neuer forgetteth vs, and that hee is a father tō vs all the yeere long? Lyke as a man ỹ is mindful of his housholde, riseth betimes a morninges to goe to his busineſſe; & when hee hath done one thing, looketh about if there bee any thing els to set in order, forecasting in his minde how to dispose the thinges ỹ are giuen him, so as the benefite thereof may redound to his whole housholde: euen so God behaueth himselfe as a housholder towardes vs, so as hee ceaseth not to watch for our benefite both early and late; not that he is faine to toyle after the maner of men: but that howsoeuer the case stand, hee maketh vs to feele that he is more than a fosterfather to vs, & we be too blind & beastly if we consider it not. Thus ye see how the practising of this lesson of Moseses, consisteth in giuing thāks to our God, according to the varietie of ỹ time & weather which we perceiue in ỹ yere. And whē he hath prouided vs for the whole yeere; let vs

assure

assure our selues that hee hath had pitie of vs, and regarded vs, and neuer turned his eye from our benefite, to the end that we might be furnished and prouided thereof. Furthermore, it is not enough for vs to thanke God when we haue so felt his goodnesse: but lyke as Moses sayth here, that his eyes are alwayes vpon the landes ẏ are full of hils & dales, where hollow grosides are not at commaundement to cut trenches in, nor streames at hand to water ẏ fields as it were gardens: so when we thinke vpon those thinges, we must beare in minde that God hath his eyes continually vpon vs, to ẏ end that we also should lift vp our eyes vnto him, to call vpon him and to resorte to him for succor all ẏ yeere long, & that when he hath giuen vs a good season, we should pray for the continuance thereof thereafter, as we should haue neede of it, and it ought to prouoke vs to doe ẏ lyke from day to day. But contrariwise, we see our owne negligence. For when thinges fall out according to our minde, wee doe as it were despise God. If we see there hath bin a good seede time, then go to, let vs make good cheere: seeing the seede time was so good, we are lyke to haue as good a harueste. And doe we wonder ẏ God disappointeth vs of our desire, because of such vnthankefulnesse? What a leawdnesse is ẏ? God hath his eyes vpon vs, & yet we shut our eyes at him, & kicke & spurne against him, & mocke at him: and thinke we ẏ he either ought or can beare w such beastlynesse? Nay rather, seeing ẏ he sayth first, My children, I looke vpon you & haue a care of you, to prouide sustenance for you: it would become vs to be answerable vnto him. Seeing ẏ our Lord beginneth after ẏ fashion, what ought we to doe? Ought we not at leastwise to say, well Lord, and we likewise will haue an eye vnto thee? Nay, contrariwise, when we haue receiued benefites at his hand, we fall to kicking against him. He would take vs into his protection, & we fall to flinging away from him. Againe, where is ẏ care ẏ we ought to haue to cal vpon him? It would become vs to consider thus with our selues, Our Lord holdeth vs as it were at ẏ staues end, to ẏ intent we should stand in awe of him: now therefore, let vs not giue our lustes the head: as if a father shoulde say to his children, sirs, looke ẏ yee apply your selues wel, the one of you at his booke and the other at his worke, & then shall ye haue your dinners, & else ye shall haue nothing. If a father hold his childrē at that point, so as they knowe not wether they shall haue meate & drinke or no, except it appeare that they haue done some good, surely it will moue thē though they haue no reason nor vnderstanding. Behold, our God could well giue vs at once all that euer we need: or else he could in one day shewe vs ẏ the yere should be prosperous, so as there should bee both a good harueste and a good vintage: but he wil not doe it. When wee haue passed ouer one day, we must beginne againe the next day to pray to him: & God hath ordeined that it should be so, because he sees wel ẏ it is more thā requisite for vs to be held in awe. And therefore let vs learne to profite our selues by this lesson: & whensoeuer we want raine, let vs beware ẏ we be patient, in waiting quietly till God open ẏ clowdes. And on ẏ other side, when he vouchsafeth to water ẏ earth, let vs vnderstand ẏ he giueth vs sustenance w his owne hand, and let vs call vpon him dayly: & sith wee perceiue ẏ he watcheth for vs: let vs lykewise haue our eyes vpon him againe. Thus ye see in effect what Moses meant to declare here.

Now he addeth thereunto, *If ye keepe the commaundements which I set before you, so as ye loue your God, & serue him with all your heart, in the lande which I will giue you.* Here Moses putteth ẏ people in minde againe what ẏ true seruice of God is, namely ẏ we learne to obey him. This hath bin sufficiently layd forth alreadie: but yet is it not wout cause ẏ the holy Ghost speaketh of it so often. For it standeth vs in hand to haue such warnings set before vs, as it were euery minute of an howre. And for proofe thereof, how serue we God, but by force & constreint? We haue no willingnesse nor desire at all to it. But our Lord telleth vs ẏ he accepteth no seruice ẏ is done vnto him, except it come from the heart, & that we loue him as our father, according as it is sayd in ẏ psalme, ẏ we cannot feare God but because he sheweth himselfe mercifull vnto vs. For so long as we cōceiue nothing in God but rigor, we can doe nothing else but shun him, & shrinke away from him as farre as is possible: & although we be constreined to looke vnto him, yet shall he draw nothing ẏ is aught worth frō vs. Therfore ẏ first step to serue God wel & to loue him, is to knowe his fauorablenesse, that we may rest vpon it, & looke for mercie & fauor at his hand. For lyke as in ẏ sayd hundred & thirtie psalme: so also here, mention is made of obedience after long, to shew vs ẏ it is not enough to pretend ẏ feare of God, but that we must so submit our selues to him, as we may say, Lord thou hast giuen vs the grace to rule our lyfe aright; & therefore vouchsafe to gouern vs in such sort, as none of vs may take leaue to doe what he list, but all of vs may harkē simply to thy voyce, to submit our selues thereunto.

Now let vs come to ẏ word ẏ Moses addeth, which is, *I will giue.* Here he speaketh in the person of God. He had sayd afore, looke ẏ yee obey the cōmandements which I set before you, & then Lord your God will blesse you. And now he sayth *I will giue*, as though he himself were God. It is not wout cause ẏ he chaungeth the person after that fashion: for it serueth to giue the greater authoritie to his doctrine, & to make it to be the better receiued. For we be inclined to such contempt & skornefulnesse, ẏ when God speaketh vnto vs by men, we make no account of it, because his worde is preached vnto vs by mortall men. Behold, a man speaketh in the pulpit, & we be not touched with his doctrine as were requisite. It ought to haue there a heauenly maiestie, and we be so dull and grosse, that we perceiue not how it is God that speaketh there. In this respect Moses saith here, *I will giue thee*: and yet for all ẏ, he was not able to giue them one drop of raine. And what is his giuing then? Verily he sheweth that his speaking is not of himselfe, but of

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God, and therefore that wee must receiue it as if God had spoken it with his owne mouth, and had shewed himselfe in visible shape, and vttered his glorie to the eye. Let vs marke well then that in this text we be done to vnderstand, that when we come to the hearing of a sermon or to the reading of the holy scripture, wee must not bring deafe eares with vs to bee no whit moued at the wordes, nor to bee quickened vp by the commaundementes and exhortations that are giuen vs there: but wee must yeelde our selues vnto our God, assuring our selues that although he serue his turne by men as his instrumentes, yet is it hee himselfe that sendeth the message and authoriseth the word, according to this saying of our Lord Iesus Christ: Hee that heareth you heareth me, and he that receiueth you receiueth mee. And whosoeuer reiecteth you, reiecteth mee also, and lykewise my father that sent me. Ye see then how it is an open rebelling against God, when wee disdayne to heare his word that is preached vnto vs by men, and to heare it with as much humilitie as if he himselfe came downe vnto vs, or as if he sent it vs by the Angels of heauen. That is the matter which Moses meant to shewe here.

Luke 10.16

Now in the end he sayth, *that they shall haue their fil, and be well maintained, when they shall haue kept Gods commaundements after that fashion*. Wee haue two poinctes to marke in this text for a conclusion. The first is, that our Lord telleth his people, that hee wil not barely giue them whatsoeuer is needefull for them: but also giue them their fil of his benefits, so as they shal be through ly satisfyed with them. That is for the one. The second is a comming backe to that which hath bin touched alreadie: namely, that although God speake but of temporall goods, such as concerne but this transitorie lyfe; yet hee leadeth them further thereby. First therefore let vs vnderstand, that God not onely giueth and bestoweth vppon vs, such thinges as hee knoweth to be needefull for vs; but also inlargeth and extendeth his riches yet further, by vsing a kinde of ouermeasure. And in very deede wee see it to be so. For as in respect of naturall necessitie, what needed wee more than bread and water? Psal.104.15 But God addeth wine to cõfort and glad mans heart, as is sayd in the psalme. Againe wee see he vouchsafeth to pleasure vs after all sortes, by sending vs so many thinges as are in the worlde to delight vs withall, which are all witnesses of his liberalitie towardes vs, in that he not onely prouideth vs of all the thinges which we coulde not forbeare; but also addeth as an ouerplus, a great number of good thinges that serue for our pleasure: Whereby wee ought to bee the more prouoked to loue him, and they ought to bee as winges to vs, wherewith to fly vnto him. But contrariwise, if God giue vs store, wee cannot forbeare to pamper our selues lyke brute beasts, insomuch that wee be wedded to this world. I speake not only of drunkards and Gluttons that cram themselues till they be without wit & reason: but also of all such as are in loue with their delicates and delightes, so as if they haue abundance more than ordinarie, they cannot holde themselues within any measure, but thereupon doe fall asleepe, and in stead of being prouoked to resort vnto God, doe runne away from him, or rather lye weltring and bathing of thẽselues in their pleasures, and forget themselues I wote not how. Wherefore let vs marke wel, that whẽ God giueth vs abundance, it is not to minister occasion of disorder, but to make vs the more in loue with him, forasmuch as he handleth vs not as seruantes or hirelinges, but as his owne children, from whom he withholdeth nothing. Now then, sith we see this; let vs learne to fare better by it. Thus much concerning the word *Fil*. But yet let vs marke, that although God giue vs not our fill; yet faileth he not to shewe his freegoodnesse in so dooing, insomuch that there was neuer yet so great a famin, but that our Lord hath alwayes shewed himselfe a father, yea and more than a father towardes men: but ill is that considered of vs. And that is a cause also why hee bestoweth not so much as were requisite. Because Gods benefites haue so ill intertainment at our handes, he also is faine to shut his blessings from vs, and to lette vs alone in want and penurie. Thus much concerning the first poynt.

And touching the second, let vs marke that when God feedeth and maintaineth vs in this world euen to our owne contentation; the same must be a prouocation to vs to consider by faith, the infinite riches that are reserued for vs aboue in heauen. It is sayd in the psalme, I shal haue my fill of the abundance of thy goodnesse. And in an other place it is saide, Lorde howe greate is the abundance of thy goodnes, which thou hast layd vp for them that loue thee? True it is that God maketh vs to feele the abundance of his goodnesse, partly euen in this world: but yet shall we neuer haue our fill of it, (as is said in the sixteenth psalme) vntill our Lord haue taken vs vp to himself, & rid vs quite out of this world. And so let vs marke, that the full measure of the good things that are promised vs, & which we looke to inioy, is not to be found here beneath, it is enough that we see some part of them. Yea and although our Lord bestow but as much vppon vs as he seeth requisite for our infirmitie: Let vs alwayes be led vp higher therby, so as it may make vs to consider, that when the time commeth wherein God wil shewe himselfe vnto vs face to face, then shall we be linked much neerer to him, than we be now: and (to be short,) that whē we be gathered vp into his heauenly kingdome, then we shall haue our fill of all thinges. Ye see then that we must so passe through this world, as we must not take our fill, contentation, and rest in the thinges that are here, but bee drawen euer higher and higher to the spirituall good thinges: and that if we linger in penurie heere beneath, we must consider that by that meane God prouoketh vs to come vnto him, vntill wee bee perfectly vnited vnto him, as the vnion shal be at the last day.

Psal.16.11
Psal.31.19

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele thẽ better

than we haue done, so as it may cause vs to hũble our selues continually, and to misslyke of our selues, and to aske him forgiuenesse of the great number of sinnes and iniquities which we haue committed; and that in the meane while it may please him to beare with vs in our weakenesse, vntill he haue clothed vs againe with his owne righteousnesse, and also taken vs vp into his endlesse glorie. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all &c.

On Wednesday the xxv of September. 1555.

The Lxxvij Sermon which is the fourth vppon the eleuenth Chapter.

16 Beware that your heart bee not beguyled, and that yee turne not away to serue other Gods, and to bowe downe before them,

17 Least the wrath of your God bee kindled against you, and hee shut vp the heauen that it raine not, and the earth yeeld not her fruit, and least ye perish sodenly from of the good Land which the Lord giueth you.

18 Therefore lay vp these wordes in your heartes and in your mindes, and tye them for a token to your hands, & let thẽ be as frontlets written betweene your eyes.

19 And teach thẽ to your childrẽ, talking of thẽ when thou art at home in thine house, & when thou goest abroad, and when thou lyest down, & when thou risest.

20 See thou write them vppon the portals and gates of thy house,

21 That your dayes & the dayes of your children, may be increased in the Land which the Lord sware to your fathers to giue you, as lõg as ỹ skyes are ouer ỹ earth.

WHen as Moses sayth here, *that men must beware that they ouershoote not themselues:* thereby he doth vs to vnderstand, howe frail we be, & how inclined vnto euill, if we be not diligently restreined by the feare of God, & by continuall minding of ỹ doctrine whereby he guideth and gouerneth vs. To our seeming it had bin enough to haue sayd; Keep the cõmandements of your God. Yee see what he requireth of you: sith yee know his will, holde your selues to it. But forasmuch as men are vnconstant, & a small thing or nothing will make them start out of ỹ right way: he addeth yet further this warning, that they should beware; As if he should say; Syrs, keepe good watch. Why so? For wee shall be surprised by and by, if we watch not to withstand Satans temptations & wiles. Specially when ỹ case cõcerneth ỹ seruing of God, wee bee streightwayes turned aside, and we need none other bodie to tempt vs, for euery man shall finde continually some seede of superstition in his owne heart, and the minde of man is a warehouse of Idolatrie, so as euen without schooling, euery of vs will forge idols, & ouerthrow the seruice of God. For ỹ diuell sleepes not, ne ceaseth to intangle vs in many fond & wicked fancies. Hereby therefore we may iudge how needefull this warning is for vs, where we be willed to be watchfull. Yea and wee know ỹ frailetie of our minde to be such, ỹ if wee be not well fenced to wstand Satans tẽptations constantly, he wil soon haue turned vs out of the way of saluation, & from ỹ pure doctrine of God. And therefore let vs vnderstand at a word, ỹ we haue need to stand continually vpon our garde, as long as we liue in this mortall lyfe. For why? On the one side ỹ diuell tempteth vs, & hath an infinite number of wiles to winde about vs euery minute of an howre: & although his tẽptations were not so great as they be; yet are we so weake of our selues, ỹ euery thing of nothing is able to ouerthrowe vs. Sith it is so with vs, let vs watch, specially seeing ỹ the spirit of God warneth vs so to doe. But what? It is well seene how we be taken vnwares & vnprouided, and God punisheth our negligence in falling so asleepe, as though wee were at peace & rest here. Nay our life ought to be kept occupyed here as though there were continuall warre, & the diuell failleth not to purvey infinite assaultes & skirmishes on all sides. And therefore seeing we on our side be so sleepie, and our enemie on ỹ other side is so watching to cut our throates: it is good reason ỹ we should soone ouercome. For seeing ỹ God warneth vs to stand at our defence, & we voutsafe not to be mindeful of it, & to cal vpon him & to refer our selues vnto his protectiõ; must he not needes shew vs by experience, ỹ his warning of vs is not vaine? Yes; & therefore let vs beare this exhortation in mind, & specially when God is to be serued (as I said afore), let vs assure our selues there needeth nothing to dazle our eies, as appeareth by experience. As soone as ỹ true & pure religion is established in any place; by & by mẽ fal to imbosing of it; for their very nature affordeth it. And therefore so much ỹ more behoueth it vs to hold our selues as imprisoned, and not to swarue one way nor other, ỹ we may hold our selues continually in ỹ pure simplicitie of Gods word. Againe let vs not be out of quiet though neuer so many mẽ do turne out of ỹ right way: for it is their kinde so to do. Wherfore let vs strengthẽ our selues against such stumblingblocks, when we see corruptions creepe in againe, & that such as were in a good trade doe disgrace themselues. Sith it is so ỹ men doe easily fall asleepe, & take no heede to themselues: let vs not maruell though euery thing of nothing do corrupt them. Thus ye see how this sentence may serue vs to dubble purpose.

2. Pet. 3. 8.

And it is sayde expressly, *that our hearts should*

not be beguiled. For it is not enough for a man to abſteine from doing of euill wilfully: but alſo all fond deuotiõs are lykewiſe condemned, becauſe our Lord wil not haue men to be ſelfewiſe, but to obey ſimply whatſoeuer God commandeth thẽ. Men thinke it to be a reaſonable excuſe before God, when they can ſay, I meant to doe wel: but that meant is but a mockerie, as Moſes ſheweth here. And for proof thereof, although our harts be beguiled, ſo as men perceiue not their owne euil doings and deſtruction, but make their reckoning that God will take their doinges in good worth: yet are they condemned here (as ye ſee) with all their good intentes, and they faile not to offend God neuertheleſſe, and in offending him they faile not alſo to heape vp vengeance vppon their owne heads. And why ſo? Euen becauſe they walke not in obedience vnto him. Now then, let vs learne, not to sheeld or ſhrowd our ſelues any more vnder deuotions after the foolithe maner that hath reigned too much in the world: but let vs vnderſtand that our Lord will haue vs to fetch light at his word, and to rule our lines by that. And ſith he is ſo good to vs as to teach vs what is good, to the intent that Satan may not haue any entrance into vs, but that hee may bee put backe though hee goe prying about vs and indeuour to vndermine vs, and ſeeke neuer ſo many byweyes to creepe into vs: let vs aſſure our ſelues throughly, ỹ we haue but only one way, from ỹ which it is not lawful for vs to ſtep aſide in any wiſe. And when we ſtand ſo vpon our gard, let vs not doubt but ỹ God will reach vs his hand, & ſo fence vs on all ſides, as Satan may well practiſe what he liſteth, but hee ſhal neuer win any thing at our handes. For otherwiſe this exhortation were to no purpoſe. If God ſhould ſay vnto vs, beware, & in the meane while we had no meanes to beware, hee might ſeeme to mocke vs. But inaſmuch as when wee reſorte vnto him, he voutſafeth to guide vs, by giuing vs ỹ ſpirit of wiſedome & diſcretion, to ỹ end we ſhould not be deceiued: ſurely whatſoeuer the deuill practiſe, yet ſhall he not preuaile, but we ſhall euer ouercome his temptations, at leaſtwiſe if wee ſuffer our ſelues to be gouerned by Gods pure word, ſo as wee forſake our owne fanſies, & truſt not to our own wit, but pray God to inlighten vs, and to ſhew vs by his holy ſpirit, what is acceptable vnto him. When wee goe to worke after that faſhion, ſo as our wareneſſe is matched with humilitie, it is certeine ỹ God will alwayes reach vs out his mightie hand. Thus ye ſee that the thing which we haue to put in vre, is firſt of all to be vigilant & to keepe good watch: and ſecõdly that foraſmuch as we know we may quickly be deceiued, we muſt pray God to defẽd vs, & vtterly diſtruſting our ſelues, leane onely vnto him. Theſe two thinges wil ſo preſerue vs, that we ſhall continually keepe ỹ right way, euẽ in the middeſt of darkneſſe. For why? God himſelfe will ſerue vs both for Sunne and Moone, as it is ſayd in the Prophet Eſay.

And now by the way he ſheweth that if ỹ children of Iſrael continued not in ỹ ſeruing of God and in his pure religion, they were leſſe to bee excuſed than all the infidels of the world: for it is ſaid vnto them, *turne not away*. Men that haue neuer had any good inſtruction, are by nature as brute beaſtes; but when God hath called vs and ſhewed vs the true foundeneſſe, then if we faile afterward, it is not with vs as with the fillie infidels that haue euer bin blinde and ignorant, but it is a rebellious turning away vnto wickednes, as though we meant to ſpite our God by ſeparating our ſelues from him, by renouncing the couenant which he had made w vs, to hold vs vnder his ſubiection. This ſaying therefore ought to be well weyed, & ſpecially of vs in theſe dayes which haue the pure trueth of ỹ Goſpel, whereas wee ſee how all our neighbours round about vs runne headlong on ſtill in blindneſſe. In deede it is pitie ỹ they haue not knowen Gods trueth; but yet ſhal not ỹ excuſe them. But what is to be ſayd to vs in compariſon of them, ſeeing that our God hath ſhewed himſelfe to vs, & hath layd the matter ſo playne before vs, as we cãnot miſſe but knowe how to obey him? Wherefore let vs take heede ỹ we keepe on our courſe, when God ſhall haue ſet vs in ỹ way of his obedience, & taught vs how to do it. Let vs beware (I ſay) that we ſtep not aſide in any wiſe, vnleſſe we intẽd to be worthie of dubble blame. Let vs bethinke vs of this ſaying, that ỹ ſeruant which knoweth his maiſters will, ſhal haue dubble puniſhment if he doe it not. And ỹ we may ſo doe, let vs ſeeke to ſettle our ſelues ỹ more by Gods word. When he hath once told vs what he would haue vs to doe, let vs profite therein, & let vs be ſo ſtrẽgthened thereby, ỹ the diuel (doe what he can, and inforce hee himſelfe neuerſomuch againſt vs) may not bee able to turne vs out of the way.

2. Tim. 3. 16

Luk. 12. 47.

Now he ſpeaketh afterward *of ſtrange Gods*. For the welſpring of all euil, is the not knowing what God we ſhould ſerue. If men bee to ſeeke in that point, needes muſt all the reſt of their lyfe be vterly vncerteine, & wrapped vp altogether in error. And therefore it is not for naught ỹ God ſtãdeth vpon this point, ỹ men ſhould know him, & ſerue & worſhip onely him alone. For when wee ſay we muſt ſerue no ſtrange Gods: it importeth two thinges. The firſt is that we ſhould be able to diſcern who is our God, ſo as we ground not our ſelues vpon falſe opinion or fanſie, but vpon ſubſtantial certeintie: which thing cannot be if we giue way to our own mother wit. For ỹ is ỹ roote whence all the ſuperſtitions in the worlde haue ſprong. And the very cauſe of ỹ huge confuſion ỹ is ſtill in the world at this day, is that men take leaue continually to imagin whatſoeuer comes in their heads. O (ſay they) I trow God will lyke wel of this: & to my ſeeming, ſuch a thing is good Now if men behaue themſelues ſo after their owne imagination, all things muſt needes be out of order. Ye ſee it is euen a very ſeagulfe. Therefore let vs learne to giue eare to God when hee ſpeakes to vs, & let vs not take leaue to cõceiue any thing of him, otherwiſe than is ſhewed vs by his worde. This then is the firſt point, that we ſhould learne to diſcerne our God from all the Idols which the world forgeth to it ſelfe: & therewithall ỹ we ſhould not attempt any thing, but

that which he alloweth. For ỹ Papistes can wel enough protest, ỹ their intent is to serue ỹ God ỹ made both heauen & earth; & so also doe the Iewes & Turkes: ỹ ease is common to them all. But yet for al ỹ, ye see how ỹ Turks haue wounde themselues into a maze of superstitions, through ỹ deceitfulnesse of their Mahomet who hath bewitched them. Again ỹ Iewes on their parte are growen out of kinde, & haue mingled ỹ Lawe w their owne inuentions, refusing ỹ redeemer that had bin promised them, who is the very foundation of all ỹ religiō which they should haue held. And as for ỹ Papists, ỹ world sees how they haue corrupted all trueth, & turned it vtterly into lying. Therefore let vs learne, ỹ if we will not worship straunge Gods, we must so holde our selues in awe, as we attempt not any thing, vnlesse we be sure ỹ it is according to Gods will. For whensoeuer we fal to worshipping him after our owne deuice, we doe set vp an idoll in our owne braine: & that is a thing which he vtterly mislyketh, reiecteth, and abhorreth. Thus ye see ỹ the thing which we haue to remember vpon this place is, ỹ seeing God hath graunted vs ỹ grace to haue his word to be our guide, we ought to be ỹ more watchfull: & sith we be so weake as we neede not any thing to thrust vs out of the way, wee ought to take so much ỹ moore heede, ỹ we may profit dayly by his word. And besides ỹ, let vs assure our selues throughly, that it is not enough for vs to weene we doe well: for we win nothing by being deceiued, our case is neuer a whit amended by it before God: & therefore let vs learn to pray him to inlighten vs. And therewithall let vs knowe, ỹ whē God hath shewed vs his wil, we must hold vs to it without adding aught thereto. Thus yee see in effect what we haue to remēber vpon this text of Moses.

Now he addeth immediately, *that men shoulde lay vp the things in their hearts which he telleth thē, & that they shoulde make a continuall monument of them: as if it were of bracelets about their wristes, or of attyres on their heades, or of deuices in writing at the entrance of their doores: to the intent they might occasion them to thinke vppon the lawe of God: so as at their rysing in the morning, & at their going to bed at night, men should talke & conferre of it, that their children might learne thereby.* Hereby Moses sheweth yet better, ỹ vnlesse men be held as it were by force, they will soone start away frō God: Lyke as whē a man thinkes he hath made a Foxe tame, if he let him alone but one halfe day, he returnes againe to his kinde by and by. Euen so is it with vs. We be so wilde, ỹ although it may seeme for a time that we be throughly brought home vnto God, & very wel reformed: yet in ỹ turning of a hand all is quite forgotten. And therefore our Lord is faine to put vs in remēbrance, (as hee doth in this text) & to quicken vs vp to inforce our selues to seeke al the means and helps ỹ may be, to hold our selues in awe vnder his obedience. That is the cause why he saith, ỹ folke shoulde make thē frontlets as ornaments of their heads. Whereas men doe commonly weare brooches, buttons, & such other thinges, & women weare billiments of gold and other costly attyres vpon their heades: the attire of the faithful must be to haue some remembrāce of Gods law. In stead of bracelets & other fine toyes to apparell & deck our selues withal, we must vse such an attyre as may teach vs to garnish our soules, yea & to giue our selues wholy to God, & to submit our selues altogether to his word. In stead of the hauing of py things to furnish our houses withal for delight, we must haue some such thing as may put vs in minde to say, These are the things that our God calleth vs vnto, he will neuer haue vs to forget him. And if we haue ouershot our selues, so as our minds do wander abrode, he calleth vs home againe, & telleth vs ỹ we must not raunge so after our own vaine fancies. Thus we see ỹ summe of that which is contained here. We haue had the like saying in the sixth Chapter. But yet this text (6.9) weeth vs more expresly, that it is not ynough for vs to haue withdrawen our selues for once frō our vain and wandering imaginations: but God must bee faine to bring vs to that point againe, by putting vs in minde of our slouth and negligence, or else we shall dwel in it continually, and he must be faine also to shewe vs the weakenesse & feebleneesse of our spirites. And in deede, my experience shewes it: for the whisking of a fly before our eyes, is ynough to make vs run after it, & to do what we can to stop her. Wee build castles in ỹ aire, & by and by al vanisheth away. Now then seeing there are so many vanities in our braine, do we wonder ỹ we doe very quickly start away from God? What a nomber of occasions are there in this world, to turne vs this way & that way, so as we shal be led & caried quite away ere euer we thinke on it? Again, Satan is such a suttle Sire, that if we be not wel armed against him, we shal neuer continue in ỹ obeying of our God. This repetition therfore is not superfluous, where God telleth vs again, ỹ it is good for vs to haue his law written euerywhere, so as we might reade his cōmandements vpon our fingers. And he hath disposed them into ten sentences, to the end they should be ỹ better knowen vnto vs. For looke how many fingers there are vpō our hāds, so many are ỹ commandements of God, to ỹ intent they should be ỹ easier to beare in remēbrāce: so as there needeth no lōg registers, (which were hard to carie away,) forasmuch as he hath giuen vs so short a rule, ỹ if we be long in learning of it, we proue our selues to be wilful. To be short: if we shut not our eyes wilfully, we cānot say but ỹ we may soon haue lerned ỹ things which our God sheweth vs. Againe sith it is his wil, ỹ in stead of ỹ deckings wherunto both men & women are too much giuen through fond desire of vainglorie, wee should haue wherewith to put our selues in mind of his lawe, ỹ we might be held in awe by it: what excuse wil there be for vs, if we fal to going astray, or if we bee wedded to this world, or giue our selues to wickednesse? Thus much concerning this text.

But according to ỹ fashion of ỹ world, which is alwaies giuen to hypocrisie, & to shamefull mocking at al Gods ordinances, ỹ Iewes made them frontlets of certaine sentences of Gods law, and they obserued the law very well as in respect of

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ꝑ words ꝑ are set down here. For they had bracelets of them, & rolles, & attires on their heads, so as it might seeme ꝑ there was nothing but holynesse in them. Also they had the commaundementes written in their houses. All this (say I) was well done. But they surmised that they serued God by these outward shewes: and that was nothing so. We also for our parte should come to the same point lykewise, if wee considered not what the will of our God is, to submit our selues thereto. For as I said afore) hypocrisie is so rooted in mans nature, that they would alwayes be dalying with God, & content him with counterfeitings, so as there might be nothing but dissimulation: & yet for all that, they beare themselues in hand, ꝑ he ought to hold the discharged. But we must marke that God will not bee serued by the wryting of some sentence of his Lawe vpon a post or a doore, or at the entrie of a house; his meaning is nothing so. But what? Forasmuch as he seeth that we be short witted, & that although we haue bin taught his word duely, yet we bee easily turned away frō it; it is not without cause ꝑ he will haue vs to seeke all the helpes that can be, ꝑ we may haue the better stay of our selues, & learne the remedies of our fraileties, sith wee stand none other thing to turne vs out of ꝑ way. And sith we know ꝑ vice to be in vs, let vs bee the diligenter in seeking God, & let vs say: How is it possible ꝑ I should hold my selfe in ꝑ feare of my God if I should passe but one day wout thinking vpon him & vpon his cōmaundements: I should forget him by & by. What is to be done then? As soone as I rise in the morning, the diuell offereth me ꝑ many lettes. Now is standeth me in hand to resist him, & that I tary not till mine enemie giue me ꝑ assault: but I must think vpon my God who calleth me to him. Againe at night when I goe to bed, for asmuch as a nightimes the diuel ceaseth not to put many fond fancies in my head, and a man is not able to restreine his own minde from conceiuing some vaine thoughtes or otherwise beseemeth me to be stil serued by being mindful of my God, & by referring my selfe vnto him & by resting wholy there. For if I tary long, I shall be so drawen from him, ꝑ I shall not finde the way thither againe, lyke as when a man taketh no heed, but runs galloping on wout minding of his way whether he be right or no; ꝑ longer he trauaileth, the further he is from his way; yea & if there be folke to set him in the way, & he regardeth not to take the right way againe; then is hee well woorthie to wander still out of his way. If one say to him; Sir, you must take on that hande, and yet he will needes goe the contrary way, as though his wits were rouing in the aire, & so goeth on still in the ende hee shall find himselfe farre off from the right way. And therefore let vs beware that we be not so headstrong in our vanities, as not to indeuour to amend our selues. For (as I said afore) we may easily wander out of ꝑ way euery minute of houre, so as we need not any thing to make vs stray frō ꝑ right way. But if wee bee out of it, let vs seeke to come in againe by & by & to be reformed. For our God is not far frō vs, he promiseth by his Prophet Esay, that he will be at our backs, as a scholemaster is at the back of a yong scholer. And like as ꝑ mother ꝑ hath her eye alwayes vpon ꝑ childe ꝑ she bringeth vp, wil alwayes be at hand by it: so God sheweth by a familiar example, ꝑ he wil be at our elbowe, if so be that wee seeke him & suffer him to reforme vs. And therefore let vs learne to exercise our selues in ꝑ studie all the time of our life. And specially sith we see there is so vrgent necessitie, let euery of vs quicken vp himselfe, & let vs not tarie til ꝑ diuel haue caried vs so farre astray, ꝑ we can no more return into ꝑ way; but as soone as we set but one step awry, or swerue neuer so little aside, let vs bethink our selues againe by & by. Nay let vs not tarie so long; but let vs be aforehand, & let vs call so much ꝑ more earnestly vpon our God to guide vs, & to preuent vs with his goodnesse. Let vs follow his word, which is ꝑ true shooteanker, & the very lampe to giue vs light. Let vs open our eyes to behold the light that he sheweth vs, & let vs often call to minde ꝑ things which we haue learned. Let euery of vs marke to what vice he is inclined, ꝑ he may seeke the remedie of it, as some be giuen to one affection & some to another. And so when we once know our owne diseases, let vs apply the fit medicines vnto them. In Gods word we shall finde ynow of them wherewith to heale & cure vs, so we be willing to vse the good ꝑ is offered vs there. Thus ye see in effect how we ought to practise this text. It consisteth not in the doing of a sort of Ceremonies, nor in pretending faire countenāces, by wearing texts of Gods law vpon our apparell, or by writing vp of a nomber of goodly sentences without any other minding of them at al; al ꝑ (say I) is nothing. What then? We must seeke the meanes to confirme our selues in ꝑ feare of our God, and to recouer againe into the right way: & because wee bee so weake, wee must receiue such remedies as God appointeth vs.

Aboue al things we must obserue that which is said here; *Lay vp these wordes and sayings which I set before thee, in thy heart and in thy soule.* To the intent then ꝑ men should not stand poring vpon ꝑ outward fashion & figure; that is the chiefe poynt. The marke (say I) whereat hee shooteth, and whereunto all this doctrine is to bee referred, is that Gods lawe should be in our hearts and in our soules. For though wee haue it euer before our eyes, & at our tongues end, so as wee seeme to set neuer so great store by it, and yet in the meane while our heart is locked vp, & wee haue no courage to serue God; truely we doe but deceiue men, & procure our selues the sorer condemnation before God. Now then let vs haue Gods law written, let vs haue the sayings of it painted vpō our walles as in tables, & let vs haue thinges to put vs in minde of it early & late: but let not ꝑ serue for our discharge, as though God were to be payed in such coyne. How then? Let vs indeuer to haue it so grauen in our hearts, as it may neuer be wiped out againe, yea euen in our harte & in our soules, ꝑ is to say, in such sort as is may possesse al our affections. For that is ꝑ place where Gods word is to bee kept. But what? The thing ꝑ S. Iames speaketh of, is seene more now- Iames. 1. 23.

adayes than euer it was, namely that they which come to heare Gods word, take as much profite by it, as by looking vpon themselues in a glasse: they be no sooner gone, but all is forgotten. What fareth a man the better by his seeing of himselfe in a glasse? As soone as he turneth away his face, his shape vanisheth away. Euen so is it with vs. Whereas our comming to Gods word, should be to be transformed into ỹ lykenesse of
2. Cor. 3. 18. God, (as S. Paul teacheth vs in the second to ỹ Corinthians,) & whereas it is the power & propertie of ỹ Gospel, to transforme vs into the glory of God, by beholding him in the person of Iesus Christ: we come to it but to make a pastime of it, so as anon all slippeth away againe, & there remaineth no substance nor power of it with vs. And by that meanes the precious seede of the Gospell perisheth. For it lighteth amõg stones, so as it can take no roote. A man may loose a good deale of corne, if he cast it vppon the drye
Matt. 13. 19. ground, or in a footepath, or vpon stones: for the byrdes will picke it vp by and by. Euen so let vs not mariel though Gods word enter not into vs, for whereas our hearres ought to be tilled as when a plowgh hath eared a peece of land: they lye still vnopened & vnbroken vp at all. By reason whereof, Gods word may wel be giuen vs as a seede, but it shall doe vs no good, the diuell wil catche it away by and by, because it sinketh not into our hearres & our soules. That is the cause why I sayd ỹ al ỹ Moses hath spoken of frontlets, of bracelets, & of writings set vp in mens houses, must be referred altogether to this, ỹ wee shall fare neuerawhit ỹ better for ỹ vttering of ỹ Lawe vnto vs, nor vnderstand any thing at all by it, vntill it haue taken roote in vs, & that wee haue receiued it with hartie affection to giue our selues vnto God.

And yet is not all ỹ wee haue to doe, neither doth God thinke it enough ỹ euery man shoulde indeuer to profite himselfe by it: but he will also haue the fathers to teach their children. Wherein he sheweth ỹ (as I haue sayd afore) it is not enough for vs to serue our God during our owne liues; but we must also prouide ỹ the seede of religion may remaine after out decease. For we be transitorie, & our lyfe is but a shadow: & therefore inasmuch as Gods trueth is immortall, it is good reason ỹ it should continue for euer, & that it should be preserued frõ hand to hand, & that men should put their indeuour thereunto. And specially whẽ God hath giuẽ them childrẽ, it behoueth them to know ỹ it is a treasure, and that they must yeeld an account therof. For it is no small honor ỹ God doth to men & women, when he giueth them children. They be creatures fashioned after ỹ image of God, & we terme them ỹ seede of ỹ Church. Now then seeing that God committeth thẽ to our charge; it is good reason ỹ we should indeuour to bring thẽ vp in such wise as God may be serued by them, ỹ when religion shal haue continued her course all our lyfe long, it may also hold out and continue stil euen after our death. But here we see our owne negligence, or rather our leawdnesse. For wee bee not onely slothfull; but we see how the most part of vs doe shun & eschew (as much as we can) to be trained in Gods worde. If men bee spoken to of it, it is a corse to them, & if they perceiue ỹ there shal be talke of any good doctrine, they haue no regard to come there. It is well seene ỹ a number are worse than ỹ Turkes, & are so bewitched ỹ their owne fond opinions, ỹ as soone as ỹ bell ceaseth to call & prouoke vs to come dayly to ỹ hearing of Gods worde, they goe another way. And for proofe thereof, what a number are there which withdrawe thẽselues from it as much as they can? Yea & when they come, they stoppe their eares wilfully, because they bee occupyed about their wicked affections, and the diuel hath so bewitched them, as they finde not any sauor at all in any word that is spoken vnto thẽ, but are weary of it as soone as there is any matter spoken concerning God.

As for ỹ bringing vp of children, ỹ world seeth what it is. Fathers are loth to haue their children better than thẽselues, for feare least they should put them to shame. Forasmuch as they themselues haue despised God all ỹ time of their lyfe, they be contented ỹ their children shall do the same full as much or dubble: & if they happen to haue any regard of ỹ doctrine, it is but for fashions sake, & by way of constreint. But wee haue taught these thinges in this text, ỹ it shal not be full deare to haue bin so warned by God, if we regard not the thinges ỹ he hath tolde vs. Therefore let vs bee alwayes carefull to beare Gods word in minde, assuring our selues ỹ although we haue profited neuer so wel, yet are we but in the way, & we must goe on still, so as the exercising of things is not enough for vs, but we must be faine to be put in remembrance of thẽ continually, & to be stirred vp by God; or elles we shall starte away by and by. Now then let vs think vpon it, & let euery of vs haue an eye to ỹ charge ỹ is committed vnto him. Let such as haue children bring them vp in the feare of God, & let ỹ be their chiefe care; for it is the best inheritance ỹ they can leaue them. For otherwise, although they leaue them neuer so riche, and set them in neuer so good a stay; al must needes go to ruine. For God will curse all, if it bee not grounded vppon the pure religion. For whereas our Lord speaketh of going to bed, and rising vp, of rest and labor: it is not for nought. For he thereby teacheth vs that wee haue neede of all the helpes that can bee, to put vs in minde of his loue. And therefore sith we see that by all manner of meanes we be turned away frõ the remembring of God, if the helps that are shewed vs here bee not set still before vs: these occasions ought to quicken vs and stirre vs vp thereunto.

First of al then, whereas it is saide, *when ye goe to bed at night, and when ye rise a morning*: it behoueth vs that wee may well take our rest, and thinke vppon all our bodily needes, so as a man may wel seeke his ease when hee is weary of his travelling & of following his busines al day long: but if we be so careful to seeke the rest of our bodies, is it not said also ỹ the rest of our souls is to heare ỹ voice of god? If a man say, I haue no leasure: hast thou no leasure to rise in the morning? Against

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when thou commeſt to the table to take thy reſt, haſt thou not time ynough to edifie thy ſelfe in the feare of God? Moreouer, when thou art about thy buſineſſe all the day, or when thou art going a iourney, muſt God needs be forgotten all the while? No: but yet doe men alwayes finde lettes to keepe them from comming vnto God. Indeede we may eaſily finde trifling excuſes to content men withall: but when God ſaith vnto vs, Go to, what haue you to doe all your life long? are yee ſo ſore troubled that yee cannot ſpare a little time to exerciſe your ſelues in my worde? I giue you time ynough to followe your owne buſineſſes: and yet ſo as yee may beſtowe ſome time in the ſtudie of my doctrine: but you thinke not vpon it: Nay rather you take occaſion to turne away from it at euery ſmall let that can happen. And by that meanes you bee hardened in all euill, ſo as a man cannot reclaime yee, but ye become worſe than wilde beaſts. Thus ye ſee of what contempt and vngodlineſs we be conuicted, when we benefit not our ſelues by Gods doctrine, wherein we ought to keepe our ſelues occupied at all times.

Furthermore whereas he ſpeaketh *of talking of it*; it is a rebuking of the wicked corruption y is among men, who neuer make an ende of their fooliſh talkes but when they ſhould ſpeake of god, the matter muſt be cut off by & by the waſte, and they thinke it to be but matter of griefe. Yea and they be not contented to vſe fond and fooliſh talke; but they do alſo vſe ribaldrie & leawd talke, ſuch as tendeth to the poyſoning one of another. And therefore it is good reaſon, that God ſhould tel vs that the thinges which wee haue heard to day, had neede to bee brought ofentimes to our remembrance: and that God had neede to quicken vs vp, ſo as wee may bee made to bethink our ſelues: And that foraſmuch as we be pulled backe with ſuch ſloth, and we ſee our ſelues are caried away with ſo great and vrgent neceſſitie, that our mindes are giuen altogether to euill; inſomuch that whenſoeuer God allureth them to good, by and by they ſtrike away vnto euill: we perceiuing this ſame, ſhould take the helpes y God ſetteth downe for vs in telling vs that we muſt think vpon his lawe both at our vpriſing a mornings, and at our going to bed a nights, & that we muſt talke of them all the day long. Let vs aſſure our ſelues it is not without cauſe that God ſpake ſo to his owne people: but that it is a generall leſſon for all men in all ages, and he ſpeaketh not onely to the rude and vnskilfull, that they ſhoulde take theſe helpes to refreſh their remembrance: but he ſaith, *all of you*, doe it euerie one of you. He ſpeaketh to thoſe that weene themſelues wiſeſt. And therefore let no man thinke himſelfe excepted here. Let ſuch as haue the charge of teaching others, vnderſtande that this is not ſpoken onely to the rude and ignorant; but alſo to the intent that euen they themſelues ſhoulde learne to rouſe vp themſelues, and y all of vs togeather ſhould ſhew our ſelues ſo deſirous to profite in Gods word, as we may ſeeke to be put continually in mind of it. And let vs aſſure our ſelues, that it is the chiefe thing wherein we ought to occupie our ſelues, ſo long as we be in this world.

And nowe let vs caſt our ſelues downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgment of our faultes, praying him to bring vs to ſuch repentance, y being aſhamed of our ſelues, our only ſeeking may be to win his fauor by fleeing to his mercy, and that we may attaine thereunto by meanes of our lord Ieſus Chriſt, praying him not only to forgiue our offences paſt, but alſo to correct them after ſuch ſort in vs, as our whole ſeeking may be to obey him. And that in y meante while it may pleaſe him to guide vs by his holy ſpirite, vntill hee haue brought vs to the full fruition of the glorie whereunto we be nowe going. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Thurſday the xxvj. of September. 1555.

The Lxxviij. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the eleuenth Chapter.

22 For if ye do earneſtly keepe all the commandements which I command you to doe, and that you loue the Lord your God and walke in all his wayes and ſticke vnto him:

23 Then the Lorde will driue out all theſe Nations before you, and yee ſhall poſſeſſe Nations that are greater and ſtronger than your ſelues.

24 Whatſoeuer place the ſole of your foote treadeth on, it ſhalbe yours. Your bounds ſhalbe from the wildernes and from Libanus, and from the Riuer, euen the riuer of Euphrates, vnto the vttermoſt ſea.

25 No man ſhall be able to ſtand againſt you. The Lorde your God will caſt the feare and dread of you vpon the face of all the Land whereunto you go, as hee hath ſaid vnto you.

WE haue seene what promisse Moses made to the Israelites: namely, that they should possesse the land which was giuen them to inherite. Howbeit forasmuch as their enemies might bee a stop in their way, and it might well seeme that God was not yet fully minded to performe that which he had saide: he addeth further, that that let also should be taken away. As howe? *Euen by this, that God would cast a terrour vpon all the nations whom he had ordained, so as none of them should bee able to withstande the people that was so guided by his owne hande.* That is the effect of Moses meaning in this place. And it is as much as if he had said vnto vs, Whē God hath once warranted vs a thing, although all the lets in the world shoulde incounter vs, yet ought we not to doubt of his promise. For why? The things that may seeme vnpossible to men, are altogether in his power, because no creature is able to resist him. And therefore when we be abashed at the sighte of the impediments that come before our eyes: wee must fall to the considering of the mightinesse of our God, which is able to ouercome all things. So then let vs marke well, that wee must fully conclude with our selues, that God is able to performe whatsoeuer hee hath vttered with his mouth: insomuch that although all accesses bee (in our iudgement) foreclosed vnto him, yet will hee wade through them all by his power. And therefore lee vs not measure the effect of Gods promises by our owne eyesight, nor by the coniecture of our owne naturall vnderstanding: but let vs assure our selues that hee hath victorie alwayes in his hande, howe much so euer the worlde set it selfe against him, and striue to stop the performance of that which hee hath spoken.

Herewithall, it standeth vs in hand to applie this thing chiefly to our owne strengthening: and forasmuch as we see the diuel euer ready to hinder our welfare, yea and to disappoint it vtterly: let vs haue this saying continually printed in our remembrance, that God which hath receiued vs into his fauour, and promised to leade vs into the heritage of the kingdome of heauen, is the God of hosts and of victorie, and that although all the furniture of hel do set it selfe against him, it is all noughtwoorth, but shalbe turned into smoke: insomuch that although wee bee driuen to abide neuer so many assaultes in this worlde, and that the diuell neuer cease to practise one thing or other against vs: yet are we sure that god will wel inough worke such deuises, as wee shall neuer be ouercome, so hee be on our side, as hee hath assured vs, so that wee keepe our selues vnder his protection. And this is to be vnderstood, not onely of Satan himselfe, but also of al his vpholders. For the diuell vseth all the meanes that can be: he hath all the wicked of his beelie: hee ruleth them and driueth them to all euill. Forasmuch therefore as they be led by the wicked spirite, they vex and trouble vs as much as they can. But we haue God on our side to fight for vs, and we shalbe defended by his power. Wherefore let vs not feare but that hee will alwayes giue vs the victory: though wee bee faine to indure much paine and trouble: for it cannot bee but that in such incounters, there must euer needs be some terrour, because wee see that the wicked are alwayes as whot as fire to annoy the children of God, and that as soone as they bee able to stirre but one finger, by and by they begin a new skirmish. Therfore must we beare it patiently, whensoeuer it pleaseth God to exercise vs after his fashion. And we must waite for the end which Moses promiseth here to the faithful, which is, that they shal alwayes haue victory of their enemies. And so we see to what end this doctrine is to be applied.

Now remaineth to be noted also, that whereas God promiseth such thinges, hee hath meanes in his hand: for he addeth the meane, which is, *that hee will cast our feare and our terrour vpon all our enemies.* As if hee should say, hee will print his mark vpon vs, so as the wicked (be they neuer so full of rancor, and bee they caried with neuer so great fury and rage) shalbe abashed, dismayed, & vtterly at their wits end. As to the worldward, they may well seeme to haue the hearts of lyons: but God will make them to melt away like water, so as men shall see with their eyes, that there is not so much as one drop of courage in any man, but so farre forth as God giueth it them. And as for vs, although we bee afraide, and haue not so stoute a courage by nature: yet wil God change vs, & giue vs inuincible constancy, so that although we had but imen of warre, and were the least, yet should our manlinesse bee nothing like to that which he will make vs to feele in our selues, so we goe not presumptiously to worke, but rest vpon him, seeking to be vpholde by his hand and power. The matter therefore which wee haue to marke vpon that place, is, first that whereas our life is as a warfare, yet must wee not bee afraid, because god hath promised to fight for vs. Yea, but we haue to do with an ouermightie enemie: and it is not one diuell alone that wee haue to withstand, but infinite legions of diuels. What shall we do then, seeing wee be so fraile, and are tempted on all sides, & (to be short) our safetie is set as it were to the spoile? For what haue we to defende our selues withall? But wee must haue an eye to our god. I haue told you heretofore, that it is not without cause that he intideth himselfe to be the Gods of Hosts. It serueth to shew that he will defende vs in such sort, as our enemies shalbe disappointed. Although they aduance themselues with neuer so raging violence, & that we be terred at their first alarmes, yet shal we alwayes get the vpper hand, by the helpe of him which hath all power in his hand. And indeede wee know that God hath his Angels, whom he hath ordained for our safegard. He thinks it not ynough to reach out his arme to helpe vs, but he hath also vttered foorth all his blessings, to fence vs with them on all sides. Therfore let vs trust to it, and let vs walke on boldly through all the troubles that are prepared for vs, not doubting but that we shall ouercome them, hauing such a guide as is spoken of in this text.

Again,

Againe, let vs also apply these things euen to the necessities of this present life. Indeede the chiefe point is, that god should succour vs to the intent wee may finish the course of this present life. But yet must we be faine to be aided by him euerie minute of an houre; so as hee leade vs through the great number of euill wayes which we haue to passe, and preserue vs from all daungers. So then we must be fully resolued of this, ỹ God will not onely giue vs victorie in the ende, thereby to bring vs to the kingdome of heauen; but also will helpe vs continually in this worlde; so as we shal wade out of al the troubles and perplexities wherin we be; insomuch that euē when we seeme to bee vtterly ouerwhelmed, he needeth no more but to reach vs his hand, and by & by wee shalbe aflote againe. Moreouer let vs assure our selues, that seeing God hath promised vs such victory against Satan and our Ghostly enemies: men also shall not bee able to preuaile, when they set themselues against vs: but although the whole world be bent against vs and at deadly foode with vs; yet ought it to suffice vs, that God is fauorable to vs. For inasmuch as he hath promised that al their practises which they attempt shalbe to no purpose, and that he wil turne them vpsidedowne: we may wel be quiet, and tary his leasure still with patience; and although we be abashed for a time; and perceiue not that God intendeth to worke according to his sayings: yet let vs stand stedfast in his doctrine, vntil he haue shewed vs the effect of his truth. That is the way for vs to despise and defie all the wicked ỹ seeke nothing else but to destroy vs. They be like a sort of madde dogges, and when they cannot bite they wil barke. They haue their throtes alwayes open, and their teeth alwayes sharpened, & their pawes are alwayes in a readines, so as whensoeuer God leueth them loose, they be crueller thā Lyons or any other beasts. Let vs sticke alwayes to this that our Lord hath taken vs into his protection, and that when the wicked haue done what they can, in ỹ end they shalbe ouerthrowen and all their attempts shall come to no purpose or effect: That is the thing which wee haue to remember here. Notwithstanding, forasmuch as it cannot but bee a trouble and vexation of minde vnto vs at al times, to see what power our enemies are of; and to see howe spitefull they shew themselues against vs; let vs haue recourse to that which is said here, namely that God hath mens hearts in his hande. And therefore be the pride of men neuer so great, and their stoutnesse such as were able to make the aire and the world to tremble: yet let vs assure our selues that our Lord will turne it into feare and cowardlynes, so as the parties that would needes be so feared of others, shall in the ende haue lesse courage than women and children. For why? it is God that giueth men corage and constancie: and it is he that bereaueth them of it again whē he listeth. Now then if we be fully perswaded and resolued ỹ our Lord bridleth mens hearts: we wil not doubt but that he will alwayes giue vs victorie against our enemies; and it is the point which the scripture standeth expresly vppon. And to the intent wee may know that men haue not one spark of prowesse or manhood in them, furtherfoorth than god giueth it them, Salomon saith expresly, that the hearts of kings are in the hand of God. Prou. 21. 1

It shoulde seeme that though all the rest of mankind be in subiection and bridled; yet kinges bee exempted from the common aray: for no man dares once open his lippes against them: & when they haue once spoken ỹ word, by and by it must be put in execution. It shold seeme therfore that they haue a prerogatiue aboue al ỹ world beside. Yea, but like as God maketh ỹ riuers to run here and there, and turneth their streams which way he listeth: so also doth he hold ỹ hearts of kinges in his hand saith Salomon. And what shall then become of ỹ little Gōslings when they perke vp, & haue no power nor strength at al? Shall we be dismayed at their threatnings? The thing then wherin we must trust, is our yeelding of ỹ honor to God which he requireth at our hands, to wit, ỹ it belongeth to him to giue men corage when they be fearefull, & to daunt the corages of such as are as lustie as if they had the thunder & lightening at their commandement: for God will so cut their combes, as they shal not know where to become, but be vtterly dismayed, so that in steed of ỹ stoutnesse which they had shewed before, there shalbe nothing in them but weaknesse and fearefulnes. After that manner must ỹ faithfull assure themselues. For otherwise what will become of vs? In what taking are we? As I said afore, we be hemmed in on al sides by Satan & his vnderlings. There is not ỹ minute of an houre, wherin we haue not somewhat to be afraid of: a thousand dangers beset vs round about: & therefore what will become of vs, if wee be not so fully perswaded of this doctrine, as to make it to serue vs for dyches & rampyres, to hold out al ỹ assaults that our enemies make vppon vs? And so, forasmuch as our life is full of vnquietnesse, & we bee threatened with many sortes of death, so as wee cannot stepfoorth one foote but wee shall meete with some mischance or other, specially considering the meanes which the diuell hath to annoy vs withal, & the indeuer which he putteth therunto; & also considering ỹ multitude of ỹ wicked, whom hee driueth forward & carieth headlong; let vs put this lesso in vre, ỹ the god of hosts who hath ỹ victorie in his own hand, is on our side & wil defēd vs, so as we shal not be ouercome, but be preserued & defended by his power. Haue we this once well printed in our hearts, we may go on boldly: and though we see men neuer so full of pride that they spew it out again, and so spitefull that they coulde finde in their hearts to eate vs vp at one bit: let vs not passe for that, for God will strike them in such a feare, that they shalbe daunted and discouraged; and although wee haue neither sworde nor staffe, yet shall they be vanquished by themselues, & not perceiue why nor how, but only by Gods secret working. Let vs looke vpon it, & experience will shew vs that God ment not to beguile vs when he behighted it vs with his own mouth. But our own vnbeliefe & leawdnesse, suffer vs not to perceiue the thing by experience which is spokē here. We cā wel y-

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nough make our complaints and say, howe happeneth it that God giueth such proweſſe to our enemies? how happeneth it ỹ we be so cowardly and forlorne? We can aske such queſtions wel ynough. But we conſider not the cauſe of them: & yet it is in our ſelues: & our enemies haue none other power, than we our ſelues giue them: and I say the ſame of Satan, as well as of all his vnderlings. For whē we forſake our god it is good reaſon ỹ we ſhould be diſfurniſhed of his help, and ỹ he ſhould let vs alone like poore forlorne caitifs looking on either ſide of vs, & not eſpying any remedy to reſiſt our enemies withal, becauſe we be bereft of ỹ garde and inuincible fortreſſe ỹ God promiſed vs, according as it is ſpoken of, both in Exodus and in the Pſalme, where it is ſaid that ỹ people were diſappointed of their ſtrong holde, when they had once forſaken God. I pray you if we ſtand not in awe of God, is it not reaſon that he ſhould make vs afraide, both of men & beaſts, yea and euen of a flie when it doth but flie by vs, as the ſcripture telleth vs? Beholde, our God offereth himſelfe in his maieſty, requiring that we ſhould do him homage, by humbling our ſelues vnto him, and by offering our ſelues both bodie & ſoule in ſacrifice to him, ỹ he may poſſeſſe vs: & we deſpiſe him, making but a mocke at his holie word, ſo as he cānot get any ſeruice at our hāds, for we ſtriue againſt him like wild beaſts. Seeing ỹ this is apparant, is it not reaſon that he ſhould chaſtiſe vs, by making vs to ſtand in feare of mē? Yes: for what are we? Behold I am ſcared & made afraide, at the peering of a worme that doth but put vp his head at me. I neede not to ſeeke farre to knowe the cauſe thereof. Let me but conſider whether I haue behaued my ſelfe well towardes my God, in yeelding him obedience in al things. Nay contrariwiſe, I haue turned away frō him, and moreouer I haue played the rebell, I haue leaped beyonde my bounds, and to bee ſhort, I haue fought againſt him: and therefore I muſt not thinke it ſtraunge, if I bee afraide of men, which are nothing. Verily God will yet more laugh our pride and ouerweening to ſcorne. For he will make vs to quake at the falling of a leafe from a tree. To be ſhort, as Salomon ſayes, wee ſhall flee when noman followeth vs: euerie little noyſe ſhall make vs to thinke that we be purſued with maine ſtrokes. Verily it is a ſingular giſte of God to haue quietneſſe of conſcience, ſo as wee may bee aſſured of his defence. And on the contrarie part, if we be not vnder his protection, wee ſhalbe diſmayed without any cauſe or mans behalfe, onely becauſe we haue God againſt vs. And ſo the cauſe why our enemies doe ſo trouble vs as wee wote not where to become, is that we regard not our god. For is it reaſon that hee ſhoulde bee our friende when we be not on his ſide? No: but he muſt rather ſet himſelfe againſt vs. And that is ỹ cauſe why Moſes both in other places, and ſpecially in his ſong that is in the 32. Chapter, ſaith, How coulde it bee that a hundred of you ſhoulde flee before one man, and that a thouſande of you ſhould be chaſed by a hundred of your enemies, if it were not for that the Lorde hath forſaken you, and deliuered you as priſoners into your enemies handes? Conſider then (ſaith hee) that when yee be afflicted by your enemies, it is for that your God hath appalled you. For you be not worthy that he ſhoulde put his power into you, or vtter it in your behalf. And therfore whenſoeuer we ſtand too much in feare of our enemies, & are ſo diſmayed that we can hardly call vpon God, but are ouerwhelmed with diſtruſt and vexation of minde: let vs vnderſtande that God hath withdrawen himſelfe from vs, and hath left vs deſtitute after ỹ faſhion, becauſe we be turned away from him, and haue ſhaken off his feare, and not ſtoode in awe of him as wee ought to haue done, in reſpect whereof hee threateneth vs by men, & maketh vs to feele our owne wretchedneſſe, to the intent we ſhould returne vnto him. Furthermore hee ſheweth well by the ſequele, that his promiſe was not in vaine. What a proofe was there thereof, at the entring of the people into the land of Chanaan? For they had ſuch a multitude of enemies, as might haue made them al diſmayed. But what for that God himſelfe fought for his people. And that did the poore harlot well perceiue, when ſhee ſaid to the men that were come to ſpie out the land, I know that your God is the God of heauen and earth, which reigneth ouer all. And for proofe thereof I ſee ỹ al the inhabiters of theſe countries, are aſtoniſhed at the only fame and report of you, wherwith they be diſcoraged, that they be as good as vanquiſhed already. She attributeth this miracle to ỹ wonderful working of God. Now ſeeing that this ſilly woman, hauing but a little taſt of faith, did lay ſo ſure hold vpon it: I pray you ought not we to behold ỹ ſtrēgth much more openly, which our Lord promiſeth vs here, which is, that he will caſt a terrour and fearefulnes vpon all thoſe that are much ſtronger & mightier than we? It is ſaid ỹ euen when God ſetteth his mark vpon kings & princes, ỹ brute beaſts which haue no reaſon do ſtande in awe of them. And why is that? Becauſe God worketh by a ſecrete meanes vnknown to vs. If our lord had not ſuch power to inſpyre men withal, ſurely principalities & ſeniories could not continue one minute of an houre. Nowthen ſeing that God imprinteth ſuch a marke, ỹ he maketh not only mē but alſo beaſts to ſtand in awe, & to be ſubiect to thoſe to whom hee hath committed the ſword of iuſtice: let vs note ỹ if we be his children, wee ſhall alſo beare his image: inſomuch ỹ if we be vnder his tuition, wee ſhalbe defēded in deſpite of our enemies: yea & we ſhall be feared, ſo as wee ſhall perceiue by the effect, that it is long of none but our ſelues that we be not ſuccored by him, and ỹ although our vnfulnes do beat backe his hand, yet doth he ouercome vs w̄ his infinite goodnes. For we ſee ỹ although the wicked haue the Law in their owne hand, yet notwithſtanding they be ſo abaſhed & diſmaied, ỹ they be quite and cleane out of heart. We muſt needes ſee it, or elſe we be duller than blockes. For our Lorde hath wrought with ſuch power, that though wee were blinde, yet we might grope it with our hands, namely that God hath daunted thoſe that thought to haue ouer-

Exod. 32. 25 & Pſal. 106. 23.

Leuit. 26, 36

1. Cor. 6. 20.

Prou. 28, 1.

Deut. 32, 30

Iosu. 2. 9.

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throtes of his children, euen when no man durst lift vp his little finger against them, insomuch ỹ when they thought themselues to haue wonne ỹ gole, then were they seen to be so striken down & discoraged, & cast into such feare & perplexitie, and so at their wits end, as they wist not what to do nor where to become. Indeede they had ỹ Law in their own hand (as I said), they had practises and deuices ynow, and ỹ world sees ỹ they had neither vprightnes nor faithfulnes in them. But yet howsoeuer they fared, they were discoraged, & were made to stand gaping & gasing one vpō another, & could not tel what to do for feare. Hereby we see that our Lord not only held their hands tyed, but also bereft them of heart; so as he disappointed them of wit & reason, by reason whereof they were so dulled, that there was lesse skill in them than in little babes, yea or euen in beasts. Ye see then how it is a goodly proofe of ỹ which is promised here: so as if we yeeld god his due honor, we should bee the more stayed vnder his protection, to walke on continually, yea & to keepe our selues from stepping out of the way.

Now let vs take good heed to ỹ which I haue said, namely ỹ such as do so go astray & giue thēselues to naughtines, haue not ỹ protectiō which our Lord hath promised: for they goe wilfully to cast themselues vp as it were to ỹ spoile. Therefore it is good reasō ỹ God should forsake them, & that they should find themselues to be taken vnprouided. But if we walk in humility, & seeke to be always guided by ỹ hand of our God: then let vs hardily put our trust in him, and we shal euer be maintained. Although men gape vppon vs like Lyons with opē mouth; & although we haue not wherewith to resist them: yet will God be able ynough to beate them backe. Wee may be driuen to fight, but in ỹ mids of the incounter we shalbe sustained as God hath promised vs, and ỹ will be an inuincible fortres vnto vs. That is the thing which we haue to remember vpon this place.

Yea and Moses saith expressly, *People or Nations are mightier and stronger than you*; to the intent wee shoulde not make comparison with the things that are seene, to thinke that God wil not helpe vs except there be some naturall meanes, or some worldly enterance. No no, wee must not bee at that point: but wee must consider that his power is infinite. Therefore wee doe him great wrong, when we restraine his power to ỹ which our senses can attaine vnto. Nay, when our enemies are too strong and too mighty for vs, and when it seemeth that they be ready to treade vs vnder foote: euen then must wee perswade our selues that God wil vtter his power to succor vs. And therefore let vs go on boldly, at leastwise so there bee no presumption in vs, and that we bee not stubborn against our God. For there are two things which are very requisite for vs. The first is that we giue ouer our selues wholly to the seruing and honoring of our God: & secondly that we put our trust in him, and sticke vnto his promises, not doubting but that he will giue things a good ende, though they seeme vtterly past all hope. Thus you see in effect what we haue to remember vpon this lesson.

Now immediatly Moses addeth, *That whersoeuer the people set their feete, they shall possesse the whole land from the wildernes vnto Libanus, and from ỹ great River Euphrates vnto the Sea.* For those were the bounds & borders which God had promised to his people, as appeareth in the person of Abraham. For the promise that is made here is no newe thing, but a ratifying or confirming of the same thing that God had spoken long afore. As if he should say, nothing shal bar you from inioying ỹ heritage ỹ I haue assigned you: stick you to me, & I wil performe whatsoeuer I haue said vnto you. True it is that if ye haue an eye to ỹ great nūber of Nations which you haue to ouercome, ye may be so scared as to say, How shall we nowe do? Indeede wee be a great multitude of vs; but what are we in comparisō of our enemies, which are men exercised in feats of armes, & bouge mē like gyārs? as we haue seene already heretofore. Againe they be nestled alreadie, they haue their townes well fortified, and when we shal haue taken a two or three hundred of their townes, yet is it nothing in respect of ỹ rest, but our enemies will be continually both before vs & behinde vs. Ye see then ỹ these were thinges that might well haue made ỹ people afraid. But it is said vnto thē: Although ỹ land be neuer so large, although yee haue neuer so many cities to take, and although there be neuer so great a number of battels prepared for you: yet settle you your selues vpon the promise of your God, for he can skil welynough how to performe the thing that he hath spoken. Shut you your eyes against all likelyhoodes of thinges that may daunt your corages, and open your eyes to behold ỹ inestimable power of your God, & doubt not but he will shew himself faithful. Now we see wherat Moses amed. But yet was not this thing accomplished to the ful, vntill the reigne of Dauid & Salomon. For although Iosua made partition of their portions, & god appointed him to ỹ office: yet were ỹ vnbeleeuing people mixed stil with ỹ Iewes, and (which worse is) wheras they should haue rooted them out quite & cleane, & haue had peasable possession of the land: they payed tribute to their enemies, which held thē in bondage like slaues & fleeced ỹ wool from their backs. They were vexed in such sort, ỹ they were as good as slaine quick, & they indured such cruelty as was pity to see. It shold seeme therfore ỹ God kept not touch w̄ them. But here is an excellent goodly text, to open vnto vs the thing which I haue expounded afore, and which wil come to be spoken of again. It is said that *God will giue his people the victory, conditionally that they keepe all the commandements which are inioyned them.* God tieth it w̄ a conditiō. Do whatsoeuer I commaund you (saith he,) & then shall you finde my power to be such, as your enemies (do what they can) shal not be able to preuaile any whit against you. Nowe let vs see if ỹ Iewes were able to performe all Gods cōmandements. Nay, they were vtterly disobedient vnto thē. And we also cease not to take ỹ clean contrary way to ỹ which god teacheth vs & commandeth vs vntil he haue reformed vs by his holy spirit. Ye see then that the Iewes were disobedient vnto god, & therfore were disappointed of his promise. Yea, but yet for al ỹ he ceased not to make place for his owne mercy still

Gen. 13. 14.

Iudg. 3. 8. & 13. 1.

Ro. 7. 19. 23.

ſtill by meanes of their leawdneſſe. For although their enemies pricked them like thornes; yet they held ſtil the poſſeſſion of the dwelling place that God had appointed them. Trueth it is that it is ſaid expreſly, forasmuch as ye haue behaued
Iosua. 23.13 your ſelues leawdly, and prouoked your God, by refuſing to goe forwarde when he was readie to guide you: therfore ſhall you not ouercome your enemies, but they ſhall remaine ſtill, and bee as thornes in your ſides, & as waſpes to ſting you, yea and they ſhal euen picke out your eyes, becauſe yee haue not taken courage as ye ought to haue done, nor ſubmitted your ſelues to God, to go forwarde at his commaundement. Lo what threatnings are made vnto thē: & they perceiue them wellynough: and afterward they become ſubiect vnto them, inſomuch ỹ they were fain to beare charges & tributes euen til they groned again. But our Lord hauing chaſtiſed them ſo many waies, did afterward ſhew vnto them, that he failed not to pity them ſtil; for he raiſed them vp ſuch men from time to time, as ſaued them frō their enemies. And ſo howſoeuer ỹ world went with thē, they ſtill inioyed Gods gracious gifts, at leaſtwiſe in part: not that they were worthie
2. Sam. 7. 10. & 11. 13. of them, but becauſe Gods wil was to be as good as his promiſe, ſo as mē might not be diſappointed of it through their own leaudnes & vnthankfulnes. In the end, Dauid and Salomon obtained the promiſe, ſo as God by their hand did ſet the people in ful & perfect liberty, & their kingdome was perfectly ſtabliſhed, becauſe god had ſo promiſed. But wee muſt note, ỹ Dauid and Salomon were a figure of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: and we be ſure ỹ it is long of none but our ſelues, that God ſheweth not himſelfe bountifull & liberall to the vttermoſt. For if we obeyed him according to his commaundement; wee ſhould want nothing, but we ſhould euen in this earthly life feele his drawing of vs vnto euerlaſting ſaluation. And forasmuch as he is ỹ fountain of al goodnes, he would giue vs ſuch abundance of all thinges, that wee ſhould haue al things at wil; and we ſhould paſſe through this world as through an earthly paradiſe, and afterward attaine to ỹ kingdom of heauen ỹ is prepared for vs. Lo howe God offereth himſelf vnto vs in his law: but yet with condition ỹ we do whatſoeuer he commaundeth vs. But we be ſo far off from doing it, ỹ we drag back from it, and there is not that thought nor that affection
Rom. 8. 7. in vs, which is not enemie to God & his righteouſnes. By reaſon wherof, in ſteede of the inioying of his benefites which hee hath promiſed in his Lawe, he is faine to become our enemy, & to arme himſelfe againſt vs, and to conſume vs till we be vtterly come to nothing. Sometimes hee thundreth in ſuch ſort, ỹ wee be ouerthrowen in ỹ turning of a hand. And wherof commeth that? Euen ſo it muſt needs be: for (as I ſaid afore) god ſheweth himſelf liberal towards vs & vttereth his great treaſures towards vs. But what? Our hearts are ſhut & locked vp. And therfore muſt we needs be bereft of them, and feele the paine therof; we muſt be ſo vexed as we may grone again, & be in ſuch anguiſh of mind, as we may not wote where to become. Yet notwithſtanding, if we be his, he neuer faileth to mingle ſome ſweetnes continually with the corrections ỹ hee ſendeth vs. Trueth it is that hee beareth with the wicked, and with ſuch as are vtter caſtaways: but yet in the end he is terrible to them, and dealeth not in ſuch wiſe with them, as he doth with thoſe whom he inſtructeth to reſerue to himſelfe. Although that generally all of vs be diſobedient vnto him, yet ceaſeth hee not to haue pitie vpon vs: and although wee feele ſore blowes at his hande; yet doth he ſhew vs therewithall ỹ he is not minded to caſt vs out vtterly. But ſurely we ſhould continue ſtil in our ſins to the end, yea and rot away in them, were it not for his raiſing vp of the promiſed Dauid, that is to ſay, of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For by his meanes wee recouer ỹ which we had loſt by our owne ſinnes, and ſo yee ſee how Ieſus Chriſt ſetteth vs in poſſeſſion of the heritage that was promiſed vs by the Lawe. Yet notwithſtanding we ſhoulde be diſappointed of it, and it coulde not belong vnto vs, vnleſſe ỹ Ieſus Chriſt had as wel made vs partakers of the benefites of God his father in his own perſon, as redeemed vs in our owne perſons. Nowe then, wee recouer al this in him, whereas erſt we were quite & cleane bereft and cut off from the inioying therof. Therefore let vs marke well, that whereas God made ſo many & ſo large promiſes to the Iewes in his law, vpon condition that they ſhould keepe his commaundements: he meant to ſhew thereby that ſame tooke no place, vntill the kingdome was ſtabliſhed in the perſon of Dauid. And therefore wee muſt not alledge as the beaſtly Papiſts doe, who ſay: Tuſh, God promiſeth vs this and that, if we keepe his commaundements; therefore it followeth that wee winne Gods fauour by our owne deſertes, and that wee purchaſe the kingdome of heauen, and are able to attaine ſaluation by our owne obedience, for God hath no cauſe to yeeld vnto euery mā according to his deſerts. They ſhew fulwell, that they neuer vnderſtoode one ſillable of the holy ſcripture. And euen this text without going any further, is ynough to bewray their beaſtlines & ignorance. True it is that God promiſed his people that they ſhould inioy ỹ land which he had appointed vnto them: but ỹ performance thereof was to bee deferred to the reigne of Dauid. Wherupon let vs marke how it is our Lord Ieſus Chriſt which maketh ỹ promiſes of ỹ Law auailable towards vs, ſo as wee ſhal not be diſappointed of ỹ thinges ỹ are conteined therin. And indeed, ỹ is the very cauſe why ỹ promiſe is made expreſly to Dauid & Salomon, as it had bin made before to al ỹ people. And this ſerueth well to make ỹ doctrine yet plainer which I com to treat of. For there are two ſorts of promiſes in ỹ holy ſcripture. The one is, He ỹ doth theſe things, ſhal liue in thē. The other is, He ỹ beleeueth in ỹ ſon whom ỹ father hath ſent, ſhall be ſaued. Loe here two promiſes, betweene ỹ which it behoueth vs well to put a difference: for they be farre vnlike. When God ſaith, He ỹ doth theſe things, he bindeth not himſelf to vs but with an if, namely that wee diſchardge our ſelues by performing his Law; and that, not only in part, but throughout and perfectly. But no man is able to do that,

and

and therefore yee see wee be shut out from all hope, and we cannot looke ỳ the promise should bee of force any more towardes vs, because of our default. For God continueth alwayes faithful, but wee suffer not his goodnes to come vnto vs. Now when he seeth vs so bereft of all his benefits, he findeth another newe remedie for vs, which is this: Lo here my sonne who is vniuersal heire both of heauen and earth; hee holdeth all the worlde in subiection, hee hath the whole fulnesse of the Godhead inclosed in him, my image shyneth most perfectly in him: which is shewed foorth in his Gospell: and therfore they that are members of his bodie, are made partakers of all the benefites which hee hath in him. That is the way for the promises to haue their effect and force in vs, and not to looke simply to the doctrine of the lawe. For when God sayd, I will giue you the lande: to whome spake he? To all the people. But yet with condition, if yee keepe my commandements. And that was made voide. As howe? Because the people were disobedient, and kept not couenant with God. And so ye see that the whole couenant was broken, so as God was set free againe, and no longer bounde vnto them, because it was tyed to a condition. What doeth he then? He sends vs a king to whome he sayeth, I will giue thee the lande for thine inheritance. Hee vseth the selfe same wordes that are set downe here by Moses. I will giue thee the lande (saith hee) for thine inheritance, from the wildernesse vnto mount Libanus, & from the riuer Euphrates to ỳ great sea. And to whome doth God giue it? To Dauid & Salomon. True it is that he had giuen the same land afore to all the people, but the people were banished from it through their own fault. And was it then but for one onely person? was it the worthines of Dauid or Salomon that made God willing to giue them the thing which hee had promised to al the ofspring of Abraham? No: but it was because they were a figure of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And in verie deede when the Prophets intended to assure the people of the quiet that was promised to thẽ, and of the inioying of the land: they saide, I will raise you vp a Dauid. Now then, Gods offering to lay foorth his riches to al men without exceptiõ in his law, to maintaine them withall in this present life, is as if he should say, whatsoeuer I haue promised to giue to the fathers of olde time, belongeth to you also, at leastwise if ye obey my law throughly in all points, & not by pieces & starts. But wee be so farre vnable to discharge our selues of that duetie, that we fall to despising of God, so as hee is faine to shewe himselfe an enemie vnto vs. That is al that we be able to win by our keeping of the lawe, if we wil needes stick simply to it as I sayd afore. Neuertheless there is this other remedie for it. Whẽ our Lord Iesus Christ cõmeth forth & reacheth vs his hande to pull vs to him; then we find that he is not without cause termed the vniuersal heire of all the goods which God his father hath. And his possessing of them is not for himselfe: for he is one selfesame essence w God the father, he hath bin the God of glory at all times. But in this flesh of ours & in our humaine nature wherewith he was clothed, he was ordeyned chiefe king, and the dominion of the worlde was giuen vnto him, euen as wel in heauen as in earth. Now then if we be once grafted into his bodie, and perfectly made one with him; then shall wee recouer that thing in him, which we cannot obteine by our deedes & deserts. And then shal we see that Iesus Christ beeing raised againe vnto glorie, wil of his goodnes drawe vs after him, to make vs partakers of all things that he hath.

1. Cor. 2. 8. Matt. 28. 18. Phil. 2. 7. 9.

Furthermore, the telling of this thing vnto vs is not to giue men scope to do euil; but wee must marke that when God receiueth vs to himselfe to put vs in possession of his goods, he doth also reforme vs by his holy spirite. Yet notwithstanding, all that euer we can do, albeit that wee bee gouerned by God & haue a good will to serue him, is of no value at all if it bee esteemed of it selfe: but yet for Iesus Christes sake God will accept vs and our workes, and the inheritance shal abyde sure & stedfast vnto vs: for wee must not be afraide but that we shal attaine vnto it. It is not giuen vs for our own sakes, but because wee be partakers of our Lord Iesus Christ, & receiue the grace that he hath purchased vs, so as we bee reconciled to God by his death & passion, in respect whereof he is mercifull to vs, & we be sure of the forgiuenesse of our sinnes, because all our spots are washed & scoured cleane away. Although there bee sinnes & imperfections in vs, which might make vs blamable before God, yet are we iustified and brought into his fauour againe, when hee hath once renewed vs by his holy spirite. Therfore if we go that way to work, let vs not dout but the promise shal stand fast, so as we shal feele the effect & force of it to our saluation. But in the meane while let vs not glorie in our selues, for there is no matter nor cause why we should do so.

Now let vs fall downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea and so to feele them as that misliking and condemning our selues for them, we may submit our selues to our Lord Iesus Christ, beseeching him so to reform vs by his holy spirit, as Gods image may shine forth in vs, and wee not faile to continue in the possession of the heritage which hee hath promised vs, because it is not grounded vpon our owne workes & deedes, but vppon his freebestowed goodnes. And moreouer let vs pray our Lord to be so gracious to vs, as to giue vs such strength while wee passe through this world, wherin wee haue a great sort of enemies to fight against, that we may get the vpper hand of them, & be alwayes certified more and more, ỳ he is neere at hand to such as call vpon him & submit themselues vnto him, that by ỳ meanes he may continually be glorified at our hands, & that it may appeare howe hee will alwayes vphold vs, if wee fight vnder his standarde. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not only to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the xxvij. of September. 1555.

The Lxxix. Sermon which is the sixth vpon the eleuenth Chapter.

26 Behold, I set before you this day a blessing & a curse.

27 A blessing if ye obey the commandements of the Lord your God which I commaund you this day.

28 And likewise a curse if ye obey not the commandements of the Lorde your God, but turne out of the way which I cõmaunde you this day, to go after straunge gods which ye know not.

29 And when the Lord your God shal haue brought you into the land which thou goest vnto to possesse it: then shalt thou set the blessing vpon mount Garizim, & the curse vpon mount Eball.

30 Are they not on the other side of Iordan, on the west side in the lande of the Cananites, which dwel in ỹ plaine ouer against Gilgal, beside the groue of Moreh?

31 For ye shall passe ouer Iordan, to go & possesse the lande which the Lorde your God giueth you: and you shall possesse it & dwell therein.

32 Take heede therefore, & perfourme all the ordinances & lawes which I set before you this day.

THE protestation that Moses maketh here, serueth to shewe ỹ men themselues are the cause of all their miseries, & that it is not for them to seeke the blame therof any where else. And on ỹ other side, that when God declareth his will vnto vs, the way of welfare is shewed vs, & it is long of our selues ỹ our life is not happie in al respects throughout. So then, the meaning of Moses is, ỹ God doth men a singular good turne, when hee vouchsafeth to teach them by his word. For whē they haue the record of his wil, it is as good as a shewing of them howe to attaine to saluation, & how to prosper in this transitorie life. Contrarywise also they be warned ỹ if they fare not ỹ better by the doctrine that is deliuered vnto them, vnhappie are they, & they haue not cause to cõplaine of God afterward as though it were long of him; for they had choyce. Therefore when we haue beene instructed in Gods worde, & knowen ỹ true & pure religion: if we hold not on through out, all the blame is to be layed vpon our selues. For God had shewed vs the good way; & we held it not, ne kept our selues in it. Needes therefore must we be barred from al excuse, and God must hold vs as conuicted for that we had leuer to perish wilfully, & to go to destruction, than submit our selues to him who was willing to haue led vs to life & saluation. For this cause Moses sayeth, *Behold, this day do I set before you a blessing & a curse.* As if he should say; Bethinke your selues: Seeing ỹ God hath commanded me to publish his lawe, it is not for you to fall asleepe: For on the one side hee sheweth you howe you may prosper all your life long: namely by obeying him. On the contrarie part thinke not to scape scotfree when ye shall haue disobeyed your God; such vnthankfulnes shal not abide vnpunished. For God must needes be reuenged of such as haue refused his doctrine & made nō reckening of it.

So then, first we be done to vnderstand that ỹ hauing of the knowledge of Gods will is an inestimable treasure. All of vs are desirous to lead a happie life, but there is no meane for vs to attain to it, vnlesse God open vs the gate to come vnto him. If it be alleged, How then? Shal not men be blessed, if they indeuour to do wel? Wil not God accept all their seruice when he sees them plaie with a good intent? Let vs marke first of all, that men may (to their own seeming) haue as great deuotion as is possible, & yet they shall be cur... To weene that we do wel is not all that we haue to do. We must be sure ỹ the way which we take is no bypath, but the way that leadeth straight forth vnto God. Ye see then that we cannot be sure of any blessing, that is to say, that our liues please God, and that the seruice which we do him is wel liked of; vntil he haue shewed vs what he requireth & what he alloweth. For so long as we walke after our own imagination, wee go the clean contrarie way; & in stead of going forward wee go back. Marke that for one point. Again, for the second point, when we haue done all, yet is God nothing beholden to vs for it. What oweth he vnto vs? [Nothing.] Now then al that we can hope for is by reason of the promise ỹ he maketh vnto vs, & by telling vs that if wee keepe his law, we shal not lose our labour nor be disappointed, but we shall haue a good rewarde at his hand. Gods saying so, is the ground from whence the blessing springeth that Moses speaketh here. And it is the same thing that S. Paul telleth vs, where he presupposeth ỹ euen before ỹ law, men could not deserue any thing: & not without cause. For if wee had done all that which were possible for vs to do, (as I said afore) were it possible for vs to deserue aught at Gods hande? No for wee owe it him euery whit of it, & he oweth nothing vnto vs. And so yee see why Moses sayeth here, ỹ when the lawe was published, then was a blessing set before the people. As if he should say, Heretofore ye haue knowen no rule, ye haue beene as the wretched infidels which go on at all aduenture & haue no certeintie to trust vnto. But now hath your God gathered you to him, & shewed you ỹ right way. Therfore ỹ way for you to leade a happie life is to obey the wil of your God.

Also here is a promise added to it, whereby the people might bee in the better hope ỹ God would

would bleſſe them. It is alone then with ỹ which I haue told you alreadie, namely ỹ God is verie gracious to vs, in ſhewing vs after what manner we ought to lead our life. For without that, wee might martyr our ſelues as much as we liſted, & yet it ſhould be to no purpoſe. Wherefore let vs beware that we receiue the word the more reuerendly which is preached vnto vs in his name, ſpecially ſeeing it bringeth vs a bleſſing, not only in ỹ we learne therby to know what Gods wil is, & how to liue in his fauour; but alſo for that hee bindeth himſelfe of his own good will inſomuch ỹ although no duetie compell him thereto; yet vouchſafeth he to couenant with vs in ſuch ſort, as we ſhal not ſerue him in vaine. But here a mā might caſt a dout, how it commeth to paſſe that Moſes ſpeaking of the law, ſayth that he ſetteth forth a bleſſing? For (as was declared yeſterday) whatſoeuer God promiſeth vs in his lawe, wee fare neuer a whit the better by it, becauſe of the conditiō that goeth with it, which is that ỹ promiſe of his bleſſing is tyed to performing of his commandemēts. But no man doth that; & therfore are we al diſappointed of the promiſe of the lawe, by reaſon of the vnpoſſibilitie of the condition. It ſhould ſeeme then ỹ Moſes ſpeakes to no purpoſe in this text, in promiſing a bleſſing to the people. And in deede wee heare how S. Paul ſpeketh of it. He ſaith ỹ the law bringeth nothing but Gods wrath & vengeance; for it rebuketh euery one of vs, ſo as there is none of vs all that is righteous, neither hath euer any man bin. All of vs then are conuicted by the lawe, as tranſgreſſors againſt Gods righteouſnes; & ſo be wee in danger of endles death. Sith it is ſo: it followeth ỹ the law of it ſelfe can do no more but ſhewe vs that we be accurſed of our God, & that he is our deadly enemie & muſt needs be our Iudge. And where is then the bleſſing that Moſes ſpeakes of here? The anſwere hereto is this; that if we looke no further but what we be in our own frowarde nature, in reſpect of the ſinne ỹ we haue drawen from Adam: the law can doe nothing but curſe vs. For whereas God ſheweth vs what our righteouſnes ought to be; if we fall to the examining of our liues; we ſhal find ỹ we haue offended him in euery point, & therfore we be paſt hope. Yea, but ỹ ſpringeth not of the nature of ỹ law, but of our own ſinfulnes, in ỹ we are ſtubborne againſt God, ſo that in ſteede of obeying him, wee indeuour altogether to follow our own wicked luſtes. The lawe then as in reſpect of our ſelues, bringeth nothing but wrath & death. But as in reſpect of it ſelfe, ſurely it bringeth bleſſing. For were we as we ought to be, that is to wit, were we ſo ſound & vncorrupted ỹ we were as throughly diſpoſed to ſerue God as was our forefather Adam by creation before his fall: the lawe ſhould bring vs his bleſſing. For why? It ſheweth vs that we muſt loue God with all our heart. When wee be once ioyned vnto him, & when wee bee once knit vnto him in all perfection of goodneſſe, of ioy, of life, & of glorie; then ſhal this ſaying bee found true. For were we of nature good & right, we ſhould be anſwerable to this doctrine, & wee ſhould obſerue it: & ſo ſhould this bleſſing be performed towards vs. Wherof is it long ỹ as now the law bringeth vs nothing but death & damnation? Euen for that wee be not able to receiue the promiſes ỹ are conteined there. Our Lorde ſaith, Come ye to mee, & I will fill you full of all goodnes; & we ſhrinke quite & cleane from him. So is it not long of the doctrine. Wherof then? Euen of our ſelues. Where is the fault to bee found? In the law? No: but in our owne ſelues. Now then let vs mark, that whereas Moſes proteſteth here ỹ he ſetteth a bleſſing before ỹ people, his ſo doing is not without cauſe.

But here it might be replyed, that although our own ſin be the let that we be not made partakers of ỹ bleſſing that is behighted in ỹ lawe to enioy it; yet notwithſtanding, for aſmuch as wee be vtterly excluded from it; it is in vaine for him to ſay, I ſet before you a bleſſing. That is not ſo: For we haue two points to note. The one is, that Gods ſpeaking after that maner concerning his word, is to the ende ỹ we ſhould haue it in reuerence & eſtimation, & alſo loue it & ſet our harts vpon it; & moreouer fall to the conſidering of our owne curſednes, ſo as we might be humbled & caſt downe, & be ſorie when we ſee our benefite turned to our bane, & our life into death be cauſe we be not diſpoſed to receiue it. But God ſhall haue wunne nothing at our handes by letting vs alone there: wee muſt be faine to go one ſtep further. Foraſmuch as we ſee our ſelues bereft of the bleſſing of the law ſo long as it continueth but a dead letter; that is to ſay, ſo long as it doth but only tel vs what wee ſhould do, & giueth vs not power to do it in deede: wee muſt reſort to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, whoſe office is to write the thinges in our heartes which God had written in ſtones, that hee may make vs willing to obey, in ſteede of our ſwaruing aſide to ỹ contrarie. Againe, our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath deſerued this bleſſing for vs; that wee might henceforth be receiued into fauour for his ſake, & our workes be accepted at Gods hande though they be nothing worth of themſelues. For we come not as euery man in his own perſon, nor as they ỹ had performed the law themſelues: but we come in the name of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, as members of his bodie. Ye ſee then that the bleſſing is perfourmed in vs by ſeeking the remedie which we want, which is that whereas God hath promiſed to bleſſe men vpon condition, foraſmuch as the ſame booteth vs not, there is added another point of fauour, which is that he receiueth vs for his ſonnes ſake, & writing his lawe in our harts, imputeth not our ſins vnto vs; by meanes whereof we faile not to bee partakers of the bleſſing that is contained here, though we be not able to performe the law, but that the ſame paſſe our abilitie. Marke that for one point.

Now let vs come to ỹ which Moſes ſayth concerning ỹ curſe. He ſayth ỹ like as the law offereth vs Gods fauor, which is the bleſſing ỹ tendeth to our welfare; ſo alſo we muſt not ſet light by the threatnings ỹ are ſet downe there. For if we giue deafe eare to Gods ſpeaking, ſo as our harts rancle againſt it through ſtubborneſſe, or ỹ we play the ſcoffers which turne all thinges to

Rom. 3. 19. & 3. 24

2. Cor. 3. 6.

2. Cor. 3. 3.

Rom. 3. 24. & 4. 4.

Ier. 31. 34. & 36. 26. 29.

2.Cor.2.15. 16. laughter: let vs beare this in mind, that howsoeuer the world go, Gods worde shall either be our life or our death, there shall not so much as one word therof fall to the ground. Such as benefite themselues by ỳ things ỳ are told them on gods behalf, shall find ỳ the doctrine serueth to their saluation: And on the other side, the despisers thereof, & such as refuse to be taught by it, must yeeld an account thereof, and they shall feele ỳ no one iote of it shalbe lost, neither is to be despised. For should the thing be vndone & vanish away wout effect, which passeth out of ỳ mouth of God? No. And therefore let vs marke well, ỳ if men cannot find in their hearts to vse Gods doctrine to their benefite when he sendeth it vnto them; it shal turne to their euerlasting death, & their damnation wilbee doubled, because they held scorne of the benefite ỳ was profered them. And this is very needfull for vs. For we see how men dally with Gods word; & they ỳ cast it not quite & cleane away, do thinke themselues to be more than half perfect, because they becom not vtter enemies to fight against it, they beare thé selues in hand ỳ God ought to hold himself contented with it. But think we that God wil suffer so good a thing to perish? He offered vs life, and we refused it: and doeth not such vnkindnes deserue horrible vengeance? Againe, God setteth more store by his own honor, than by the saluation of our soules. And good reasõ it is ỳ he shonld. Now he hath shewed vs after what manner he wilbee glorified by vs, & wee make no account of it but reiect it vtterly. And therfore let vs consider wel, ỳ if we receiue not the blessing of Gods worde, ỳ is to say, if it serue not to reconcile vs to him, ỳ we may take him for our father: we must (spite of our teeth) feele him our Iudge, & his worde must condemne vs. Wheras it should haue ben a witnes of his loue towards vs to bring vs to saluation, & to the inheritãce of ỳ kingdom of heauen: it must become an inditement to passe vpõ our liues, so as we shalbe accursed in this present life, & after our death Gods vengeance shal pursue vs for euer, because we obeyd not gods word when it was preached & set forth to vs.

Esa.49.8. Now then, seeing ỳ God telleth vs ỳ this is ỳ conuenient time, & ỳ he calleth vs vnto him: let vs learne, let vs learne I say to go to him and to make hast, least this threat light vpon vs, that we be cursed for our wickednes, in ỳ we lifted not to receiue ỳ benefite that was offered vs. And specially nowadayes we ought to be ỳ more prouoked therunto, because our fathers of old time had not the like occasion. It is true that Moses might wel say he offered ỳ blessing to those people in ỳ law: But we in these dayes haue the blessing set forth more openly in ỳ Gospel. The promises at ỳ time were dark, & they pointed at Iesus Christ, howbeit a farre off. They yeelded some smal tast of life; but wee at this day haue our fill of it, so as god giueth vs euen his hart there without omitting of any thing, to ỳ intent to make vs to perceiue his inestimable loue, therby to draw vs & to win vs vnto him. Sith it is so, ỳ the law sheweth vs it alooſe, & ỳ gospel bringeth it neerer to vs: let vs not bee so frowarde as to shrinke away as though we would needs spite God of purpose to be cursed: but let vs rather imbrace the blessing which costeth vs nothing as they say: For there is no more for vs to doe but to receiue it willingly, according to ỳ promise which he maketh vs, saying: Opé thy mouth & I wil fil it. And for ỳ same cause also doth S. Paul say, Now are ỳ acceptable dayes, now are ỳ dayes of saluatiõ; shewing how ỳ same is to be applyed to ỳ preaching of ỳ Gospel. His alledging of that text of Esayes is as he should say, Our Lords desire is nothing else but to do ỳ office of a sauiour among vs: & therfore suffer him to shew himself such a one. Againe, let vs vnderstand ỳ we neede not to seeke farre for him; for he offereth himself to vs before we once thinke of him, to make vs perceiue his fatherly kindnes & goodnes. And on the contrary parte, when he threatneth vs & is minded to make vs feele his rigour; he runneth not vpon vs at ỳ first dash, neither lifteth he vp his hand by and by to strike vs: but only sheweth it vs first alooſe. Yet notwithstanding, howsoeuer he fare, let vs mark ỳ the Gospel is neuer preached, but ỳ he witnesseth on ỳ one side ỳ he is readie to receiue men to mercy, & to open them ỳ gate of his kingdõ, ỳ they may go into it: & on the other side that if they be stubborne & wilful in their wickednes, it shal not boote thé to think to escape, or to wonder ỳ the word shalbe vaine & to no purpose: for god wil always giue it force & power. What to doe? To destroy those ỳ haue so refused it, & trode it vnder foot, & made a mocke of it, & openly resisted it. Now by the way we must call to minde again what I haue touched already heretofore in following Moseses discourse: namely ỳ God promiseth not any blessing but to such as obey his cõmandements: like as on ỳ other side he threateneth none but such as turne away from him. And therby he sheweth that men may well take much paine, but they shal but lose their labour if they rule not themselues according to the law. Here ye see how al ỳ deuotions ỳ men deuise, are cast down. Moses saith they be vtterly fruitles. In deede ỳ Papists, Turks & Iewes doe perswade themselues, ỳ they deserue much at Gods hands by their doing of things vppon their own head, whé they be able to say; I take it to be very good. They beare themselues in hand ỳ they come very neere to God by their wãdring in their wind-lasses after ỳ fashion. But on ỳ contrary parte we see, ỳ God promiseth not any thing but to such as obey his word. Therfore if we intẽd to be vndisappointed of our hope, let vs seeke to know Gods wil by asking it at his own mouth, & therupõ let vs simply obey whatsoeuer he telleth vs. For as long as men rule themselues after their own imaginations, or after ỳ traditions of men, it is no obedience, but a displeasing of God, & he wil not admit it to come in their account. Thus much for the first point cõcerning this blessing.

On ỳ contrarie, how much soeuer mẽ repine at it, setting themselues against vs, yea & condemning vs for our refusing to follow their foolish inuentions; God acquiteth vs here, for he threatneth none but such as rebel against him. Nowadays ỳ Pope thundreth against vs, because we wil not

wil not be ſubiect to him as other do, which hold downe their neckes vnto him and yeeld themſelues in bondage to him like wretched beaſtes.

True it is ỳ their imagining that he hath power to ding vs down to the deepe pit of hell, is ỳ thing ỳ amazeth them, & maketh the rude and ignorant ſort to quake. But forasmuch as we heare it at the mouth of our God, ỳ we neede not to be afraid except we haue diſobeyed him: let vs hold vs to it, & be bold to laugh al the popes manaces to ſcorne, for they be no better than the rattling of a bladder with a fewe beanes in it to ſcarre a yong babe withal. In deed it makes a great noiſe: but yet it is but a toy. And euen in like caſe is it with all the manacings that men can make.

But here is yet one other ſaying wel worthy to be noted. Moſes ſaith that *the curſe ſhal come vpon the people when they turne away from their GOD to ſerue ſtraunge Gods and ſuch as they haue not knowen.* Here againe he ſheweth ỳ they which haue bin rightly taught, are much more blamewoorthie than the wretched infidels. For they ſpite God maliciouſly & wilfully: they offend not any more of ignorance, but turne aſide wilfully frõ ỳ way ỳ God had willed them to walke in, & ſeeme to make warre againſt him of ſet purpoſe: by means whereof they make their condemnation the grieuouſer. And therfore let vs marke well, that wee which haue receiued ỳ doctrine of the Goſpell, ſhalbe leſſe excuſable than ỳ papiſts, if we obey not our God. For the papiſtes holde on ſtil their old trade, they be gone aſtray like ſillie beaſts, & all that euer they do is but filth & abhomination. This is true. And yet do we for our partes much worſe in turning away from our God, after his comming vnto vs, & ỳ hee had brought vs nigh vnto himſelfe. And Moſes ſaith expreſſely; *The Gods which you haue not knowen.* Wherein he rebuketh the malice of men, in that they had leuer to follow ỳ vncertaine than the certaine. True it is ỳ we haue a cleane contrarie ground in nature. For if a man be demanded whether he had leuer to be ſure of a thing or to be doutful of it; He wil alwaies ſay he had leuer be ſure of it. And yet for all that, we ſeeme all of vs to ſtriue who may bee moſt wauering, doutful, & vncerteine of his ſoulhealth, & yet notwithſtanding what is there that we ſhould make more account of? And God is readie to aſſure vs of it, warranting vs it by his word, ſo as we cannot faile of it, if we obey him. We heare it, & can God ly? No: & therfore let vs go on as he hath cõmanded vs. Nay, we be loth to do ſo. And what do we in ſteed therof? I trow, I weene. Loe at what point we be! Let vs ſee howe the papiſts do. When they ſhould pray vnto god, this one good point they haue, that they knowe themſelues vnworthie to preaſe vnto him. That is true. But behold, our Lord giueth vs a remedy, which is, that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſhalbee our ſpokeſman ſo as if he intreat for vs, we ſhalbe admitted & God wil heare all our prayers. It is the thing which the holy ſcripture aſſureth vs of euerywhere. But what do the Papiſtes? I am not worthie to preaſe vnto God (ſay they) & therefore I wil go ſeeke to the virgin Marie, S. Michael, & S. Peter: & therupon they deuiſe & ſet vp a great ſort of Saints at their own pleaſure. And what a dealing is that? Sure we be that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt wil not faile vs: for as much as it is his office appointed him of his father; hee will diſcharge it. And why then do we not go rightforth vnto him? He wilbe a good ſtay for vs. Com' vnto me ſaith he, alluring vs gently. Againe wee haue promiſes innumerable, that if we reſort vnto him we ſhal not be diſappointed of that which we hope for: & yet for all this wee leane to our own weening, & we ſay, to my ſeeming I were beſt to go to S. Michael or to our Lady. And ſo we fall to forſaking the certaintie ỳ God hath giuen vs, to ketch an vncerteintie: and in likewiſe wiſe deale we with al ỳ reſt. For in ſeruing God according to his law, we be ſure that our ſeruice ſhalbe wel taken. But the Papiſtes fall to inuenting of this & that, & leaue the law of God: & is not that a forſaking of the certaine to followe an vncertaine? Yes, & that is againſt nature. Therefore it appeareth ỳ we be blinded by Satan. For we haue the cleane contrarie in vs by nature. We haue wit ynough to ſay, I would faine be aſſured & we bee loth to hazard our ſelues at all aduenture: & yet in this caſe we be ſo mad, that neither ropes nor chaines can hold vs. My alleaging of theſe examples is to ſhewe after what ſort wee ſhould put this doctrine in vre: for it falleth out ỳ men haue wilfully eſtranged themſelues from God in al caſes. Howſo? For whereas God hath diſcouered himſelfe vnto them; they haue not vouchſafed to hold themſelues to him, but rather haue buſied themſelues about their own dreams & dotages. In deed they wil eaſily ſay, We know there is but one god ỳ maker of heauen & earth: but in ỳ meane while they hatch a whole ſwarm of other gods, as we may wel perceiue by ỳ idols which they haue forged. And whereof commeth that? Euen of this, ỳ wheras men knew God, yet they haue had no luſt to glorifie him, but haue wandred away after their own imagination, by meanes whereof they be turned away from him. And at ſuch time as God gaue his law, ỳ bleſſing was more darkſom than it is nowadays in ỳ time of ỳ Goſpel. Beholde, God doth not onely report himſelf to be ỳ maker of heauen & earth: but alſo becauſe he is incomprehenſible, & his maieſtie paſſeth all our vnderſtanding: he will haue vs to looke vpon him in his liuely image, that is to wit in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. He is the ſonne of god, which hath ſhewed himſelf ſo familiarly, ỳ we may be ſure ynough that we worſhip the liuing God forasmuch as we knowe that the whole fulneſſe of glorie & of ỳ Godhead dwelleth in him. That is the cauſe alſo why ỳ Prophet Eſay ſpeaking of him, ſaith, Lo this is he, lo this is our god. If the caſe ſtoode ſo with the fathers of olde time, ỳ it behoueth them to ſtand vpõ a certeintie euen in the time of the law, ſo as God woulde not haue his people hang in doute, but that they ſhould be certified of as much as was for their behooſe & benefit: much more ought we to bee ſure nowadayes. For we haue a larger diſcouerie of things in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, ſo as ỳ voyce of the prophet Eſay; Lo this is he; lo this is our God, ought to ſound continually in our eares; by

Rom. 1. 21.

Mat. 11. 28.

2. Cor. 3. 18. & 4. 4. 6.

Col. 2. 9. Eſa. 25. 9.

reason wherof it is not for any man to turn away from it, nor to runne gadding at rouers, nor to reele one way or other; but we must knowe & assure our selues ỳ we haue ỳ ful & perfect mesure of al wisdome, if we can hold vs to Iesus Christ, & to the things which his doctrine teacheth vs. But herein we see how the wretched world gaddeth vp & downe, euery man trotting after his own way, so as euery mans will is to go astray: & yet notwithstanding we shield our selues with ignorance. When we haue shut our eyes after ỳ fashion against ỳ light, when we haue stopped our eares against ỳ doctrin of saluation, whē we haue turned our backs vpon him at his shewing of his face, & whē we haue spit at him for his reaching of hand vnto vs: yet we fall stil to excusing of our selues by ignorance. So then the thing which we haue to remember here in this place, by Gods vpbraiding of men with their turning away from his word when it is preached vnto them; is that their so doing is through a diuelish stubbornes, & ỳ (euen by ỳ witnes of their own consciēces) it is a worshipping of gods which they haue not knowen. For our faith must not be vncerteine, it must not be an opinion or weening, but it must bring a sure knowledge with it. And what maner of knowledge? Truely as in respect of our own wit & reason, if we intend to come vnto god, we must worship him w̄ all humilitie, & remēber that his secrets surmount our vnderstāding. But yet here withall it behoueth vs to stande vppon so sure a ground, euen by knowledge; as our owne consciences may beare record of it, & wee bee able to
1. Iohn 3. 2. say with S. Iohn, we wote well ỳ we be ỳ children of God. Lo here what the true Religion is. It is not an vnaduised zeale, or a liking that men cast to this thing or that: but a sure knowen doctrine grounded vpon Gods trueth, wherethrough we be able to say ỳ it is he which hath spoken to vs, & ỳ he is a faithfull witnesse of ỳ things ỳ are for our welfare & saluation And againe, whatsoeuer we alleage, wee shall alwayes abide conuicted of our malice. So that when wee haue once beene taught ỳ word of God, if wee afterwarde worship gods whom we haue not knowen, if we swarue aside to any superstition, or if we continue not in ỳ pure simplicitie of ỳ holy scripture: surely we shal iustly be accused to haue had strange Gods, & to haue bin forgers of them, as folke ỳ loue the vntrueth better than ỳ trueth. According wherunto S. Paul speaking of all such as obeyed not the
Rom. 1. 25. 28. Gospel, saith it is good reason they shold be stricken with horrible blindnes, & that forasmuch as they honored not the creator, it was meete that they should become vnderlings to the creatures, ỳ is to say, to the things which they had dreamed in their own fond braine & foolish fancies. Now thē seeing ỳ our God hath taught vs; let vs learn to hold our selues at a stay to his word, & to vnderstand in what maner he hath shewed himself vnto vs; & let vs benefite our selues by al the records which he giueth vs, & beware ỳ we wander not one way or other, ne followe not our owne leasings. For there wilbe no excuse for such as would not be certified of God when he was readie to do it.

Now in the end Moses addeth, *that when the people were come into the land of promise, they should diuide their companie in two parties: the one half vpon mount Garizim, & the other half vpon mount Hebal, & that they which should bee vppon mount Garizim, should pronounce the blessings; & that they which should be vpon mount Ebal, should pronounce the curses*, which thing wee see was done accordingly. For this commandement shalbee rehearsed yet againe in the 27. Chapter of this booke. And Iosua in his eyghth Chapter declareth ỳ he had obeyed the cōmandement of Moses. The effect of ỳ storie is, that when ỳ people were entred into ỳ land, they should meete with two mountaines, ỳ one called Hebal & ỳ other Garizim. Now god had commanded ỳ one part of ỳ people, namely certaine tribes, should be on ỳ one side on mount Garizim; & ỳ the rest of the tribes should be vpō mount Hebal, & ỳ the Leuites shold stand in the middes of ỳ host bearing the Ark of God, to shew ỳ God was chiefe souerein there, & that the Leuites were as witnesses or sureties to vnderstād matters in ỳ behalf of the people, like as if there were two parties to make som solemne mariage or couenant, a notarie or register is present to take an othe betwixt them: euen so God had ordayned ỳ the people shoulde be there to heare & receiue ỳ doctrine of saluation, & ỳ they should answere on their part, as in ỳ passing of som solemne contract; to ỳ end they might knowe vpon what condition God had chosen thē & presented thē before al other nations of ỳ earth, as shalbe shewed hereafter in the foresaid 27. Chapter. And what were ỳ blessings? They were a rehersall of ỳ same thing that God had spoken afore: namely, al such as keepe my law shalbe blessed; al such as worship me with a pure conscience shalbe blessed; all such as hallow my name, shalbe blessed; al such as obey their fathers & mothers, shalbe blessed: all ỳ liue chastly shalbe blessed: all ỳ abstaine from deceit, extortion, & al maner of euil, shalbe blessed. God then on his parte promised blessing after ỳ maner. Hereunto the people answered, Amen, Amen: ỳ is to say, So be it: whereby they ratified ỳ which had been spoken by the mouth of God. Again, on ỳ contrarie part, ỳ curses were vttered on mount Hebal in this wise. Cursed be he ỳ turneth aside after strange gods. Cursed be he ỳ dishonoreth his father or his mother: Cursed be hee that offendeth in theft or in whoredom: Cursed be he ỳ performeth not all ỳ cōmandements conteined in this booke. Amen, Amen, said ỳ people. When the curses were vttered after ỳ fashion, it behoueth euery man to answer Amē. And so ye see what is said in this text.

Now let vs mark ỳ by that meanes god went to touch ỳ people neerer to ỳ quicke, by their agreeing to such a couenant. And the same belongeth vnto vs. For although wee haue not ỳ same ceremonie ỳ was obserued at ỳ time, yet haue we ỳ trueth howsoeuer the world go: & whensoeuer Gods word is preached vnto vs, although we receiue it not, yet shal it not fal to ỳ grounde, but it shal light vpō our heads spite of our teeth, & it shalbe an intolerable burthen to sink vs down to ỳ bottom of hel. Therfore when we receiue gods

word into our harts, let beware ỳ we like wel of it & ỳ we ratifie the promise of our saluatiō which he maketh vs. Nowe hee adopteth vs to be his children; and if we be his children we be also his heires. Therfore when we imbrace the preached word by faith & obedience, although our mouth speake not a worde, yet doe wee confirme Gods truth to our saluation, according to this saying of S. Iohns, that as many as beleeue in the only
Ioh. 3. 33. sonne of God, haue sette to their seales that God is true. Thus ye see howe the full measure of our saluation and of the promise is accomplished & hath his full effect & power, when we on our side do aunswere rightly Amen. And although it be not spoken with the mouth, yet let the heart say it: for ỳ is the chiefe point. True it is that if there be faith in the heart, the mouth must needes agree vnto it also; according to this saying of the
Psal. 116. 2. Cor. 4. 13. Psalme, I did beleeue, and therfore will I speake, which saying, is alledged likewise by S. Paul to the Corinthians. But my speaking at this time is of the ceremonie; namely ỳ although wee haue not a mount Garizim & a mount Heball among vs, although we assemble not together into one citie, to seuer our selues into two hostes, and although there be not a visible Arke among vs; yet is Gods once declaring therof inough for vs, & his once setting downe of a memorial thereof before vs is sufficient for vs, to make vs know ỳ same belongeth to vs at this day, & ỳ the preaching of the Gospell vnto vs in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, is all one as if wee confirmed God to be our father by our saying Amen. That is ỳ very meane wherby we be receiued to be his children, & wherby we be assured of the inheritance of the kingdom of heauen. For otherwise, how were it possible that we wretched creatures should attaine to such dignitie, as ỳ God should vouchsafe to win vs by gentlenes, & vtter ỳ good loue that he beareth vs, & be willing to haue vs to be his, to the ende ỳ he might be owner of vs? Must it not needs be ỳ we be worse than froward if we benefit not our selues by such grace? Yes, & therfore let vs learn to answere Amen willingly, when our Lord behighteth vs his blessinges. For on the contrary part, although wee harden our hearts & shut our eyes, yea & grind our teeth at God as it were in rage & dispite of him: yet must there follow an Amen therupō, which shall burn vs like a searing yron, wherby God wil shew ỳ his word is as a burning fire to consume all thinges, so as we must needs feele ỳ inward scalding therof when God vttereth ỳ power of his word, by reason whereof we shalbe in continuall vnquietnes & torment for euer, if he set himselfe against vs. Yet for all this ỳ faithfull must answere Amē, as well to the blessings as the cursings. Amen, by imbracing ỳ grace ỳ God offereth vs. Doth God offer himselfe so vnto vs? Cōmeth he to seeke vs out when we be vtterly lost & forlorne? Doth he come downe to these horrible miseries wherein we be plunged? Well, then it is our duetie to go vnto him, and not to be so froward as to drawe back when he allureth vs so gently. Thus ye see how we must answere Amen to the blessings, by imbracing ỳ grace of the holy Ghost, ỳ we may be guided & gouerned by it, & made acceptable to our God, by fashioning our life after the rule ỳ he hath giuen vs, in resting vpon ỳ grace of our Lord Iesus Christ, wherby he is reconciled vnto vs, & accepteth vs for righteous, insomuch ỳ although we be sinners, yet he receiueth vs for his sonnes sake, & couereth al our sins & vices. After that sort therfore must wee answere Amen, that our Lorde may performe all the free promises which he hath made vnto vs.

Also we must aunswere Amen to ỳ curses. For why? We haue such a number of contrarieties in vs, as is pity to see. Although God haue giuen vs a good desire to receiue his word, & ỳ we receiue it in deede; yet do we it not to the full. For wee drag our legges after vs; there is alwayes some gainstriuing in vs; we haue still some remnantes of our flesh; & besides that, there is too too much stubornes in vs, so as we be like asses ỳ haue need to be driuen forwarde by force. And therefore I sayd ỳ we must answere Amen to ỳ curses. When we see ỳ God will haue vs to passe through ỳ afflictions of this worlde, & through the cares ỳ are vpon earth: Let the prouoke vs to repaire vnto him, and let vs assure ourselues ỳ oftentimes his causing of vs to feele his curse, is for our benefit. Moreouer let vs consider thus with our selues: Alas, if God curse all such as transgresse his cōmādementes; what shall become of me? Now then let euerie of vs finde such fault with himselfe, as we may patiently indure whatsoeuer it pleaseth God to lay vpon vs in this present life. Thus our pronouncing of the curses must be to ỳ end that they light not vpō vs. For they ỳ quicken vp thē- 1. Cor. 11. 31
selues after ỳ maner, shalbe set free from the curses. And let vs mark by the way, ỳ when we shall not haue performed all ỳ cōmandements of the lawe, we haue a remedie for it in our Lord Iesus Christ, for otherwise we shold be accursed euerychone of vs, according to this alegation of saint Paules to the Galathians: Cursed are they ỳ per- Gal. 3. 10.
forme not the whole Lawe to the full. Whereupō he concludeth, ỳ all men are cursed of God as in respect of their owne workes, and ỳ if we will be iustified by our owne deserues, we must go seeke our payment in hell. For God hath shot out one thunderbolt against all mankinde, in saying, cur- Deut. 27. 26.
sed be all they ỳ perform not the whole Law. But no man performeth it. Euen ỳ holiest men in the world are indebted in ỳ behalfe. So then S. Paul rightly concludeth, ỳ we be all accursed in our selues. But yet he sendeth vs to our Lorde Iesus Christ, & telleth vs ỳ forasmuch as he is giuen vn to vs, we be set free from ỳ rigor of the Law: so ỳ whereas God as now doth teach vs his will, telling vs what way we should walke, & setting before vs both his promises & his threatnings: although our liues be still vnperfect, yet wil he not cease to accept vs, so wee haue recourse to him which hath supplied our want. For our Lord Iesus Christ hath made such satisfaction by ỳ sacrifice of his death, ỳ God accepteth it in full paymēt to couer al our faults. Therfore let vs repaire thither, & let vs so plundge our selues in it, as we may be clensed & scoured frō al our spots. Which thing will come to passe, if we learne to walke in

humilitie and feare before our God, & abuse not his goodneſſe & patience. For ỳ is the meane to make vs acceptable vnto him, ſo as his curſes ſhal be turned frō our heads, & his grace & bleſſing ſo increaſed after he hath once vttred the ſame, as it ſhal growe cōtinually in vs, vntil it be come to the full perfection.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him &c.

On Saturday the xxviij. of September. 1555.

The Lxxx Sermon, which is the firſt vpon the twelfth Chapter.

THeſe are the ordinaunces and Lawes which yee ſhal keepe, that yee may doe them in the Lande which the Lord God of thy fathers hath giuen thee to poſſeſſe, all the dayes which thou ſhalt liue vpon the earth.

2 Ye ſhall deſtroy all the places wherein the people, whom yee ſhal conquere haue ſerued their gods, whether it be vpon high mountaines, or vpon the hils, or vnder any maner of greene trees.

3 Alſo yee ſhall digge downe their Altars, and breake their images, and burne their woods with fire. Yee ſhall deſtroy the images of their gods, and diſpatch the names of them out of that place.

4 Yee ſhall not deale ſo with the Lord your God.

5 But looke what place ſoeuer the Lord your God ſhal chooſe out of al your tribes to ſet his name in and to dwel in: there ſhall yee ſeeke him, and thither ſhall yee reſorte.

WHeras Moſes exhorteth ỳ people here againe to obſerue the ordinances & ſtatutes of ỳ law, and to do thē; it doth vs to vnderſtand, ỳ if we be not diligēt in following Gods will, we ſhal ſoone be carried away vnto wickednes one way or other. For it falleth out vpon vs ỳ we do cōmit many faults through ouerſight, we ſtumble at euery turning of a hand becauſe ỳ deuill doth eaſily beguile vs; & we haue no great wit or diſcretion in vs, our mind is ful of fondnes, & conſequētly vnconſtant: & therfore if we be not very diligent in obeying our God: we ſhall neuer obſerue his law as we ought to do. Now thē let vs beware ỳ we ſet our minds earneſtly to ỳ ordering of our life. For if we bethinke vs not aduiſedly of it, ne haue any great care of it; we ſhal not fail to do amiſſe ſome way or other. That is ỳ thing which we haue to gather vpon this place where Moſes ſaith ỳ we muſt not only put gods cōmandemēts in execution, but alſo *keepe thē to do them*. As if he ſhould ſay, ỳ if men holde not themſelues well in awe; if they bee not very watchfull in following their duety, & if they be not well aduiſed & earneſt in their doings: by & by they ſlip away, and there is no ſtedines in them; and although there haue bin ſome good zeale in them, yet it vaniſheth away out of hande.

And he ſayth expreſly that *they be the ſtatutes and ordinances of the God of their fathers*. Which ſerueth to the better confirming of the matter ỳ we haue ſeene heereto fore: which is, that the Land of Chanaā was giuen thē by vertue of the couenant and promiſe ỳ was made before they were borne. The Iewes then are put in minde in this place to thinke themſelues beholden to Gods free beſtowed goodnes, for their promiſed inheritāce foraſmuch as they coulde not boaſt of it as of a cōqueſt, becauſe God had aſſigned it to their fathers before they were borne. Neuertheleſſe his purpoſe is alſo to confirme them in the doctrine of the Law, to the end they might knowe ỳ they worſhipped not a new god, or a god lately found out: but the ſame God which had bin reuealed to their fathers in all ages afore, & therfore he telleth them they were leſſe to be excuſed, if they held thē not to the religion ỳ had bin knowen in all times afore, at leaſtwiſe among their fore fathers. For we heare what God vpbraydeth them withall by his prophet Ieremie. Go ſeeke all the worlde about (ſaith he) go ouer ỳ ſea, & ſee if the heathen nations haue changed their gods, and yet they be but idols. Sith you ſee ſuch ſtedfaſtnes & conſtancie in the infidels, ỳ they be not variable in their ſuperſtitions, but rather as it were wedded & wilfully giuē ouer to thē: what a ſhame will it be to you to haue forſaken the liuing God when ye haue knowen him, & not to continue in his word? Then let vs marke wel in this text, that Gods vpbraiding of ỳ Iewes with his manifeſting of himſelf vnto thē & to their fathers ſo long time aforehand, is to ỳ ende they ſhould be the more worthy to be condemned, if they hild not themſelues to the doctrine which had bin ſo well warranted vnto thē. But let vs marke alſo ỳ it is not inough for vs ỳ our forefathers held ſome kind of religion: but we muſt alſo ſee ỳ the ſame be alowable. And whereas it is ſayd here, ỳ their forefathers knew the ſame God which had ſet forth his Law to thē at ỳ time: the knowledge or opinion which the fathers had, is not ỳ chief ground that we ought to ſtand vpon; for God preſuppoſeth ỳ he had ſo certified thē of his word, as they were not in any doubt at all. Therfore firſt let vs learn to knowe what our Lord declareth vnto vs; and then let vs afterward go to antiquitie. And it is certaine that if the religion be true, & good, it is

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not new nor deuised in our time; but our repaire must be to the things ỳ are witnessed in the Law and ỳ prophets. There we shal see how God hath gathered his Church, how he hath gouerned it, & how it hath alwayes had his truth, euen from the beginning of the world. In dede the number of people is but small ỳ haue followed godlinesse: the rest haue turned away after their owne inuẽtions. Howbeit, we must not haue an eye to the world, but let it suffice vs ỳ god hath had a church of his owne in all ages, whereunto it behoueth vs to be ioyned & to become one wt it. For although the Church haue bin despised of the worlde; yet hath it alwayes bin precious in Gods sight. And we see the like still at this day. True it is that the most part of such as boast thẽselues to be beleeuers, are doted with leasinges, errours & abuses: but wee must let thẽ alone, & submit ourselues to the truth ỳ God telleth vs, knitting ourselues in vnity of faith & concord with the faithfull which are contented to followe whatsoeuer God hath shewed thẽ. Thus ye see ỳ the way for vs to put this text in vre where the God of the fathers is spoke of, is ỳ it is not ynough for vs to haue som antiquite as the papists alledge, saying; we haue bin a long time in possession: but we must be well groũded vpõ certainty, so as we know ỳ the God whom we worship is not an idoll. When a man knowes ỳ once, then let him proceede to the cõsent & agreement of faith, according to our belef whereby we confes ỳ there is but one almighty god, which is ỳ father of our lord Iesus Christ, and by the same reasõ our father too; ỳ our Lord Iesus Christ is the redeemer that hath appeared vnto vs; that we be sanctified by the holy Ghost, and also ỳ we can beare record of the maiesty of our God, at leastwise according to his vttering of himselfe vnto vs by his holy scriptures. Which done, then let vs adde, ỳ we beleeue the holy catholike Church, and that there is a cõmunion of Saints, so as there is but one body. But yet must God be faine to shewe himselfe to vs to be the almighty: that he is ỳ same which made both heauen & earth, that he is the same at whose hande we must hope for saluation; ỳ he is able to maintaine his owne glory, so as all the thinges ỳ men haue deuised of their owne braine are but lies. That is the first end whereat we must begin. And afterward we must agree with the holy patriarks, Apostles, & all the faithfull that haue liued since the worlde began. We must haue ỳ indissoluble bond of faith, & al must come to this point, namely that they be grounded vpon the certaine and vnfallible truth. As for example, The Iewes that came after, had the fathers as well as they, of whom also they made thẽselues a sheelde. but God did vtterly mislike their so doing, according to this saying of the prophet Ezechiel; Walk not after the righteousnes of your forefathers. At the first blush here seemeth to be some cõtrarity. For in this same place it is sayd; Worship ye the God of your fathers, stick to him, & beware ye change not your religion. And there ỳ prophet Ezechiel layth contrariwise; beware that ye follow not ỳ deuotion of your fathers. Yea verily: for there were two sortes of fathers among the Iewes: the one was Abraham, & the holy Patriarkes & Prophetes, and such as knewe the liuing God, & serued him in all pureneſſe: those it behoued the Iewes to rule thẽselues by. And in ỳ respect doth Moses say now vnto them, beware ỳ ye turne not away from the God of your fathers, but cõtinue still in their faith. Besides this, they had other fathers also, which were backesliders, & frowarde, and had corrupted the Lawe, & made a minglemangle of it with all the superstitions of the heathen. In respect of this it is said, beware ye folow not your fathers: for they were frowarde & falsehearted towardes God. In the same taking is the world at this day. The Papistes alledge their fathers. But what? Are not the Apostles the true fathers of the christian Church? Yes, but the papistes will not heare them speake, nor any other that haue stablished such order in the Church as God cõmanded. But they haue their bastardefathers like themselues, which being a misbegottẽ generation, they take Monkes & old dotterelles for their fathers. Againe, when they alledge any of the auncient doctors, if there be any folly or superstitiõ in their writings, they can skill to cull it out euery whit: but as for the good, they cast ỳ a great way off. Now then let vs beware of such maner of fathership, & let vs vse discretiõ in chosing out ỳ true fathers, & let vs put ỳ in vre which Paul speakes of where he sayth ỳ all fatherhood dependeth vpon God and vpon our Lord Iesus Christ. Thither (say I) must we refer our fatherhood, if we wil haue good fathers; so as God may be the chiefe father of them all, & they giue record ỳ they be his sonnes, ỳ they may beget vs by the vncorruptible seede of his word: or els there wilbe nothing but vtter confusion. Thus ye see what we haue to remember vpon that saying. Eph. 3. 15.

Now heretofore Moses addeth further, ỳ the Iewes must not serue God at the first, and afterward become cold: but ỳ they must perseuere in it all the time of their life. And after ỳ maner will God be honoured of vs. For he taketh vs not to hyre for certain dayes, & then to let vs go, or to giue vs leaue to depart at the ende of our termes: he taketh vs for life & death. And it is good reason, as S. Paul sheweth vs where he sayth ỳ our Lord Iesus died & rose again to reigne both ouer the quicke & the dead. Though there were none other respect than this, were it not ynough? Behold, ỳ son of God which bought vs by his death and passion, is risen againe immediatly: & is it not meete then ỳ we shold giue our selues to him & to God his father, and ỳ we should be wholly dedicated vnto him, & that we should both indeuor to serue him as long as we liue vpon ỳ earth, and also ỳ our death should be as a sacrifice & offering vnto him, to shewe ourselues obedient to him in all points? Yea: & therefore let vs marke well, ỳ we must not doe it, as it were in a pang, as a number of folke do, who are very whot in gods seruice for a two or three dayes, and afterward their mind is altered, & their deuotion is quite gone, & they shew full well ỳ there was no zeale in thẽ. But let vs alwayes beare in mind to serue God as long as we liue. And therewithall let vs also bethinke vs of ỳ which is set downe here ere, where Rom. 14. 9.

where Moſes ſpeaketh yet againe of the heritage that had bin promiſed to ỳ Iewes. For ſeeing that our Lord doth daily put vs in mind of his grace: it is good reaſon ỳ wee ſhould plucke vp a good corage to honour him, & gather new ſtrength to ſay, foraſmuch as I haue liued out this day in the world, & haue ſerued God this morning, ſeeing ỳ I perceiue he cõtinueth his goodnes ſtil towards me, yea, & increaſeth it: is it not reaſon that my zeale & mine affection to ſerue him ſhould be ỳ more kindled, and ỳ my hope ſhold not be abated? That is the thing which Moſes ment in ſaying, Ye ſhall poſſeſſe ỳ land: & as long as ye poſſeſſe it ye ſhal haue a faire mirrour before your eyes to ſhewe you how your God calleth you to him, & mainteineth you in the poſſeſſion of the benefit which he hath once beſtowed vpon you.

And therefore let vs marke, ỳ we deſerue well to be bereft of the grace ỳ God thal haue granted vs, if we acknowledge it not toward him, but forget it, & apply it to another end than he ment it.

Deut. 11. 21. It hath bin ſayde heretofore ỳ the Iewes ſhould poſſeſſe the land, as long as ỳ heauen hung ouer the earth. And yet we ſee how they be put out of it, inſomuch ỳ at this day they poſſeſſe not any part of it, but wander abroad in the world, & are hunted to & fro. And what is ỳ cauſe therof? Surely God had mainteined them in the inheritance which he had promiſed thẽ, if they had not turned away frõ him after ỳ faſhion. For it was not Pſal. 132. 14 without cauſe, that ỳ land was called Gods reſtingplace. As if he had ſaid, ỳ when al the reſidue of the worlde were toſſed & turmoyled, ỳ Iewes ſhold dwel at eaſe & reſt in ỳ land, ſo as if any mã made war vpon them & troubled them, yet God wold ſtabliſh thẽ there. Yea but they haue brokẽ couenant wh him. And therfore at this day (as we ſee) they be baniſhed frõ reſting in any place of the whole world. They be as vagabonds euerie where. And what is the cauſe of it but their own vnthankfulnes in ỳ they haue forſaken gods promiſe through their vnbeleefe and ſtubbornes, and haue vtterly diſanulled it to the vttermoſt of their power? Therefore let vs bethinke ourſelues. True it is ỳ we muſt be as wayfarers in Hebr. 11. 13 16. this world, if we wilbe heires of heauen, as ỳ Apoſtle telleth vs. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, if we intend to be bleſſed of our God, & to feele ỳ he is a good defence for vs: let vs hold vs in obedience & ſubiectiõ to him. Otherwiſe let vs aſſure ourſelues, ỳ although al ỳ whole world hold with vs, yet we ſhall finde ourſelues ſo perſecuted and purſued, as we ſhall finde no reſt any where. If a faithful man walke in the feare of God, although he be perſecuted & tormented, yet may hee reſt vpon this point to ſay, yet is God my protector; and he will call vpon him, & by his calling vpon him he ſhall finde cauſe of cõfort. But on ỳ contrarie part, if an vnbeleeuer play ỳ rebell againſt God, although he haue peace to the worldward, and be in fauor of men, yea & alſo dreaded: yet ſhall he euer be vnquiet & agaſt. And the reaſon is, becauſe he ſeketh not to be at peace with God. So then let vs marke that whereas Moſes exhorteth the people heere to ſerue God all their life longs it is to the end wee knowing ỳ God renues his mercie and goodnes daily toward vs, ſhould be inflamed to ſerue him with ỳ greater corage, & that frõ day to day we ſhold alwayes continue therin as though we were at reſt. We ſee ỳ euen ſleepe ſetteth a man in good plight againe, ſo ỳ when he hath wearyed himſelfe with walking or working, he becommeth ready and diſpoſed to retorne to his labour againe the next morning. Euen ſo muſt we take corage at our Lords incouraging of vs, and at his calling of vs vnto him, ſo as it may appeare that we be willing and readie to follow him.

But now let vs come to that whish Moſes hath ſet down concerning the Lords ordinances and ſtatutes. The firſt cõmandement ỳ he giueth the Iewes, is that when they be come into the Land which they were to poſſeſſe for their inheritance *they ſhould beate downe all the altars of the heathen, breake and deface their ydolles, burne all the groues where they had vſed their ſuperſtitions, and vtterly roote out the remembrance of them.* Here we ſee again how hatefull a thing ydolatrie is vnto God, and that he can not abide ỳ his ſeruice ſhould in any wiſe be corrupted. Let vs marke I ſay, that God accepteth not any ſeruice at our hands, wherin is mingled with any abuſe or folly of our owne heades: but as we muſt ſerue him onely, ſo muſt we ſerue him not after our owne faſhion, but according to his owne will, cõmandement & allowance. Wherein we ſee how a great number of ignorant wretches beguile themſelues nowadayes. For hauing proteſted that their intent is to ſerue ỳ only one God, they put to many peeches of their owne, bearing themſelues in hand that ỳ is not amiſſe. And why? So long as mine intent deuour be to ſerue God ſay they, & that I do it of a good intent; why ſhold it be condemned? Yea, but we heare how our God can not away with any companion, as he declareth euerywhere, and euen in this text we be taught the ſame expreſly ynough: for God will haue all remembrance of ydols vtterly rooted out. For why? As long as ydols haue their vſe; God is defaced & ouercomred that he can not be diſcerned, and likewiſe all things in the world are confounded by it. Therefore it is all one as if mẽ ſhold go about to ſpoile him of his maieſtie & glory. And euen ỳ papiſts themſelues auow the ſame thing in their cõmon byword, when they ſay that God is not knowen for the Apoſtles. And it was Gods will that they ſhould make a common prouerbe of it, to ſhewe that they cut their owne throtes with their own knife, in that they can alleadge no excuſe at the latter day. For they ſay they ment it not: nay but will not their prouerbe proue them liers? Yea their owne wordes ſhall iudge them. Howſoeuer they fare, let vs note that if Gods ſeruice be not kept in the owne pureneſſe, all is marred: ſo that although men worſhip him neuer ſo much, yet hee miſliketh it, as wee ſee by his ſpeaking thereof in his prophete Ezechiell. Goe ſerue your owne Gods ſayth he, for I haue done with you. As if hee ſhould ſay; belong altogether to the deuill if you will: Seeing that ye hold your ſelues all wholly to me, but that I muſt haue companions ioyned with me, and ye make me but as one

of the common sort, so as I must bee as good as no body: I renounce you and giue you ouer, ye may goe to the deuill; for I will haue no more to doe with you. So then let vs marke well, that to serue our God aright, wee must yeelde such preheminence to his maiestie, as to depende all wholly vppon his worde and doctrine, without adding any thing to that which hee commaundeth, as shall be declared more at length in the next Lecture.

Nowe furthermore, whereas it is sayde *that she* [*very*] *remembraunce of ydolles must be rooted out*: it is to the end that folke should be the better aduised. Truely God sheweth vs on the one side (as I haue sayde) howe greatly he hateth all ydolatry, seeing hee willeth men to burne the woods & all that euer hath serued to the maintenance thereof, insomuch that hee will haue the very stones beaten to pouder, and the golde and siluer broken, so as all may be quite & cleane done away. Seeing that God doth so condemne the creatures which are good as in respect of themselues, because they haue beene instrumentes of superstition: thereby we see well that hee can in no wise away with ydolatrie. Besides this hee hath alwayes respect to the frailetie of men: for assoone as we meete with any thing, by and by we be miscarried: wee be euer starting one way or other. And what is the cause? Naturally we be inclined to ydolatrie: and because wee bee earthly and fleshly; wee bee euer imagining of God some thing that seemeth good to ourselues, by reason whereof wee turne him into sundrie shapes. If we haue neuer so small an occasion, by and by we be drawen vnto euill. If a flye do but crosse our eyes, we make an ydoll of it. We see then whereat God looked when hee gaue so straite commaundement to beate downe the altars, to heawe downe the groues, to burne vp the woods, to breake the images, and to destroy the puppets vtterly. For had those things continued still among the Iewes; there woulde euer haue been some among them, which would haue giuen themselues to the superstitions of the heathen. Tush, would they haue sayd: what and if a man had deuotiō to it? it is a hallowed thing: like as at this day, such as haue beene nusled in papistrie, are so held to it as long as they see their peking trash, that they can neuer winde themselues out of it, though they would neuer so fain. If a man that hath beene long inured to the Masse doe see a chalice: his minde giues him still that there is some holinesse in it; whereas cleane contrariwise it is as filthie and stinking an infection as any can be, and yet notwithstanding wee can not conceiue it. For why? As I sayde afore, we be fleshly by nature: and besides that, Sathan vseth such slight, that when he setteth such thinges before our eyes to beguile vs with, we be snared by them out of hande; and therefore there is none other remedie, but to make cleane riddaunce of all such thinges as may allure vs to superstition. Truely if their were puppettes among vs as are in the Popedome, it might be alleadged that they could not hurt vs as long as they were not worshipped. In deed it is true that they of themselues could not hurt vs: but lette vs looke into ourselues, and wee shall finde ourselues so weake, that wee shoulde be blinded immediatly by such baggage, and it would turne vs away from Gods pure worde, insomuch that if we had altars still, we should not knowe that the Lordes supper were ministred vnto vs to the intent wee should be partakers of him, and inioy all his goods: but there woulde remaine I wote not what a wicked imagination of y hellish Sacrifice which is done in the popedome; namely of the Masse, wherein men thinke that Christ is offered there to GOD his father for the remission of our sinnes. And so there woulde alwayes remaine some wicked fancie still in our heade. That is the cause why God hath so straitly commaunded to breake the ymages, destroy the altars, and burne vppe the woods or groues where ydolles haue beene serued and worshipped. The Papists in these dayes replie that that commaundement was giuen but to the Iewes, because they were giuen to superstition. Verily as who shoulde say that we were better disposed noweadayes than they were. True it is that GOD giueth not this commaundement to vs as touching the Ceremonie of burning all thinges wherewith ydolles haue beene serued: but yet for all that, his will is that we should make cleane riddaunce of all thinges that may turne vs from the pure religion. If it were of necessitie that all thinges shoulde bee doone away wherewith ydolles haue beene worshipped; this temple shoulde not nowe stande to haue the name of GOD preached in it. It hath beene a brothelhouse of Satans, but nowe must wee apply it to good vse, by taking away the trumperie that hath reigned in it, which was quite contrarie to Gods worde. But howesoeuer the worlde goe, if we looke well vppon our infirmitie, wee shall finde that this lesson belongeth to vs at this day, namely that all remembraunce of ydolles is to bee vtterly rased out. And nowe insomuch as the maladie of superstition is so rooted in vs, there is none other remedie for it, but to take away all obiectes that may moue vs thereunto, that the deuill may haue no more any meanes to intangle vs in his nettes which hee layeth for vs: but that wee may knowe simply after what manner God wilbe worshipped and serued.

Also we may gather further vppon this text, howe mad men bee in their superstitions, accordingly as the prophetes doe speake thereof. For they vse such similitudes as these; namely that men not onely resemble such folke as are carried away with fonde loue, and haue lost both honestie, witte, and countenaunce: but also resemble horses that ney after Mares, and such other brute beastes. Yee see then after what manner the wretched Idolaters are carried away in their superstitions. And this is declared vnto vs, in that wee heare him speaking of *woods of high growth*, as men terme them, and *of Mountaines and Hilles*. For there was not that odde nooke where in the Iewes hadde not

Ier.5.8.

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some peculiar deuotion; after which manner we see howe our ydolaters also haue poysoned the fountaynes, Woods and Hilles with the filthinesse of their superstitions and charmes. Whereseouer was any notable thing, by and by there was reared some Temple, or there was some chappell builded, and all to worshippe some ydol in. There is neuer any ende or measure when men take leaue after that fashion to worshippe GOD after their owne liking. And forasmuch as wee see that, wee ought to brydle our selues the more, that we attempt not any thing without the warrant of Gods worde: For if we hold not ourselues within our bounds, and as it were tye our selues simplye to that which GOD hath commaunded: it can not bee but that Sathan shall leade vs out of the way, so as there will be horrible confusion in our case.

The first reason then is, that such as will needes serue GOD after their owne fancie, doe alwayes goe into such a dungeon as they can neuer gette out of againe, and they fall continually from one superstition to an other. Marke that for one point. And on the other side we see howe greatly it will bee to our condemnation, that we can not finde in our heartes to dedicate our liues vnto GOD, seeing that the ydolaters are so carried away by their foolishe fancies, that they haue neuer doone with them, nor can neuer thinke themselues superstitious ynough. Therefore if we for our parte seeke not to keepe ourselues in obedience to our GOD, what will become of vs? For God hath layde such a yoke vpon our neckes, as is gentle ynough. He hath an eye to our infirmitie, hee giueth vs such strength as he knoweth to be meete for vs, hee beareth with vs as gently as may bee. And yet for all this, hee can not compasse vs, wee bee so nice as is pittie to see. Wee fall to complayning and say; Alas, GOD pincheth vs too sore. And if wee doe him but halfe seruice, yea or but the hundreth parte of our duetie, wee thinke hee ought to holde himselfe contented with it: whereas in the meane while the ydolaters doe martyre themselues out of measure, they indure after a sorte the peines of damned soules, and they are euer readie to increase their superstitions.

Matt. 11. 30.

Wherefore let vs looke well to ourselues; and seeing it is not lawefull for vs to attempt any thing beyonde Gods will; but it behoueth vs to knowe what he requireth of vs, and to submitte our selues wholely vnto him: lette vs be gentle and meeke minded to beare the yoke patiently which GOD layeth vppon vs, seeing it is neither harde nor greeuous (as I sayde afore). And seeing that the ydolaters doe so followe their geere, and nothing can stay their trotting and gadding, but that they doe as it were flye to the seruing of their ydolles: Lette vs steppe forewarde also, sith wee see that our Lorde sheweth vs the way, yea and such a way as though it be verie harde as in respect of our corruption, is neuertheless verie playne and easie to vs, in respect of the grace of his holy spirit.

Heere is this moreouer, that Moses sayth not heere, that the Iewes shall destroy and breake the ydolles in all places whereseouer they become: but that GOD commaundeth them to doe it in the lande that is giuen them to inherite. Wherein we see that the holy Ghost commaundeth not all the faithfull in generall to pull downe and to breake all ydolles in the worlde: but onely where they themselues haue authoritie. And it is a point well worth the noting. For if we be among ydolaters, it lyeth not in vs to ridde the Lande from the superstitions that reigne in it. What is to bee doone then? Euerie man must reforme himselfe in his owne heart, so as all ydolles may be thrust out from thence. When I see Gods seruice corrupted any where, I must forbeare to haunt that place or to communicate in companie with those ydolaters. I must cutte off all the wicked affections that are in my flesh, and I must know moreouer that I am not minded to forsake my GOD, nor to falsifie the faith that I haue plighted vnto him by defiling my selfe with the ydolatries that are about mee. Therefore euerie man must first and formost reforme his owne heart, and secondly separate himselfe from all things that may defile him. And that is because GOD hath giuen vs a charge of our owne persons, and made vs as it were keepers of his temples, to the intent that euery of vs shoulde looke narrowly to ourselues. That is a thing which it behoueth vs to doe when wee be in the countrey of Idolaters. Besides this, euerie man must purge and clense his owne house from all filthinesse. So as if a man be a housholder, hee must looke well about him that he hold well his children and seruauntes in the feare of GOD and in the pureneesse of religion. For if a man suffer his house to be defiled, and all thinges there to goe to hauocke: he shalbe sure to make account thereof to God. Not that a man can holde his wife and seruants continually eyed to his fingre to turne them to the christian faith when he lysteth: but my meaning is, that he must not suffer any superstition or ydolatrie. For why? Seeing that GOD hath giuen him soueraignte in his owne house; it behoueth him to deale in such wise as GOD bee honoured there, and as no filthinesse be mingled with the pure religion, but that all be ridde quite and clene away. But as for Kinges, Princes, and Magistrates, which haue power and authoritie, they must roote out all superstition and ydolatrie. And seeing that GOD hath armed them with the sworde: it behoueth them to vse it in that behalfe, so as they doe not in any wise suffer or giue leaue, that there be anie vnclenesse to greeue GOD withall, or to abolish or deface his seruice. Those are the thinges which we haue to marke vpon this text of Moseses. And therefore to be short, let vs remember that hee commaundeth euery of vs to keepe cleane his owne

body

body and soule. For why? God hath laide such a charge vppon vs, that he will haue vs to be the Temples of his holy Ghost: and therefore hee will haue euerie of vs to keep his bodie as cleane as we can: Nowe then let vs bee carefull to driue al idolatrie farre from vs, and not to meddle with it in any wise. And agayne, let euerie of vs haue an eye to his household, that there bee no infection in it to mar the seruice of God. And thirdly let those that are in estate of cheefe soueraintie; as kinges, Princes and magistrates, let them I say consider, that sith the Lord hath giuen them authoritie and power, if they suffer his seruice to bee defaced; they shall bee called to accounte for it. For it is saide that when thou art come into the lande: thou must driue out al idolatrie, and vtterly deface whatsoeuer hath serued to any superstition.

And in speaking after that manner, Moses sheweth that the putting away of idols is not all that we haue to doe: but that the cheefe point is the abaunncing, restoring and stablishing of Gods pure seruice. And that is well worthie to be noted. For wee shall see a great number nowadayes, which can wel enough mocke at the follies of the Pope, & at the abuses which reigne vnder his tyrannie. They dare well enough eate flesh vpon fry dayes, and they make no great account of Lent & Saints euens, or of the taking of holy water, or of kissing of Relikes, or of gadding on Pilgrimage, or of anie other such petie trashe. They haue no great deuotion to ỹ masse, or to Shrift, neither passe they for the deade, or for the singing [of diriges and such other pastime] for such as are deceased. Wee shall see a great number that can well enough despise all the superstitions of the Popedome, yea and euen laugh them to skorne and vtterly condemn the. But what? There is no feare of God, there is no Religion in them. Surely it were much better for them to haue gone on still like bruite beastes in their ignorance, than by such contempte to fall to rushing against Gods Maiestie like wilde beastes, and not to perceiue that there is a God which reigneth ouer the whole worlde. Then doeth it not greatly boote to haue abolished Idols, except the true religion bee set vp in the steede of it: Like as when a house is builded a-newe, if it be saide to bee nothing worth, or that there be many faultes in it; it shall be wel done to pull it downe againe, whereas notwithstanding if it were let alone in the same plight, so as a man had leuer to haue some Hoggescote to lodge in; yet for all the ilfauoredesse and faultinesse of it, it would serue his turne after a sorte being let stande still: but if it were pulled downe and raised to the grounde and none other buildded vp in steede thereof, the pulling downe of it were to no purpose at al.

Let vs marke then that here Moses deliuereth vs a perfecte doctrine which consisteth of two rules: Namely that wee worship our GOD purely, and moreouer that all superstitions bee cast downe, so as nothing may hinder the worshipping of God according to his worthinesse, but that men may haue an eye to him alone, & holde themselues alonely to his Maiestie. And first he speaketh of the abolishing of al superstitions. Why so? For if a man intende to sowe a feelde, if the same bee full of bryers, thornes, and noysome weedes, he must first and foremost cleanse ỹ ground, or else he must breake it vp wỹ ỹ plough to kil wicked weedes before he lay his seede into it. Euen so must all corruptions be taken from among vs, ere we can giue our selues ouer to the seruice of God. Well may it be preached vnto vs that there is but one God whome we ought to worshippe: but if wee haue possessed aforehande with fond fancies or imaginations, we shall be neuer the better for it, but our minds shall euer be intangled. That is the cause why Moses beginneth at that ende. But yet hee addeth further, that it is not inough to haue cleansed a peece of grounde, vnlesse it be also tilled & sowed, that it may bring forth fruite, for else it will continue barren still. And what is a man the better then for his plucking vp of the bushes and brambles that were in it alone? That is the thing which is shewed vs here. But first let vs marke, that it is but a flat mockerie, when men will needes set foorth Gods worde, without correcting of the vices that are contrarie to the right religion; after which manner there are a number to be founde noweadayes in the Popedome, which rowe betweene two streames, of which sorte are these hypocrites which haue perchaunce some taste of the Gospell, and can boast indeede of the preaching of Gods worde But howe is that? Whereas they see the wretched worlde as sore blinded and besotted as may be, so as nothing else is minded but idolatrie and superstition: yet they, thinke it enough for them to say, there is but one God whome it behoueth vs to worshippe. They dare not say that he onely is to be worshipped: but let vs worship God, say they. And will not the Paynims say as much? Haue not the Papists alwayes sayd the same? And yet when they haue saide, wee haue Iesus Christ for our aduocate: it is seene neuertheless, that they let him alone behinde them and run gadding after the patrons which the worlde hath deuised; and holde the wretched worlde at such a bay, that (like a sort of traytors to God and his Church) they make me beleeue that it is not euill to be partakers of all the abhominations that are committed in it. But we see howe Gods meaning is cleane contrarie. For Moses saith not onely, You shall serue the Lorde your God: but before hee come to that point, he saith, Ye shal beat downe the Altars, breake the images, burne the groues, and make cleane riddance of all that euer hath serued vnto wickednesse: euerie whit of it must be vtterly done away. And why. For had the people continued still in such infections; it had beene vnpossible that God shoulde haue beene worshipped purely. Then it is not enough for a man to giue some tast of Gods trueth: but if we see that Leasinges haue borne swaye aforetimes; they must be cut off, men must crie out against them, men must be reformed, they must bee brought into the right way, and they must not bee suf-

ſered to ſtray ſo any more. But yet therewithall let vs alſo learne, that when men haue cryed out againſt ſuperſtitions, they muſt not ſtay there: but they muſt cheefly proceed to ỹ ſetting vp againe of Gods ſeruice, as Moſes ſpeaketh thereof. For the very cauſe why there are ſo many Epicures in the worlde nowadayes, and why there are ſo manie folke that reſemble ſwine and brute beaſtes rather than men: is that they be contented to mocke at the fondneſſe and ignorance of the vnbeleeuers, and yet coulde neuer skill thẽſelues what it is to worſhippe GOD purely, and as ſtriue to him, and to humble themſelues to his worde. And therefore it is meete that they ſhould be giuen vp to a reprobate ſenſe, & that GOD ſhould giue them the bridle, that they might no more haue any honeſtie, humanitie or aught elſe in them that is good. Wherfore let vs learne not onely to know that Papiſtes are miſerable & wretched creatures, and to condemne them in all their follies & ſuperſtitions: but alſo to be ready to goe vnto God when he calleth vs. And let vs vnderſtand that when he hath bene ſo gracious vnto vs as to teach vs the true religion and doctrine of his Goſpel, thereby he ſhoweth vs that it is he onely whome we ought to worſhip. Thus ye ſee what we haue to remember vntill the reſt may be laide forth more fully.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele thẽ the more feelingly, that being caſt downe and as it were ouerwhelmed in our ſelues, wee may go ſeeke ỹ mercie which he hath promiſed vs for our Lord Ieſus Chriſtes ſake. And ſeeing he hath graunted vs the grace to put away all ſuperſtitions from among vs, let vs beſeech him that his ſeruice may be ſo ſet vp again, as he ſuffer vs not to become heatheniſhe, but that as he hath once ſhewed vs, ſo we may holde out in the ſame, and profite continually more and more therein, vntil we haue finiſhed the courſe of this life. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Wednesday the ij. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxj. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the twelfth Chapter.

3.4.5 But looke what place ſoeuer &c.

6 And thither ſhall yee bring your burntofferinges, and your ſacrifices, and your tithes, and the heaueofferings of your handes, and your vowes, and your freewillofferinges, and the firſtborne of your kine and ſheepe.

7 And there ſhall you eat before the Lorde your God, and be merrie both you and your houſehold in all things that you ſet your hande vnto, wherein the Lorde your God ſhall haue bleſſed you.

IN the Doctrine that I haue deliuered vnto you alreadie, there are two partes. The one is that God will haue all thinges vtterly rooted out wherewith Idols haue beene ſerued. And good reaſon hath hee ſo to doe, becauſe he ſeeth the frailtie of men: for if we haue neuer ſo ſmall an occaſion, by and by we be miſcaried. For Idolatrie is ſo rooted in our hearres, that wee haue neede as it were to plucke ourſelues from it by force: and what wil then become of vs, when we be drawen to it? Let vs marke wel therefore, that foraſmuch as we be inclined to ſuperſtition, if we intende to ſerue GOD, we muſt put away all things that may turne vs from the right way, & from the ſimplicitie which God commaundeth vs. And men cannot ſtand too much vpon their gard in that caſe. True it is that a number of me do weene themſelues to be ſo ſtrong, ỹ although they be neuer ſomuch conuerſant among ỹ ſuperſtitions of the vnbeleeuers, yet they ſhal not be atteinted with them: But God is wiſer thã we. And therfore let vs remember the leſſon that he telleth vs: namely that we muſt ſhunne all the ſuperſtitions of the heathen and the vnbeleeuers, or elſe his ſeruice will bee marred among vs by and by. But foraſmuch as I haue declared that part alreadie, I wil ſtand no longer vpon it.

Let vs proceed to that which Moſes addeth, namely *what mẽ muſt not deale ſo with God*: by which ſaying he meaneth, that the Iewes muſt not go about to honour the liuing GOD by building vp the altars, Chappels, or any other of all the filthie things again which they had beene drawen from. As if he ſhoulde ſay, GOD will not be ſerued after the manner of Idols, and therefore vnderſtande not what the heathen haue done, follow them not, neither faſhion your ſelues to their example: but holde you to this one rule, of doing that which your God commaundeth you. And this is well worth the noting: for when we haue condemned Idolatrie, we ceaſe not for all that to imagine that God liketh well that we ſhoulde do ỹ ſame things in honor of him, which were done by the vnbeleeuers: and ỹ appeareth by the buildinges in the Popedome. After that the Goſpell had beene preached to the worlde, men fell to mingling of al maner of ſuperſtitiõs of ỹ heathen with the true ſeruice of God. And what was the cauſe

cause thereof? The heathen had their Pilgrimages: and men knewe well it was a diueliſhe abuſe: neuertheleſſe they did not put them quite and cleane away, they did but onely chaunge them. In ſteede of going on pilgrimage to ſuch an Idol, they goe now to our Ladie of Laurette, to the holy handekerther, to Saint Michael, to Saint Iames, and to viſite the holy Sepulchre. Men ſhould haue vtterly rooted out all ỹ things that had beene ſo brought in by Satan, and in ſtead thereof they did but change them. Whereas men ſaw that the heathen made great feaſts, and kept a great number of ſolemne holy dayes in honour of their Idols: O (quoth they) wee muſt no more doe ſoe, for that were a ſeruing of the diuell: but let euery pariſhe make a Churchholyday, to play, to daunce, and to feede in till they burſt againe, and all in the honour of God. Beſides this, let euery one haue their patron, and let them worſhippe him. And ſo in ſteade of the ſolemne feaſtes that were among the heathen, let others be brought in among vs. O ſirs (ſay they) theſe thinges are not doone any more in honour of the Idols, but in honour of Saint Martine. And then let them daunce and playe the drunkerdes, for all is well enough ſo it be done in the honour of God. Againe the heathen were wont to keepe a holy day which they called the feaſt of all Spirits: and we muſt chaunge ỹ word and haue the feaſt of all Soules. Moreouer the heathen had a Temple which was called the Temple of all goddes, and wee doe nowe call it the Church of all Saintes or all Hallowes. See what an act worthie of remembraunce and an Angelicall act the Pope thought hee did, as the Papiſtes can well skill to make their bragges. For he (ſay they) there is a temple called the Temple of all the gods: but what? Wee haue but one God, and therefore it muſt not continue after the faſhion. Wel, we will chaunge the worde, and whereas the heathen had a Temple which they called the Temple of All their gods, we wil haue it the Church of all Hallowes, and we will haue a Churchholyday added to it. Again when they ſawe that the heathen had their ſacrifices: Nedes muſt they alſo haue their Maſſes ſet vp in the roome of them. Moreouer perceiuing that the heathen had their waſhings, they alſo would needes haue their holywater. To be ſhort, whatſoeuer filth and infection was among the Infidels, the Papiſts tooke it to themſelues to keepe. And what was the cauſe thereof? Euen for want of taking heede to this text, wherein it is ſaide that whereas the Infidels haue many deuotions deuiſed of their owne braine; we muſt not couet to doe the like to our God, nor looke that way; but we muſt harken what he ſaith and commandeth. Were this ſaying of Moſeſes vnderſtoode; all the diueliſh deuiſes that haue reigned & doe reigne ſtill at this day in the Popedome, ſhoulde get them away to the bottome of hell. For we ſee here a generall condemnation, whereby GOD ſheweth that he hateth al ſuch things. And why? Becauſe he will not haue men to deale with him as the ignorant doe with their Idols. A thing may ſeeme faire to the worldwarde, & men may clap their hands at it: but behold God ſaith here, I wil not be ſerued after ſuch faſhiõ, or ſuch maner, let not men preſume into my preſence to deuiſe what they think good themſelues. And if it be alleadged, yea, but ſhall ſuch a thing bee euil taken, when I doe it in the honour of God? Shal it be ſaid that I ſerue Idols, when I do ſuch a thing of a good intent, and all to ſerue God? Is it ſo great an euil that men ſhould cry out at it? No, no, men muſt hearken what God commandeth, and ground themſelues altogether thereupon, ſo as they preſume not to adde any thing thereunto. We ſee then that the meaning of this text is, that wee muſt forget al the follies that haue beguiled vs, and not alledge cuſtome or continuance of time, but receiue the doctrine of the holy ſcripture like litle children. A yong childe will not ſay, thus and thus haue I beene taught, for he knoweth yet nothing at all: But he receiueth that which is put to him, and is the readier to learne, becauſe he is not inured aforehande with anie maner of miſteaching. But if a childe haue been miſtaught and nuſled in his fondnes: then if a man go about to amend him, O (ſayes he) I was taught ſo, and a man ſhal not be able to make him pronounce one ſyllable aright, nor to ſpeake one worde to any purpoſe. And why ſo? Becauſe he hath bin trained by an Aſſe, who hath framed him to his owne faſhion, and hee hath learned ỹ right trick of him. After the ſame maner it is with a great number of folke that haue been brought vp in curſed poperie: alwayes they hold ſtil ſome relikes of it, ſaying, Yea ſir, but can ſuch a thing be euil? There is euer ſome replying againſt God. But as for vs, let vs practiſe ỹ which is ſaide in the foure & fortith Pſalme: My daughter, forget thine owne people and thy fathers houſe, and thy husband wil take pleaſure in thee. We know that in that place our ſpiritual marriage with Ieſus Chriſt is deſcribed vnder ỹ perſon of Salomon. And firſt of all we bee commaunded to forget all that euer is of our owne. For by our people and by our fathers houſe, is meant all that euer we haue of nature, all things that we haue loued afore, and al the pleaſures & delights wherewith we haue beene helde backe. Al theſe thinges muſt be thruſt vnder foote, or elſe the ſonne of God wil neuer like of vs, whoſe calling of vs to him is to make vs all one with himſelfe. Alſo we muſt put the ſame thing in vre which I haue alledged heretofore out of Saincte Peter: namely that we muſt be like newe borne babes. For when a child beginneth at his Apſa he is eaſie to be taught and ſuffereth himſelfe to be ouer ruled: euen ſo in al things, let vs learne this leſſõ which God teacheth vs in his doctrine, & let al our wiſedome be to obey him. That is the thing which we haue to marke in this texte where it is ſaid, thou ſhalt not deale ſo with thy God: for God wil not be weighed in the balance nor ruled by ỹ meaſure of Idols, but wil haue mẽ to imbrace whatſoeuer he commandeth, and to reſt vpon it wout gainſaying or replying. For declaration hereof he ſaith, *To ſhal reſort to the place which hee ſhall haue choſen to put his name in, and to dwel in.* Which ſaying here is expounded

of some to bee his habitation, that is to say, his sanctuary or tabernacle. But all cōmeth to one end: Gods meaning is plain & vndoubtful, namely ỹ whereas the heathen had set vp many Altars, builded many Chappels, and gone on many pilgrimages: the Israelites shoulde holde themselues contented with the only sanctuarie. Now if it were lawfull for men to bee ruled by their owne reason, ỹ Iewes might here haue pleaded in this wise against God. What, the countrie is great, and shall there be no Altar in no place of it but onely in one? There are diuerse great Cities; and shall there be neuer a Temple in them for men to offer sacrifice in and to doe their deuotions? There are a great number of countries bordering vpon it, [which doe otherwise;] and shall we in worshipping GOD looke onely vnto heauen? Why shall there be no altar? It might seeme therefore that the Iewes had verie iust cause to refuse this commaundement and to say wee will bee so deuout that wee will haue some signe or marke of Gods dwelling among vs and wee will worshippe him, and doe solemne sacrifices vnto him. But what? In this case men must bridle themselues and holde their owne wits in captiuitie, so as they giue God leaue to speake, and they themselues holde their peace, without attempting to go anie further than Gods mouth permitteth them. Ye see then howe it is Gods will to humble his seruauntes by making them subiect to his word. Wherfore let vs learne that wee must not followe our owne sway nor our owne imagination: but this ought to suffice vs, that our seruice be acceptable vnto God, by ordering of it according to his will: there is no other way but that.

And it is said expressely *in the place which the euerlasting, thy God shal choose*: as if he shold say, it is not in the choice of ỹ Iewes to appoint God a place or to say vnto him, here wil wee sacrifice. Men must not presume so far. It belongeth to thy God to choose saith Moses. To be short hee will haue Gods authoritie to bee receiued and him onely to be the ruler of his people, so as he may command what he listeth and be obeyed without gainsaying. Ye see then that the foundation of true religion is not to say, it seemeth so to me, I weene so, I would faine haue it so, it is a goodly thing: but to let God speake, and to assure our selues that it is not for vs to doe any thing but ỹ which he alloweth. And so is meant by this saying that obedience is more worth before him thā all maner of sacrifice. And in verie deed can wee doe him any greater honor than to rest vpon his worde, and suffer our selues to be gouerned by it, and to be as poore blinde folkes vntill hee haue lightened vs and shewed vs the way? Now as for those that solow their owne deuotions, they bereaue GOD of his soueraintie and yeeld him no reuerence at al: therefore it is but a building in ỹ aire and an vtter confusion. Wherefore let vs weigh wel this word choose, that we may be fully resolued in our selues that none but God hath authoritie to set order how he should be honoured and serued.

1. Sam. 15. 22.

And he addeth yet further, *from one of al your tribes*. Here the people might bee tempted to a kind of iclosie, for we know that men do willingly drawe things to themselues, and that is a greefe and a corsey vnto vs when others are preferred before vs. The same might bee among the Iewes. The lande of Chanaan is diuided into twelue tribes, for the Tribe of Ioseph made two, and the Leuites had no portion at all. But yet for all that, yee see there were twelue Tribes, which had euery one his portion to inherite. Now GOD tolde them that his Tabernacle shoulde be set in Ierusalem, and that his Temple shoulde be builded vpon mount Sion. Hereupon the residue might haue quarelled thus. What? Are not we the children of Abraham as well as they? with whome is it that GOD hath made his couenant? Are we not al of one stocke? Why then shoulde the Tribe of Iuda be preferred before vs? specially seeing he is not the first begotten. Doth ỹ birth right belong vnto him? Why then shoulde he bee more honoured than all the rest? Whence hath hee this priuiledge? After that manner might the matter bee debated. Also it might be alledged that the title ought to be remoued euery moneth of the yeere fro one tribe to an other throughout al ỹ twelue Tribes. There are twelue moneths in the yeere, and we be twelue tribes of vs: and therefore we ought to begin according to the order of birthright, so as the eldest haue the carying of the Arke the first moneth, and euery Tribe after in his order. Were it not reason it shoulde be so? Yee see then that the rest of the Tribes might haue made that allegation when they saw the Tribe of Iuda preferred before all the other Tribes. But Moses preuenteth that, saying, it belongeth vnto thy GOD to choose and to commaunded what hee thinketh good. According whereunto it is saide in the Psalme that the land of Chanaan was in deede made holy, and that God had promised it to his seruaunt Abraham. But what? He refused the tribe of Manasses and Ephraim, and rested not there but choose the Tribe of Iuda. And why? because it pleased him. If a man shoulde looke vpon the outwarde apparance, it is wel known that the kingdome of Israell was faire greater than the kingdom of Iuda. True it is that in king Dauids time they were all one kingdome: but when the people fell away, then the Tribe of Ephraim became of greatest honour among them: but yet for all that, God reserued the dignitie to the citie of Ierusalem and to mount Sion, that hee woulde be worshipped there. Seeing it is so, let vs vnderstande that to serue GOD aright, men must vncase themselues of al pride, so as they seeke not to aduaunce themselues, but submit themselues wholy to Gods wil without regarding to bee honoured aboue others after the ambitious maner of the Papists which striue who shall goe foremost to the offering. They pretend to doe it of deuotion, but indeed they doe it of diuelish pride. And therefore if we wil haue God to accept our seruice, let vs learne to come vnto him with humilitie and not to turne our tayles to our neighbours but

God

god vouchsafe to endue any others with greater grace than our selues, wee must not spyte them for it, as wee be warned of it. Wee see that God distributeth his giftes more vnto one than vnto another; What is nowe to bee doone? shoulde wee haue spite at it? Shoulde wee gase aboute vs howe to make our selues iolie fellowes? Alas wee doe but wander away from GOD when we steppe foorth to aduaunce our selues before men. Therefore let vs proceede with all lowlinesse, and not bee so fondly and wickedlie disposed as to haue a will to bee preferred before our neighbours. And so we see what Moses meant to expresse here in saying, God wil choose him out some one certaine place from among thy tribes: and let it not greeue them that are put backe from it. For why? If it bee Gods will to humble them, they shall gayne nothing by their comming to rushe against him. And therfore let euery man holde himselfe contented with his degree and measure, and let him that is litle holde himselfe contented with his litlenesse.

And nowe hee addeth expressely also, *that God will choose a place to put his name in.* Whereby he meaneth that he is not to be inclosed in it as in respect of his substance. For (as I haue declared afore) there are alwayes two thinges which it behoueth vs to marke well. When we haue an outwarde order or forme of seruing God, wee muste obserue two thinges therein. The one is that forasmuch as God seeth vs to be rude and earthly, hee stoopeth vnto vs, and pleasureth vs so far, as to giue vs things fit for vs. As for example, when wee in praying doe vse these ceremonies of kneeling down, of putting off our cappes, and lifting vp our handes: wherfore doe we so? It is not for that GOD hath neede of it for his part, but for our owne weakenesse sake. Because we bee ouer grosse, we bee faine to be exercised after that fashion. After the same manner wee haue Baptisme, and the Lords holy Supper, all which thinges are for the weakenes of our nature. And so ye see that that is one thing which wee haue to marke on our part. But when as God beareth with vs after that fashion, let vs beware that wee surmise him not to be like our selues, or that wee thinke him not to behaue himselfe after our lust. For men are alwayes in daunger of falling into that extremitie. The thing then in effect which Moses ment to say, is this: The Lord will choose him a place to set his sanctuarie in, there will he haue you to worshippe him: there will he haue you to offer your sacrifices to him, thither will hee haue you to bring your oblations; there will he haue you to honor him w your persons & goods, protesting your selues to bee wholy at his deuotion. But yet must you not thinke that your God is come downe from heauen and shut vp in a cofer or chest. You must not thinke that he sitteth betweene Cherubins after the manner of men: but that it is ynough for you that his name is there, that is to say that he giueth you some token of his presence and power, to the intent yee may be sure that he will heare all our prayers and be mercifull to you. And yet for all that hee filleth heauen and earth, howsoeuer the worlde goe. Therefore ye must not fall to shutting vp of the infinite maiestie and substance of your God, into a cortier, or into a material & corruptible Temple. Beware of such superstition, and be contented with the hauing of his name, that is to say, ỳ your God is there called vpon, that his Law is there preached to you, that his promises are there set before you, that you be grounded vpon his grace, that you neede not to doubt but that he is your father and Sauior, that you may boldly sue vnto him, and that you be sure he is ready to receiue your requests. That is the intent why your God is minded to be among you.

Of this place we haue a good lesson to gather, which is, that seeing God hath ordeyned means agreable to our infirmitie to serue him withall; we ought to vse them, according to this saying, *shun shalt seeke out that place.* For Moses hauing warned the Iewes of their rudenesse, commaundeth thẽ to benefite themselues by such meanes as the Lord teacheth them: that is to wit, by the ceremonies which he would giue them. Nowe adayes we haue not the like ceremonies to those that were vnder the lawe. But yet doth our Lord beare with vs also, so farre foorth as hee seeth it requisite, and giueth vs such ceremonies as are meet for vs, in respect wherof we haue the meetinges that are made among vs, as I haue saide afore. And why? To the end that Gods worde should be preached to vs, that we shoulde make cõmon prayers as it were with one mouth, that we should confesse our faith, and christendome together, and that ỳ Sacramentes should be ministred in the companie of the faithful. Seeing ỳ our Lord giueth vs such meanes, it behoueth vs to vse them. For whosoeuer despiseth thẽ, mocketh God openly. Let vs marke wel that whatsoeuer our Lord hath ordeined for our behoofe, we must receiue it, & be diligent to strengthen our faith therby dayly more & more. For if I thinke my self to be so perfect, ỳ I passe not to come at ỳ Church, there to benefit my self with others: it is a diuelishe ouerweening; and it were better for me that I were some poore begger that had neither witte nor vnderstanding, (so as in the meane while I knewe mine owne pouertie) than to be so high minded. For it is the next way to cast me downe to the bottome of hell, when I will needes exempt my selfe from the common order. And therefore whosoeuer hath any zeale and affection to serue God, must doe that which is commaunded here in seeking the place that God hath appointed: that is to say, he must not holde skorne of any thing which he hath ordeined for the confirming of our faith. That is one point.

Againe we must alwayes beare in minde, that when God vouchsafeth to plant his name amõg vs, we must not serue him after our owne fashion, and after our owne rude manner: for his seruice is alwayes spirituall, and the thinges that he sheweth vs here beneath, must draw vp aloft to heauen. And hereby a man may see howe the wretched world hath bin beguiled. For ỳ greatest

warrant that we haue of our Lorde Iesus Christs presence among vs, is left vs in his holy supper. There he doeth as it were put himself into our handes, of purpose to be incorporated into vs, as the breade and wine become one substance with vs when we haue eaten it and taken sustenance of it. The sonne of God sheweth himselfe familiarly vnto vs. Yet for all this, we must not imagine that he is come downe from heauen, & that wee handle him here betweene our pawes, or that he is inclosed within any certaine place. No: but his comming downe to vs, is to drawe vs vp to him. Therefore when wee receiue the communion, let it content vs that wee haue there a good and sure pledge of the grace of our Lord Iesus Christ, and that we be sure of his dwelling in vs, and of our being one with him. And yet for all that, we must not be so fleshly and grosse, as to ducke downe our heades to it, or to worship it: but rather wee must beholde him by faith in his heauenly glorie, & seeke him there. For wee see howe beastly the papistes became: They beare themselues in hande that there was no God at all, if hee were not shutte vp in a boxe: they worshipped Iesus Christ after such a grosse manner, that they became vtterly brutishe and witlesse. Forasmuch then as we see that the wretched worlde hath beene so bewitched by Satan, let vs resorte to the remedy. For the fault grewe of this, that men followed not the rule that is conteined in this text, *Where shal you seek your god.* And why? For there is his name: Where as it is saide you shall seeke him there: it is not meant that ye shoulde shut him vp there: but that ye should there glorifie his name. True it is that notwithstanding the chosing of that place, yet the people were still taught to serue him spiritually. For God renounced not his own nature, when he appointed a temple to be worshipped in: but his doing thereof was to the end that the people shoulde exercise themselues continually in his spirituall seruice, notwithstanding that the Ceremonies were outwarde: That is the thing which we haue plainely to gather out of that place.

Nowe we haue to marke likewise, that God helde his people a long time in suspence, before hee shewed them the place where hee woulde dwell for euer: True it is, that whersoeuer the Arke was, there the sacrifices were to bee made. Yet notwithstanding the place was not appointed out, that is to wit Mount Sion. Although the Arke were for the most parte at Silo: yet did it wander vp and downe for a great time, and the people were in continuall waytinge where it should rest: and that was a greate temptation. For see what might haue beene saide: GOD promised vs to choose out a place: but hee doeth it not. And why then shoulde wee not choose a place our selues? And why shoulde not hee like well of vs for so dooing? Howesoeuer the worlde goe, it is not lawefull so to doe. The matter stoode not here vppon tenne, twentie, thirtie, a hundred, or three hundred yeares: but yee see the people were faine to tarie a much longer time, euen to the reigne of Dauid. There had beene a number of chaunges, a great sorte of Iudges one after an other, and a great sorte of gouernours: and yet of all that whyle GOD spake not one worde of that matter, whereby it might seeme he had vtterly forgotten & prouided he had made by Moses. But yet must the people tarie his leasure still. And therefore let vs not bee as though wee stoode vppon thornes, when our Lorde listeth to holde vs at a bay. Let vs beare in minde that hee tryeth our obedience. If hee vtter not thinges vnto vs at the first as wee woulde wishe, it is his meaning therein to trie vs the better, whether wee can finde in our hearts to be subiect to him or no, & whether we haue the lowlines and reuerence to walke in the simplicitie of his word. That is the thing which we haue to mark concerning the first point.

Furthermore, wee must vnderstande, that when God hath chosen a place: it is not for vs to remoue to and fro. And yet wee must not be drowned in so brutishe superstition, as to thinke that GOD is tyed to the place which he hath chosen. Indeede it was an excellent prerogatiue for the citie of Ierusalem to bee called the royall citie of GOD, so as he would vouchsafe to haue his Temple there. But we see what befell them for abusing so honourable a title, and for refusing to serue GOD with pure consciences. After that God had patiently wayted for their conuersion, hee withdrewe himselfe from them. When he sawe the Iewes become stubborne; hee tooke away his glorie from that place. Yea and the Prophete Ieremie had vpbrayded them with it aforehande. Goe your wayes to Silo (sayth hee) and see how desolate it is at this day. And yet notwithstanding Silo had beene preferred before Ierusalem. For Gods Arke had beene there a long time, and yet was that place rased to the grounde. Beholde a thing euen at this present that might make your hayres to stand vp vpon your heades. Doe yee boast of your Temple (quoth Ieremie?) Thinke you that God is so much bounde vnto you that hee can not withdrawe his glory from thence? The threatenings were vttered by Ieremie; but the people followed still their wicked trade: and in the ende Gods glorie was faine to departe, as is saide by Ezechiell. For the Maiestie of GOD was shewed him in the Temple, so as hee sawe there both heauen and earth, and thinges that were aboue nature. And yet for all that, hee sawe also that all vanished away as smoke, and the Temple abode emptie and was vnhallowed, because GOD had forsaken it and giuen it ouer. Whereby wee bee done to vnderstande, that when our Lorde sheweth vs fauour aboue others, we must liue the more warely and fearefully; and that if wee will continue in the possession of the benefites that wee haue receyued, wee must not abuse them. Had Rome beene chosen as was Ierusalem, howe proude would they haue beene? For although they boast themselues to haue the Apostolike sea, and that the Pope is the head of the worlde, so as the vniuersall supre-

premacie of all thinges is there: yet haue they not one syllable for them in the holy Scripture, but haue vsurped all that euer they chalenge to themselues, and they haue no colour that God liketh of them. But what though there were some text that God gaue preheminence to that Citie? Yet we see that as now it is a very dungeon of hell, insomuch that they haue not onely burst out into all maner of leaudnesse, and by all meanes wrought dishonour vnto God: but also are become as voyd of religion as Sodome, so as the deuils themselues haue more feare and reuerence to Godward, than al those filthy and stinking rable that rule the roste there. Seeing then that there is such contempt of God, and so outrageous wickednesse there, thinke wee that God is so bound vnto them, that he cannot depart from them? He had said of Ierusalem, This is my resting place: but of Rome he neuer sayde any such thing. And therefore wee see what a fondnesse it is to make such bragges as to say, that howsoeuer the Pope doe, yet is hee still the head of the Church. Nay contrarywise wee haue God for our head, and it is not lawfull for vs to change him, except we wil go to destruction with those whome wee see to haue beene so farre ouerseene after that fashion. And nowe sith wee see that this is fallen out in the Popedome, let vs looke well to it when God dwelleth among vs, that we driue him not away, but that we serue him with all pureneſſe, that as hee reigneth ouer vs at the present, so he may continue with vs to the ende, and neuer forsake vs. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in mind when wee looke vppon the examples that befell both to Silo and to Ierusalem. I say, to Silo where the Arke had beene a long time: and to Ierusalem where the place was appointed for the building of the Temple, according to the promise that Moses had made.

And now hee addeth, *That they should resort thither to offer their Sacrifices and burnt offerings, their tithes, all their deuotions, and to pay all their vowes.* As if he should say, that they might not attempt any thing vppon their owne fonde heads, but hearken vnto God, and be gouerned by his only word. And herewithall wee must call to minde what hath beene touched afore; namely that Gods ordeining of Sacrifices, burnt offerings, vowes, and such like things, was not for any neede that hee himselfe had of them, or for that they could stand him in any stead: but to keepe the people occupied with those ceremonies, and all bicause men are so fraile and earthly. God then did ordaine Sacrifices. And to what purpose? To instruct folke withall. For when the Iewes came thereunto, it was for them to consider this with themselues: Wee be wretched sinners, wee bee not worthie to approche vnto the Maiestie of our God, for he is righteous and the verie righteousnesse it selfe, he is the fountaine of all cleannesse, and wee on our side bring nothing to him but all maner of filth and vncleannesse. Therefore it stoode the Iewes in hand to haue some meanes to wash themselues and to make themselues cleane before God. It stoode them in hand to bee discharged of their debtes, and of the curse wherein they felt themselues to bee wrapped. For the dooing whereof God gaue them the said Sacrifices. When they came to him, they protested on y one side, Alas Lord, wee deserue death, but wee hope that thou wilt heare vs for the blouds sake which is to bee shed for the washing away of our spottes. Besides this, they had washings, wherby they were made to acknowledge thus: True it is Lord that wee be full of filth, but it is in thee to make vs cleane. And so yee see that the Sacrifices were ordeined to instruct the people, as I sayde afore, and wee likewise haue the same order at this day, which God would haue to continue still among the Christians. And therefore let vs referre all to that ende, namely that in asmuch as wee bee grosse and rude, it is for our behoofe to be exercised with some Ceremonies. Yea, but yet must not those bee of our owne inuenting. For wee shall neuer haue doone, if we goe to worke after our owne fashion. Let vs content our selues with the playne thinges that are conteined in Gods woord. For that is all our wisedome.

Finally Moses addeth, *There shall yee eate and drinke in the presence of your God, both you and your households. And when yee come thither your God will blesse you.* Heere Moses addeth that when the people submit themselues after the manner aforesaid, God will make them to prosper. That is the effect of his meaning heere. And herewithall he sheweth vs, that euen in the matters y concerne this temporall life, wee must dedicate all things to the seruice and honour of our God. And that is a thing well worthy to bee marked. For wee see howe the worlde is desirous to discharge it selfe in such wise to Godward, that when they haue once serued God a little, they woulde haue ruse for a good while after. As how? When the greatest hypocrites in the Popedome haue performed all their ceremonies in their Churches, as the besprinkling of themselues with their holy water, their crossing of themselues, and their much mumbling of their *Missa dicas*: they beare themselues in hand that all the day after they may turne their backs vppon God as soone as they haue turned their tayles from the Church, and God seeth them no more. For why? He is well payde, and he must holde himselfe contented. After that manner doe men behaue themselues. And why so? It is bycause that although wee knowe Gods seruice to bee spirituall, yet notwithstanding wee consider not that all things which wee doe in this present life must bee referred to the seruice of GOD: like as when wee eate and drinke, it is trewe that the dooing thereof is to sustayne vs in this worlde till GOD take vs out of it. Againe, wee haue other needefull thinges to bee doone, as the applying of euery mans trade, in traueling and labouring for his liuing. True it is that all these thinges are worldly and earthly, and therefore they must not withdrawe vs from the heauenly things, whatsoeuer come of it. Therefore when we eate and drink, our taking of our bodily sustenance

naunce muſt bee after ſuch a ſort, as therewith we muſt find ſome further taſte of the goodneſſe of our God, and ioy in him for that hee is our fosterfather, of whom we haue our dayly bread, as wee profeſſe by asking it at his hande. And when we haue taken our repaſt, wee muſt proceede to take ſuſtenance of ỹ good things that are prepared for vs in heauen, againſt wee departe out of this worlde, that wee may haue ſome beginning of them afore hande, and trauell towardes the attaynement of them dayly more and more. That is the thing which Moſes ment plainely in this place ſaying, When yee haue offered ſacryfice to your GOD, yee ſhall make merry there in his preſence. For the people were woont to make feaſtes at their ſacrifices. And what maner a ones? Holy feaſtes: not that God was honoured by their eating and drinking: but for that it was a teſtifying, that it behoued them to beare in mind that they were all their life long in Gods ſight: So as it behoued them not onely to think vppon him at the beginning of the yeere, or a three or foure times a yeere when they came to Ieruſalem to do ſacrifice, but alſo to thinke thus with themſelues continually: Although wee bee farre off from the Temple, ſo as wee cannot bee there to doe our ſacrifices: yet doth not our GOD fayle to regarde vs: for hee watcheth ouer vs, and wee bee in his protection. Therefore whenſoeuer wee eate or drinke, let vs aſſure our ſelues that hee ſeeth vs, and we cannot hide our ſelues out of his ſight, neither ought wee on the other ſide to forget him, as men commonly doe when they be minded to make merry. They friske it out in ſuch ſort, as if they thought they could get away from him. But on the contrary parte, Gods will was to doe the people of old time to vnderſtand, that whenſoeuer they did eate and drinke, they ſhould thinke that God ſawe them. Wee in theſe dayes haue no ſuch Ceremonie of feaſting in Ieruſalem and in the places neere about the Temple: but yet doth the truth thereof continue ſtill to vs: which is, that we be done to vnderſtand ỹ after we haue beene at the Church, and haue mette there together in the name of our God; when euery of vs returneth home to his houſe to dinner, we muſt not let God alone in the Church, and take our leaue of him, but we muſt beare in mind that God guideth vs, and when we be come home to take our repaſt euery man by himſelfe, we muſt behaue our ſelues as in the preſence of our God, & our mirth muſt be after ſuch a ſorte, as he may bee the witneſſe of our gladneſſe. For we know that if our mirth be vnholy, it is curſed of God. Therefore let vs learne to beare alwaies in mind, that our God is our guide euery where, and that he neuer forſaketh vs, to the intent that we on our parte ſhall not be as beaſtes that runne aſtray. That is the thing which wee haue to marke vpon this text. The Ceremonie thereof was in force during the time of the Lawe. But as for vs nowadayes, let vs bee contented with the truth therof, & learne to vnderſtand ỹ ſith our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is come, we neede no more any materiall Temples nor vs that God is with vs. For our Lord Ieſus hath not for naught taken to him ỹ name of Emanuel (as the Prophet Eſay calleth him) that is to ſay, God with vs. And foraſmuch as our Lord Ieſus Chriſt telleth vs ỹ he wil be with vs continually to ỹ worldes end, let vs not feare but ỹ God will accept vs for his childrē, ſo ỹ in paſſing through this tranſitorie life, we haue our eye alwaies vpō him, and goe forward ſtill towards his heauenly kingdom. For then wil he make all the reſt to be dedicated to his honor, ſo as euen our eating & drinking ſhalbe a peece of his ſeruice, & he will take it in good worth & like well of it, ſo that we do wholly worſhip him, looking to be fed at his hand, not onely with this corruptible foode, but alſo with ſuch nouriſhing foode to himſelfward, as wee may liue with him the ſame life that himſelfe liueth.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with aeknowledgement of our innumerable faults, which we cōmit dayly againſt his Maieſtie without ceaſſing, praying him to make vs perceiue thē better than we haue done, and in the meane while to beare with vs, vntil he haue rid vs quite & cleane from all vices, and vnited vs throughly to his righteouſneſſe. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the vij. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the twelfth Chapter.

8 Yee ſhall not doe according to all the things that you doe heere this day, that is to wit euery man as he thinketh good.

9 For as yet you be not come into the reſting place and the inheritaunce which the Lord your God giueth you.

10 You ſhall go ouer Iordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God will make you to inherite. And he wil giue you reſt from all your enemies round about you, and you ſhall dwell in ſafetie.

11 And

11 And when the Lorde your God ſhall haue choſen a place there, to put his name in: Ye ſhall bring thither all that I commaund you that is to wit, your burnt offeringes, your ſacrifices, your tenthes, your Heaue offringes, and all the choiſe of your vowes which ye ſhall haue vowed to the Lord.

12 And ye ſhall make merrie in the ſight of the Lord your God, both you your ſelues and your ſonnes and daughters, your Menſeruauntes and your Maide ſeruauntes, and the Leuite alſo that is within your gates: for he hath no part nor inheritance with you.

13 Beware that thou offer not thy burnt offeringes in all places which thou ſeeſt.

14 But in the place which the Lorde will chooſe in one of thy Tribes, There ſhalt thou offer thy burnt offerings, and thither ſhalt thou bring all the things that I commaund thee.

ALthough Moſes haue treated of this matter heretofore, yet is it not without cauſe that he goeth to it againe for ỹ better confirming thereof. For as I haue told you alreadie, Men are alwaies deſirous to paſſe their boundes, & cannot ſubmit themſelues to God, to attẽpt nothing beyond his word. Wherfore let vs marke well that God thinkes it not ynough to tell men once for all, that they ſhould behaue themſelues according to his word & ordinance: but he repeateth ỹ ſame leſſon oftentimes, to the intent that men ſhould take ỹ better heede of it, and marke it the better. And biauſe ỹ people had not as yet the law written as touching the Ceremonies; it is ſaid expreſſely, *Ye ſhall not doe as ye doe now.* For it behoued the people to bridle themſelues thereafter as they were taught. Howbeit, for the better vnderſtanding of this text, it might bee demaunded firſt, whether the Iſraelites did for a time offer ſacrifice at their own pleaſure, without rule, or without being certaine what God required or allowed. The anſwere hereunto is, that they had alwayes ſome marke to ſhoote at, and that they had not the bridle ſo looſe in their neckes, but that they knew how they ought to ſacrifice. And in deede, wee heare how the Apoſtle ſaieth to the Hebrewes, that frõ Abel forth on, there was no ſacrifice accepted but by faith. And fayth importeth alwayes an obedience, ſo as if men deale at alauenture, there is no faith at all in them. But the Apoſtle ſaieth expreſſely that Abels ſacrifices pleaſed God bicauſe of his faith. Whereupon it followeth, that God hath euer ſhewed his will to ỹ faithfull, ſo as they haue not gone to woorke vnaduiſedly, but haue had ſuch certaintie as was requiſit for them. And whereas Moſes reporteth in Geneſis that Noy ſacrificed of cleane beaſtes vnto God; it doth vs to vnderſtand that Noy muſt needes haue had ſome knowledge of the difference of them aforehand: for it paſſed his vnderſtanding to finde out which beaſtes were cleane. Needes therefore muſt it bee that God had imprinted it in him: and that order hath continued for euer. And ſo is it certaine that the Iſraelites neuer had any ſuch lawleſſe liberties, but that they knew which was the trewe way of worſhipping GOD. Alſo it is expreſſed by Moſes that Abraham would inſtruct his poſteritie in the iudgements, Lawes and Ordinaunces of GOD. Whereby he doth vs to vnderſtand, ỹ although there was not as then any law writtẽ; yet notwithſtanding Abraham failed not to haue knowledge of the things ỹ God required & of whatſoeuer elſe was requiſite. For Moſes coulde haue ſayde at one woorde, Abraham will teach his children to liue well and holily and according to the wil of God: but he ſayeth that he will teache them his lawes, ſtatutes & ordinances. To whate purpoſe? I haue told you before, that it was to magnifie God the better, for his well prouiding of all things requiſite to the ſeruing of him, ſo as the faithful could not ſtand in any doubt, but were ſure of their dutie what they ought to doe. Gen. 18.19.

According hereunto therefore let vs marke, that when the people of Iſrael came out of Egypt, their ſacrificing was not after the maner of the Heathen, according to the inuention of man: but after a heauenly order, that is to ſay, according to the order which God had appointed. Yet notwithſtanding it is true that there was not as yet any ſuch particular declaration made of the Sanctuarie, and of all the appurtenances and things belonging thereunto, as wee ſee is ſet downe in Exodus and Leuiticus. Theſe things (ſay I) were not ſo particularly ſet forth: it was not yet ſayd vnto them, You ſhal haue but one altar, which ſhalbe of ſuch a meaſure, of ſuch a heigth, and of ſuch a breadth: you ſhall haue a Tabernacle of ſuch manner of ſtuffe, of thus many peeces, thus long, and thus broade. You ſhall haue fire burning continually in the Sanctuarie: Your ſacrifices ſhall neuer bee offered without Salte: there ſhall alwayes bee lyght and perfumie in the Temple: The cakes that ſhall bee offered in the Temple ſhall bee of ſuch a faſhion: There ſhall be bread continually before the Lord, and it ſhall be renewed day by day: Againe there ſhall bee a hygh Prieſt, which ſhall enter once a yeere into the narrowe Sanctuarie, and there ſhalbe an Aultar of burnt ſacrifices for him to offer vpon from day to day. Theſe things were not yet thus ſet out: & that is the thing which Moſes meaneth in this text whẽ he ſaith, Ye ſhall not doe after the ſame manner

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as we doe this day. For there was greater libertie before such time as God had set foorth his commandements to bridle the people withal, and to hold them in such awe as they should not attẽpt any thing vpon their owne head, nor step aside to the right hande or to the left; but followe the thinges roundly which were conteyned in his Lawe.

And heereof wee haue to gather, that after as God vttereth his will vnto vs, so are wee the more bound to follow the same. For if we knew not what to doe, and that God had let vs alone in suspence: we might haue some excuse for our doeing of thinges as seemed good to our selues. For why? Our Lord hath not bin so gratious to vs as to say vnto vs expresly, Thus shal ye doe: And therfore we may do according to our owne skill, seeing we haue no expresse word to ỹ contrarie. After that maner might a man reply. But now that God hath witnessed his will vnto vs, we must stoope to it, and it is not lawefull for vs to adde any thing thereto, For that were as much to say, as we would fall to scanning whether God or wee were the wiser. And what a presumption were it, if wee would needes haue better thinges than those which he inioyneth vs? Yet notwithstanding, if men cannot find in their heartes to yeelde to the thinges that GOD commaundeth, they enter into this diuelish presumptuousnesse of purposing to be wiser than God hath giuen them leaue to be. Wherfore let vs learne, that when we haue once assurance what God alloweth, we must rest wholly vpon it. And herewithall we must marke, that God did not without cause giue the people of olde time so many rules to shewe them how to doe sacrifice. When we read the thinges that are conteined in Leuiticus, to our seeming there bee many needelesse thinges. For God might well haue sayd in feawe woordes, I will haue a Temple, and there will I haue you to sacrifice vnto me. But there are such a sort of commaundements as may make a man amazed and out of his wits. And what is ỹ cause thereof? True it is that all thinges were made and doone according to the patterne that Moses had seene in the Mount, as God himselfe declareth. And thereby we be doone to vnderstand that the figures, (although that at this day we know not perfectly in all pointes to what vse they serued) had a spirituall truth, which may bee referred to the thinges which we haue nowadaies by the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ: for hee is the very body and substaunce of all the shadowes that were vnder the Lawe. When wee reade that the highpriest might not enter into the Sanctuarie, but with such attyre as is there described; wee would thinke it straunge to see a man so disguised, with so many thinges about him. And why was that? We must marke that it was to doe the people to vnderstand, that the partie which was to bee the mediator betweene God and men, was not of the common state and sorte of men, but that it behoosed him to haue a speciall kind of holinesse to preace vnto GOD with all. And that was the cause why hee caryed this tytle in his frontlet vppon his head; *Hallowed vnto God, or the holinesse of God*, Again, hee had other attyres about him, so as hee coulde not goe or stirre, but there went a noyse or sound from him. For hee ware bells vppon the skirtes of his garments; and that was to shewe that all men ought to giue eare, when it is told them that the sonne of God was offered for vs in sacrifice, so as the same may ring into our heartes, to the intent wee may seeke the meanes to be reconciled to GOD. There were other things whereof a man may perceiue the reason. As the twelue precious stones which the highpreest ware on his brest aloft vpon the Ephod: and the names of the twelue tribes grauen in other stones vpon his shoulders. Whereby was ment that Iesus Christ did nothing for himselfe but all for vs and in our behalfe: and that his going vnto God after that fashion, was to bring vs into his presence, according to this saying of his, I sanctifie my selfe to make you all partakers of the same holynesse. Nowe then wee see the reason of many thinges that were commaunded in the law, and we know it was not without cause that the Apostle saith that all things were made according to the patterne that Moses had seene vpon the Mount: after the which maner Saint Steeuen alleageth the same text in the seuenth of the Acts. Nouertheless wee must note, that Gods meaning was to hold his people in awe, that they might be the surer what to doe, and not bee occasioned to transgresse the true seruice of God, by mingling of any inuentions with it. I say it was Gods intent to inure his people to obedience. For if we shew our selues to serue God otherwise, all that euer we doe will bee nothing woorth: nay hurt it will be sinne. If I weene I doe well, and in the meane while stand in doubt and perplexitie, I must needes goe to wreche. For if wee bee not inlightned by certeintie of faith; God alloweth not any of our doinges. And therefore I say his intent was to keepe the people of old time in obedience. And that was the cause why he willed that there should bee light continually in the Temple. It was not to giue light vnto God, or so doe him any seruice, but to do the rude people to vnderstand, that we must not doe things disorderly, and be as blind folkes when we approch vnto God: but that we must haue light to guide vs by, which light is not to be found in our owne braines, but must come from aboue. And for that cause the holy candlesticke had Lampes vpon it, wherein was oyle continually. Whereby was ment, ỹ if men be not guided & gouerned by ỹ holy Ghost, they do nothing but wander vp & downe, & in ỹ end they shall fall into destruction. Again, God willed that no strange fire should be brought vnto his Altar. Whereby is ment ỹ man must not bring aught of their own to the seruice of God: but we must haue the holy fire, ỹ is to say we must pray to God in ỹ Church, & not go beyond his word, or beyond ỹ doctrine ỹ he teacheth vs. Moreouer it is said ỹ no sacrifice should be offered without salt. And why so? For when we offer things to God without warrant ỹ he alloweth them & requireth thẽ, they haue no sauor at all before him.

Exod. 25. 40.

Heb. 9. 8. 10.

Col. 2. 17.

Leuit. 16. 4.

him. Thus you see in effect how it was Gods in-
tent to cõfort his seruants, & to incourage thẽ,
ỹ they might serue him as became them. And a-
gain, it was his will to cut off al occasiõ of adding
any thing which they had learned of ỹ heathen.
We know ỹ although mẽ haue no incoũters be-
fore their eies, yet they ceasse not to forge many
fond things, weening to please god by ỹ meanes.
But when we see examples on either side of vs, it
is a further prouocation to vs. Besides ỹ tickilish-
nes which we haue already of nature, it pricketh
vs forward to say, why should not such a thing
be good? For ỹ Iewes had seen ỹ fashiõs of Egypt
& of other heathẽ folke: & therfore they might
haue bin prouoked to fashion thẽselues like vnto
them: & that had bin a corruption to ouerthrow
ỹ whole seruice of god. To preuent this mischief,
God gaue them a remedy, which held them oc-
cupied in such sort, as they had ynough to do in
ỹ things ỹ were inioyned them, & had no leasure
to withdraw themselues or to adde any deuise of
their own. And so we see it was not for naught ỹ
God gaue his people so many lawes, rules, & ce-
remonies at their going into ỹ land of Canaan.
For first of al, it was meete ỹ the figures and sha-
dowes should supply ỹ roome of ỹ truth ỹ was yet
vnrenealed, vntil Iesus Christ was shewed openly
to ỹ world. Secondly it was Gods will to try ỹ o-
bedientnes of his people by ỹ means. And third-
ly it tooke away al occasion of intermedling thẽ-
selues w ỹ superstitiõs of ỹ heathẽ & vnbeleuers.

And for ỹ cause doth Moses say, *You shal go o-
ver Iordan, & God wil giue you rest in the land that he
hath promised you, & there shall you dwell in safetie,
though you haue enimies round about you.* And then
wil he choose him a place in one of your tribes,
and thither shal you bring your sacrifices, burnt
offerings, & oblations. And the very true sacrifice
(saith he) is to do nothing vpon your own heads,
but to obey your God throughly in all poyntes.
Wil he saith ỹ they shall come into ỹ land, it is
to her ỹ Gods deferring to giue his law til that
time, was to declare more particularly what
things he liked of. For it was his will to performe
his promise made vnto Abrahã, before he would
establish his owne seruice. And thereby he gaue
thẽ to vnderstand ỹ the land of Canaã ought to
haue led thẽ to a further thing. For had there bin
no further matter in it than ỹ land it selfe; it had
bin ynough for thẽ to haue bin setled in it, and
there to haue had wherew to finde them abun-
dantly. But God setteth vp his seruice, & sheweth
thẽ after what sort they should honor him thẽce-
forth: & al is referred to our Lord Iesus Christ.
We see then ỹ the land of Canaan should haue
guided ỹ Iewes to ỹ hope of ỹ heauenly life, so as
they should not haue set their mindes vpon ỹ in-
ioying & possessing of the profits ỹ came therof,
but haue proceeded on further & considered ỹ
Gods meaning was to raigne among thẽ after a
spirituall maner. That was ỹ cause why he listed
not to giue thẽ ỹ ceremonies at ỹ first, after the
maner ỹ they be set down in Leuiticus: but refer-
red the setting of them foorth, vntill the people
were come into their inheritance.

And he saith expresly *that the Iewes should dwel in
quiet & safetie, notwithstanding that they were lefte
round about with enimies.* Hereby we bee done to
vnderstand, ỹ it was not ynough for thẽ so haue
conquered the country, but ỹ it behoued God to
maintaine them stil vnder his protectiõ. And as
the Israelites were warned of it then so doth the
same belong to vs at this day. For God telleth vs
ỹ if he hath once called vs, it is al one as if he had
made vs to passe the red sea. True it is ỹ he could
cal vs without making of vs to chaũge our place.
But let vs consider from whence God taketh vs,
& whither he draweth vs. He taketh vs out of ỹ
bottom of hell. For so long as we be in our owne Eph. 2. 12.
nature, we haue none accesse to ỹ kingdome of
heauen, nor any acquaintance with him, but are
vtterly banished from ỹ hope of life. And whẽ he
hath drawen vs out of such confusion, he pulleth
vs vp to himself, to the end we might cleaue vn-
to him: & although we dwel as yet on the earth,
yet notwithstanding wee ceasse not to be heires
of ỹ heauenly inheritance. This is a farre greater
thing thã to passe the red sea. For we haue an e-
nemy ỹ is greater and much stronger than was
Pharao & al his people. For what can we do whẽ Eph. 6. 12.
we haue all ỹ diuels against vs, labouring to hin-
der our saluation, & being so subtle & hauing all
ỹ meanes ỹ can be to do it withall? They be cal-
led the princes of ỹ aire, & they reigne ouer our Eph. 2. 2.
heades, so as they might easily ouerthrowe vs if
God deliuered vs not from them. Therfore it is
a great power which God vttereth when it pleaseth him to gather vs vnto himselfe. And yet is ỹ
to no purpose, except we be preserued still vnder
his hand & ruition. For as long as we bee in this
world, we shalbe inuironed continually round a- 1. Pet. 5. 8.
bout w enemies. The diuel ceasseth not to trou-
ble vs; he hath wyles & slights ynow to doe it
withall: & we on our side are vnarmed & vnpro-
uided: & therefore it standeth vs greatly vpõ, to
haue God to bee our defender. Nay, the diuell
needes not to seeke farre: for we carie such a nũ- Rom. 6. 12.
ber of vices with vs of our owne, as we might be 13. & 7. 23.
ouercome a hundred times without any great a-
doe or noise. Let vs mark wel then, ỹ like as God
promised to maintaine the Iewes in the inheri-
tance ỹ he had giuen them: so it standeth vs in
hand at this day to be maintained by his hand in
the faith: ỹ we may persever in his seruice: or else
our saluation wil go to wreck euery minute of an
hour, so as there wil be no stay nor continuance.

Now afterward Moses addeth: *God will haue
you thenceforth to serue him in the place which he shal
haue chosen to put his name in.* Which is as much
to say, as that we must not make this our rest, to
inuest this or that; but we must hold our selues
in quiet, and abide vnder the gouernment of our
God. When we be at rest, then is our mind much
troubled w vnquietnes, which is cleane contrary
to Gods meaning. For if he giue vs respit, so as
we be not troubled with feare & terror, to what
end is it? Is it not to the end that we should bee
so mild as to say, go to my God, if I were vexed
or disquieted in minde, I had some cause to bee
caryed here and there and to doe some thing or
other. I should bee seeking of sundry remedies.
But now that thou vouchsafest to maintaine me

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in quiet rest; it is good reason that I should bee still, and suffer my selfe to bee ruled by thy word, and to bee bowed which way thou listest, without giuing heade to my lustes, for that were a wicked vnthankefulnesse. That is the thing which Moses ment by that text. And the same matter concerneth vs also. For whensoeuer God vouchsafeth to giue vs rest from our enemies, wee ought to bee so much the quietter in our selues. As for example. If we were among the Papistes, wee might bee in such feare, as we should bee driuen to seeke new shiftes euery day, as the poore soules are which bee among them, who may well say, Alas, I haue no liberty to serue God. How may I behaue my selfe in such sorte as I may not defile my selfe with the superstitions of these Idolaters? Thus ye see how these poore caitifes are faine to seeke al the waies to the wood to find some shift to swim betweene two streames. And no maruell though they be in that taking. In deede it is no sufficient excuse; for howsoeuer the world goe with vs, we must bee fully resolued in our selues to serue God neuertheless. But yet are we the lesse to be borne withal, when we abuse the time of quietnesse that God giueth vs. If we be at libertie, then must nothing withhold vs from hauing our religion pure and clean. For he offereth himselfe to vs dayly in his word. And therefore let vs refraine our selues from wandring after our owne imaginations, and let vs bridle our selues in that behalfe. Seeing that God hath giuen vs rest: let vs followe all that he sheweth, without attempting any thing at all to the contrary. But we see the contrary come to passe. For commonly it falleth out that when men be in rest, so as no man trubbles them nor disquietes them; then fall they to bee lustie or sporting like a horse that is broken loose and hath neither bridle nor saddle. And the experience hereof is too common, in so much ỹ those to whom God hath graunted such fauour as to haue his truth in most safetie, doe thinke it better to behaue themselues after another sorte, and to chaunge their state: and what a kinde of dealing is that? It is a diuelishe rage that we be caried away withall, when wee cannot bee quiet in our selues at such time as god hath giuen vs outward rest, and holdeth our enimies locked vp, so as although they be round about vs, yet he suffereth them not to make any chaunge to disquiet vs with all, and yet we our selues cannot abyde to sit in quiet. Wherefore let vs marke wel, ỹ seeing God is so gracious to vs as to grant vs libertie to serue him purely: it is our dewtie to holde our selues quietly vnder his obedience, without attempting any thing at all. But the Papistes haue well shewed in this case, that they cannot find in their harts in any wise to submit themselues vnto God, and that their intent is not to yeeld him any obedience. For first of all they looked not what God ment by the olde figures of the Lawe, and yet they followed the things that Moses commaunded concerning lightes, perfumes, and apparell. And why was that? Bicause they considered not that all those things were referred to our Lord Iesus Christ. They were much more brutish than the very Iewes that had no faith at all. For the Iewes at leastwise held themselues to the rule that was giuen them. In deede they knewe not the right vse of their Ceremonies: but yet had they an expresse commaundement from God, & durst not attempt any thing against the same. But as for the Papistes, notwithstanding that Iesus Christ bee manifested, and haue accomplished all the thinges that were betokened in olde time: yet haue they vtterly ouerthrowen the good and substantial foundation, and set vp his death and passion vnder foote. They fall to making vp of lightes. And what needes that? The holy ghost hath shewed himselfe visibly in the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and also ouer the Apostles, to doe vs to vnderstand that we must no more looke for any outward signes, bicause we haue the truth and substance of them. But what? The Papists haue abolished the infinite grace of God, and vtterly made a mocke of it. They will needes offer sacrifice, and haue attyred their priestes thereafter, disguising them as though it were to the playing of an enterlude. And all this geere is but gugawes, for they be not commaunded of God, and besides that they be done as it were in despite of him. All those things doone in the law was of Gods setting vp: & sith men fall to setting vppe of newe fashions such as God neuer spake of. Againe, they place a mortall man in ỹ roome of our Lord Iesus Christ: as who should say that the office of our Lord Iesus Christ were not welynough knowne and apparant, vnlesse it were figured out with newe and straunge toyes. It is all one as if a body should then seeke the picture of a man when the parte himselfe is present, and shoulde saye, Behoulde this picture, and yet the man is there himselfe who can much better shew himselfe what he is than the picture can doe. Euen so doe the Papists in setting forth of ỹ picture of Iesus Christ. He is named the liuely image of God. Although the father be incomprehensible in his owne maiesty: yet hath he so vttered himselfe in the person of his sonne, as wee may behold him face to face, as sayth Saynt Paule in the second to the Corinthians. But the Papistes draw a Curteine before it, and tell vs that wee must be contented with pictures. It is therefore a turning of all thinges vpside downe, and a bringing in of diuelish confusion. Neuertheless, we see that in the Popedom there is no barking after God saies; but all is doone at the appetite of man. Looke whatsoeuer they do, they name it by the name of Gods seruice. Yea but how is God dewly serued? God sayth, ye shall not doe whatsoeuer seemeth good to your selues: seeing that I haue set you downe a certaine order, but contented to bee gouerned by my word. But what say the Papistes? Mee thinkes this is good. This we take to be excellent: euery man calles to his collup, and in all Gods woord a man shall not finde one syllable of al the things which they terme Gods seruice, and which they will needes haue to passe in their account. For let a man search all ỹ things through which are comprised vnder ỹ name in ỹ Popedom, & he shall find the

exercises

euerychone to bee forged and builded by men, and that God not onely disclaymeth them, but also condemneth them, bicause he hath shewed vs his certeine and infallible truth, which is the thing that we must frame our selues vnto. Wee see then howe all this doctrine hath beene wickedly throwen downe in the Popedome: and that is bicause they haue peruerted the true vse of the figures of the Lawe, and taken inordinate liberty to doe whatsoeuer came in their heades, without hauing any regarde to the witnessinges that God giueth vs, whereby they might haue sayd, These be the thinges which we ought to do. Now so much the more diligẽt ought we to be in marking this place: For were wee still in doube nowadayes what to doe, so as wee knewe not what thinges God alloweth: then might wee haue some fancie to make vs to sway to and fro. But seeing that God hath tould vs what hee requireth at our handes: that ought to be ynough for vs. And now hath hee abolished, the Ceremonies of the law that were of his owne appointing? Yea. And wherfore? To shew vs therby ỹ he wil not haue vs any more intangled in the outward figures. The reason is added; bicause we haue them throughly fulfilled in Iesus Christ. Now then, if we wil not deface the glory of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and ouerthrowe the benefits that he bringeth vs; we must put away the old figures. Marke that for one point.

Againe, wee see that God is contented with few ceremonies. For it is not his will that wee shold haue any more deckings, lights, perfumes, Cakes, sacrificings of beastes, nor other such thinges: but his wil is that in our baptisme we should haue such an assurance of our washing & clensing by the grace that is purchased for vs in our Lord Iesus Christ, as should continue with vs for euer. Haue we that? We must hold our selues contented with it. For God could haue added more, if he had lifted: but he lifted not so to do. And lyke see heere is a bridle which must reine vs backe to gather vs home to GOD, or else he shall neuer be able to weeld vs. Now what haue the Papistes done? Tush, this simplicitie of baptisme pleased not them, they would needs adde this & that to it at their own pleasure. What say they? Should there be but sheere water? What a thing were that yea, but god hath so ordeined it, Iesus Christ who is the infinite wisedome of God his father hath so appointed it. It is said that last of all God hath spoken to vs by his mouth, and that we must stand to whatsoeuer he saith. Now he hath ordeined it in water alone. Yea, but wee must haue a taper (say the Papists) to represent the holy Ghost: we must haue salt, to represent ỹ heauenly wisedome, and the grace of God: wee must haue diuers other things, and we must haue spittle to make infantes and dum folks to speake, and we must haue a number of other gugawes to mocke God wᵗ all, which are so grosse, and fond, as they can serue for nothing but to make Christianity a laughingstock to the Iewes and Turkes: and the diuell plaies his part with them, when ỹ world is sorted after such a sort. We see thẽ that the Papists haue broken and transgressed Gods order, by adding after ỹ maner to ỹ things which he had set downe certaine, and in such measure as he would not haue men to go beyond them.

But there hath bin yet a farre more outrageous disorder in ỹ Lords Supper. For therein our Lord Iesus Christ ment to shew vs, ỹ his wil is ỹ we shold settle our whole trust in him, bicause we be fed wᵗ his substance, & therfore wee must not seeke life any where else thẽ in him: we must not eate there & drink somewhere else; for we haue there ful sufficiance for ỹ sustenance of our soules, we haue ỹ ful perfection of all goodnesse in him. That is ỹ thing which he sheweth vs by his holy supper, & his wil is ỹ we should receiue ỹ bread & wine in witnes therof, and ỹ it should be distributed among vs, to the end we should be knit togither in him, to become members of his body. But on ỹ contrary part, they haue set vp ỹ abhominable Masse, & wil needs sacrifice Iesus christ. And whereof comes that? Euen of ỹ they vnderstãd not ỹ they vsurpe ỹ office which is allotted to him in the holy scripture, according wherunto he hath offered vp himselfe once for al, & behold, mẽ wil needs take vpon them to counterfet him, for by their owne saying, it is all one sacrifice. Yet for al ỹ, they be but Apes to Iesus Christ. For it becommeth them not to take vpon them the office ỹ is not allotted vnto thẽ. Againe they wil needs make a minglemangle of al things: for they not only disguise & falsifie all thinges that were ordained by our Lord Iesus Christ, but by all likelihood are fully bent to fight furiously against his institution. Iesus Christ ordeined ỹ the bread & wine should be diuided among ỹ faithful. But it is ynough wᵗ them ỹ one doe take it all, & eate it vp alone. Yea & when the people come of purpose to cõmunicate with them, (which is but once a yeere) they be faine to content themselues wᵗ the one part of it, & the other part is reserued. Besides this, there is no opening of Gods word, their saying is ỹ they go to receiue their God, & they make a charme & sorcerie of their consecrating of the bread & wine. Thus ye see how proudly they be turned away frõ Christes ordinaunce, so as they could not deuise howe to fight against him wᵗ more violence. Now sith we see these things, we ought to acknowledge Gods grace in drawing vs out of such confusion. And therewall let vs marke, ỹ Gods standing so much vpon ỹ point ỹ his people shold not do what they liked thẽselues, is not wout cause. For why? we see what mẽ are whẽ they once go astray. Whẽ they once take ỹ libertie, they disguise the trueth, and there is no end of their leasings. Therfore let vs beware ỹ we hold our selues short, specially whẽ God hath giuen vs rest from our enemies, & wee dwel in a place where we may worship him purely, let vs keepe ỹ simplicitie ỹ he commaundeth, & alloweth by his word, wout any swaruing aside from ỹ same how little soeuer it be. For we had need to keepe our selues farre off frõ al corruptions, if we be determined to obey our God. And why so? For mans heart is a dreadfull gulfe. And again, euery mã drawes his neighbor into error after him. Therefore it is like an endlesse maze wherof there is no way out again, vnlesse ỹ thing

be obserued that is spoken here: namely *that men do not what euery man thinks good in his owne eyes.*

And let vs note also, ỳ by this saying, al our intentes (as men terme them) are condemned, though they seeme neuer so good to our selues. For we be no competent Iudges; God must tell vs what is good: & if we on our side find any apparant reasõ, it is altogether but smoke. So then for as much as God in this place setteth his own word, and ỳ testimony of his will, directly against all our deuotions, and al that euer seemeth good to vs: let vs assure our selues that it is not lawfull for vs to followe whatsoeuer we think good. For al that is nothing worth: but al ỳ seruice that wee do vnto god, must be grounded vpon his word & his infallible truth. Without ỳ, we doe but build in the aire, that is to say, all that euer we do is but dreaming.

Now Moses addeth ỳ same things again which he had spoke concerning *Sacrifices, Burnoffrings, freewillofferings, vowes & tenthes*; namely, *that all those things must be done & paide in the place that God had chosen out of one of their tribes.* This thing was not so soone performed as I haue shewed heretofore. And ỳ reason is, for ỳ god intẽded to proue his peoples patience, & also for ỳ ỳ people were not worthy ỳ God should stablish the order at the first, in such sort as he had promised it. And that is a thing well worthy to be marked. For we see ỳ gods gracious gifts are oftentimes long in coming. And yet God saith, ye shal no sooner haue spoken, but I will be ready to succour you, yea & my hand shalbe stretched out to helpe you before your words be out of your mouths. So doth God promise: & yet notwithstanding he suffereth vs to linger. And why? Bicause we haue hindered the course of his grace by our vnbeleefe, and we be so reckles, that hee maketh no haste to come vnto vs, bicause we for our part come not to him but ẇ great hardnesse, & as it were limping. Yet notwithstanding he doth alwaies surmount all our vices ẇ his infinite goodnesse, as it came to passe in ỳ which Moses speaketh here. God had promised to choose a place for his Sanctuary to rest in for euer. Now, ỳ thing was to haue bin done as soone as ỳ Israelites were entred into the land of Canaan; & yet it was delayed a long time: insomuch as there passed a hũdred yeeres or twaine, yea three or four hũdred before ỳ promise tooke effect. And that was bicause the people were not worthy to be so satisfied, as God had declared, & therefore were faine to abide the punishment of their sin. For they draue not out their enemies as he had commaunded them, but became negligent: and besides ỳ, they themselues turned away & fell into all maner of vices & corruptions. That therfore was the cause why God withdrew his hand, and performed not his promise till the time of Dauid. Neuertheles, although ỳ people were malicious, although they were vnthankfull towards God, although they prouoked his wrath so many waies to ỳ vttermost: yet could they not vtterly disappoint ỳ promise altogether. The reason was, for ỳ it depended not vpon ỳ desert of men. Therfore although men be vnworthy of it, yet doth God in ỳ end performe whatsoeuer he saith. Yet notwithstanding there is a delay made for a time, to the intent that folke should learne to know their own naughtines, and mislike of it, and be sory for it. Wherfore let vs learne hereby, that if God at any time do shew himselfe vnwilling to put vs in possession of his benefites out of hand: it is bicause that we haue procured the delay of them by our own naughtines. But yet had we not be vtterly bereft of them, so we acknowledge our sinnes and be sory for them: but in the end he will reach out his hand again, to put vs in possession of the benefites wherof we had deserued to be vtterly dispossessed. Truly this will not boot the hypocrites at al: but as for gods children, although it liue in suspence for a time; Yet will our Lord shew in the end, that his goodnesse surmounteth all the sinnes of men, and that he will not faile to be faithfull, though all of vs be lyers. Rom. 3.

Sothly (as I said afore) we must not vnder this colour flatter our selues. For if we be stubborne in euil, our Lord wil welynough find the meanes to discharge himselfe of the promise wherof we had haue beene disappointed. But let vs learne to acknowledge our sinnes; & when we haue acknowledged them, let vs learne also to rest vpon the goodnes of our god, not doubting but that his great and infinite, that notwithstanding all the lets which we on our side shal cast in the way of it, yet it will so get the vpper hande, that in the ende we shall find the welfare from the which we had shut our selues out of doores. That is the thing which we haue to remẽber vpon this text. Moses where he saith that god wold appoint a place, euen such a one as he had chosen out from among all the tribes of Israel, where he would haue his name to be called vpon. The residue which is not bee declared as now, shalbe pursued hereafter.

Now let vs fall downe in the presence of our good god with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs perceaue them better than we haue done heretofore, so as we may mislike them more & more, & thereby be brought back vnto him: and that sith wee for our parts bring nothing to him but vtter corruption, it may please him to graunt vs the grace so to reforme vs by his word, as ỳ sacrifices which we shall offer vnto him may be made holy by faith, and he accept them for our Lord Iesus Christs sake. And for as much as we knowe that he requireth spirituall sacrifices: let vs call vpon him ẇ such humblenes, as we may be hard at his hand, & yeeld him praise for all his benefites bestowed vpon vs, and more ouer indeuer to discharge our selues of our dueties euery man towards his neighbor, bicause those be the sacrifices which he receiueth & alloweth. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth; &c.

2.Sam.7.10

On

On Tewsday the viij. of October. 1555.

The lxxxiij. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the twelfth Chapter.

12.13.14. And ye shall be merry, &c.

15 Neuertheleſſe, looke whatſoeuer thou haſt a mind vnto, that maiſt thou kill and eate within any of thy gates, according to the bleſſing of the Lord thy God, which hee hath giuen thee; as of the fallowe deere or of the Red deere: both hee that is cleane and he that is vncleane may eate therof.

16 Onely of the bloud shal you not eate, but you shal powre it vpon the ground as water.

17 Thou maiſt not eate the tithes of thy Corne, of thy wine, or of thine oyle, within any of thy gates, nor yet the firſt ingendred of thy kine, or of thy sheepe, nor any of the vowes which thou shalt haue vowed, nor the free will offringes or the liftinges vp of thy handes.

18 But thou shalt eate thoſe thinges in the preſence of the Lorde thy God, in the place which the Lorde thy God wil chooſe to himſelfe. *There shalt thou eate thou, both* thy ſelfe, thy ſonne, thy daughter, thy manſeruant, thy woman ſeruant, and the Leuite that is within thy gates. And thou shalt bee merrie before the Lord thy God in all things whereunto thou putteſt thy hande.

MOſes going forewarde ſtill with his matter, commaundeth the Iewes here to bee merrie in the preſence of the Lorde. Nowe although this leſſon haue bin laide foorth alreadie, yet is it requiſite for vs to bee put in minde of it againe. For the treating of it heere is newe againe, is not for nought, neither hath the holy Ghoſt ſet down any thing more than needeth, as I haue ſayde heretofore. Men cannot keepe meaſure in their mirth without ſome diſorder alwayes. And the cauſe therof is, for they haue not an eye vnto God in their making merrie. Nay rather (which worſe is) they thinke it is no mirth at all vnleſſe they caſte their backs vpon him. Whereas we ſhould ſette all our welfare in GOD to haue our reſt there: wee beare our ſelues in hand that wee be beſt at eaſe when we bee furtheſt from him. For this cauſe God ordeined the ſayde Ceremonie of ſolemne feaſting when the folke offered ſacrifice vnto him, as it were of purpoſe to put them in remembrance, that God was there preſent, and ſhewed himſelfe vnto them. Not that the doing thereof once a yeere was a ſufficient diſcharge to them; but that euery man ought to make a leſſon & a generall rule of it, that whenſoeuer they did eate or drinke, they ſhoulde referre it wholly vnto God, accordingly as Saint Paule warneth vs to doe. And thereby wee ſee that the truth thereof abideth vnto vs, though the Ceremonie thereof bee done away. Wherefore let vs learne, that in playing and ſporting after the faſhion of the children of this worlde, wee ſhake off God and bereaue him of his honour. And ſurely it is an vnexcuſable vnthankfulneſſe, when we acknowledge not the author of all welfare. If we referre all our mirth vnto God, it will be alwayes moderate. Beſides that it ſhall euer haue a good end, God wilbe ſo hold vs in aw by his Maieſtie, as we ſhall not paſſe our boundes as we ſee the wretched and blind vnbeleeuers do, who haue no more ſtay of themſelues in their making merrie, than wild beaſtes haue. Now then, if our eies be ſo ſet vpon God, we ſhalbe ſober and modeſt ynough. Marke that for one point.

But beſides this, it is the meaning of Moſes alſo, that fathers ſhould teach their children, and maſters their ſeruants, to do the like. For it is not ynough for a faithful man, that he himſelfe ſerue God: but he muſt alſo gouerne his houſhold, aſſuring himſelf that it is committed to him to the ſame end, & that he is to yeeld account of it. And in deede, what reaſon is it that a man ſhould haue ſuperioritie ouer his neighbors that are creatures faſhioned after the image of God as wel as he, and that in the meane while God ſhould be bereft of his right, and not be vſed as chiefe ſouereigne of all? What a preſumption were that? Were it not an vtter peruerting of the order of nature? Then let vs marke well, that heere wee bee warned to rule our houſes in ſuch wiſe, as GOD may bee ſerued both of great and ſmall. Let him to whome God hath giuen children, beware that he bring them vp in the right religion, & let him do the like to his men and his maides, ſo as God may be the common father and maiſter of them all. That was the thing whereof Moſes intended to warne the Iewes, & in their perſons it behoueth vs alſo to bee taught at this day to doe our duties, in the behalfe. And therewithall wee be exhorted to gentlenes alſo. For although the maiſter of a houſe haue preheminence & authoritie ouer his houſhold; yet notwithſtanding his inioying thereof, muſt not be to himſelf alone: but he muſt impart it to al his whole houſhould: for elſe it is a ſeparating of himſelfe from the ſtate of mankind.

kind,& a barring of the common societie which God hath set among men. Therefore there are here two points to be noted. The one is ỳ whosoeuer hath charge of children and seruants, must do his indeuer to lead them to god. And ỳ other is, that all such as are set ouer others and haue inferior persons vnder them in what state of subiection soeuer it be, ought to be kindharted towardes them, and not to reigne ouer them with tyrannie and crueltỳ,but to rule them w al gentlenesse, so as they make them partakers of the benefites and gratious gifts which they haue receiued at Gods hand.

That which Moses addeth concerning *the Leuites*,serueth for a further confirmatiõ of ỳ which he had spokẽ of their reioycing or making merrie in ỳ presence of God. For(as I haue declared alreadie) God had appointed ỳ townes of ỳ Leuites to be dispersed among ỳ tribes, to ỳ intent there should be good doctrine taught throughout ỳ whole country. We know what the state of ỳ tribe was, namely how it is said in ỳ second of the Prophet Malachie,ỳ lippes of the priest ought to teach knowledge, & that men shoulde seeke for good doctrine at his mouth,& that the Priests were as the messengers of ỳ liuing God. God then had chosen ỳ tribe of Leuie to be cõtinually among his people, to hold them in the true and pure religion. For had they bin placed all together in some corner by themselues, after the same maner ỳ the rest of the tribes were in their portions;all the people besides had bin wout teaching.But inasmuchas there was no tribe where the Leuites had not some towne allotted to them;by that meanes the seede of Gods word was spred abrode; so as the persons whom God had ordained to gouerne his Church & to haue the charge of mens soules; were so dispersed ỳ the land was furnished with them throughout. And now it is said ỳ the Israelits shal make merrie with the Leuites ỳ were mingled among thẽ. And why? For they might holde the people in some awe. Though there had bin some vntruly persons,yet if they had seene the Leuites, who bare their marks,& were specially chosen to the spiritual gouernmẽt of ỳ Church:it would haue bin a bridle to restraine thẽ wal. Thus the Lord seeing ỳ frailtie of his people, gaue thẽ this help to hold them in order & modestie.As if he shold say, True it is that I haue chosen you for mine inheritãce, & you be ỳ people whom I haue dedicated to my self: but yet is there a special holinesse in the Leuites, bicause they preace into ỳ Tabernacle,and are appointed to teach you the lawe,and to keepe you from running into superstition, & from starting aside to straunge gods. Seeing then ỳ I haue committed this charge to my Leuites:let them be in your company, that by your beholding of them you may be ỳ more prouoked to feare mee, and to bee merrie after a holy manner, without defyling of your selues with the lustes of the world as ye see the vnbeleeuers doe, who rush out into all disorder: that seeing I haue appointed my Leuites to bee as messengers from me, and ỳ my lawe is in their mouth,& their office is to beare abrode my doctrine: you may not be so giuen to disorder, but rather consider ỳ I dwell among you, so as the very sight of my seruants may do you to vnderstand,that I am neere at hand,& that you ought not to separate your selues from me. And herby we be put in minde to behaue our selues soberly and modestly,& that we haue neede to be exhorted dayly thereunto by the word of God, for feare of starting out into vnthriftinesse; for we see what feeblenes is in vs. True it is ỳ when we be once entered into a wicked trade, we shall soone be hardened in it:but to be constãt in doing good,we shal haue much ado. Therefore although we haue some good disposition & desire to serue God: yet must he bee faine to quicken vs vp still from day to day. Wherfore let vs take the meane; which is to resort to the doctrine ỳ should be our guide,and to yeeld willing eare to the warnings ỳ are giuen to draw vs vnto God, & to confirme vs in his feare & obedience. Yea and when wee haue bin at a sermon, and haue heard ỳ word that is preached to vs in his name let it serue to keepe vs in awe,& although wee be tempted to vnthriftines, yet let it be as a bridle to reine vs backe vnto God. Thus you see how we ought to vse the meanes & remedies ỳ God hath appointed vnto vs to redresse the frailtie that is in vs. For otherwise we would start away by and by, and wonder that we should be so vterly strayed away from our God. That is the thing in effect which we haue to remember vpon the first sentence that is set downe here.

Leuit.25.8. & Iosua.3.

Mal.2.7.

Now he addeth afterward, as we haue seen alreadie heretofore, *that the people should not sacrifice in all places,but only in the place that God should chuse among their tribes*. And that is to hold the people in obedience, that they shoulde not attempte to serue God after their owne fansie & imagination. In deede a man might say at the first blush, ỳ there needed nõ rehearsing of the thing ỳ was easie ynough of it selfe. But the case concerneth not ỳ only vnderstanding of it, there is another reason why god setteth down this saying so often which is that men cannot refraine frõ swaruing one way or other,but that although they be fully minded for a time to serue God,yet doe they start aside in the turning of a hand, bicause they be vnconstant & light minded. Not wout eate therefore doth God rehearse here ỳ same thing that we haue seene here before,namely that the people shoulde not offer sacrifice in all places. And why? For thinges in those dayes were very darke,& it was needefull for the people to be restrained,to know ỳ there was but one God. The heathen had euery one their religiõ by himself, & there was no certaintie at al among them.But it behoued the people of Israel to be fully resolued in this wise. The God whom we worship is the maker of heauen & earth: & bicause we be not able to gette vppe vnto him, hee hath shewed himselfe vnto our fathers, so as wee cannot doe amisse,if wee worship him according to his Lawe.It behoued the people of Israel to bee at that point. For had they had diuers altars, and ỳ euery man might haue followed his owne deuotiõ;what a thing had it bin? There would haue bin

bin store of inuẽtions: they would haue brought in diuersitie of religions, euery man would haue deuised what he had listed, & the God of Abrahã shold no more haue bin worshipped after his owne maner. For this cause is it saide, you shall haue but one Altar and one Sanctuarie, and God reserueth to himselfe the choosing and appointing out of the place wherin he wil be worshipped & serued. We see then ỳ here all libertie is taken from men, so as they may not take any thing at all vpon them in the seruing of God. Marke that for one point.

Againe, it is shewed vs here moreouer, ỳ forasmuch as we be subiect to this corruption of forging fond opinions, & consequently of false and wicked opinions out of nomber: God ment to hold his people in ỳ true vnitie of faith, and his choosing of one Sanctuarie was as a band of cõcord, to the intent ỳ men should not run gadding euery one after his owne fansie. To bee short, without agreement in ỳ one faith, wee cannot serue God or doe any thing to his liking. And hereby we see that men do themselues no good at all by their foolish deuotions, but rather prouoke Gods vengeance the more, by their straining of themselues to do the things ỳ they haue deuised of their owne braine. For ỳ very ground of religion is to knowe whom we ought to serue, as our Lord Iesus telleth vs in ỳ fourth of Iohn, saying: We knowe what we worship. Nowe he speaketh there of the Iewes, bicause they had ỳ law, & therein the full certeintie howe God was to be serued. But it is said by the Prophets, that at the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ there should be three Altars, one in Egypt, another in Assyria, & the third in Iewrie. Whereby is ment ỳ God shalbe serued euerywhere. For the materiall Altars were beaten downe. As for the things that are termed Altars in the Popedom, they be deuilish abhominations: for their setting of them vp is to sacrifice christ on thẽ. But he hath offred himselfe once for all, according to ỳ office ỳ was giuen him by God his father. And therefore it was high treason & blasphemie against God to haue altars nowadayes among Christians. For Iesus Christ is our onely spiritual Altar: & when we be knit vnto him, then is God duely worshipped and as he himselfe requireth. Wherefore let vs learne ỳ although the ceremonie be disanulled, yet ỳ meaning of it may greatly profite vs: which is, ỳ we must serue God, not by turning aside euery man after his owne conceites, but by linking our selues together in ỳ bond of faith & by agreeing rightly together. And whereupon shal this concord be grounded? Vpon Gods word & vpon our Lord Iesus Christ, who is his very wisdome. For if we resort to him, we shal haue a certaine marke to shoote at, & such a one as cãnot deceiue vs. But as soone as we swarue aside from him, be it neuer so little; by & by we vanish away in our own foolish thoughts. Thus ye see in effect what we be caught as concerning this place.

Ioh 4.22.

Mich.5.3 & 2.3.40.

Heb.9.28.

And let vs marke wel that it belonged to God to choose the place, as hath bin told you before, so as ỳ Israelites had not leaue to spie it out thẽselues, & to say, This is the fittest place: but God bare all ỳ stroke alone. Hereby we be done to vnderstãd ỳ it is not for vs to set vp a seruice of god after our own lyking, but ỳ we must herken vnto him, and so receiue his woord as nothing be added thereunto, as shalbe declared yet better in ỳ end of this chapter. And verily when as he saith that he will chose it in *one of their Tribes*: thereby he doth vs to vnderstand that we must not enuie our brethren, though one of them be more honoured than another. Let it content vs that god accepteth our seruice; & although some of vs be lesser and some greater and excellenter than others: yet must not that breed any hartburning among vs, nor occasion vs to be greeued at Gods graunting of more fauour vnto others than to vs: but euery of vs must doe his dewtie in his owne degree, & seeke no further but to bee receiued at Gods hande all togither, both they that goe before, and they that come after.

Furthermore let vs marke well, that whereas God saith he wil *chuse that place to put his name in*: it is not ment that his beeing was shut vp in the Sanctuarie: but onely that foolke shoulde there haue a recorde of his presence. And that was to the intent that the Iewes shoulde not busie their heads about grosse imaginations, as we see men commonly inclined to doe. When God stoopeth to imparte himselfe familiarly vnto vs, wee take occasion to make him some Image; if wee could wee woulde tye him to some stone or to some piller, or coope him vp in some corner: and wee thinke wee haue him not with vs, except wee haue some visible signe of him. And this was the cause why men made puppets and Idolles to represent God by. For this cause he telleth them expresly that he himselfe wil choose the place wherein hee will bee worshipped and serued, howbeit not that his being shall bee shut vp there, but onely that his name shall bee there, that is to say, that hee will bee called vppon there. And moreouer the Iewes were to bee put in minde, to looke vp to the heauenly patterne that Moses sawe on the Mount, as oft as they looked vpon the arke of couenant and the other signes that God had giuen them, and thereby to bee led to the spirituall seruice which was figured by those things, wherof Iesus Christ was ỳ very substance. True it is that euen at this day still God commeth downe or stoopeth vnto our rudenesse; insomuch that it is his will wee shoulde haue temples or Churches to assemble in, and thither we come together to make our cõmõ prayers there. Againe, Baptisme is ministred there, for Iesus Christ also is there amõg vs & ruleth ouer vs, & in his supper we haue an assurance ỳ we be knit vnto him, & grafted into his body, so as we haue but one life cõmon to vs all. Yet must we not be held downe by the signes and tokens that God giueth vs for our helpe; but wee must rather bee conueied vp by them, and not bee wrapped in superstitiõ, to worship god after a fleshly maner. Wee must consider that hee filleth all thinges, yea euen abyding in his heauenly glory, and there must wee seeke him by fayth. When wee thinke vpon him, we must not draw him downe

Exo.25.40; Hebr.8.5.

Col.2.17.

hither to haue him here after a fleshly manner, but wee must mounte vp by faith into heauen where he dwelleth, as the scripture speaketh of him. That therefore is the thing which we haue to remember vpon this place besides ỹ thinges ỹ haue beene declared already. For I doe but put you in remembrance of the thinges that haue beene discoursed more at large heretofore.

Pſal. 2. 4. & 113. 5. & 123. 1.

Nowe afterward here is leaue giuen by God to his people, to eate flesshe throughout all the Iande of Chanaan, so it be not of any Sacrifices, tithes, burntofferinges, Heaueofferinges, or firſt fruites. It ſhall be lawful then for you to eate of all common flesshe euery where; but as for that which ſhal haue bin ſacrificed vnto me, let it not be eaten of in any other place, than in the ſame which I ſhall haue choſen to ſet my Sanctuarie in. Howebeit, he addeth one worde more here, ſaying: *according to the bleſſing which thy God ſhall giue thee*. Here wee ſee firſt of all, that it were not lawfull for vs to eate one bit of breade, vnles we were ſure in our minds that God giueth it vs and that wee haue leaue of him to eate it. And that is the cauſe why Saint Paul requireth faith where he ſpeaketh of eating and drinking: ſaying that whatſoeuer is not of faith, is ſinne. And whereof treateth hee there? Euen of the eating of flesshe or of herbes, of bread or of fiſhe, and of all manner of fooder and hee ſaith that it muſt be doone with faith. As howe? Some will ſay that faith is too precious a thing to bee mingled with corruptible meates. Yea, but wee muſt be ſure in all our life, that wee attempt not any thing which may diſpleaſe God, or that is not lawfull for vs to doe by his leaue or warrant giuen vnto vs. Therefore in the foreſaide text, by the worde *Fahh*, Saint Paul meaneth the recorde that we haue in our eating and drinking, that God ſheweth himſelfe a father to vs, by giuing vs foode to nouriſhe our bodies withall: and that our vſing of the benefites which the earth yeeldeth, is not by ſtealth as though wee woulde robbe him of them; but as it were by receiuing them at his hand. When a father giueth his children euery one his pittance, ſaying, hold here, & eat it: it is no more than God doth dayly vnto vs, when we be certified by his word, ỹ he hath giuen power to ỹ earth to bring foorth corne & wine for our vſe, & deliuered vs ỹ beaſts & all other things to eat of. We muſt aſſure our ſelues ỹ the growing & encreaſing of victuals in the worlde commeth not by haphazard, but of Gods ordinance, who hath appointed them to feede vs through his goodnes. I tolde you this doctrine is verie needeful. For what a thing were it, if we could not eat a morſell of bread without offending God? And yet S. Paul auoweth it to be ſo. And why? For if in my eating & drinking at all times & in all places, I know not that I am beholden to God for ỹ good things ỹ hee hath ordeined for mee: it is al one as if I ſtole it frō him: I do but filch it frō him like a dog or a cat, which taketh that which was not ordeined for her. Yee ſee then that that is one fault.

Againe, it is as it were a burying of God, whē men knowe not that it is he which giueth them the foode for their ſuſtenance. If wee bee not fully perſuaded of that; then is God diſappointed of the honour that belongs to him, ſo as wee acknowledge him not for our father and ſuſtcrer, but become ſo brutiſh that wee minde no more the life which is prepared for vs in ỹ kingdome of heauen. But his taking of ſuch fatherly care of vs in this world, is to leade vs vp higher thereby. And ſo wee ſee that vnleſſe we bee ſure that God giueth vs leaue to eate and drinke according to his bleſſing; wee bee but as brute beaſtes, and much worſe than they. Againe, on the other ſide, who giues vs authoritie to deuoure Gods benefits? Shall wee wretched creatures which offend God without ceaſſing, preſume to do it of our own heads, without conſidering that wee haue thoſe things of his free goodneſſe, and that they belong not to vs otherwiſe than of Gods good will, who vouchſafeth to ſhewe him ſelfe liberall towardes vs? Surely then doe wee rauin all things to vs without any right or title. Therefore are we blame worthie euerie way for our eating and drinking, till wee knowe that GOD is the giuer of all. And hereby wee bee doone to vnderſtande further, that in our eating and drinking wee muſt not obſerue the traditions of men, but content ourſelues with the teſtimony of Gods good will. And thereunto alſo doeth the holy ſcripture referre vs by condemning the fond toyes that men deuiſe of themſelues, as when they ſay, it is not Lawfull to eate flesh vpon ſuch a day, this muſt be done and ỹ muſt be done. And what authoritie haue men to bid and forbidde ſuch thinges? For the Pope and all his rable are not able to make a flye flye: and ſhall they forbidde vs to eate beefe, mutton, or any other of the thinges that were made for our ſuſtenance? What elſe is their vſurping of ſuch authoritie, than a robbing of GOD of his ſoueraignetie ouer vs? Now then let vs haue an eye to the will of our GOD. And ſith wee knowe that hee hath giuen vs all meates without exception: let euerie of vs vſe them ſoberly, and bee contented to bee ruled by his worde: for to him onely doeth it belong to lay Lawes vpon vs, and it is not for any mortall man to preſume ſo farre. If any man take that vpon him which is not due to him, let vs deſpiſe him, yea and abhorre him, as one that goeth about to ouerthrowe ỹ authoritie of God. And ſo ye ſee what wee haue to marke in Gods ſuffering & giuing leaue vnto his people, to eate fleſh in all places, ſo it were not ſacrificed. As if he ſhould ſay: In your eating and drinking conſider well what is lawefull for you. And howe may you diſcerne that? By my word. Giue your ſelues once ouer vnto me; and you ſhal no more be afraide of any thing. If men lay new Lawes vpon you; make no account of it: for it is ynough for you, that ye haue leaue at my hande.

Rom. 14. 13

And nowe Moſes addeth expreſly, *according to the bleſſing which thy God ſhall haue giuē thee*. whereby he doeth vs to vnderſtande, that euerie man muſt haue an eye to his owne abilitie, and thereby rule his deſires. For if the riche man hauing whereof to liue, doe fare according to his abili-

abilitie, and the poore man will needes fare as wel as he: he must needes smart for it. And God liketh not of it when he that hath not wherewith will needes fare as dayntily as hee that is riche. Indeede we must alway beare this lesson of Saint Pauls in mind and put it in practise, namely that he which hath abundance glut not himselfe till he burst, ne giue himself to his pleasures, according to his saying in the xiii. to the Romanes, that we must not haue a care of our flesshe to cocker it too much: For our flesshe desireth not the best things, and our appetites are inordinate: and therefore the following of them were but a confused disorder. Although the richer sort haue great store of all thinges, yet must they not pamper themselues out of measure, so as they shoulde at any time fall into disorder, and not indeuour to bestow of their abundance vppon such as are in neede and pouertie. For Gods meaning is to try the charitie of such as haue wherwith, by giuing them more than they themselues haue neede of, to the intent they shoulde not bee nigardly of the thinges which they haue, but be helpefull to their poore brethren & to such as want. Neuerthelatter, a rich man may fare according to the blessing ỹ God shall haue giuen him, and the poore man must content himselfe with browne breade if he haue none other, and not straine himselfe to eate whytebread as wel as the riche man, but beare his pouertie patiently, and pray to God to nourishe him as it were with Manna from heauen: And although hee haue nothing else but drie bread to feed on, the same must serue his turne in steede of all other vittels. That is the thing in effect, which Moses meant to shewe vs here. And it is a verie good and profitable lesson: for thereby wee bee doone to vnderstande that if God giue vs abundaunce, it is a continuall putting of vs in remembrance that hee dwelleth among vs, that wee bee not as these drunkardes which in a yeare when there is store of wine, do despite God and plaie the very brute beastes, so that if they may not drinke wine till they spewe it out again, and powre it in as it were with tunnelles, they haue neuer enough. Let vs beware of such beastlines: and let vs beare in mind that we be in Gods presence. And surely if wee beare him that reuerence, we will bee ashamed to cram our selues like dogges or swine, and to deface his image in vs by vnmeasurable eating & drinking til we burst againe. Lo what we haue to beare in minde. Likewise on the other side, if the yeare be barren, so as there be small store of wine, and corne is deere: This text teacheth vs to thanke God for it, and to cut our morsels the smaller, and to bridle our selues. For why? It is saide that our eating must bee after as our God hath blessed vs, so as we must haue an eye to the abilitie that God hath giuen vs: and accordingly as we haue wherewith, so must euery of vs learne to rule himselfe, and not play the vnthrifts ỹ are led away by their lusts, which put all into the platter (as they say) to satisfie their bellies withal. Some are so delicate of their diet, that rather than they wil forbeare when God sendeth them scarcetie, they will sell their cotes, yea and their dishes and platters too. Such folke might consider, that it were good for them to keepe somewhat in store, for afterwarde, to the intent that if they fel into sickneſse or any other necessitie, they might haue wherewith to releeue them. Had they anie honestie or any stay of themselues, to thinke that it is Gods will to deale sparely with them at that time: Had they anie consideration at all I say: they might say, Lord thou hast all good thinges in thine hand, and that so plentifully, as thou couldest wel giue vs much more: but thou intendest to try our patience. Vouchsafe therefore to blesse the little that thou hast giuen vs, so as it may suffice vs. Let it be as the Manna to vs, that we may perceiue thy fauor towards vs, euen thereby though there were none other thing. But what? All our minde is vpon the filling of our bellies, yea euen without regarding how far God giueth vs leaue to goe. So much the more therefore ought all men both rich and poore, to mark wel this text. Let ỹ man of wealth say in himselfe, it is the blessing of my God: & sith it is so, I must yeelde him account of it, and I must looke verie well about me howe I may vse these thinges aright according to his ordinance: so as I giue not my flesshe whatsoeuer it liketh or lusteth for, but that I behaue my selfe soberly howsoeuer the worlde go, and also imparte my ouerplus to such as haue want or neede, and releeue them with mine aboundance. Let the rich deale after that maner. Againe on the otherside, let the poore bethinke them thus: Wel, God giueth vs not wherewith to finde our selues, and therefore it behoueth vs to beare our poore state patiently, and not giue head to our lustes: for then shall we but prouoke Gods wrath, by following our deintie desires & such other like thinges: wherefore let vs be well aduised to content our selues with the little that he giueth vs.

Thus ye see that although the rich enioye their ease & haue wherewith to maintaine their delights for the present time: Yet they must bee of such mind, that if God list to bereaue them of all things the next morrowe, they must not repine to giue ouer al, but so humble themselues as they may say, Lord I will liue to day according to the blessing which thou hast giuen mee: and if thou list to impouerishe mee to morrowe, doe thy good pleasure: onely graunt mee the grace to learne to content my selfe with anie other state of liuing than I liue in to day. Whereas to day I fare according to mine abilitie; if thou list to bring me downe to browne breade, let mee abide to be brought thereto, and let my necke be pliable to receyue thy yoke. That is the effect of the thinges which we haue to marke vppon this sentence of Moseses, where he declareth that euery man must moderate his dyet and fare according to gods blessing, that is to say, according to the abilitie that God giueth him wherewith to doe it.

And wee bee further warned to beware that we deuoure not all that euer wee can get by pilfry and wicked trades: for that is no blessing of

God. When a man hath raked other folks goods to him by fraude and Leawde dealing, can that be called Gods blessing? True it is that riches come alwayes from Gods hande: but yet whosoeuer he is that inricheth himselfe by rauin & fraude, is reiected of God, and vtterly misliked of him. So then, let vs marke that although a man coulde by wicked shiftes gaine wherewith to feede himselfe fat, yet must he not take such libertie to him. For why? In this place we bee restreyned backe to the blessing of God. Were this point wel marked, we should not see so much naughtinesse in the world as there is to be seene nowadayes. For all the care is howe to gette wherewith to maintaine vs: but as for whether the meanes be Lawfull and reasonable, no man entereth into the examination of that: but so he may scrape and catch, he neuer takes any further care at al. We see what rauening there is, we see what deceitful and leawd dealing there is: in somuch as there is not anie state or trade of men in ỹ world this day, which is not so peruerted as wold irk a man to think vpon it. Euery mans seeking is to pul to himself ỹ goods of other men, & commonly all is fishe that comes to net. For why? We haue no regard of Gods blessing, but we winde them in vnto vs, some by lying, and some by faire glosing. And to what ende? Forsooth to finde our selues withal. Beholde, God calleth vs all, & telleth vs that his blessing shall light vpon vs if we followe his worde simplie: & that he will not faile vs in any thing, at leastwise if we indeuour to doe what we can. Indeede we may hap to fare hardly nowe and then, so as God will not feede vs so full as we woulde wish: but yet howe soeuer wee fare, hee promiseth to giue sustenance to as many as resort vnto him. But wee disappoint our selues of it by our owne leawdnesse. For first and formost we be troubled and tormented with distrust: secondly our vnordinate lustes doe tempt vs and tickle vs: & thirdly the diuell doeth so blinde vs, that wee make no conscience of pilling and polling, of deceytuing and beguiling, and of giuing our selues to al naughtinesse, so we may bee fat fedde, and liue deintily: as for all the rest wee make none account of it. And therefore let vs remember this worde Blessing, as whereby God sheweth vs that we must resorte wholy vnto him, accordingly also as our Lorde Iesus Christ teacheth vs by bidding vs to aske our dayly breade of God his father, where by wee protest that wee holde all thinges of his blessing.

Psal. 128. 2.

Finally he addeth, *That as well the cleane as the vncleane may eate thereof.* Our Lorde doth not here giue leaue to the vncleane, to eat the fruits of the earth with an euill conscience: but his meaning is that there is not so great streitnesse to be vsed in the receiuing of the cõmon meats and drinkes, as in eating of the sacrifices. For ỹ eating of the Sacrifices, was to another purpose. In those holy feastes aforementioned, it behoued them in any wise to be cleansed afore hande according to the ceremonie of the lawe: so as it was not for any man to come to the Temple and to eate of the Sacrifices, vntill hee hadde first cleansed himselfe; and water was set readie at the comming in of the dore for the same purpose. But here it is saide that there was no such straite bondage to bee obserued in their common eating and drinking. That is the verie meaning of Moses. But yet must wee marke also therewithall, that all that euer we touch is defiled by our vncleanesse, if wee our selues be not dedicated vnto God, according to this saying of Saint Paules, that all things are cleane to the pure and cleane, which haue their consciences right before God, and cleansed by faith. Tit. 1. whereas on the contrarie part, the vnbeleeuers and such as haue no feare of GOD, defile the breade and wine by their touching of it, and do but make all thinges vncleane, so as Gods creatures are infected by ỹ filthines that is in them.

This must wee holde for a rule: and specially in eating and drinking wee must haue the saide cleannesse of dedicating our selues vnto God. Neuertheless wee must note that we cannot at all times be so well disposed in our eating and drinking, as when wee come to the Church: there we must bee of an other minde. True it is that euen in our laboring, and in our looking to our household, wee ought to haue God alway before our eyes; and that when we eate and drinke, we ought to doe it in his name, according to the lesson that I alleadged out of Saint Paule. But when wee come to the Church God is yet neerer vs and more familiar with vs. For our Lorde Iesus Christ assureth vs that he is there among vs when we come together in his name: and by our holding vp of our hands towardes heauen, wee shewe that our comming thither is to present our selues in the sight of our God. And therefore wee must haue a more singular and earnest affection when we bee come thither, than when wee bee doing of our common businesse. Ought there not to bee a difference put betweene the Lordes supper and our common eating and drinking? True it is that whensoeuer we receiue our ordinarie repast, we ought to call vpon God and to giue him thanks, or else wee bee defiled. But yet when wee come to the holy supper, wee must be rauished after an other fashion, as though wee were no more in this worlde: Our mindes must not runne vpon the feeding of our bodies, but vppon the sonne of GOD, who calleth himselfe our life, telling vs that his flesh is our foode, and his bloode our spirituall drinke. And therefore it is meete that it should be separated from the thinges that belong to the common order of this earthly life.

Wee see then that the meaning of Moses in this place where our Lorde giueth vs libertie to eate and drinke, is that wee should call vppon him: and that although there be infirmitie in vs, yet must not we therefore forbeare ỹ libertie and leaue that GOD giueth vs to vse the foode which he hath appointed to our vse: which thing wee may doe with a quiet conscience, not doubting but that GOD doeth well like of it, seeing hee hath giuen vs such warrant, & hath dispensed with vs of his owne

for-

free goodnes. And specially that when we resort vnto him, we must retyre & call our selues backe from al earthly cares, ỳ we may mount vp wholy vnto heauen. As for example, when we be to receiue the holy supper, or when wee see ỳ Christ assureth or warranteth vs by Baptisme, ỳ we be made cleane by him, and newly reformed, so as he accepteth vs and taketh vs for his members, to the intent that his fathers iudgement seate shoulde not be terrible vnto vs: when we thinke on these thinges I say, it becommeth vs to bee drawen to the heauenly life, and to be as it were secluded from our earthly cares, that wee may the better sticke vnto our God, and fare the better by it all the dayes of our life.

And nowe let vs fall downe in ỳ presence of our good God w acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs perceiue thé daily more & more, & to reach vs so to serue him, as we may abide continually in the pure simplicitie of his worde, without adding aught to it or taking aught frō it, vpon our own head. And seeing we know our selues giltie before him of so many sins committed against his maiestie, let vs flee for refuge to his mercie, and not doubt but that seeing hee hath vouchsafed (not to haue a visible Sanctuarie among vs, but) euen to knit himselfe to vs in the person of his sonne Iesus Christ, wee may assure our selues that he alwayes hath cōpassion of vs, to receiue vs, notwithstanding that we be so wretched creatures as we bee well worthie to bee cut off from him, and to bee vtterly thrust out of his kingdome. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the ix. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxiiij. Sermon, which is the fifth vpon the twelfth Chapter.

19 Beware that thou forsake not the Leuite of all the time that thou shalt be vpon the earth.

20 When the Lorde thy God shall haue inlarged thy borders as he hath saide, and thou sayest, I will eate flesh: if thy mind be desirous to eat flesh, eat thou whatsoeuer flesh thou hast a mind vnto.

21 If the place which the Lord thy God will choose to put his name in, be farre from thee, thou shall kill of the Oxen and sheepe which the Lord hath giuen thee, as I haue commanded thee, and thou shalt eat of it within thine owne gates, according to thine owne hearts desire.

22 As the Fallowdeere and the Reddeere are eaten: so shalt thou eate them. The cleane and the vncleane may eate therof alike.

23 Onely take heede that thou eate not the bloud: for the bloud is the life, and thou mayest not eate the life with the flesh.

24 Therefore thou shalt not eate it, but shalt powre it vpon the earth as water.

25 Eate not of it therfore: that it may go wel with thee and with thy children after thee, when thou shalt haue doone the thing that is right in the sight of the Lorde.

26 But as for the halowed things that are in thy custodie, and thy vowes, thou shalt take and carie them to the place which the Lorde hath chosen.

27 And thou shalt offer thy whole burnt offerings both the flesh and the bloud, vpon the altar of the Lord thy God. And of thy Peace offrings thou shalt powre the bloud vpon the altar of the Lorde thy God, and thou shalt eate the flesh.

28 Take heede and hearken to all these words which I commaund thee, that it may go well with thee and with thy children after thee for euer, when thou shalt haue done the thing that is good and right in the sight of the Lord thy God,

WE sawe yesterday why God appointed the Leuites to haue cities here & there throughout the land of Iurie: namely for the maintening of the true & pure religion among his people. For if any of them would haue turned away to superstition, or idolatry, those whom God had appointed to his owne seruice, might haue amēded them by good admonitions. So by ỳ meanes was ỳ seed of good doctrine sowen euery where. now pursuing ỳ same matter Moses addeth. That the peo-

people should bee so vniuste that they defrauded them not of their right. And not without cause. For as I haue told you before, God had appointed them of purpose to serue him, and the greater part of them also to teach his people, that his lawe might be knowen. Seeing it was so, it was good reason that they shoulde haue wherewith to find and maintaine them. For in very deede a part of the inheritance belonged to them, because they were descended of the linage of Abraham. But GOD had put them from it, to the ende they shoulde not bee troubled neither with tilling of the grounde nor with any other businesses, but onely giue themselues all wholly to the doing of their office. And it is not without cause that Moses plainely exhorteth ỹ people to doe their duetie in this behalfe: for wee see the vnthankfulnesse of the worlde. The Idolaters can finde in their hartes to maintayne their priestes, and they spare for no cost: but as for them that serue God purely, there is commonly no account made of them, as hath beene seene in al times. We see how God himself complaineth that he was defrauded both of his first fruites and also of his offeringes, and of all the residue which he had appointed to himselfe in his lawe. But if a man had inquired howe the heathen behaued themselues towardes their idols: he should haue founde that they were willing to spende the most part of their substaunce in their superstitions. We see then as I haue told you alreadie, that the worlde is so thankeles towardes the liuing God, ỹ if men be not throughly quickened vp, they let slippe al that euer God commaundeth, and coulde bee contented that such things should neuer be spoken of. Specially as for those whom God hath ordeined to preach his word, men can find in their hearts, not onely to set light by them, but also to forsake them vterly. And why? It is because god rebuketh vs for our faults, but we wold he were further off from vs, & that he would lay the bridle in our neckes, so as euery man might do what he listed: & therfore it greeueth vs to be touched by Gods word. But yet for al that, if those ỹ haue that charge committed to them do their duety; they must be importunate in calling vpon vs, by rebuking, exhorting, and reprouing vs, that they may ouercome vs by their liuely rebukes & sharpe threatnings. Now, that is not ỹ thing which the world coueteth & desireth. Nay ỹ world had leuer to maintaine such as shoulde neuer speake worde of it, than to haue a preacher that woulde rebuke sin liuelyly. And if it were in ỹ worlds choice, it had alwayes leuer to maintaine a whole couent of Munkes & Chanons to houle out with ful gorge, than to find one preacher that would speake as he ought to do. Men can be contented to haue Organs. And why? For they put men to no griefe by rebuking their sins. But as for such as preach Gods worde to the quick, men could find in their hartes that they were rid out of the worlde, if it were possible. And therfore it is not without cause ỹ our Lord saith he will not haue them forsaken, which beare abrode ỹ true doctrine in his name. For by that meanes folke bereaue themselues of the foode of life, in that they refuse to maintayne those that bring them the doctrine of saluation, which is all one as if they meant to starue themselues for hunger. And that is the cause also why Saint Paul standeth so much vpon ỹ matter. Certaine it is that he sought not his owne profit. Insomuch that he forbare to take his due wages in some places, because he sawe that men grudged at it. And he chose rather to take it of other Churches, where he serued not, than of ỹ Corinthians, because of the vnthankefulnesse which he sawe among them. Nay, he chose to labour with his owne handes, rather than hee woulde giue them any occasion to speake ill of him. Thus haue we a man that is not giuen to his owne profite, but rather forbeareth willingly euen that which God had granted vnto him, and yet he ceaseth not to tel them, that ỹ preachers of Gods worde ought to be found & mainteined. And why is that? Because wee see the diuelles subtletie, who desyreth nothing so much as that the Churches shoulde bee destitute of good shepeherdes. Againe Saint Paul hath an eye to the spitefulnesse of the worlde. And that is the cause why he standeth so much vpon the said point, That those to whome God hath committed the charge of the preaching of his world, should be faithfully mainteined. It is a great matter (saith he) that we for bringing you ỹ spirituall goods vnto you, should haue wherwith to sustaine our bodies. It is a very faire recompence. And yet if ỹ mislike you, you shewe great malice, and that yee set but litle store by this inestimable treasure sent you of God. Now we see to what purpose Moses commendeth here the tribe of Leuie vnto them. It was not so much for the profite of those that were to be maincyned by the offrings, first fruites, and tithes; as for the common benefit of the whole people. For it was to the end they should be maintained altogether in the true vnion of faith, & that they might alwaies haue men to put them in mind to liue in obedience towardes God, and that the Religion might be preserued in ỹ purenes therof. This is not for ỹ peculiar benefite of ỹ Leuites, but for ỹ general welfare of the whole Church of God.

Now hereupon Moses repeateth ỹ same thing again which I haue expounded heretofore: that is to say, *That the Iewes might eat fleshe throughout all the land of Iurie, conditionally that the sacrifices were reserued for the sanctuarie, & for the temple: and the time were come that it were builded.* I haue told you already that the cause why God gaue such leaue, was to the end that men should learne to refraine frō the attempting of any thing which they were not sure to be lawfull for them to do. And howe shall we knowe that the things which we doe are acceptable to God? By hauing his word which he giueth vs. For it is not for vs to be further of his counsell, than he discloseth vs to vs. To be short, it is shewed vs here, that in all our life wee must not stirre one finger, except we be sure that GOD hath giuen vs leaue. Now he for his part leaueth vs not in doubt, but hath giuen vs a sure and vnfallible rule, so as we may alwayes discerne the certaintie at leth-

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wise if wee will holde our selues contented with the thing that God alloweth, without adding any thing to his doctrine and his lawe. For there he hath vttered his wil in such wise vnto vs, that if we want any thing nowe, it is because we list not to harken to him that hath all dominion ouer vs. As for example, all the doubtes that are among the Papistes proceede of nothing else but of a foolish curiositie which they haue to do better than GOD commaundeth them. O (say they) I woulde be so holy as nothing might passe from mee which shoulde not be good. And is it not enough to obey GOD? Yes (say they), but I would do yet more. He ỹ passeth those bounds, shall but torment himselfe, and dwell in vnquietnesse al the time of his life, as wee see these hypocrites are, which are alwayes tossed and turmoyled with some doubt. And what is the cause thereof? It is a reward which they deserue verie well because they will not rule themselues by Gods worde. But (as the Prophet Esay saieth) if we walk purely and simplie according to Gods word, we shall haue rest in our soules, and wee shall be free from all these troubles and debates which the wretched vnbeleeuers make: for they wote not at which ende to beginne, neyther knowe they where to make an end. Therefore let vs marke well howe it is not without cause, that GOD speaking of eating and drinking, doeth giue here expresse leaue to his people, to the ende we shoulde not aduenture anie thing, but in his name, and to doe vs to vnderstand that he hath such a care of vs, that hee will guide al our steppes, and therefore we must liue as in his presence.

Esa. 33.

Furthermore let vs learne to receiue the libertie which GOD hath giuen vs, that we may enioy it so far forth, as is expedient: for we know ỹ this libertie of ours ought to carie a restraint with it. S. Paul telleth vs ỹ al the things which are lawfull, are not alwaies behoueful, bicause they do not always edifie our neighbors. But yet howsoeuer the case standeth, we must haue our consciences free, so as wee may vse the thinges that GOD hath graunted vs by his worde. And therefore both in eating and drinking wee may giue him thankes with a cheerefull hearte, as they that knowe howe it is hee that feedeth vs, and that we doe receiue all thinges at his hand. Moreouer we bee continually put in mind hereby, ỹ he is neere at hand with vs, and ỹ his prouidence extendeth euen to ỹ least things. For it may well seeme that eating and drinking are no such thinges as are worthie that God shoulde haue regarde of them. But yet it is Gods will to beare sway in that behalfe, to the ende that we shoulde knowe the fatherly care that hee hath of vs, not onely in respect of our soules, but also in respect of our bodies, though they bee transitorie and corruptible.

1 Cor. 6. 12. & 10. 23.

Hereunto Moses addeth, that *the people shoulde refrayne from eating the bloude of beastes*. Whereby he doeth vs to vnderstande, that wee must so vse Gods creatures, as we abhorre all cruelnie. For at the first sight it seemeth an vnnaturall thing to kill the beastes to whome GOD hath giuen life, by knocking of them downe and by cutting of there throtes. It seemeth to be a chaunging of Gods ordinaunce, and an vtter peruerting of all thinges, when men take leaue to doe such thinges. Yet notwithstanding our Lorde sayth that men may lawfully eate the flesshe of beastes, and that hee hath created them for mans vse. Neuertheles to the intent to inure his people to meekenesse, hee willeth them to abstcyne from bloude. But that serued but for the time of the Lawe and the ceremonies. For as wee haue seene alreadie, our Lorde gouerned the people of olde time as little babes. And wee knowe that men teach young children all thinges that are good: but for asmuch as they haue not yet the capacitie to vse thinges as they that are come to mans estate: men holde them in awe, and suffer them not to haue thinges at will which are lawfull of themselues. As howe? Men beate a childe for handling a knife, because hee cannot tell yet howe to vse it. So then GOD vsed a childishe kinde of instruction and as it were rudimentes, or euen as wee say, the A, B, C, to enter that people withall which was yet rude and weake; but yet wee knowe what the ende and intent of the Lawe was, in commaunding men to abstcyne from the bloud of beasts. For Gods will was that men shoulde abhorre all cruelnie. And the same exposition hereof is set downe by Moses himselfe in the ninth Chapter of Genesis. For after the floude God declareth that men may well eate the flesshe of beastes, so they forbeare to eate of their bloud. And why is that? Because it is to bee considered, that the soule or life of euerie liuing thing is after a sorte represented by the bloude. And I forbidde you all manslaughter (sayth GOD:) beare well in minde that men are created after myne owne image: and therefore yee muste not worke any outrage one to an other. For whosoeuer sheddeth mans bloode, shall haue his bloude shedde by man. Wee see (I saye) that the respect which our Lorde hadde, was not of the brute beastes: but rather that his meaning was to holde vs together in brotherly loue. And therefore hee gaue the people of olde time a figure, whereby to put them in minde that they shoulde not offer any outrage to the reasonable creatures. That is the very effect.

Gen. 9. 4.

Gen. 9. 5.

Gen. 9. 5.

Nowe as touching the Ceremonie, that is no more in vse: it was meete that all such thinges shoulde bee doone away at the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ: but yet doeth the substance of it continue with vs still, so as GOD commaundeth vs to liue peaceably one with another. For seeing it is tolde vs in his Lawe, that it was not lawfull to eate the bloude of beastes: howe much the rather ought wee to spare the bloode of men? For men are not sette in the worlde to make meate of; but GOD hath prynted his marke vppon them, and made his owne image to shine foorth in them, to the ende that wee by our sparing of them, shoulde shewe what reue-

reuerence we beare towards GOD. There are two thinges which we ought cheefly to regarde in maintaining concorde and friendship among men. The one is that wee bee all of one kinde. Esa.58.7. Thou shalt not despise thine owne flesshe, saith the Prophete. And in deede, we see that euen the wilde beastes do through a naturall instinct keepe companie together, and euery of them liues quietly with others of the same sort. Needs then must wee bee more peruerse and lesse reasonable than the brute beastes, if wee fall to deuouring one an other, and play the cats and dogges, as they say. Neuertheless, considering the inordinate vnrulinesse that is among men, howe there is neither vprightnesse nor indifferent dealing among them: surely there needeth none other iudge to condemn them of their cruelties, than the very wilde beastes.

But there is yet a further thing, which I saide to bee the seconde point: and that is, that God hath set his image in vs. Therefore when I doe any outrage to my neighbour, it is all one as if I shoulde deface the image of GOD, and so am I guiltie of high treason. Wherefore let vs beare well in mind ỹ our Lord maketh great account of the maintenãce of peace & agreement betweene men: the meane whereof is that no man offer any violence or wrong vnto his neighbour. And surely wee knowe howe greatly God misliketh manslaughter. For the lawe was made Deut.21.1. so straite in that behalfe, that if a bodie were founde deade by chaunce, and it was not knowen who killed it, the elders shoulde meete about it, and after great search for the matter, they shoulde take a solemne othe that none of them was guilty of the murther: thereupon they shoulde offer a sacrifice, to witnesse that the land shoulde be as it were defiled if God punished not so heynous an offence, thoughe the murtherer were not founde. And what shall then become of vs when our handes are imbrewed with bloode, and the murtherer is knowen, and we be full of cruelties towardes our brethren? Thinke we to scape the hande of ỹ Iudge vnpunished, when as he hath pronounced such sentence? Yea and euen when manslaughter is committed in battels, although the same be permitted when the warres are Lawfull: Yet notwithstanding the scripture telleth vs there is a kinde of defiling in it, to the end ỹ euen when men are compelled to slaie their enemies 1.Chro.22.8 in the maintenaunce of iust quarels, they should consider thus with themselues: Alas, I must be faine to deface here the creatures that are shaped after the image of God: and thereupon be sorie and loth to doe it. Nowe then let vs marke that aboue all thinges it is Gods will we shoulde liue quietely among our selues, without offering of any violence or outrage one to another. But truely, murthers are aboue all thinges most horrible in Gods sight: and yet must we marke therewithall, that by that meanes all other outrages are forbidden. And that was the cause why the Prophete Esay vpbraided the Iewes, Esa.1.15. with the blouddinesse of their handes. It was not for that they had robbed by the highwayes sides, or for that they had so beaten or stricken foolke, as they might haue beene indited for it before earthly Iudges, but it was for the pilferies and extorsions which they had committed secretely, and for their wrongfull coueting of other mens substaunces. Although then that there bee no open murther committed nor any such outrageous act done as may be condemned by ordinarie iustice: yet doth not God accept that as sufficient, except wee bee free from all rauin, and wrongdealing, and haue liued so vprightly among our neighbours, as we haue done nothing to them which wee would not haue done vnto our selues.

Moreouer we haue to note howe Saint Iohn 1.Iohn.3.15. in his Canonicall Epistle saith that he which hateth his neighbour in his heart, is a murtherer alreadie before God. Although this hatred of ours be not knowen, although wee shewe no outwarde token to the worldewarde that we be caried with desire of reuẽge, although there appeare no such thing as may discouer our malice vnto men: Yet are we guiltie of murder before God, if we haue any hartburning at all within vs. For euen that were a giuing of place vnto Satan, as Saint Paul telleth vs here where he Ephes.4.26. warneth vs that the sunne shoulde not go downe vppon our anger. He saith that the partie which hath his heart so infected with hatred and rancor giueth Satan the possession of him to reigne ouer him. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in mind.

I tolde you euen nowe, that the vse of this ceremonie hath ceased euer since the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And therefore we ought to bee the more incouraged to serue GOD, sith wee see that wee bee not ruled in with so rough a bitte, nor held so short as the Fathers of olde time were. Yee see howe at this day, GOD giueth vs leaue to eat the bloud of beastes, which thing was not graunted to the Iewes. Wee knowe what is tolde vs of it by the Apostles themselues. For they made not a decree of it, as the Papistes vnderstande it, neither chaunged they any thing in Gods word, (for that had beene high treason to God) but forasmuch as they knewe that our Lord Iesus Christ, had by his comming abolished the Ceremoniall lawe: they shewed that it might bee lawful to eate bloude, so it were done without offence to others. For their forbidding of it in the fifteenth of the Actes, was but for a Act.15.20. time; and thereby they shewed that it was free to euery man according to conscience, to maintaine peace and concorde withall. In deed they counselled men to absteyne from it, howbe it that was but for a time (as I said) vntil the faithfull were better seeled in the doctrine of the Gospell.

And nowe let vs applie this doctrine to our owne vse. I haue told you alreadie, that first and foremost it behoooueth vs alwayes to bridle ourselues, assuring ourselues that nothing is permitted vs which breedeth offence. And why? Because God bindeth vs one to another. But yet for al ỹ, we haue our consciences at liberty so as

wee knowe that the thinges are free to vs, which were not permitted to the fathers of olde time. Nowe then ought not this to moue vs the more to serue God, which sheweth himselfe so freehartted towardes vs? For if we were vnder the bondage of the Lawe; wee ought to abstaine from manslaughter, seeing that the bloude of beastes were forbidden vs, which at this day is permitted vnto vs. And therefore let vs beware wee abuse not such goodnesse of our God: but rather the more that hee graunteth vs, the more let euerie of vs bethinke him to holde himselfe in his obedience & subiection, that we play not the loose Colts as the prouerbe saith. That is the effect of the thinges which wee haue to note vppon this text.

Now as touching the *Vowes and Oblations* whereof Moses speaketh so much; let vs remember what hath bin saide heretofore; namely howe it is not Gods will that his people should eate and drinke, without hauing some recorde that all commeth of him. As for example, whereas at this day he giueth vs leaue to eate and drink, euerie man according to his abilitie; his meaning is that wee shoulde giue our neighbours part with vs, and shewe by our almosedeeds that we doe homage vnto him with the things that he hath giuen vs, as belonging vnto him alone. There is not nowadayes the like order that was vnder the Lawe of Moses, concerning oblations, firstfruites, and Sacrifices: but Almosedeedes are the sacrifices that God liketh of, as is shewed vnto vs, specially in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. And it is a doctrine that is verie rife in the holy scriptures. But there it is saide expresly, that wee must not forget the brotherly loue which wee ought to haue in succouring our neighbours that are distressed: for they bee the sacrifices which God requireth and alloweth. Sith it is so then, let vs marke well, that if a man haue wherewith to maintaine himselfe honestly, hee must not exempt himselfe from doing seruice vnto God therewithall. And after what manner? Euerie man must streine himselfe to the vttermost of his power to succour and releeue such as haue scarcetie & want of worldly goods. Thus yee see howe the right vse which our Lorde appointeth to all his creatures, is to offer them vp vnto him, to shew that we holde all of him. That is the very meaning that was intended in all the first fruites of olde time. And although the Ceremonie continue not at this day; yet ought the truth thereof to reigne still among vs. Wherefore let vs learne to cherish our selues in such sort, as wee forget not other folks: and specially let vs beare in minde, that our vnthankfulnesse will defile all our good fare, if wee acknowledge not God to bee the giuer of all thinges vnto vs. Wee heare what our Lorde Iesus Christ saide to the hypocrites that tooke greate paines to make cleane their vesselles that there might bee no spotte in them. Make cleane the insides of them too, quoth hee. And afterwarde hee addeth, that the right way for men to make themselues cleane, is to giue to the poore, and not to busie themselues about a sort of pelting trifles as the worlde doeth continually, who thinke to dally with God, and woulde giue him rittleratttles to play with as if hee were a babe, but they cannot beguile him so. Therefore according to Iesus Christes exhortation, if wee meane that the meates which we take shoulde be sanctified vnto vs, let vs looke that God bee honoured by them, and let vs beare well in minde howe it is of his onely freegoodnesse that wee bee nourished by them. And forasmuch as wee can neither doe him good nor harme, neither hath hee needе of any thing: let vs shewe our good will towardes his poore seruauntes: For they bee his bailifes whome hee sendeth to vs, to receiue the fines and other ducties that wee owe him for all his benefites. Thus yee see in effect what wee haue to gather vppon that saying.

Nowe it is saide further, *that if the people doe the thinges that are right and iust before God, they shalbee blessed, both they and their children*. Hereby wee bee still warned, that if wee will direct our life aright, wee must not followe our owne good intents as they cal them, but hearken what God sayth vnto vs, and rest simplie vppon his will, as shalbe declared more at large to morrowe by Gods will. Neuertheleſſe Moses warneth the people here as he doth in manie other places, that they must not demeane themselues after their owne fancies, but in any wise giue eare vnto God. If thou doe that which is good and righteous saieth he; And in whose sight? In the sight of men? True it is that we ought to liue in such sort as wee giue no cause of offence to any bodie, so as if any speake euil of vs, they may haue their mouthes stopped. But yet must not men bee made iudges of their liues; that authoritie must bee reserued vnto GOD. And that is the cause why the scripture meaning to betoken an angelicall perfection, saieth that such a man hath walked before God. For if wee shoulde fashion our selues after the worlde, what a thing were it? Wee see howe the greatest multitude liue out of all order, and so shoulde wee make euill custome a Lawe. When whoredome, drunkennesse, outrage, violence, and blasphemie reigned; wee woulde beare our selues in hande that such thinges were permitted vs. And why? Because they be growen into custome.

Nowe therefore, if wee shoulde followe the guise of the worlde, wee should bee caried quite away. Againe, euen they that pretende to bee fullest of deuotion, may chaunce to vse some pelting trash and baggage in the seruing of God: they may happe to make a number of geugawes and rifferaffe: but all such thinges are nothing worth, they bee but flatte mockerie. So then, it behoueth vs to walke before God; & although wee see thinges vtterly out of order, and all brought to confusion, yet must wee holde the right way still which GOD sheweth vnto vs. If wee see men goe astray, and deuise neuer so many fonde deuotions, let vs leaue all such thinges, and be contented to follow Gods ordi-

nance. Surely although the worlde like neuer so well of our doings, yet shall wee not faile to bee condemned: but if God allowe of vs, then haue wee a good warrant. As for example, because that nowadayes wee vse not the gewgawes of the Papists, we haue not any puppets here, wee haue no decking of altars, wee haue no tapers nor such other stuffe: they laugh our plaine dealing to scorne, and they thinke there is no seruing of GOD among vs. But howsoeuer wee fare, wee haue heere a good recorde, which is, that wee doe the thinges that are good in the sight of our God. And it is not for once onely that Moses speaketh heereof. Wee haue seene other textes heretofore tending to the same effect: but here this saying is set down twice within tenne lines: and it is no more than needeth, considering howe frowarde wee bee to doe the thinges which the worlde liketh, insomuch that wee couet to bee soothed, and will needes alwayes iustifie our selues to the worldwarde. Moses therefore bringeth backe to that point. No (saieth hee), be contented to doe whatsoeuer our Lorde inioyneth you. For if hee allowe of your doings, then is it perfite righteousnes: and therfore hardily laugh all the world to scorne. So then, that is one point which we haue to beare in minde, when Moses telleth vs that wee must doe that which is good before God.

And nowe to giue the people the better corage, hee addeth immediately a promise, saying: *To the intent thou maist prosper, both thou and thy children for euer.* Here first of al we see that which hath beene touched alreadie; that is to wit, that our Lorde prouoketh vs to serue him with the better courage, by profering vs reward. Truely hee is not bounde to vs in any case: insomuch that when we shall haue serued him, yea though it bee a hundred thousande times more than wee doe; yet are wee still indetted to him neuertheless: for wee be his. And wee must
Luke.17.7. marke our Lorde Iesus Christes similitude, howe that if a man haue a seruant that is as his slaue, when his seruaunt hath laboured all the day long, and commeth home at night, his master will not rise vp to giue him his supper, but commaunde him to waite vppon him still at his table. Nowe it is certaine that wee owe much more vnto God, than men owe one to another. Let vs streyne our selues to the vttermost of our power, yea and aboue al our power, and yet shall wee not bee able to discharge our selues of the hundreth parte of our duetie towardes him, and what rewarde then can wee deserue at his hande? Neuertheless, of his owne freegoodnesse it is saide that wee shall not lose our labour in seruing him. So then let vs marke that Gods meaning is not to place any worthinesse in our workes by promising vs rewarde: but onely to incourage vs the more to them. And indeede wee bee too slothfull, if the regarde therof moue vs not. Beholde, God might commaund me, and exact at my hande whatsoeuer he listeth, for I am bounde to him in all cases and all respects: and yet to the ende that no sloth shoulde holde me backe, hee telleth me that if I serue him hee will prosper mee; and in his so doing there passeth as it were a couenant, whereby he bindeth himselfe vnto vs. If this moue vs not, must it of needs bee that we bee more harde than stones? Yet notwithstanding, wee see that the wretched world cannot be wunne by any meanes. When the promises are set before vs, that God will blesse vs, though wee bee minded to giue our selues to his seruice, yet do we not cease to yeeld to all euill, and wee beare our selues in hande that wee shall benefite our selues greatly by prouoking his displeasure. If wee spie any likelihood of gaine; wee runne gadding after it, and euery of vs is rauisht in loue of it. And what commeth of it when we go about to inrich our selues after that fashion by craft & wicked practises? When wee will needes attaine to some ambition or dignitie, what will bee the ende of it? Our Lorde will curse it euerie whit. It seemeth then that we intende to prosper euen as it were in despite of God. And wee bee so caried away by our affections, and so driuen by the headinesse of them, that God cannot holde vs backe, neither by bridles, nor by ropes, nor by cheynes. Loe here a greate mischiefe, that although our Lorde allure vs neuer so sweetely to him, & labour to win vs to him by promising vs rewarde, yet notwithstanding we bee so full of malice, that to our seeming, all his promises are vaine & nothing worth; they moue vs not a whit. But as for the allurements of Sathan, they draw vs to thē, insomuch that we beare our selues in hand, that although God bee against vs and our enemie, yet wee shall not faile to prosper, & the worlde laugh vppon vs, and that there bee some likelihood of aduancement. Marke that for one point.

Furthermore, wee see that euen the wickedest faile not to stande in their owne conceite. As for example, wee see nowadayes that in the Popedome men make a shielde of these words, to shewe that God is beholden to vs, that our workes are deserfull, and that wee bee able to purchace Gods grace, yea and euen euerlasting saluation; so as not onely God must needes prosper vs in this worlde, but also the heritage of the heauenly kingdome becommeth as a conquest vnto vs. The world (say I) beguileth it selfe in this behalfe. And who bee they that speake so boldly of it? Euen the greatest despisers of God. As for example, ye shall see a sort of these Friarly flatterers dispute of deserues with full mouth, and yet for all that, they bee men without God, without religion, wicked out of measure, and scorners of God. Also let vs take the greatest pretenders of holinesse among them, and yet shall finde them full of pride and statelinesse, full of malice and enuie against their neighbours, and burning with couetousnesse. They make a faire outwarde shewe of holinesse, but inwardly, there is no soundnesse at all. Their life bewrayeth that they bee ranke rebelles against God, and that they doe but turne the best side outward in al their deuotions: and yet in the meane while, all their talke is of Mercy, Mercy,

riter. And what manner of deserts? Looke vppon their liues, and you shall see what they be. But first and formost, howe can our workes deserue, but by Gods accepting of them of his owne free goodnesse? For it standeth vs in hand, not only that he bind himselfe vnto vs, as he doth notwithstanding that hee neede not except hee listed; but also moreouer, that hee accept our works in good worth, forgiuing the faults & blemishes that are in them. For we cannot bring any one work vnto him which is not defiled with some imperfection, so as there is alwayes some fault to be found in it. Now then we shoulde bee found blameworthy in all our vertues if God listed to examine them with rigour. And so what becommeth of the promises, which tell vs that our works are deserfull? Nay, let vs marke that after our Lords binding of himselfe so freely vnto vs, hee yeeldeth vs rewarde for the seruice that we haue offered vnto him, and then accepteth our workes of his owne freegoodnesse. As howe? By putting all the blots and blemishes of them out of his remembrance, so as hee imputeth them not any more. And that is the way for vs to prosper all kinde of waves, through his only freegoodnesse. But yet by the way let vs call to minde the matter that wee haue touched afore: namely that we be verie wretched, seeing our Lorde allureth vs to him so gently and with so great courtisie, saying, Go to my childre, I desire nothing else but to maintaine you in prosperitie, doe you no more but followe mee: and yet notwithstanding, after this choice of prosperitie offered vnto vs, wee forsake our GOD, and runne gadding after the vanities of this worlde, Sathan carieth vs away with his trumperies, and wee shut our eyes wittingly, and wilfully, as though all our seeking were to bee deceiued that wee might perish: and yet for all this, wee cease not to complaine when wee see the miseries and aduersities of this worlde light vpon vs. And in what a time are wee? Wee see nowadayes howe there is war on ỹ one side, and dearth on the other; all thinges are so farre out of order as it is pitie to beholde, and euery man mourneth, but no man hath an eye to the cause of the mischiefe. For if wee thought vppon it, wee coulde not but perceiue Gods hande to be vppon vs, yea and that in such wise, as it woulde make vs to bethinke vs after this manner: Alas, wee haue forsaken the fountaine of all welfare, and therefore it is good reason that wee shoulde nowe feele thirst. For God is readie on his part to giue vs our fill, hee is not nigardly, his power is not diminished, he hath the fulnesse of all good thinges in him: and therefore if wee be destitute, of whom is it long? When a man runs gadding heere and there, and forsaketh a fountaine, and goeth on wandering into desert places where hee is in daunger to die for thirst, so as hee beareth out his tongue halfe a footelong, and findeth not a droppe of water to refreth himselfe withall: is hee not worthie to die for thirst, seeing he hath so forsaken the fountaine? So then let vs marke that God withdraweth his blessings from vs, because wee haue forsaken him, and it is a iust rewarde whereof wee bee well worthie. And yet by the way wee be warned therewithall, to returne to our God: for his will is not that we shoulde pine in such sort, as he should not bee ready to receiue vs againe. True it is that wee bee driuen to feele our harmes in good earnest, that wee may bee moued with hartie desire to returne vnto him: But yet notwithstanding, for all his rough chastising of vs, and for all the long continuance of our misetie, wee misse not to come into his fauour againe, and to be made partakers of his benefites, when we cease to shrinke away from him, and be fully minded to put our selues againe vnder his obedience.

So then, let vs learne to put this doctrine of Moseses in vre, namely of doing that which is good and rightfull in the sight of our God. And let vs marke howe it is not onely for a day or two that God saieth hee will bee mercifull and fauourable to his people: but that he will holde out to the ende, yea euen after the decease of those that shall haue serued him. And heerein wee haue a confirmation of our hope of the euerlasting life. For if God holde on in doing vs good euen after our decease, in the person of our children: it followeth that hee will not forget vs, but that when wee haue finished our race in this worlde, we shalbe gathered vp vnto him, to inioy the benefites fully and perfectly, whereof hee hath giuen vs but a tast by hope. Therefore must wee marke that point; and sith we bee so naughtie and frowarde, that wee cease not to go astray and to runne gadding here and there: let vs runne backe againe to him, and consider that his vttering of his will vnto vs by worde of mouth, or his writing of it in paper or parchment, is not ynough for vs: but that hee must bee faine to write in it our hearts also. Seeing then that wee bee so frowarde as to rush out into naughtinesse, and to turne aside from the right way: let vs pray our good God to holde vs so in by his holy spirite, that although wee see things in horrible disorder nowadayes, so as wee bee moued at the beholding of the present state of the world: yet notwithstanding we may not cease to holde our selues still vnder his hande, and gouernement: which thing if wee doe, surely wee may defie all that euer the vnbeleeuers doe practise against vs. For if they despise vs, if they shake vs off, if they abhorre vs: what for that? Yet are wee sure that God hath not giuen vs his worde in vaine, but that if wee sticke thereunto, wee may bee well apaide though men finde fault with vs, for wee shall bee acquit and iustified before GOD and his Angels, though the worlde haue condemned vs. Thus yee see howe wee may walke in such certainetie and hope, that although wee see stumbling-blockes rounde about vs, yet shall wee neuer bee thrust out of the right way, and therewithall wee shall bee well assured, that our Lorde will holde vs vnder his protection, so as when Satans vnderlinges haue wrought what they can, and the diuell himselfe hath streined all his force to the vttermost to ouerthrowe vs; yet not-

Ier. 32. 39. Ezec. 11. 19 & 36. 27. 2. Cor. 3. 3.

withstanding forasmuch as wee bee shrowded vnder the shadowe of our God, and haue his blessings printed in vs, wee needе not to feare but that hee will continue the same from day to day. And although wee see neuer so many changes and backturnings in this world: yet are wee sure that we cannot light vpon our feete, so long as our Lorde bee our vpholder and stocke to leane vnto.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs so to feele them, as we may bee led to true repentance, and not onely craue forgiuenesse of the sinnes which we haue committed, but also obtaine such increase of his grace in vs henceforth, as he may bee glorified by our whole life, when hee hath brought vs backe againe to his holy Lawe. And so let vs all say, Almightie God, Heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the x. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxv. Sermon which is the sixth vpon the twelfth Chapter.

29 When the Lorde thy God shal haue rooted out before thy face the nations which thou goest to possesse, so as thou hast them in possession and dwellest in their Lande:

30 Then beware thou be not snared by them, after that they be ouercome before thee. And enquire not after their gods, saying: Howe did these nations serue their gods? I wil doe so too.

31 Thou shalt not doe so to the Lorde thy God. For they haue done all such things to their gods, as the Lorde abhorreth and hateth. For they haue burnt euen their sonnes and daughters in fire to their gods.

32 Therefore whatsoeuer I commaund you, looke that yee doe it, and put not any thing to it, neither take any thing from it.

WHen we heare that Moses warneth the Iewes that they turne not away from the right seruing of God after his setting of them in possession of their inheritance: we may thinke they were a very malicious people, & right hard to be gouerned. For what is it that Moses requireth of them? That they should not forget the partie that had redeemed them, and afterward giuen them his lawe, but that they shoulde holde themselues at a stay, and not defile themselues with the superstitions of the heathen. And they had two thinges to hold them to the seruice of God. For they ought to haue borne in minde after what maner he had deliuered them from the bondage of Egypt: and did not such a gracious goodnesse well deserue that they shoulde haue persisted continually in the acknowledging of their redeemer? Againe they had very faire lookingglasses set before them for example, in that they sawe that Gods rooting out of the inhabiters of the Lande of Chanaan, was a token that hee coulde not away with any of all their abhominations: and ought not the Iewes to haue fared the better by their beholding of such examples? But nowe that wee knowe the naughtinesse of that people, let vs come to our selues and bee well assured that wee bee not better than they were, but haue needе of the warning that is giuen heere. And for proofe hereof God doth dayly renew his gracious goodnesse towards vs. Had we felt his goodnesse but once all our life, it ought to serue vs for a bridle to hold vs vnder his obedience. But he ceaseth not to increase his benefites still dayly, and yet we forget it in the turning of a hand, and wee neuer think vpō it any more, to benefit our selues by it. To bee shorte, it seemeth that all our indeuour is to burie Gods benefites that hee bestoweth vpon vs, that we might haue no occasion to honor him. Lo how our vnthankfulnesse bewraieth it self too much on ỹ one side. Yet notwithstāding we see how God giueth vs sufficient warnings, by chastising others ỹ haue doone euill before our eyes, and by sparing vs: and ought wee not to bethinke vs better of the commandementes which hee executeth, after that fashion? Yes: for they bee no thinges doone in a corner mudder, there is no more for vs to do but to take heede to them. But it should seeme that wee play the blinde buffardes wilfully, and labour not to knowe any of the thinges which are nowe too apparant and notorious. Therefore whether it bee that God do drawe vs to him by the great number of benefites which he bestoweth vppon vs, or that hee teache vs to feare him by punishing offenders in our presence: al this booteth vs not, for we be vnthankfull, and the time is but lost in doing vs good, insomuch that although

though wee see howe hee hath shewed himselfe iudge against such as haue offended him, yet wee thinke not vppon it, but let it slippe. Can wee cast our eye any where nowadayes, but wee must needes see a great number of manifest examples, whereby wee ought to take warning to liue warely and aduisedly? Wee see howe whole Nations and Countries are not spared, and wee see the like in priuate persons: all is full of sighing and crying, and it is all one as if God should sounde a trumpet to the punishing of some offender, that euerie man might bee warned to take example by him. Wee see these thinges: but howe doe wee benefite our selues by them? Let vs not thinke then that in this place Moses speaketh but onely to the Iewes: but let vs vnderstand, it was Gods will to shew vs by them, that euen after wee knowe him to be our father and Sauiour, and euen after hee hath powred out the infinite riches of his mercie vppon vs; yet haue wee still neede to bee warned to liue in his feare: for otherwise wee will turne our backes vppon him. Againe, when hee hath warned vs by many examples; that is not ynough vnlesse hee quicken vs vp to set our minds vpon it, so as wee may perceiue wherein it was his will that we shoulde fare the better by it.

But there is yet another point; which is, that when wee bee so taught by other mens harmes, and by Gods bearing with vs in that hee listeth not to punish our faultes: we shoulde reciprocally preuent his anger, and seeing there are so manie that suffer, yea and which suffer to serue for our instruction, the same shoulde serue as a schooling vnto vs; that when wee see our Lorde vtter his rigour after that sort, and shewe himselfe to bee a Iudge; wee shoulde not tarie till hee smite vs on the heades, but come meekely vnto him, acknowledging our faultes, and taking good heede that wee wrappe not our selues in his curse with those against whom he hath shewed himselfe such an enemie and aduersarie. That is the thing which we haue to beare in minde.

And Moses saieth expresly, *Beware thou fall not into the snares after them*. As if hee shoulde say, If yee bee not starke blinde, yee must needes shunne these people and not followe their example, seeing that God hath punished them after that fashion. For if yee meddle with their corruptions, God can make you to fall into the same pitte wellynough. Yee see into what case they bee falne: and therefore take heede to your selues, or else it will be an open tempting of God, as though ye sought your owne destruction euen in despite of him. Nevertheless, wee see howe men playe the beastes in that behalfe. For when wee haue seene GOD correct a man for some offence, by and by wee faile not to prouoke his wrath in the selfesame sorte, that they did which were punished. Indeede wee haue witte ynough to condemne them that suffer the punishment; O it is good right say we, they haue well deserued it, they bee worthie of such correction. Wee can skil to talke after that fashion: but in the meane while, when wee plaied the Iudges towardes other men, wee cannot finde the fault in our selues, and therefore must wee bee double condemned at Gods hande, because our hypocrisie blindeth vs, and wee looke not into our selues to correct our own misdoings.

Moses therefore speaketh heere expresly of the snares that the Cananites were falne into. As if hee shoulde say, whatsoeuer you see in any vnbeleeuers, is all one as if God warned you long aforehande, to beware that yee fall not into the like curse by following their steps; and therefore shunne them. For wee must vnderstande that as oft as our Lorde punisheth those that haue offended him, and wee knowe it, and hee will haue it so; it is all one as if hee shoulde make some signe to vs, or rather arrest vs with his owne hande and say, Take heede to your selues, proceede no further, goe not on still; for if yee doe, yee bee vndone, yee bee forlorne. Seeing that our Lorde giueth vs such warning, may it not bee saide that wee bee worse than madde if wee proceede on still? What excuse will there bee for vs, when God shal haue shewed vs the ditche and bidden vs beware that wee fall not into it, and yet we bee so wilful in wickednesse, that he cannot winne so much at our handes, as to make vs turne backe againe from it?

Moreouer wee see by this text, that it is but a simple shift to say, Other men doe so as well as I: and yet a greate number of sillie soules beguile themselues with it euen at this day. If a man warne the Papistes of their superstitions, to bring them to Gods trueth; O (say they) I am not alone, there be many others in the worlde. They beare themselues in hand that they may by and by disappoint God, with the multitude of their partakers. But Moses telleth vs heere, that all shall bee tyed together in one bundle, and one of them shall not helpe to acquite another or to diminishe anothers fault, but that all of them shall bee rooted out together, according to this saying of our Lorde Iesus Christ, If the blinde leade the blinde, they shall both fall into the ditche. What shall I haue gained by it, when a great number of people shall haue perished with mee? Then let vs not thinke our faults the lighter for the greatenes of the number of them that offende with vs: but rather let vs marke on the contrarie parte, that there is not a worse thing than euill custome: and it is the thing that wee had neede to beware of as long as wee liue in this worlde. For wee see verie fewe of that sort of men which guide vs the right way; but on the contrarie part the multitude is infinite of those that thrust vs out of the way: so as if wee leane vnto men, wee shall scarsely finde one among a hundred, which walketh aright, but all of them doe go astray. Also when the Prophet Esaie speaketh of the disorders that reigned euerie where, hee saieth no more but that euerie man had turned aside

Mat. 15. 14. & Luke. 6. 39

Esa. 56. 11.

after his owne wayes. Whereby hee doeth vs to vnderstande that we neede not to be beguiled by others, for euerie of vs beguileth himselfe too much. Therefore when men followe their owne imaginations, then are they quite and cleane out of the way of saluation. And sith it is so that we shal finde verie few that can amend vs, and all the rest doe but draw vnto euill: what shall become of vs if we grounde our selues vpon custome? If wee say, O, there be thus many and thus many that take this or that to be good: yea, but God misliketh it, and it makes no matter what men doe, for wee see they bee all giuen to naughtinesse, and are corrupted in their vnderstanding. Againe, their hearts are ful of malice, so as they dragge cleane backe from that which God hath shewed them. And if wee alledge, It is not nowalaze that this thing came vp, it hath beene vsed of custome in all ages long agoe: verily it is all one as if wee shoulde say, the worlde is hardened in naughtinesse. But yet hath it not gotten so sure-holde that it can displace God from being Iudge, that he shoulde not condemne them as they deserue. And therfore let vs marke wel howe it is shewed vs here, that if we followe the steppes of such as haue gone astray; when God hath punished them, wee also must come to account after them. Yea and wee deserue double punishment, when wee fare not the better by the corrections that God hath shewed vnto vs: for it is all one as if we resisted him wilfully. The matter in effect which wee haue to gather vppon this saying where Moses speaketh of the snares that are laide for vs, is; that when our Lorde hath once warned vs, and we haue seene the verie examples themselues before our eyes; we should set our minds vpon them, that wee intangled not our selues in the curse that is prepared for the despisers of Gods word.

And it is saide further, *that men shoulde not inquire after their gods*. Heereby hee doeth vs to vnderstande, that men are oftentimes turned away from well doing, by their fooliſh curiositie. For when wee bee once instructed in the pure simplicitie of Gods worde, if wee holde our mindes imprisoned, that is to say, if wee holde our selues contented with Gods trueth; then are wee sure that our Lorde will confirme vs more and more, so as though all the worlde were on a broyle, yet shoulde wee bee knitte still in good agreement of faith. But our wittes are so fickle, that they bee alwayes rouing: wee cannot holde our selues from inquiring of this and that: not for any benefite that wee reape by it, for wee wote not what is the reason thereof: but yet our desirousnesse so tickleth vs, and so prouoketh vs, that wee cannot holde our selues in quiet to say, let vs obey our God. Therefore Moses meant plainely to condemne the vice that reigneth ouermuch in men, and is too deepe rooted in their nature: which is, that in steede of soberneſſe to holde our selues in simple obedience to Gods worde; wee bee continually turmoyled with vaine fancies, and all our seeking is who did this and who did that, that wee might bee cunning in inquiring thereof. As for example, wee see a great sort that woulde faine knowe al the Religions of the worlde. And to what ende? It seemeth vs them that they bee not sure of the Christian faith, vnlesse they knowe Machomets Alcoran; and al the diuelishnesse that hath reigned among the Paynims and Papistes; and fraught their heads full stuffed and besotted with all the dotages of the Iewes. Thus doe they play the beastes through their wicked curiositie, and it appeareth well that there hath beene nothing in them but vtter vanitie and hypocrisie. Wherefore according to that which Moses hath declared heere, let vs learne not to be too inquisitive of the thinges that are not good for vs. We see that euen in reading Gods worde, wee must vse this modestie of forbearing to seeke things needeleſſe which serue not to edifying: & what will come of it if wee disguise Gods worde, by ripping vp the thinges which cannot but infect our mindes, and corrupt them, and turne them from the pure trueth? True it is that such as vse to make warres are faine to be inquisitive of the force and policy of their enemies, that they may beware of them: but when wee be so eager, that without any occasion or needs, wee will needes knowe that which doeth not touch vs nor concerne vs; is it not a tempting of God? is it not a casting of our selues into the snares which we see that Sathan hath laide for vs? Therefore when men haue beene taught the Gospel purely, let them abide quietly therein, let them be contented with this, that they are approued of God; who cannot deceiue them, and let them refuse all manner of trumperies, which can serue to no purpose but to intangle them in vaine disputations without profite, or without any inherance to their faith. Wee see what hath happened to some, I meane of these wilfull headed fellowes that woulde needes be inquisitive of all thinges, and there was not any sect or opinion, but they woulde needs know it and haue skill to dispute of it. Verie well: but what wonne they by so doing? God gaue them vp, so as they were destitute of vnderstanding, and there was lesse wit and discretion in them than in little children. Where things were in quiet they would needes set all on a broyle, yea euen without any time or reason, so as they sawe not a whit euen in the thinges that were so visible and apparant, that they might haue picked out their eyes with a knife. Seeing then that GOD doeth so punish these troublesome heades that cease not to trouble themselues in their owne vnquietnesse, and cannot bee satisfied but that they must needes be inquisitive of the thinges that are not for their profite: wee ought to bee the more mindful of Saint Paules lesson, which is that wee must not bee ouer wise, but wise according to sobrietie. Let vs bethinke vs of our slendernesse, how rude and grosse witted wee bee, and let it suffice vs that GOD can well skill to teach vs, if wee take him for our master and teacher. And seeing we haue his worde, let euerie of vs keepe himselfe within the boundes thereof, and not

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play the colts that are broken loose.

Nowe after that Moses hath spoken after ỳ manner, he saith *Thou shalt not do to the Lord thy God, as those nations have done to their gods.* As if he shoulde say, we must not looke vpon men, when we intend to serue God aright; but Gods only will must bee our rule, as he wil adde for a conclusion in the end. Let vs marke well then that there is not a worse thing, than to fashion our selues after the customes of men in causes that concerne the seruing of God. For that hath bin ỳ very cause of so manie mingle-mangles and of so great confusion of all things in Christian religion. A man needeth but a litle Leuen to sowre a whole batch of dowe. But there hath bin so much Leuen brought in, that it hath marred all the righteousnesse whereunto GOD calleth those that are his. For as I haue declared heretofore, men haue thought it good that in steede of the fashions that were vsed by the heathen, there should bee some such fashions brought in as had some resemblance of them.

As for example, the heathen worshipped such an idol, or helde such a high feast on such a day: and therefore must wee also appoint a feast to some Saint vpon the same day. Yea, but that was but a changing of the name of the idol: and the neerer they came vnto it, or tooke ouert vnder it, the more did they falsely abuse Gods name and defile it. Thus made they an exchange of the ydols of the heathen, and in their stead tooke vp Hee saints and Shee saints and made ydols of them. Nowe seeing that this manner of dealing hath bin the cause of the peruerting of all things; it standeth vs the more in hand to take heede to the things that Moses telleth vs here, to witte, that God requireth not that we should do as the wretched and ignorant infidels doe to their Idols: but that if wee will walke rightly wee must keepe vs from counterfeiting the thinges that wee may happen to see any where. True it is that forasmuch as wee iudge fondly, wee will thinke the thinges that are done by men to bee very godly: but what shall wee gaine in this case, by bringing our owne weights and balances? For God will haue vs to conforme vnto him; and shall not wee then make a faire bargaine, to say I weene I doe well? All such stuffe is nothing woorth, it must bee striken off, euerywhit. That is the cause why Moses in this text expressly presupposeth that God wil not haue the thinges done to him which the wretched infidels did to their idols.

And yet to perswade vs the better in all these things, he addeth *that they had done such thinges as God abhorred, as namely the burning of their children in fire.* Here vnder one kind, Moses sheweth that the wretched Paynims rushed out into so beastly dealings, as woulde make a man to abhorre their cruelrie to thinke vppon it. For how is it possible that they should bee so destitute of all reason, as to forget euen naturall kindenesse, when they meane to serue their Gods? What a thing was it, that they should goe burne their owne children? Beholde, the fathers which ought to haue considered, that when God had giuen them children, it was a singular blessing, forasmuch as hee had ordeined them to bee in his owne stead, to the end there should alwayes bee some seede in the worlde to honor him and serue him: euen the fathers themselues (I say) did cast their owne children into the fire, and became murtherers of them. Whereby wee see that idolaters may well bee caryed away with some deuotion; but the same is but as a fury, they bee out of their wittes, and the diuell doth so possesse them, that they haue neither wit nor discretion any more. And shal wee allowe of such doinges? Wee see then whereat Moses amed in declaring here that the wretched Paynims burned their owne children, by meanes whereof they became starke diuels, and there was not a more horrible thing than was their deuotion, though they commended it neuer so much. If it bee obiected that GOD commaunded Abraham to doe the lyke; wee see the ende thereof. True it is that GOD meant so farre foorth to try Abrahams fayth, by commaunding him to kill his owne sonne: but that was a singular example for a speciall purpose, and not a common rule. On the other side, GOD prouided for it, and shewed that hee desired not to haue mans bloud sacrificed vnto him: for hee preserued Abraham from dooing it when it came to the point. Therefore there is greate diuersitie betweene the obedience that Abraham yeelded to God in going about to sacrifice his sonne Isaak: and the madnesse of these blinde wretches in purposing to honor their idols by murthering their owne children. Gen. 22. 2. 12.

Hereby let vs learne generally to marke well, that whensoeuer wee see the wretched vnbeleeuers rushe out into disorder lyke brute beasts, we must learne to haue the more stay of our selues that wee followe them not. As for example; whereas it is sayd nowadayes in generall, that wee must not followe the steppes of the Papistes, because that all the thinges which they learne by the name of Gods seruice, are but a heape of vaine fancies, such as euery man listed to forge of his owne brayne, and a horrible hotchpotch of thinges confounded together, for the dooing whereof they haue not so much as one syllable in Gods woorde to allowe it, and yet they martyr themselues exceedingly in the doing of them: besides this, they become so brutish, as wee ought to be euen ashamed of them. For proofe whereof, what a thing is it that they should goe kneele downe before puppets, as though GOD were present there? They say they worship not the images; but men see what reuerence they yeeld vnto them, and it is the first lesson that is taught in their Synagogues. And surely what excuse soeuer they make, when they kneele downe before the image of S. Barbe which neuer was, (for yee must vnderstand that men haue made a God of such a creature as neuer was in the world) or when they goe to S. Catherin, or Saint

Christo-

Christopher which are things of the same stamp and say nine Paternosters and an Auemarie to them: to whome speake they? Is it not a flatte mocking of God, or rather a villainous blaspheming of him? The heathen therefore had much more than the Papistes, wherewith to colour their abhominations when they did thinges so farre out of square as was pitie to see, and yet thought they pleased God in so doing. When they drinke til they be drunken vppon the holy-day, they thinke that God is content therewith. Againe, when they be well apparelled, they suppose it is a good seruice of God. To bee short, they haue such fond toyes and gewgawes, as are woorthie to bee spit at as often as a man heares them spoken of. And whosoeuer hath but one drop of good vnderstanding may perceiue the fondnesse that is in them. Insomuch that when wee consider the matter, wee thinke it vnpossible that men should bee so brutishe as wee see they haue bin. But it is Gods owne dooing, who executeth this threat, made by the prophets, that hee woulde powre out the spirit of giddinesse and blockishnesse vppon the world, to blinde it withall, because that such as haue forsaken the pure doctrine of God, and turned away from the holy scripture, are worthie to be so caryed away, to the committing of such vnreasonable thinges as we ought to bee ashamed of and vtterly to abhorre. And this is tolde vs to teach vs to shun their companie, and euen that is the meaning of Moses when he sayth, Marke what is befallen vnto them. Now then, let vs beware that God punish vs not after ỹ same maner, by giuing vs ouer to a reprobate sense. Wherefore let vs receiue the light of his worde, and followe the way while hee sheweth vs it, suffering our selues to be held altogether in obedience vnder him. For step we once aside one way or other, in deede wee shall not at the first dash fall into so great confusion as wee see the idolaters are, but in the ende wee shall bee payed home to our smart. For how became they so brutish? Had they neither wit nor reason? yes: but God punisheth them because they submitted not themselues to his word. Let vs therefore stand in feare of the lyke condemnation: for it is certeine that the lyke shall fall vppon vs, if wee followe their steppes. And wee heare how Saint Paul speaking generally of all such as list not to obey Gods will, sayth that they must needes haue their eyes stopped, so as they may not bee able to discerne any more, but bee trayned in all thinges to other mens lures. And this threate pointeth at vs. And therefore let vs keepe good watch, and bee wel ware that we set not one foote forward, without the direction of Gods worde; for there is not any other way that is certeine.

Esa.29.14.& 29.10.

Ro.1.25.28

Now let vs come to the conclusion that Moses addeth. *Looke thou doe all that I commaunde thee this daye, without adding any thing to it or taking any thing from it.* Heere hee sheweth vs the remedie to preserue vs from all stumbling, and from all the wiles of Satan and al his snares, and from all occasions that are ministred to thrust vs out of the way of saluation: and that is, to bee contented with the rule that GOD giueth vs, and to followe the same, and to bee so pliable to it, as wee alwayes haue our eares stopped against all other sayinges whatsoeuer, reiecting all thinges elsse, that none but only GOD may haue dominion ouer vs. And so let vs marke well, that wee shall neuer haue the witte to keepe our selues from superstition, and from Satans sleightes; except our Lord remedie the matter by his word. True it is that wee ought to giue good eare to the counsell that is giuen vs, and not to followe the follies and errors of the world, nor intangle our selues in such a sorte of fond toyes; but to bee slowe to eschewe all the foolishe deuotions that men haue deuised of their owne heades; wee ought well to marke that. But yet is not that enough. For there is none of vs all which hath not a storehouse of many errors in his own head, in so much ỹ euery of vs is a prouocation to himselfe although we be not furthered by others. What remedy then? There is none other way, but to suffer our selues to be gouerned by God. And that is the cause why Moses, after all his exhortations, telleth vs that if wee followe our Gods worde, wee shall euer bee intangled in many wicked imaginations, whereby the deuil shall finde a gappe open, or as it were a hooke to win vs by. Therefore if wee purpose to put Satan backe, and to bee preserued from all vncleanesse of superstition: let Gods worde haue his authoritie among vs.

And first of all Moses sayth; *Doe whatsoeuer is commaunded thee*. Whereby hee meaneth (as I haue declared in other places) that it is not enough for vs to obey GOD by halues (for he can away with no such partnership) but that wee must submit our selues to his commaundementes in all cases and all respectes without any gainsaying. And that is a thing very worthie to bee noted. For euen men can well enough finde in their hearts to confesse that it is good reason that GOD shall bee serued, yea euen according to his owne wil as he himselfe requireth: but yet they will not to take exceptions still, and to say, The lykes mee not, such a thing woulde doe better. To bee shorte, for all their promise of obeying GOD, and although that in many respectes they yeelde to the thinges that are spoken to them; Yet doe they beare themselues in hand, that they may let the rest alone. But contrariwise, GOD admitteth not any exception, but sayth that whatsoeuer hee commaundeth, must be done: and that wee must not enter into disputation with him, to make him amendes in one thing for missing in another; but that his Lawe must be obserued, yea euen according to the common and substaunce thereof. For if I should receiue some couenant or some publike instrument or writing made vppon it, and yet say, as for this poynt or that article, I will not admit it: what a thing were it? It were to disanul ỹ whole. Sodeinly let vs marke, that to honor God and to yeelde him

him obedience, his worde must beare the whole sway, so as wee submit our selues wholy vnto it. Marke that for one point.

Againe whereas Moses sayth *This day*; it is a summoning of the people to follow without delay when God calleth them. For is it a small matter that God communicateth himselfe so familiarly vnto vs? Then is it not for vs to require space to deliberate: but as soone as God openeth his mouth, by and by wee must giue eare to him, and bee conformable to his worde out of hand without delay, by submitting our selues thereunto. And not onely this place serueth to warne vs how forward wee ought to bee to followe his Lawe: but also wee heare how it is sayd in the Psalme, To day if you heare his voyce: so that our Lord generally meaneth that as soone as men heare him speake, they should by and by followe his saying, and fashion themselues thereafter. And the Apostle in the third Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrewes, sheweth vs what is meant by this worde *To day*: Namely the very same times wherein our Lord is so gracious as to send vs his worde, whatsoeuer these times bee. Therefore let vs not delay till to morrowe, for it were too great a mockerie: and it may bee that the gate shall be shut against vs. Seeing then that God speaketh vnto vs to day, let vs giue eare vnto him readily and without any delay. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde. And therefore when we come to a Sermon, or reade the holy scripture by our selues, as soone as wee haue heard a sentence, let vs enter into our owne consciences: and if wee finde any sloth there, let vs waken and quicken vp our selues, and thinke thus: what? It is no dalying with god in this case, it is not for vs to defer to come vnto him when hee calleth vs, but wee must answere him with such readynesse, as the thing that is commaunded vs here by Moses may bee performed, so as we burie not Gods word, ne suffer it to hang in the hooke; but receiue it into our hearres at the full, that it may take good roote there, and bring forth fruite. Thus yee see what wee haue to marke vppon this worde *This day*, or *To day*.

Now let vs proceede to that which Moses addeth. *Without adding aught to it*, (sayth hee) *or without taking aught from it*. And this is an excellent text to shewe vs how mens lyues may be well ordered. I haue tolde you before, that it is a good tryall of our subiection vnto God, when wee receiue his worde, and that his commaundements beare such sway with vs, as wee bowe downe our neckes to receiue the yoke that he layeth vppon them. But that were not sufficient, vnlesse wee had that which Moses addeth here, which is, that it is not lawfull for vs to adde any whit to ỹ thinges ỹ God commaundeth, nor to take any whit from them, as the Papistes doe in these dayes, who beare thẽselues in hand that they cannot doe amisse in mingling their owne follies with Gods word. And why so? For wee doe as GOD commaundeth vs, say they. Wee deny not but that wee ought to keepe God Lawes; but what harme is it for vs to doe more? If we vse some deuotion of ouerplus, will not God take it in good worth? If I doe more than I am bounde to doe, why should not God accept it in good part? I may well doe whatsoeuer hee appointeth: yea, & I will adde somewhat more to serue him withall. When the Papistes get such a shrowdingsheet, they beare thẽselues in hande that all their matters goe very well, but in the meane while they consider not ỹ God will haue none to be counted wise but himselfe, nor none to haue the authoritie to bee our Lawegiuer but himselfe. The Papistes then doe blaspheme GOD two wayes: first in taking vppon them to bee holyer than hee would haue them to bee. For when wee deuise meanes of our owne head to please God withall after that fashion; it is all one as if hee had not bin well aduised in the matter. Behold God sayth that all our wisedome must consist in hearkening vnto him. Wee haue seene it in the fourth chapter & also in ỹ tenth, where it is sayd, O Israell, what is it that thy God commaundeth thee but only to sticke to him, & to be wholy his. Hereby wee see how it was Gods intent to comprise ỹ summe of al holynesse and righteousnesse in his Lawe, so as it is a full perfection whereunto nothing can bee added. Neuertheless men thinke and suppose that they themselues can doe yet much better. And what is that to say? Is it not a blaming of God, as who should say hee had forgotten himselfe, and foresawe not all thinges? Verily that is a cursed and diuelish blasphemie. Therefore, let not the Papistes boast of their seruing of God: for the diuell is their founder, and God disauoweth all that euer they doe. For hee may alwayes reply against thẽ and say, Who required these things at your handes? And not without cause: for their so doing is all one as if they charged God with enuy towardes men, as who would say he had not faithfully taught them all thinges that were for their behoofe to doe. And I pray you is that blasphemie tollerable?

Psal. 95.8.

Heb. 3.13. & 4.7.

Deut. 4.6. & 10.12.

But there is yet another point which I glanced at. For those two may bee put both into one. The other point then is, that they vtterly deface the soueraigne dominion that God hath ouer vs. For thus doe they alledge: Very well. God hath ordeyned by his lawe, that we should keepe his commaundements, Statutes and Ordinances: but yet is it not amisse to adde moreouer what I my selfe would haue done. But if a priuate person shoulde fall to mingling of the inuentions of his owne braine, with the statutes that are set foorth by publike authoritie, shoulde he not trouble the whole order of the Common weale? And as for such as took part w̃ him, shold they not shewe thẽselues to bee rebels to their superiors? Now our Lord saith by his prophet Esay ỹ he himselfe wilbe knowen to be our onely lawgiuer. That is a title which he chalendgeth to himselfe. Seeing then that God will bee our onely Lawmaker, what shal we say when men doe thrust themselues into his place? Is it not more than to confounde heauen and earth together? And surely Saint Iames expresseth

Esa. 33.22.

Iam. 4.4.12 expresseth yet better the same thing that was sayd by the Prophet Esay. For he sayth that there is but onely one Lawegiuer which is able to saue and condemne. When men are set vp in state and authoritie of making Lawes to gouerne our soules by, I meane as touching the spiritual gouernement; (for wee treate not here of ciuill Lawes, but of the seruing of God;) when men (I say) are so highly exalted or take so highly vppon them: it is all one as if they bereaued God of the title of Sauiour and Iudge. For if hee be not the onely Lawemaker, Saint Iames concludeth that he is not the onely Iudge, nor the partie that hath power alone to condemne vs or to saue vs. And what a presumption is it that the creature should proceede so farre, as to father our saluation vppon wretched carkesses and earthwoormes, which is to be fathered alonely vppon God? So then let vs marke well, that whereas Moses hath tolde vs heere that it is not Lawefull for vs to adde any whit to the thinges that God commaundeth in his Lawe: thereby hee condemneth all the deuotions that euer were inuented by the world. It will seeme strange why God hath so streitly forbidden men to adde any thing to his Lawe: but ought not the reasons to suffice which I will aleadge? Verily the world condemneth it selfe by his owne mouth. Hath this prouerb bin inuented in our time? Hath it not bin euer a common saying among the Papists to say, Thou art the deuils seruant, for thou doest more than thou art bidden? This manner of speech hath bin vsed a hundred yere before we were borne: it hath bin a common byword. And what haue the Papists done? They haue let the commaundementes of God alone, to runne gadding after their owne inuentions, and newgawes: And yet neuertheless they say dayly still, Thou art the deuils seruaunt. If a Master bee angrie with his seruaunt for leauing the thing vndoone which he had commaunded him; to do the thing which he had conceiued in his owne imagination, and he thinketh to content his Maister in saying: I haue done better than you were aware of: thou art the diuels seruant (will his Master say) for thou hast done more than was commaunded thee. And I pray thee, what art thou? Thou doest the lyke to God. For thou wilt needes serue him after thine owne fashion, without regard what he hath commaunded thee. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that forasmuch as GOD is robbed of his honor, and the creatures set themselues in his iudgement seate, when they take vppon them to make Lawes for the stablishing of a spiritual gouernment: God declareth that he Esa. 29.14. wil take horrible vengeance of it, & deale terribly with them. And why so? Euen because they haue serued him after the commaundementes of men, and not held themselues to his simple worde, and therefore hee will blind the wittes of them, so as they shall be destitute of all reason, and become so brutish that they shal not be able to discerne any thing at all. Is not this enough to make the hayre stand vp vppon our head? What is to bee done then? Let vs followe this saying: That obedience is better than sacrifice. Loe here a sentence that needeth no glose. The Papistes shew themselues to be farre past shame in these dayes, in that they will needes maintaine the tyrannie of that idoll, and still continue in their wilfulnesse of folowing their owne fond deuotions, which haue not any foundation in Gods word. Behold, our Lord requireth but obedience, that is to say that men should submit themselues to his trueth, and be contented with that which he commaundeth. And the declaration hereof is deliuered vs here by Moses in two wordes; that is to wit, that they shoulde neither ad nor diminish aught at all to Gods worde; but that when God speaketh, they should receiue his sayinges with quiet obedience, saying: Yea Lord, all this is iust and righteous full, there is not any thing to bee gainsayed in any one poynt. Againe, thou Lord hast set vs boundes within the which it behoueth vs to holde our selues and not presume to say, this is good, or I will doe this more than is commanded me. No, but wee must assure our selues that our true wisedome and perfect soundnesse is to submit our selues meekely to thy word. If wee haue that, let vs not doubt but that God alloweth our whole lyfe. And if wee swarue neuer so little from it; wee shall not onely bee vtterly misliked of him, but also prouoke his vengeance against vs.

But now let vs kneele down in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to perceiue them better, so as it may bring vs to a true and liuely repentance. And because wee bee so much inclined to followe our owne inuentions, it may please him not to suffer such hardnesse of heart in vs, as may make vs to turne away from his commandements, but rather that euery one may submit our selues to his word, and frame our selues wholy thereafter, that being voyde of all ouerweening of our owne wit and discretion, we may suffer our selues to bee guided & gouerned by his hand: and specially that when he sendeth vs preachers to shew vs his wil, hee vouchsafe vs such grace, as wee may submit our selues thereunto, so as wee may not onely receiue his word when it is preached by the voyce of men, but also haue it written in our hearts by his holy Ghoste. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth. &c.

On

On Fryday the xj. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxvi. Sermon which is the first vpon the thirteenth Chapter.

IF there rise vp among you a Prophet that is a dreamer of dreames, which giueth the signe or a myracle;

2 And the signe or myracle which hee hath tolde thee, commeth to passe: and he say vnto thee, let vs walke after other Gods which you haue not knowen, and let vs serue them:

3 Thou shalt not hearken to the words of that Prophet, or dreamer of dreames; for the Lord your God trieth you, to weete if you loue the Lorde your God with all your heart and with all your soule.

HEERE godsheweth what steadfastnesse of faith ought to bee in those yhaue bin taught by his word natnely euē such as may bee able to withstād all the lyes and sleightes of Satan, so as they bee not hindered by any false doctrines or errors; but may continue alwayes in the trueth. For if wee receiued his worde when it is preached vnto vs, and yet it had no hold in vs: but that wee should turne aside from that which we had learned so soone as we perceiued any thing to the contrary: what a thing were it? It is sayd that faith must be the victorie whereby to ouercome the whole worlde: for so doth Saint Iohn speake thereof in his first Epistle. And if wee yeelde to euery winde, so as euery blaste of vntrueth is inough to withdrawe vs from GOD: our faith will soone bee ouercome; and where is then our victorie? Therefore let vs marke that when GOD graunteth vs the grace to bee taught by his worde; it is not onely to the end wee shoulde learne the thinges that are spoken, and beare them in minde for a while; but also to the ende wee shoulde staye vppon them, and bee so grounded vppon them, that if all the troubles of the worlde shoulde rise vp against vs, wee shoulde still holde our owne, and continue stedfast and inuincible. If this were sayd to the people of olde time, which had not so large instruction by a great deale as wee haue: much more dooth it belong to vs nowadayes. God gaue the Iewes sufficient instruction, so farre foorth as was requisite for their welfare. That is true: but yet did he teach them vnder shadowes and figures, which maner of teaching was darkesome in comparison of that which we haue nowadayes. For in the Gospell wee haue the sunne of righteousnesse shining as it were at nooneday. So then, Gods worde must serue vs, not onely to shewe vs the right way, but also to inable vs to withstand all the temptations of Satan and his vpholders. We must (say I) be so armed, as we may fight and put backe all errors and falsehood, so as after we haue once knowen God, we may stick to him stedfastly to the vttermost. And that is the cause why Saint Paul treating of the vse of the Gospell, sayth that we must not be lyke little babes which are drawen too and fro, so as we should no sooner see any trifling toye to beguile vs, but we should by and by be gadding after it: and what a thing were that? But we must (sayth he) be so setled in the fayth, that if there come any cosiners that goe about to leade vs by craft, and to deceiue vs, wee may bee fenced against them, and not bee shaken by them ouersoone. True it is that we must needes haue a begetting in our Lord Iesus Christ, and that at the first our faith may be so weake, that we shall be lyke little babes: But we must growe still, and dayly gather new strength, vntil we come to mans estate that we be perfect to meete with our Lord Iesus Christ. Thus yee see what force the doctrine of trueth ought to haue, when it is taught vs. That is to wit, we must not onely count it good in consenting to it; but also be so well assured of it, that the diuell, doe what he can, may not be able to remoue vs, by reason of the certeintie which wee haue, whereby wee bee inabled to beare backe whatsoeuer shall be set against vs. And doubtlesse wee see by the example of our Lorde Iesus Christ, that such as haue bin faithfully taught, may well repulse all the wiles of Satan. For when Iesus Christ was tempted, wherewith armed he himselfe but with the holy Scripture? Wee see that if there rise vp neuer so many false Prophets among vs, yet if wee be throughly well grounded in faith, & setled in it as we ought to be: we shal cōtinue stedfast, & the diuell shall win nothing at our handes. True it is that now & then we shal find some impedimēts; (for Gods seruauntes shall bee sure of trouble, that serueth to humble thē:) but yet whatsoeuer

Mal. 4. 2.

Eph. 4. 14.

Matt 4. 7.

it be, their faith is alwayes the better prooued by errors, heresies, & such other lyke thinges, whereby our Lord sheweth that we haue profited well in his schoole, & that wee can neuer be led away vnto wickednesse, whatsoeuer betideth. Also we heare what Saint Paul sayth, when hee armeth vs against all spirituall battels that may befall vs: hee giueth vs the sword of Gods word, hee deliuereth vs the shield of faith, and hee giueth vs the helmette of hope. And thereupon hee inferreth, that wee shall not onely be inabled to withstand all the assaultes that Satan can make vppon vs, but also bee defended from his fiery dartes when there is no lykelyhoode for vs to escape from his subtleties. Now therefore, whensoeuer the Gospell is preached vnto vs, or that wee reade the holy scripture, let vs learne not onely to receiue the thinges as true which are told vs out of the mouth of God, but also to bee so fully resolued of them in our selues, as we may not be trayned vnto wickednesse nor turned aside from the right way when the diuell stirreth vp any heresies. And so ye see what is told vs in this text. For our Lord thinkes it not enough that the faithfull should serue him and hold them to his trueth when they bee in quiet & without temptation, but also hee will haue them to yeeld such trust vnto his worde, that if the diuell fall to sowing of his darnell to marre al, and wicked men rise vp to deface the truth by al the meanes they can, and to turne it into lyes: such as haue learned what the true religion meaneth, should not change nor be fickle and vnconstant, but shewe that the thinges which they know are of God, and an abiding trueth, so as it is not for men to swarue or start from them in any wise.

Eph. 6. 12. & 16. 17.

Now thé, let vs beare this warning wel in mind, and euery of vs examine himselfe, and when we haue once vnderstoode ỹ things ỹ haue bin told vs, and are necessary to our saluation: let vs not imagine our selues to haue a perfect and right faith as is requisite, vnlesse wee bee so constant and fully resolued in the thinges that our Lorde hath shewed vs, that we abide by it and followe our course still, whatsoeuer come of it. For whosoeuer fleeteth or starteth aside at euery matter, sheweth that hee neuer knewe Iesus Christ as hee ought to doe. And therefore Saint Paul in another place vseth two similitudes to shewe of what force Gods word ought to bee with vs, to hold vs fast vnto him in his obedience. Hee saith that wee must be throughly grounded and rooted. For many haue a kinde of faith: but that is but in outward shewe and appearance: as for inwardly it hath no liuely nor deepe roote. For if a man haue but a faire braunch couered with flowers, to what purpose is that? One blast of wind will deface it. But if a tree bee well planted, the roote of it will hold it fast in the middest of all stormes. Euen so must wee bee rooted in our Lorde Iesus Christ, and we must be throughly well grounded vppon him, so as men may perceiue not onely that wee haue knowledge, but also that our hearttes doe yeeld record of our playnedealing. And marke here the cause why so many men are so greatly hindered, and indeuour no further but to purchase themselues credit among men. When they come to a Sermon where the Gospell is preached, for the most part they thinke they haue well profited, when they can skill to talke of it and there are very fewe that haue a care to be so grounded in it, as to lay it vp in their hearts, that GOD may be witnesse of it: there are very fewe that indeuour to attcine to that holinesse. And therefore doth God abhorre that fooolish vainegloriousnesse, wherebymen seeke but onely to win themselues estimation, by setting a faire face and countenance vppon the matter.

And therefore let vs marke in fewe wordes, that Gods word ought to serue vs to double purpose. First to teach vs his will, that we may submit our selues simply vnto it: so that when wee haue the grace giuen vs to haue the doctrine purely taught vs, then euery of vs shall agree thereunto, and hearken to the voyce of our sheepheard, and followe whatsoeuer is told vs, without gainesaying. The thing whereof we must doe when wee haue order in the Church, so as there be no sectes nor troubles in it, but Gods trueth is purely preached: is, that there must bee true concorde and brotherly loue among vs, to answere our God all with one heart and one mouth, that his trueth may be aduanced among vs. The second vse thereof is, that when it falleth out that Satan indeuoureth to turne vs away, and there spring vp heresies, false doctrines and errors among vs: wee must withstand all such things, and shew that Gods truth is strong enough to hold vs still vnto him, according to my former saying that our faith must put the vpper hand of all the world, so as we bee starke deafe in hearkening to any of all the wiles that are put to vs to intice vs from God and his pure trueth. Thus yee see in effect what is told vs in this text.

And let vs marke well Moseses maner of speache. *If a prophet steppe vp among you*, saith he. Hereby hee sheweth that wee must not only withstand the open enemies that fight against Gods word, and pretend not at all to be of the flocke, or to haue any partnership or neighboorhoode with vs: but also resist our household traytors, insomuch that if there rise vp any deceiuer among our selues, that is to say if any such one maketh pretence to be of the fellowship of the faithfull, and to be as it were of the very household of faith, step vp: we must not be troubled at it out of measure. And that is well worthie to be noted, for if the christian faith be impugned by the wicked, which pretend not to serue the God, (as by the Turkes, Paynims, and Iewes) so as they blaspheme with open mouth: howmuch as they be vtterly cut off from the Church lyke rotten members, their resisting of the Gospell, and their striuing to abolishe the Christian religion, is no great woonder to vs. For why? Wee be as it were hardened with such examples. Therfore when the open enemies set themselues against God & his word, it is a signe that

that will easily bee ouercome. But when those that are knitte vnto vs, and are as it were of our owne bodie, doe fall to tearing of the vnitie of our faith in peeces, to peruert Gods trueth, and to marre it in such wise as it shoulde bee disfigured: that is such a perplexitie and griefe to vs, as wee wote not where to become. And that is the thing that troubleth so many simple folkes nowadayes. What shall wee doe, say they? For wee see so much disputing in the Church, and so greate diuersitie of opinions, that it were better to aske no question of any thing, insomuch that a great number become careless, for feare to bee intangled in wicked matters and to bee beguyled, and therefore they let all alone, and will not in any wise come neere vnto God. Wee see a greate sorte of men of that stampe. Otherssome let loose the raynes of the brydle, and take libertie to maintaine one while one mans saying and another while another mans, and are neuer fully perswaded of any thing; but are in one mynde to day, and in another minde to morrowe, and chaunge at euery minute of an houre.

Wee see a number of wild heades nowadayes which haue no stay at all, but thinke that all things are lawfull. And why? For I see there are diuerse opinions, say they. But such men do proue that they neuer tasted what Gods trueth is. The first sort doe well bewray a cursed vnbeleefe. For our Lorde promiseth that such as seeke him with a lowly heart, shall not be disappointed, but hee will shewe him selfe to them. Let vs knocke, and the doore shalbe opened. If wee desire reuerently to be guided by God, surely he will not faile vs. Let vs distrust our owne infirmitie and rudenesse; and our Lorde will giue vs the spirite of discretion, so as wee shall not bee beguiled. To be short this saying of Saint Paul which I haue alleaged alreadie heretofore shall euer be performed; namely, that heresies shall serue to the true tryall of our faith, and not bee able ouerthrowe it. For as touching those that are so fleeting without cause; they shewe that there was nothing in them but a false pretence, and that they did but play the hypocrites in making a countenance to sticke to Gods truth; for had they beene well rooted in it, as I sayde, they woulde haue continued stedfast in it still.

To conclude, let such examples prouoke vs to put this lesson the better in vre. And when wee see the troubles that are nowadays in the world, let vs not be ouercome by them, neither let our faith be defaced. But the more the diuel laboureth and inforceth himselfe to vndo it, the more let it aduaunce it selfe and get the vpper hande of such assaultes. And when wee see false prophets step vp among vs, let vs not ceasse to yeeld this honour still to God, that wee hold our selues to his word, and start not from it by any meane. And very necessitie constraines vs to it in these dayes, because wee see that such as call themselues Christians and take that title most vppon them, are the worst enemies of God that a man can finde. For the Turkes & Iewes are not more fierie and venemous at this day against God, to deface the whole doctrine of saluation; than are the Papistes. And therefore let vs arme our selues with the warning that is giuen vs heere: which is, that when wee see false prophets step vp in the sheepefold and in the middes of Gods house: yet notwithstanding wee must not faile to hold on stil, nor make a stumbling blocke of it to step aside or start away, but ouergo it through the power of faith. Yea, and to come yet neerer the matter, when wee see these varlets that had pretended to be at oddes with the Papistes, and had mingled themselues among vs, do thereupō fall to inuenting of false opinions: let vs not bee ouermuch amazed for all that. True it is that wee be not senseless, & that we haue neede to be waked: but yet must wee alwayes conclude thus with our selues: How nowe? Our Lord hath beene so gracious to vs as to open his owne holy mouth to giue vs the certeintie of faith by his Gospel: and shall wee nowe turne away at euery push? After that manner (say I) must wee withstande all the temptations that may befall vs, when deceiuers and false fellowes step vp amōg vs, of purpose to deface by their suttletie the pure doctrine that hath beene preached to vs, & wherein we haue beene trayned vp.

Now first of all it is said, *Thou shalt not hearken to the Prophet when he sayth vnto thee, Let vs go and serue other gods which thou hast not known.* It behoueth vs to wey well all these woordes of Moses: For here he speaketh to al beleeuers. He speakes not only to the great doctors that haue beene at the Vniuersitie all their life long, but also to the vnlearned. Although then that we be no clerks, yet let vs learne that we must haue this constancie of faith, of not following the wyles of Satan to bee withdrawen from our God when he hath beene so gracious vnto vs, as to communicate himselfe to vs. Wee must not say, Alas, I haue no learning, nor fineneſse of witte, to be so cunning; euery man hath not like measure. I graunt that euery man is not of abilitie to enter into disputation against sophisters, and against such as are full fraught with malice to deceiue ỹ simple: but yet, all men from the moste to the least ought to haue this inuincible stedfastnes of sticking vnto God and his trueth when they once knowe it. There is no excuse in that case. For it is not in vaine that God hath set downe this generall law for all his Church. And it is certaine also that he will giue vs power, so wee resort to him, and seeke to him for succour. For what is ỹ cause why so many folke are seduced, but onely their own fond presumption, or their negligence, or else their contempt of Gods worde? For yee shall see some stand so much in their owne conceits, as (to their own seeming) no man is able to ouermatch them: and yet for all that, they are but sillie beastes. Our Lorde therefore doth blow away their pride, as men may perceiue: and experience sheweth that God punisheth many folkes pride, which had too great an ouerweening of themselues. Now thē, what is to be done? Let vs humble our selues & pray God to gouern vs so by his holy spirit, & to giue vs such wise dōe,

as wee may not bee taken tardie when the diuel goes about to make a breach into vs to enter at. If we goe y way to worke, let vs assure our selues that God will guide vs, and that wee shall neuer be caught in Satans snares. But there are many that keepe on their race without care, as though they were priuiledged from all dangers. But let vs for our part keepe good watch, and haue such a care to warde our selues, as the deceiuers (whé they come) may not finde vs asleepe. And that will so bee, if wee beare such reuerence to Gods worde, as wee acknowledge it to bee the preciousest treasure that we haue. For if a man make so little reckening of a thing, that he leaue it at al aduenture: the first that commeth may robbe him of it: but as for him y locketh vp his goods, (specialy those that are the chiefe and which he counteth to bee most worth:) he cannot bee so bereft of them. And therefore let vs put our faith in good custodie, and be so warie in the keping of it, as [it may appeare] that we haue it in such estimation as it deserueth; for it is an inestimable treasure. Thus yee see what wee haue to note here, where Moses speaketh to all such as had tasted what Gods lawe is, exempting no man from standing stoutly in battaile and defence against the lyes and sleyghts of Satan.

Nowe hee addeth, *If he say vnto thee, Let vs followe strange gods, which thou hast not knowen.* This serueth to shewe vs who bee false prophets. For God telleth vs that wee cannot withstande the wyles of Satan, without the knowledge of the trueth: that is the onely meane. And no marueil though the wretched worlde nowadayes be allured to destruction: for Gods worde is as it were buryed: and when men are destitute of that light, it is certaine that they bee in horrible darkenesse, so as they cannot but stumble & stray here and there, because they haue no certaine aime at any thing. But here our Lorde declareth that wee must bee instructed in his worde; and thereunto also is this saying after a sort referred. For hee presupposeth that wee bee in a good trade alreadie, and that wee knowe the way of saluation: accordingly as Moses wil protest hereafter; saying, I haue shewed you the way of life and the way of death. Nowe therefore, whensoeuer wee will resist false Prophets, and their lyes, let vs take to vs the doctrine of trueth. And that is the cause why it is saide, *The gods which thou hast not knowen.* For in this case wee must match the liuing God whome wee haue knowen, against all the ydolles which the worlde hath forged to it selfe. For God speaketh not to such as neuer heard nor vnderstood any thing of him before: but to such as he had giuen his lawe vnto, whome hee had set in the right way, and to whome hee had giuen an infallible rule. When hee hath so fenced men aforehande, then saieth hee vnto them, Beware that yee followe not the gods whome yee haue not beene acquainted with.

Deut. 30, 15 19.

To be short then, it is shewed vs that this doctrine concerneth such as haue beene duely instructed in the faith. Will wee beate backe all Satans deuices? Let vs haue the skill to say, It is God that hath certified vs, hee is a faithfull witnesse to vs, wee needs not to be in doubt or vncertaintie any more, or to cast doubts, or to say, What? Which way shall we goe? We may well assure our selues that this is the way, that is the thing which wee must stay vppon. That in effect is the order which wee haue to keepe, according as it is shewed vs in this text.

But let vs marke also, that wee must haue our eares so stopped, as we may vtterly mistike whatsoeuer may cause vs to swarue to the contrarie of those things which we haue learned by Gods worde. For as soone as wee giue care to them, by and by wee be halfe corrupted, according to this similitude which Saint Paul alleageth in the seconde to the Corinthians, that when a woman giueth eare to a bawde or a Ruffian, although shee consent not to him out of hande, yet is shee alreadie peruerted, and it is already an euill token. For if a woman bee chaste and shamefast, shee will in any wise shunne all such messages as may be brought to her to inueigle her to follie, and to make her to breake wedlocke. Shee must eschewe such manner of things. Nowe Saint Paul sayeth, that as long as we byde in the simplicitie of the Gospell, we be as a chaste wife that keepeth her faith whole to her husbande, and that our Lorde Iesus Christ who hath made such couenant with vs, to choose vs to bee of his bodie, taketh and receiueth vs for his owne. But if wee heedeth the lyes and trumperies that are brought vnto vs; and wee refuse not to learne what Diuel is: it is an euill signe, and wee bee corrupted readie. And therefore let vs beare well in minde, that wee ought so little to credite false prophets, as wee shoulde not in any wise giue eare vnto them, but shunne them a farre off, as soone as wee perceiue that they goe about to deceiue vs and to enuyce vs to naughtinesse. And to say the trueth, this curiositie hath beene the cause of many mens destruction. For it seemeth to many high minded persons, that all thinges should passe the tryall of their wit: and that when they haue sifted things after their owne imagination, they may followe whatsoeuer they themselues thinke good, for they bee able ynough to discerne the trueth of all thinges. But when our Lorde findeth such ouerboldnesse in them, hee punisheth them to confusion. The trueth is, that they would so inquire of all things, as nothing might escape them: in so much as they could finde in their hearts to mingle Mahomets Alcoran, and all the dotages of the Heathen, and all the superstitions of the Papists with the puritie of the Gospell, and to make a medly of them, that when they had well clowted them together in their owne brayne, they might saye, This is the thing that is good. But our Lorde (as I saide afore) cannot abyde that men shoulde trust so to their owne wittes. And againe on the other side, hee cannot abide such iniurie to bee done to his worde, as that it shoulde bee matched with the wyles of Satan, so as it might bee sayde, now will I choose what liketh mee best.

It is too high a mounting for men to make themselues iudges and vmpers of Gods trueth, which the Angels do honour with all reuerence. Needes therefore must such men fall into horrible destruction. And therfore let vs beware that wee lyddle our selues, so as our mindes wander not out into fond curiositie. And as soone as wee perceiue that ỹ diuel goes about to falsifie Gods pure trueth, let vs stop our eares, and not harken to any such thing, but vtterly abhorre it.

Now moreouer Moses sayth, *That although the false prophets shewe some signe or myracle, & the same commeth to passe, yet must not mans eare geue vnto it.* Here he sheweth that we must haue such constancie and stedfastnesse in our faith, as it may not bee ouerthrowen though there bee neuer so great occasion of stumbling. As for example, if there bee such an illusion of Satan, that a false-prophet say vnto vs, such a thing shall come to passe, and it commeth to passe in deede: then are wee at our wittes end, and it is ynough to ouerthrowe our whole building though it were neuer so well builded, vnlesse God worke on our side aboue the power of mans abilitie. But yet howsoeuer the world go, Gods trueth must be of such force wich vs as to holde vs backe against al such temptation, so as if the diuel bring any illusion, he may not gaine any thing at our handes, nor preuaile against vs.

And let vs marke, that before that Moses saith so he giueth vs a sure declaration of false prophets, that is to say, of such as go about to turne vs from the true God, whome wee haue once knowen, and would wrap vs in wicked superstitions wherin there is no reason. If any such thing befall vs, no maruel though our Lorde will haue vs to resist all that euer the diuel putteth to vs to bleare our eyes withal, yea, euen though there bee false miracles, in so much that although all that the false prophet or deceiuer foretelleth, do come to passe; yet must wee not be led away by it. We see then in effect what the meaning of Moses is, that we must be so well fenced by gods worde, that although the diuell rush against vs with neuer so great violence, and worke all the meanes he can to beguyle vs; yet we must not be ouercome, but our faith must be as a wel garded fortresse, that notwithstanding any assault, or any batterie made against vs, yet it may warde all blowes, and bee able to saue it selfe from beeing vanquished by any enemies.

And now let vs marke, that if God sende such false miracles; it is not to intrap those that are his; but to punish such as haue not beleeued the Gospel, as Saint Paul speaketh thereof in the seconde to the Thessalonians. And therfore doth Moses also adde, *Then is it Gods will to try thee whether thou louest him with all thy heart & all thy soule or no.* It is a saying that deserueth to be wel marked. For first Moses doeth vs to vnderstande, that such thinges happen not without the ordinance of God: and secondly hee sheweth the ende or reason wherefore: namely that the faithfull may haue wherewith to bee confirmed, knowing well that God will giue them constancie to holde out, though the temptation be neuer so rough and violent. Those are the two thinges which wee haue to remember here. First, it is sayd, *God tryeth thee.* Hereby hee sheweth, that Satan hath no power ouer vs, nor can sowe any wicked weedes, further foorth than God giueth him leaue. And that is a verie needefull thing for vs to marke. For were wee perswaded that the doore were open for Satan, and that all errours might spring vp at all aduenture, and that God ouer ruled them not: alas what a thing were it? For wee see howe mad the diuel is to ouerthrowe all trueth: wee see with what furie hee goes to worke when hee is to fight against the kingdome of our Lorde Iesus Christ: and we see what spite hee beareth to our saluation. And therefore things would go too much to hauocke if God wrought not to hinder Satan of his full scope, that hee might not set vp his lyes among vs. Wherefore let vs vnderstande, that whensoeuer there is any trouble, diuision, or diuersitie of opinion in the Church, the same happeneth not at all aduenture, but God worketh from aboue, and ouerruleth the whole matter, according to this protestation of Moses, Thy God tryeth thee. Yee see then that by knowing that God holdeth vs vnder his hande, wee bee assured that no errours or abuses can haue accesse vnto vs, vnlesse so farre foorth as our Lorde giue them accesse. And marke it for a speciall point, to the ende wee thinke not that the diuel reigneth at his owne pleasure, and doeth all thinges as it were whether God will or no: for hee must bee faine to haue leaue of his master.

And nowe let vs come to that which Moses addeth concerning the ende and reason why God doeth it: For wee may thinke it strange. What? That God shoulde trye vs? That errors shoulde bee saide to come so of God? Then is hee the author of lying. Againe, doeth God stirre vp the diuell vnto euill? Then might wee take occasion of stumbling at it. Yea, but in as much as Moses addeth that God doeth it for iust cause, the stumbling blocke is taken away. Hee sayth that God tempteth vs, that is to saye, that hee tryeth vs. After what maner? *Whether we loue the Lorde our God or no.* And hereby hee sheweth, (as I haue declared heretofore) that if wee haue a right meaning and pure heart, and haue receiued his trueth without hypocrisie, he will helpe vs at our neede, and we shalbe vpheld by his power, so as Satan may well straine himselfe to the vttermost, but the victorie shall alwayes go on our side. And this is the thing that I haue touched out of Saint Paul where he sayth, that all the false miracles which befall vnder the reigne of Antichrist, (as many haue been seene) are all reuengements of God, to punish such as woulde not obey his trueth. And it is good reason that Satan shoulde driue them to destruction, sith they woulde not open their eyes at such time as God woulde haue enlightened them. And seeing they haue thrust all good doctrine vnder foote; it is meete that they shoulde bee deceiued by lyes.

But let vs come backe againe to the wordes of Moses. *He sayth that wee be tryed, as wee if wee*

loue the Lorde our God. Heereby hee sheweth, that God putteth a difference betweene the hypocrites and such as serue him in soundnesse of heart, at such time as heresies spring vp and that there is trouble and disagreement. And why? For it is certaine that such as loue God are preserued by the power of his holy Ghoste, & that the troubles which they susteyne are a good proofe and sealing vp of their faith, whereby the same is made autendicall. God sheweth by effect howe hee hath wrought in them, and that they bee in verie deede of the number of those whome hee hath chosen. So then let vs vnderstand, that all the errours and heresies which the diuell shall haue sowed among vs, shalbee turned to good ende to all Gods children. So farre off is it that they bring vs any hurte or harme, that they serue euer to make our faith shyne the brighter, and to warrant vs that God hath succoured vs, and that hee will haue the same knowen to the whole worlde, so as he may bee glorified for it. And we also haue the more cause to rest vppon him with the greater certaintie of faith, and to trust that hee will neuer faile vs.

For as much then as wee see that our Lorde worketh in such wise as hee turneth darkenesse into light, and deadly poyson to our health: haue wee not whereof to reioyce? and ought wee not to bee patient albeit that troubles doe vexe vs for a time, and that wee haue much adoo to resist? Yet ought not our hearts to quaile, seeing that God giueth it so happie an issue. Thus much concerning the first poynt; that is to witte, that if wee loue God with all our heart, that is to say, roundly and soundly and without counterfayting: hee will not suffer vs to bee beguyled: but whensoeuer Satan comes to sowe troubles and heresies, wee shalbee confirmed still better and better, and profite in such wise, as wee shall neuer bee ouercome. And therewithall wee shall haue the better proofe that wee bee of the number of his seruauntes, and of those whome hee hath committed to the custodie of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and that wee shall see this saying fulfilled, that hee will neuer suffer any of the things to perish, which his father hath put into his hande. Wee see then howe our Lorde Iesus Christ is the keeper of our saluation; & that wee finde the thing by experience which Saint Peter sayeth; namely that our saluation is kept in heauen by faith, and that wee our selues also shall get the vpper hande of all the temptations which the diuell stirreth vp against vs, by sowing such cockle and darnel to the preiudice of Gods trueth.

Iohn.18.9.

1.Pet.1.4.5.

But let vs marke also, that such as are windeshaken, doe shewe that they neuer wist what it is to loue God with all their hearts, and that there was nothing in them but vanitie and hypocrisie. And therefore when wee see men seduced, let vs not wonder as though God were cruell to them. For it was meete that their hypocrisie shoulde bee discouered. They meane to mocke God, and vied a kinde of vernishing and painting to make a shewe of that which they were not: and God bewrayeth what they were in deede. Nowe therefore, whereas wee see the wretched worlde so carried nowadayes into darkenesse, superstition and idolatrie, wee must not thinke that they doe it of meere simplicitie, as though they were innocent and sinnelesse, and that God had giuen Satan the bridle without cause: but wee must rather consider that God with iust vengeance punisheth the vnkindnesse of such as had neither purpose nor desire vnto him.

Trueth it is, that a man shall see some outwarde shewe of holinesse in a number of those that are seduced in the popedome and elsewhere. But yet for all that, they bee double hearted, and God perceiueth what they bee in secret. So then, let vs vnderstand that God is iust Iudge, and let vs glorifie him for his punishing of such as loued him not soundly in their heartes as they shoulde haue done. That is the thing which wee haue to note.

And in deede, experience shewes it in such as turne backe and fall to naughtinesse after they haue once knowen the Gospell. We haue seene here that when Satans vnderlinges haue come hither to set troubles in the Church, those that haue beene seduced by them haue known them welynough of olde, and not nowe of late, for I speake of the space of eyghteene yeere. Since the troubling of this Church diuers sorts haue beene seene, and still God hath beene fain to shewe and to poynt these out with his finger, which had nothing in them but dissimulation & hypocrisie, howe faire countenance soeuer they did make. And I say that this hath beene knowen nowe these eyghteene yeres; insomuch that euen they that haue pretended to bee great vpholders of the Gospell, are well knowen to vs howe they haue behaued themselues, & I could rehearse their doings if neede were, but it is ynough to giue men an incling of them, that others might take example by them. When the Anabaptistes came hither to infect all, there was great cheere made them in the towne, and this was about an eyghteene yeares ago. True it is, that men were constrained to repeale their doctrine openly: but yet in the meane while they were still chocke vnder the chinne, & in steed of resisting them lustily, scarfes were made to entertaine them with. And since that time, wee haue seene in our owne dayes, (and that not long ago) howe other heretikes haue beene fauoured at their comming hither, and specially howe that horrible blasphemer was supported. And by whom? By such as had so long despised God, that in the ende their shame was of necessitie to bee discouered. They proofed sufficiently that their desire was to haue the Gospell: but that was the gospell of Mahomet to turne all thinges vpside downe, and to bring all things to confusion. For the worlde hath seene howe farre they ouershot themselues; insomuch that they tooke parte against God and his word. Nowe sith wee haue such examples, let vs learne to liue in feare and warinesse, and alwayes come backe to that which is tolde vs here, that is to

vs,

sir, that it is not without cause that our Lorde sayeth, that hee tryeth and examineth such as were disguised afore: and that when hee suffereth false prophets to bee stirred vp by Satan, to sowe their darnell among vs, it is to trye vs whether wee loue him with all our heart or no. And therefore let vs proceede more and more in the feare of our God, accordingly as it is said here, that wee must serue him and obey his holy commaundementes, not douting but that hee will make vs to get the vpper hande in al assaults and conflictes wherewith wee be assayled, so as wee shalbe sure of the victorie, because hee will fight for vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs so to feele them, as wee may not proceede to prouoke his wrath through our vnthankfulnesse; but that seeing he hath giuen vs the infinite treasure of his holy worde, whereby wee haue full assurance of our saluation; wee may imbrace it with all reuerence and liue in such pureneſſe of heart before him, as hee may bestowe his riches more and more vppon vs & make vs partakers of them, and that wee may walke the whole race of our life after such sort in his obedience, as wee may moreouer resist all our enemies, and by the power of the spirituall sworde of his worde, and of the shield of faith, beate backe all the assaultes that shalbe made vppon vs. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the xij. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxvij Sermon, which is the second vpon the thirteenth Chapter.

2.3 And the signe or miracle, &c.

4 Yee shall walke after the Lorde your God, and feare him, and keepe his commaundements, and obey his voyce, and serue him, and sticke to him:

5 But that Prophet or dreamer of dreames shalbee put to death: for hee hath spoken to turne you from the Lorde your God (which hath brought you out of the lande of Egypt, and deliuered you from the house of bondage) and to thrust thee out of the way which the Lorde thy God hath commaunded thee to walke in. And so shall you ridde away the euill from among you.

WEe sawe yesterday wherefore God giueth the brydle to Satan, in such wise, that hee soweth many errours and corruptions, not onely in the worlde, but also in the Church. For it is good reason that our faith should be tryed, to proue whether we liue in vprightnesse, soundnes, and loue before our God, or whether there be any fayrednesse in vs. And there is not a meane to try all thereof, than when wee come to the encounter to know, whether Gods trueth ought to bee inuincible against all errours and leasings. And therefore let it not offende vs when wee see him sowe darnell: but let vs bethinke vs of that which is sayde here, namely, that our Lorde will search vs to the harde bottome, whether wee beare reuerence to his worde in good earnest and vnfeynedly or no. Not that hee knoweth not verynough what wee bee; (for it is not for himselfe that hee doeth it:) but to the ende that our faith should shewe it selfe, and that there shoulde be true record thereof.

Nowe moreouer it is tolde vs, *that wee must follow Gods worde and hearken to him, that wee may serue him and sticke to him.* And this is still to shewe vs that which I haue declared afore: namely, that wee can neuer bee at any stay, vnlesse wee knowe well what God it is whome wee worship. For if wee bee in doute, there needeth nothing to shake vs downe, as wee see by experience. Therefore let vs learne to profite so in our Gods schoole, as wee may not bee remoued by false doctrines, but may haue wherewith to withstande the sleightes of Satan, as was declared more at large yesterday.

But let vs goe backe againe to this saying, *that although the false Prophet haue giuen some signe or foretolde some wonder, and the same thing is come to passe: yet notwithstanding wee must hold our owne still.* Here it might be demaunded whether the diuell can prophesie or no. I stande not much vppon that, it is not materiall: but I haue aunswered before, that GOD is aboue him, and that it is his will that his Church shoulde liue in warrefare, to the ende that the faith of all his might be exercised. Then if a deceiuer foretell a thing, and the same fal out in deede: it is not to bee laide, but that GOD hath giuen him the brydle. Therefore it is not for vs to trouble

our selues greatly, to knowe whether Satan foresee thinges to come or no. For it is very certaine that notwithstanding all the craft and subtletie that is in him, yet knoweth hee not any more than our Lorde imparteth vnto him. And all is to deceiue the vnbeleeuers according to their desert: or elſe to ſhewe, that doe what he can, yet ſhall hee neuer get the vpper hande of the choſen, as is ſayde in other places of the ſcripture.

Matt. 24. 24 & Iohn. 10. 28, 29.

Let vs then leaue theſe needeleſſe queſtions, whereby many folke haue deceiued and intangled them ſelues, to wit, whether the diuels doe knowe more than men doe: for it is nothing to the matter as I ſayde afore. But rather let vs vnderſtande this iuſtice of GOD, that it is his will to puniſh the vnbeleeuers, becauſe they bee neuer contented with the ſingle trueth, but will needes bee ſtill wandering here and there, and therefore are they woorthie of ſuch payment. Beſides this, the faithfull alſo are exerciſed by incounters; and that is alwayes to their benefite, and to their welfare. For God doeth ſo preſerue them, as it is not poſſible for them to be deceiued.

But as yet there remayneth one queſtion more: for it is ſaide in the eyghteenth Chapter, that a man may diſcerne a true Prophet from a deceiuer by this ſelfe ſame marke. If a Prophet (ſayth Moſes) haue foretolde a thing, and the ſame is come to paſſe: yee ſhall vnderſtand that that Prophet hath ſpoken truely and in the name of God. But if he be founde a lyar in the thinges that hee hath ſpoken, it appeareth that he was puffed vp with pryde and preſumption, & that he tooke too highly vpon him: and therefore let him be driuen away and rooted out from among you. It may ſeeme at the firſt bluſh, that here is ſome contrarietie: but wee muſt marke that in ſo ſaying, Moſes intendeth to declare, that God deceiueth not his ſeruauntes as the ydols are wont to doe, that is to ſay, as the diuels haue vnder the title of ydols deceiued the ignorant wretches that did put their truſt in them. For they foretolde lyes: and the people founde them ſelues diſappointed in giuing eare vnto them. And that is the cauſe why it is ſayd by the Prophet Eſay, that the gods of the Heathen can do neither good nor euill. But our Lord ſeparateth himſelfe there from all the gods that had beene inuented by mans deuiſe, and telleth vs ſaying: It belongeth to mee onely to ſhewe what is to come. And why? For I order all things, and I haue the worlde in my hande; and therefore I can well tel what ſhal come to paſſe. But as for ſ ydols, they haue no power at all: and therefore howe can they declare any thing to ſuch as ſerue and worſhip them? This then is true in general. And according hereunto, the Prophet Ieremie ſpeaking to Hananiah in his eyght and twentith Chapter, confirmeth this ſaying of Moſes which wee ſhall ſee in the eyghteenth Chapter of this booke of Deuteronomie. I wiſhe (ſayth hee) that the thing which thou haſt foretolde may come to paſſe. For, that lyar did ſoade the people with vaine hope. When Ieremie told them

Deut. 18. 22

Eſa. 41. 23. 46. 17.

Ier. 28. 9.

ſayings you haue offended your God too much, and haue continued in your wilfulneſſe vnto this daye; I haue often times warned you to come to amendement, but you would not heare mee, and therefore wee bee come now to the laſt caſt; thinke not that GOD will beare with you any longer, but prepare your ſelues to beare the yoke and burthen; for yee muſt bee caryed away to Babylon, where your ſtate ſhalbe miſerable; Becauſe you haue forſaken your God, hee hath giuen you ouer to bee a praye to your enemies, and therefore there is no more remedie but to diſpoſe your ſelues to patience, that this aduerſitie may tame you, and your GOD ſhewe pitie vnto you at the ende of the terme which hee hath ſet you: Hananiah ſetting himſelfe againſt him, ſaide no, feare not that any ſuch thing ſhall befall you. And therewithall hee went and put a yoke vppon his neck, in skorne of Ieremie who had worne beades & lynes about his necke. Beholde (ſayes hee) I come to breake the thing that Ieremie hath ſhewed you for a ſigne that you muſt bee priſoners in Babylon. Very well (ſayde the Prophet Ieremie:) I woulde it were ſo; I wiſh not any harme to my countryfolke: but yet muſt not thou on the other ſide abuſe them with vayne hope as thou doeſt. Moreouer, thou ſhalt finde whether it bee ſo or no: and experience ſhall ſhewe whether thou bee a true Prophet or no: for whoſoeuer foretelleth a thing and the ſame commeth to paſſe; yeelds proofe that hee was ſent of God, and that hee ſpake out of Gods owne mouth. But if it come not to paſſe, it appeareth that all was but a lye. In that place Ieremie had an eye to the ſaide text which wee ſhall ſee hereafter. You ſee then howe it is a generall rule for all of vs to holde, that it belongeth onely to God to foretell thinges to come, and that ſuch as declare thoſe things truely, do by that token ſhewe and proue themſelues to be true Prophets. Notwithſtanding, it may well bee that ſometime GOD will permit a deceiuer to foretell ſome thing to come. And yet doeth not that ſtaine the generall rule. For why? when our Lorde foretelleth things to come, it is to frame al men to his lawe: And the falſe prophets what by they? In abuſing the people, and turning them from God, they promiſe them that all ſhall go well with them: whereas contrariwiſe Gods ſeruauntes doe alwayes matche faith and amendement of life with their admonitions: and they vſe a kinde of teaching that hath a good foundation to buylde vppon: but the ſpeaking of the other ſort is altogither in the aire. Now wee ſee howe deſirous the worlde is to be beguyled, accordingly as it is ſayde in the Prophet Micheas, that the vnbeleeuers doe like of thoſe but ſuch as bring them good tydinges of a good vintage or of a good harueſt. For ſo ſaith hee expreſſely, when it is ſayde vnto them, Yee ſhall bee farre fedde, and GOD ſhewereth you, take no thought, make good cheare. Thoſe are the thinges which the worlde deſireth. Neuertheleſſe GOD will

Mich. 2. 11.

that

then permitte the deceiuers to speake trueth: but that is but in some peculiar case, and then doe they builde without foundation. Therefore is that no impediment to the continuall trueth of this rule, that when Gods prophetes foretell thinges to come, it is a proofe to warrant their doctrine, so as men may thereby knowe of whome they bee sent. For in verie deede although there appeare some trueth at the first blushe in the false prophetes: yet notwithstanding there is no holde of it. Marke that for one speciall point. Againe all the matter lyeth in the falling out, which in the ende sheweth it selfe cleane contrarie to that whiche was surmised. For in the turning of a hande all thinges goe backewarde, and the vnbeleeuers finde that it was but a blearing of their eyes to make them the more blockishe; and that their hasing of some trewe signe was but a baite to beguyle them, whereas in ỹ meane time they ceased not to hoorde vp Gods wrath & vengeance still against themselues.

Then let vs beare well in minde, that whereas it is sayde in this text, that a prophete may fore say some thing that shall come to passe afterwarde, and yet neuertheless not haue the more warraunt to bee taken for a seruaunt of GOD: the reason is, for that his matter hath no grounde in the worde of GOD, as I haue sayde afore: And secondely, that it is but as a heate, and a peculiar case, whereof there is no holde to be taken; like as when God suffereth Satan to transforme himselfe into an Angell of light, it is to harden the vnbeleeuers as they deserue to bee. And because they woulde not enioy the light, therefore must the darkenesse be made the thicker for them, and the deuill must haue all manner of effectualnesse of errour, as sayth Saint Paule in the seconde to the Thessalonians, insomuch that GOD not onely giueth him leaue to deceiue, as a point belonging peculiarly to his office, and as wherein hee is his owne minister: but also giueth him suche efficacie of errour, that is to saye such force and power, that men are blinded by him beyonde all measure. Thus yee see what wee haue to note. And therefore wee bee warned in effect, to pray GOD to giue vs the spirite of wisedom and discretion, that wee may not be snarled by Sathans lyes, what colour or couerte of craftinesse so euer he vse. Marke this for one point, that men must in any wise beware of presumption. For they be not so well able to iudge as were requisite. But let vs resorte vnto God, and hee will make vs to discerne betweene whyte and blacke.

Againe on the contrarie part, we must vnderstande that whensoeuer any good is promised vs, or any euill is threatened vs, wee must take Gods doctrine for our foundation, assuring ourselues that Gods will is not to separate his blessing and grace from his Lawe; And therefore that it is in vaine for vs to hope for fauour at his hande when wee haue offended him. For seeing wee haue prouoked his wrath wee shall finde that his threatening of vs is not in vayn; seeing that hee sayeth in his Lawe, that hee will persecute all such as sette themselues against him; it must needes bee performed. Therefore let vs first lay the foundation of faith and repentaunce; and then shall wee not be deceiued as in respect of the particular prophesies, but that this rule shall alwayes holde trewe, to witte, that such as speake the trueth are sent of GOD. Yet notwithstanding Sathan will not leaue off to haue leaue after a certaine sorte to deceiue the vnbeleeuers as they bee worthie: but that trueth is no trueth (as sayeth Saincte Paul): such miracles are but illusions to deceiue those that trust to them, and the ende that they tende vnto is but to seduce the wretched world. After the same maner also doeth our Lorde Iesus speake of them. And therefore let vs marke wel that although the deceiuers haue a showe of trueth in some particular case, yet is it nothing woorth: for there is no holde of it: and it is so farre off from any substantial trueth, that in the ende it appeareth to bee vtter vanitie and vntrueth, to deceiue the wretched vnbeleeuers withall, which are turned away from God. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to marke vpon this text. But howsoeuer the worlde goe, if we put the thinges in vre which are spoken here by Moses, that is to wit, if we followe the Lorde and walke in the way which hee sheweth vs: wee neede not to feare but that we be out of all danger of being deceiued by the wylinesse of our enemie. Although the deuill be the father of lying, and doe forge an infinite number of illusions against vs, and although wee on our side be neuer so roughly assayled by him: yet will GOD preserue vs, so wee abide continually in the obedience of his worde, and be willing to harken to him in all cases.

2. Thes. 2. 9. 10.

Matt. 24. 24.

But nowe let vs come to that which Moses addeth. *As for the prophet* (sayeth hee) *or the deceiuer which shall haue dreamed and deuised suche, to make them turne away from the Lorde their God; Let him be put to death, and he shall be taken from among you.* Here our Lorde will haue vs not onely to beware that wee harken not to false prophetes, but also to roote out such pestilent persons vtterly. And therein he sheweth how earnest wee ought to be in the maintayning of his honour. Therefore to the ende wee shoulde abide in the pure singlenesse of faith, he had sayd afore, Beware that yee harken not to the false prophete. And not without cause hath our Lorde forbidden all his to giue eare to the bringers in of newe learninges. For why? Sith wee haue the worde of GOD, that ought to content vs well ynough: and if that will not suffice vs, what an vnthankefulnesse is it? For if wee will needes intangle our selues in false doctrines, is it not a yeelding of our selues to bee a pray to Satan? Doe wee not well deserue that God should leaue vs destitute of vnderstanding, to be drawen into all errours like brute beasts? But it behoueth vs not onely to shunne false prophetes and to giue their subtilties no

entraunce into vs? but also (as Saint Paul sayth) to bee diligent in purging of Gods Churche from them, that such a plague be not nourished among vs. And truely if wee knewe our owne frailtie, and considered well on the other side what Sathan is able to doe against vs: it is certaine that wee woulde stande more vppon our garde than we be wont to doe. Trewe it is (as I haue sayde alreadie) that wee woulde fayne repose and staye our selues vppon GOD, so as we might not minister any occasion to Satan to beguyle vs; and surely if wee through our owne fonde desire of seeking lyes, did not cast ourselues into Sathans snares, wee shoulde be sure that GOD woulde alwayes preserue vs. But forasmuch as we bee too too weake, and Sathan needes no more but to holde vppe his finger to vs, to carrie vs out of hande from the right way of saluation: in respect thereof wee ought so much the more to seeke the remedies whereby to preuent the mischiefe. Againe let vs consider what Satan is able to doe: He is the prince of this worlde, and therefore wee shall soone be ouertaken by him, the rather if wee be slothfull, careleſſe, or negligent. Then is it not without cause that our Lorde warneth vs to take so good order, as such a plague may not lurke among vs; that is to wit, that wee may not haue deceiuers to beguile the simple, and to marre them by turning them from the pure trueth. For it is a likelihoode that wee woulde faine bee turned away from GOD, when wee giue the mischiefe such scope. If there were a breach in our towne-wall, and our enemies were at hand or that wee were alreadie beseeged, so as wee looked for the assault euerie minute of an houre; would we not prouide for it? Now the case standeth so with vs, that our enemie is not onely at hande, but also is entered in already. When wee heare his lyes, and withstand them not, ne make account of them; we may seeme to be wilfully disposed to perish, as wee bee worthie. And as touching vs that are shepheardes, it standeth vs in hande to haue a double voyce. For wee must gather together the sheepe as much as is possible: and when they bee in the flocke, wee must keepe them there quietly. But if there be wolues also, and theeues that woulde inuade the flocke: against those we must crye out aloude. And yet besides this, such as haue the sworde in their hande, must prouide for it also, and euerie man to his power must streine himselfe to keepe Gods Church from infecting with suche poyson, that the deuill may not haue his full scope to falsifie the pure trueth, to aduaunce himselfe against GOD, to ouerthrowe the right religion, and (at a worde) to turne all thinges vpside downe: but we must let these thinges as much as we can. Wherefore let vs marke, that it was Gods will that falseprophetes shoulde be rooted out from among his people. Nowe at the first sight this Lawe seemeth to bee ouerstreite: for is it meete that a man shoulde bee punished so sore for speaking his minde? Verily it is a wonder that we can abide that one shoulde be punished for speaking against a mortall man, and that when a man shall haue blasphemed the liuing GOD, we coulde finde in our hearte that he shoulde scape vnpunished. It appeareth what zeale is in them, which woulde haue such rigour abolished. If a Prince be misused, man will thinke that death is too small a thing for the offender, and that the fact can not be sufficiently reuenged, insomuch that whosoeuer speaketh against the princes authoritie shall bee punished, and no man will speake against it. If a man be founde so wicked as to procure a rebellion, or to rayse an insurrection among the people, verie well, he must loose his heade for it, and no man will say that such a Lawe is vniust or wicked. And why? Because it serues for the mainteynaunce of the state and common weale of the Countrey. And yet for all this, whereas GOD hath the soueraigne dominion of all, a woorme of the earth shall seeke himselfe against him, and goe about to robbe him of his honour, and to deface his maiestie and authoritie; and yet all this shall be as nothing, it shall be let slippe, and because it is but words, there is no reason why such punishement shoulde ensewe of it. But they that say so, doe well shewe that they haue no loue at all towarde GOD, but (which worse is) that they coulde finde in their heartes that all thinges were confounded together in a hotchpotche, so as man might scoffe at GOD and at his maiestie, and turne all religion into a mockerie and scorne. To be shorte, whosoeuer he is that speaketh so he is not to be taken for an ignoraunte person, seeing hee woulde that false doctrines shoulde be vnpunished: but rather hee is to bee counted a despiser of GOD, and an vphoulder of the deuill, which seeketh nothing else but the vndoing of all thinges vpside downe in the world. For our parte, lette vs learne to haue Gods honour in such estimation, that whereas we reuenge the wronges doone to men, wee thinke it much more reason that the partie shoulde bee punished which violateth the maiestie of him that hath created and fashioned vs. And the matter concerneth not onely the honour of God, but also the saluation of our owne soules: for they be thinges inseparable. And that ought well to whette vs on the more, not to beare with the errours and deceites of false prophetes.

Gal. 5. 9. 12. & Tit. 3. 10.

Iohn 12. 31.

See howe GOD witnesseth the infinite Loue that hee beareth vs, in that hee matcheth our saluation with his owne glorie, so as men cannot touche the one without hurting of the other: insomuch that if a man deface the honour of GOD, the saluation of man is ouerthrowen therewithall. In respect whereof GOD sayeth vnto vs, Suffer mee not to bee mocked among you, nor your selues to bee inticed to shrinke from my obedience: But if there be any wicked man among you, that goeth about to egge you away, beware yee nourishe no such a plague. Doeth not our Lorde in so saying shewe, that wee can not serue to his honour, nor maynteine him in his estate, but that in so doing wee procure our owne welfare? And therefore these dalyers and mockers that would

woulde haue vs to beare with all manner of false doctrine, and that it shoulde bee Lawefull for euerie man to spewe out whatsoeuer hee lyſteth, (beſides that they shewe themselues traitours to GOD, and vtter defacers of his maiestie if it lay in them to doe it:) doe also bewraye themselues to bee enemies of mankinde, and desirous to bring their soules to ruine and destruction, so as they bee worse than murtherers. Let vs marke then that if Gods honour bee precious in our sight, and that the saluation of our owne soules bee deere vnto vs; we must not nourishe heresies, nor abuses, nor any other of Sathans trumperies; but euerie of vs in his owne state and calling, must procure the purging of Gods Churche from all euill, that wee may worshippe him with one common consent, that his doctrine may bee receiued, and that there may bee no diuision among vs.

But this was sayde to the people of olde time. Yea, and Gods honour must not be diminished by vs at this day: the reasons that I haue alreadye alreadie doe serue as well for vs as for them. Then lette vs not thinke that this Lawe is a speciall Lawe for the Iewes: but let vs vnderstande that GOD intended to deliuer vs a generall rule, to which wee must tye our selues. In deede it is alleadged that when our Lorde Iesus Christ came into the worlde, he aduanced not his doctrine by the sworde, but rather both he and his were persecuted, and therefore that the right way to maynteine the true religion, is not to punishe such as set vppe themselues against it: but rather to holde our selues contented with the spirituall swoorde, and to vse that in our fighting against Satan, so as our vpholding of the trueth, bee alwayes by sufferance and patience, if the worlde doe persecute it. But lette vs see whether our Lorde haue excluded and banished Princes and Magistrates and Officers of Iustice out of his flocke, so as they may not be Christians. No surely. For when he speaketh of the kingdome of our Lorde Iesus Christe, hee sayeth expressly; Yee kinges stande you in awe; and yee Iudges of the earth, humble you your selues, and all of you kisse the sonne. Moreouer, before hee spoke to priuate persons, hee willeth expressly that Kinges, Iudges, and Officers of Iustice shoulde doe homage to our Lorde Iesus Christ: then they bee called to the knowledge of the Gospell. And in deede, according hereunto it is sayde in the Psalme, that kinges shall come to submitte themselues to him that was to bee sent to be the redeemer. And againe that they shal be as foster fathers to the Churche, and that Queenes shall giue her sucke; that is to saye, that such as haue the sworde of Iustice in their hande, shall take Gods Churche into their protection to maintaine it in the pure doctrine, and in the same Religion that is set downe in Gods worde. Sith it is so, it is to be concluded, not only that it is Lawefull for all Kinges and Magistrates, to punish heretikes and such as haue peruerted the pure trueth: but also that they be bounde to doe it, and that they misbehaue themselues towardes GOD, if they suffer errours to rouse without redresse, and employ not their whole power to shewe a greater zeale in that behalfe than in all other thinges. For is it reason that he which sitteth in the seate of Iustice, shoulde punishe a theefe for doing wrong but to the valewe of fiue shillinges: and in the meane while let a traytour to GOD goe vnpunished? Gods name is thereby blasphemed, his 2.Cor.3.18.
trueth whiche is his image is trampled vnder foote, and it is much more than if a man should rende some [princes] Coccarmour in peeces. In so dooing the liuing image of GOD is skorned, and as it were spitted at, and the saluation of mennes soules hindered: and shall the Magistrates sit still at it like ydolles? They must punish a theefe for the valewe of fiftreene pence, and beholde, this is such a traytour as goeth about to confounde heauen and earth together, and must the same go vnpunished? What a dealing were that? Doeth not euen nature teache what is to be doone in this behalfe? And as for those that say that we should let the euill weedes growe still, doe they not shewe themselues to be growen out of kinde like monsters, and that they bee more intollerable than if they were starke madde? For it shoulde seeme that their meaning is to defie the whole order of nature, and men see that they not onely speake against GOD, but also poyson mennes soules, and bewray themselues not to haue one droppe of setled discretion. Nowe then let vs marke, that sith God hath declared that in the reigne of his Sonne, euen kinges shoulde bee called to the knowledge of the trueth, and become a parte of his Church: It behoueth them to giue example to their people, and it is good reason that they shoulde employ their whole power and authoritie to maintaine the good doctrine, and to cause GOD to be honored and serued, and to driue away all ydolatrie and superstition, and to see that it bee not Lawefull for anie man to spewe our blasphemies agaynst GOD. That is the thing which we haue to marke vpon this place.

And whereasit is alleadged that Iesus Christ vsed not the materiall sworde to aduaunce his doctrine withall: that is true, and wee also bring not the sworde in our hande into the pulpit to prooue the things that wee preache. But lette vs learne to put a difference betweene offices, and let vs consider howe our Lorde Iesus Christe came to preache his worde, when hee woulde that such as receiue it should euerie man in his owne state and calling, followe whatsoeuer is ordeined for him. Nowe it is true that in the time of our Lorde Iesus Christ, the great men of the worlde claue not to the Gospell, no more than we see them doe yet still at this day: but the little ones and weakelinges were faine to be chosen, thereby to beate downe the pride of the worlde, as Saint Paule auoweth in the first to the Corinthians. Ye see (sayeth he) that 1.Cor.1.26
there bee not many noble men, men of power, or wise men among you. And why? For men

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are but too much giuen to the aduauncing of themselues: and if God had begunne at the great ones, the litle ones shoulde haue seemed as nothing. But God ment to beate downe all pride, that men might learne to chalendge nothing to themselues. Notwithstanding howesoeuer the case stand, when the great ones are called to the seruice of God, then must they imploy themselues in the thinges that belong to their charge. For the thinges that I alleadged out of Esay, Dauid, and diuerse other Psalmes, belong to the reigne of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and to the state of the Christian Church. Therefore must we needes conclude, that our Lorde will haue Princes and magistrates to vse the sworde that is giuen them, to the mainteynaunce of his honour, and of the vnitie of faith and good agreement; so as if any man rayse vp trouble or goe about to sowe darnell, he may be rooted out. But is not that punishment too rigorous? [Yes:] for some will well ynough graunt (as constrained thereunto) that it is good that heresies shoulde be repressed: but that it were too great an extremitie to proceede so farre as to punishe them with death. Yea, but (as I sayde afore) wee must esteeme Gods honour as it deserueth. For if wee woulde that deceiuers shoulde be reprooued, so as they might not haue their mouthes open, and yet that they shoulde not bee vtterly suppressed as were requisite: it were all one as if we shoulde say, In deede we ought to please God, but as for to put a man to death for blaspheming him, what a thing were that? Loe at what point we be.

But God for all that, will not faile to be had in estimation as I sayde afore: yea and that to our cost, if wee goe that way to worke. For the very cause in deede, why we see the worlde infected with so many troubles and errours, is our lasines in that wee haue neither zeale nor disposition to beate downe the leasinges of Satan. Nay rather (which worse is) there are a great number which maintaine them willingly. And yet in the meane while men crye out that all thinges are confounded, that all thinges goe to hauocke, and that there are so greate troubles as is pitie to beholde. And what is the cause thereof? Euen the princes that are willing to maintaine errours, and further them by all the meanes they can, so as it may seeme that they bee of Satans setting vp, as it were to vpholde his part against God and his worde. Their people likewise desire nothing so much, as to be fedde with lyes; that is al their seeking, and God sendeth it them. For (as I haue shewed afore) it is a iust rewarde for them. Why then should men cry alas, or why should they be greeued at the matter, when all men both great and small seeke the vtter defacing of Gods trueth, and to giue scope to all manner of leasinges? Therefore let vs learne in any wise to haue the zeale and affectiō which our Lorde commaundeth vs: or else it wil come to passe that heresies and errours shall in the end picke out our eyes, if we feede them still as wee be seene to doe. Let vs take the forementioned example of Ananias, and Ieremie. Ieremie taught in the name of God, and it was prooued sufficiently that hee stepped not forth on his owne heade: and yet for all that, the people woulde haue hadde him to let them alone, that euerie man might haue followed his owne wicked lusts, they could not away with him. God his threatninges were to corrasiue, and therefore euery man sought to withstande Ieremie. Yea (quoth they) shall this fellowe trouble vs thus continually? Nowe hereupon God sent a deceiuer that went about to make Ieremie a lyer before all the people assembled in the Temple: and no doubt but a great number were assembled at it specially such as might consider, or say thus: What? We haue heere the Temple of God, as he himselfe appointed, and it is the place where he will be worshipped; wee haue the Lawe, we haue Gods promise that he will dwell among vs for euer. And yet nowe beholde, heere are two prophetes, of whome the one sayes, ye shall go into captiuitie, and the other sayes, it shall not be so. Besides this the deceiuer fell to bobbing of Ieremie as it were to shame him, and giueth him the lye, so as Gods prophet was faine to stande there as abashed at the sight of such trouble. By reason whereof many might be remoued as I sayde afore. But what? Let vs a little consider the state of that people. For when the gouernours were assembled, (which ought to haue mainteyned the pure religion, and had the prophet Ieremie as it were in their keeping) they to shewe themselues voyde of all ielousie, did not onely sette themselues against Ieremie, but also (which worse is) affirme him to be worthie of death. Thus yee see howe Gods prophet was condemned both of great and small: insomuch that euerie man ranne vpon him. For they were fully bent to giue themselues to all wickednesse, and to bee no more threatned in the name of GOD. If wee see the like nowe adayes, let vs vnderstande that we bee worthy of such payment. For without going anie further, for all the preaching of the Gospell among vs, howe is it receiued? what reuerence yeelde wee to it? All men rush out into disorder, and we needde not speake any more of the popishe superstitions: for there is to double wickednesse to bee seene, that euen such as haue beene counted the simplest cloynes, are fraught full of blasphemies to spyte GOD withall, and to laugh his worde openly to skorne. You see what murmuring there is, specially when vices are rebuked. To be shorte, whereas our desire is to haue dumbe dogges, such as may haue no authoritie at all to speake, and ydle people, drunkardes, glutrons, Leacherers, and I wote not what else. At a worde, men would haue either dogges or swine in the pulpit. This is the thing that they seeke for; And this is mennes desires in most places; who in steade of good and faithfull seruauntes to GOD, doe choose dogges and swine. And if a man seeke the remedie and the redresse of it: Hee must goe to the newefounde yles, for there is no man heere that will meddle with it. Sith we see such dealing, let vs consider what manner of obedience and feare of God there is in such folke. So much

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much the more therfore doth it ſtand vs in hand to beare ỹ exhortation wel in mind which I haue ſet downe alreadie: namely ỹ Gods working of our ſaluation is alwayes matched with his owne glorie. And therefore whenſoeuer he perſwadeth vs to maintaine his honour, it is all one as ifhe ſayd, Ye wretched people, if ye make reckening of the ſaluation of your owne ſoules: yee muſt prouide alſo that I may beare ſway among you, and that I may be honored: and therefore ſee that yee lay for it. Gods meaning then hereby is to ſhewe vs that he will haue his honour maintcined by making vs furtherers of his caſe, and that he will haue vs to ſette it foreward as much as in vs lyes, or elſe we ſhalbe a pray to the deuill. Seeing that hee vttereth ſuch loue towardes vs, it is no reaſon that wee on our ſide ſhoulde be negligent: but it behoueth vs to indeuour that errours and hereſies may be rooted out from among vs. For if we doe not, we muſt looke for the rewarde that I ſpake of, and God giueth vs too much proofe of it. On the other ſide when wee followe the order that is ſhewed vs heere, we muſt vnderſtande that it behoueth vs to haue Gods honour in ſuch eſtimation, as all other thinges may bee nothing with vs in compariſon of that. Which thing will come to paſſe, if wee ſticke ſtedfaſtly to his worde, and holde our ſelues to it though wee bee aſſaulted on all ſides; and ſpecially if wee reſiſt the miſchiefe by looking to it aforehande, ſo as it neſle not among vs. Therefore let vs take heede that we bende our ſelues to it euerie man in his calling; and then wee needе not to doubt but that GOD will ſtrengthen vs and ſtabliſh vs in the faith which wee haue receiued of him, ſo as we ſhal continue ſtedfaſtly therein vnto the end, and be throughly well fenced againſt all the aſſaultes of Satan and his vnderlinges.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs perceiue them better, And therewithall foraſmuch as wee ſhould ſoone be ouertaken by falſe teachers, let vs flee for ſiccour to our God, and yeelde him thankes for his ridding of vs from the hereſies and errours wherein wee were snarled, and for his giuing of vs the foode of life; praying him to make vs to taſt thereof in ſuch wiſe, as wee may neuer be turned away from it, but wiſely diſcerne the way of life and the way of death aſunder, to the ende that our ſaluation may bee kept ſafe in his handes, and we in the meane while eſchewe the wyles that Satan worketh againſt euerie of vs particularly, ſo as wee may put them from vs luſtily, and they haue no acceſſe vnto vs: but that wee may ſticke ſo ſtedfaſtly to our God, as our whole ſeeking may be to acknowledge him for our king, and wee behaue our ſelues as his people, that hee alſo may alwayes auowe vs to be ſo. That it may pleaſe him to grant this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth. &c.

On Wedneſday the xvj. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxviij. Sermon which is the third vpon the thirteenth Chapter.

6 If thine owne brother the ſonne of thy Mother, or thine owne ſonne, or thy daughter, or the wife that is in thy boſomme, or thy neighbour that is to thee as thyne owne ſoule, goe about to intice thee, ſaying ſecretly, Let vs goe and ſerue other gods which thou haſt not knowen, nor yet thy fathers:

7 That is to wit, any of the gods of the nations that are about thee, whether they bee neere thee or farre off from thee, from the one ſide of the earth to the other:

8 Conſent not to him, neither giue eare vnto him: neither let thine eye fauour him, ſhewe him not any pitie, neither conceale him.

9 But thou ſhalt put him to death, thy hande ſhalbe the firſt vpon him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people.

10 And thou ſhalt ſtone him with ſtones and ſo he ſhall die: (for he hath ſought to thruſt thee from the Lorde thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the houſe of bondage:)

11 That all Iſraell may heare and be afraide, and not doe ſuch a wicked thing among you any more.

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Pſal.69.10. HAd we the zeale in vs that is ſpoken of in the Pſalme, that wee tooke the reproch which is done vnto GOD, as if it were offered to our ſelues: this lawe here were in a manner needeleſſe. For euerie of vs woulde willingly of his owne accorde indeuour to maintaine Gods honour. But nowe inaſmuch as manie men thinke it to be too exceſſiue rigour to put the troublers and peruerters of religion to death: thereby it appeareth that we deſpiſe Gods honour and make no greate account of it. For euerie of vs would faine haue his owne honour maynteined, and if anie man haue ſtormed againſt vs, wee thinke the time will neuer come ſoone ynough for vs to bee reuenged. If a man doe vs any wrong or iniurie, wee woulde that euerie man ſhoulde ſette himſelfe againſt it in our defence: but if Gods honour bee trampled vnder foote, wee ſette it ſlippe. Wee ſee then howe colde and vnluſtie wee bee, but this vnluſtineſſe of ours deſerueth a more ſhamefull name. For if a man ſuffer his father to bee ſcorned, folke will ſay hee is not worthie to liue in the worlde, becauſe he doeth againſt his kinde. And beholde, GOD is as it were torne in peeces by wicked mennes aduauncing of themſelues to rend aſunder the vnion of the fayth wherethrough it is his will to bee knowen, and whereby it is his will to reigne among vs: and that is borne withall. And is not that a token, that if it lay in vs wee woulde neuer haue any remembraunce of GOD at all? But foraſmuch as there is ſo litle zeale in vs; therefore is this Lawe giuen vs. And GOD declareth that hee is not vnmindefull of his owne maieſtie, but that hee will haue the defacing thereof to bee puniſhed. Naye rather hee ſheweth that hee diſclaymeth vs for his people, if we haue not a ſpeciall regarde of this caſe of his.

Wee haue hearde heeretofore what hath beene ſayde concerning falſe prophetes: namely that if anie man troubled the Churche of GOD, hee ſhoulde bee ſtoned to death without ſparing. Nowe God expreſſeth yet better the thing that he hadde ſpoken: which is, that we muſt put all affections of nature vnder foote, when his honour commeth in queſtion, ſo as the father muſt not ſpare his ſonne, nor the brother his brother, nor the husbande his wife, nor the friend his friende, yis as deere to him as his own life, yhe be not put to death. And good reaſon. For doe not all the friendeſhippes in the worlde proceede of that order of nature whiche the creator hath eſtabliſhed? Then if wee will not ſette the carte before the horſes, wee muſte alwayes beginne at GOD. And Saint Paule Eph.3.15. doeth not without cauſe ſay; that al kinred commeth from thence, and iſſueth out of that fountayne.

Alſo when there is any friendſhippe betweene man and man; it muſt alwayes bee referred to this marke, that GOD haue ſtill the cheife preheminence, and that wee be ioyned together in him. And curſed be al alyaunce that ſeparateth vs from our maker, in whoome conſiſteth all our life, welfare, and ioye. Then if a husbande loue his wife, without regarde of GOD, hee is woorthie to bee thruſt out amonge the brute beaſtes. In like caſe is the father, which ſtandeth not at the ſame marke in louing of his children. If wee be ſo linked together, and haue ſo plighted our faith and trothe one to an other, as wee may ſeeme after a ſorte to haue as ye would ſay but one ſoule in two bodies, and in the meane while GOD be lette alone vnthought on: doo yee not ſee that it is too ſhamefull a beaſtlineſſe? Then is it not without cauſe that GOD hath tolde vs expreſly that his honour is to bee preferred before al worldely or naturall conſiderations. And lette vs marke well the wordes that are ſette downe heere, for they bee of great weight.

Moſes coulde haue ſayde ſingly, *If thy brother, thy wife, thy ſonne, or ſome friende of thine make thee, and goe about to allure thee to worſhippe*, but hee addeth (which is of much more vehemencie) *If thy brother the ſonne of thy mother which laye in the ſame bellie that thou thy ſelfe diddeſt*. And to what ende is this doone of GOD, but to ſearche the bottome of our affections, by entering euen vnto our bowels, as if hee ſhoulde ſay, I will ſee whether yee loue me better than yee doe theſe carkeſſes? For what is thy brother? Hee is but a mortall creature and I will ſee whether thou ſette more ſtore by him than by mee. Naye (ſay wee) but he and I laye both in one bellie. That is trewe, (ſayth GOD:) but is it not meete that I ſhoulde alwayes haue the vppes hande and higheſt preheminence? The ſame caſe is it when hee ſayth, *thine owne ſonne, thine owne daughter, thy wife that ſleepeth in thy boſome*. Hee coulde haue ſayde ſingly; *thy wife*: but hee ſayeth, No, thou muſte forgette and quite and cleane ſhake off all the loue which thou beareſt to thy wife, if ſhee goe about to plucke thee away from me.

Agayne, *If thou haue a friende* (ſayeth hee) *which is as deere to thee as thine owne life*: thou muſt lay thy hande vppon him alſo to ſtone him: thou muſt not onely bee his accuſer and giue euidence againſt him; but thou muſt alſo laye hande vppon him without ſparing: all mercie and pitie muſt bee put away in that caſe. Heereby wee ſee in effect, as I ſayde afore, that Gods will is to trie vs, whether wee truely loue him. And for that cauſe doeth he ſette downe vnto vs whatſoeuer might holde vs backe, or hinder our deſire from ſhewing ſuch zeale as wee ought to haue to the maintenaunce of his honour: declaring vnto vs that if any thing bee an impediment to our continuall keeping of the vnion of fayth aboue all things, in ſuch wiſe as it is contayned in his woorde: wee bee traytoures and falſe hearted towardes him, and hee will ſhake vs off; and in ſtede of taking vs for his children, hee will giue vs ouer and baniſhe vs from his kingdome and his Churche: for hee will haue that order obſerued

obserued among those that are his. Marke that for one point.

And herewithall it behoueth vs to consider of whome hee speaketh. Hee sayeth not onely, if a man goe about to abolish all religion, as wee see some worldlings doe, which couldle finde in their heartes like a sort of dogges and swyne, that men shoulde make a mockerie of all the seruice of God; hee speaketh not of such kinde of men: But his saying is, if a man go about by superstitious meanes to turne thee from mee to the serving of idolles; although it bee of the gods that are moste renowmed in the worlde, in the serving and worshipping of whome, the people that are about thee doe thinke themselues to do well: If any man labour to turne thee from my worde, to make thee followe after those gods: let him bee rooted out.

Nowe then, wee see, that God punisheth, not onely those that woulde abolish all religion: but also those that woulde corrupt his trueth. And therefore for the better vnderstanding of this lawe that is giuen vs heere, let vs marke at a worde, that it is not for vs to saye, There is no God, it is but folly for men to trouble themselues about any deuotion, for wee shall gaine nothing by it: but [wee must consider,] that if a man bee neuer so deuout, and thinke to doo neuer so well, yet if hee turne himselfe to the superstitions of the Heathen like a renegate, and knowe not the true God: hee is condemned. And it is a distinction which wee ought to knowe well inough. For our Lorde sheweth vs, that hee will haue vs to bee contented with his worde, and to rest wholly vppon it, that wee may bee ruled by it, and not attempt to alter any thing, seeing hee hath once declared with his owne mouth what hee alloweth.

And hee saieth expressely, *the gods which our fathers haue knowen.* By this saying hee doeth vs to vnderstande that it behooueth vs to bee well assured of our religion. For to put a man to death without hauing knowen whether it be the true God, were but a frantike zeale, as we see the Papistes doe at this day, and the Heathen haue beene wont to doe at all times, yea, and euen the Iewes also, who haue put this lawe in execution (howbeit amisse) against the prophets. And vnder the same pretence were our Lorde Iesus and his Apostles driuen to suffer persecution.

As for the Heathen, when they made lawes for the obseruing of the manner of religion that was established among them; they had a good grounde and foundation for the thing they did. For it is not ynough for Magistrates to make lawes to represse robberies, murther, and violence; but they knewe also howe it was meete that God should haue the forehande. Nowe if nature taught them so much; what excuse will there bee for vs that professe Christianitie, if we by it is ynough for men to represse robberies, adoueries, murthers, and other such violent and outragious doings that tende to the hurt of priuate persons: and in the meane while make none account of God? What a dealing were that? The Heathen then had a good grounde in that they knewe that in a well ordered Common weale, religion ought to bee obserued, and that if any man attempted ought to the contrarie, he was to be punished: in so much that it was a matter of life and death among them, and it was obserued throughout all the worlde in all ages.

The Iewes did not amisse in beeing zelous in punishing false prophets after that God had giuen them this lawe. Likewise in these dayes, whereas the Papistes say that Heretikes are to bee punished; that is true, wee confesse that they bee worthie of it. But therewithal they ought to come to the poynt that is set downe heere, namely, that it behoooueth vs to knowe which is the GOD whome wee serue, and that wee bee sure that our religion is not a thing set foorth at all aduenture, but that wee holde the infallible trueth of Gods owne sending, and that it is preached vnto vs in his name & by his authoritie: so as it is hee on whome our faith is grounded. It woulde become vs (say I) to come to that poynt. But the Papistes play the beasts in that behalfe, bearing themselues in hand that so they shut their eyes, they may execute their rage and furie vppon innocents.

And after the same manner haue the Heathen ouershot themselues. For, because religion was to bee maintained, they not discerning what they did, not perceiuing whether it was good or euill: did set themselues against the seruauntes of God. Likewise dealt the Iewes with the Prophets. Yee see then here is a point which it standeth vs in hande to wey well all our life long: and that is, that wee must haue knowen the true God, so as wee may iustly and without grudge of conscience condemne the errours which men woulde drawe vs to. Which thing will come to passe, if wee haue the light of Gods worde to shewe vs the way: for thence it is that all good discretion commeth.

Nowe then, to the intent wee may benefite our selues by this text, let vs marke first of all what loue wee ought to beare to our Lord God, when hee hath vttered himselfe vnto vs. Namely that wee must beware that in any wise hee may bee serued without gainsaying, and that the rule which hee hath giuen vs bee vnbroken, and that nothing bee chaunged in his worde, but that we make much more account of the doctrine which wee haue receiued of him, than of our liues. And therefore let vs not bee plucked backe from the saide zeale for any worldly respect as wee see the worlde is, which fauoureth more his owne fleshly affections than God. But howsoeuer the case stande, yet must wee fight against all impedimentes and distresses, vntill the saide zeale doe get the vpper hande in vs, so as wee will rather cause them to dye which seeke the defacing of the true Religion, than suffer such a plague to preuaile in the Church, to the infecting and marring of our selues or of any others.

And hereof wee may gather a good exhortation, which is, that when wee see Gods honour impaired any manner of way, it must greeue vs at the heart, according to the generall saying of the Psalme, concerning all reproches. I say wee must not beare with any thing whatsoeuer it be, whereby Gods honour may be impeached or defaced. But what? Little (in deede) is this doctrine imbraced nowadaies. For blasphemie hath his ful scope euery where; and if a body be to be reproued for so doing; though a dosen persons bee at the hearing of the blasphemie; yet shall not a man finde so much as one witnesse. In this case God ordeyneth all both small and greate to bee his aduocates, and hee will haue euery man to doe him seruice in it. For it needes not to bee sayd to a man, Haue a care to bewray blasphemie when ye heare it: No for hee is knowen to haue beene present; and yet if hee bee asked of it, hee doeth but wring his groyne like a swyne, and saye, I heard him not. Such folke are well worthie, not only that God should plucke their eares from their head, but also vtterly ouerwhelme them. They bee monsters that can heare the name of their maker blasphemed, and yet couer such filthines and suffer it to abyde vnpunished. Is it not reason that God should shew how it is hee to whom they be to yeeld accompt for it? And though he winke at it, yet let not vs thinke that they which forsweare themselues so vntrustily, shall scape scotfree, but that in the ende GOD will shewe howe it is not without cause that hee hath pronounced, that to fauour euill is worse than to doe euill. For it may bee that hee that doeth the euill is carried to it by choler or by some other affection: but as for him that cloketh it, he is not onely a partaker of it, but also a wilfull iustifier of it as it were in despite of GOD: and that is an vtter peruerting of the order of nature. And therefore lette vs learne by that which is tolde vs heere, that euerie of vs must beare such zeale to the mainteinaunce of Gods honour, as not to spare anie kinne or friende, if they steppe vppe to sette themselues against him to whome wee belong, and to whome wee owe all seruice, going about to ouerthrowe his seate, and to disappoint him that hee may no more reigne among vs. And therefore whensoeuer Gods honour is darkened or diminished among vs, let euerie of vs in his state looke to it that we be so zealous as to redresse it to the vttermost of his power. This is y first point which we haue to marke heere.

Psal. 69. 10.

And moreouer, if any man shoulde goe about to alter the Religion, so as GOD shoulde after a sorte bee driuen from among vs; it were meete that our zeale shoulde in that case be kindled yet more. For if wee bee nice in hauing our owne honour touched: what ought wee to be when Gods kingdome is in daunger of vtter dispatch? If there be some wicked practise in a Citie, so as some treason, insurrection or alteration of the state is a bruing, and one hauing but some secret incling of it tolde him in his eare, doe conceine it; shall hee not bee taken as necessarie, and bee adiudged woorthie of punishment? If it be proued against a man that some wicked treason was a practising; and hee heard of the matter and yet discouered it not; he shall be punished as a traytour, and men will say hee was well worthie of such punishment. And shall we bee holde excused of our silence, when an insurrection is made against GOD, and men goe about to ouerthrowe his holy temple, that he might not dwell any more among vs, so as they indeuour to deface his maiestie, and furthermore to cast vp the saluation of mens soules as a pray to Satan, and wee say nothing to it? Doeth not our dissimulation import both treacherie and periurie against GOD? Yea notwithstanding there be some so farre past shame, that they demaunde at euerie turne, Who is he that findeth faulte with mee? Whome haue I wronged? Behoulde, hee hath played the blasphemous and wicked wretche, in finding out some matter so vglye against GOD, as hee ought to be rooted out for it; and yet hee sayes, Who complaines of mee? If hee had taken but fifteene pence, he shoulde be whipped: and for the seconde or thirde offence, he should go to the gallowes: and like a Churcherayser hath trampled Gods maiestie vnder foote, and in hee hath doone worse than the theefe that cuttes a trauellers throte, in a wood; and yet his owne seeming he is iust still. And whereof commeth this, but of the foresaid lasinesse, that no man bethinks himself of his duetie in that behalfe? GOD doeth vs the honour to make vs mainteyners of his trueth, as though he made vs a solemne commission of it.

And is not that such a preheminence, as of duetie ought to make euerie of vs to driue himselfe (yea euen beyonde his power) to haue a constant and inuincible zeale in causing men to serue and honour GOD? For if a prince imployed a man in his affaires, and did put him in commission; hee woulde straine himselfe to farre, as he woulde euen hazarde his life; and hee woulde thinke that what paine so euer he tooke, though he did much more, yet all were too litle seeing hee hadde so honourable a charge.

Beholde, the liuing GOD taketh vs as if wee were his defenders, and willeth vs to represent his owne person: and yet for all that, we despise all those thinges; when Gods name is blasphemed wee make no reckening of it; the partie himselfe that hath taken the office to conceale no such thing, shall playe the traytour first. And therefore it is no wonder though wicked folke take such libertie, and when they bee conuicted, they alleadge that no man complaines of them, & that they haue done no man any wrong.

For were wee the true children of GOD, surely wee woulde tender the wronges that are doone to him, more than the wronges that are doone to our selues, and wee would take them much forer to hearte.

Je

For if wee our selues bee offended, is it any great matter? But when Gods holy name is lightly esteemed, and reproched; then wee ought to bee verie tender hearted. And because wee thinke not of it; when wee haue blasphemed God, wee say wee haue done no man any wrong.

Furthermore, let vs consider (as I haue saide afore) that if wee must endeuour by all the meanes wee can to haue swearing redressed: much more reason is it that wee shoulde not suffer any man to step vp to trouble the Church, and to make any rebellion, but vtterly roote out such a pestilent fellowe out of hande. But yet before all other thinges, let vs looke that wee knowe Gods trueth afore hand, that wee may be able to maintaine the same: for without that, wee shall goe lumpishly to worke, and our zeale shalbee but as the rage of madfolkes, as I haue already shewed by the examples of the heathen men, Iewes, and Papistes. The Papistes haue a faire colour, in saying that if a man deface the maiestie of a Prince, hee shall not scape vnpunished: and therefore it is much more reason that men shoulde bee punished for setting themselues against God. Yea: but in the meane while they wote not what GOD they worship: for they bee carried away with their owne wicked and diuelish superstitions. Let vs marke then, that wee must not take this lawe here at aduenture; but that to begin well, wee must lay this foundation, that wee bee sure that the religion which wee holde is of God. As for example, wee haue the holy Scripture; and there our Lorde hath shewed vs his will. Hee protesteth by his Prophet Esay that hee hath not spoken vainly nor couertly, nor meant to beguile men in bidding them to seeke him. Then haue wee certen declaration of Gods trueth, so wee obey his worde by faith, and receiue it without gainesaying.

When wee bee at that poynt; wee may well with good conscience and safetie punish such as seeke to turne vs away from the trueth. But if we be doubtfull and wauering, and go to it but by weening: what will come of it, but that wee shall punish innocent persons, as wee see the Papistes doe by persecuting our Lorde Iesus in his members? It were better for them nowadayes that they killed one another without cause of iustice, than to persecute the children of God after that fashion. For the matter standeth not vppon the punishing of men by taking away their liues, or by sheading of giltlesse blood through wicked crueltie: but vppon the making of warre against the liuing God, and vpon the suffering againe of our lord Iesus Christ in his members.

And let vs marke, that whensoeuer wee falsly pretende the name of God for a colour; our fault is doubled in so abusing it, and we become so much the more blame woorthie. As for example, when the Papistes nowadayes doe persecute the faithfull, and vse such excessiue crueltie as they doe: they can welynough say, it is the zeale of God that driueth vs to doe it. If a man haue slayne one or robbed one; very well, hee shalbee layde vppon the wheele. And what shalbee done when Gods maiestie is defaced? Shoulde the partie scape vnpunished? So will they alleage. Yea; but first they shoulde inquire of the cause. For like as sometimes men punish giltlesse persons accused of false crymes: so may it well bee (and wee see it by experience,) that Martyres are persecuted in steede of heretikes. Therefore were it meete to looke well to the matter.

But nowadayes if a man say that wee ought to call vppon none but onely God in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and that wee shoulde not fetche any further compasses after the imaginations of men, by praying to the virgine Marie or other Saintes deceassed to bee our patrones and aduocates; but that wee ought to holde our selues contented with Iesus Christ, to whome that office is giuen by God his Father: By and by they crye out, to the fire with him. And howe so? It is the pure doctrine of the holy Scripture. Yea, but the church of Rome admitteth it not.

If a man say, wee must worship God after a spirituall manner, without making any puppets to him, and that the breaking of the rule which our Lorde Iesus Christ hath giuen vs, is vtter abomination: our vppon it, thats a foule heresie, at leastwise by the iudgement of the popedome. But yet for all that, the Scripture beareth it. If a man say wee haue no freewill to doe good, but that wee bee vtterly corrupted; and that if there bee any goodnesse in vs, it proceedeth of Gods meere grace and mercie, so that our going forwarde towardes the marke, is because wee bee renewed by his holy Ghoste, and yet neuertheless that wee bee weake, and had neede to flee continually for refuge to the forgiuenesse which GOD promiseth vs, and whereby wee bee reconciled vnto him, whereunto wee attaine not by our owne deserues and satisfactions, but must bee faine to bee purged by the bloudshed of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and by that meanes wee obteine saluation: if these thinges (say I) bee alleaged: by and by hee must bee haled to the stake. And why? Because all this is condemned by their Synagogues.

Yea, but it were meete for them that they shoulde giue eare vnto God. For did hee forgo his authoritie when hee sayde that we should neither ad too nor diminish from the thinges that hee hath spoken, as wee haue seene alreadie heretofore? For thereby doeth he shewe at what ende it behoueth vs to beginne. Then is it a hellish kinde of dealing, when men stay not vppon the thinges that GOD commaundeth, and that are conteyned in his worde, and yet notwithstanding doe take vppon them to burthen other men with what lawes they list. Deut. 12. 32

If a man say that wee must serue God according to his commaundementes, and not depend vpon those that take vpon thē to enioyne lawes to mens soules, and that all such inuentions are

foolish: What? Shall the traditions of our mother holy Church bee so reiected? That were a deadly and intolerable cryme. If a man speake of the Sacraments, & say that baptisme ought to be ministred in a knowen tounge, that men may vnderstande to what ende our Lorde Iesus ordeyned it, what fruite it yeeldeth, and how to vse it aright: and moreouer that men may perceiue that baptisme sendeth vs to our Lorde Iesus Christ, and hath no power of it selfe further than God worketh by his holy spirite, which appeareth when wee haue an eye to him that is the verie substance of baptisme: and that all the trifling toyes ought to bee put away wherewith men haue mocked God eo the full, namely, the ceremonies of their owne inuenting which are but vtter corruptions of baptisme, as their spittle, their salt, & all their other maygames which they play withall: If a man talke so of their stuffe, he must be put to death for it out of hand. And why? Fye vppon him, hee is a ranke heretike, he is not to bee borne with. Yea, but they shoulde see first whether it bee an heresie or no. For by that meanes they make God him selfe an heretike for want of due examination; and what a dealing is that? If a man say that our Lordes supper ought to bee receiued according to the rule which hee him selfe did giue vs, that is to wit, that wee shoulde communicate togither, so as the bread might bee a warrant to vs that wee bee truely become partakers of his bodie, and the wine a warrant that wee bee partakers of his bloud, and consequently that the Masse is an abhomination of the diuels owne deuising, for that therein the Christians are so farre off from communicating together, that one man separates himselfe from all the rest of the company: beholde, then must excommunication serue as a sauce for all meates.

Againe, if a man come at Easter to receiue the Lordes supper, hee must haue but a morsel, and hee must holde him contented with the one halfe of it: and moreouer, contrarie to Christ his institution, which sayes: take and eate: they woulde beare God in hand that he shall receiue; wee giue it thee, say they. Besides this, if a man intende to bee reconciled to GOD, the Masse must serue as a new sacrifice, and although they say it is the same that Iesus Christ himselfe offered, yet doe they oftentimes reiterate it. If a man open his mouth against such abhominations, O that is an vntolerable cryme. The aire must ring of the great outcryes that shalbe made against it. How now, say they? What ado haue wee here? Hee hath spoken against the decrees of the holy Councels. Yea, but before that God commaunded the punishment of Renegates that shoulde goe about to trouble the Church, and to set diuision in the faith; he saide, Thou shalt not doe what seemeth good in thine owne eyes; but thou shalt submit thy selfe obediently to my sayinges, and not step aside from my worde, but yeelde your selues to it both great and small; and therefore that order ought to bee maintained.

Deut. 12.

But wee see that all thinges are turned vpside downe. And therefore let vs looke that wee bee well informed, (as I saide afore) and that wee bee well assured that wee haue Gods certaine trueth, and that wee bee throughly resolued of it, so as wee may bee able to say, It is God that hath spoken it, we haue beene taught it in his schoole, and wee renounce all imaginations of men: for wee knowe there is nothing but vanitie and vntrueth in men. God then must bee the author of our faith, and allowe it, before wee can say, This is the trueth. And when wee bee so resolued, then may we obey this commaundement here.

But wee must marke therewithall, that it is not ynough for men to excuse themselues by saying, as for mee I meane not to abolish all religion; and yet if I like well of this thing, why shoulde it not bee lawfull for mee to haue it? Moses sheweth vs that although a man pretend the title of some god, yet is that nothing: for wee must haue the liuing GOD; and that when wee haue once the knowledge of the true Religion, that must suffice vs, and that if we goe astraye, it is through our owne fault, and there is no excuse for vs. That is the meaning of Moses, and it is a doctrine well worthie to bee noted. For many men might finde starting holes in this behalfe.

May not a man bee ouerseene through simplicitie? Yes: but when wee haue once knowen God, wee cannot bee separated from him, but our malice must needes bee vtterly inexcusable. And therefore let vs take courage to benefite our selues: and when Gods worde is giuen vs freely and preached vnto vs purely, let vs bee so confirmed in it, as wee bee not any more like wauering reedes, yeelding to euery wynde, nor as little children whoome euery man may beguyle: but let vs vse wit and discretion. And in deede our Lorde giueth vs his worde, not onely to the intent wee should say, Lo, this or that is good: but to the ende that every man shoulde keepe himselfe from euill, & bee fenced and armed against all temptations of Satan, so as wee might haue wherewith to resist him when hee goeth about to thrust vs out of the way.

Nowe, Gods worde is termed a spirituall sworde: and therefore wee haue wherewith to outstande all assaultes, so wee haue profited in Gods worde as wee shoulde doe. And hereby it appeareth what diuels they bee, which would nowadayes leaue all things in dout. For there are fantasticall persons which say, What? If a man will punish Heretikes, hee must do it continually; because all thinges are out of order. True it is, that men ought to serue God. And if any man woulde saye there were no diuine maiestie in heauen, there is no GOD; there ought to bee no religion in the worlde, O that were not to bee abidden. But as long as men holde this grounde, that there is a GOD, it is ynough.

And although the heathen keepe still their images, although the Iewes be wilfull in maintaining their false exposition of y lawe, although the Turke

Turkes holde still their Mahomets Alcoran, although the Papistes bee still intangled in their superstitions: all is one, so they holde fast this principle, that there is a God. Yea, but Moses sayeth here expressely, that although a man pretende an intent to serue God: yet must hee bee stoned to death, if it be knowen that hee meant but onely to ouerthrowe or disguise the true religion. And what more then? For (as I haue sayd) wee must not onely pronounce with our mouth that there is a God: but wee must also discerne him from all the abuses that men haue inuented of their owne brayne. For otherwise it is but a mocking of all the holy Scripture. I shall say I worship God, and in the meane time I worship a puppet. And what is my God? It is a fansie that I haue deuised in mine owne head: it is not the liuing God, hee disclaymeth all such dealings, & so am I but a forger. For (as Saint Paul speaketh of it in the first to the Romanes,) such as haue wandred away after their owne imaginations, haue transformed the maiestie of GOD, though their intent was to worship the liuing God, as the Papistes doe, which protest that they worship God the maker of heauen and earth; and likewise the Turkes, who say the same thing; and so also doe the Iewes, notwithstanding that they abhorre Iesus Christ.

And it is sayd in Saint Iohn, that hee which beleeueth not in the Sonne beleeueth not in the Father which sent him. Nay he that turneth away from Iesus Christ, doeth vtterly renounce God. For where dwelleth the fulnesse of the Godhead but in Iesus Christ? When the Turke in their Mahomet in the place of Gods sonne, knowing not that God hath manifested himself in the flesh (which is one of the chiefe articles of our faith): what a dealing is it? So then, how many things soeuer men terme by the name of God, they bee but diuels of their owne deuising and forging vp, if they keepe not themselues fast ioined within the boundes of the holy scripture. And therefore let vs marke well, that wee must holde vs to the pure Religion; and when wee bee well assured of that, then must we come to this lawe whereof Moses speaketh here. And whosoeuer shall inuenteth himselfe against it, let him bee rooted out.

Nowe if the man that woulde drawe vs to the seruing of strange gods, deserue to bee put to death: what is to be done to these dogges whose whole endeuour is to turne all vpside downe, and to beleeue the whole worlde, so as men may not knowe any more what religion is? And in these dayes wee see this kinde of weede to rise thorough the whole worlde, a sorte of heathenish people, which serue to no purpose but to scoffe and iest at all thinges that are spoken of GOD. Also what shall become of those that commit so open blasphemie, as they may seeme to make but a mockerie of all the holye Scripture, as though it were nothing else but fables? Nowe then, sith wee see that Moses speaketh so: what doe they deserue which do so trouble and defile the holy things?

Beholde there comes mee an hypocrite that woulde deuise a newe Religion, as it were to set vp a popedome here againe, or to bring in the Alcoran of Mahomet: nowe ought such a one to bee put to death without forbearing, for so hath God ordeyned. And if any man say, it is cruelnie; let him finde fault with God for it, and wee shall see if he can preuaile.

On the other side, if wee may well spit in such mennes faces, notwithstanding that they saye that their so doing is to maintaine Gods honor, what is to bee doone to such as will needes after a sort deface it quyte and cleane? But let vs come backe againe to the matter. There is a man that goes about to peruert the truth thorough fonde deuotion; and to turne it into vntrueth: the same man ought to dye. There is a Royster that casteth forth lewd scoffes against the holy Scripture, as doeth that diuelish fellowe which is called Pantagruell, and all his filthie and ribauldly writings: and this sort of men pretende not to set vp any newe Religion, as though they were deluded by their owne foolish imaginations: but like madde dogges they belke out their filthinesse against the maiestie of God, and their meaning is to ouerthrowe all religion: and shoulde such bee spared? Why not? for they haue the Cardinalles for their vpholders, they bee fauoured and maintained by them: in so much that the names of these Lord Cardinalles are blazed in those goodly bookes, which serue to mocke God as well as Mahomet. All is one, all may bee abidden, so the Cardinalles bee carryed, it is welynough, and it doeth them good to bee so registred: whereby a man may see that they not onely mocke at all Religion, but also coulde finde in their hearres to abolish all religion quite and cleane.

But herewithall let vs also see howe wee may apply this to our owne vse, for wee must not onely condemne those that haue shewed themselues such as I haue spoken of: but wee must also fare the better by their example, to the end wee may knowe howe it is too wicked eyes, and too diuelish a thing, that when men go about to make some backeflyding or to set some trouble among vs, and much rather to driue away all feare of GOD, and bee fauoured or fauoreded, or harkened vnto, or haue any gappe left open to them, or be let alone vnpunished; it is the next way to vndoe and marre all. And yet wee haue seene examples of such as haue maintained so cursed thinges, yea, and of such importance as the verie Papistes themselues coulde not endure them. For it is certaine that the two heretikes that were here, did wrest the holy Scriptures much more than the Papistes. As touching this Tristlemaker, who was the first of them; hee maintayned free will, & destroyed Gods election: and are those thinges maintained among the Papistes? Nevertheless wee see how he was fauoured, & hee was held vp by the chinne as it were in despite of God.

Againe, as touching the seconde, wee knowe how he was so horrible a blasphemer, that al men abhorred his leawde opinions: and yet for

all that, had he not his maintainers and defenders? Yes: for men shewed them more fauour than if they had beene the neerest of their kin. And yet was it not enident that they conspired continually against God and his trueth, to wage battel against him? Therefore let vs looke neerlyer to our selues, & to conclude let vs vnderstād that when God hath giuen vs the grace to haue the certeintie of faith, so as we be grounded vpō his worde; wee must holde vs to it after such a sort, that whensoeuer we see any bodie go about to trouble the order which God hath set, wee may all set our selues against it, and not tary till al agree in one, but that whosoeuer of vs doth first perceiue the mischefe, the same doe discouer it out of hande, and euery of vs do his duetie in such wise, as such plagie persons bee not nourished among vs. For (as I haue declared alreadie) wee see there is such frailtie in vs, that a verie little leauen will sower our whole batche of dowe; and as soone as wee giue eare to Satans iuggling trickes, by and by wee bee ouerthrowen and so intangled, that in the ende wee bee carryed quite away from our God and from the true religion.

1. Cor. 5. 6. & Gal. 5. 9.

God therefore beeing acquainted with our frailtie, meant to prouide for it by shewing vs that it behoueth vs to cut vp the wicked weedes out of hand. Accordingly also as the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrewes sayeth, that wee must not suffer any euill weedes to growe: for they will marre the good corne, and if the time bee foreslowed, it wilbee too late afterwarde. Then must wee not driue off till to morowe, but euery of vs must quicken and stirre vp himselfe, following the exhortation that is made vnto vs heere.

Hebr. 12. 15.

Moreouer, seeing wee bee commaunded to plucke vp whatsoeuer is contrarie to the maiestie of God, and whatsoeuer may peruert or put away the true religion: let euery of vs see that hee so offer and dedicate himselfe to our God, as wee may not thrust one another out of the right way. If any man goe about to thrust mee out of the *way*: beholde, God commaundeth mee to rise vp against him; and though it were mine owne brother, my sonne or my wife, yet is it sayde that I ought not to spare them. Now then, if I my selfe thrust others out of the way, is it not a farre more heynous crime? I shalbe taken for an accessarie if I doe but conceale another bodies misbehauiour, and I shewe my selfe a traytour to Godwarde: Nowe then, if I my selfe bee an author of euill, howe deepe am I in? So then, if wee will correct other folkes misdeedings so roughly, let vs beare in minde that wee must in any wise holde our selues in the feare of God, so as in cases concerning his honour, wee bee not a stumbling blocke to driue wretched foules to destruction; but rather indeuour to gather home the stray sheepe into the flocke, & to bring back the wanderers into the right way, and to maintaine and further such as are in the good way alreadie, and all of vs lende our helping handes one to another, that wee may all serue our God with one common accord.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to receiue vs into his fauor, and that although wee be wretched sinners and vnworthie to come in his sight; yet notwithstanding it may please him to accept of vs, and to reformе vs in such wise by his holy spirite, as all our life may bee imployed to his glorie, and our whole seeking hencefoorth may bee to aduaunce the kingdome of our Lorde Iesus Christ his sonne. And so let vs all say, Almightie God, heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxj. of October. 1555.

The Lxxxix Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the thirteenth Chapter.

12 If thou heare say, that in any of the cities which the Lorde thy God giueth thee to dwell in,

13 Some wicked men are gone from among you, and haue seduced the inhabitants of their cities, saying, let vs go and serue other gods whome yee haue not knowen:

14 Then shalt thou search, and inquire, and examine the matter throughly, & if it be true & certaine that such abhomination hath beene doone among you:

15 Thou shalt roote out the inhabitants of that citie with ỹ edge of the sword, and vtterly destroy the citie, and all that is in it, and the verie cattell thereof with the edge of the sworde.

16 And thou shalt gather al the spoyle thereof together into the midde of the citie, and burne vp the citie and all the spoyle thereof with fire to the Lorde thy God: and it shalbe a heape for euer, and neuer be builded againe.

17 And

17 And none of the cursed thinges shall sticke to thy handes, that the Lorde your God may turne away the fiercenesse of his wrath from thee, and giue thee mercie, and haue pitie vpon thee and multiply thee, as he sware to thy fathers,

18 Because thou shalt haue obeyed the voyce of the Lorde thy God, in keeping all his commaundementes which I commaund thee this day, to the ende thou mayest doe the thinges that are right in the eyes of the Lorde thy God.

WE haue seene heretofore what manner of zeale wee ought to haue to ỹ maintening of Gods true seruice & the pure religiõ: that is to wit, that we must forget al ỹ friendship of the world, and shewe that we make more account of the honor of our God, than of all those that are as deare to vs as our owne soules. But now Moses proceedeth further, and sayth that wee must vse such rigour not only against particular persons, but also *against whole cities*. Now if a whole Citie ought to be rased for breaking ỹ seruice of God, what shalbe done to any one man? Should he be borne with? Here then we see how Gods honour ought to be preferred before the whole worlde. And because he had set downe a right and pure order to ỹ people of Israel how to do it, his mind was that it should be kept to the vttermost, and that if any man transgressed it, he should be cut off, insomuch that if it were a whole people that had done it, they should be dele withall after the same maner. Now then we see yet better, howe carefull wee ought to be for the preseruation of religion in his purenes. True it is that we ought to be alwayes mindefull of ỹ which we haue sayd already, namely that is serueth not to excuse ỹ doers whe they be so inraged with zeale without discretion. For we must be sure a forehande, that the religion which we holde is holy, & that God alloweth of it, so as it is not a doctrine forged at the pleasure of men, but Gods owne will vttred vnto vs of his owne free fauour, whereof wee haue good and infallible record, that if any rise vp against it, he must be cutte off: yea though it were a whole Citie. So litle ought any priuate person to be forborne, that euen a whole citie ought to be destroyed for it.

But to the intent this doctrine may be ỹ better vnderstoode, let vs marke the order which God commandeth here to be kept. *If it be sayde*, that is to say, if the report go, *that some wicked persons are gone from among you, and haue led away the inhabitants of a Citie: make good inquisition of the matter, & search it out diligently and vnfeinedly: to the ende that if it be found to be so; ỹ whole Citie be vtterly destroyed with the edge of the sworde*, and so forth. Now first our Lordes will is, that when any bruite goeth of an euill deede, we should first inquire how ỹ case standeth. And hereby he sheweth that such as haue authoritie of the sword, & sit in the seate of Iustice, must not be retchlesse, in suffering thinges to passe before their eyes, without making any countenance to see them. Is there then any brute of a thing? Inquisition must be made of it. For if it be let passe, we shew that our intent is to nourishe the euill: and the parties that haue so concealed it, must in ỹ ende abide their payment, which is that it must light wholly vpon their owne heads, as we see it commeth to passe. And it is a iust punishment of God, that when such as are in office to remedie & redresse euill, doe beare with it, they themselues should abide the paine of it. And when they suffer it, it happeneth not by hap hazard, but God yeeldeth them the iust wages which they haue deserued. Therefore we must marke this text, that God will haue vs to be doing aforehand as soone as the brute is reported or giuen forth; & not to tary till the thing be apparaunt, without setting hand to it or without making inquisition of it: but he will haue the Iustice to inquire of it betimes, specialy when there goeth any brute of it. And by the way, to the intent there be not a slight inquirie made of it as it were but for fashions sake, he vseth here three wordes: and afterwarde he addeth that it must be done throughly, so as there be an exquisite care vsed in the matter. For diuers times, informations are taken when some coplaint is made, and that the euill is knowen, yea and ỹ in suchwise as they be ashamed to cloke it altogether, and so witnesses bee called. But they will not seeke to vnderstand the pith of the matter, they doe but vse a kinde of forme for fashions sake, as who should say ỹ matter is not buried, because there hath bin some seeking to knowe the trueth of it. But what? This is no proofe: that is to say, we will not search how the case stands in deede. For the witnesses are dispatched ere they haue tolde halfe their tales: and that which they haue spoken is let slip, so as wee see not the thing that is as apparant as the nooneday.

Now to the end that men should not daly after that sort with God: it is sayd expressly *that inquisition should be made, that the matter should be examined, and informations duely taken*. And therfore let Iustices vnderstand, that they shall not go quit, but that God will hold them giltie, for neglecting their duetie, if they do not what they can to bring matters to light, when they heare any complaint or any brute of them. Neuertheles our Lordes meaning is not that me should iudge as aduenture, but that the crime should be duly proued whether it be so of a truth in deede. He vseth two wordes to shew that a Iudge ought not to be led by bare suspition to conclude what hee listeth. For wee must be faine to beare with the euill when it is not knowen, because God hath not yet brought it to light. As for example, there be some sinnes (sayth S. Paul) which make haste to come to their condemnation; and we see that God doth so thrust and driue some wicked men forward, that they runne a head into mischiefe.

1. Tim. 5. 24

For sometimes it is Gods will to humble vs by making our offences knowen, that we may feele them and be sorie at the heart for them. Yea & [sometimes againe] a man knoweth not at what end to begin, but is letted that he cannot punish, because he findeth no mean how to do it. Therfore a Iudge must be discreete and milde, that he giue not sentence vpō bare coniectures, but that he first of all do see the matter substantially proued. Now then, here are two notable thinges: the one is that we must not be reckelesse, but diligent in searching out of thinges, that ỹ euil may be discouered & not nourished. The other is, that we should not iudge rashly, but that the matter should be wel knowen and throughly brought to light, before we come to giue diffinitiue sentēce of it, so as our iudgement may be ripe & settled.

Now this being so, it is sayde, *shew shalt destroy the inhabitants of that Citie with the edge of the sword.* Wherby God sheweth (as I haue declared alreadỹ) what affection wee ought to beare vnto his seruice. For if we consider what a thing his glory is, it ought to be more deere to vs thā all ỹ whole world. What see we either in heauen or on earth but litle sparks of ỹ power, righteousnes, goodnes & wisedome which are infinite in God? They be not to be measured: we haue but only some litle signes and tokens of them in heauen and earth. Therefore it were better that the worlde should perish ten thousand times, than that Gods glory should be defaced. But it falleth out that his glory is conueyed ouer vnto ydols, yea & bestowed vpon Satan, when his seruice is corrupted. And therefore it is not for vs to fal asleepe or to cocker ourselues in this case, as we haue bin wont to doe, making sale of Gods honour, and letting it passe as though we seemed to count it as a thing of nothing. But contrariwise we see here how he putteth all cities to destruction, if they haue defaced his honor. So then let vs vnderstand that it is not for vs to rowe any more betweene two streames as we haue bin wont to, if we intend to keepe our religion vnappayred: but we must see that all Churchtreasons, that is to say all outrages that are doone to the maiestie of God, may be punished. Seeing we know and nature teacheth vs that robberies, murthers, thefts, and all manner of pilfries ought not to bee borne with, what shal we do when gods name is blasphemed, all religion turned vpside downe, and the pure doctrine falsified, to thrust folke out of the way and to breake the vnion of faith? Such thinges are not to be winked at: for they be too heynous crymes.

Yea and it behoueth vs to marke how it is said heere, *that if any wicked men be risen vp, and haue seduced the inhabitants of a Citie.* For it may seeme that this circumstance should somewhat abate the fault, forasmuch as the whole citie went not away of their own accord, but were carried away by certain wicked persons, as in deed a few such firebrandes of hell are ynough to set all thinges out of order. Yea, but yet are not they to be born with, which haue giuen eare to such deceiuers; they must be punished for it neuertheles: yea and ỹ not with stripes of roddes onely, but euen with death. And in deede, how trifling an excuse is it for a man to say, I was vndermined, I would neuer haue done amisse if I had not bin induced to it, ye may see what ill counsell is. Yea, but yet notwithstanding thou haddest bin taught by the voyce of thy God, thou knewest his will, & wast ascertained of it. Beholde, a man whome thou knewest to be wicked came to seduce thee, and thou gauest more credit to his leawdnesse and to thine owne wit, than to ỹ infallible truth of thy God. Thou knowest ỹ thy God speaketh for thy benefite, and thou leauest him, thou giuest him deafe eare, thou art loth to giue him any hearing, thou refusest all that he telleth thee: and is that to be excused? Nay rather, shouldest we not spit in the faces of such men as will needes make a shield of other mens inticementes? Yea: and for that cause doth not God hold a whole Citie excused, when the people of it haue bin deluded by wicked persons. Both great and small (say I) must be punishable: and God is not cruell in punishing them all, as wee see hee hath ordained heere.

Furthermore, let vs marke well ỹ God meaneth to do vs to vnderstand what it is to haue wicked persōs in a citie. For (as saith S. Paul) a little leauen soureth a whole lump of dow. Nowe then, whosoeuer deceiuers be, there are the people by them infected. God speaketh so thereof plainly, to the intent we should not suffer euil to harbor among vs. If there be any poysoninges, we are all afraid of them, and it troubleth vs to prouide how to saue our selues frō them. ô (say we) such a plague must not abide among vs. Now it is certaine there is not a worse nor a more deadly plague, than the stepping vp of vnruly persons, despisers of God, and wicked men, which seeke to turne all thinges vpside downe, and to bring all to confusion, corrupting all thinges to the intent to haue the more libertie to doe euil. When such fellowes rise vp, & be borne withall, it is good reason that all should be guiltie of their fault. And we see also that God punisheth those ỹ beare with euil doinges when they both should and could correct them: insomuch that the common prouerbe is verified in them, that when a man is lased from the gallous, he could finde in his heart to see him hanged ỹ deliuered him from it. And good reason it is that they should haue such reward, for their corrupting of Iustice, and for their impeaching of right. Therefore when we see men goe about to turne all thinges vpside downe, we must represse them aforehande: and not tarie till ỹ end, for that is a cursed patience. True it is (as I said afore) that if God giue vs not the meanes to put away euil so soone as we would; then must we be sory for it & haue patience. But when things are euident, & there is none other let than faint hearts of cowards: then if we be cold and lasie, and shut our eyes because wee be loth to suffer displeasure; [as if a man shoulde say,] I will not be too forwarde, least I bee left in the byers, for fear least I pay for the shot when I haue entered into such a quarell, for I see that such fellowes are full of reuendge and may easily be euen with me: when we vse such cowardlynesse, then must we

abide the penaltie of it. And surely it is a great grace of God to haue power to redresse a mischiefe that hath bin knowen of long afore: and therfore it must not be let slip without prouiding for it in time conuenient.

Moreouer we must heare what a simple shift it is to alledge pitie, when men marre all thinges by giuing cause of offence. For what kinde of pitie is it to spare two or three to cut y throtes of a whole nation? On the contrarie part, if they that be so wickedly bent, be represſed that they may no more haue their own swinge, but rather be vtterly rooted out: it is a purging of the whole nation, it is a healing of a common sore. So then if wee loue the welfare of all men, lette vs not giue head after that sort to such as intice men to forsake the right way. But wee must goe backe againe to the matter which I haue spoken of alreadie, and which Moses goeth forwarde withall still in this text: to wit, that the worst corruption which can befall a nation, is to haue despisers of God that falsifie the true religion, or to haue vpholders of Satan that leade men into superstition and ydolatrie, to abolishe the pure doctrine and the trueth which they haue receiued. True it is that if there bee whoremongers, drunkardes, whooremongers, and such other like folke, it is an infection that is wel worthie to be feared, & meet to be redressed out of hande, least the mischiefe growe too strong: but as for those that put all thinges out of order, shewing themselues to be bent to spite God, and to make men to yeelde no more reuerence to his maiestie: it is as a gathering of all sinnes together into one heape, and a packing of them vp in one bundle. For there can be nothing pure when Gods seruice is taken away, and when men walke not in his feare, all other thinges must needes be out of order. For the knowing of God and the worshipping of him as he deserueth, is the verie brydle that holdeth men in all holinesse and honestie. But if men turne their backes vppon him, they must needes play the beastes, and their life must needes become so lose and lothsome, that a man shal see as it were a gulfe of hell among them. And therefore not without cause are we so straitly commaunded in no wise to beare with men, when they become wicked and goe about to inueigle folke to doe seruice to ydolles. Let vs marke then, this if we be desirous to liue as wee ought and in good concord; we must aboue all thinges haue Gods seruice in estimation, as the thing wherein it behoueth vs to vse seueritie and rigor, or els all will go to wrecke and confusion. That is the thing which we haue to gather vpon this place: and would to God that it were better in vre now adayes. For as I haue touched heretofore, men are moued at the thinges that concerne and touch themselues. Insomuch that if we perceiue that the suffering of an offence will turne to our hurte or losse, euerie of vs cryeth out to haue it punished. And why? Because wee haue no regarde but of our selues. But if GOD his honour bee impeached, that is let slippe, and we fay it is not so great an euill. And why? For our purses are not pinched by it: and therefore it seemeth to make no skill at all. Nowe see heere on the contrarie parte, howe GOD punisheth vs as we deserue. For thinges become so farre out of order among vs, that wee wote not which way to turne vs. And good reason it is that it shoulde come so to passe, euen because we haue forsaken GOD, and beene more mindefull of ourselues than of his maiestie, so as we haue not yeelded him his dewe honour whereof hee is worthie, and which hee requireth at our handes. Thus much concerning this text.

And it is sayde, *that all thus ouer is in the Citie must be brought together in a heape, and set on fire, & be taken as a curſed thing, and be made a ſacrifice vnto God.* Heere Moses sheweth howe hatefull a thing ydolatrie is, and consequently whatsoeuer ouerthroweth the true seruice of God and the pure religion: and that is done to moue men so much the more. But [you will say, that] when such a fault is committed, the Citie it selfe, the cattell, and the houses are not to be blamed for it. And why then will GOD haue all to be destroyed? It is to the ende that folke shoulde learne to abhorre ydolatrie the more, that wee might vnderstand that the wicked folkes whom Satan dryueth to giue themselues to ydolatrie are so little to be borne with, that we must euen abhorre the verie place where they haue dwelled, yea and the verie sight of them, and thinke with ourselues, beholde, this is a place wherein Gods wrath hath beene prouoked, and that was ynough to haue soonke vs all to hell. Wee see then wherat God aimed. For hee knewe that we see nowe with our eyes, namely that we haue not such zeale to maintaine his glorie, as wee ought to haue, we passe not for it, euerie man is occupied about his owne gaine, and about the thinges that concerne himselfe. Nowe because we be so colde, God on the other side quickneth vs vp, and telleth vs that the corrupting of his seruice is a great misdeede, yea and so horrible a thing, as might make the hayres to stand stiffe vpon our heades. That is one point which wee ought to marke.

And herewithall we haue to marke also, that the rigour of this Lawe, is not to be obserued of from point to point as it is commaunded heere to the people of Israell. But yet the substance thereof abideth still in force, as I haue declared heretofore intreating of ydolatry, where I told you that wee were commaunded to put away all places that haue serued to superstition. Nowe then, we in these dayes be not in such thraldom, but that we may vse a Church that hath beene one of Satans brothelhouses. Ydolles haue bin worshipped heere, and GOD hath beene blasphemed heere: and yet for all that wee bee nowe come heere together in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ. This place then is newe dedicated, according to the saying of Saint Paul, that all thinges are sanctified vnto vs by faith and by calling vpon the name of God. And therefore if a place be put to such vse, that God is honoured there, it is a kinde of hallowing of

Deut. 12. 2.

1. Tim. 4. 5.

that

that place. But vnder the Lawe God helde the people in greater and more slauishe bondage, commaunding them to make cleane riddaunce and vtter dispatch of all thinges that had beene vsed in the seruice of ydolles. So is it in this text, where GOD commandeth that the whole Citie shall bee rased, and neuer inhabited anie more. And the straitnesse of this bonde serued for the time wherein the fathers were gouerned like litle children. But yet doeth the substaunce thereof abide with vs still: and wee haue to gather of this text, that our Lorde abhorreth ydolatry aboue all thinges; and that if other offences bee to be punished, this is not to be indured in any wise, but that we ought to abhorre it. And because wee be too colde in that behalfe, we be warned to quicken vp our selues, and to take the meanes which wee knowe to be fit for it, to the ende wee may bee the forwarder in causing God to bee serued purely among vs, and open no gap to deceiuers, ne make any way for superstitions and ydolatrie, that might bereaue vs of the pure trueth and drawe vs vnto lyes. Thus yee see what we haue to remember vpon this text,

Col. 4. 12.

But heere a man might aske a question, howe Moses may say that all the thinges which shalbe founde in such a Citie shalbe accursed; and yet they must bee put ouer vnto God as an offering or sacrifice? Yet doeth GOD speake after that fashion in manie places, and not without cause. For it is an offering of sacrifice vnto him, when we protest that only he ought to be worshipped, and when we make as it were a solemne homage vnto him. And againe when other appurtenances come in place: as when men sacrificed vnder the Lawe, they protested that they were worthie of death, and yet notwithstanding they had a warrant of their reconcilement vnto God, by the sacrifice that was to bee offered. Also men offered of their goods vnto GOD, as who shoulde say, Lorde, all that I haue commeth of thee, and it is alwayes at thy commaundement. Yee see then that sacrifices were blessed: and yet neuertheless there was a kinde of cursednesse in the sacrifices that were offered for sinne. In the Firstlinges, Tenthes, and such other like things, there was nothing but the prayse of God and giuing of thankes vnto him: but as for the sacrifice that was offered for sinne, it behoueth Gods curse to be thereupon, as who shoulde say, Loe this is hee that shall answere for all. To the ende that men may bee acquit and deliuered from death, this sacrifice must answere for them. And therefore those sacrifices were called sinnes: and the same name is attributed to our Lorde Iesus Christ, because he bare our curse in his person. But heere is an other kinde of cursednesse; namely that GOD is honoured, and homage is doone vnto him by rooting out the thinges that hadde defaced his honour before. Therefore when a Citie is destroied that had erst beene a denne of ydolatry, and all the spoyle thereof is set on fire: it is a sacrifice that God liketh verie well of. And why so? Because it is a protesting that wee be not willing to suffer any thing that impeacheth the honour of him at all mens handes, and that all men shoulde submit themselues to him, and his maiestie be knowen as it ought to be. Now then we see howe it is not without cause that Moses commaunded sacrifice to be done vnto GOD with the vtter destruction of all thinges that had beene infected and defiled with ydolatrie.

Leuit. 7. 2. 2. Cor. 5. 21.

And hee sayeth expressly, *so shal ende shal the wrath of God bee not vpon shee*. Whereby he confirmeth the matter that I haue touched already, which is that we must beware that wee wrap not ourselues in other mens sinnes. For they that correct not euill dooinges when they may, and when their office requireth it; are giltie of it themselues. As for example, if a preacher winke at the vices that reigne: surely he is a traitour and vnfaithfull: for he shoulde keepe good watch, and waken such as are in daunger of vndoing. Then if I beare with the euill wittingly or through negligence: I am the first that shalbe condemned. Likewise if they that holde the sworde of Iustice, execute not the rigor which they ought to redresse mes misbehauiours: surely the wrath of God is vpon them continually, yea and vpon y whole country, because no man is found, that complaineth of this, that the mischiefe was so borne withall. One good zealous man is ynough to turne away the wrath of God, for hee will inforce others that were negligent. But when no man beginnes the daunce, but all men drawe backe, and euery man sayes, What nowe? If all the rest put not to their hande, what can I alone doe? Surely none of them all can exempt themselues from condemnation before God, when euerie one of them speaketh so. Not without cause then doeth Moses here wrap vp a whole Countrey vnder condemnation, if a wicked deede bee borne with, or not punished when it commeth to knowledge. And herby we be put in minde, to be more diligent than we are wont to bee, in ridding away of all filth and vncleannesse from among vs. For it is all one as if we shoulde lay wood vppon the fire that is kindled ynough [and too much] alreadie, so as we shall all of vs be consumed with it in the ende, and yet wee doe so euen wittingly and willingly. Why then doe wee not open our eyes, seeing our Lorde sheweth vs the daunger so euidently, and warneth vs to prouide for it aforehande? Why doe wee not thinke vppon it? Nay, wee be well worthy to perish, and to be vtterly confounded, because wee haue not vouchsafed to receiue the counsell that God hath giuen vs.

After that Moses hath thus threatned vs, he addeth a promise, *that God will blesse his people, if they obey his voyce, & doe the things that are right before him*. Our Lord indeuouring after his manner, to winne vs to him alwayes by gentlenesse and friendely dealing: when hee hath doone threatning of vs in this text, doeth also attempt the contrarie way saying: If ye finde me meaning to haue my seruice purely maintayned, I will be with you; yee shall finde that my seeking is but to increase the benefites which I haue begonne already to bestowe vpon you, yee shall inioy the

Exode

Lande that I haue giuen you to inherite; ye shall perceiue that my promising of my fauour and mercie to your fathers is not in vaine. And let vs marke, that heere it is our Lordes intent to drawe vs to a willing seruing of him. True it is that yet for all this, wee must not forgette his threatenings, seeing we be so slowe in resorting vnto him. Then lette vs be afrayde of them, and consider that wee shall not scape his vengeaunce except we maintaine his seruice. But yet howsoeuer the worlde goe with vs, lette vs not doe it by constraint, but let vs goe to worke with a free courage. And howe may that bee doone? Euen by beeing drawen by the gentlenesse that Moses sheweth heere vnto vs: as if he shoulde say, goe to, happie will our state bee if we serue our GOD, and euerie man endeuour to drawe his neighbours with him, and suffer not any man (as farre as lyeth in vs) to peruert or trouble our state when it is well setled. If we doe so, our Lorde telleth vs that hee will be among vs, blessing vs in such sorte as wee shall prosper more and more, and that he will stablish vs in the possession of all the benefites which he hath giuen vs. Seeing the case standeth so; too too leude were wee if we woulde not submitte ourselues to him, seeing that his desiring to haue vs, is altogether for our benefite and welfare. Let vs learne then on the one side to quicken vp our selues with Gods threatninges; but yet on the other side let vs be moued and allured to serue him with a free and pure affection, voyde of inforcement or constraint. Let vs goe to worke of our owne goodwill, assuring our selues that wee be bereft and dispossessed of all good thinges, if wee serue not our GOD. And why? Because wee can not prosper but by his fauour. And let vs not delude ourselues: if we see that he make vs to prosper this present time, lette vs not fall asleepe, but let vs consider that wee haue neede of the continuaunce of his benefites and free fauour towardes vs. And this is a very needefull warning: for we see howe men take libertie, as soone as they haue any respitte. So long as GOD sheweth vs his roddes, or as wee feele his stripes; wee make countenaunce still to serue him. Yes, but that is but hypocrisie, according to this complaint which the Lord maketh by his prophete. As long as I afflicted them, they turned vnto me; but either the same day or the next morow they became like themselues againe. Therefore let not vs doe so; but although GOD let vs alone in rest, and wee perceiue no harme at hande; yet let vs looke for it afarre of, and forecast that there will come a suddeine tempest which wee looked not for, if we swarue aside from his seruice. Wee see howe that in summer the wether chaungeth in a minute of an houre: euen so may it fall out in respect of Gods wrath: and therefore let vs not welter in our delightes. When God prospereth vs, let vs not fall to frisking as abusers of his goodnesse and patience: but let vs remember howe Moses sayeth, that when he hath giuen vs a Lande to inhabit, he must be faine to maintaine vs in it, and to stablishe vs in the possession thereof. For I haue tolde you heeretofore that vnder this worde *The Lande of Chanaan*, all the benefites that GOD bestowed vppon his people, were comprehended, as all in one particular. Nowe then, let vs looke to our selues, and if we purpose to continue in the perpetuall inioying of the benefites belonging both to our bodies and to our soules which GOD hath bestowed vpon vs: let vs looke that wee continue stedfastly in the seruing of him, without swarueing one way or other. And moreouer lette vs labour that there may be one common accord among vs, and that euery of vs hearten vp his neighbour to doe well, so as we may doe as hath beene declared alreadie, and as we haue seene heeretofore; that is to wit, that it is not for vs to demeane ourselues after our owne imagination and fancie as wee see men doe in bearing with themselues, not onely when they doe as ill as may be, but also when they doe their duetie by halues, and yet they beare themselues in hande that they haue doone ynough, and that there is no fault to bee founde in them, GOD can require no more at their hande. And though a man point them to a thing with his finger, as if he shoulde say, This is a generall rule, and wee must not goe to it by halues; but God must haue all that belongeth vnto him, or else hee will accept none of all the thinges that can bee doone: they shut their eyes at it. O (say they) it makes no matter, wee must haue a respect of our infirmitie, we must be well aduised by wisedome and discretion. Yea, but for all that, shall we swarue from that which GOD hath ordeined? Lette men vse as much discretion and gentlenesse as can be: but yet howsoeuer the case stande, let him look wel to it, y Gods honour be not troden vnder foote, and that mennes sinnes bee not so bolstered, that any body come to aduance himselfe against the sacred maiestie of him that made vs and fashioned vs, which also maintaineth vs, by whose power wee bee vphelde, and without whose grace we could not continue one minute of an houre. Let this bee well considered, and let men doe the thinges that are right in the eyes of the Lord: for hee will not frame himselfe to our dyet. Imagine we our selues to doo thinges neuer so well, to the contentation of men, yet wil not GOD be contented with them, because hee measureth not himselfe by our weyghtes and balance. He will haue vs to harken to his worde, and to haue an eye to the thinges y he liketh, so as we may say, Lord, thou shalt haue the gouerning of vs. Thus yee see what we haue to remember vppon this text, if we entende to eschewe the curse which GOD denounceth against all such as haue suffered the peruerting of the true Religion and the corrupting of his seruice, and to haue him not onely to blesse vs, but also to increase y benefites which we haue receiued at his hande, and also to continue them towardes vs to the ende.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele thē y better, so as we may be able to shewe that his instructing

Hosea. 6. 4.

Deut. 29. 25.

of

of vs in his worde hath not beene in vaine, but that we may yeelde him such reuerence, as our whole seeking may bee to haue him purely worshipped among vs, and y the same may be done with one accorde, and all stumblingblockes bee cut off frō among vs, so as we suffer not ourselues to bee deluded wittingly, nor the ignoraunt to be led to destruction, but that we may looke to the drawing of them backe: and that hauing such zeale to amende other folkes misdeedes, euerie of vs may beginne at himselfe, and not giue vnto ownie flesh such libertie, as that it should cause vs aside and alienate vs from our God, but rather our selues short, fearing his threates and also in respect of his blessinges and promises which hee maketh vs for that it is his will to maintaine vs in his house as his children. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth. &c.

On Tewsday the xxij. of October. 1555.

The XC. Sermon which is the first vpon the fourteenth Chapter.

YE be the children of the Lorde your God; Therefore you shal not cut your selues, nor make any shauinges betweene your eyes for the dead.

2 For thou art a holy people to the Lorde thy God. And the Lorde God hath chosen thee from all people that are vpon the face of the earth, to be a peculiar people to himselfe.

3 Thou shalt not eate any manner of lothsome thing.

4 These are the beastes that ye shall eate of: namely, the Oxe, the sheepe, and the Goate:

5 The Red deere, the fallow deere, the Bugle, the wilde Goate, the Vnicorne, the wilde Oxe, the Chamoyse,

6 And all maner of beastes that deuide the hoofe and cliue the hoofe into two clawes and chaweth the cudde also: among the beastes them shall ye eate.

7 But as for these, yee shall not eate: among those that chawe cudde or deuide but onely deuide their clawes, that is to wit, the Camell, the Hare and the Conie. For inasmuch as they chewe cudde and yet deuide not the hoofe, they shalbe vncleane to you.

8 Also the Swine, (because he cliueth the hoofe, and yet cheweth not cudde) shal be vncleane to you. Yee shall not eate of their flesshe, nor touch their dead carkesses.

9 These are they that you shall eate of all that are in the waters: namely, whatsoeuer haue finnes and scales.

10 And whatsoeuer hath not finnes and scales, yee shall not eate thereof, but it shalbe vncleane to you.

11 Of all cleane birdes yee shall eate.

12 But these are they of which yee shall not eate: namely the Eagle, the Ospray, and the Fawcon:

13 The Gleade, the Kite, the Vultur after their kinde:

14 All manner of Rauens after their kinde:

15 The Estrich, the nightcrowe, the Cuckowe, and the Sparehauke after their kinde:

16 The Skritchowle, the great Owle, the Swanne,

17 The Cormorant, the Pellicane, the Dopchicken,

18 The Storke, and the Heronsewe in his kinde, and the Lapwing, and the Backe.

19 And all creeping foules shall be vncleane vnto you, and yee shall not eate of them.

20 But of all cleane foules yee may eate.

Wee

WE haue here two cõmandements to expounde, which God gaue vnto his people: The one is *that when a man died among them, they shoulde make no extreme mourning and lamentation for them in disfiguring their bodies*, after the ceremonies and fashions of ỹ heathen. The other concerneth meates: for it was not lawfull for the Iewes to eate of all meates indifferently: there was a difference set them betweene cleane beastes and vncleane beastes. Nowe as touching the first, Moses telleth them, *that they be a people chosen of God to be separated from all other Nations of the world*. Wherevpon hee concludeth, that they must not then disfigure themselues: for inasmuch as God had set his marke vppon them: they ought not to do any wrong or violence to their owne bodies. And therewithall this commaundement is so moderated, that if a man haue forgone any kinsman or friende of his, hee must not lament for him out of measure as wee see men doe, who are wont to be too excessiue in their passions. When a body is deade, we see what sorrowing is made for him, yea euen with grudging against God, so all is out of order and there is no reason at all in their dealinges. Moses therefore commaundeth the Iewes to be patient, when it pleaseth God to bereaue them of their kinsfolke or friendes. And therewithall he telleth them it is shame for them to disfigure themselues after the manner of the heathen, for asmuch as it was a defacing of Gods image which was in them because they were made holy from among all the people of the worlde. Nowe as touching the first point, for as much as this inconuenience reigneth as well nowadayes, as it did at anie time heretofore; that is to wit, that men are too excessiuely giuen to making of sorrowe: this is not superfluous for vs. In deede this ceremonie of rending folkes hayre, and of scratching their faces to disfigure themselues is no more vsed: but yet wee see howe God is grudged at in ỹ greefe that men take for ỹ death of their friendes, insomuch as they martyr themselues without regard of submitting themselues to God. There is no dealing with them to comfort them, they bee caryed with such rage, as God cannot bee heard, whatsoeuer yee say to them they bee deafe. Nowe then, seeing that this misdealing commeth still at this day, wee must vnderstande that this doctrine concerneth vs also.

And here we haue to marke first of all that if the heathen and the vnbeleeuers, and the poore ignorant soules which haue not beene trayned in the worde of God were not excused for this vice: wee on our side offende God much more greeuously and without all excuse. For he hath separated vs from all the worlde. Yet notwithstanding men may well sooth themselues: for there is not any thing where God tryeth our obedience more, than by the liuing and dying at his pleasure, so as wee knowe that our liues be not in our owne handes, but that it belongeth to him to dispose of them: and euerie of vs is readie to departe out of this worlde, whensoeuer it pleaseth him to call vs: Or if hee take away our kinsfolke or friendes from vs, we be well contented with it. And indeede, why pray wee dayly that his will shoulde bee doone, but to protest that we bee willing to holde all our affections in captiuitie, and to keepe them in awe? Sith it is so: surely they that vexe themselues with immoderate lamenting for the decease of their friendes, are sufficiently conuicted by the onely order of nature, that they striue with God and rebell against him. Neuertheless, (as I saide afore) if the fillie ignorant soules torment themselues after that fashion, they bee to bee pitied. For they knowe not that our dayes are determined, and that God reserued the authoritie and priuiledge of calling vs vnto him, when hee sent vs into the worlde. They knowe none of all this: and therefore it is no wonder though they vse such excesse in their mourning. Moreouer, they haue not wherwith to comfort themselues: for none of them hath euer had any vnderstanding of the euerlasting life. To their seeming, if a man bee once deade, all is lost, hee is vtterly forlorne, hee is quite and cleane come to nought. And that is the cause why they conceiue so excessiue and vnmeasurable greefe. Othersome goe at aduenture: and although they haue some imagination of the endlesse life, yet are they not assured of the saluation of the parties, and therefore they cannot comfort themselues with the fauour of God. But as for vs, wee knowe that death is but a parting of the soule and bodie asunder, to the ende that God may shewe his inestimable power in raysing vs againe. And we knowe also that hee is a faithfull keeper of our soules when hee hath receiued them: and therefore that wee may well put them into his handes, assuring our selues that our Lorde Iesus Christ dyed not for vs in vaine.

Rom. 14. 8. 9

Seeing wee haue such comfort, is it not too great an vnthankefulnesse to torment our selues after the maner of the heathen and the infidels, when God taketh any man away from vs? Yes: And therefore when Saint Paul exhorteth the faithfull to haue patience in the departure of their friendes, he saith expressely, Sorrow not as the vnbeleeuers doe. In deede Saint Paul saw well that we can not bee senseleese: for in verie deede it were no patience if wee felte no greefe. If wee were starke blockes, it were no vertue at all. If a man shoulde laugh at the death of his wife or of his father, it were a beastly brutishnesse. Therefore it behoueth vs to feele the inconuenience and to be touched with it, so

1. Thess. 4. 13

as it pinch vs and greeue vs: But yet muſt God aſſuage it againe, becauſe we know that he hath all ſuperioritie ouer our liues, and wee muſt ſuffer him to diſpoſe of vs as hee thinkes good. Againe we muſt goe boldly vnto him, being well aſſured of his goodnes and mercie, and we muſt not doubt but that death ſhall bee to our ſaluation, and that whether we liue or die, al ſhal without fayle turne to our benefite and welfare ſo we be in Chriſt Ieſus. Thus yee ſee what we haue to beare in mind.

To be ſhorte, that we may benefit ourſelues by this leſſon of Moſeſes; let vs vnderſtand, firſt of all, that vntill God brydle vs, our affection wil euer be inordinate whether it be in mirth or in mourning. If wee haue proſperitie, by and by it makes vs to forget our ſelues what we be, ſo as we thinke not our ſelues to be mortall men. And wee ſee howe all men fall to flinging as it were in deſpite of God when they haue their eaſe and delightes. Likewiſe on the contrarie part, if our Lorde afflict vs whether it be by the death of ſome kinſeman or friende of ours, or by ſome other aduerſitie: we be piteouſly forlorne, wee cannot meaſure our greefe, wee be ſo ouerwhelmed with ſorrowe as is pitifull to beholde, and finally our heart is full of bitterneſſe and poyſon. Wee ſee howe a number doe ſpewe out blaſphemies againſt God. Let vs conſider all theſe vices in our ſelues, and ſeeke the remedie of them as it is ſet vs downe here. Let vs beare in minde (I ſay) that our Lorde commaundeth all of vs to holde our ſelues as in captiuitie, that if our nature be faultie in that behalfe, we ſhoulde not nouriſhe the euill, but withſtand it aſmuch as is poſſible. This cannot be doone except we vſe force in ſubduing our ſelues to the obeying of God, and euen ſtreyne our ſelues to the vttermoſt. And one of the cheefeſt ſacrifices that
Leuit. 23. 32. God requireth of vs and whereof he liketh beſt, is that wee conſider that wee muſt not ſorrowe out of meaſure, when we be afflicted, but flie vnto God praying him to giue vs the grace to ſubmitte ourſelues wholly to his wil ſo as if the husbande be bereft of his wife, he may beare it patiently. And why? Becauſe he knoweth it is Gods will to trie his obedience in that behalfe. Let the wife doe the like by her husbande, and let euery body ſubmit themſelues to this order of Gods, that wee may bee able to ſay, that like as he hath ſet vs in the world, ſo alſo it is good reaſon that hee ſhoulde take vs hence againe, not at our pleaſure but at his. For it is not without cauſe that he hath limited the race of our life, &
Pſal. 31. 5. 6. it pleaſeth him to take away one rather than an other. We be mortall before we come into this worlde: for a yong babe may die as well in his mothers wombe as after hee is borne. Sith it is ſo; aſſoone as God giueth vs diſcretion, let vs applie our indeuour to vnderſtande that death beſeegeth vs euerie minute of an houre, and that we muſt not promiſe our ſelues life till the nexte morrowe, nor ſet any terme to God: for his daylie prolonging of our life is but ſo much reſpiting of vs. But howeſoeuer wee fare, let vs bee mindfull of our owne frailtie, and let the ſame leade vs to conſider that if GOD take vs out of this worlde, ſooner than wee looked for, it is meete that he ſhoulde haue vs at commaundement, and that euerie of vs ſhoulde offer vp our owne bodies to him in that manner of ſacrifice, in ſuffering GOD to ſeparate vs aſunder; that what friendſhippe or bende of kinred ſoeuer there haue beene betwixt vs, yet wee may not faile to glorifie God when he taketh away our kinſefolke and friends, nor vſe this beaſtly impatience, in pulling our ſelues by the hayre of our heades, and in ſcratching and diſfiguring of our faces, as though wee knewe not what it were, to liue in the obedience of God, and to die in the ſame holy

And moreouer as well in this as in all other thinges, let vs take heede to that which is tolde here to the Iewes by Moſes: namely that when God is ſo gratious as to dedicate vs to himſelfe, and to gather vs together to bee his people, we muſt giue our ſelues ſo much the more earneſtly vnto him. True it is that in reſpect of nature we differ nothing at all from the reſt of ignorant & vnbeleeuers. For our being of Chriſts Church befalleth vs not by the right of inheritaunce. Indeede the promiſe extendeth to a thouſande generations: but yet for all that, it is of his free goodneſſe, that we haue the prerogatiue to bee of his houſe. Sith it is ſo, let vs acknowledge the honour that he doeth vs, in ſeparating vs from the heathen and vnbeleeuers though we were forlorne and damned as well as they; and let vs benefite our ſelues by that grace, that it periſhe not through our owne wickedneſſe. Thus ye ſee for what purpoſe Moſes ſaid, Thou art a people ſhooled out to thy God, haue a care to maintaine thy ſelfe in thy calling: acknowledge the good that is doone vnto thee, & goe not about to bereaue thy ſelfe wilfully of ſuch fauour. Let vs thinke vppon it (ſay I.) and that in ſuch ſort as God may be glorified in vs accordingly as hee hath vouchſafed to call vs.

And Moſes ſpeaking here expreſſely of God his election or choyce whereby hee had choſen the Iewes, addeth *Thou ſhalt bee a holy people.* For God gathereth not the ofſkowrings of the worlde to keepe them in his Church; his intent is not to haue his Church to bee as it were a Swine ſtie, ſo as there ſhoulde bee nothing but filth and infection; but hee purgeth vs from all vncleaneſſe. Nowe then whereas God calleth vs vnto him, it is with condition that we ſhould worſhippe and ſerue him in all puritie. True it is that he findeth vs as it were drowned in the depth of all leawdneſſe, ſo as by nature we haue nothing but vtter vncleanneſſe, and we be altogether ſo defiled that we be euen loothſome to him: but yet doeth hee purge vs and make vs cleane by his holy ſpirit, and it behooueth vs to lead a holy converſation al the time of our life. And ſo yee ſee howe hee woulde that men ſhoulde ratifie their free election, as Saint Peter ſpeaketh of it. And that is a thing which wee haue to marke in this ſaying of Moſes wherevppon wee haue to conclude that it is not lawfull for vs to take example at the vnbe-

ners and such as haue not beene brought vp in Gods schoole. And it is a verie necessarie doctrine for vs, considering howe wee euer shroude ourselues vnder the causes of offence which we see in any body giue vs an euil example, we beare our sinnes in hande that we bee excused before GOD, and that such a person is a shelter to vs. But contrariwise Moses telleth vs here, that we must bee a people sanctified vnto GOD, so as if the wretched vnbeleeuers doe playe the vnthrifters, we must not marueil at it. When wee see a sillie blinde soule stumble or stray out of his way, we pitie him because he is in darkenes, but we thinke it no straunge thing. Euen so is it with those that neuer knewe the trueth of GOD: they be sillie blinde soules that goe in darkenesse. But GOD inlighteneth vs, and sheweth vs the way of saluation. If we rushe against stinges, or if wee wander out of the way; whence commeth the fault? Are not wee our selues to bee blamed for it? Yes, and therefore let vs euer beare in minde the greatnesse of the grace which we haue receiued of GOD, that it perish not through our owne leawdnesse and negligence. And aboue all things, let vs take heede to that which is spoken here concerning the moderating of our sorrow & heauines. And this shall be doone, if wee be not troubled and grieued out of measure for the death of any of our kinsefolke or friendes, or for any other affliction that befalleth vs, but that we suffer God to liue as hee listeth, to dispose of them according to his good will. Thus yee see in effect what we haue to remember vppon the first point that is conteined heere.

Nowe as touching the second, Moses saith, *that the Iewes must vse care of all manner of meates, in that they must haue a care to discerne betweene the cleane beastes and the vncleane.* And afterward hee nameth the beastes, whereof it was lawful for them to eate & also the seuerall kinds which it was vnlawful for them to touch. And to be short, he saith that the beastes *which chew Cud*, (that is to say, which keepe in their mouthes ye last of their meate, & chaw it againe) are cleane, so as they might eat of them, conditionally *that they deuide the hoofe.* Now, to seeke here for nice points, as what this should meane, that ye hooues should be clouen, or that they should chawe the cud, were no matter to be greatly stoode vppon. And as for them that haue pried into the matter to search the new & the old Testament out of ye bottes cleauing of their hooues, & haue told vs ye we must needs put a difference betwixt them; & moreouer, that we must chew our cud, ye is to say feede vpon the doctrine againe and againe, that we may the better digest it, because it is ye foode of our soules: it is too too curious. For if it bee so, what do the scales of the fishes betoken? There will be occasion of seeking euerywhere, and wee shal fall into many fond speculations. And therefore let vs be aduised to vse modestie in this case. Some hold opinion that God had no further respect but to the health of mens bodies, when he forbade the eating of such beasts as he reckoneth vncleane, & they thinke that God plaide ye part of a Phisition. But that is too colde & too barren stuffe, & the scripture sheweth vs the contrarie. In deede a man may wel think that our Lord had regard what was good and conuenient for mens bodies: but to thinke that he had a further consideration, than to spy out what meats were best for mans health; that is too childishe a matter. And (as I said afore) it is no matter for vs to scan vpon, seeing the holy Ghost hath told vs plainely, that god aimed at a far other end. Let vs mark wel then, that this commaundement is no such order as is wont to be prescribed by a physition for the preseruation of a mans health: but a ceremoniall lawe that serued for Gods people in the time of the lawe, to holde them in obedience and to leade them vp higher and higher to the cleannesse of the minde: for it was Gods wil that the Iewes shoulde alwayes haue as it were lookingglasses before their eyes, to make them see that they ought not haue to doe with the defilements of the world, but to applie their whole indeuour to keep themselues in such wise as god might be glorified in thē. That is the first point, which we haue to marke. For when the Apostles treated of meats, they alleadge not that GOD meant to do the office of a Physition. And that is a very short solution. When S. Paul declareth ye the false Apostles and couseners troubled the Church, going about to holde men in bondage to the olde lawe: he sheweth that this difference of meates was a part of that childishe doctrine, vnder the which GOD led the people of olde time, because there was more rudenesse, and infirmitie at that time than there is now adayes. Not that we be better, or stronger in faith, or that we be any perfecter in our selues than they were: but because that God hath set vs further forward, by giuing vs the doctrine of the gospel. For the lawe was as an Apsie in comparison of ye doctrine that is preached vnto vs at this day. It is not to be marueiled then though there were many Ceremonies for that people, and that we haue not those Ceremonies in vse nowdaies, which serued but onely for that time. If a man replie then and say, that the preaching of the is vnto vs is more than needeth: wee see the contrarie. For although the figures be past & vtterly abolished by the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ: Yet doeth the substance of them continue still with vs, so as it behoueth vs to knowe still for what purpose God would haue ye Iewes forbeare the meats that are forbidden the here. Seeing then that the same reason and force remaineth common to vs which serued for them, it is not vnprofitable for vs to haue ye same things shewed vnto vs. Moreouer although the Sunne doe driue away all darkenesse with his light: yet is it not vnexpediente for vs to thinke vppon the night in the daytime, and vpon that wonderfull order which God hath established, sith that in winter we thinke vpon sommer, and in sommer thinke vpon winter. For we see how God setteth foorth his wisedome therein. And if there were no such varietie, we shoulde haue no such occasion to wonder thereat and to glorifie our God. Again, on the otherside, wee bee assured of the

Col. 2. 16.

grace that is brought vs by our Lord Iesus Christ: for we be preferred before the holy fathers and Patriarkes which were worthier to haue beene preferred than wee, and yet notwithstanding God kept them vnder like litle children, whereas nowadayes hee dealeth with vs as with perfect men of full age and grouth. Seeing then that God vseth such goodnesse and liberalitie towards vs, haue we not the more cause to honour him?

1.Pet.1.10. & Gal.4.1.

But nowe let vs come backe againe to the matter which I was in hand with afore, and shew yet further howe all the saide thinges may redounde to the benefiting and profiting of vs, as well in faith as in the feare of God. I haue tolde you alreadie, that whereas God did put a difference betweene beastes, declaring some to be cleane and some vncleane, it was to accustome the Iewes vnto the spirituall cleannesse, euen in eating and drinking. True it is that God inioyned them soberneſse and temperaunce therein: but he had yet a further respect, which was that in all thinges they shoulde haue a care to be vndefiled, and to haue such a stay of themselues, as they might not bee steyned with the vncleanneſse of the worlde. Gods intent then was to giue them as it were a kinde of exercise, to keepe them the better in vre. We knowe howe men do take too large scope in eating and drinking. For whereas the rest of their life doth put them in minde to pray vnto God, and to take paines, and to discharge themselues of their dutie: when they take their repast, they giue them selues to mirth and reioycing. And it is lawefull for them so to doe, so they keepe measure. But what? They so ouershoote themselues in the turning of a hande as a man might wonder to see their excesse of mirth. This was the cause why God woulde haue his people put in mind of the soberneſse which we ought to vse in our eating and drinking al our life long, that it might be as a bridle to restraine vs, for after as our diseases bee, so doeth God giue vs medicines for them. Now (as I saide afore) there is more disorder in eating and drinking, than in all our life besides. And therefore it was requisite that our Lorde shoulde exercise his people in that behalfe. And for the same cause did he deliuer them instructions, to warne them that they ought to behaue themselues purely in all things, and to put them alwayes in minde thereof. Ye see then that the first point which wee haue to remember vppon this text, is that God telleth the Iewes that forasmuch as hee had chosen them to be his owne inheritance, they ought to dedicate themselues to him euen in things that concerne the outward conuersation, and to abstaine from worldly corruptions, not intermedling themselues with the vices of the heathen after our common maner which we knowe to bee alwayes tending vnto euill. Gods will was to holde them in that awe. And nowe wee see howe it is no more than needeth. For why? True it is that the ceremonie continueth not nowadaies: for our lord Iesus Christ hath set vs in greater libertie than the fathers were vnder the law: but yet is not the pith of it put away, that is to wit, that we shoulde liue soberly vnder the feare of our God, casting off all corruptions, and abridging our selues of all libertie of hauing to doe with the lustes of the worlde. What though the vnbeleeuers doe beare with themselues too much? shoulde we doe so too? Seeing that our Lord telleth vs that wee be his temples, so as he dwelleth in vs by his holy spirite, and that he woulde haue vs to be as sacrifices vnto him, so as we shoulde offer vp both our soules and bodies vp to him dayly: is it lawful for vs to cast our selues into the vncleanneſse of the worlde, without anie regard how to represse it? Then let vs marke well that although the ceremonie be no longer in vre, yet the lawe in it selfe is not doone away, but that God inioyneth vs the same sobrietie as this day, whereto he meant to leade the people of olde time by the meanes that were agreeable to that time. Againe sith we see what priuiledge God giueth vs, let the same moone vs the more to yeelde our selues freely vnto him. If we compare our selues with the fathers of olde time, we shall finde that God led them but as yong babes and yet were they as Angels among mortal men. If we look vpon the life of Abraham, what a perfection of holinesse shall we find there? As much is to be saide of the rest of the Patriarkes and Prophetes: and yet neuertheleſſe, yee see howe God held them in darkishnes, giuing them but a small taste of his grace, insomuch that his shewing of Iesus Christ vnto them, was but a farre off. But we in these dayes haue much further preeminence: for God sheweth himselfe fully vnto vs, and we haue the spirite of adoption, whereby we may crie with full mouth, that God is our father, euen wee that come of the heathen, and had no acquaintance with God, but were vncleane, and (to be short) were by nature accursed, & had none other heritage than death and damnation. Nowe then is it not an inestimable priuiledge, that God hath brought vs so neare to himselfe? What is to be doone then? Seeing that God allureth vs more freely than he did the fathers, let vs be the more earnestly minded to serue him. He dischargeth vs of the burthen of concerning the shadowes and figures: what is to be doone therfore? We must haue this willingnesse of giuing our selues to the spirituall seruice which he requireth continually now stil as well as he required it then. Therfore let euerie man bethinke himselfe, and inasmuch as God giueth vs leaue to eate of all manner of meates freely without exception, (that is to say, of all such as may serue for our sustenaunce:) let vs haue this consideration with our selues, Alas my God, yet must I not abuse thy goodnes. How manie waies doest thou shewe thy selfe liberall to me? Therfore doeth it become me to bridle my selfe of mine owne accorde and to cut off all the wicked affections that reigne in me.

Col.2.14.

And first of all let vs put the doctrine in vre which Saint Paul setteth down in the thirteenth to the Romanes, which is, that wee bee not carefull for our flesshe, at leastwise to fulfill the lustes thereof (for that is a guilt that can

neuer

theuer be filled) but onely looke to the susteyning of our bodies, so farre foorth as they may bee maintained in good plight, & so vse Gods creatures, as wee defile them not. For although Gods creatures are permitted vnto vs; yet doe we not cease to defile them by our vnbeleefe, intemperance, gluttonie, or other abuses which we commit. GOD sheweth that as now we may eate both of the Hare and of the Connie, as wel as of the sheepe or of the Goate. Yet notwithstanding if wee glut our selues with them, the meate that is cleane of it selfe becommeth vncleane vnto vs, because we bee vnthankefull to GOD, in that we consider not to what end he giueth vs sustenance. One man rusheth foorth into all excesse, and yet is neuer the more mainteyned in strength of bodie by it: for he is readie to burst, and maketh himselfe altogether vnweeldie. A drunkarde playeth the Swine or some other brute beaste, and the wine so ouercommeth him, that he hath neither wit nor reason. And although wine be a creature that God hath blessed, and haue no vncleanneſse at all in it selfe: yet is it defiled by such misusing of it. Othersome neuer remember to giue GOD thankes, nor to call vppon his name. And that is an other kind of defiling our foode. Againe othersome abuse it to vaineglorie and deliciousnesse, and growe so farre out of order, that they can no skill to serue GOD. Othersome are so giuen to daintie fare, that it maketh them to put their consciences in ieoperdie, insomuch that they will not sticke to make them bondslaues to all lawdnesse and wickednesse, so they may haue good cheere. Othersome are afraide of want, and fall to snatching, to filching, to catching, and to al that can be deuised, to get somewhat by hooke or by crooke. And thus doe all of vs defile Gods creatures, which of themselues are cleane. And that is the cause why I saide, that sith our Lorde hath giuen vs greater priuiledge, and set vs more at libertie, to the end that the bondage of the lawe shoulde not haue dominion ouer vs: therefore wee ought to bee the willinger to restraine ourselues in absteining from all vncleanneſse, and to consider that the cause why God hath giuen vs the free vse of all kinde of meates, is that wee shoulde vse them purely, and not be defiled on our side, so as we might not bee blamed for defiling of the things which haue no manner of vncleanneſse in them selues, in respect of God and in respect of the order that hee hath set among vs. And we must haue this regarde not onely in respect of meate and drinke, but also in respect of our whole life in general. Considering then that God nurtured the people of old time, by forbidding certaine meates, to the ende that they shoulde thinke thus with themselues; well then, seeing that our God hath forbidden vs the things that are lawfull for the heathen, and which they take leaue to doe; let vs vnderstande that it behoueth vs to liue in all manner of pureneſse, and that seeing God will haue vs to bee pure in smal thinges, hee will much rather haue vs to bee so in great thinges. Let vs nowadayes consider to what purpose this ceremonie of the lawe may serue vs, to the ende that euerie of vs may enter into himselfe. As for example, if a man be led with ambition, so as hee wil needes aduance himselfe and clymbe too high: or if he be caried away with couetousneſse, so as he burne therewith: or if hee be an vnthrift and leade a lawleſse life: or if hee bee a whorehunter and giuen to beastly lust: let vs bethinke ourselues thus: howe nowe? Our Lorde abhorreth euerie little vncleanneſse euen in eating and drinking: and what will come of it then if our soules be defiled, sith they be the thinges wherein he will haue his glorie to shine most cheefely? True it is that our bodies also are the Temples of the holy Ghost: but yet hath God set his owne image in our soules: and what a thing were it then to defile them after that sort with all diueliſhe and worldly vncleanneſse? Thus ye see whereunto it behoueth vs to applie this doctrine to vse it wel. 1. Cor. 6, 15. & Eph. 4, 23 24.

And by the way let vs marke, that Gods wil was to holde the people of olde time in obedience that they might knowe howe it is not for men to take such libertie and licence as they list, but that they must receiue it at his hande. To bee short, let vs not attempte any thing in al our whole life, except wee knowe it to be acceptable to our God. When wee haue leaue of him, then may we well goe forwarde: but if hee say it not, then let vs be still. And indeede although this prohibition were not put in writing; yet had God put a difference afore betweene cleane beastes and vncleane beastes, as we may easily perceiue by that which is written of Noe. God commaunded him to make sacrifice after the fludde. And whereof? Was it of all beastes ingenerall? No: Neither had hee reserued so great a number of the vncleane beastes as of the cleane, and that was by reason of sacrificing. Then was there a difference alreadie euen at that time. And whereof proceeded that? Had men deuised it of their owne braine? No. And therefore let vs marke howe God reserued to himselfe the prerogatiue of putting difference betweene the beastes that were cleane and the beastes that were vncleane, to the intent that men shoulde know that it is not for them to liue as they list, & to haue y bridle loose in al things; but that it behoueth them to looke vpwarde to harken what God giueth them leaue to do. And when he giueth them leaue; then let them vse their libertie, or else let them keepe themselues still. Ye see here a doctrine that is as profitable as that which we haue touched alreadie: for wee see howe men burst foorth into such disorder, & with so great headinesse, that they haue no mind at all to vse Gods benefites according to his meaning. Ye shall not finde one among a thousande that will consider with him selfe whether God giueth him leaue to doe a thing or no. But men rushe out into all disorder, as though they had leaue to doe what they list. Nowe then seeing wee be so leawde and vnkinde that wee fall to thrusting our groynes into thinges like swine, and consider not from whence the benefites Gen. 8, 20.

come: good cause haue we to remember this doctrine, wherein it is shewed vs that euen from ỹ beginning of the worlde, GOD did put a difference betweene the cleane beastes and the vncleane. And let vs vnderstande, that although the ceremonie continue not any longer nowadayes; Yet notwithstanding the same ought to serue vs for a warning, to lift vp our mindes on high in our eating and drinking and in our vsing of all the rest of Gods creatures, that wee may know howe farre God hath giuen vs leaue, and simply submit our selues thereunto.

Again, if he giue vs libertie, let it always prouoke vs to glorifie his name & to giue him thãks: for it is one of the sacrifices which he requireth of vs, that wee shoulde doe him homage for all his benefites as holding them from him. But that cannot be done, except wee bee first put in minde that we cannot so much as eate one bit of breade, without it be giuen vs from aboue, not onely for that he hath created all thinges, but also for that it behoueth vs to receiue all things as at his hande. Therefore whensoeuer we eat or drinke, we must not onely call to minde that God hath created all things for mans vse; but also that hee feedeth vs, as a father that cutteth out meate to his little children, so as our hauing of thinges is as it were by his deliuerance, as if he should say to vs, I doe the office of a father, I haue a care to nourishe you. If wee knowe not this, it is vnpossible for vs to thanke God hartily and vnfainedly. True it is that euen they that haue no such thought will say grace; but that is but for fashion sake and in way of hypocrisie. Wil wee then magnifie Gods goodnesse truely: then must we bee fully resolued, not onely that God hath created all thinges for mans vse: but also that he stil sheweth himselfe a father, and giueth vs assurance that he will susteyne our bodies, and maintaine vs in this transitorie life. Sith it is so, is it not an incouragement vnto vs to yeeld him the thankes as he deserueth? Yes: For it is not without cause that hee listed to put a difference betweene the ceremonies of the Lawe, and the thinges that we haue at this day. But although this prohibition was done away by the cõming of our Lorde Iesus Christ; yet cease wee not to come backe still to this point, that forasmuch as our Lord Iesus Christ giueth vs leaue to vse all his creatures indifferently, we must vse them in such wise as he may be glorified by them, so as wee referre all to him, and take all as at his hande.

Psal. 50. 14. 23.

And herewithall we see what priuiledge we haue, in that we may quietly and with safe conscience eate the thinges that God giueth vs. For as for the wretched papists, which behaue themselues after the maner of the worlde, in forbearing certaine meates that are forbidden them, whereas they think themselues to serue God in making but small meales vppon some certayne dayes, and absteyning from egges and white meates on some other dayes; and beare themselues in hand that their so doing is great deuotion, and that God is greatly bound to them for it, and yet in ỹ meane while suffer themselues to be led like silie beastes by the tyrannie of men: in what case are they before God? They can not eat one bitte of breade without doubting because they knowe not who it is that giueth it vnto them. But sith we see that our Lorde hath set vs at libertie, so as we may vse all manner of meats with thanksgiuing: let vs consider that it is such a priuiledge as cannot be esteemed sufficiently, and therfore let vs acknowledge it in our eating and drinking. Sith we perceiue ỹ God hath such a care of vs, as to stoope so lowe, as to be carer of our food: [let vs assure our selues ỹ] although our bodies be but carions; yet notwithstanding God wil giue them sustenance to maintaine the. Seeing wee haue such a certeintie & knowledge (which cannot be without faith,) that is to say that we be sure what God hath graunted vnto vs: we ought greatly to magnifie his grace, and therewithall to vse all his creatures with such sobrietie, as we may yeeld him good account of them at the last day, & glorifie him in al points as long as he keepeth vs in this world.

Now let vs kneele downe before ỹ maiestie of our good god ỹ acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, by touching vs to the quicke, so as we acknowledging him to bee the author of all good things, may learne to seeke him in all our life, and cleaue wholy to his will: and that for the bringing thereof to passe, it may please him to graunt vs the grace to forsake all our corruptions, and to fence vs so from the wiles and suttleties of satan and the world, as nothing may keepe vs from being truely vnited to him that is the fountaine both of life, of ioye, and of al happinesse. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xxiij. of October. 1555.

The XCj. Sermon, which is the second vpon the fourteenth Chapter.

21 Ye shal not eat of anie dead bodie, but thou shalt giue it to the Straunger that is within thy gates, that he may eat it: or else thou shalt sell it to a straunger: For thou art a holy people to the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not seeth a kidde in his dammes milke.

22 Thou

22 Thou shalt giue the tenth of all the increase of thy seede which groweth yeerely on thy Land:

23 And in the place which the Lorde thy GOD will chooſe to put his name in, thou ſhalt eate before him the tythe of thy grayne, and of thy wine, and of thine oyle, and the firſt borne of thy kine, and of thy ſheepe, that thou maiſt learne to feare the Lord thy God alwayes.

YEſterday I tould you the cauſe why God forbad the people of olde time to eate of ſome certaine kindes of meats. For in as much as we be fed & ſuſtained by his hand, it is good reaſon ẏ we ſhould vſe his creatures purely, and that we ſhould haue leaue of him, ſo as euery man take not leaue to doe what he liſteth, but what Gods word permitteth vs to doe. Therewall I ſhewed alſo, ẏ although the ceremonie be no more vſed nowadayes, nor we any more bound thereto as the fathers of old time were which liued vnder the law: yet notwithſtanding the doctrine thereof ceaſſeth not to be profitable for vs. And hereby we be doone to vnderſtand, that it is not lawfull for vs to eate or drinke without faith, (as S. Paul ſpeaketh of it in the xiiii. to the Romanes) that is to ſay, vnleſſe we be ſure that God giueth vs the thinges which wee receiue for our ſuſtenance, as if a father ſhoulde feede his children. On the other ſide, wee haue farre greater libertie nowadayes, than was vnder the Lawe. Wee ſee how liberall GOD is towardes vs: and wee haue the more cauſe to yeeld him thankes. Moreouer the thing that was ſet downe in figures to the Iewes in olde tyme, is vttered as nowe vnto vs without figure: that is to ſay, that in all caſes & all reſpects we muſt bridle our ſelues, ſo as we medle not ẇ the defilements of ẏ vnbeleeuers, but ſeparate our ſelues from them, ſeeing ẏ our Lord hath gathered vs into his flock and ſheepefold. And this figure of the old time, is a warning for vs nowadayes. For although we be no more bound to the keeping of it; yet notẇſtanding it ought to moue vs ẏ more to ſerue our god purely, ſith we ſee he hath giuen vs a greater priuiledge than he gaue to ẏ Patriarkes & Prophets. After ẏ ſelf ſame maner is it ẇ the things ẏ Moſes addeth here. For yeſterday he treated of the meats ẏ were foule and vncleane in thoſe dayes. And hee ſorted them into their ſeuerall kindes. You ſhal eate of ſuch beaſtes, ſayd he: but in any wiſe beware ẏ ye touch no ſwine, nor any ſuch like thinge. Nowe he treateth of ſtrangled meats, as of fleſh ẏ dieth alone ẇout killing and ẇout letting of it bloud. And no doubt but ẏ his ſetting downe of this, is to ſhew that in ſo doing there is a double abhomination according to ẏ lawe. For firſt & formoſt when a beaſt died ſo alone of it ſelf, it was vnholy aforehand, & the very only touching of it was able to make a mã vncleane. And ẏ was the cauſe why God did ſo forbid his people to eate therof. Again, the bloud of it was ſetled in it, & we haue ſeene already how it was not lawful for ẏ Iewes to eate bloud, & that was bicauſe ẏ in the bloud wee haue as it were a liuely image of ẏ ſoule & of the life: & Gods meaning was to teach his people to abſtaine frõ all crueltie. And hereof we haue ẏ reaſon expreſſed in Geneſis, at ſuch time as Noe and his ofspring were forbidden to eate bloud; where it is added ẏ we muſt ſpare men, bicauſe a man is ẏ image of God, & whoſoeuer doeth any outrage vnto him, ſhal not ſcape vnpuniſhed. Now then, Gods care was not for the beaſts when he forbad ẏ Iewes ẏ eating of their bloud: but his intent was to teach them by ẏ meanes to abſtaine from all crueltie, ſo as they ſhould be loth to do any outrage, and ſpecially any murther. But as for vs in theſe days we bee not in ſuch bondage. For our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath freed vs by his death and paſſion. Neuertheleſſe, howſoeuer we fare, ẏ groundwork abideth ſtill; ſo as a man may forbid a little child to handle a knife, leaſt he ſhould hurt himſelfe ẇ it: and yet an elder body alſo is to be forefended from hurting of himſelfe, wheras yet notwithſtãding, the handling of a knife were not euill for a child but in reſpect aforeſaid. And therfore God who tooke ẏ Iewes as little children, forbad thẽ ſtreitly the things ẏ are permitted vs at this day. Howbeit, the finall end is all one both to them & vs: inſomuch that we muſt conſider, that if Gods wil was to haue the Iewes kindharted, & to know ẏ the ſhedding of bloud is a deteſtable thing: the ſame ought alſo to be regarded of vs at this day, although the figure therof be aboliſhed. True it is (as wee reade in ẏ xv. of the Actes) ẏ the Apoſtles forbad ẏ Gentils to eate bloud or any thing that is ſtrangled: but ẏ was not for any ſin ẏ was in ſo doing. It was to auoide occaſion of offence, bicauſe (as it is there alleaged) Moſes was read openly, & the law was publiſhed abrode in all Cities, ſo as they heard it there forbidden. The Iewes could not abide at ẏ firſt, to ſee them eate bloud, which named themſelues Chriſtians: for ẏ was a lothſome thing to them. Therefore men were faine for a time to forbeare ẏ libertie that God giueth nowadayes to al the faithfull, accordingly as S. Paul ſpeaketh therof, ſaying that the things which are lawfull for vs are not alwayes expedient: for they edifie not. We haue in deede our conſciences free before God: but yet if I ſee my brother offended, it behoueth me to beare ẇ him, if his ſo doing be through infirmitie, and in any wiſe I muſt haue a conſideration, whether a man be already throughly inſtructed in the faith or no. The intent of the Apoſtles then was not to make a grounded law wherewith to tie mens conſciences, & to hold thẽ in bondage: but only to auoide al occaſion of cauſing folk to ſtumble. But this hath bin ill marked of a great ſort of ignorant perſons. For they haue thought it to bee deadly ſinne to eate ẏ bloud of any beaſt, as wee

Gen. 9. 4, 6.

Col. 2, 14.

Gal. 4. 10.

Act 15. 20. 21.

1. Cor. 6, 12 & 10, 23.

see it mainteined still at this day: and that was a foolish & beastly superstition. For (as I said afore) our Lord Iesus Christ hath cancelled the obligation of the Lawe of Moses, so as we be no more bound vnto it. But yet for all that, it behoueth vs to liue in concord one with another, and to haue a regarde what our neighbours are able to beare. There is not the like reason for vs noweadayes to forbeare the eating of flesshe vppon frydayes: for it is a meere deuotion, and it was forged and inuented without any likelyhoode of reason, yea and it was matched with a kinde of Idolatrie, for as much as the Papistes haue furnished themselues to serue God by that meanes in forbearing to eat flesshe vpon certaine daies, which was too grosse a folly. Nettertheless, if a christenman should come among the Papistes, and goe about to teache them that are yet altogether blinded, the point ỳ he should begin at, must not bee the eating of flesh vpon frydayes, for that would scare them quite away; bicause they neuer heard that it is lawful to do it, and therfore could neuer conceiue the truth of it, and besides that they should see him go about to breake a law which they take to be most holy, without informing them of the true meaning of the whole. Such dealing therfore should be contrary to Gods meaning, and to Christen liberty. And therefore order and measure are to bee obserued in those cases. But by the way, let vs remember that wee haue cause to giue thankes to our God, for exempting vs from ỳ bondage that our fathers were subiect to vnder the law: & that we must also benefite our selues by those figures, by learning to liue friendly with our neighbors, abhorring all murthers and outrages, not onely actual murthers but also hatred, which is likewise condemned for murther before God, though it be neuer so secret and close kept, as saith S. Iohn. That is the thing which we haue to note when it is sayd vnto vs that God vttereth his will without any shadow, and not in darke speeches as he did to the fathers, but as one that speaketh with open mouth: and therefore let vs hold our selues contented therewith.

Col. 2. 14.

1. Ioh. 3. 15.

Now after this commaundement, Moses addeth *that wee must not seeth a Kidde in his dammes Milke*: but woorde for woorde, it is but in *Milke*. It hath beene commonly vnderstoode, that a man shoulde not seeth a Kid in his dames milke, or make sawce with Goates milke to eate Kiddes flesshe withall. And thereuppon, the Iewes (who will needes bee alwayes adding of somewhat to the pure worde of God) haue made a Lawe that it shoulde not bee lawfull for a man to eate cheese made of Goates milke after he had eaten kiddes flesh, vntill he had first well scoured and washed his teeth, for to their seeming, that woulde haue bin a defiling of the man. But when al things are wel considered, the meaning of this text is ỳ men shoulde not rost a kid as soone as he were newyeaned, but ỳ they should let it sucke for a time, ỳ it might be flesh meete to bee eaten. And this was doone to the ende that folke should not inure themselues so much to the following of their owne appetites, as to fall into any beastly cruelties for from the one, men come to the other. Let vs alwayes beare in minde howe it was declared yesterday, that GOD was well willing to giue his people leaue to eate of all maner of good & conuenient meates, sauing that he meant to holde them in awe for the trial of their obedience, and yet notwithstanding ment not onely to set them downe some order of diet or fare like a Phisition. For it were too grosse an imagination to thinke that God prouided but onely for the diseases of his people, as though all his Ceremonies had tended but to the feeding of their bodyes. For the putting hereof among the olde figures and shadowes was not for nought. Then let vs conclude that God had a further regarde when he forbad the eating of a kidde in his dammes milke. And in deede we see how in another place hee forbiddeth men to catch an olde birde sitting vpon her yong ones, for it is a kind of cruelty. If a man finde a nest of Partridges or other birdes, and catch the dam sitting vpon the yong, God condemneth it, that is to say, he condemned it in olde tyme in the Lawe among the Ceremonies. And why so? Bycause it is against nature. For wee see howe the seely birdes are so carefull for their young, that the damme will rather starue than forsake them. Whereby wee bee put in minde to doe the like. Seeing then that the seelie birds, to discharge their naturall duetie, doe forget themselues so farre that they passe not what miserie they indure, nor what care they take for the cherishing of their yong ones, in so much as they suffer themselues to bee taken with hand, and yeeld themselues as it were into bondage for them: were it not an acte of extreme cruelty for a man to goe kill them? Good cause therefore had God to forbid it, to shewe that men ought not to passe their bounds, and take leaue to doe what they list, but to restraine themselues to some kind of humanitie. And so whereas in this text God forbiddeth men to eate a kid in his dams milke; it is as much to say, as men ought not to deuour a yong beast as soone as it is come into ỳ world, vntill it haue sucked a time: neither can the flesh of it be kindly and good to eate. Nay, moreouer it importeth a kind of barbarous ouerfiercenes, when men are so greedie ỳ they will needs take the beastes at the first fal of them, and not tarie till they may come to their full season to be eaten, as some haue bin seene to be so beastly, ỳ they haue ripped ỳ dams bellyes to take out the yong ones. It hath beene seen that a glutton hath not bin contented with the creatures which God hath brought forth into the world, but he must also go rip vp a Hinde to haue the Calfe for the satisfying of his appetite. It is sayde that the earth is full of infinite riches, and ỳ god hath powred out such treasures as are able to amaze vs: & yet for al ỳ ye see how some man wil play the detestable monster. Whe he hath pãpered his belly with ordinarie foode, he fals to deuising I wote not what: in so much ỳ if it were possible he wold create a new world, to feede his paunch wal. And although he be not able to make a flie, yet falleth he to imagining ỳ will

Deut. 22.

Psal. 36.

will go ſlit a Hinde or a Doe, and take out ſ vnciuely fruit out of her belly to feed vpon. And is not ſ too great a wickednesse? No doubt but that ſuch desires haue beene in all ages; but behold, God telleth vs that wee muſt vſe ſuch temperance and ſobernesse in our dyet, as wee may alwayes haue a regard to the maintening of humanitie. Wee muſt preſcribe a rule our ſelues, and our eating and drinking muſt not bee ſo barbarous; that it ſhould be a meane to harden our hartes & make vs to forgo all humanitie, which is a thing diuers times quite forgotten; but that we ſhould liue together in good quietnes, & abſtaine from all iniurie and euill dealing.

And as touching the Ceremony whereof I am to ſpeake, which the Iewes obſerue and whereof they haue made a very ſolemne law: we ſee therby how the world will needes pay God alwayes with petie triſles: And ſ is it from whence ſuch ſuperſtition is come. It is all one with that which we haue ſeene heeretofore, where God forbad his people to diſfigure themſelues at the death of any of their friendes. But the Iewes conſidering not to what end ſuch prohibition was ſet downe: obſerued it according to the letter. Well then, they muſt not diſfigure themſelues: but yet they had not an eye to gods meaning, which is, men ouerſhoot themſelues too far in making too much ſorrowe at ſ deceaſſe of their friends, tormenting themſelues out of meaſure, blaſpheming the name of God, and fretting inwardly. And therfore God intended to repreſſe ſuch corruption. Yea and as though mens ſins prouoked not Gods wrath ſufficiently of themſelues: they thinke it not ynough to be impatient, but they do alſo prouoke themſelues to it ſtill more & more. For we ſee there is no meaſure in mens ſorrowing, but they inforce themſelues to weepe, and doe many other thinges to increaſe their greefe and beſinesse, kindling the fire ſtill more and more, which is great ynough already of it ſelfe: diuers the ſame maner deale they in all other thinges. But what doe the Iewes ſtill in this behalfe? They may not diſfigure themſelues: but in the meane while they rend their garmentes. And ſo the meaning of the Lawmaker, which was ſimple, is diſfeated. For to their ſeeming, when a friend of theirs is dead, they muſt not be without ſorrowe for him; for that were a diſhonouring of him, and therefore they muſt rend their garmentes for him. And beſides that, they muſt make ſuch Countenances, and ſuch Ceremonies, ſo as they muſt not eate that day in their owne houſes, but ſpend that day abrode in mourning, and in doeing this and that. When they haue finiſhed a hundred pelting toyes, they beare themſelues in hand that they haue well pacified God; and yet notwithſtanding that they may diſpiſe him all their life long. And heerein we ſee as in a lookingglaſſe, how greatly our nature is inclined to ſuperſtition; and ſecondly that alwayes we will needes haue ceremonies to content God withall, and to diſcharge our dewties towardes him. Our nature (I ſay) is ſo bent to ſuperſtition, that if God forbid a thing, in deede wee dare not doe it with intent to reſiſt him, but wee ſeeke ſome other byway, ſo as GOD ſhall bee diſappointed, and neuer haue the thing that hee demaundeth. As for example, the Chriſtians which beare that name, take not vpon them the very ſuperſtitions of ſ Idolaters as they terme them; but yet they followe the ſelfe ſame in deede with a little diſguiſing of them, and ſo they beare themſelues in hande that god eſpies them not at all. The Idolaters caryed bread and drinke to the graues of the dead, bearing themſelues in hand that the ſoules were fed therewith; and they caryed thither lightes to the intent to glad them. Nowe the Papiſtes haue thought this to be too great an abſurditie. But what for that? They offer vp bread, & wine, and candles, and monie at their Maſſes, and the ſoules departed (ſay they) ſhall finde releaſe by it. Verily if it bee replyed that the ſuperſtition of the Papiſtes is not all one with the ſuperſtition of the heathen: in deede there is ſome difference betwixt them. But to what ende do they ſo, but to content GOD with ſome newe exchaunge? For (as I ſayde) it is a thing rooted in mans nature. And wee ought to marke it well: for wee woulde ſoone fall into it, if wee were not reſtrayned by Gods woorde, as by a ſhort and rough brydle. And all commeth from out of this ſpring, that wee will not ſerue GOD as he requireth, but by a ſorte of Ceremonies I woote not what. And when wee haue once made ſome ſhewe of deuotion; wee beare our ſelues in hand that he is well appeaſed, and that he ought not to preſſe vs any further. And thus ye ſee that the cauſe why men in all ages haue toyled themſelues ſo much in the ſeruice of God, and haue inuented ſo many triſling things: is that they will needes paye him in ſuch coyne, becauſe they were loath to deale vprightly and faythfully with him. God requireth our hearts: & if he poſſeſſe not them, all the reſt is nothing worth. Now we bee full of hypocriſie, and wee bee not willing to diſcouer our backhookes which are full of diſſimulation, malice, and rebellion, but would alwayes keepe them ſtill to our ſelues. And yet in the meane ſeaſon wee pretend a maruelous holynesse with our eyes, our feete, and our handes. Therefore let vs learne that this miſchiefe hath reigned in all ages, to the intent we may rid our ſelues of it; and let vs aſſure our ſelues that God will not be ſerued at our handes by outwarde Ceremonies. True it is that all our whole life ought to beare witneſſe that the feare of him is well rooted in our hartes. Faith is a dead thing if it vtter not it ſelfe by good fruites. Moreouer if we intend to haue our ſeruice accepted of God, let vs aſſure our ſelues that we muſt begin at the ſoundneſſe of hart, and that all Ceremonies are to no purpoſe, except they ſhewe ſ our hart is right, pure, and vnfeined. Thus much concerning the ſuperſtition and abuſe ſ reigned among the Iewes and ſtill reigneth at this preſent.

We muſt alwayes come backe to this ſaying of our Lorde, that the thinges which goe into a mans mouth defile him not, but the thinges that come out at his mouth, as all maner of

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wicked affections. One is full of ambition and pride, another burneth in couetousnesse, and a third practiseth spitefullnesse and treason. Euery man hath his vice himselfe, so as one is a glutton and another is a whoremonger. These are the things that infect the man, yea and they infect the whole world. Therefore let vs learne to clense our selues from all such filthinesse: and as for Ceremonies, let vs knowe that wee ought to vse them so farre foorth as God requireth them for the vttering of our faith: but yet must we vse them simply, and not bee wedded too much to them. For wee see that the deuill will by and by haue a towell ready to blindfould our eyes withall, so as wee shall no more consider the principall, but forget it vtterly and abuse our selues to thinges of nothing. To the intent then that we may not haue our eyes so bleared: let vs follow God that way which hee calleth vs: that is, to serue him in all pureneſſe.

And now as touching the principall point of this sentence, where it is said that a kid must bee eaten in his dammes milke: let vs vnderstand that God will haue vs to vse honestie and sobernesse in our eating and drinking: that is the thing in effect, which wee haue to remember in that text. Truely as touching the figure, we be no more tyed to it, as I haue said aforetime but as for Gods meaning, that is durable. When men doe giue themselues to their leawde and outrageous appetites, it is all one as though they ment to ouerthrow the order of nature. Yee see how drunkardes (when they bee so full that they be ready to burst) doe inuent such shamefull thinges, that an honest man would bee ready to cast vp his stomacke to heare the things spoken of which those swine doe. When they be as full as their skinnes can holde, they whet their stomacks, & take shooinghornes (as they term the) to drawe on a cup of wine, and such other like things, so as wee may see that men cannot content themselues with any measure, but although God shewe himselfe liberall towardes them, yet notwithstanding they wil needs follow their inordinate lustes still, declaring ſ their desires are vnsatiable, & neuer at rest, till they haue brought themselues to shameful disorder, without regard of any modestie. Sith we see such things, we may well perceyue howe it is not without cause that God hath warned the Iewes to vse a kind of honestie in their liuing and feeding: which thing belõgeth much more to vs at this day. Although we haue not the Ceremonie any more; yet will God haue vs to liue honestly, & to vse a sobrietie in our eating & drinking, so as we may alway lift vp our eyes & say, Lord, we haue receiued foode at thy hand, & we know ſ thou shewest thy selfe a father towards vs. But if we make a hotchpotch of al things wout discretion, surely it is no taking of them as at Gods hand, but wee shall finde at the last, that we rauened them vp like beastes. And therfore let vs learne to refraine our selues. Thus wee see howe the doctrine that is conteyned heere, is not vnnecessarie at this day, so wee can applie it duely, and with discretion of the holy Ghost to our instruction.

Now after this, he sayth concerning beasts that *are strangled, and are dead in their blood, that they should giue them to strangers: or else sell them.* It seemeth heere at the first sight, that God should as well condemne those beastes for the strangers as for the Iewes. For if it be not lawfull for me my selfe to doe a thing; why should I bee an occasion to my neighbour to doe it? Am I not giltie of sinne in so doing? Here we haue to consider the reason that Moses addeth: *Thou art a People holy vnto thy God.* Heere he sheweth that God had shooled out ſ Iewes from all other nations of the earth, and therefore hee would not haue them to defile themselues with any kind of meate. Now if it be demaunded, and why then had they leaue to selor giue the things to strangers, which were abhominable as in respect of themselues? The reason is this: That god hauing named the beasts which he would haue his people to eate of, did leaue all beastes without difference for all other men to feede on which were not instructed in his Law. True it is that he had forbidden al mankind to eate the blood of any thing, and consequently to eate of any beast that was strangled or died alone. But the most part of the world was already gone astraye, so as they knew not the law any more, & we see how ſ euen in the life of Noe, his posteritie intangled themselues in a nomber of superstitions & idolatries, and had forgotten god who had preserued them so wonderfully: so as there was no more but the linage of Sem, which was but a very small portion, that held themselues to any puretie in the seruing of God. By reason whereof ſ whole world grew into such a licentious liberty, that all was mard. God therefore reſcrueth a people to himselfe, & bringeth them backe to the first law, saying. Seeing I tel you that I haue chosen you to be my household: I set you downe a speciall order, ſ you may haue my badge whereby to be knowen from al ſ vnbeleeuers of the earth. After ſ maner doth god deale. But men runne gadding on their own head, & follow alwaies their own affections, & cãnot find in the ir harts to subiect themselues simply to Gods law as he requireth. Truely the thing of it selfe were not euill, if there had bin no law against it. And this law was giuen to ſ Iewes, for the two reasons which I haue alleaged afore. The first was for the tryall of their obedience, ſ they should shew themselues to be subiect vnto God. And the second was, ſ thereby they might be quickned vp to keepe themselues from al corruption. But as for the heathen, they might haue eaten of all meates, so they had acknowledged the giuer of them and the creator that had made all thinges to their vse, worshipping him purely and abstaining from al cruelty & outrage: but they liued in ſ world like beastes. They had in deede a kinde of Imagination that there was one God, & they forged a great nomber of gods and yet for all that while euery man had an idol by himselfe, the liuing God was forsaken of all men. For as much then as the heathen had not the Law appointed vnto them: the Iewes might well leaue those kind of meates vnto them.

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stand, ỳ the thing of it selfe was not euill. Seeing ỳ God gaue them leaue to sel or giue vnto ỳ heathen the flesh of such things as were not ordinarily slaine; thereby they might perceiue how it behoued them to looke yet further. And why so? As touching murther, bicause it is forbidden of it self, if it be not lawfull for me to kill a man, neither is it lawfull for mée to lend a sworde to kill him withall, nor to vse any maner of treacherie. Now then, in things ỳ God condemneth of thémselues, & which are euil of théselues: it is certaine ỳ all men ought not onely to abstaine frō them, but also to beware ỳ he giue not any occasion to my other body to do thē. And so it is to be concluded, ỳ sith the Iewes might without offending God giue or sel the flesh of strangled beasts: God shewed thereby, that ỳ thing of it self was not euil, & that his forbidding of it was but to hold thē vnder awe, & thereby to leade them yet further, intending to make thē vnderstand, ỳ they ought to liue in al maner of purenes, bicause they were a holy people. This is ỳ which we haue to remēber vpon this place. Nowe, whereas he speaketh here of straungers, he meaneth all the heathen which were not of ỳ line of Abraham, as if we in these dayes should speake of ỳ Turks & Sarazins, we might say they haue no fellowship w vs bicause they weare not ỳ badge of Baptisme, and desire ỳ God whom we worship. For Gods lawe speaketh to all men alike, at leastwise the morall lawe as they terme it, that is to say, the lawe ỳ rulth our life: but the lawe ỳ belongeth to ỳ Gospel speaketh to none but to ỳ Church of God. As for example ỳ Turkes and the Sarazins haue not to do with the supper of our Lorde Iesus Christ, neither can they any skill of Baptisme. True it is that they haue washinges, and they wash themselues oft ynough: but al ỳ euer they haue is no better than ỳ holywater of the Papistes. As for ỳ thinges ỳ are peculiar to vs, & which God hath giuen to vs as to his children and housholdfolk, thése belong not to such as are altogether estranged from ỳ Church, & the holy scripture. And therefore let vs marke well, ỳ whereas God doth here giue the heathen leaue to eate al maner of meats: it is bicause he was not so gratious to them, as to giue them the instruction that was peculiar to ỳ children of Abraham, & to the holy lande which he had chosen from ỳ whole world. Nowe notwithstanding all this, if the Iewes had complained ỳ God held them in more subiection than he did the heathen, and ỳ their owne estate was worse than theirs: might we not say ỳ it were too great an vnthankfulnes? If a Iewe should say, How nowe? Seeing ỳ God hath chosen vs for his children, why doth he not giue vs as great liberte at the least, as he hath giuen to those that belong not vnto him? Is it meete ỳ we should be inferiour to them? If a Iew should speake after that maner, we would be his iudges, and euery of vs would say, fie on him wretch, he sheweth himself too vnhoneste & churlish. For seing ỳ god hath chosen them for his people, & instructed them in his pure doctrine: should they finde fault with him for his holding of thé vnder ỳ obedience of his law? But nowe let vs apply this to our selues. For in as much as God hath gathered vs togither into his house, he wil haue vs to walk more carefully and warely, than the sillie ignoraunt soules that are strayed from the way of Saluation. If wee say that that were too rough and seuere a dealing, wee our selues are too vnthankefull. It is said that we must liue as childrē of the light: & no marualle it is though such as haue not learned Gods word do stut and stumble, & go astray; for they be like blinde wretches in the darke. But wee haue Gods worde, which is as a lampe to giue vs lyght, and again we haue beene inlightened by the holy Ghost, so as wee knowe the will of God. And shall wee nowe rinne astray as though wee had neuer knowen any good doctrine? Nowe then whereas God hath tyed vs shorter than he hath tyed the ignorant; if we thereupon wil needes shake off his yoke and fall to checking at him, as though wee had leuer to haue the licentious libertie of the vnbeleeuers, than to bee held vnder the obedience of God our father: we were worthie to bee rooted out of the world. For it were too great a defacing of Gods gracious goodnesse, to doe so, when GOD hath chosen vs to himselfe and giuen vs his badge, as if hee should say, I wil raigne among you, let it appeare that yee haue beene in my schoole, let not my shewing of my selfe to haue beene your father and Sauiour bee in vaine. So then, let vs marke well, that whereas God calleth vs vnto him, it is with this condition, that wee shoulde not liue any more after the manner of the ignorant wretches which woote not howe to order their conuersation: for they doe followe their owne beastly lustes. It is ynough (saieth Saint Peter speaking to the heathen that had beene conuerted to the beleefe of the Gospell,) it is ynough (saith hee) that yee haue done heeretofore, ye haue giuen too much heede to your wicked affections already, see that none of you take such licentious libertie any more, but submit your selues to Gods yoke, and sith it is gods wil to haue the gouernment of you, suffer your selues to be guided by his hand, and obey his worde in all thinges, vtterly forsaking your owne wicked lustes.

Psal. 119. 104. Eph. 1. 17. 18 & 5. 17.

1. Thess. 5. 6

1. Pet. 4. 3.

Nowe then, whereas in these dayes we see the worlde to bee altogether corrupted: let vs not alledge other mens crosse dealinges in defence of our own, neyther let vs make a shield of them to say, why shoulde wee bee held more in awe than other men? Alas, is it to bee marualled at that those shoulde goe astray, which haue no lyght? But seeing that GOD hath sent vs the Sonne of righteousnesse, let vs assure our selues that it will bee no excuse for vs, though the ignoraunt wretches doe goe astray after their owne imaginations. Surely this is yll put in practise. For our whole seeking nowadayes, is nothing else but to heape together all the offences in the worlde, to make a confused hotchpotch of them. If it bee sayde that there bee a nomber of men which are giuen to fraude and guyle, and are full of suttletie and deceite: wee rest vppon that and are contented to counterfet their vices, & to alleage them in sport.

As

As for mens vertues, wee let them alone, and make none accounte of them: but as for their vices, wee make a barre of them against God. O say wee, ye see howe such a man doth so, another doeth after that fashion: this is a common custome euerywhere: and wil ye haue vs to be holyer than al other men? Besides this, it is alledged thus also. What I pray you, doe not the Papistes so before vs? Yes: but the Papistes haue shaken off the yoke of our Lord Iesus Christ, they haue withdrawen themselues from him and from his Church. True it is ỳ they haue baptisme which is ỳ signe of Christianitie: but they haue vtterly abolished the true vse of baptisme, and we see how they haue no skil at al either of God or of his word. As for our part, forasmuch as we haue the Gospel, and that wee are thereby connicted ỳ it is Gods trueth, and we be preferred before those that were at leastwise as good as we in respect of the world, & seeing he hath chosen vs after that fashion, are we not too much to blame, if wee come not to offer our selues wholly vnto him, saying, Lorde gouerne thou vs, and let vs not looke at other mens dooings to bee caryed away by their misexample; but let vs alwayes bee gathered together as it were vnder the shadowe of thy winges? Thus ye see what wee haue to marke vpon this admonition of Moseses, *Know ye* (saith he) *that the Lord your God hath separated you out from all other nations of the earth.*

After this, he cometh to the tythes wherof he had spoken afore, & saieth, *Ye shall tythe the first of all your fruites which ye shall haue gathered, as well of Corne, Wine, and Oyle, as also of the first borne of all your Cattell.* The repetition which our Lord vseth here is not more than needeth. For (as we haue seene heretofore) men are so wedded to their owne profit, ỳ their duetie cannot be had at their handes, but by force, and they must bee faine to haue their eares beaten dayly, or else (if it bee possible) they will doe what they can to exempt themselues from dooing their duetie, specially when it commeth to the Lawe of God and to the things that he requireth at our hand: for we wil be ashamed if wee yeeld not our duetie vnto men. Whē a man hath misbehaued himselfe towards mē; ye shal see him ashamed to lift vp his head. True it is ỳ faults shal not faile to be committed, & that there wilbe a thousand deuises to defraude men by theft, robberie, extortion, and other wicked practises: but yet will men alwayes looke the warelyer to themselues, bicause they be restrained by shame. But as for to Godward, men are quite past shame, and set all at randon as though they would pul out his tongue, or forbid him to speake, when they haue taken from him ỳ which belonged vnto him. And so yee see what is the cause that God hath spoken so oft of tythes which he would haue offered vnto him, & likewise of ỳ first fruits. I haue tolde you already ỳ the tythes were allotted to the Leuites, bicause God reserued them to do him seruice: & it behoued them to liue vpon ỳ Altar, bicause they were dedicated therunto. The same reason is in force at this day towardes vs. Not that we be bound to the same maner of tything that the Ieuites had, furtherforoth than ciuill order requireth: but that wee must alwayes come backe to this saying of Saint Paul, that lyke as the Leuites liued vpon tythes bycause they were dedicated to the seruice of GOD: so nowadayes they that haue the charge of teaching in the Church, ought to be maintained with liuing likewise; & God hath made an euerlasting law thereof. 1. Cor. 9.

But yet moreouer, we haue to note, that the tithes were allotted to the Leuites as in recompence of their inheritance whereof they were deprined. For God had promised the Land of Canaan to all the linage of Abraham, by reason whereof the children of Leuie ought not to haue beene bereft of their portion. Yet notwithstanding, God bereft them of it. And why did he so? To the intent they should not toyle themselues in tilling the ground as other men do, but giue themselues wholly to his seruice as became them. In respect whereof it was good reason that they should bee recompensed after another manner. Truly this matter cannot be discoursed at large as now, and therefore wee will delay the going through with it till to morrowe, taking the breefe summe of it for a conclusion, that the Lordes meaning in this place, was to set downe a Lawe for the maintenance of his seruice. And for that cause it was his minde that the Leuites should haue whereon to liue: for they were the parties that had the charge to maintaine the pure religion: and for that purpose were they dispersed throughout the whole land of Canaan to the end they should keepe the people in the pureneese of Gods seruice, as we see the prophet Malachy speaketh of them, saying ỳ they ought to be expounders of gods law, as at whose mouth men ought to seeke what is good and lawful. The cause then why GOD hath not only set downe this lawe but also repeated it, is for that he will haue his seruice maintained. And howsoeuer men are negligent in yeelding him his due, he hath vouchsafed to repete the law against which he had set downe before; and besides that, his intent was also to put vs in minde to honour him with al the goods which he bestoweth vpon vs in this life. For surely if men eate and drinke without yeelding any honor vnto God, they defile ỳ things which they receiue. For ỳ true meate to sanctify meates, is by faith & praier saith S. Paul. Without faith and prayer, all things become vncleane to vs. And now ye see here how god disposeth men to offer vnto him their first fruites and tenthes. And why is ỳ? Bicause that by ỳ meanes folke were prouoked to say, True it is ỳ the earth bringeth forth her fruites, wee haue a good harueest and vintage, we haue store of Oyle and victelles; & who is he that giueth vs all these things? Hath the earth a soule to determine with it selfe to nourish vs? No, it is God our father that doth it: and therfore it is good reason that wee should haue regard of him, & consider how much we be bound vnto him. Thus ye see how ỳ in the tithes and first fruits, there was a solemne protestation ỳ whatsoeuer we haue we receiue it as gods bil, & therfore we ought to do him homage & fea-

fice therewith. Which thing is then done, when we pray vnto him to bleſſe them all, and when wee ſhew effectually by our almesdeedes and ſuch other like thinges, that we be willing to offer all things vnto him which hee hath put into our handes, and to vſe them in ſuch ſorte, as wee may haue a care to follow meaſure, and to frame our ſelues to the ſobrietie which hee hath commaunded vs.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to behold vs with pitie, and not to impute vnto vs the great number of offences whereof wee bee guiltie before him, but that it may pleaſe him to rid vs cleane from them, euen by forgiuing them: and moreouer to drawe vs ſo vnto him by his holy ſpirite, as our whole ſeeking may bee to dedicate our ſelues throughly vnto him, continuing throughout in his holy calling, to the end. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father &c.

On Thurſday the xxiiij. of October. 1555.

The XCij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the fourteenth Chapter.

24 And if the way be too long, ſo as thou canſt not bring them, becauſe the place which the Lord thy God ſhall haue choſen to ſet his name in, is too far from thee: and that the Lord thy God haue bleſſed thee:

25 Then ſhalt thou make it into monie, and take the monie in thy hande, and repayre to the place which the Lorde thy GOD ſhall haue choſen for himſelfe.

26 And thou ſhalt giue the monie for whatſoeuer thy heart deſireth; whether it be oxen or ſheepe, wine, or ſtraunge drinke, or any other thing which thy heart liketh of. And there feede thou on it in the preſence of the Lord thy God, and bee merie both thou and thy houſeholde.

27 And thou ſhalt not forſake the Leuite that is within thy gates: for he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee.

28 At the three yeres end thou ſhalt gather together all the tythes of thine encreaſe of that yeare, and lay it vp within thy gates.

29 And then the Leuite which hath no part nor inheritance with thee, and likewiſe the ſtraunger, the fatherleſſe, and the widowe which are within thy gates, ſhal come and eate, and be refreſhed, that the Lord thy God may bleſſe thee in all the workes of thy handes which thou doeſt.

Forasmuch as Moſes, in ſpeaking heretofore of firſt fruites and offeringes, and freewill oblations; had commaunded that they ſhould be offered in Ieruſalem, or elſe in the place which God was then to chooſe: now hee addeth, *that if a man dwelt too farre off from that place, hee might make money of the thinges that were to bee giuen for an offring vnto God, and after the ſale thereof, buy the like thinges againe, which ſhould be wholy dedicated to God whatſoeuer they were.* Now I haue told you already, how it was not for naught that God would haue one certeine place, wherein to offer ſolemne ſacrifices vnto him and to worſhip him: for it ſerued to maintein the vnitie of faith. Inſomuch that if euery trybe, or at leaſtwiſe euery citie had had an Altar by themſelues; it had bin enough to haue made hauock of all, and men could not haue continued in concord and brotherly loue. Therefore it behoued the Temple to bee a meetingplace for Gods people, to the intent they ſhould altogether acknowledge themſelues to be but one bodie, and vnderſtand that they were bound all to one rule, which is the lawe, and all of them obey the ſame, without any diuerſitie of opinions, or ſtraunge maner of dealinges, or ceremonies among them. And in the ſame reſpect alſo were they commanded to offer in the Temple, to the end that euery man ſhoulde not behaue himſelfe after his owne deuotion as they terme it. For when men will needes ſerue God after their owne fancie, there will be nothing but corruption. Wee muſt alwayes beare this ſaying in minde, that obedience is better than all the ſacrifices in the worlde. And therefore they were forbidden to offer ſacrifice in any other place than onely one which was appointed for that purpoſe, to the intent they ſhould not euery man muſe vppon fooliſh ſuperſtitions, but hold themſelues to the order that was ſet down, without attempting any thing raſhly and fondly vppon their owne heades as I ſayd. And this is ſpoken expreſly vnto vs. For although wee haue not the ſelfeſame order of religion which was among the auncient fathers vnder the Law: yet doth this ground ſtand ſtill, that God will

1.Sa.15.22

not be worshipped after our opinion, but according to his owne will. Therefore let vs bee well ware that we inuent not superstitions (as the Papistes haue done) vppon surmise that they will be accepted of God; for they will doe nothing else but prouoke his wrath, insomuch that when men turne away from Gods trueth, the more they inforce themselues foreward; the further off doe they still stray from it. Will wee then keepe the right way? Gods word must ouermaister vs. And this thing is yet the better confirmed to vs, by Gods reseruing of the place to himselfe wherein he woulde be serued. For he could well haue sayd by Moses; Choose what place you your selues lyke best, and when yee haue so done, God will giue you leaue to come euery man thither, and there to doe him seruice. Al this might wel haue bin sayd. But God sayth, it belongeth to mee to choose, I will not giue the choyce to men. Herein wee see how hee reserueth the right of souereintie to himself, to the end that the faithfull shoulde the better knowe, that it is not for them to enterprise aught at aladuenture, but that it behoueth them to haue warrant from aboue, so as they may say, God accepteth all that euer wee doe; for we doe nothing but what he commaundeth vs, none of vs dealeth vppon his owne head in this behalfe. Wherefore let vs marke well, that God hath here done vs to vnderstand, that he wil not haue his seruice mingled with our inuentions, but that wee should simply followe the thinges that are conteined in his worde. And so yee see that as concerning the thinges which I haue sayd already, God was to bee worshipped solemnly no where else than in the Temple of Ierusalem after it was declared: and that vntill that time, it behoued the Iewes to resorte to the Arke and to the Sanctuarie. But now let vs come backe againe to that which is set downe here in writing.

If the place (sayth Moses) *bee too farre from thee, thou shalt sell the thinges which thou wart minded to offer*, or the thinges which thou oughtest to offer. For it behoued them to offer the first borne of all their cattell. Nowe they that dwell in the vttermost coastes of Iewry should haue had much ado to driue thither their Lambs, Sheepe, Goates, and Calues. Therefore they were to be borne withall: and God being no oppresser of his people, giueth them here a remedie, to the intent they should not be greeued too much. As for those that dwell neere to Ierusalem sayth hee, let them bring thither as wel the first borne of their cattell, as also all their freewill offerings, and whatsoeuer other thinges they haue dedicated vnto God. For otherwise the Citie of Ierusalem might bee famished. If all that had come thither should haue bought their sacrifices there: what a thing had that bin? Therefore it was Gods will that men should bring thē thither from al the countries, vnlesse the places were ouerfarre off. And in that case hee saith it should bee Lawful for them to sell the thinges that they had dedicated, namely such as were due by commaundement of the Lawe: as the first borne thinges, in remembraunce that God had smitten the firstborne of Egypt, and spared the firstborne of Israell, whereof he would haue the memoriall to continue for euer. *Then shalt fold it* (sayth he,) & put vp the mony, or *folde it vp* (for so doth the word signify which he vseth.) Folde vp the mony in thy hand (sayth he) that is to say, consider with your selues that that mony is none of your owne, but that it must bee put vp alone by it selfe as a holy thing. *And when thou commest to Ierusalem, thou shalt buy thine offrings after thine owne lyking, and after that the same hath bin offered in the Temple, the Priestes shall take their dues therof, & then shall you eat and drink before the Lord* as soone as you haue made your oblation therof, *and you shall be merry in eating of your sacrifices, as farre as euery mans portion will extend*. That is the thing in effect which wee haue to remember in this text.

And here wee see (as I haue sayd afore,) that although God held his people vnder very straite bondage, yet notwithstanding hee layde no more vppon them than they were able to beare, but so mitigated the rigor of the Lawe, as no man could say it was vnpossible to doe the thinges that hee had inioyned. Sith wee see it is so; Let vs assure our selues, that if our good GOD doe in these dayes lay any burden vppon our shoulders, that may bee too heauie for vs; hee doth also giue vs abilitie to beare it, so as wee bee not borne downe by it, at leastwise if wee commit our selues to him; so as we haue no cause to complayn of him as though he did vtterly ouerwhelme vs. True it is, that the righteousnesse which God requireth of vs in his Lawe, dooth farre surmount all our ability, yea and we come so farre shorte of the performing of all that hee hath commaunded vs, so as wee bee not able to stirre one finger wardes it; nay, wee cannot so much as thinke one good thought towardes it: GOD must be faine to giue vs euerywhit. But when he assisteth vs with his holy spirit, then wee finde his yoke sweete and easie, specially, when hee layes it vppon our neckes by the hand of our Lord Iesus Christ. And that is the cause why Iesus Christ protesteth that his burthen is not so heauie, nor his yoke too hard. But how commeth that to passe? It is because God giueth vs both the will to serue him, and also the abilitie to put the same in execution. And therewithall hee addeth a second grace, which is that hee beareth with vs when wee haue done amisse. For wee of our selues are ouerfoule, wee cannot throughly performe the things that hee commaundeth vs, & therefore he pardoneth our infirmities & forgetteth them. But howsoeuer the case stand, yet haue wee good cause to serue him freely & with a franke hart, forasmuchas we see that hee on his side deferreth no more but to guide vs as the father doth his children, as hee auoweth by his Prophet Hosheah.

But now let vs marke, that whereas Moses sayth, *Let them buy whatsoeuer they haue a mind vnto*: his meaning therein is not to giue men leaue

to play the gluttons at their pleasure, as though there were no measure nor modestie to bee obserued. A certeine sect of Heretikes called the Manichees, which skorned Gods Law & the Prophets, alledged this present text & such other like, to shew that the God of the olde testament as they blasphemously termed him, was a God of disorder, and such a one as kept no good rule. For why, sayd they; hee layd the bridle vpon his peoples necke, and bad them eate whatsoeuer they lyked, and so his meaning was to make them drunkardes and gluttons, by incouraging them to eate and drinke after that fashion. But the true God (sayd they) will haue folke to bee sober, whereby a man may see that the Lawe was not giuen from heauen. But we see how this text was corrupted by their malice, yea euen by their shamefull malice, in blaspheming without any colour of truth, seeing that the lustes of men were restreined afore by the same Lawe. I tolde you yesterday how it was Gods will to bridle his people, by restreining thē from the eating of all sortes of meates without exception, wherein hee meant to haue a tryall of their sobrietie. Sith it is so: it is a foule shame to alledge this text as a placarde for the setting of all lustes at libertie. The worde *Lyking*, *Longing*, or *Listing*, ought rather to bee restreyned to the thinges that were Lawfull, and which God had giuen them leaue to deale with. As if it had bin sayd, Those that haue a minde to eate of any kinde of meate which is Lawfull for them to eate, let them buy it and make an offering thereof vnto God. And when the Priestes haue taken their rightes thereof, let them eate the residue themselues.

So then let vs marke that here are two things conteined. The one is, that our Lorde sheweth himselfe liberall towardes his people in that hee sayth, Go too, although I coulde withhold my blessing from you; yet notwithstanding I giue you leaue to make your owne choyce of your meate and drinke, howebeit with this exception, that yee take heede that you touch not any meate that is not pure and cleane to you: for it behooueth you to be exercised for a time in the indeuour of dedicating your selues vnto me, that yee bee not tangled in the defilementes of the infidels. Therefore let that protestation stand for euer, so as yee alwayes take good heede to vse your libertie in such sorte, as yee may haue no cause to blame mee as though I helde you too streit. For I leaue you to your owne likinges, so they be well ruled. Now then let vs vnderstande, that heere our Lorde beareth with vs, in that hee vouchsafeth to giue vs the vse of his creatures, not onely for our needs without other desire to them, but also euen for our pleasure: and yet notwithstanding, that wee must alwayes take good heede, that our mirth be not excessiue, but rather well moderated. And for that cause is it sayd, *Thou shalt eate there in the presence of thy God*, which saying hath bin set downe already heretofore. Nevertheless it is not for naught that Moses repeateth it here againe. For wee see how men are wedded to their owne sensualitie, and how they forget themselues in their eating and drinking, so that it is very hard to keepe such measure as God bee not offended, yea euen ere wee thinke of it. I say that euen such as are not giuen to gluttonie and drunkennesse, and which haue a care not onely to the health of their bodies, but also the sober vsing of the things which God giueth them for their repaste; euen they (I say) faile not to commit some fault or other. So then, let vs beare well in minde what is sayd here, where God commaundeth men to eate and drinke in his presence, specially at their solemne feastes when they came to Ierusalem: namely how that thereby he did warne all the faithfull to haue an eye to him in their eating and drinking when they were at home in their owne houses.

Therefore when men sit downe to the table, they must in any wise beware that they take not their repaste without minding of God. For why? First it is a defiling of all our meates and drinkes when wee begin not at the calling vppon his name. Of whom shall we receiue our foode, if we seeke it not at Gods hand? Then must wee beginne at prayer and that is as it were a dedication, to the ende that our meates may become cleane and holy vnto vs, as Saint Paul speaketh of them. But yet besides this, we must come againe to the thing that is sayd here; namely that we must come eate as in the presence of our God. Were it wel printed in our mindes that our God is present at the table w vs surely wee would vse another maner of modestie than wee doe. And out of doubt, the putting of this lesson in vre, that God is among vs, is a true proofe of our Christianitie. But it is a wonder to see what an insensibleneese there is in these dayes among Christians. For it was Gods wil that euen among the Infidels there should remaine stil some confused tokens of that which is sayd here. Because the heathen were of opinion that their Gods were alwayes attendant at their meales; they termed their Tables holy. And why so? It is certeine that they vnderstoode not the reason of it: for al things were become vnholy among them, by their misusing of all thinges against their kinde. Yet notwithstanding, God to make them vnexcusable, did leaue this marke still among them, as if he should say, whensoeuer men doe eate and drinke, I am present at it, so as all things done there must needes come to account before me. Now then, if wee knowe lesse hereof than those blind wretches, what a thing is it? So much y more therfore ought we to marke wel this lesson, where God commaundeth the people of olde time to eate and drinke in his presence, to the intent that the same might holde them in awe, and make them to consider that whensoeuer they did eate or drinke, God gouerned them and beheld their doinges. And now although we haue not the ceremonie that was vnder the law; yet let the trueth thereof haue his force among vs: which is that we neuer come to the table, without considering that God is present there, and that as he vouchsafeth to haue a care to feed

1. Tim. 4. 5.

vs, so wil he also haue vs to take our foode with al reuerence & honest behauiour, like as if a childe be at the table with his father, and his father sitting at the vpper end doe looke vpon him, surely he wil not vse such boldnesse as if hee were in a corner by himselfe. For there perchaunce hee would play the wag, and throwe his trēchor vnder foote, and play other wanton prankes: but if hee bee at his fathers table, either hee must behaue himselfe soberly, or else be rebuked for his labor. Let euery man bethinke him of this, and let it be a meane to holde vs in such awe, as the meates which God giueth vs may haue their pure and lawfull vse. That is the thing which we haue in effect to remember vppon this text.

And now he speaketh lykewise of *mens housholdefolke*, shewing that if we intend to be merry before God, we must also haue a care to instruct those that are committed to our charge. Marke that for one point. It is not enough for a man to liue in the feare of God himselfe; but the father that hath children, and the maister that hath menseruantes and maideseruantes must leade them with him, and there must be one consent in euery household, so as both great and smal doe serue God. For it is an vntollerable leawdnesse, when a man letteth his household play the beasts, so as God is not knowen among them. And what a thing is it that men should looke to be serued of their folke, & in the meane while forget God? There is none of vs all but hee will looke to bee knowen for maister in his owne house: & in the meane while what a pride is it ỹ God should bee thrust out of doores? What a thing is it, that we which are but wretched earthwormes shoulde looke to haue our dueties yeelded to vs, and that God should be defrauded of his? That is ỹ cause why it is sayd expresly, that men shoulde make merry with their housholdes before God.

Neuertheless, hereby God meant also to inure his people to humanitie. For we see a number of men that can finde in their hartes to cram themselues til they burst, & in the meane while passe not though others starue: & it shold seeme ỹ a whole world were little enough to finde one of them. But our Lordes will is that there should be courtisie among men, that whē the maisters haue suffised themselues with meate and drinke, they shold not be nigardly in giuing foode & sustenāce to such as take peins in their seruice, but haue a care of thē. That is a second thing which our lord ment in this text. But now let vs pas on.

After ỹ Moses hath spoken of firstfruites and offeringes, he returneth againe to Tythes, and treateth more fully of them. *Thou shalt not forget the Leuite* (saith he) *which is within thy gates. Euery third yeere shalt thou lay aside the tenth of al thy fruites, and the Leuites shall come and gather them, and lykewise the widowes, the fatherlesse, and the strangers, that thy God may blesse thee in all the workes of thy handes*. Yesterday I began to tell you that in old time ỹ Tythes were appointed to the Leuites, because they serued at ỹ altar: & that God would not haue thē occupied about any such labor, as might hinder them either from teaching ỹ law, or frō doing of sacrifice & such other like things. For inasmuch as God had reserued thē to ỹ purpose, his wil was ỹ they should giue themselues wholy thereunto. That was ỹ cause why he exempted them from tilling of ỹ ground, and from such other labors. Besides this, there was also an other reason, which was, ỹ they should haue had a portion in ỹ land which was promised to the lynage of Abraham, for there was a whole tribe of them: but God had excluded them frō it, & put in two tribes in stead of ỹ one, so as Ephraim and Manasses the sonnes of Ioseph made two heads. And so were there twelue portions of ỹ Land. But yet in stead of the Leuites ye see ỹ Ephraim succeeded: for Manasses was ỹ firstborne of Ioseph, & yet was he put after his brother & set in the second place, & made inferior to him. And so were ỹ Leuites excluded. But yet behoueth them to haue their right. And therefore God recompenced them, & lyke as if a man should giue his childe a recompence some other way when he would not haue him to come to ỹ parting of ỹ inheritance ẅ his brethren, euen so stoode the case ẅ the Leuits. Those were ỹ two chiefe reasons for ỹ tythes. Neuertheless it was Gods will ỹ the ouerplus should be deuided among ỹ poore & needie. For ỹ Leuites had not so large a portion giuen thē to make them gluttons & to enrich thē aboue other men: but to ỹ ende they should be as deacons to haue a care of Gods poore folk, and to distribute his almes to his people. Now we see what was the cause of the tithes.

But it is cleane cōtrariwise in the Popedome, where it is sayd that by Gods Lawe the tythes are due to the Priestes. Although (say I) that their Priestes were such as they ought to be, & as they were not the priests of Moloch and of other idols, but that they serued God purely: yet were it a grosse ignorance to imagin that tithes were an euerlasting order set downe for all nations to obserue. Againe it was a flat fond, in that the Priestes being ouerruled by couetousnesse, did beare men in hand that the tythes belonged to them by Gods lawe. For the contrarie is well knowen. And their chalenging of that, was at such time as the whole world was corrupted, and men were vtterly ignorant of the meaning of the holy scripture. For since the time that Christianitie hath begunne to florish, and that there hath bin greater soundnesse of iudgement than was before, it hath neuer bin said that Tythes are due to the Shepheardes, nor to those which haue the spirituall gouernmēt of ỹ Church: but it hath bin alwayes orderly obserued, that Princes & Lords haue taken the Tenthes: yea & in some places and countries which are lesse fruitful, they haue taken the Thirtithes or at leastwise but ỹ Twentieth: whereas in other places where the landes are more fruitfull, & where there is greater abundance thā is ordinarily in other countries, they haue taken the tenthes. Hereupon the priestes and Cleargymen of ỹ Popedome, haue taken occasion to finger all things, & to vsurp vppon all mē most wickedly. For they haue thundered out their excōmunicatiōs against such as would not graūt thē their robberie, so as mē were driue to let them

them haue their owne willes. And then fell they together by the eares among themselues lyke a sorte of curredogges about a bone. The Monkes sayd, they bee ours: the Prieſtes sayd they were theirs: and to bee ſhorte, there was nothing but vtter diſorder among them.

Yet notwithſtanding, wee muſt returne againe to that which was touched yeſterday, and which I am about to rehearſe againe now preſently: which is, that inaſmuch as the ſacrificing Prieſtes were found at the common charges of the people, in the time of the olde Lawe, it is good reaſon that the preachers of the Goſpell ſhoulde bee mainteined lykewiſe at this day, as Saint Paul ſpeaketh thereof, howbeit Chap. 14.
not for his owne aduauntage ſake, but to the intent there ſhould not bee ſo great vnthankfulneſſe among thoſe which name theſelues Chriſtians, as to defraud thoſe of their bodily liuing, which preach to them the word of lyfe, & bring them the ſpirituall foode of their ſoules. The thing it ſelfe then remaineth ſtill: but that it ſhould be taken vp in this kinde or in that kinde, that is not ſo: it is not ſo ſayd by Gods Lawe, and therefore what ſhall become of Tythes? Let the poſſeſſion continue ſtill, and let the vſe of them be amended. That is to ſay, becauſe mē ſee euidently that Tythes haue bin wrongfully vſurped, and that the parties which holde them in their handes haue wreſted them by ſuperſtition: let vs now conſider the right vſe of them. And to ſay the trueth, looke how many Prieſtes there are in the Popedome, ſo many theeues are there. I ſay not this according to the holy ſcripture, but according to their own Canons, wherby they bee all excommunicated for theeues & robbers. For their Canons commaund them to put their Church goods in ſuch ſorte, as the poore haue one fourth parte of them, and ſtraungers another fourth part. To be ſhort, the one halfe of the Church goods ought to be beſtowed in almes vppon the poore and vpon ſtraungers. Who ſayes this? Not Gods word, (for the Papiſts make none account of that) but their owne Canons haue ſo decreed. Ye ſee then how al the Byſhops, Chanons, Pryors, and Abbots in the Popedome are excommunicated euerychone from the higheſt to the loweſt, euen by their owne Canons: ſo as there is euery where moſt horrible confuſion among them, I meane euen according to their owne orders. But it is not enough for vs to condemne them: wee muſt alſo haue an eye to our ſelues, and ſee that the right vſe of the thinges which haue bin dedicated to God, bee ſet vp againe: And that where any abuſe hath beene, the ſame bee redreſſed. And how may that bee? Wee ſee it was Gods will that the poore ſhould bee found and maintened by a part of the tythes, that is to ſay of the offeringes which were made in thoſe dayes. After the ſame maner muſt wee come to the vſe of Gods Lawe at this day: and foraſmuch as Tenthes or Twentithes were left euen in old time to Princes and chiefe Lordes, and that the ſame order was ſet downe for the benefite of the Church: Let vs conſider how it may bee imployed to the benefite of the Church at this day. It is not meant that ſuch as beare the name of Prelates and Paſtors ſhoulde glutte themſelues with them: nor that when they haue ſotted themſelues in their pleaſures and delights and ſpent more than needeth in prodigalitie and ydle expenſes, they ſhoulde haue wherewith to maintaine whoredome and other ſtumblingblockes, as wee ſee that the Churchgoods are commonly waſted in ſuch thinges. For we knowe that ſuch doings are againſt the order of nature, and therefore can in no wiſe be iuſtified by Gods word. What is to be done then? Let the poſſeſſion remaine quietly, and in the meane while let men returne them to their right vſe. Let thē be mainteined whome God hath commaunded to be maintayned. And let the thinges be continued which are requiſite for the well ordering of the Church. Moreouer, Let the poore and needy be pityed; Let men knowe them to be the takers vp of Gods rents; and that it is an acceptable kinde of ſacrifice vnto him when ſuch are releeued as ought to be ſuccored. After that maner wee may iuſtly condemne the Papiſtes at this day, yea and take them for Churchrobbers and theeues, by reaſon of their wrongfull chalendging of the thinges to themſelues which belong not to thē. And wee on our ſide ſhall not bee condemned for the lyke, if wee runne backe to Gods will, and diſpoſe the Church goods in ſuch wiſe, as the poore bee not defrauded of them, but that ſuch almesdeedes be done with them, as the neceſſitie of thoſe bee releeued whome God commaundeth vs to ſuccour, and whom he offereth vs as in his owne ſtead, according to this ſaying of his, that looke whatſoeuer wee doe to the poore, hee taketh it as done to himſelfe. Heb. 13. 16
Sith it is ſo, let vs folow that rule. For we ſee how this leſſon is greatly for our behoof nowadayes, and how we may put the ſame in vre. Matt. 6. 4 & 25. 40.

Let vs marke well then, that it is not onely ſayd ỹ the Leuites ſhal come and gather vp their right; but alſo it is added, ỹ the widowes, the fatherleſſe & the ſtrangers ſhalbe ſuſteined lykewiſe. Yea verily: Albeit that the ſtrangers were not ſome times of the body of ỹ Iſraelites, nor of their religion: yet was it Gods will ỹ they ſhould be pityed. Not to nouriſh any filth & vncleanes thereby; (for if folke might haue reſorted thither from all nations, and haue dwelled there, it had bin the next way to haue turned the people away vnto wickedneſſe:) but it ſerued for trauellers, & for ſuch as had intercourſe of marchandiſe with them, whome Gods will was to haue ſuccored when they fel into any aduerſitie. Now ſeeing that the Iſraelites were to releeue thoſe that were not ſo neere neighbors vnto them: what ought wee to doe to our brethren, and to ſuch as are all of one ſelfeſame faith and Religion with vs? If we ſhake thē off & ſuffer them to pine away for pouertie, how greatly ſhall wee bee to blame, ſeeing that God cōmendeth vnto vs ỹ poore ſtrangers, yea euē which haue no acquaintance w̄ vs in the ſeruing of the true God?

But howſoeuer ỹ caſe ſtand, let vs remember

in generall, that of the goods which were consecrated in those dayes vnto God, part was to be imployed not onely vppon the Priestes and Leuites, but also vpon the relieſe of the poore, so as it behoued them to haue a part with the priestes so farre foorth as the tenthes woulde yeelde. What is to be done then nowadays? Forasmuch as the Ceremonie of bringing of our Freewill offeringes to a place chosen for that purpose is done away, if wee intend to offer such sacrifices as may bee acceptable to GOD, euery of vs must doe almesdeedes according to his abilitie, and thinke thus with himselfe: Go too, my God hath giuen mee chaunge of meates, I eate one kinde of porredge to day and another kinde to morrowe, and yet might I content my selfe all my lyfe long with bread and water. But God of his bounteousneſſe giueth mee moreouer what meates soeuer I lyke of beſt, yea and chaunge of them also, so as if I bee weary of one meate, I may take another according to my abilitie. Seeing then that he dealeth so with me, what an vnthankfulneſſe is it for mee to deſpiſe him that sheweth himselfe so liberall towardes mee? True it is that our so doing is neither here nor there (as they say,) in reſpect of God: the seruice that wee doe him doth neither amend him nor appaire him: but he giueth vs the poore among vs, to bee succored at our handes, to the ende that none of vs should so glutte himselfe by cramming his owne bellie, as to deſpiſe others that are in neceſſitie, but that wee shoulde bee well aduiſed to make an offering vnto God of the thinges that he hath put into our handes, and that the same might become holy by that meanes. Not that wee should pay it as a raunsome to God: but that the acknowledgement which we make vnto him in hauing compaſſion vppon our poore needy brethren, is as though our Lord should allow of our eating and drinking, saying thus: Now is all lawfull for you, I lyke well of it, I giue it vnto you; and that is because yee honor mee in dooing almesdeedes to such as are in pouertie. Thus yee see what euery man hath to beare in minde as in his owne peculyar and priuate behalfe.

Iob. 35.6. Pſal. 16.2.

Howbeit, for common orders sake, because there are reuenewes appointed to the Church, as I haue touched afore: let vs beware that they bee not abuſed by beeing deuowred I wote not how, or that they be not miſſpent about worldly matters. For men are alwayes giuen to cantle out the poore folkes morſels as short as can be, and it ſeemeth to them that whatſoeuer is beſtowed in hoſpitalitie, is loſt. O (say they) we must locke vp, wee muſt ſpare, wee muſt play the good husbandes: but curſed bee that good husbandrie which regardeth not the welbeſtowing of a mans goods. Therefore let vs haue an eye to the diſpoſing of the thinges which GOD offereth vnto vs, and whereas there haue bin abuſe and ſuperſtition, let vs vnderſtand that all ought to bee brought backe again to their right vſe: and that although the ceremonies continue not ſtill; yet notwithſtanding GOD will not bee mocked: but that this principle muſt alwayes ſtand in force, namely that whatſoeuer hath bin dedicated to GOD, muſt bee diſtributed accordingly. Now there was also a tything of the tythes, whereof I cannot but say some what. For after that the generall tythes were taken vp, the high priestes tooke their tenthes thereof, and afterward layd out a tenth part for the poore. Forasmuch as this third tything was not intended by God, but proceeded of the couetouſneſſe of the Leuites who could haue found in their hearts to haue raked all to themselues: it was meete that they shoulde bee reſtreined. And after the same maner, the Popes Canons that I ſpake of, were made of purpoſe because men ſawe the Church goods deuowred by the Prieſtes, by reaſon whereof it behooued them to bee bridled. The tythes therefore were parted in ſuch ſorte, as the poore might haue their portion, and not be defrauded of the right that was aſſigned vnto them. But (as I ſayd) wee neede not as now to ſtand ſifting of theſe thinges by perceiuing it is enough for vs that wee haue the meaning of the Lawe, and that wee knowe wherein the abuſe reſted, to the ende wee may retaine the right vſe of them ſtill.

Now it is ſayd conſequently, *That the Lord may bleſſe thee in all the workes of thy hands.* In this text wee haue two thinges to marke. The one is that all our labour would bee vaine purpoſe, if God of his meere grace did not prosper it. Let that ſerue for one poyne. Another is, that if wee will haue God to further vs, we muſt honor him with the goods which he giueth vs, by vſing them in ſuch wiſe as he commaundeth vs. For if hee be defrauded of his right, hee can ſoone bereaue vs of his bleſſing ſo as wee ſhall bee diſpurueied and ſtripe out of all thinges, and when wee thinke our ſelues to haue abundance of all thinges at will, hee will make it to vaniſh away to leſſe than nothing. Thoſe bee the two thinges which wee haue to beare in minde. As touching the firſt, let vs beare in minde that men are commanded to trauell for their liuing, and that ſuch as doe take paynes ſhall be maintained by their labor. But yet muſt not men ſay, It is mine owne policie, it is the labor of mine owne handes that hath gotten me this or that, as wee haue ſeene in the eight chapter, where God fed his people ſome yeeres with Manna, to make them to know that when they were come into the land of Chanaan, albeit that they tilled the ground, gathered the grapes, and reaped downe the corne, yet they ſhould not imagin that their liuing proceeded from elſewhere than from Gods meere goodneſſe who bleſſed them. And that is the cauſe why it is ſayd in the pſalme, that wee may well riſe early and goe to bed late, and eate our bread with ſorow; & yet notwithſtanding all ſhall goe to decay, and God ſhall holde vs vnder foot, vntill wee be ſure of his bleſſing.

True it is that God doth oftentimes multiply the goods of the wicked, & of ſuch as liue altogether by extortiõ, deceit & theeuery: but ſuch kinde of men may well intich themſelues

and God beareth with such thinges to blinde their eyes the more with their riches, that they may bee as a poyson to them, and as a baite to choke them withall. For inasmuch as they imagine that they can inrich themselues whether God will or no: he letteth them doe so, yea and he giueth them riches as if hee shoulde say, Gather till yee burst: yet shall it not turne to your sustenance, but it shalbe as a poyson to kill you, as I said afore. For when men inrich themselues after that fashion by wicked practises, wee see what comes of it in the ende. Gods wrath lighteth vppon them, and they be tormented all their life long: and when they looke to inioy the goods that they haue gathered together, Gods curse doth so vtter it selfe vpon them, that they cannot do themselues any good with them: insomuch that although they haue their garners & storehouses full fraught, and their bagges full of money; yet doth God sende them diseases or such other afflictions, by which he holdeth them as it were vpon ỹ torture or racke; as if he should say: What hast thou done thou wretched creature? Thou hast offended mee all the time of thy life, and yet hast thou borne thy selfe in hande that all shoulde goe well with thee if thou mightest heape vp riches ynowe. But thou must now be made to knowe, that all thy raking vp of the riches which thou canst not inioy, will stand thee in no steede. Thus yee see what reward they haue which will needes inrich themselues as it were in despite of God: insomuch that all their heapings to themselues on all hands by vnlawfull meanes, are but as cordes to snare their children withall, as experience sheweth. And therefore let vs be throughly perswaded in our selues, that if we will prosper, the onely blessing of God must suffice vs though wee haue not all things at all. When we haue taken neuer so much paines, yet must we not trust in the strength of our owne hands, nor bee so blinded with fonde presumption as to say, I am an able man, I am politike & can take paines. But let euerie man referre himselfe to God, knowing that it is he which giueth him sustenance. And although I take neuer so much paines to get my liuing: yet must I haue it at his hand, and when I haue asked my ordinarie breade to day, I must doe the like to morrow too, and yeeld my selfe to the wil of him that giueth it mee. Thus much concerning the first point, where mentiō is made of Gods blessing of the workes of mens hands. And therewithall let vs call to minde what hath beene declared thereof more at large heretofore, where our Lorde willeth men to consider how it is onely hee that beareth the sway in making our labours to prosper. Let that serue for one point.

And nowe let vs come to the seconde point which is, that if wee desire to bee partakers of Gods blessing, we must first yeeld him his right: for if he be defrauded of it, he wil reuenge it vpon vs. And that is the cause why hee saith by his Prophet, Do ye complaine that ye be afflicted? Consider the cause, saith hee. Yee haue defrauded mee. Whereof? Of my Tythes, Firstfruites, and all other thinges. Yee beare your selues in hande that yee increase your selues greatly by robbing of mee, and that ye gaine much by defrauding mee of my right. The people of Israel were so witlesse, that they stole the tythes; or if they tythed, they did it but by halues: and likewise of their firstfruits, in steede of making good fulsome sheaues and bundels vnto God, they gelded them and made them verie thinne and lanke: and yet these miserable wretches bare themselues in hande that they benefited themselues greatly by laying vp some little quantitie more than they ought to haue done. Contrariwise our Lorde saieth vnto them: Goe to sirs, shoulde yee haue either tithes, or firstfruites, or any croppe at all, but by my blessing? And think ye that your filching away of any of ỹ things that belong to me, shall boote you? No no: ye must needes be wasted and dye for hunger by reason of your vnthankfulnesse. Therefore let vs learne to yeelde God the things which he reserueth to himselfe: and then will hee blesse vs. As howe? When we beg to be sustained, the firstfruits that God requireth of vs, are that we should waite vpon him, and sue to his meere gracious goodnesse for all thinges requisite to the maintenance of this slightfull life. And afterward when he hath giuen vs whereon to liue, we must vse the same soberly, that our life being ruled after that fashion, may be as another sacrifice to him, and consequently that we giue our neighbours part with vs. Let such as haue wherewith imparte to the poore that want: and let euerie man beware that he filch away none other mens goods, and let vs bee contented with our competent foode and raiment as God listeth to bestowe vpō vs: and in so doing we shalbe blessed at his hand. But what? Our distrustfulnesse, our excesse, and our vnsatiable lusts cause God to withdrawe his blessing from vs, and that we are, as it were dried vp. Also it is seene that in steade of going forwarde we goe backeward: and what doe wee thereupon? Such as haue plentie can no skil to vse it according to Gods ordinance, and to bee thankfull to him for the abundance which hee sendeth them, but they woulde still haue more & more. O say they, this is not ynough for me, & though it be ynough for me, yet it is not inough for my children. And so wee fall to gathering of more & more. But to consider how we come by it, and whether it bee lawfull before God or no, we neuer hearken after it: we goe to it by hooke and by crooke, and wee neuer thinke that wee shall come to a reckening for it before God. To this point (I say) are we come nowadayes. And therefore it is no wonder though wee feele no blessing of God, but that wee bee faine to be set besides it. Againe we may see hereby how colde and faint our prayers are: for our asking of our daily breade at Gods hand is but from the teeth outwarde: and therefore it is good reason that wee shoulde receiue as skant and slender frute as appeareth that we do. Wherfore let vs mark, that if wee intende to feele Gods blessing, and that hee should continue the same towardes vs: wee must offer vp our selues in sacrifice, and all that euer hee giueth vs, so as all may be wholly

dedicated vnto him. And when wee see the vse that he alloweth of, let euery of vs behaue himselfe thereafter, that God may be glorified by vs as his intent is to be.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to graunt vs the grace to come to him with humilitie, sorie for prouoking him so many wayes as wee doe without ceasing: and to vouchsafe so to burie our offences, as wee preace into the presence of his maiestie by meanes of our Lorde Iesus Christ, to bee guided by his holy spirit, and to be confirmed more and more in this; that hee holdeth and auoweth vs for his children. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Fryday the xxv. of October. 1555.

The XCiij. Sermon which is the first vpon the fifteenth Chapter.

AT the terme of seuen yeares thou shalt make a yeare of Freedome.
2 And the maner of the freedome shal be after this sort. Euerie creditour shall release the debt of his hande which he hath lent vnto his neighbour, and he shall not constreine his neighbour nor his brother: for it is called the yeare of the Lords release.
3 Thou maist compell a straunger, but as for thy brother, forgiue him.
4 In any wise let there bee no poore bodie among you: for the Lorde will blesse thee in the Lande which the Lorde thy God giueth thee for an heritage to possesse,
5 Yea if thou obey the voice of the Lord thy God in keeping and performing all his commaundements which I commaunde thee this day.
6 For the Lord thy God will blesse thee, as he hath promised, so as thou shalt lende vnto manie folke, and not borrow of any. Thou shalt reigne ouer many Nations, and they shall not reigne ouer thee.

WE haue here a Lawe for the releasing of such as were indetted. Now wee knowe that GOD gouerned ỹ Iewes according to their owne rudenes, insomuch that he graunted them a tolleration in many thinges because they were a people harde to bee ruled. Yet notwithstanding hee ceased not by all manner of meanes to allure them to gentlenesse, to the ende that no man shoulde greeue his neighbour beyonde measure, nor vse too extreme rigour, nor deale cruelly one with another. That is the marke which the Lawe shooteth at which I haue read heere presently, so as yee must vnderstande *that it was not Lawfull for them to presse any man with his debts in the seuenth yeare*. And it hath beene thought that in this place Moses commaunded the cleere forgiuing of all debtes the seuenth yeare. But in that supposall is no reason at all. For if debtes had beene quite and cleane released: what more reason had it beene that such persons as had yeelded themselues into bondage for the discharge of their debtes, shoulde haue beene released: for we knowe that the freedome of mens persons is much more acceptable, than the releasing of a debte of money. Shall a poore man bee holde as a slaue and make it good with his bodie because hee hath not wherewith to paye that hee oweth: and shall hee bee released which keepeth the money still in his purse, or else vseth some odde by shift, so as hee abydeth freely at home in his owne house? That were no vpright dealing. But the case stoode so among the Iewes, that such as yeelded themselues into bondage for the discharge of their debtes, were not set at libertie againe till the yeare of Iubile which was the fiftith yeare. Therefore it followeth that here is not meant the cleare release of all debtes. For that had beene the way to haue procured more disorder, rather than to haue set downe a rule of courtisie and gentlenesse. For no man woulde euer haue lent any mony the sixth yeare. Againe, men would haue

haue beene the more hastie in calling for their debtes, so as their detters shoulde haue beene much lesse priuiledged than if there had beene no release at all. Also there are other reasons which are verie sufficient; insomuch that euery man shoulde haue beene driuen to sell his owne house and lande. To bee short, it is not to be doubted but that Gods intent here, was to commaunde no more but that the seuenth yeare shoulde be priuiledged. And hereby it appeareth that such as haue interpreted the *seuenth yeares* remission to be the *seuenth yeares ende*, haue beene too grosly ouerseene. For the making of this law was in respect that the seuenth yeare shoulde be a yeare of solemne rest. Like as God had reserued one day in euerie weeke to bee holy to himselfe: so also was it his will that euery seuenth yeare shoulde be a high solemnitie, so as the grounde shoulde not bee tilled that yeare. The Lande of Iurie was barling ynough to haue borne all yeares, that is to say, men might haue tilled and sowed the grounde euerie yeare saue the seuenth yeare. And that yeare was spared, not for feare least men shoulde haue worne away the heart of the soyle too neere: but to the ende that the people shoulde inure themselues continually to the day of rest, because it conteyned the chiefe point of the Law, that is to wit, that men ought to gather their wittes to them, to giue themselues wholly to the minding of Gods benefites, whereby it is shewed them that they shoulde renounce themselues, and referre themselues wholly to his holy spirite, to bee so gouerned by him, as that their affections and thoughtes may no more ouermaster them. And indeede, because the Iewes did breake the day of rest, and the Propheres coulde not winne them to yeelde to that which was commaunded them: our Lorde saith that hee woulde punish them in such sorte, that if they woulde not, the Lande should take rest by them. Forasmuch as you (saieth he) will not keepe the Saboth dayes accordingly as I haue ordeyned in my Lawe: I will shortly finde out one that shall obserue my Lawe, and that shall be the Lande it selfe. For ye shalbe driuen out of it, and none shall be left in it to manure it; all the Sabothes that haue beene broken must be put into a reckening, that they may bee recompensed againe. Threescore and tenne yeares was the people banished out of it. And looke how many commaundementes there are, so many tornes were there continually of the solemne restingtimes. What restingtimes? Not euerie seuenth day, or euery seuenth yeare onely: but for the space of seuentie yeares together was the Lande to take rest. Yee see then that this seuenth yeare was a confirmation of the fourth commaundement of the lawe, that is to wit, of keeping holy the seuenth day. For in that yeare (as I said) men tilled not the ground. And why? To the ende that folke shoulde haue the better leasure to giue themselues to the seruice of God, and be not so much letted by their businesse, as indeed they had the more libertie to studie this lesson, and to bee well instructed in the doctrine of God. And for the same cause also was it commaunded, that the booke of the Lawe shoulde bee read openly euerie seuenth yeare at the feast of Tabernacles, as wee shall see hereafter in the one and thirtith Chapter.

Nowe that we haue Gods meaning, which is that his ordeining of the seuenth yeare was to the end that the people should haue some easement: let vs assure our selues that the saboth day was not inioyned without cause. Not onely to giue men to vnderstand that our Lorde had forbidden that any man should be sued for his dets that yeare (for that was likewise done euerie weeke): but also to know the thing which we see obiected in the eight and fiftith of Esay; against such as through hypocrisie obserued the feaste, but yet ceased not any whit the more to sue for their dettes. Verily I am much beholden to you, saith the Lorde: for yee say yee haue fasted, and obserued my Ceremonies. But yet is all that euer yee haue done, nothing worth: for the verie substance of it wanteth; whereas yee should be pitifull to your neighbours, yee do nothing else but fleece them and persecute them to the vttermost. And surely that is a goodly obseruing of the Saboth. Therfore dot I renounce you, and I disauow all your doings, saieth the Lord.

Esa.58.3.

So then, we haue here the end of the Law that is set downe here, and also the thing which the same commaundeth. For like as God ment not that men shoulde pleade the seuenth day, to the end they might be the better drawen to obserue that feast, which was to gather men to God, and to cause them to rest in him: so ment he also concerning the seuenth yeare; namely that the Iewes shoulde giue themselues to vpright dealing: insomuch that if it were not lawfull to gather the fruites of the earth, and that the fruites which grewe without tilth were common, so as the poore which had no possessions were partakers of them: it was much more reason that if a man were ouerpinched, he shold not be pursued with rigour of Lawe. But in the yeare of Iubyle, which was euery fiftith yeare; there was a greater freedome, and such a one as extended much further. For if a man were in bondage, hee was then made free, vnlesse it were that hee liked so well of his master, that he bound himselfe to bee his slaue for euer as long as he lined. Afterward, all possessions returned home againe. True it is that the houses in Cities could not reuert again, vnlesse y sellers of them redeemed them within a yeare. But as for Farmes, and other possessions in the countrie; the purchacer was to conuey them backe againe at the fiftith yeare, so as they returned home againe to their former owners. And according to the neerenes or farnesse of the yeare of Iubyle, men sold their possessions the dearer or the cheaper: insomuch that the lands so purchased were released againe within thirtie, twentie, or ten yeares after the purchasing of thē. And of this dealing there was one special reason, which was y God hauing diuided y Land of Canaan by lot, intēded to haue it continue in

Leuit.25.6.

Leui.25.38

Leuit.25. 29.30.

that

that order for euer, to the ende that mens poſſeſſions ſhould not be intermingled together.

And hee ſaieth expreſly, Other Nations poſſeſſe their landes in feeſimple: but I holde you as my farmours. I will not haue you to be as owners, ſo as yee might ſay this is mine: neither ſhall yee bee as purchaſers of the Lande at my hande; yee ſhal haue as it were but a ſoiourning place in it for a time, and yee ſhall bee but as a Farmer vnder a maſter. Loe heere the cauſe why our Lordes will was that the poſſeſſions ſhoulde returne to the firſt owners againe. But as for that which is ſpoken heere, concerneth but the ſeuenth yeare, at which time euerie man ought to bee releaſed, and no man ought to ſew his detters, yet euerie man ought to reteyne his owne right neuertheleſſe ſtill. For Gods meaning was not that hee which had lent money ſhould loſe it, ſo as hee ſhoulde haue no meanes to recouer his dette againe: (for ſo ſhoulde one man haue robbed another of his ſubſtance; and the vntruſtie merchant that had waſted his goods in riot and exceſſe at his eaſe without care, ſhoulde haue laughed his creditor to ſcorne as ſoone as the ſeuenth yeare were come, which had beene a greate diſorder, and woulde haue cauſed vnthrifts to haue become the worſe): but Gods intent was onely that there ſhoulde a kinde of reſpit bee giuen, that the poorer ſort might not be pinched out of meaſure.

Leuit. 25. 23

But nowe let vs returne to that which is ſet downe in the texte. *In the ſeuenth yeare there ſhall bee a Forgiuing*, that is to ſay, a forbearing or a giuing of further reſpite. Hee meaneth not that there ſhoulde bee a cleare acquitall or releaſing for euer: but onely that hee which had lent money, ſhoulde not chalendge his dette out of hande, nor bee ſo greedie and haſtie as to ſeeke it by ſute of Lawe that yeare. And hee ſpeaketh expreſly of the ende of the yeare, to ſhewe that this forbearing or reſpitting ſhoulde not onely bee at the beginning of the yeare, but euen throughout to the ſeuenth yeares ende. And here God meant to bounde his Lawe according to the circumſtance: that is to ſaye, becauſe the ſeuenth yeare was a kinde of reſting time as well as the ſeuenth day was; therefore our Lordes will was that the ſame ſhoulde bee obſerued. Therefore ſaieth hee, *as the terme*: howebeit not to ſignifie the ende of the yeare, but to betoken the continuance of the time appointed by the Lawe. *Yee ſhall giue a reſpit* ſaieth hee, and the manner thereof ſhall bee thus: If any man owe thee aught, thou ſhalt not conſtraine him, at leaſtwiſe for the *dette of thy hande*. As if hee had ſaide, thou ſhalt not take the thing by force, but ſhalt rather forbeare the dette. And why ſo? For this forbearing commeth ſpecially of God: that is to ſaye, God reſerueth that yeare ſpecially to himſelfe, and hee will haue it openly proclaimed as it was indeede, and he will haue the order thereof to be kept.

Hee addeth, *In any wiſe let there bee no poore bodie among you*. This ſpeech is ſomewhat darke, becauſe the firſt worde that Moſes vſeth ſignifieth *Nothing*, or *it is not at all*: and ſometimes when it is ioyned with another worde, (as it is in this place,) it betokeneth *ſtoppe that*, or *ſtaying that*. And for that cauſe ſome men vnderſtande that our Lorde ſetteth downe an exception heere, namely ſo there were no poore folkes. For if the detters were ſtaied, they might alwayes bee well contented to pay. But the poorer ſort were to bee borne withal, and to haue ſome eaſement; the vexing of whō other ſort, was a kind of ſucking of their blood, and a drawing of the marrowe out of their bones. Againe the ſeuenth yeares reſpit was as a meane for them to gather ſomewhat towardes their diſcharge.

Moreouer there was the more cauſe why the poore ſhould bee borne withal the ſeuenth yeare, the ground was not tilled that yeare, and therefore Corne might become the dearer by reaſon that there was no gathering of any thing that yere. For it was not with them in thoſe dayes as it is with vs in theſe dayes, that when one peece of grounde lay fallowe, as they ſay, another peece was with corne, ſo as they might haue a croppe euerie yeare one after another wherewith to finde themſelues. In the Lande of Iewrie they gathered not ſo much as one kernell of wheate, Otes, or other kinde of graine in the ſeuenth yeare, neither was it lawfull for them to till the grounde that yeare by reaſon whereof the poorer ſort had much adoe to get their liuing by their labour and trauell. That was the cauſe why ſome haue taken it to bee as an exception when our Lorde ſaide, if peraduenture you haue no poore among you. Well may yee demaunde your dues of ſuch as are wekhie and well able to pay; but beware that ye pinch not your neighbours that are behinde hande. Otherſome take it thus, *So as there bee no poore among you*; that is to ſay, deale in ſuch wiſe as no man bee brought vnder foote by you, but that the poore and meaner ſort may liue with the rich: and let no man bee ſo greedily minded as to put thinges out of order by his exceſſe, like the great fiſhes that eate vp the ſmaller fiſhes: Take heede that yee vſe no ſuch cruelneſſe towardes your neighbours. Alſo a man might take the ſaid worde as betokening *Nothing*; as though our Lorde had ſpoken after our common manner and ſaide, No, no, there muſt bee no poore among you. But as for the meaning of the Lawe, it is certaine ynough to vs, which thing ought to ſuffice vs, and it is all that wee ſhoulde looke for.

Therefore let vs vnderſtand that our Lordes intent was to ſay here in fewe wordes, that men ought to behaue themſelues ſo friendly, as no man were oppreſſed, and that although it be not in men to let that there ſhould not bee both poore and rich among them: yet they ſhould ſo deale as the poorer ſort were not troden vnder foote. For wee ſee that ſuch as are wekhie do lay their ſnares, and catch whatſoeuer they can come by, ſo as the poorer ſort edare not come neere the

and if they get but the value of a pinne at their hands, they fleece them of it by and by againe. Therefore it was our Lordes intent to prouide a remedie for that mischiefe among his people. Nowe remaineth that wee apply this matter to our owne behoofe. True it is that this order belonged peculiarly to the Iewes: but yet doth it concerne vs also: namely that we shoulde not vexe them out of measure, which are indetted vnto vs. And it may well bee among those that beare the name of Christians, that they wil not goe to lawe vppon the Sabboth day: and the reason is, that vpon that day euery man ought to haue leasure to withdrawe himselfe to Godwarde, to minde his workes, that wee may all of vs be prouoked to serue and honour him. For, all our life long wee ought to giue our selues to praying and supplication. Neuertheless cómon meetings are made that men may heare the cómon doctrine of saluation, and it is good reason that on the Sabboth day all other cares and thoughts should be laide aside. Notwithstanding let vs take good heede that wee keepe not the single Ceremony onely, but also the intent of God therewithall, which is, that our neighbours be not so vexed by vs, as they may haue occasion to despise God, and to be cast into despaire. For our Lorde will haue vs giue such respit as the poore may not bee ouer grieued. Wee see howe he saith in other places, that wee must not take a poore mans mattres from vnder him: As for example, when a man hath broken payment, if hee bring his bedde to lay to gage, our Lorde forbiddeth the taking thereof, and likewise the taking of a poore mans rayment which hee hath neede of to weare. For if he be a cold (saith he) and thou bereft his bed from him, although hee speake neuer a worde, yet shall his sides curse thee, because thou beest so hardhearted that thou hast no pitie of him when thou seest him afflicted in his bodie. And albeit that the poore man be patient in his aduersitie, yet doeth God in heauen consider thy cruelnie, and in the ende he will reuenge it. Contrariwise he that giueth his poore neighbour his gage againe, and is so pitifull towards him that he cannot find in his heart to see him indure necessitie: although the partie so releeued do play the Churle, and regarde not the good that hath bin done vnto him: yet shall hee haue his good deede to answere for him before me, saith the Lord.

You see then that we must be kindharted both generally and particularly as time requireth. As how? if there come a yeare of dearth, many men will seeke to inrich themselues by it, and they beare themselues in hande, that it is a time euen for their owne tooth: and it is a thing too much vsed nowadayes, as it hath bin at all times heretofore: and woulde God we coulde forget it. But we shal see a number that lye in waite like skouts or spies, and if there come a deare yeare, O say they, this serues well to make me rich; when as in verie deede it is the time wherein they should open their bowels to haue compassion of such as are in necessitie. Wee see that poore folke haue much ado to maintaine themselues though they be succoured: yea and such as heretofore haue beene able to liue in their owne houses without being pinched ouer neere, are nowe driuen to borrow. And why is that? They haue their ordinarie earnings as before: but corne and wine are at such excessiue prices, that they be not able to buy them; euery man shrinkes away and holdes himself short. And as for the rich man that hath wherewith to liue, his minde is vppon nothing else but howe he may inrich himselfe. O (saieth he) this is a fatte yeare for mee, for it is a leane yeare for all others. Alas, heere is a wretched regarde. So then let vs learne that our Lordes meaning by this Lawe is not that we should forbeare to releeue such as are (as yee woulde say) windshaken already: but that if we see a man that hath much ado to maintaine himself, we should not runne vpon him to ouerthrowe him altogether. As howe? If I see a man a little behinde hand, and I haue a mind to some cornegrounde or vyneyard of his; loe hee is in fitte case for my purpose: and if I take him at the vantage, hee is vndone by it, & it is vnpossible for him to scape vtter ruine. And when a man hauing that regard to selfeprofite, indeuoureth to catch away the poore mans possessions; surely although there were no Lawe of God at all: yet doeth euen naturall equitie condemne it. But heere our Lorde sheweth vs his will, which is, that whensoeuer wee see any man distressed, wee shoulde spare him so much the more, vntill hee haue some meanes to recouer himselfe againe; and that wee shoulde not lye in waite to catch from him at euerie occasion that is offered to further the matter: but rather that wee shoulde vse such vprightnesse as to saye, If I beare with him hee will pay mee one time or other, I see hee is willing ynough, I see hee woulde paye mee mine owne and doe asmuch for mee if hee were not ouerpressed otherwise; and seeing I knowe him to bee such a one, shall I nowe set vppon him with rigour? That were euen as much as though I woulde curte asunder his hamstringes that hee might bee able to goe no further. I see he is scarse able to drawe his legges after him, and therefore if I should fall to cutting of his sinewes asunder, and so fell him downe altogether; if hee bee vtterly ouerthrowen for want of lending him my helping hand at his neede, am not I the cause therof? Shal not his pouertie crie out for vengeance against mee vnto God?

Nowe wee see howe this Lawe serued as a policie among the Iewes, and yet neuertheless that it sheweth vs Gods will at this day, because it teacheth vs to beare with the poore and needie. To be short, let vs marke that our sparing of the poore after that fashion, is an acceptable sacrifice to God, and that after the same manner, he will accept all other seruices that we do vnto him: where as if wee performe neuer so manie Ceremonies, and in the meane while haue no equitie nor vpright meaning in vs, we do but prouoke Gods wrath according to the saying of the Prophet Esay which I haue alledged already. If wee resort to sermons, and shewe our selues to haue neuer so great zeale and good will to Gods

word;

worde; and yet for all that, euerie of vs do practise wicked deuises to ouerthrowe our neighbours, so as we seeke to deuour one another like dogges and cattes: our Lorde shalbe much beholding to vs for giuing eare to his sayings, when in the meane while wee make none account of the keeping of them. Nay contrariwise, let vs consider that our comming hither is to bee induced to brotherly loue, so as the rich may beare with the poore, and that where any pouertie is among vs, they may be so prouided for as they may still come forwarde, and bee so comforted as they may eate the breade which God giueth them, with thankesgiuing, and not be driuen to despaire, nor the name of God bee thereby blasphemed. And wee must not tarie till the time of forbearing be proclaimed by the sounde of a trumpet: but wee must holde our selues contented with Gods lowde crying out vnto vs from day to day. And this worde must sounde into our hearts: By which God requireth that wee should so partake with our neighbours that they should no manner of way be grieued by vs: Againe we must not looke for a seuenth yere, because we must haue at this present a continuall rest: Seeing that God hath ridde vs from the olde bondage of the lawe; and therefore hee will haue vs to rest our selues all our life long in him: let vs therefore giue rest to our neighbours, so as they may bee releeued and not haue any occasion of heartburning against vs for our despising and reiecting of them; but that the fatherly loue which God sheweth towardes vs, may be as a bande to tie vs together in brotherly good will as members of one bodie, so as no man doe misuse his brother any more than ỹ hand would misuse the foote, because it woulde turne to the hurt of it selfe. And therefore let vs haue the same consideration of our selues one towards another. Now let vs proceede to that which God addeth.

He saith *that his blessing shalbe vpon the people, so as they shall all prosper, and haue wherwith to lend, & not be driuen to borrow: and that they shall reigne ouer many Nations, and no Nation shall reigne ouer them.* The cause why our Lord addeth this promise, is to confirme the lawe. And at a word (as I haue said heretofore) albeit that our Lord might command after a precise manner: yet doth he apply himselfe to vs, indeuoring to win vs to him, that we should obey him with a free heart, and not go to worke by compulsion and constraint. Yee see then that ỹ thing which he requireth of vs, is ỹ wee shoulde offer him freewilofferings as they terme them. But let vs marke that the vpright dealing which wee haue treated of, serued but onely for the Iewes. And therefore this promise, *I will blesse you*, answereth thereunto. For it was lawfull for the Iewes to pursue straungers, such as were not circumcised. After that maner ment Moses. But if any straungers receiued the lawe of Moses, they were priuiledged, as being of the bodie of the Iewish people. But as for them that worshiped not the God of Israel, & were among them but onely in way of traffike or for some other affaires: they inioyed not the benefite of this law whereby the sewing of them for dett was forbidden. And the reason therof was that they kept not the Sabboth for any deuotions sake. True it is that they were fain to rest themselues whether they woulde or no; it was not lawfull for them in any wise to worke; they were driuen to submit themselues to Gods ordinance: but in the meane while they had no desire to serue the God of Israel. And therefore they were not to be spared as in respect of common policy: but nowe that Gods grace is shedforth euery where, we must not make any more difference betweene Iewe and Gentile. For (as saieth Saincte Paule) our Lorde Iesus Christ hath broken downe the partition wall, to the ende that being adopted of God for his children, wee shoulde maintaine brotherly vnitie among our selues, and euerie of vs acknowledge his neighbour to bee as his brother.

Pſal. 54. 8.

And as touching this promise, it was reserued for that time to ỹ people of Israel. But nowadayes, forasmuch as Gods promises are common to all men because hee hath shewed himselfe to be the father indifferently of all men: let vs vnderstand that our Lorde declareth here a generall, that if we feare him and keepe his commandements, hee will blesse vs and make vs prosper: And this promise must bee referred to the circumstance of the place. For wee see how couetousnesse prouoketh vs to catch what we can from our neighbours, because we be not afraid of want. O (say we) If I may not haue mine owne, what a thing were it? True it is that our Lorde doeth indeede permit euery man to haue his right: but yet must not euery man be so giuen ouer to himselfe and to his owne profite, that he should haue no regarde to spare those whom he holdeth as his vnderlings. For whosoeuer hath no regard of him that standeth at his mercie; surely he can finde in his heart, not onely to liue vppon the parties labour, but also to sucke his bloud. If I bereaue a man of the meanes whereby hee should followe his litle trade, so as he is brought vtterly vnder foote: it is all one as if I maimed him in his body, so as I made him pine away all his life after. So then let vs marke well, that as touching this promise, our Lord hath an eye to the eagernesse which euery of vs hath to draw to himselfe. And why do wee so? Because we be afraide leaste we should want. And therefore our Lord saith, No, make more account of my blessing than of all that euer ye can gather. When ye haue vsed al the craft and sleight ye can deuise to fish to your selues by hooke & by crooke, and when yee haue gathered neuer so huge a heape of goods together: al that shall not bring you so much as my blessing, that I multiplie you and giue you so much as shall suffice to maintaine you withall. And although yee haue not so greate store of thinges at once, as you coulde finde in your heartes to wish: yet will I make the thinges auailable which yee haue in your handes. And if it bee but litle, yet shall it be so inlarged, that yee shall haue at your ease. Now we see what Gods meaning is.

And therefore whensoeuer wee be tempted by

by vnbeliefe to catche other mens goods; Let vs bethinke our selues thus: howe-soeuer shall we become rich in despite of God? At whose hande haue we our liuing? Haue wee it not of his meere liberalitie? Nowe hee hath not promised his blessing to any other than to such as walke in integritie, and do so beare with their neighbours, that they trample them not vnder their feete through ouergreat rigour. But if I will needes inrich my selfe by hooke and by crooke; then doe I spite God and prouoke his wrath against mee; and what hope is there then that God will blesse mee? Nay rather his horrible curse must needes light vppon mee. Therefore let vs thinke aduisedly vppon these thinges. And that wee may so doe, Let vs consider howe it is he that giueth wherewith to finde and feede vs, and that hee must bee faine to preserue the thinges that hee hath giuen vs, and to make them auailable for our vse; or otherwise we may well doe what wee can, and trot vp and downe; but all shall bee but lost labour. God (say I) must bee faine to open his hande to giue vs wherewith to liue. And when he hath once giuen it, hee must also maintaine it. For it might slippe away from vs euery minute of an houre, if hee shulde not make vs to inioy still the things that he hath giuen vs. Thirdly hee must also bee faine to giue vs the meane to it, and to turne the thinges to our benefite which hee hath put into our handes. For if wee put them to any other vse, wee shall woonder to see howe they shall come to naught. And why? Because Gods blessing faileth vs. Yee see then howe the thing which we haue to consider when our flesh is so frowarde as to prouoke vs to greeue our neighbours; is that wee must thinke thus with our selues; yea, but what shall I gaine in the end when God is against me? Sure I am that I ought to thinke my selfe beholden to him for all things: and though I had all the worlde vnder my wing: yet were it nothing worth vnlesse God blessed me. Sith it is so, I must haue an eye to him, and beholde mee well howe I may obtaine his blessing: inlarging my heart towardes my neighbours after his example, who sheweth himselfe so liberall towards me.

And Saint Paul giueth the selfesame admonition, not onely to cause vs to spare those that are in our debte: but also to inducee vs to doe almesdeedes, and to succour the needie: for hee exhorteth vs to him that giueth vs seede to sowe. Come on sirres (saieth he): thinke yee that yee haue lost your labour when ye haue compassion vppon the poore, and bestow almes vpon them? Doe yee no more than the husbandman that layeth his seede into the grounde; for he looketh to reape his crop againe at Haruesttime. Therefore when ye doe almesdeedes, ye sowe: and your God meaneth that hee receiueth with his owne hande, whatsoeuer yee giue to the poore, yea and that hee will make it to returne euerie whit of it to your owne benefite, so as yee shall reape fruite of it, not onely at that great haruest time which shalbe at the last day; but also euen in this transitorie life; your God will make you to perceiue that your almesdeedes are acceptable to him, and you shalbe so much the more increased by them. And for proofe thereof (saith he) is it not hee that giueth the Corne euery yeare to sowe? When the husbandman hath sowed his grounde, howe couldee hee sowe it againe the next yeare, vnlesse God gaue it a heade againe? Consider then that when God giueth you wherewith to doe Almesdeedes, it is to the intent to make it fruitful to you. It is al one as if he should giue you seede in your hande and say, that if yee intende to gather fruite of it, yee must first cast it into the grounde. Will the husbandman keepe his corne still in his Garner? Will he leaue his Lande vnsowen for feare of bestowing some quantitie of graine vppon it? Euen so when yee see an vnsowen grounde, that is to say a poore neighbour whom God offereth vnto you, leaue him not vnsowen still, but bee freehearted towardes him, and God will not suffer the seede to be lost which ye haue bestowed vppon him, but will make it to yeelde yee fruite out of hande. And so yee see whereunto the promise that is set downe heere tendeth, namely *That God will multiplie you in the Lande which hee hath promised you.*

Heere Moses did put the people expressly in mind that their hauing of the Land of Chanaan was of Gods gifte. As if he should say, whence come the goods that yee haue, but out of the earth? And is that Lande yours? No verily, not as in feesimple. Ye haue it but as bayliffes. Your God will be knowen continually to bee the Lorde and master of it. Seeing then that he betaketh the Lande vnto you, may he not at leastwise require some of the fruite thereof at your handes? And that is done when you bee pitifull towards the poore. That is the thing which Moses had respect vnto, when he saide, This lande hath beene promised you, and your God will giue it you in possession. True it is that at this day wee haue not the Land of Chanaan as the Iewes had: but yet whersoeuer wee liue, we be harboured there as it were by the hand of God, and it is he that findeth vs. Seeing then that we haue our life and all thinges else of him, let vs know that it is good reason that we should comfort our neighbours, and that wee shoulde vse compassion towards them in bearing with them, at leastwise if wee will haue God to continue his welldoing towards vs. To bee short whensoeuer we bee not sufficiently stirred vp to referre our selues to the blessing of God; let vs repaire to y thinges which wee knowe by experience. Men cannot finde in their heartes to trust vnto God, but rather are caried away and inflamed with their owne wicked lustes, deceits, and leawd practises, so as they passe not howe they come by thinges so they haue them. But when wee behaue our selues after that leawde fashion, and passe not for the blessing of God as we ought to doe: Let vs come to the exhortation that Moses maketh in this place to vs; namely, that if I haue nothing of myne owne, I hold all thinges of my God. And seeing it is so that hee hath fed me and maintained me vnto this day: should

I not put my ſelfe ſtill into his hande? Though I had a thouſand times more thē I haue, yet would it ſoone be ſwallowed vp: but if I haue very little yea and yet leſſe, my God who hath not failed mee vnto this houre, will continue his bleſſing ſtill, and that ought to ſuffice mee. Seeing then that experience (which is the ſchoolemiſtres of fooles as they ſay) ſheweth vs howe ſtrong Gods bleſſing is are we not too leawd if we folow not ỹ thing that is tolde vs in this text, that is to wit, if we haue not pitie vppon our poore brethren, ſeeing wee haue his promiſe, the performance whereof wee haue had accompliſhed by effect? That is the point wherein God will haue a triall of the loue that we beare to him. Now he ſaith that mercie is more worth than all the ſacrifices in the world: and therefore hee will haue vs to honour him ỹ way, that is to ſay by pitying of our poore brethren, by ſuccouring them, and by bearing with them when it lyeth in our power to trouble them: aſſuring our ſelues that God accepteth the thinges that are ſo done to our neighbours for his ſake. And he will not onely ſhewe himſelfe liberall towards vs by making vs to feele the fruite of our Almeſdeeds; but he will alſo continually increaſe his benefits vpon vs in ſuch ſort that by meanes thereof wee ſhall haue continuall cauſe to bleſſe him and to glorifie his holy name.

Oſee. 6. 6. Matt. 7. 12. & 22. 7.

And now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to vouchſafe to wipe them away, ſo as they may not hinder vs from being preſerued at his hand: and that if he make vs to finde his fauour euen in this corruptible life, we may much more bee inuironed rounde about with all his ſpirituall benefites, that we may ſo grow in them more and more, as wee may neuer be helde backe by the brittle thinges of this world, but rather ſo vſe them as wee may hope on our way ſtill, and communicate together after ſuch a ſort, as it may be to the exerciſing of the faith which wee haue in God, and in his pure doctrine, and for the confirming of vs in the hope which we haue of the heritage of heauen, ſo as wee may tende euer thitherwarde, as we be dayly called thither by the preaching of his worde. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Saturday the xxvj. of October. 1555.

The XCiiij. Sermon which is the ſecond vpon the fifteenth Chapter.

7 If a brother of thine become poore within any of the gates in the Lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee, thou ſhalt not harden thy heart nor ſhut thy hand from thy brother that is poore.

8 But thou ſhalt open thy hand bountifully, and lend him ſufficiently for his neede wherewith he is pinched.

9 Beware that there be no point of peeniſhnes in thy heart, that thou ſay nay, the ſeuenth yeare which is the yeare of reſpiting is at hande, and thereuppon that haue a wicked eye againſt thy poore brother, ſo as thou giue him nothing; and then hee crie againſt thee to the Lorde thy GOD, ſo as it become ſinne vnto thee.

10 Thou ſhalt giue him freely, and let not thy heart repine at thy giuing vnto him: for becauſe of this the Lorde thy God will bleſſe thee in all thy woorkes, and in all that euer thou putteſt thy hande vnto.

HEre Moſes goeth on with ỹ ſame matter that was ripped vp yeſterday, that is to wit, that in the ſeuenth yeare dettes ſhould be reſpited, to the intent that the poore ſhoulde not bee ſued nor moleſted. And I told you that the meaning therof was not that they ſhoulde be quite and cleane forgiuen, but that the poore ſhoulde be ſo much eaſed. Now Moſes addeth a larger declaration, *That the ſame ought not to hinder men from lending liberally when any bodie had neede.* And this is added becauſe men doe alwayes goe about to defraude the Law. Although equitie be ſhewed vs neuer ſo plainely, and that the Lawes be ſet neuer ſo well together: yet are men ſo ſubtile in naughtineſſe, that they finde alwayes ſome euaſion hole, to beare the worlde in hand that they haue not offended the Lawe, and yet the intent of the Lawe maker is defrauded. This is a thing too much accuſtomed; and woulde God there were not too many examples of it in experience. But what? When men thinke themſelues to haue ſet things in as good order as may be, a thouſand meanes are deuiſed to ſcape from them, and thereof commeth ſo much breaking in Law. For the end of good Lawes is to ſhut the way to all peeuiſh, that there might bee no de-

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haste not quarelling among men, but that euery man might haue his owne right. And inasmuch as Lawes doe shewe that whosoeuer offendeth must be punished, is it not a meane to hold euerie man in awe? But as I saide afore, the Law serues vs but to deuise wicked shifts how to do hurt and harme vntill our hearts be reformed. Neuerthelesse our Lords meaning in this text, was to prouide that the Law which he had set downe should be kept, and that men shoulde not take occasion thereof to withholde themselues from succouring such as are in necessitie. And yet notwithstanding, that which is spoken here was not onely wrested to the defrauding of the Law; but also applyed much worse. For such as were too much wedded to their owne profite, tooke occasion at Gods law to do lesse good and to shew lesse mercie to their neighbours than otherwise they woulde haue done. For why? Had it beene lawfull for them to haue sued men at all times, so as they might haue required their right at all times without exception: they woulde haue lent money in the sixth yeare as well as in the first, and they woulde haue made no bones at all at it. But nowe that a Lawe was set foorth, that there shoulde bee a forbearing of it in the seuenth yeare, if a poore man required succour, euerie man thought thus with himselfe: if I lende him money nowe, it is layde a water, I lose a whole yeares occupying of it, and what a thing is that? It were better that this good fellowe shoulde goe prouide himselfe where hee can: for I intende not to hazarde my selfe in this wise: for what can I tell what will befall within a yeare and a halfe? There needeth but a little hinderance, and beside, I may fall into further pouertie, and then am I too short of my money. Thus ye see how euery man woulde shrinke away, and vnder colour that God had commanded men to vse gentlenesse towardes their neighbours in the seuenth yeare, the poore were disappointed of help and succe, and their throates were cute, so as there was no way for them to ease themselues of their sute.

And hereby wee see yet better, that men not onely be subtile in deuising new shiftes from time to time, to couer their misdoings: but also ỹ whē they haue neuer so good and iust Lawes, they turne them to the cleane contrarie. And this commeth to passe not only in worldly gouernment, but also euen in matter concerning God: wherein we see ỹ horrible corruption of our nature. And this is one point well worthy to be noted. When such as are in authoritie ouer vs, as Princes, Magistrates, and Iudges make Lawes & statutes if wee breake them, that disobedience of ours (as Saint Paul sheweth) toucheth God, and therefore is not to be excused. But when as God commeth as it were in his owne person, and talketh vs his will as it were with his own mouth: if we then dally with him, and shroud ourselues by shifts and subtleties as though hee were not able to see vs: is not that a diuilish malapeartnes? But there is yet a farre greater and more outragious extremity, as I said afore. God goeth about to rule our life aright, he seeth vs pitifully wandering in our own affections: he setteth vs downe an order what to doe: and his will ought to bee as a definitiue sentence for vs to stande vnto, so as wee ought to inquire no further for we know that whatsoeuer God alloweth, is perfect righteousnesse. Nowe when hee hath beene so gracious to vs as to teach vs, What doe we? We not onely fall to dissemble in his Lawe, but also turne al order vpsidedowne, and transgresse the verie Lawes themselues which hee giueth vs to direct vs by: Sith wee see such frowardnesse, wee haue good cause to mislike of our selues, and to condemne our selues vtterly. And therefore seeing wee be of malicious and froward nature, let vs learne to suspect our selues, and to yeeld to Gods good will, that when he hath giuen vs his Lawe, he may also giue vs the grace to receiue it with all singlenesse of heart, so as it may bee to our benefite, and that we may not turne life into death, nor light into darkenesse. Thus yee see what we haue to remember in the first place.

Secondly it behoueth vs to marke here, that the keeping of the outwarde forme of the Lawe is not all that we haue to doe: but that wee must specially obserue the substance of the Lawe. Will wee proue our obedience towardes God? The way to do it is not by Ceremonies, but to seeke out the certaintie of his meaning, and to submit our selues thereunto. For men will take good heede to the worldewarde, that they offende not in such wise, as they may bee punished: and if a man can finde some prettie shift to excuse himselfe withall when hee commeth before the iudge; hee thinkes all his doings to bee iustifiable ynough. A man then will make no conscience to offende, so he haue wherewith to hide himselfe when he is reproued, and that hee can say, as for mee, I vnderstoode it not so: the Law saith not so. He findeth out some little worde that carieth a shewe of contrarietie to the true meaning of the Lawe, and setteth a counterfait construction vppon it, and so beares himselfe in hande that hee hath well ridded his handes of the matter, and that by that meanes he is cleare of it. And therfore let vs learn that it is nothing worth to haue obserued the Lawe as in respect of the outwarde forme of it, that is to say, in such wise as men can finde no fault with vs; but that the chiefe point is to liue soundly & roundly, accordingly as wee see here that it was Gods will that in the seuenth yeare there should bee a respit, that is to wit that men shoulde not sue for their dettes, but suffer it to bee a resting-time, as I declared yesterday.

True it is that the Iewes woulde not vtterly transgresse this order: but yet they thought it ynough for them to discharge themselues of the Ceremonie, and they bare themselues in hand that God might well holde himselfe contented with such disguisings, when in the meane while the chiefe thing was left vndone. For the poore were not pitied to their releefe, but rather men tooke occasion to leaue them vtterly destitute. Insomuch that howe great so euer their neede was, they were neuer the more releeued, and all

vnder colour that men could not recouer that which they had lent. Wee see then how men wouldde alwayes oppoose God with ceremonies. But let vs beare in minde howe hee saieth by his Prophet, that he hath an eye to the soundnesse of the heart. Therefore let vs deale faithfully with our neighbours, if wee will haue God to accept the seruice which we yeeld vnto him.

Ier.5.31.

And nowe let vs come to that which is set downe here. *If any of thy brethren* (saieth hee) *bee fallen behinde hand, as leathfull of such as do all wickednesse: harden not thy heart, nor shut thy hande against him.* His speaking peculiarly of the Israelites themselues, was not to giue the Iewes leaue to deuour the goods of the heathen, nor to deale cruelly with them: but his meaning was that there shoulde bee the more friendlinesse vsed among themselues, because that besides the kinred that was among them, there was also an vnion of faith. For GOD had shouled out the lynage of Abraham from the rest of the worlde, and had knitte them together into one bodie, whereof hee himselfe vouchsafed to bee the head: and therefore it was good reason that they shoulde maintaine one another, and be the more inclined one to succor another. But hereof the Iewes tooke occasion, to holde fast all that euer they coulde catch: for they construewed all the promises of the holy scripture to their owne aduantage, as though God had laide the bridle on their necks, and had no more care of the Gentyles than of brute beastes. As for example; whereas it is said, Thee shall reigne ouer many Nations: thereupon they concluded, Then is it lawfull for vs to exercise all maner of Tyrannie vppon the Gentiles, and to eate them vp: for they be vncircumcyzed and vncleane, and belong not vnto God at all: therefore let vs sticke what wee can possible out of them, and not spare them. Yea and they streatched the worde *South* verie farre: for they sticked not a whit to ouerlode the strangers with vsurie to the vttermost that they coulde beare, without any regarde of vprightnesse. Thus yee see howe the Iewes did alwayes restreine the right of Gods promises, bearing themselues in hande that it behoued them to be a litle friendlyer to their neighbours, that is to say to those that were of their owne kinred: And yet euen in y behalfe also they were counted as rauening Wolues, as the Prophet Ieremie vpbraideth them, and as shalbe declared in due place.

Ier.5.26. Mic.3.1.2.

But let vs nowe come backe againe to that which is saide here, to applie it to our instruction. If the Iewes vsed this hypocrisie of couering their couetousnesse with a pretence that they might well pill and poll the heathen and Infidels: let vs see if wee our selues doe not the like at this day. True it is that our Lord commendeth vnto vs the houshold folke of faith aboue all others: (and yet is it not meete that he giueth vs leaue to fleece such as haue not the knowledge of his worde. For hee hath twise vs generally alogether in that hee hath saide by his Prophet Esay, Thou shalt not despise

Gal.6.10.

Esa.58.7.

thine owne flesh, in which saying he comprehendeth all men without exception. Therefore must we behaue our selues vprightly and indifferently towardes all men; and likewise we must haue pitie and compassion vpon all: but when we behold our owne nature, then we find that, the houshold folke of faith are linked vnto vs with a much neerer bonde: in respect whereof it is good reason that wee shoulde loue them more specially as our brethren. Thus yee see after what maner this text is to be vnderstoode, where God saith *If any of thy brethren*, that is to say of thine owne countrimen. And hee doeth it for that they were linked together in a holy bande, had the true Religion, and were adopted to be the children of God: in consideration whereof it behoooued them to beehaue themselues to bee kinde hearted and pitifull one towardes another, and yet ought they not to haue despised the rest of the worlde as they did.

And whereas it is saide *within thy Gates*, is to shew that the exercising of our charitie ought to bee according to our knowledge of mens necessities. For wee bee not able to helpe all mens needes. True it is that euen without seeing the extremities that are euery where, we ought to be touched with compassion. When we heare of warres, that one Countrie is hadde burned, another spoyled, and all thinges laide vtterly vpsidedowne; it is our parte to runne to the place to see what hath beene done. But if we be not too too blockish, we may well iudge that those thinges cannot bee done without horrible confusion. Therefore must we pray for those whome wee neuer sawe: for they touch vs, they bee men as well as we, they bee reasonable creatures shaped after the image of GOD. And in that respect we ought to pitie those that are nothing neere vnto vs. But as in respect of straungers a verie man must straine himselfe according to the needs that hee seeth, for I cannot help all of those that are far off from me. But if I see a bodie in present necessitie; then must I be moued to pitie, and I must confesse that God prouoketh and calleth me to the succouring of him that is in neede.

Thus yee see why Moses hath set it downe expressly, that men shoulde haue a regarde of those that are within their gates. The Iewes then coulde well skill to saye, that though all mankinde bee alyed together; yet notwithstanding, the neighbours that are acquainted one with another, ought to vse a speciall friendlinesse in succouring one another. And in deede, euen without anie reading of the holie scripture, euerie man can well skill to saye in his owne behalfe when his neighbour faileth him, Howe nowe? what neybourhood is this? And who teacheth them? lesson? Nature. Euen therefore our Lord telleth vs that if we perceiue any of our neighbors to be in necessitie, it ought to stirre vs vp, so as if wee bee not too too vnnatural, wee must needes be touched with it: and any further pricking of vs in mind thereof

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thing he saith speaketh when we see our neighbour so distressed.

Now he addeth further, *Thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thy hande*, Hee might well haue begunne at this point, Thy hand shall not be shut; for that is the matter which hee tendeth vnto effect. But it is not for nought that he saith, Thou shalt not shut vp thy heart. For why, his intent is to preuent the thing that hindereth our welldoing & our succouring of our neighbours that are in distresse: namely, the hardnesse of our hearts. For where pitie is, that is to say if we be pitifull, wee will indeuour to vse such wealth as we haue wherewith. In deede a man shal see a number that can well skill to weepe; but al that they can find in their hearts to do, is but to diddle a fewe teares: they cast forth such signes that a man would thinke their heartes should burst; but to spare one penny out of their purse, that is no part of their thought. Many such hypocrites are to be seene. But let vs haue the true kindheartednesse in vs, and let vs not be hardhearted, but let our hande euer follow our heart. And that is the cause why our Lorde beginneth at this point, That men should not harden their heartes. As if hee should say, will yee be good Almesmen? Will ye be well disposed to succour such as haue neede of your helpe? Then let your heartes bee softened, and not locked vp to holde fast to your selues, but rather to thinke with your selues that God offereth vnto mee here a man, he is my neighbour, and although hee bee neither kinsman nor alie to me, yet is hee a creature shaped after the image of God, and therefore must I put my hand towardes him, and haue some pitie vpon him. As often then as wee haue colde minded part in succouring our neighbours, let vs enter into this consideration that he doeth heere, and so say to our selues: How now? Wretched man, if thou want as hee is, wouldst thou not be gladde that others should succour thee? Yes: and if they shoulde let thee alone, thou couldest skill well ynough to say for thy selfe, Alas, men make no more account of vs then of a dog. Thou couldest well skill to say so; and yet for all that wilt thou thy selfe harden thy heart after the same fashion? Thus yee see that wee haue in the first place to marke vpon this.

And now for the seconde part, Let vs marke how our Lorde speaketh here, in that he saith that our deedes please him not, vnlesse they come from a willing and freedisposed heart. And therefore let vs learne to order our succouring of our neighbours needes in such sort, as we doe it not vnwillingly, so as when our hand is stretched out, there be a wicked affection in vs which may hinder vs from offering vp vnto God that succour which we owe vnto our neighbours when we see them in necessitie. And would God that this lesson were well put in vre, and that euery one of vs did beare it better in minde than we do. For although we doe some Almesdeedes, yet may the world see that our harts are straitened, and that wee cannot come to this doctrine of Saint Paules, that God loueth the liberall giuer, and that hee will not haue men go to worke as it were, by constraint and inforcement, but of a free goodwill. Howe many be there that put this lesson in vre? Nay, the giuer hath alwayes some hartgrudging in himselfe, and would faine draw his heade out of the coller if hee couldo, and his doing of it is as if he were put to his task as they terme it, or as though hee payed some tribute. But our Lord calleth Almesdeedes Sacrifices, to the ende wee should do them cheerefully. And I pray you, if wee will offer any thing vnto God, shoulde it bee as the paying of a tribute, or of some tallage or impost, that is exacted? Shoulde it bee as it were a ransome giuen to theeues or enemies? Shoulde our honouring of our God by doing him homage for the goods that wee haue receiued at his hande, bee by such force and constreint? Nowe wee see in effect, what is imported in these two speeches; namely that wee must not haue our hearts locked vp to hinder vs from well doing, but that not onely our handes but also our hearts must bee open towards such as are distressed, to haue pitie vppon them, and to vse kindnesse to them. Where this is not, there must needes bee all manner of crueltie, as wee commonly see that such as haue most to spare, doe fall to repyning if a bodie go about to wring an almes from them and they make a grudging at it like a dog when one wouldo take away a bone out of his mouth. And if they happe to giue any thing, bee it for shame or for any other cause, it is a death to them to part from it. And surely it were better that such carkasses were rooted out of the worlde, than that they should liue among men. For they bee monsters againſt kinde, they bee foule churles, that coulde finde in their hearts to deuour and swallowe downe all the worlde into their mawes. Or rather they bee men full of vnbeliefe, which haue no more trust in God than deuels, bearing themselues in hande that the earth is not able to finde them. By reason whereof if it come to the point that they must giue any thing, it striketh them to the heart, it killeth them, insomuch that the asking of an Almes at their hande, is as the drawing of a sworde to cut their throtes. Therefore let vs looke to our selues, and when we heare our Lord speake of the not hardening of our hearts, let vs beginne at this point of kindnesse in hauing pitie and compassion vpon such as are in distresse. And therewithall let our hande bee as liberall afterwarde, in such sort as wee may protest that wee offer GOD a sacrifice with a free heart.

And nowe Moses addeth, *Beware that this wicked thought come not in thy heart to say, Behold, the seuenth yeere is at hande, and if I smite, my money cannot be dead for the time.* He calleth it a wicked thought when we be holde backe by it too much to our owne profite, and in the meane while forsake the parties that is in neede. For were our thoughts well ruled, surely wee should not bee so greatly wedded to our owne profite, but that we

would also thinke vpon those whom God com-
1.Cor.13.5 mendeth vnto vs. It is saide that loue seeketh not his owne. True it is that it cannot bee but that euerie man will bee mindfull of himselfe. But Saint Paules meaning in saying so, is that men must not bee caried away with the loue of their owne profite, as who shoulde say they woulde haue no fellowshippe with their neighbours, nor streine themselues to doe any thing for them. Therefore as for those which say, I must haue regarde of my selfe, and therewithall doe despise others, and passe not what they endure: those seeke their owne gaine, and in so doing shewe themselues to be vtterly voide of charitie. Contrariwise, if wee bee kindhearted, although wee be mindfull of our selues, yet are we not so caried away with it; but that wee beare an euen hand and proceede to the louing of our neighbours as our selues. Whereas our nature wholly draweth vs to our owne priuate profite, let vs bethinke our selues thus: What? I cannot separate my selfe from those to whom God hath knit me; for that were a wicked diuorce. If I should holde my selfe alone, and haue no regard but of mine owne aduantage, It were a cutting of my selfe off from mankinde, & I were worthie to be cut from the rest of the world, for it is against kinde. So then, it is not without cause that Moses saith, that when a man is so mindful of his owne profite, and seeketh it in such sort that he taketh it as an occasion to refuse to help his neighbors at all: it is a wicked thought, for thereby wee bee done to vnderstand, that we must not iustifie our selues because that although men be not able to accuse vs so as we may be condemned by mans Lawe, yet doth it not followe therefore that wee be quit before God. If a man come to borrowe mony of mee, and I thinke thus with my selfe, I cannot tell whether this man be able to pay me againe or no, he is a poore man, and when I haue taried a long time, hee may chaunce to growe poorer and poorer, and then is my money loste. Nowe then if this poore man that was to be succoured abide still in distresse, and in the end perish: the other that woulde not lend him, shall not be accused for it nor brought to answere for it before men. And if men cast him in the teeth with it. O (will hee say) It was for mee to seeke mine owne profite, I lifted not to hazarde my selfe after that fashion. Well this excuse may serue afore men: but in the meane while what saith the heauenly Iudge to it? It is a wicked thought, saieth hee: and let men flatter themselues neuer so much, they shall winne nothing by it. Therefore let vs marke that wee must not wey our woorkes in our owne scales, as who shoulde say wee shall goe scotfree because wee haue some startinghole. For our Lorde telleth vs that the thing which beares a shewe to be excusable of it selfe, is cursed in his sight; that is to wit, if wee succour not the partie that hath neede, at leastwise according to our abilitie. And it is the selfesame thing that our Lorde Iesus Christ putteth vs in minde of, where hee saieth that wee must doe good to such as are
Luke.6.35. not able to requite vs with the like, and that wee must lende without looking for any gaine. For neither in lending nor in giuing, commonly is there any liberalitie among men, but euerie man hath an eye to his owne gaine. If a man giue, it is to the ende to receiue gifts againe: and if a man lende, alwayes his respect is, that such a one may doe him pleasure and recompence him with the like good turne againe. It is no Liberalitie when wee doe good in hope to bee recompensed for it againe. But if wee doe good to a poore man, at whose hande wee cannot by any meanes reape any profite; that is a point of freegoodnesse, and God alloweth of it, for it is an acceptable sacrifice vnto him. And that is the cause why hee saieth that we should not giue to such as are able to requite vs, but to such as are vtterly vnable, and of whom wee haue no hope to recouer the principall: for it is no Almesdeede, that is to say, no deede of mercie, vnlesse there bee neede: and where is neede, but among such as are not able to recompence? Yea and euen where our money may seeme to bee cast into the water, inasmuch that wee haue succoured such a man as it may bee saide, Verily this is quite lost for anght that I can see? Yea verily, as to the worldward. But our Lorde saieth, I receiue it: yet thinke yee put your almes into a mortall mans hande, but it is I that become debter for it. Although all thinges bee his, yet bindeth he himself in the person of the poore; and shoulde then our ingardlyneesse stay vs from succoring those whom God offereth vnto vs, seeing he setteth them as in his owne steede, and auoweth all to be done himselfe which is done to them?

Moreouer let vs marke that Moses speaketh here, of such as are in neede. For God meaneth not to maintaine wicked folke in ydlenes & naughtinesse. The man that seeketh to waste away other mens goods, and to defraude his Creditors, is not commended vnto vs heere of God: but he speaketh directly of mercy. And that is the cause why he saieth, Thou shalt not harden thy heart. For if wee haue not that discretion: doe what Almesdeedes we will, and yet shall none of them be acceptable. Wherfore let vs marke, that how God speaketh not in fauour of all men, but only setteth before vs such as are in neede & wot not what to doe, and shoulde perish in deede if they were not relieued. Those are they which are to be helped according to our ablitie. That it is, that to make a Lawe of it, it is not possible. God hath set this order among his people, that the poore shoulde be succoured. But he hath not tolde with what summe, nor how often times hee hath not made a tax of it, to say that euery man should beare thus much. Only we must referre to this which S. Paul saith, Let euery man doe that which he doth with a free hart, and not lay enbure vpon me as though they should pay as much as they were sessed at: but let euery man sesse him self of his own good wil, & think thus, although I streined my self a hundred times more, yet could I not discharge my self to my godward. Howbeit forasmuch as he sheweth me this fauor to accept it as an offring of my hand, although I do not so much

much as I ought to doe nothing neere, yet doth it please him to receiue ỹ which I giue him, so it be done w a free hart. Sith we know this, albeit that we cannot make a grounded Lawe of it, to ỹ how farre we shall go in succoring our neighbors, yet let euery of vs streine himselfe, and alwayes be doing, with the foresayd free heart.

And it is sayd, *Thou shalt not thinke with thy self, the yeare of respit is at hand, and therefore I will not lend.* Hereby it is shewed vs, (as I haue touched afore) that if a poore man require help, although he be not able to pay the thing againe out of hand which he borroweth, yet must not wee be cold for all that. For we must thinke, if I helpe this poore man at this time, he is a faithful man, and my succoring and releeuing of him shall set him halfe vp againe, but howsoeuer the worlde go, he may be able to maintaine his trade, and at length he may pay mee all that hee borroweth. But if I vtterly faile him at this time, he is quite sunck, he is brought vnder foote for euer, and hath no meanes to get vp againe: and I am to blame if I see him perish so. Had we this cõsideratiõ with vs, we should not haue the nigardlines that Moses mentioneth and condemneth here. And how so? Let vs knowe that where need requireth, we must not haue such respect to our owne profite, as to let the poore perish in their distresse without lending them our helping hãd.

Again, Let vs wey wel this saying which Moses setteth downe here: namely that wee must open our handes. Hee repeteth it twise or thrice: and that is to shewe vs that there is nothing but hypocrisie in vs, when we pretend to haue compassion, & yet our hand is alwayes shut, and nothing can be wrong out of vs. I haue told you already ỹ a number of folke wil not passe greatly to lye; Alas, when they see poore people: but they beare themselues in hand ỹ it is enough to haue pretended a countenance. But here God reproueth mens dissimulation, if they haue not their handes open: for it is a toke that their hart is hardened, so as there is nothing but beastly churlishnesse in them, and when their handes be not opened, it must needes bee a record of it. Againe he setteth downe that the poore is to be succored according to his neede, and that a gage is to be taken of him, if there be a gage to be had: for it may also full well be vnderstood of the taking of gages. And hereby we see yet better, that our Lordes meaning was not to haue debtes vtterly released by the respit that was giuen in the seuenth yeere: but onely to haue a time of rest giuen for the respectes and considerations which I haue treated of before.

Furthermore it is tolde vs here, that we must releeue our neighbors wants: for our Lord speaketh heere of the lendinges that are doone of almes. And in deede, it is oftentimes a greater almesdeede to lend some cõpetẽt sũme, than to giue a very little. For it may be ỹ the giuing of a little will doe a man no ease at all: but the lending of as much as neede requireth, releeueth him very wel, & he may in time contente his creditor again. That then is the thing whereunto our Lord appointeth vs. And therefore let vs marke the thing which I haue touched already; that is to wit, that although a man cannot set downe a Lawe certeine in this behalfe; yet must euery man be a rule to himselfe, to doe according to his own abilitie and according to ỹ need that he seeth in his neighbors.

Now here is added yet further, *That God will blesse such as doe so*, according as hee had begun yesterday to promise his blessing to all such as were so liberally minded towardes the succoring of the poore. And this serueth still to correct the cursed vnbeleefe ỹ holdeth our heartes locked vp so as no man mindeth aught else than himselfe and his own profite. For it seemeth to vs ỹ if we forgo neuer so little of ỹ which we haue, we be in ỹ way to be vndone by it. That is ỹ cause why euery man holdes fast, & neuer thinkes hee hath enough. O (say we) it is true ỹ we may doe so and so: but thereby I should be impayred, & I cannot tell what may befall to my selfe. We cast so many doubtes, ỹ we can neuer finde occasion to giue any thing. And why so? Forsooth because I might want it my selfe. But ỹ is a cursed distrust, & such a one as prouoketh Gods wrath. For wee ought rather to hope well at his hand, ỹ as he hath not failed vs heretofore, so he will continue to doe vs good stil. And yet we go to seek these doubts afar off, which we be afraid of: insomuch ỹ it grieueth vs euen to heare thẽ spoken of. If a man shoulde say to vs, such a thing may befal the if thy house should be burned, & all thy goods be cõsumed in it, & thou be driuen to sell thy landes & possessions, in what case wart thou thẽ? None of these songes would please vs, but we would chafe and storme at him ỹ should speake so. And why? For a rich man would faine sleepe in his riches, hee hopeth ỹ he shal stand alwayes at one stay, & he foadeth himselfe in his delights. But in ỹ meane while, if he be to doe any good, he by & by forecasteth, O such a thing might befall me, famine & warre & I wote not what else must be feared. We heape together all ỹ mischaunces ỹ can bee deuised. And to what ende? Euen to shut vp our harts & our hands, ỹ we might do no mã good. Now our Lord minding to correct such distrust, bringeth vs backe to his blessing, & sayth, Know ye ỹ it belõgeth to me to multiply you. And therfore ye may wel hope ỹ when ye seeme to be impaired to ỹ worldward, yee shall haue a greater treasure thẽ if ye had kept all ỹ euer could haue come to your handes, and had neuer done any good to your neighbors to succor thẽ withal. For I am rich enough to fill you againe, euen when you be vtterly destitute of al things. Seeing ỹ our Lord speaketh after ỹ maner, must we not needs be woorse than infidels if wee bee not mooued thereat to doe good? Yea and though we go not to woorke with so earnest mindes as we should doe, yet if wee be not mooued at leastwise to doe somewhat; may it not bee sayd that wee stop our eares against God and giue him no audience at all, yea and that we giue no credit nor trust at all to any of his promises? Therefore let vs learne to wey better ỹ valew of this lesson cõcerning Gods blessing, & let no man rest vpon ỹ thinges ỹ he hath in his own possession, ne put such trust in thẽ as to say; This is my stay, this is

truſt in them as to ſay; This is my ſtay, this is the ſtaffe that I muſt leane vpon, Let vs beware of ſuch truſt, for it is diueliſh. Nay rather, let vs think thus; Seeing ỳ God hath giuen me wherof to liue, I am contented with ỳ which I haue, and I hope ỳ he wil alſo prouide for me ſtil hereafter; and in ỳ mean time I wil ſo vſe ỳ which he giueth me, as I may ſuccour thoſe that haue neede. And therwithal I wil put from me al things that may draw me from ỳ obeying of my God, and from ỳ truſt which I ought to repoſe in his goodneſſe. Thus ye ſee how we ought to benefite our ſelues by ỳ promiſes of Gods bleſſing, ſo as they may quicken vs vp, not onely to haue recourſe vnto him, but alſo to vſe liberalitie towards thoſe that haue neede of vs, to the end ỳ our Lord may bee prayſed both of great & ſmall, poore & rich, and al of vs haue our cõtentmẽt in him alone, according to ỳ grace ỳ he ſhal haue beſtowed vpon vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in his preſence & acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs perceiue them better, & to touch vs to the quicke, to the ende that knowing his infallible truth, & what his wil is towards vs, we may be moued thereby to follow ỳ same, & to frame our ſelues to his exãple, by imparting our ſubſtance in ſuch wiſe to our neighbors, & by diſpenſing the good in ſuch ſorte which hee hath put into our hands, as we may one day yeeld him a good and faithful account of them, ỳ we haue not bin too much addicted to our ſelues: but ỳ when we ſhal haue indeuoured to doe good according to his meaning, our whole ſeeking may be to liue & die in his obedience, drawing others with vs to the ſelfeſame fayth, ſo as we may all call vpon him as our father truely and vnfeinedly, becauſe we mainteine a right brotherhoode with all ſuch as are knitte vnto vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xxx. of October. 1555.

The XCv. Sermon, which is the therde vpon the fifteenth Chapter.

11 For there ſhall euer be ſome needie folke in the Lande. And therefore I commaund thee, ſaying, that thou open thy hand to thy brother, to thy needie and to thy poore in the Lande.

12 When thy brother an Hebrewe, or [thy ſiſter] an Hebreweſſe ſhall bee ſolde himſelfe vnto thee, and ſerued thee ſixe yeres: in the ſeuenth yeere thou ſhalt let him goe free from thee.

13 And when thou letteſt him goe free from thee, thou ſhalt not let him goe emptie.

14 But thou ſhalt lode him vpon his necke with ſomewhat of thy flocke, of thy vyneyarde, and of thy winepreſſe. Thou ſhalt giue him of the things wherewith the Lorde hath bleſſed thee.

15 Remember how thou thy ſelfe waſt a bondſeruant in the Land of Egypt, & that the Lord thy God deliuered thee: and therfore doe I command thee this thing this day.

IT is ſayd in the common prouerb, that Lawes are not made for thinges that are not woont to come to paſſe, but for thinges that are in vre, and which it behoueth vs to practiſe dayly. And that is the cauſe why our Lord in this text ſayth, that his ſpeaking of ỳ ſuccoring of the poore is not without cauſe, for that as long as this mortal lyfe indureth, we ſhall euer finde whereon to execute our duetie, by reledting the neceſſities of our neighbours, *becauſe there ſhall alwayes be poore folke among vs in the world*. Thus we ſee in effect, ỳ Gods intent was to make the Iewes to take the better heede to his Lawe, foraſmuch as it was a very requiſite yea and neceſſarie thing, that they ſhould be put in minde of their duetie in ỳ behalfe. And thereupon we haue to gather, that the more auaileable a doctrine is to the well ordering of our lyfe, ỳ better ought we to ſet our mindes vppon it. We ſee a number of folk which are fond and curious in forecaſting for things that happen not once in a hundred yeres: they imagine things ỳ are vtterly vnpoſſible: & if the ſhould come to paſſe (ſay they) what ſhould we doe then? They beat their braines about things that haue no profit in them, and in the meane while they ſee not the things ỳ are before their feete. And for proofe hereof, how many are to be ſeene nowadayes, which groſly ouerſhoot themſelues in things that ought to be throughly knowen, ſhutting their eyes at them ſo as they ſee not one whit? And yet for all that, they vſe themſelues exceedingly in ſearching out I wote not what: and if a man aske them why they doe ſo, they cannot tel, but that they be drawen thereto by a fooliſh curioſitie. Therefore let vs haue in minde that our Lordes intent is to occupye vs occupyed ſo farre foorth as is for our behoofe. And that is the cauſe why that in the holy ſcripture, we ſee that God hath not vouſafed to feed our humors with thinges which he knoweth to

le of no edificatiō, but restreineth vs to ỹ things which are for our behoofe to put in vre. Let vs consider then that euery of vs ought to looke diligently to his owne duetie: and that is the warning that is giuen vs in this text, where God telleth vs that he maketh not Lawes of things that concerne vs not, but that hee hath an eye to the thinges which we ought to put in practise dayly.

But now let vs come to this saying of his, *That there shalbe poore folke continually*. This was spoken expreslie, to doe vs to vnderstand that God will try our charitie. For he is rich enough to supply all mens wantes, and it commeth not of any niggardship, that he powreth not out his treasures vpon vs. What is the cause then that God suffereth men to be poore in this world, but onely to giue vs occasion to doe good? Therfore when we see one man poore & another rich, let vs not attribute it to fortune: but let vs vnderstand how it is God ỹ disposeth thinges so, and that it is not without reason. True it is ỹ our eyes shal not alwayes see why God inricheth one & impouerisheth another, we cannot discerne ỹ cause therof certenly. And by that meanes God will haue vs to cast downe our eyes oftentimes, to the end we should yeelde him the honor of gouerning men at his will, and according to his own deuice which is incōprehensible. Yet notwithstanding we haue to remember in generall, the thing that I haue touched already, which is, ỹ Gods distributing of these worldly goods so vnegally, is to know what it is in mens harts, by making a tryall of the) way. So ỹ if a man be rich, he may be the better discerned what a one he is. For thereby hee is inabled to doe hurt, and can the better indomage his enemies. But if he abstaine frō doing euil, if he exerce no crueltie towardes his neighbors, if he hold himselfe win his owne bodies wout couetīg more thā God giueth vnto him: it is a signe of honesty, which had not bin knowē if such occasiōs had not bin ministred vnto him. Again, if a man of wealth be liberall so as he indeuour to doe good to such as haue neede of his helpe, and aduaūce not himselfe through pride & stately nesse, but alwayes behaue himself mildly) is a very good proofe. If another mā be poore take patiently whatsoeuer it pleaseth God to send him, & moreouer be not led to any deceit or naughtinesse how much soeuer he suffer, or how hard soeuer his state be: that also is a good & chooseful tryal. Now the let vs mark ỹ wherein there are both rich and poore in this world, God hath so ordeined it, & it cōmeth of his prouidēce: & therfore wee must hold it for a sure groūd, ỹ there shal neuer want poore folkes.

And now by the way let vs come to that which I spoke of, namely that Gods commaunding of wealthie folke to haue their handes open to succour the poore and needy that are in the land, is not without cause. For it is as it were a setting downe before our eyes, wherein and after what manner he will be serued at our handes: namely in doing him homage with the goods which hee hath bestowed abundantly vppon vs: Yea verily, for he sendeth vs poore folkes to be as his receiuers. And although ỹ almesdeed be done to mortall creatures, yet doth God wel accept and well like thereof, & puteth it into his accountes, as though ỹ thinges which we bestow vpon ỹ poore were deliuered into his owne handes. Trueth it is ỹ as in respect of God ỹ deede ỹ wee doe is no almesdeede, but an homage of ỹ goods that hee hath giuen vs, & for the which we bee beholden to him. Yet neuertheles there is this moreouer, ỹ besides his accepting of the acknowledgement which we yeeld vnto him for ỹ good ỹ he dooth vs, it is all one as if ỹ mercie which we shew to our brethren, extended it selfe vnto him. And ỹ is the cause why it is sayd, that he which shutteth his eares at the crying of the poore, shall cry himselfe vnto GOD and not bee heard. Prou.21.13
On the contrary parte, if wee bee pitifull, and be moued to pitie the poore when we heare of their wants, God also wil vse pitie & compassion towards vs to succour vs againe at our neede. And in the same respect Moses sayth expresly in this text, that God cōmaundeth vs to haue our handes open to the poore that dwel in the land among vs. For God offereth them to vs, to the intent wee should haue no excuse to say, I wist not to whome I should doe good. Seeing then that our Lord ministreth the meanes vnto vs, we must not seeke for starting holes: for we shall bee still guiltie, because we haue not vsed the occasion that was offered vs. Our Lorde Iesus Christ goeth yet further and saith, that he himselfe will not be alwayes with vs, but that ỹ poore shall euer be with vs. For in cōmending ỹ deede that was done to his honour, because ỹ precious oyntment seemed superfluous, whē his head was annointed therewith, he sayd, let it be so for this once: but from thence forth he sendeth his disciples to the poore. And why? for it was all one as if he had sayd, that it was no ordinarie seruice that he required, nor for his own person, nor for the person of God his father, that men shoulde present him with the precious thinges of this world: for he had no need of the: but his will was ỹ looke whatsoeuer men were willing to bestowe vpō him they shold bestow it vpon ỹ poore. And here let vs mark well (ỹ as I haue touched afore) ỹ almesdeedes which we do to ỹ poore, are accepted of God as sacrifices done vnto him. Therefore let vs not deceiue ourselues in our offering vnto him, as though he receiued any thing at our handes: for he doth send vs backe againe, to doe good to such as stand in neede of our helpe. Mat.26.11 Hebr.13.16

Had this lesson bin well borne in minde, the wretched world had not so mispent their labor and mony in foolish pomps, as we see they haue done in the Popedome, where they vse a greate sorte of lightes, & a number of other petie trifles. And why is that? O they thinke that GOD taketh pleasure in paintinges, in imagerie, and in such other gewgawes. That is the thing wherein the world is wholy occupyed: and in the meane while the poore are let alone and forgotten. Contrariwise, our Lorde Iesus telleth vs that ỹ is the thing whereby God wil try whether we be willing to honor him or no. For (as I haue declared already) hee coulde well make all men rich: but he sendeth vs poore folke, to giue vs occasion to keepe our selues occupyed, if we haue any desire to shewe to whom we thinke

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our selues beholden for our goods, & be minded to apply them to such vse as he may well lyke of. Therefore if we haue any such desire, the occasion to shewe it is offered vs & there neuer wanteth any. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to consider vppon this place.

It should seeme at ỹ first blush, ỹ this agreeth not with ỹ which we haue seene already, namely ỹ there should be no poore beggers in ỹ land. But ỹ solutiõ is very easie, because it may wel fall out ỹ there should be poore folkes, & yet that all begging be taken away. And soothely it must needes be a great shame for a people ỹ professe God, that there should be beggers among thẽ, because it is euen against common order & honestie. Although we had not the cõmaundemẽt of our God, yet let vs consider according to nature what may insew of suffering beggers to be. First it is a token ỹ the richer sort do deuour all, & that they haue no regard of succoring such as be in neede & penury. Againe, when the bridle is layd loose, we see it followeth ỹ the moe doe giue themselues to roging. For men knowe not to whome they giue, insomuch that when those kinde of people go crying vp & downe ỹ streetes from gate to gate, it cannot bee discerned whether they haue neede or no: and importunatest creatures doe commonly beare away that wherwith the poore should bee fed and maintained. Moreouer the rewarding of such as goe about begging after that fashion, is a maintenance of false harlotry. For there is none so great deceit to be found, as is in these Roges that go begging about. And he that is once nousled in roging, becommeth a theefe in the end. Finally although there were none other inconuenience; yet wee see that those which are once inured so with begging, can neuer fall to any labor afterward, nor learne to doe any good, but are idle bodies and loyterers euer after. Thus ye see how begging is euen by ỹ order of nature to be alwayes condẽned. For it bringeth nothing w̃ it but sinne and corruption, and all thinges must at length needs come to confusion, where begging is suffered & borne w̃. But wee haue Gods commaundemẽt which is a far higher thing, which saith ỹ we must not haue any beggers among vs, but ỹ the incõuenience thereof ought to be preuented aforehand, by relieuing such as want, accordingly as men can discern of thẽ, & be of abilitie to succor thẽ. Ye see then that these two places are not cõtrary one to another. For wheras he saith ỹ there shal alwayes be poore folke; it is to the end (as I haue sayd afore) that ỹ rich should haue occasiõ to offer such sacrifice to God as he requireth, by succouring the needy with such things as they haue in their handes, and by doing it with discretion, by searching out as much as is possible who they bee that haue neede. But that men should giue without discretion, or that it should be lawfull for men to goe begging vp and downe the streetes, or to stand begging at the gates or at mens doores: it is a shamefull thing & against all good order, and bringeth nothing but confusion, as a nourishmẽt of euil in all those to whom such libertie is giuen, as I haue shewed already.

Now remaineth to put this doctrine in practise. First of all we must vnderstand, that according to the greatnesse of mens necessities, God stirreth vs vp euer to doe them the more good, & it is then chiefe time to streine our selues, when there is any famine or dearth. For then we ought rather to cut their owne morsels from vs, than to suffer others to want, the misdoing being so in excesse. And whereas many men take occasion to pinche when they see a deere yeare, bearing themselues in hand that it serueth their turne well to make their hand the better: Let vs vnderstand that our Lord doth then cite vs and declare vnto vs that if euer we be minded to doe him homage with the goods that he hath put into our handes, hee will haue vs to vse it at that time. Let that serue for one point. And whereas we see many poore folke in necessitie, let vs assure our selues that our Lord warneth vs that it is as a waking of vs from sleepe, and that because wee haue not bin sufficiently mindefull of our duetie, our Lord commeth to put vs in remembrance of that which he had commanded vs: and that if we be not too lazie, we must needes inforce our selues, to consider euery of vs the measure that is giuen him & the ability of his power, & thereafter imploy himself. That is a thing that wee haue to marke in the first place.

And as touching the second point, Let vs looke to keepe order and pollicie, so as the shame and dishonestie of begging be not among vs. For why, it is nothing else but a nourishment of wicked rascals, and they will neuer be brought to any good, which are so maintained, but they become roges and idle persons as I haue tolde you before. And in the end they take a pleasure in their begging, and finde it well of their scrippe or wallet, that they would not chaunge it for a yeerely rent: Which thing experience shewes too much. To be short, of Roges, they become robbers, & in the end what must become of that? Therefore let all this be takẽ away, vnlesse we purpose to prouoke Gods wrath wilfully, & to cause thinges to grow euery day worse than other. But yet howsoeuer ỹ we stand, let vs see that ỹ poore be maintained. For if a man forbid begging, & therwithal doe no almes at all: it is as much as if he did cut ỹ throats of those that are in necessitie. Nay, we must prouide for the poore, & redresse their want: for such as are stout beggers and apparantly found not to be pitied, may be reformed. For they do but eate vp ỹ others bread, & rob ỹ needy of that which should be giuen vnto thẽ. That (ỹ) is effect, is the thing that we haue to marke here. But how may ỹ be done? First ỹ Hospitals should prouide wel for such needs. For what a shame is it, that ỹ goods which are dedicated to God and ỹ poore, should neuertheless be applied to other vses? That is not simple robbery, but a robbing of God. Therefore let thẽ be imployed according to his cõmaundemens; & let not ỹ good husbãds in hording vp ỹ things that ought to be bestowed vpon God & vpon those whom he offreth vnto vs. Also according as euery man knoweth ỹ particular needes of his neighbor,

so let him indeuour to succour thē, and consider where waste or neede is, and helpe to remedie it. If this be done, then shal beggerie be taken away as it ought to be, and they shall not neede to make a simple forbidding of it: saying, let not men beg any more: & in the meane season ỹ poore be left destitute, to die for hūger & thirst.

And truly it is not for nought ỹ our Lord saith here, *thy poore & thy needie which are in thy Lād*. He could wel inough haue said, *the poore & needie*: but he vseth another maner of phrase saying, *thy poore and thy needie*. As if he should say, if a man bee poore, euery body disdaynes him and turnes his backe to him: and why is that? Because the rich doe beare themselues in hand, that the poore are not worthie to come ny them, & they could finde in their hartes neuer to see thē. But on ỹ contrary part, to pull downe such pride & presumpcion, our Lord sayth, who are thou that despisest so thy brother? He is thy poore, he is thy needy. He pertaineth as to our owne flesh. Therefore let vs wey well the wordes which the holy Ghost hath vsed, that no pride may hinder vs to haue compassion vppon those that are so vnited vnto vs. And let vs marke that they bee our owne poore folkes, ỹ is to say, ỹ the persons which are so in need, are offered vnto vs of the Lord, as if hee should say, it is my will to make such an interchange, as the rich may be mingled wt the poore, & either of them may meete wt other, to the intent they should cōmunicate together, ỹ poore to receiue & the rich to giue, so as I may be honored at the handes of them both, as well for ỹ ỹ rich man hath wherwt to do good, as for that ỹ poore man acknowledgeth himselfe to be sustened & maineined for my names sake, & so both of thē blesse me. That is ỹ cause why Moses speaketh of ỹ poore & needy after such a sorte, ỹ he putteth ỹ rich how it is they themselues whom he speaketh to, & that there ought to be a kinde of mutuel cōmoning between thē & the poore, not to make thē fellowlyke, but to relieue ỹ neede of those whom God offreth vnto thē after ỹ maner.

After this, Moses addeth a law ỹ serued but for ỹ common weale of ỹ Iewes, & substance whereof continueth neuertheless vnto vs at this day. *If thy brother an Hebrewe* (sayth he) *or thy sister an Hebrewesse be solde vnto thee, let him serue thee sixe yeares, & in the seuenth yeere thou shalt release him, and at thy releasing of him, thou shalt not sende him away empte, but thou shalt giue him some Corne of thine owne, according to thy abilitie, that he may liue of the blessing which the Lord thy God hath giuen thee, and that thy seruāt may be as a lyre vnto him.* Now we must marke, ỹ in those dayes there were no such seruantes as are nowadayes which take certein wages by ỹ yeere: but they were in bōdage after ỹ maner of those whom wee call bondslaues in Barbarie & in other countries in these dayes. So then they were al slaues at ỹ time, & among the heathen ỹ bondage was endlesse: insomuch ỹ if a man had lued a hundred liues, yet should hee neuer haue bin released, vnlesse his maister had priued him. Moreouer, the man ỹ had such slaues might mary them, & forasmuch as the wretched soules were not free thē selues, their children also were in bondage lyke ỹ beastes ỹ we haue. If a man haue Horses, Kine, Cattel, or Sheepe, hee reapeth ỹ fruite of thē: & so did they wt their bōd seruants at ỹ time. And surely ỹ state of bondage as it was then through ỹ whole world, was very hard. For it was Lawfull euen among Christians. It is not cōmaunded to be abolished: Wee see ỹ whereas S. Paul speaketh of maisters ỹ had such bondseruants & were faithfull, he biddeth them not to set thē quite at libertie, but so deale gētly by all kinde of meanes. Know ye (saith he) ỹ you haue one cōmon Maister in heauē, & that your seruantes be Gods children as well as you: and therefore deale gently wt them, & hold them not in such thraldome as ỹ vnbeleeuers doe. S. Paul, ỹ is to say ỹ holy Ghost speaking by his mouth, thinketh ỹ to be enough. Howbeit forasmuch as the Iewes were priuiledged, & God had chosen them for his owne inheritance: it behoued some moderation or mitigation to be among them, so as they should not vse so extreme rigor as was among the Heathen. Neuertheless it is a good thing, ỹ this slauish bondage is abolished in time among ỹ faithful, howbeit ỹ there continue still some remnantes of it in some places, but yet is ỹ same much more tollerable thē so rough a law could haue bin. For whereas there are some persons which are still taxable (as they terme it) at this day, whether it be in their goods or in their persons: it is of ỹ olde slauery, & they be of ỹ race of such as were very slaues in old time, & of such as might haue bin handled as bondslaues by rigor of Law. But as I sayd, this may wel be borne wt: and it was a vertue worthie of cōmendation, that the parties which had such bondslaues, released them vppon a certaine qualification.

Eph. 6, 9.

But now let vs come againe to ỹ Law ỹ is giuē here to ỹ Iewes. It is sayd that such as were solde should serue by the space of sixe yeeres: and the seuenth yeere is priuiledged here in honor of ỹ Saboth day, ỹ is to say of ỹ rest, whereby our Lord ment alwayes to reduce the Iewes to gentlenes, by bringing them backe to himselfe. As if hee should say, assure your selues ỹ your vsing of such mercie towardes your neighbors, is an acceptable seruice vnto me. For ỹ day of rest was ỹ very marke of Gods spirituel seruice, as is declared vnto vs in many places of ỹ scripture, both in Exodus & Ezechiel where our Lorde speaketh precisely of ỹ day of rest, & also in ỹ xvii. Chapter of Ieremie. Yea & he speaketh in such wise of it, as though all his seruice cōsisted therein. And why is that? Because ỹ on the day of rest, hee called ỹ people to himself, as if he should say, know me, let me be worshipped, let euery man giue his minde to consider my goodnesse, my Iustice, my wisedome, & my power. And therewithall rest your selues in me, and let euery of you forbeare his owne will, and his owne lykinges, that yee may be, as it were subiected vnder my yoke, and I gouerne you. We see then ỹ the day of rest was as ỹ principal seruice of God. Now forasmuch as mē cānot acquaint thē selues wt the dooing of good to their neighbors, nor wil willingly giue ouer their right whē they haue thē at a vātage, & can hardly be

Exod. 20. 8. Ezec. 20, 12. Ier. 17. 24.

be drawen to doe so much as they ought to do. Therefore doth our Lord set this before them here, and say, such as release their bondseruantes doe me acceptable seruice, whereof I giue them the day of rest for a signe & sure token. Seeing then that I set betweene you and me, this token & warrant, know ye ỳ your giuing of release to your bondseruantes is by mine authoritie, so as I am among you & ouerrule you in that act, and your dooing of it is for my sake. Though yee haue no regard of men, because yee thinke yee should not owe them so much seruice, at leastwise yet consider how much you be bound to me. Thus ye see now to what end the seuenth yeere was assigned. Sixe yeeres (sayth hee) shall they serue you, & the seuenth yeere you shal let them goe. And he contenteth not himselfe with the onely releasing of the bondseruantes, but he will also haue men to giue them somewhat wherewith to set vp their trade. And not without cause: For euen the heathen themselues at ỳ same time in which I tolde you, ỳ that bondage was most rife, could skil to say that they were not to be vsed as bondseruants but as hirelinges, ỳ is to say, after ỳ maner of our seruants ỳ take wages by ỳ yeere at this day. Is it not a great shame ỳ the heathē both Greekes and Latins could speake after this fashion, we haue bondslaues, we may vse thē as Oxen & Asses: but that is vilanous, it is out of all order: & therefore albeit that it be lawful for vs by the ciuill Lawes, yet is it against all humanitie, & we ought to haue another regard. As how? Surely we must vse thē as though they were freemen whom we hyred for wages. If ỳ blind wretches spake so, & perceiued that this kinde of vpright dealing was requisite: what shall become of vs? Verily God hath punished such as haue dealt roughly with them. For it was lawfull for a Maister in olde time to kill his bondseruant, & he needed not to aske leaue of ỳ Magistrate to put his seruāt to torture, but he might teare him in peeces one mēber from another, yea euen at home in his own priuate house: & when his Maister had so murthered him, no man sought Iustice or reformation of it. True it is ỳ in the ende men were forbidden to kill thē wout examination of their cases: but yet had ỳ Maisters alwayes ỳ authoritie stil. And because they abused it, God payed thē home with the lyke againe, so as they had a common prouerb among thē, That looke how many bondseruantes a man had at home, so many enemies had he. Also they could well skill to cōdemne thē selues, saying: they bee not enemies borne, but we make them our enemies by our cruelty. Seeing then ỳ the heathē knew thus much: it was requisite ỳ there shold be some greater mieldnesse & humanitie among gods people ỳ were chosen of a singular priuiledge. That is ỳ cause why God sayd expreslỳ ỳ they should bee helped at their departing from their houses in ỳ seuenth yeere. For if a poore man be sent away stark naked, now & then he had leuer to continue a slaue stil, thā to goe seeke what shal betide him he wot not where. A poore man that hath not much to take to, can finde in his hart to take paynes: & so he may haue meat & drinke, hee is at a poynt. Thereupon he taketh paines in his Maisters house: Now if his Maister driue him out of his doores & say get thee hence: He may cry alas, what shal become of me? I haue not a bit of bread to eat, I haue no lodging, I wote not where to become. This sending away of their seruants naked, was an indirect meanes to hold thē in bondage still. For this cause our Lord sayth, whō ye haue bin serued by ỳ space of six yeeres by those ỳ are your brethrē, giue thē somewhat in reward péce of their seruice, according to your ability.

Cicero in his first bookes of Duties.

Again, to ỳ end ỳ men should be ỳ willinger to such liberalitie, Look into your stables (saith he) & into storehouses, & into your garners. Because men are alwayes repining: here God falleth to making of an Inuentorie. O (sayes one) I haue not so much to giue: & what wote I whether I my selfe shall want or no? Our Lorde therefore maketh an Inuentorie to discusse ỳ matter, saying, What? Cannot he which hath Corne in his garner giue to him ỳ hath serued him, whom himself he hath drawen in making him to labor for him? Ought he not at leastwise to haue an eye to the corne ỳ is in his garner? He hath husbanded his ground, he hath tilled it, he hath toyled himself about it: & is it not reason ỳ he should taste some sweetenesse & fruite of it? Besides this, he goes to his winepresse & to his stalles: as if he should say, let euery man see what hee hath, for according to your abilitie you be bound to recompense them ỳ haue trauelled for you, & haue bin instrumentes of such blessinges. For if we thanke God w^th^ our mouthes, confessing ỳ it is he which hath blessed vs, & in ỳ meane while make no account of such as he hath sent to doe vs seruice in ỳ increase of our liuing, by taking paynes and toyle for vs: all our thanking of him is but labor & vtter hypocrisie. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to marke vppon this text.

This law is set down lykewise in ỳ xxi. Chapter of Exodus. Notwithstanding, although God had spoken of it after ỳ fashion, yet was ỳ thing not obserued which he commaunded here. And hereby we see how malitious, hardhearted, yea and wilfull stubborne ỳ Iewes were. For as often as God punished them, & they were driuen to sorrow vnto him whether they would or no, they pretended a willingnesse to submit thēselues to him, & to take some good way of amendment, [though they meant it not:] which thing among others he casteth in their teeth, saying: what I haue commaūded you cōcerning your brethren ỳ are your seruants, ỳ ye should let thē go free & free in ỳ seuenth yere: but ye haue not done. Now thē seeing ỳ my lawe is set in force again. Let it be kept. In deed when men be pinched & constrained by necessitie, then they can make some faire couenante & shew well enough. Go to then, let seruantes be released: but immediately after they haue shiftes to bring thē vnder again, as if a man should make a theefe to creepe vnder his arme, as who would say he shold make restitution of his theft, & whereas he pretended to take it from him with the one hand he should conuey it to him again with the other. After the same maner was God mocked with his owne law, yea euen notwithstanding this the Iewes were punished extremely at that time, and sore vpon this

that God persecuted them & did set himselfe against them because of their disobedience. As touching the bondseruants that would not vse ỹ freedome that was graunted them, wee shall see more in the next sermon. But as touching the common law; the Iewes were so full of malice, ỹ they refused to giue freedome to their bondseruants.

And here the first thing that wee haue to gather, is the substance of the lawe, which concerneth euen vs at this day. There is no more any such bondage among vs as was then among the Iewes and all the heathen: In deede in some countries the same bondage remaineth still, as in the East countries, in Greece, and in Barbarie, but yet for all that it is the better that the vse of it is abolished, as it is among vs: and that is a very commendable thing. Yet notwithstanding, it behoueth vs to consider, how our Lord admonisheth vs by his lawe, to deale gently with such as do vs seruice, so as wee beare with them and defraud them not of their hire, ne stand vpon rigor towards them to take the vttermost of them that we may, but that we deale vprightly with them, & rule our selues, as those that haue a stay of the selues & looke not to be compelled by lawe, but euery man rightly to rule himselfe. That is the thing in effect which we haue to note in this text. As how? A master that hath a seruaunt wringeth all euer he can out of him without any regarde to him: therin he shewes himselfe to be cruel. If he say, I find him meat & drink, & I pay him his wages: that is true, but he must also haue respect what he is able to do, & what seruice he may reape at his hand. Aboue all things we must haue an eye to this natural vprightnes; that we do not any thing to another body, which we would not haue done to our selues. If a man haue seruants, he ought to think with himself, how would I desire to be dealt with, if I were in their stead? I wold desire to be borne with. Trueth it is that we must make at that point when a seruant wouldè liue idly & do nothing, but wold be kept like a cockney, neuer to put his hande to the doing of any thing. For it is not ment of such as liue disorderly, but only of such as we know to be reasonable. As how? I thinke with my selfe, if I were in this fellowes place, what ought I to do? I speake not here of wishing, but of ỹ reasonablenes which euery of vs knoweth. For when the case concerneth our own profit or disprofit, we can very well skill to iudge of it: but when the case concerneth other men, then are we blynd. But such as haue seruants ought to consider thus with themselues: If I were in their roome, what would I reasonably desire to be done to mee? Then must I not take more vppon mee than my conscience warranteth mee. For although there were no iudge to condemne mee, nor lawe to accuse mee: yet doeth mine owne conscience suffice in that it findeth fault with mee. Thus wee see, that although this lawe belonged peculiarly to ỹ state of the Iewish common weale, where this kind of bondage was vsed: yet notwithstanding it conteineth a lesson beneficial to vs at this day: that is to wit, that it behoueth vs to vse our seruants in such wise, as they bee not oppressed beyonde measure, nor cruelly handled; and secondly that wee be kindhearted towardes euery of them, to do them good, and to shewe in very deede that wee be willing to agree to his good will. For it is not ynough for the mouth to speake vnlesse the hande be aunswerable to the same. That is the thing in effect, which wee haue to marke vppon this text.

Therewithall let vs wey well the words wherin our Lord maketh an inquisition of euery mans goods, & let vs consider howe it serueth to shewe vs that in the ende wee must come to account, so as wee may not thinke to slip the colar and to shift our handes by saying, Do what I can, I shall not bee well reported of for my labour: after which sort some folkes continually repine when they bee spoken to concerning almesdeedes, to whome it seemeth to bee as good as hasing of them to the galowes, if ye do but speake to them of the opening of their purses. To the end therfore that wee shoulde not imagine that such shiftes can goe for paiment before God: let vs marke well howe hee telleth vs here, that he forgetteth not what hee hath giuen vs, but can very well cast vs in the teeth with it. And seeing he casteth vs in the teeth with it alreadie in this worlde; what will he do when all things shalbee brought to light, & when the bookes of account shalbe layd open? Wil there be any excuse then? No: for then euen the secretest thinges shalbee layde open: and what will become then of the things that are apparantly knowen? Shal a man escape the iudgement of God, when he is found to bee a niggard and a churle euen before men? So then let vs beware that we behaue our selues well in this behalfe: and for the better doing thereof, let euery of vs mark the forme of speech which the holy Ghost vseth in this text, forasmuch as it serueth to search vs to the bottom, to the intent ỹ wheras euery of vs hides himself away when he should do an good, no man should shrink backe, but euery man put forth himselfe according to his abilitie & state. Dan. 7. 10. 1. Cor. 4. 5.

Now for a conclusion our Lord addeth here, *that the Iewes had beene in bondage in the lande of Egypt*, and therefore he commandeth them to be kindharted & pitifull towards those that are in their seruice. And hereby it is shewed vs, that if our Lord haue giuen vs experience of aduersity, we must be the readier to succour the distressed, & not play the proud fooles which cannot abide to heare their former state spoken of, when they haue beene in pouertie, but are more scornefull and disdainfull than such as haue liued continually at their ease. Nay, if our Lorde haue suffered vs to bee pinched, and to stande in neede of otherfolks seruice; let vs print it throughly in our minder, & let it bee as a spurre to quicken vs vp, that whensoeuer we see any folke in necessitie, it may alwayes runne in our mindes, Alas, when I was in their case, what desired I? I could haue founde in my heart that all men should haue opened their heartes and their bowels towardes mee: and shall I nowe shut vp mine? Lo what the declaration that is set down here importeth.

And it is not in this place onely that Moses vseth to say so. For there is not any thing more rife in all his bookes: insomuch that euer after the peoples deliuerance out of the lande of Egypt, Remember (sayeth hee) from time to time, that thou thy selfe hast beene in bondage. Therefore let vs marke, that looke what experience euery of vs hath had in his life, Gods will is that the same shoulde serue vs for an instruction, and that wee shoulde beare it continually in minde. As for example, when a man hath beene a traueller of countryes, he ought to consider into what distresses a man might fall: and hee shalbee the more inclyned to succour others whome he seeth in like daunger. Againe, when a man hath beene pinched for a time with pouertie, and afterwarde commeth to wealth, his former pouertie ought to bee a teacher to him for euer after, to bee the forewarder to put foorth himselfe where neede requireth. True it is that although a man had liued all the dayes of his life in ease, and neuer wist what neede or want meant: yet shal hee not therefore be holde excused before God. But yet forasmuch as wee bee so slacke and slowe to doe good: wee had neede to take to vs the helpes that may serue to quicken vs vp withall. And so let euery of vs for his owne parte cheere vp himselfe to do good. As for the riche which neuer haue tasted any want of the goods of this worlde, if they looke into them selues, they shall finde that God hath visited them some way or other, so as they haue had neede of other folkes helpe. And if they be not starke churles, the same must needes bee as a stroke with a spurre, to thrust them forwarde to weldoing.

To conclude in fewe wordes, the principall purpose of this place, is that besides the vprightnesse which is of nature, our Lord wil haue euery man to bee inclined to mercie, to do good to such as haue neede. But put the case there were none other respect why wee shoulde succour our neighbours but onely this, that wee be men: is not that respect great ynough? Yes, for vnder this worde *Man*, wee comprehend many miseries. When I see a man in distresse, I finde in my selfe that I shoulde bee subiect to the like thinges, if God had not a speciall regard of mee. There is neither sickenesse, pouertie, nor any other like thing in any body, but that wee our selues are subiect to the same miseries. And what is the cause that wee bee cleare from them? The goodnesse of our God. And the cause why hee spareth vs and beareth with vs, is to the ende that wee shoulde bee mindfull of such as haue need. For it is a very great proofe of Gods goodnesse towardes mee, that hee not onely exempteth mee from the aduersities which I see in my neyghbours, but also giueth mee wherewith to remedie theirs. And therefore it ought to be a sufficient prouocation for mee, that they bee of mine owne flesh, and of mine owne nature, so as there is no difference betwixt vs but that God hath aduaunced the one of vs, and put the other backe. For wee be all of one lumpe, and it is not for any man to glorie, as though hee had his riches of him selfe. If a man bee not so miserable as a number of others are, hee ought not to bee proude of it, but rather to consider that he is so much the more bounde vnto God. Accordingly therefore as God bestoweth his benefites vppon vs, let vs beware that wee acknowledge it towardes him, by doing good to our neighbours whome he offereth vnto vs, so as wee neither exempt our selues from their want, nor seclude them from our aboundance, but gendy vnto them partakers with vs, as folke that are linked togither in an vnseparable bond.

And nowe let vs fall down in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs so to feele them, as we may returne to him with true repentance, and misliking our former life, craue forgiuenes and mercie at his hande, and bee alwayes ready hereafter to yeeld our selues to his obedience, so as our whole seeking may be to glorifie him in all cases, after such a sort as our whole life may shewe that wee haue well profited in his holy worde. And so let vs all say, Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the iiij. of Nouember. 1555.

The XCvj Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the fifteenth Chapter.

16 And if hee happen to say to thee, I will not depart from thee because I loue thee and thy house, by reason that he findeth himselfe well with thee:

17 Then shalt thou take an Aule, and bore him through the eare to the doore, and hee shalbee thy bondman for euer. And likewise shalt thou do to thy wo-manseruaunt,

18 Let it not grieue thee to let him go free from thee: for he hath serued thee sixe yeares as a hyreling of double wages. And the Lorde thy God will blesse thee in all thy dooings.

16 All

19 All the first borne males that breede of thy cattell and of thy flockes, thou shalt sanctifie to the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not labour with the first borne of thy kyne, nor shere the first borne of thy sheepe.

20 But thou shalt eate them, thou and thy household from yere to yere in the presence of the Lord thy God, in the place which the Lorde will choose.

21 But if there be any blemish in it, so as it be lame or blinde, or haue any euill fault in it: thou shalt not offer it to the Lorde thy God:

22 But shalt eate it within thy gates, as well the vncleane as the cleane, both alike, as the fallow deere and the Red deere.

23 Only thou shalt not eat the bloud of it, but shalt powre it vpon the ground as water.

WEe haue seene already the lawe which God placed among the Iewes, whereby bondage was not to continue for euer, but y the person which had bin solde should serue sixe yeres, and afterward be set at libertie. And I told you that although the like law be not among vs nowadays; yet notwithstanding we may gather a very profitable lesson of that which is therin contained, y is to wit, that he which hath any superioritie ouer others, ought to forbeare all tyranny, & to be kyndharted towardes those whom God hath put in subiection to him, so as he reigne not ouer them with crueltie, ne inforce them to all that euer he may, but deale gently with them as with his brethren. And although wee bee not nowadays all of one linage as the Iewes were: yet must it suffice vs that wee haue all one father & one master in heauen, as is declared vnto vs. For by meanes of our Lord Iesus Christ, wee be so vnited togither, that there is such a brotherhood betwixt vs, as cannot be broken without forsaking the adoption which God hath made of vs. And therfore as many as intend to be taken for Gods children, must louingly beare with all those whō they may commaund. Againe, we must come to account, so as if wee will obtaine mercie at the hand of God, & be borne withall by his gracious hand, wee must looke to doe the like to such as are in subiection to vs.

But nowe Moses addeth an exception to the law, whereby he had commanded to set seruants at libertie after sixe yeres seruice; and he sayeth *that if any seruant be so well contented with his state, that when his master is readie to sende him away & to giue him reward, he will say vnto his master; Nay sir, I had liefer to tary still in thy house because I finde my self well at ease: then shall his master take an Aule, & bore through his seruants eare in token that hee is his for euer.* Yet was not this done without consideration of the case, as is written in the xxi. of Exodus. For there it is sayde expressely that the master shall call to the Iudges, that the matter may bee inquired of by them. For otherwise, euery master might haue made the worlde beelene, that his seruaunt was desirous to bee his for euer. Therefore it behoued the thing to bee prooued; and then was his eare boared through at the doore, to the ende that the matter might bee done openly to the sight of all men. For in such eases there might haue beene much collusion, yea, and also compulsion, and a man might haue beene so vrged by constraint of much beating, that hee woulde haue consented to haue beene in perpetuall bondage. But when the thing was done in open sight, so as the Iudges were called to the matter: then was there no deceite, neither coulde they bee beguyled which did so yeelde themselues into bondage.

And as touching the marking of them, it was a common thing in the East countryes. And it is seene in other Cōtries also, that such as were marked, were of worse state and condition than other bondeseruauntes were: but in this place there is no meaning of any harder bondage than the rest. And because God had graunted that priuiledge among his people; he addeth that if any man woulde needes be a bondeslaue of his own wil, then he should beare some marke thereof. But yet was this marke made without any wounding, as if the tip of a mans eare should bee boared with a pinne or with an awle that were sharpe, it coulde put him to no payne, and it was no more but to make the matter knowen. And whereas God sayth that he should be so for euer, Leuit. 25. 39. we must vnderstand that the yeere of Iubile was excepted, as we may see in other places. And in very deede, the compasse of fiftie yeeres was called a worlde, and the worde that Moses vseth is taken sometimes for the age of a man. His meaning then is, that he which consenteth to be a bondeslaue, shall abide in that state for euer, that is to say euen vntill the state of the countrie be renewed, as well concerning mens Landes as their persons: at which time euery man entered againe into his owne heritage, that God might alwayes be knowen to be both soueraigne Lord and as it were the onely Lorde of the soile, & that the inhabiters were not owners and freeholders, Leuit. 25. 23. but onely as tennauntes at will, or farmers, for those are the verie termes that our Lorde vseth. Therefore his will was that the parting of the Lande which was made by his commaundement shoulde bee kept: the meane whereof was that euery man shoulde returne to his owne inheritaunce & possession at the fiftith yeere, at which time the whole state of the Realme was chaunged in all other thinges. Thus see we now what was the effect of this Lawe.

And heere wee haue an example that masters ought to behaue themselues gently, for

wee ought alwayes to beare in minde what hath beene treated of, namely that this law was farre other than ỹ law of seruiceship that is among vs. For as now we hyre seruants for wages, whereas in those dayes they were bought and solde, and men vsed them much more hardly than they do nowadayes. If a seruant had beene misintreated at his masters hande, he coulde not depart from him, nor haue any law against him: but hee was faine to obey his master in al that euer he would put him to. If his master would sende him to the feelds, or vse him as a droyle in his house to doe whatsoeuer he had to be done; it was not for the seruant to hang the groyne at it, or to say I cannot do it: for his master would vse him as he listed; in so much as hee woulde marrie him euen spyte of his heart, & take his children from him. And though the seruant were set at libertie at ỹ seuenth yere, yet his children were faine to abyde in bondage still. That is one thing which we haue to note. Now then, seeing that the state of seruants was so grieuous: it may wel be sayde, that there were masters of singular humanitie among the people of Israel, seeing that a seruaunt could find in his heart to say, I am contented to dwell with you still. Freedome (as the Heathen themselues haue saide) is an ineſtimable benefit: & when lawes speake thereof, it is preferred in fauour before all other things. And sith it is so, what a thing was it that a man should giue ouer his freedome, which ought to be as deere to him as his life? Needs must it be said that he was gently delt with. And this ought to make vs greatly ashamed. For seeing a man might safely at that time by the lawes of man, vse his bondseruaunt as he listed: must not those whom Moses speaks of here, needes condemne the person ỹ vseth crueltie towards his household folk, now when we be brydled by the ciuil lawes? Yes: for they had not Iesus Christ as yet reueiled vnto them, who hath gathered vs togither into the spiritual kinred, as hath bin touched heretofore. It was not declared vnto them ỹ God would haue vs to bee members of his only sonne, yea euen bondslaues & such as are of the worst state that is. Sith it is so, let vs haue an eye to our selues: & let not the example that Moses setteth downe here, bee a witnesse before God to condemne our excessiue crueltie against those whom God hath made our vnderlings. Marke that for one point.

Horat. 1. Epist. 10.

Eph. 3. 15. 2. Cor. 12. 13 Gal. 3. 28.

Moreouer let vs marke, ỹ the boring of ỹ seruants eare ỹ is spoken of here, is to auoide ỹ blearing of mens ees, & that the matter should come to open triall. For although there were courteous masters to be found among the Iewes: yet notwithstanding the most part of them were after ỹ cõmon trade of ỹ world, as alwayes we see, ful of malice, ful of fraud, & ful of outrage. For there were of them ỹ woulde haue drawen their seruants by naughtie meanes to say, thou thinkest thy selfe nowe scaped my handes, but I will make thee come againe after another fashiõ. Or else peraduenture he woulde haue flattered his seruant for a time: & vnder pretence of dealing wel with him for a moneth or sixe weekes, hee would haue drawen him into his nettes & snares to bynd himself to this perpetual bondage. For this cause it was our Lords wil that it should passe by order of law, & ỹ the magistrates should haue knowledge therof. And hereby we see how men had always need to be brydled, & to haue their naughtines preuented: for it were pitie else. And although this seeme somwhat hard, yet was it ordeined in fauor of ỹ seruãts rather than of ỹ masters. If there were any such mark here among vs nowadayes: very wel, it were a kind of reproche. And why so? for such a one should shew himself to haue had no heart: for he should rather haue liued of his hãdie labor, & to haue scratched his liuing out of the earth, rather than to haue forgone his libertie whẽ he was to be set free. Therefore ỹ world sees ỹ such a one is but an yldebelly & a very blockhead. Thus it should seeme at ỹ first blush, that God here doth punish the guiltlesse. For if a man be in good state, and therewith is cõtented to yeeld himself into perpetual bondage; should he be put to shame for his labour? Nay, our Lords meaning was to waken vp those that were to enter into such bondage, as if hee should say; Beware what ye do: For they come to nayle you to the dore, to shewe you that ye shoulde bee tyed to this place, to bee his bondseruauntes for euer to whome yee binde your selues, and so you do after a sort renounce that prauiledge which I had giuen you: and therefore looke well about you what you do. We see then that this lawe was not made for the maisters sakes but for the seruauntes sakes, to the intent they should bethinke themselues throughly what they went about to be bound: and ỹ euen when they came to the deed doing, they might bee at choice still to say, I will depart free, I am mine own man, I wil vse the libertie ỹ God giueth me. Thus wee see in fewe wordes, howe Gods intent was not onely to shewe to the maisters that they themselues also were vnder commandement: but also to warne such as had bin misuised, to beware howe they dyd cast themselues into perpetuall bondage. And so let vs make in fewe wordes vpon this text, that the gentlenesse which we owe to our neighbours, is precious in the sight of God. For seeing he hath such a care of it, and hath inioyned it so by his worde: it is a token that it is an acceptable sacrifice to him. Will wee then please God? Let vs vse such gentlenesse towardes our neighbours, that euen they themselues which are in subiection to vs, may haue cause to esteeme of themselues and to reioyce and prayse God, ỹ wee behaue our selues as brethren towardes them. And let such as are maisters thinke alwayes with themselues, This doth not take away nor abolish the spirituall kinred which God hath planted and stablished betweene the great and the small. But seeing hee vouchsafeth them the honour to be their fathers it is good reason ỹ wee also should take them for our brethren, forasmuch as he hath chosen them as well as vs. That is the thing in effect which we haue to gather vpon this text.

And Dauid seemeth to haue had an eie to this Ceremonie in the fortith Psalm where he sayth, Sacrifice and oblation for sinne are not ỹ thing

Psal. 40.

that thou Lorde requirest: but thou hast boared mine eare. As if hee should say that God desireth not sacrifices at our handes, but would haue vs to be wholy his, and to bee wholly giuen vnto him, accordingly also as ỹ scripture exhorteth vs 1 Cor. 10. not only to offer this thing or that thing to god, but also to offer him our bodies and soules, that he may possesse & enioy vs. When S. Paul sheweth vs the seruice which he calleth reasonable; he sayth not, offer of your goods vnto God: but mortifie your selues as true sacrifices. And therupon hauing mortified our humane reason, and all our thoughts and lustes, let vs offer vp our selues (saith hee) as liuing sacrifices to God. Nevertheless Gods meaning is not to haue vs offer vp our selues as temporall sacrifices, so as wee shoulde be willing to honour him to day, & forget him quite and cleane to morrowe: but he will haue vs to be his both in life and death, ac- Rom. 14. 8. cordingly as it is saide in the xiiij. to the Romanes, that our Lorde Iesus dyed & rose again, to the ende that wee should liue and dye to him. It seweth then that Dauids speaking of the boaring of his eare, was to shewe that our giuing of our selues to our God must not bee for a time, & then at the ende thereof to take our leaue of him: but that as wee haue liued in his obedience alreadie, so wee be readie to dye in the same, following his call vnto the ende, without ceassing or altering our purpose. We knowe then ỹ God requireth not sacrifice, for ỹ chiefe thing ought to go before, and that is, to be wholly his.

Againe, when a man dedicateth himself vnto God, it is certaine that all that euer he hath doth follow him. But yet the offering vp of our selues must be all wholly, so as hee enioy both our bodies and our soules, and be glorified throughout by vs. And as touching this matter which wee treate of nowe presently, it is to bee noted that god is not contented with our seruing of him for a time, as a number doe that make faire shewes at first, who thinke themselues well discharged when they haue done a thing or twaine in ỹ honour of God, and therefore would exempte themselues from euer putting to their hand any more as long as they liue. Let vs beware wee deale not so, but rather as I haue tolde you alreadie, let euery of vs make his account, that in as much as God calleth vs to him, we must not shrink from him in the middes of our way: for this life is as a race wherein God intēdeth to exercise vs. Therfore let vs keepe on our way, and indeuour to go forward to the ende. Let vs straine our selues to continue, and let vs liue and dye in the obediēce of him that hath purchased vs so deerely: & let vs holde out in his seruice vntill hee haue taken vs out of this worlde. After that sort is it Gods meaning ỹ we should haue our eares boared, ỹ we might be marked to be his seruaunts for euer, & not for a time. True it is also that God vseth not any Aule to marke our eares withall: but he boareth vs inwardly. For ỹ bondage that Moses speakes of here was earthly, and serued for the state of this world. But God will haue vs to serue him after another fashion, namely by reducing all our thoughts & affections to the obeying of him. And how may that be done? For when hee speaketh to vs, he speaketh to deafe folke, so that the holy Ghost must be fain to boare our eares: & vntil we be touched after ỹ maner, & that god haue wrought in vs, we neuer woote what the seruing of him doth meane. Then let vs marke wel, ỹ God vseth not such a maner of marking as was vsed among the Iewes: but he will haue vs to bee in subiection to him. He taketh no Aule to boare vs through the eare, that ỹ mark might be seene to the worldward: but it behoueth vs to be framed by his holy spirite to giue our selues wholly vnto him, and we must feele his power within vs. That is the thing in effect which we haue to remember vpon this place.

Now let vs come to that which Moses addeth, *That the wages of a Seruaunt is double the wages of an hyreling.* This sentence is not vnderstood of many men as it should be. For they haue taken it, that the reward which was to be giuen to a bond man at his infraunchising, ought to be double ỹ wages of an hyreling, as though the seruant that tooke wages, had taken but three yeares wages. But that was nothing to the purpose. And the Iewes after their manner, haue inuented yet a more foolish glose, and vtterly corrupted the holy scripture, by mingling their own fancies therwith. For they saye, that a man ought not to esteeme of his life aboue three yeares, and that if he attaine to fixe yeares, it is as it were a double pay. This is much to the purpose, as who should say I could warrant my selfe life til to morrowe, or as though I had my life in mine owne hand, to say, thou shalt liue til such a time. Thus yee may see their beastlinesse, howe there was neither feare of God, nor any right vnderstanding in those blinde wretches. And good reason is it that they which haue so forsaken the light of the worlde, shoulde become brutish after that fashion, so that for all their reading and for all their hauing of the holy Scripture, yet doe they nothing else but bewray their own ignorance. And it is Gods iust punishment for their despising of our Lorde Iesus Christ, whereby they haue cut themselues off from him which is the very soule and guyde of the lawe. But the meaning of Moses is large: namely, that it must not grieue a man to giue liberally to his bondseruaunt, when hee hath dwelt with him the space of fixe yeares. Col. 2. 17.

For why? It is double the wages of a hyreling: as if hee shoulde say, hee deserueth double wages in comparison of a hyreling. Wee haue seene alreadie howe our Lorde hath forbidden men to sende away their seruauntes emptie when they were set at libertie. Thou shalt rewarde him (sayeth hee) according as the Lorde shall haue blessed thee. Looke into thy presses, looke into thy garners, looke into thy stalles: and according to thine abilitie giue thy seruant somewhat, that hee may fall to some trade, and not bee put quite and cleane out of heart. This wee haue seene alreadie. Now hereagainst a man might reply: I had leaner then to entertaine a hyred seruaunt for wages. For if I take one for wages, hee shall serue mee but from day to day, and if hee serue mee well, I can keepe him still:

or if hee serue mee amisse, I can send him away, and that were more for my profite. And therefore it seemeth preiudiciall to my right to giue rewarde nowe to a slaue. A man might alleage after that fashion, as men are alwayes subtle in seeking of starting holes. If the case concerne eyther their profite or their losse; they can bee brought to no vprightnesse or reason. For this cause our Lorde saith here, Howe nowe? Thinke yee not that a slaue doeth, yea double the seruice of an hyred seruaunt? Yes: for if a man hyre a seruaunt for wages, if hee finde him not meate and drinke, hee must giue him so much the more money, that hee may finde himselfe after his owne liking. And againe, if a man find him, hee will looke for a large pittance; and yet he will grudge at it and say; this is no fare meete for a man that takes wages. The man then that is hyred for wages, must bee maintained after a more courteous and liberal fashion, than a slaue. Moreouer, when the hyred man hath done his dayes worke, hee is dispatched, and he goes his way to bed till the next morning that hee come againe to his worke. But the slaue is in a harder case. For the similitude which our Lord Iesus maketh in Saint Luke, is taken of the cõmon fashion that reigned in those dayes. True it is that hee treateth of a farre greater matter, to shewe howe wee bee bounde vnto God. But yet doeth hee alleage this similitude, saying: Behold, if one of you haue a bondseruaunt, whome you sende to labour in your vyneyarde or in your feelde, when this seruaunt commeth home at night starke wearie of his labouring to doe you seruice; I aske you whether his master will saye to him, Come sit thou downe thy turne, & take here my place, and I will serue thee. Nay, his master will say further to him, Sirrha, go fetch mee such a thing, and goe doe such a thing. And the seruaunt dares not bee so bolde as to replye, why so? I haue laboured in the feelde all day, and must I nowe take paynes stil when I am come home at night? Yee see then to what purpose it is sayde nowe that the rewarde of a slaue is double.

Luk. 17.7.9.

Againe, the seruaunt that is hyred by the day hath more ease and priuiledge: insomuch that if hee bee ill delt with, hee may goe his way. But the poore bondslaue is tyed, so as hee must bee faine to serue his master day and night, & there is no regarde had of giuing him any thing for his labour, but so hee be founde neuer so meanly it is welynough. To bee short it is shewed vs heere, that wee ought alwaies to haue consideration of the profite that redoundeth to vs by such as haue doone vs seruice. And although there were no Lawe to compell vs to the discharging of our dueties, yet ought it to bee printed in our heartes, and euery man ought to haue a conscience for the lawes sake, which telleth vs that wee ought not to deale churlishly with our seruants. For if a man flatter himselfe, he is neuer the more discharged before God, but he must be faine to come to account. And those which as now do vaunt themselues because they haue gotten some superioritie aboue others, shal in the end finde that Gods will was there should haue bin some equalitie betwixt them, as S. Paul speaketh therof. For he vseth the selfe same reason when he cõmandeth masters to beare with their seruants, & to spare them. Let there be an equalitie betwixt you saith he. As how? Is it meete that the seruant should be chekmate with his maister? No, but S. Paul would there should be an honorable vprightnes, so that as the master can vse skill to take the labour & trauell of his seruant vnder pretence that he may say, He is mine vnderling, I may command him what I list: so must he also consider the mutuall bonde that ought to be betweene one & another of vs, that he on his own side do answere & acknowledge, God is his master, but not to vse tyrannye; I am his master, howbeit in such sort as I am also his brother, I am his master, but yet is there one cõmon master in heauen, which hath authoritie both ouer mee & ouer them that are vnder mee: & in that behalfe we be all but one housholde. And seeing that God hath called vs all into his house, it behoueth both great & small to acknowledge one another for their brethren, for as much as God hath done vs ý honor to adopt vs to be his children; let not the great ones which haue some authoritie vse any lordlines in reigning after their own will, but let them gouerne their subiects as their household with all gentlenes & curtesie, in such sort as God who is the father of all, may haue highest preheminence, & be honored as he deserueth. Thus ye see in effect, ý the thing which we haue to marke in this sentence, is that euery of vs should look to himself, & yeeld them right which are not able to demaund it, but as dare such a sort in our subiection, as they cannot open their mouthes to complaine of vs. Let vs not crie til their complaint & crye mount vp to heauen; but let vs preuent that, & let vs of our selues be inclyned to pitie & gentlenes. That is ý thing which our Lord aimed at in this sentence.

Now he addeth a promise vnto it, to the ende we shoulde bee the better prouoked to doe that which hee biddeth vs. For although we finde our slackenesse in doing our dueties to bee such, as our owne conscience findeth fault with it: yet doeth selfe profite so blinde vs and bolster vp, that wee cannot bee wunne to open our purse, and to giue liberally of the things which seeme to belong vnto vs. Now then, God perceiuing vs to be so wedded to our owne profit, that a meane not wring any thing from vs, but by meane of profite addeth here, that if wee vse liberalitie towarde those ý are vnder vs, he on his side will bestow vpon vs & increase vs & he more for it. Surely, if there were any faith or rightbeleefe in ý world, should not this promise inflame vs, & moue vs to pitie and compassion towardes those that are in distresse, to succour them and to helpe them? And although that mention bee made here peculiarly of bondseruauntes; and that God commaund some rewarde to bee giuen vnto them: Yet is it a generall lawe of courteous liberalitie. Seeing it is so, let vs marke, that if wee finde our selues to doe good to such as are in need, wee ought to hope for Gods blessing, and

that the more liberall men bee in succouring their neighbours, the more will God shewe himselfe liberall towardes them againe. And so farre off are they from diminishing themselues by their giuing to the needy; that it is as the opening of a windowe for Gods grace to raine in at, to the greater increase of their wealth. That is the cause why I sayd, that if there were but one drop of fayth among vs, wee would be inflamed after another fashion to do good. But wee be locked vp, and euery man withholdeth that which hee hath, insomuch ỳ when we should giue, we think the earth must needes faile vs. Wherby we shew ourselues to haue no trust in God. So then, let vs marke well this text, wherein our Lord to soften our hard hearts and to induce vs to compassion, sayth that according to our pitying of the poore and needie, by relieuing their necessities: he also on his side will haue regarde thereof, & multiply vs a hundredfolde more by his blessing, than euer we could haue increased ourselues by our owne couetousnes & nigardship. Insomuch ỳ we shall set open a windowe (as I sayd afore) for Gods grace ỳ is offered vs, if we succour those ỳ haue needle of our helpe. That is ỳ thing which wee haue to consider as in respect of the promise which God addeth heere.

Now afterwarde followeth the Lawe of the firstborne, wherein it is sayd, *That all the firstborn Males shalbe offered vnto God, and that they shalbe of-* *fered euery yeere, in the place which the Lorde shall haue chosen, so they be not faulty, nor in any wise blemished.* As for example, if a beast were goggle eied, or blinde, or lame, or had any other ilfauorednes or blemish in it: it might not be offered; but the beastes ỳ were founde, were to be offered in ỳ temple, as God had cõmanded to bring them to the place ỳ he had chosen, according to that which hath bin tolde you heretofore. We know wherefore this Lawe of offering vp the firstborne thinges Exod. 13. 2. was, namely of Gods sleaing of all ỳ firstborne of the land of Egypt: as well of men as of beastes in such time as he was about to deliuer his people out of the bondage of Egypt, & of his sparing of the children of Israel, for the bloud of the paschall Lamb was dipped vpõ their doores, & ỳ was done for their preseruation. Now our Lords will was ỳ the firstborne should be offered vp to him in acknowledgement of ỳ great benefite. For seeing ỳ such a miracle had bin wrought for thẽ, it behoued them to honor God for it, & to be alwaies the more moued to magnifie his grace. But wee see how forgetfull we are in ỳ behalfe: insomuch that if God haue done vs any good turn, in deed we can speake of it & tell it forth with voyce loud enough for a litle while: but by & by it slippeth frõ vs, & we thinke no more of it. But gods powring out of his gratious goodnes towards vs, is to the end ỳ we should mind it continually & beare it in remembrãce euer after. Therfore is it requisite ỳ we should be warned & put in mind of ỳ things which we would els forget. Euen so stoode ỳ case as in respect of the offering of the firstborne. For Gods will was ỳ it shoulde be a memoriall of the sayd benefite, so as it might neuer bee forgotten. And hereby let vs marke, that although wee haue not the like ceremonies among vs: yet doth God still exhorte vs to bee mindefull of the benefites that we haue receiued at his hande. And the excellenter that his gratious dooinges are, the more ought we to be moued by them to exalt them, yea and to deale in such wise that euen when wee be dead and gone; our children may continue in doing the like. Thus ye see what we haue to remẽber concerning the order that was set downe for the offering vp of the firstborne thinges.

It had bin ynough to haue spoken of it once: and why then doth God repeate it againe, but by reason of mens vnthankefulnes? And this concerneth not the Iewes onely, but also vs. Wherefore let vs consider, that whereas God telleth vs that we ought to be mindfull of ỳ benefits which we haue receiued at his hand, yet we cease not to turne our backes, and to shut our eyes ỳ we might not see; and if we be driuẽ to remẽber them whether we will or no, yet are we too too lasie in doing it. Considering then the naughtinesse ỳ is in vs, insomuch that God hath no sooner turned his hande, but that we haue by & by forgotten what he hath done for vs; or at least wise whereas hee woulde that the remembraunce of his benefites should be printed in our hearts, we thinke it ynough to haue borne them in minde a day or twayn: Let vs accustome our selues to the mindfulnesse of them, and consider that wee must not only blame the Iewes for their vnthankefulnesse, but also remember that we ourselues are of nature like vnto them.

Moreouer whereas it is sayde that the firste borne thinges which are to be offered, must bee founde and without blemish: hereby we see how men wold faine beguyle God with their byshifts. For they would haue picked the faultiest of their firstborne thinges to haue offered vnto God, and they would haue thought with themselues, well, this shall be set out to doe seruice withall in the Temple; for it will doe mee no seruice: yonder beast doth but pine away, well, he must serue for sacrifice. This were a playne mocking of God: and yet was it a common thing among the Iewes. But let vs come to our selues: there is none of vs all but he findeth himselfe so ill minded, as to defraude God continually of somewhat that belongeth vnto him. For, (to let passe the ceremonie of offering the firstborne thinges) God requireth that euerie of vs should offer vppe our selues vnto him; and it is good reason that wee shoulde doe so: for he hath redeemed vs from Hebr. 2. 14. thebondage of death. Wee were by nature the bondeslaues of Sathan, and beholde, GOD hath made vs his owne children: therefore is it verie meete, that wee shoulde doe him hõmage with our persons. And as touching our soules, wee knowe that the sonne of GOD spared not himselfe for the redeeming of them. And as for our bodies wee hope that they shall bee rayssed againe to his heauenly glorie. Is it not meete then that GOD shoulde haue the whole possession of vs? But when it commeth to the offering vp of ourselues to him, the world seeth ỳ wee goe to it like cripples and purblinde folke

Who is he that commeth freely vnto God, and that suffereth himselfe to be vtterly cast down & to be stripped out of his sinful nature? Nay, if we goe towards God with the sight of one eye, with the sight of the other we are tied to the vanities of the worlde. If we lende him our eares a little while, by and by wee be listening to some other thing. If we haue any good thought tending towardes him, we be corrupted a thousande waies. Such are the sacrifices ỳ we offer vnto God, that is to wit sinfull sacrifices & full of corruption. To be short, howsoeuer the world go, God can haue no right at our handes. Cal he neuersomuch vpon vs, & be he neuer so importunate with vs, yet are we so hardharted, ỳ we will neuer yeeld him his due. Thus we see that although the ceremony of offering ỳ first borne as wel of cattell as of men, is taken away: yet this Law is not superfluous among Christians: but vnder the shadowes of Moseses lawe, God sheweth vs after what sort we should come vnto him nowadayes: that is to wit, not limping, nor as purblinde folke ranging here and there: but ỳ we should looke to the purging of the wicked affections that are in vs, so as wee may come to him sounde both in bodie & soule. True it is that doe what we can, it is not possible for vs to be without a great number of vices in vs: but yet must not those vices be nourished, neither must we flatter our selues. If any of vs feele anie imperfections in himselfe, he must mislike of it, and being sorie for it, wee must desire GOD to purge and clense vs from our sinnes, that we may be ridde from all the corruptions that hinder vs to become acceptable sacrifices vnto him. When we go that way to worke, that is to say, when eueric of vs fighteth against his owne sinnes by true repentance, although there be many things amisse in vs, yet will our Lorde receiue vs, and
1. Ioh. 2.1. not shake vs off. For we knowe that the bloud of our Lorde Iesus Christ serueth to scoure our all our spottes. And that is the cause why it is sayd
Hebr. 3.15. that our sacrifices are offered to God the father in his name. Seeing then that Iesus Christe is there aunswering for vs, although there be spots in vs, yet are they not imputed to vs. But yet must we on our side endeuour to amende them, and by that meane acknowledge the thing that is sayde heere, that is to wit, wee must not offer faultie sacrifices vnto God, nor resemble the hypocrites, which come to him for fashions sake, but in deede make none account of him: so as we should make a faire face of it to the worldeward, and in the meane while foster some secret poyson within, but that we come right hearted to our God as he commaundeth vs. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to remember vpon this sentence of Moseses, where hee speaketh of the firstborne.

Besides this, our Lords meaning was that the first borne should be valued at a summe of money as well of the cattell as of other things: so as the thing that was alwayes aimed at, was the thankfulnesse of Gods benefites. But as concerning these things we will not enter into them as now, for this text requireth it not, neither doth ỳ time serue for it. It sufficeth vs in fewe words to know that our Lordes meaning heere, is that when we haue receiued any gratious good turne, or that he hath bestowed any benefit vpon vs, the remembrance thereof should continue with vs, not for a day or two, but for euer: and that the fathers should tell their children the same, to the ende that he may be honored among vs for euermore. Finally let vs not offer beastes vnto him in sacrifice, as they did vnder the Lawe as appeareth by this figure: but let vs assure our selues that ỳ acceptable sacrifice which God requireth is the offering of ourselues vnto him both in bodie and soule, so as our whole seeking may be to be guided and gouerned altogether by his holy spirite, and that all that euer wee haue be dedicated to his seruice, and applyed to the vse which he hath shewed vs, that he may be glorified in all poinctes.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, and that seeing there is nothing in vs but all matter of frowardnesse & leaudnes, we may so be renued in such sort, that as long as we liue in this mortal life, our whole seking may be to be guided to the happie ende which we looke for in heauen, and ỳ in the meane time we may liue after such a sorte in this worlde, as he may be glorified in vs, and that whē it shall please him to take vs hence, wee may yeelde our selues obediently into his handes, assuring ourselues ỳ sith he sheweth his selfe so gratious and liberall towardes vs, and gouerne vs in this transitorie life, & of his goodnes giueth vs al things behouefull & necessary, wee neede not to doubt but that he will make vs to attaine to the perfection of the things which are nowe hidden, & which shall not be opened vnto vs, vntill the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the fifth of Nouember. 1555.

The XCvij. Sermon which is the first vpon the sixteenth Chapter.

THou shalt keepe the moneth of new fruites, that thou maiest keepe Passeouer to the Lorde thy God. For in the moneth of new fruites the Lorde thy God brought thee out of the Lande of Egypt.

2 And thou shalt sacrifice the Passeouer to the Lorde thy GOD, euen

sheepe

Sheepe and Oxen, in the place which the Lorde thy GOD will chooſe to put his name therein.

3 Thou ſhalt eate no leauen breade in that feaſt: Seuen dayes ſhalt thou eate vnleauened bread, euen the bread, of ſorowe. For thou cameſt in haſte out of the Lande of Egypt: to the ende thou be mindefull of the day of thy departing out of the Lande of Egypt all the dayes of thy life.

4 And there ſhal no leauen be ſeene in thy houſe, during the ſeuen daies in all thy coaſtes. Alſo ye ſhall not leaue of the fleſhe that is ſacrificed from the euening of the former day till the next morning.

THis preſent chapter treateth of the three feaſts which God ordeined among the Iewes: that is to wit, the feaſt of Eaſter or paſſouer, ỹ feaſt of Pentecoſt or Whitſontide, & the feaſt of Tabernacles or Tentes. Firſt hee treateth of the Paſſeouer, & God ordaineth that it ſhould be diligently obſerued: for it was a memorial of great importance, whereby the people were put in mind, how they had beene redeemed, & put in poſſeſſion of the inheritance that had bin promiſed vnto them. It was behoouefull that ỹ ſame ſhould be knowen: for it was the fundation of all the benefits which the Iewes had receiued at Gods hande, & which they looked for afterwarde. Without that, they had bin no people ſeparated & dedicated to god; neither had they had any hope of ſaluation: for the couenãt made with their fathers had bin diſſolued. Therefore is it not without cauſe, that God would haue that day kept holy, & with ſuch commande. In like caſe was it with the feaſt of Tabernacles, as wee ſhall ſee hereafter. For it ſerued to put the Iewes in minde of their going out of Egypt, and that whereas they had dwelt long time in the wilderneſſe, without houſe or harne, and yet God had euer preſerued them: it behoued them likewiſe to acknowledge ỹ ſame benefite. But we will treate of euery feaſt in his owne order.

Preſently we haue to ſpeake of the paſſeouer. But before I go any further, we muſt marke alſo that God reſpected not only what he had done already; but alſo ment therewithall there ſhould be a figure of thinges to come, whereof we haue now the trueth & ſubſtance, ſince the time ỹ our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath bin diſcouered to ỹ world. That is the cauſe why S. Paul telleth ỹ Coloſſians, ỹ theſe thinges were but ſhadowes, ỹ body whereof is in Chriſt Ieſus. True it is ỹ he ſpeaketh not there expreſly of Eaſterday by name: but yet vnder the name of Sabbat, he comprehendeth all the feaſtes, & likewiſe al the Ceremonies that depended vpon thẽ. To be ſhort, God had a double reſpect in ordeining the day of the Paſſeouer. The one was to do the people of Iſrael to vnderſtand, ỹ they came not into poſſeſſion of ỹ Land of Chanaan by their own power: but ỹ they had bin led in thither by the hande of God. And becauſe they had bin deliuered by miracle out of ỹ land of Egypt; Gods wil was ỹ the ſame ſhould be declared. Againe, foraſmuch as the ſame deliuerance was a figure of the deliueraunce ỹ was to be hoped for by our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: this feaſt of Paſſeouer extẽded yet further, ỹ is to wit, ỹ whẽ the people ate of the paſcal Lamb (as they called it) they ſhould thinke thus with thẽſelues: This is a ſhadow & figure of the Sacrifice which ſhalbe once offered vp, wherby the world ſhalbe reconciled & ſet free. And although the thing were not yet apparant to the eye. Yet behoueth it the faithfull to inure thẽſelues to the hope of the redeemer whõ God had promiſed them. And in that reſpect ſayth S. Paul in the firſt to ỹ Corinthians, ỹ Ieſus Chriſt is our Paſſeouer or Paſcall Lambe, and ỹ he is ſacrificed for vs, and that we muſt now eate of that ſacrifice: howbeit not with the leauen of malice and deceitefulnes, but with righteouſneſſe and ſoundneſſe. That is the one point which we haue to remember. 1. Cor. 5. 7.

And that the Paſcall Lamb was not a bare ceremonie without doctrine, it appeareth by that which is written in ỹ twelfth of Exodus; where it is ſaid, ỹ when the Lamb is ſacrificed as it is a eating, if their childrẽ aske what it meanieth: their fathers ſhall anſwere, The Lorde brought vs out of the land of Egypt where we were in bondage, & therfore he wil haue this thing done yerely in remẽbrance thereof: not ỹ the doing thereof one only day may diſcharge vs: but ỹ the ſame ſhould continue printed in our hearts, ſo as in inioying the land of Chanaan, we may vnderſtand ỹ wee cõquered it not by our own ſtrẽgth, but through his good pleaſure, becauſe it was his will to harbour vs here, according to ỹ promiſe which hee had made to our forefathers. We ſee then howe the feaſt of Paſſeouer, was not a ceremony without inſtruction: but ỹ it conteined doctrine in it. And it is an article of great importance: For the world would alwaies haue a great number of ceremonies tõ no purpoſe: & in the meane while it ſeemes ynough to haue ſtore of gay ſhowes. But on ỹ the cõtrary part, God telleth vs, ỹ ceremonies are but toyes & trifles, vnleſſe they leade vs further, & be light vs things cõcerning our ſaluatiõ, ſo as we be taught & cõfirmed in the faith by meanes of them. If ỹ be not in thẽ, they be ſtarke baggage, & nothing worth. Nay, they be nothing els than a corrupting of ỹ ſeruice of God, and the high way to lead vs to ſuperſtition and ydolatry. Exod. 12. 26

As

As for example, wee see howe they make a great number of disguisinges in the Popedome: but in the meane while they wote not what any of those things meane. If ye come to their Masse, there they play an enterlude, where there are as many fonde toyes as can be. In deede the wretched worlde is rauished at them: but that is because they knowe nothing, but are vtterly sotted, and yet they beare themselues in hande that they haue done a dowtie deede, and ẏ God ought to like very well of it, when they haue so bestirred themselues. But (as I tolde you afore) they be but vaine & fonde Apish toyes. And why so? For God neuer ment to ordeine any ceremonie among his people, which conteined not some good instruction, and serued not to some good ende. And therefore lette vs marke well, that whereas the Iewes had ẏ feast of Passeouer, they had Gods worde also, whereby they were warranted ẏ it was not inuented at the pleasure of men. For God not onely gaue a prefixed commandement as saying: You shall obserue such a day: but also a doctrine with it, & willed ẏ the fathers should teach it their children, & put thē in remēbrance of the deliuerance ẏ had bin made, as in deede it was as excellent a deede as might be. That then was of his appointment.

And so let vs beare in minde, that if we nowadayes haue ceremonies without instruction, they shalbe all condemned of God, who vtterly misliketh them, and we can not alleadge them to be his seruice. For he declareth and auoweth it to be but foolish superstition, when men turne away from that marke, and that it is the next way to put vs quite besides our saluation. And heerein we may defie all the houge heape of pompes wherewith the Papistes will needes serue GOD: for there is nothing in them that God auoweth. Also wee be warned to mingle nothing with the pure simplicitie of the Sacramentes and Ceremonies which GOD woulde haue to bee obserued noweadayes. Let vs holde vs contented with that which is shewed vs: for if wee adde neuer so little to it, surely wee shall make such a minglemangle as will bee nothing worth, after the manner of the Papistes, who (as wee see) haue inuented many thinges of their own head. Wee must haue this and that, say they, Why so? To what purpose? O (say they) it will serue for such a thing: but in the meane whyle there is no instruction to Godwarde. Is it their part to cause a doctrine to bee brought in? It were meete that God should speake. And when men heare him, then euery one shall be edified. But when men thrust themselues in, and fall to forging of fonde deuotions without authoritie from GOD: all must needes be cast downe. The worlde sees how the Papists haue corrupted the true Sacramentes. In Baptisme, the water hath beene esteemed as nothing in the Popedome: for it is no matter if the infantes pisse in it. But as for the holy creame that is in it, O, it is not for any man to touch that: for that is too heauenly a thing. And yet notwithstanding the water is the substance of that Sacramēt, and the whole perfection thereof. But as for the creame, who deuised it? It is a stinking grease that men haue charmed, and blowed vpon, like sorcerers. And should that be had in such reuerence, that the Sacrament which proceedeth from the sonne of God, shoulde be had in no estimation for it? Moreouer, the water (by their reckening) is not good, vnlesse it haue beene coniured, and that a number of charmes haue beene made ouer it, to amaze the ignorant. And therefore so much the better ought we to haue this lesson in minde, that wee may be fenced against all Satans inuentions; which is, that sith wee see our mindes so tickelish, that wee would faine still inuent some newe thing, and we beare ourselues in hande that wee haue spunne a fine threede, when some newe Ceremonie is come foorth by our meanes: it standeth vs in hande to thinke thus, yea but GOD dispiseth all this geere, yea and he sheweth vs that we do but peruert his seruice, when wee adde any thing after that fashion, of our owne. Then is it an intolerable doctrine that no Ceremonies are beholden or to be made account of among the faithfull, vnlesse they carry instruction with them. And that instruction must come of GOD: for it is his office to teach vs, hee reserueth that authoritie to himselfe. And therfore it is to be concluded, that the ceremonies which are set forth by men, are but trifles & geugawes, howe great a shew of wisedome soeuer there seeme to be in them.

And hereby we see also that it was superstitiously done of such as beare the name of Christians, to bring in a feast of Passeouer vnder pretence that the Iewes had it for the respect we are farre diuers. I meane not that we may not haue one day in the yeere, whereon to celebrate the remembraunce of the resurrection of our Lord Iesus Christ: for we must not runne so rigorously into extremities, as that our infirmitie might not haue some helpe, to quicken it vpp withal, that we might the better bethink vs all the time of our life, what benefit the rysing againe of our Lord Iesus Christ hath brought vnto vs. Well then may we haue a day appointed to that purpose for orders sake: but to make a seruice of God thereof, or to thinke that we ought to fashion ourselues after the example of the Iewes, as they had their passeouers, so ought we not: it were an abuse that tendeth to the turning of all thinges vpside downe, and a putting of a vayle before the face of Iesus Christ, ẏ men might not know the light of the Gospell. These things (as I saide) were but shadowes, whereof we haue now the body and substance: and therefore it is a hiding of Iesus Christ, whē men bring in feasts after the maner of the Iewes.

But nowe let vs come to that which is commanded here concerning the Easterday of the Iewes *Ye shall eate vnleauened breade or cakes* (sayth he) *by the space of six dayes, and there shall no leauened bread be founde in your houses*. This was done because the Iewes departed in hast out of the Land of Egypt. And it ought to haue made them to think that they went not out with banners displayed, as though their enemies had stoode so in feare of thē ẏ they durst not quetch against thē: for they

were

went away like a sort of poore fugitiues. The women caried their children vpon their shoulders, the men tooke vp their stuffe in their neckes, and fled away priuily, and their enemies would faine haue pursewed them, & they were of strength & power ynough to haue done it. The Iewes on the other side were a people ỳ could no skill to handle a sworde: for they had bin holde in such slauerie, ỳ they durst not once looke vpon a sworde or any weapon of warre. They had bin vsed like Asses and Oxen. Their state had bin as slauishe as could bee. Well then, when the time came that they should depart, it was sayde vnto them, Exod.12.39 Get ye hence. And what bread shal wee haue to eat? What prouision shal there be by the way? Grinde your corne, and trusse it vp quickely in meale vpon your shoulders, and as the time will serue ye shal bake it by the way and eate it. Now when the people had this solemnitie yeerely, wherein they ate cakes whithout leauen: it serued to put thẽ in minde, that when their fathers departed out of Egypt, they were a poore fugitiue people, that ranne away like a Lambe that is pursued by wolues. Ye see in what plight they were. Needes therefore must it bee concluded, that God had preserued them after a wonderfull fashion. For what were the Egyptians? A nation full of pride and cruelkie. A mightie nation, a nation ỳ trusted to their owne force & power; & moreouer a nation ỳ bare deadly hatred to the poore Iewes, an vtter enemy to thẽ, & such a one as desired nothing so much as to roote out ỳ remembrance of them, as the tyranny of Pharao hath well shewed. Now then the Iewes were put in minde ỳ God had made them to escape out of their enemies handes, so as they coulde not but knowe ỳ they had bin helped by him, & that the stayse of their life was to bee yeelded vnto him. As if they should say, Thou Lord hast deliuered vs, not only from ỳ state of bondage but also as it were by fetching vs out of our graues. For wee were as it were starke dead, and had bin past all hope of recouery, if thou haddest not reached vs thy mightie arme. That was the thing wherof the Iewes were put in minde, when God commanded them to eate vnleauened bread. And it was his will ỳ this should be done, not only ỳ same night ỳ they ate the paschall Lambe: but also that the same Ceremony should be continued by the space of six dayes together. And why? God shewed therein, ỳ men be not throughly framed at ỳ first brunt to the doctrine ỳ he setteth downe vnto them, though ỳ same be cleere ynough. Doth God speake? There is no darknesse in his speech. But yet howsoeuer the case stande, wee can not fasten vpon it. For we be so slowe minded, ỳ wee can neuer attaine to his meaning, vntill he haue repeated our lesson to vs diuerse times. That is the cause why hee commaunded expresly that they should eate vnleauened bread by the space of sixe dayes together. As if hee shoulde say, truely the very one nightes eating of the paschall Lambe with vnleauened breade, ought to bee a sufficient instruction to you what is ment by the same. But what? I see well yee be shortwitted, insomuch that if yee haue hearde any thing at Gods mouth, yee forget it out of hande. And therefore when I intende to teach you, I must deale w you as it were by measure and compasse. And therefore if ye haue a good long time afore hande to bethinke ye of the eating of the paschall Lambe, yee will be the better prepared vnto it. Therefore shall yee haue a whole weeke, wherein ye shall eate no leauened breade; by meanes whereof yee shalbe quickened vp to thinke vpon the great and inestimable benefit which God bestowed vpon your fathers in deliuering them out of the Lande of Egypt, so as you may beare well in minde that his deliuering of them was after a straunge manner, and that hee was faine to worke after a heauenly fashion, because ye were in so wretched plight, that yee might seeme to haue beene already swallowed vp of death, and to haue beene already buried in your graues. Nowe we see why the Iewes were expresly commanded to abstaine from the eating of leauened bread.

There were other Ceremonies also; that is to wit, the girding vp of their garmentes, the putting on of their shooes, and the taking of their walking staues in their handes. For in those East countryes they ware long garmentes after the same manner that the Turkes doe at this day. And when they trauciled by the way, they trussed vp their garments aboue their loynes, as the gray Fryers & Iacobines or white Fryers do, and such other that are so greatly combered with clothes. Nowe God did the Iewes to vnderstande that they shoulde bee as wayfarers when they ate the paschall Lambe, and that they should eate it in haste, to put them in remembraunce of the sayde departure out of Egypt. And our Lord did set downe this figure as a lookingglasse for the Iewes to beholde howe their forefathers ate the paschall Lambe, euen when they were hasted to go their wayes, that they might acknowledge so great a benefit. And herein we see how God had a respect to the rudenesse of his people as in deede all the Ceremonies which wee haue serue but for our infirmitie. What doth Baptisme or the Lordes Supper bring vs? Doe they make the death & passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ of more value than it is of it selfe? What helpe find we in the bread, or in the wine, or in the water, to that purpose? Gods meaning then was not to ad any thing to ỳ which we haue receiued in our Lord Iesus Christ: but to beare with our rudenes because he sees vs to be vnable to comprehende the thinges that are gotten for vs by our Lorde Iesus Christ. For inasmuch as they bee too high for vs, God helpeth vs vp to thẽ by the outwarde & visible signes which we haue in ỳ Sacraments. But it behoued the Iewes to haue mo such helps than we. For they had not so plaine a doctrine as is now conteined in ỳ Gospel. Again, Iesus Christ was not yet come, in whom we see all ỳ euer can be wished for our saluation. The heauens were then opened vnto vs, when his side was opened Col.1.22 to washe vs cleane, and his body offered vp for a sufficient sacrifice to reconcile vs vnto God his father, and to doe away all our offences and trangressions. When these thinges were done, then

then had we a full warrant of our saluatiõ. Therfore wee in these dayes neede not to be helped with so houge a heape of Ceremonies as the ancient fathers vnder the Lawe were. It is ynough that we be ledde to our Lord Iesus Christ, whervnto fewe signes suffice, that is to wit Baptisme and the Lorde his Supper. For seeing that the sonne of God is contented with those two: we also ought to rest there. Neuertheless, wee see heere howe God vouchsafed to stoope to the infirmitie of his people, by giuing them a liuely representation of their departing out of the Land of Egypt, and by setting them downe as it were in a lookingglasse or painted table; for them to beholde howe he had deliuered them: that is to wit, like a sort of poore people, that were taking their iourney to flee away priuily, and were so distressed as it was not for them to turne heade against so mightie enemies, who were able to haue swallowed thẽ vp at the first chop without any resistance. Seeing then that the Iewes had such instruction; they shoulde haue considered thus with themselues: How commeth it to passe that we be aliue at this day, but because our God hath preserued vs? And how shold our state stand but onely by his meere mercy? For we had perished if he had not reached out his arme to bring vs out of the Land of Egypt. Thus much concerning this point.

Exod. 12. 8. Nowe it was commaunded further, that the paschall Lamb should be eaten with bitter herbes. And our Lorde himselfe speaketh here expressly of the bread of sorrow: as if he had said, although ye eateth the paschall Lambe in rest, and when yee be come to the inioying of the inheritance which I haue promised you: yet must you haue a memoriall of the anguish wherein your forefathers were, and you must thinke y without my fauour you should haue had neither paschall Lambe nor bit of bread to eat at this day: for ye should haue beene vtterly rooted out of the worlde. Consider it therefore, and that yee may be the better moued thereunto, take bitter herbes, that is to say, abstaine from all deintinesse in your eating of the paschall Lambe. For the Iewes were not restreined from taking their repast after their eating of the paschall Lambe, as wee see that our Lorde Iesus Christ in eating of the Paschall Lamb with his disciples, insomuch as they did not only sit downe at a table, but also lye downe after the manner of olde time, which was to eate their meales lying halfe a tone side. Certaine it is that Gal. 4. 4. 5. he kept the Lawe to the vttermost: for hee submitted himselfe to it to set vs free from it. Then must we note that our Lord ate the paschall Lamb after the same maner that was ordeined by Moses, that is to wit, standing vpon his feete, with his staffe in his hande, and his shoes on his feete, and hauing his loynes girded vp like a wayfarer. And after this was done hee tooke his accustomed repast, for this was a solemne sacrifice, and therefore wee must not wonder that it was separated from the common meates: for it behoued all the folke of one house to eate thereof, so as if there were thirtie or fortie persons in a house, euery man hadde his portion of it. And if the housholde were not great ynough, two or three housholdes were called together and they eate in one place, that the sacrifice might be eaten vp hastily. A Lambe was roasted in hast and eaten vp with a morsell of a sweete cake: yea and they were forbidden to seeth it, to shewe that they could haue no leasure to tarrie till it were halfe boyled, but they were faine to deuour it hastily, like folke that were to go their waies out of hand. But howsoeuer the case stoode, it behoued them to eat it with bitter herbs. Whereby we be taught to vnderstande, that deinties doe keepe vs from the dewe consideration of Gods benefites, to be rauished by them. For although it bee sayde, Thou shalt be merrie before thy God: yet are we continually holde backe in this worlde, when we haue some allurement to withdrawe vs frõ God. For if our flesshe haue her likinges, then are we ouertaken in such sorte, that we stye not vp aloft to beholde well the spiritual grace of God. Thus yee see that the cause why the bitter herbes were put to the sacrifice, was to make men to consider the better after what manner the people hadde beene deliuered, beeing erst in so extreme anguish as they were not able to endure any more.

Besides this, they were also forbidden to admit any heathen man to it, vnlesse hee were circumcised. True it is that God commanded that the bondmen being straungers borne should eate thereof. Yea, but that was not before they were first incorporated into his Church by receiuing the signe of circumcision. Hereby it is done to vnderstande, that it was a peculiar ordre giuen of God to his owne people. For Sacraments are peculiar to the Church. They be no things for men to put to vnholy vses, nor to leaue at aladuenture. For our Lorde will haue vs to be gathered together vnder his name. When we vse the Sacramentes, let vs thinke that with ourselues, Beholde here is a treasure that God hath kept and layde vp for vs as for his children. And in deede, if a man should nowe adayes admit as many to the Lordes Supper as would offer come to it: were it not a defiling of the Sacrament? And yet there are a number to be seene, which would haue al men indifferently both rag and ragge to be admitted to it: but such folkes neuer wist yet howe to vse the Sacraments aright. For (as shall be declared hereafter) the Supper of our Lorde Iesus Christ is as vsed at this day the same that the Paschall Lambe was to the people of the Iewes. Wherefore let vs marke in fewe wordes, howe our Lorde hath shewed that this Sacrament was a warrant & pledge of him to his people, that he took thẽ to be his Church, and therefore that it ought not to bee set foorth at aduenture to all commers. True it is that Circumcision likewise was a Sacrament: but there was diuersitie of respectes betweene the one and the other. For by circumcision, folke were receiued into the number of Gods people, so as it was an entrãce into the Church as Baptisme is at this day: by meanes whereof such as by nature are not nõbered in y cõpany of Gods children, are receiued and incorporated into the by Baptisme. And so stoode the case with y Iewes for circumcision: But as for the Paschall Lambe, that was to be kept to the Iewes themselues.

Now

Now it is also sayd, *that it was not to bee eaten throughout the whole Countrey; but that it was to bee done in the place which the Lorde had chosen to put his name in*. And truely this was not shewed them at the first day, insomuch that they had beene a long time in the land of Chanaan, eare the Arke had any certaine resting place, there was no such place assigned to it. But yet it behoued them alwaies to be obedient to the ceremonie of resorting to ỹ place where the Arke was, vntil mount Sion was marked out. And then were al men bound to repaire thither, euen from the vttermoost borders of the Countrey: all men were to come to Ierusalem, except they were letted by sickneſse or old age. And why? It was not to giue a president for the Pilgrimages which ỹ Papists inuented afterward: For in so doing they shewed themselues to differ nothing at all from the Iewes. Againe, it is not for them to excuse themselues by the example of the Iewes: for ỹ Iewes had a commaundement of God, but the Papistes made their vagaries for their own pleasure: wherin they vtterly renounced Iesus Christ & ouerthrew that which is sayd in the fourth of Iohn, namely that ỹ time was come ỹ god wold no more be worshipped in any place certain, but would haue his name called vpon euery where throughout ỹ whole world. Besides this, we must marke that there was a speciall reason why God would haue the Iewes to reſorte to Ierusalem to sacrifice the paſcall Lambe there: namely to the end yͤ man should attempt to alter any thing in yͤ order which he had set by the Law. And (as I haue said) this ancient ceremonie was a thing of great importance, as wherby the people were informed of their Redeemer, euen that he had brought them out of the land of Egypt, & that he would send thē yet another redeemer, by whom the whole world should be redeemed. Loe heere a ceremonie that imported a wonderfull secret, & therfore it was meete ỹ it should be kept purely. For the doing wherof, god called al the Iewes into one body, ỹ hauing ỹ Sāctuary & the temple there before their eyes, they might be the better put in mind ỹ it was not lawfull for them to adde any thing at their owne pleasure, but that it behoued them to follow ỹ commō doctrine, to vnderstand ỹ God represented himselfe there, and dwelt among thē by meanes of the Arke. Seeing then that the people were so gathered together, they could not but be restrained frō starting out into foolish inuentions: and needes must the doctrine be retained therwithal, as I haue said afore: for ỹ ceremonie was nothing of it selfe, it had ben but as a Maygame or a mockerie. That was ỹ cause why ỹ people were drawē to Ierusalem vnto ỹ place which God had appointed. And so we see now why it was said ỹ they shoulde not do sacrifice in any of their cities or townes, but assemble al together in the Citie of Ierusalem.

It is inioyned further, that they shoulde not breake a bone of the Paſcal Lamb. And why so? As if it were said ỹ it was a meate to bee eaten in haſt, (as I haue shewed afore,) so as they were forbidde to boile any part of it. And hereby God meant to shew yet better ỹ haſt which the people made in departing out of ỹ land of Egypt, forsomuch as it was not for them to set the pot vpon ỹ fire to boile it: for they could neuer haue had time to do it. Therfore were they faine to make haſt, & to eate this Lamb halfe rosted as people preaſſed vpon by their enemies, & as folke ỹ looked to haue bin ouertaken euery minute of an houre: by reason whereof they had no leasure to stand gnawing of ỹ bones, or to breake them to get out ỹ marow, as folk do when they haue time at wil. None of this could they do: but were faine to eate ỹ sacrifice in haſt, & to cast away ỹ reſt. We see then as nowe, ỹ as concerning ỹ deliuerance ỹ had bin wrought alreadie, things were as it were pointed out with ỹ finger in the Paſcall Lamb: & for this cause ỹ very terme it self is expreſſed here, for ỹ Hebrew worde *Peſſah* is the same ỹ we call *Paſſing* in Inglish. And by ỹ word our Lord confirmed ỹ thing which we haue spoken of before, namely ỹ this Ceremonie was not a fond deuise to buſie mens heades withall as though they were little babes: but ỹ it importeth instruction to edifie folk withall, to the end they should think thus: This day must we do homage to our God for our life, bicauſe he preſerued vs of his owne mere infinite goodnes, by bringing vs out of ỹ land of Egypt. So then God spake not simply of ỹ thing, ỹ were to be obserued: but his meaning was to shew the end in such wise which he intended, as ỹ people might cōsider, we haue made a Paſſage: & what maner of Paſſage? Euen such a one as we had no legs to go it withall, but God did lift vs vp by his power, and made vs to paſſe ouer it as a gulf of death, not onely in paſſing ỹ red sea, but also whē we were yet in Egypt. For before we came at the red sea, there was another straite to paſſe, which wee shoulde neuer haue scaped out at, if God had not opened vs ỹ way with his owne hand. Yea & his will was that that day should be obserued, to the intent that the remembrance therof should be ỹ certainer.

And for the same cause he poynted out the moneth ỹ answereth to March or April. Howbeit not to eyther of them, but bicauſe wee cannot make a certaine report of ỹ monethes of the Iewes to cōpare them w̄ ours. The reason wherof is, for ỹ they had their moneths intermingled one with another, bicauſe they tooke them according to ỹ Moone, so as they were interlaced together. This moneth therefore was sometime sooner and sometime later, & was named in hebrew *Abib*, which signifieth an eare of corne, when it beginneth to shoote foorth at the first. Not when the eares of Corne are full ripe: but when the corne beginneth newly to spindle. In deede the time of it selfe importeth nothing: but yet did it serue greatly to the instructing of the people, bicause the setting of it down made them to behold the matter the more presently. Gods putting of thē in remembrance of it was such as they could not but know ỹ meane wherby their fathers were brought out of the land of Egypt. And the very night it selfe was marked, to ỹ end they shold cōsider how god had deliuered them from the thraldom of Pharao. On the other side, had the moneth been marked at the pleasure of

men: they wold haue thought it might wel haue beene chaunged for the commoditie of the people. But God commaunded it to be kept, to the end they should know he would haue no part of his ordinance chaunged, nor any man attempt to alter it in any wise.

And nowe we haue to marke in effect, that by the ordeining of ỹ Passeouer day, God ment to set downe a memorial of his doinges among his people, that they might acknowledge his grace, in deliuering them out of the Land of Egypt after that fashion, and that their children myght know that that was the meanes whereby they were come into the inheritance that had beene promised them. Neuertheless, it was not Gods intent to be honoured and serued with a trifling Ceremonie: but his mind was that there should be teaching, that men might be edified by it, and that the Iewes might know that Gods calling of them to him, was to bee serued by them as their redeemer and father. And therefore he would not haue the Paschall Lamb eaten by vnholy and vnbeleeuing folke: but that it should bee giuen alonly to such as were circumcised, and were already of the body of the Church. And seeing it is so, Let vs remember that in all signes which God giueth vs, we must haue instruction annexed to lead vs vnto him. And for as much as we haue the true passeouer in our Lord Iesus Christ, as shall bee declared to morrow: wee must nowe dayes step further. And although we haue not the old Ceremonies; yet let vs hold fast the truth therof, which is brought vs by the sonne of God, as it is declared vnto vs in these dayes by his Gospell.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgment of our sins, praying him to make vs to perceiue more and more we were, when he vouchsafed to call vs to him, as he hath plucked vs out of the gulfe of death, in such sort as we haue now cause to glorifie him, and to giue our selues ouer to his seruice all the time of our life. And for as much as he not only sheweth himselfe to be our father and sauiour in this transitory life, but also calleth vs to the euerlasting inheritance of heauen; according as he had chosen vs thereto before the creation of the world: let vs tend alwayes thitherward, and be the more prouoked to labour to that end, seeing we haue the helpes and Remedies which he giueth vs, and that the badge is kept among vs as he hath commaunded vs by his word. That it may please him to graunt this grace not only to vs, but also to all people & nations of ỹ earth, &c.

On Wednesday the vj. of Nouember. 1555.

The XCviij. Sermon which is the second vpon the sixteenth Chapter.

2,3,4 And thou shalt sacrifice &c.

5 Thou maist not sacrifice the Passeouer within any of ỹ gates which the Lord thy God giueth thee,

6 But in the place which the Lord thy God wil choose to set his name in, there shalt thou offer the Passeouer at euen, about the going downe of the Sunne, iust at the time that thou wentest out of Egypt.

7 And thou shalt roast it, and eate it in the place which the Lord thy God shall haue chosen for himselfe. And the next morning thou shalt returne from thence and goe home to thy Tentes.

8 Six dayes shalt thou eate vnleauened breade: and on the seuenth day which is the solemne feast of the Lord thy God, thou shalt doe no manner of worke.

IT was declared yesterday, how ỹ by keeping ỹ feast of the passeouer, the Iewes were put in minde of the deliuerance of their forefathers made by God. And I toulde you howe it was to double ende. For GODS will was to put his people in remembraunce of the fauour which he had shewed to them alreadie: and againe, he ment to leade them to the hope of our Lorde Iesus Christ. It was then but a temporall deliuerance, which God had made of them out of the land of Egypt: but when he sent his onely sonne, thē deliuered he his people out of a farre worse bondage than that which we haue spoken of. And therfore let vs mark ỹ the Paschall Lamb was a figure of our Lorde Iesus Christ: which thing S. Paule witnesseth in expresse words, saying: Christ our Passeouer is offered vp. Also ye knowe the sentence that is alleged out of the twelfth of Exodus by S. Iohn, where it is said, Ye shal not breake a bone of him. For there he declareth how they came to our Lord Iesus Christ & to haue broken his bones after the accustomed manner, and found him alreadie dead. And how came to passe by the wonderfull prouidence of God, whose will it was that the thing which had beene figured in the Paschall Lambe, should bee layde open to mens eyes in Iesus Christ. And so Saint Iohn applyeth this sentence to

the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ, in saying, it is written, Yee shall not breake a bone of him. Yea, but God speaketh but onely of the Paschall Lambe which was offered in those dayes. Yet notwithstanding his intent was to shew, ỹ there was an agreement betweene Christ & the Passeouer, and that in that visible sacrament he ment to foreshewe the redemption that was not yet seene, and that all this was fully accomplished in our Lord Iesus Christ. True it is that the Iewes haue not profited by this admonition: for they were the more inhardened by it. But let vs on our side learne to referre the thinges that were done by our Lord Iesus Christ, to the things that were forefigured in the lawe, & wee shall profit greatly by that meane. For it is not ynough for vs to knowe the storie of the death and Passion of our Lord Iesus Christ; but the chiefe point is to resort to the vse and fruite of it. And that is much the better attayned vnto, by considering the auncient figures. Now it is sayd, ỹ the Paschall Lambe was offered vp, to the end that the houses which were marked with the bloud thereof, Exod. 12 should bee spared of God. For an Angel passed swiftly through the land of Egypt, and slew al the first borne both of man and beast. There was but one reseruation, namely the sacrificing of the Lamb, & looke what doore of a house was dipped with the bloud thereof, that house did the Lords Angel passe ouer. The onely safetie then which we haue, when God vttereth his wrath and vengeance through the whole world, is to beare the marke of our Lord Iesus Christ. For inasmuch as he was sacrificed for vs, & we bee besprinkled w̄ his bloud, God acknowledgeth vs for his own, & vpon speciall priuiledge withdraweth his hand from vs, so as we bee not compriſed nor inclosed vnder the common curse of ỹ whole world. For ỹ land of Egypt was at that time as an image of all mankind. And in deede, we be al accursed by nature & good reason it is that God as a iust Iudge should execute his vengeance vpon vs. But here the faithfull are dispersed and mingled with the faithlesse. And how then are they discerned a-funder, seeing they dwel together? God can well ynough skill to discerne the marke of his sonne. True it is ỹ the state of our life may well be like ỹ lot of the faithlesse and the despisers of God. But yet howsoeuer we fare, our Lord gathereth vs continually to himself. Insomuch that if we be of his flock, he wilbe merciful to vs euē to ỹ end, conditionally also ỹ wee beare the bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ for our badge. At ỹ time the doores of their houses were sprinkled w̄ a branch of Hyssop: but as now our besprinkling must bee spirituall, as S. Peter telleth vs. Would we then ỹ God should take vs to mercie, when his hand is stretched out to punish all the world? Let vs vnderstand ỹ there is no other meane for vs to bee marked by our lord Iesus christ, than only ỹ holy Ghost. For his blood is not now a shedding, that we might make an outward and visible sprinkling of our selues with it: but hee hath shead it for vs in spirite (as the Apostle speaketh of it in the Epistle to the Hebrewes.) That is to say, it was not the only paine that he suffred in his body, but also the matching of the heauenly power with it, that made the bloud of him to bee our washing and clensing. And when wee haue once beene watred with the holy Ghost, then will that bloud be euer fresh and neuer drye. For it is not corruptible, in as much as wee be washed and clensed with it before God. Therefore let vs so put the thing in vre which is spoken of by Saint Peter, as it may besprinkle our soules. As how? Euen by taking holde by fayth, of the inestimable benefite which is brought vs by our Lorde Iesus Christ. And although wee bee full of filth and vncleanneſse: yet doth not God faile to take vs into his fauour, because the bloud that was once shedde for our saluation, is sufficient to wash out all our spots at this day. Thus much for one point. Hebr. 12. 20. 1. Iohn 1. 7.

And therefore let vs rest vpon this point, that although we seeme in this world to bee wrapped vp in the curse of God with the vnbeleeuers, yet notwithstanding we shall bee preserued from aboue: and that if the Angell could skill to discerne the Iewes which had marked their houses with the corruptible bloud of a brute beaste; it is much more likely that God will at this day know the blood of his own sonne, so as we may be discerned by it, and not haue his wrath to fall vpon vs. True it is ỹ we may well suffer some chastisement, for it is good for our soules health. But the end therof will alwaies be good, and God will neuer ceasse to be still mercifull to vs. That is the first matter which we haue to mark as in respect of the former saying, that our Lord Iesus Christ is the fulfilling of the things that were figured in the law, by the offering of the Paschal Lambe.

But let vs nowe come backe againe to Saint Paules exhortation. Hee sayth that because our Easter lambe is offered vp, wee must nowe keepe the feast in eating it, howbeit not with the Leauen of naughtinesse or deceite, but in simplicitie and vprightnesse. Whereas he sayth that our passouer is offered vp, he doth vs to vnderstand that if we wilbe reconciled to God, we must resorte to the death and passion of his Sonne, and not surmise any other Sacrifice than that, which is the euerlasting, because the vertue thereof can neuer fayle. And it is a point well worth the noting: For it serueth to condemne the abhomination of the Masse which is brought into the Popedome. They be not contented with ỹ offering vp of Iesus Christ vnto GOD his Father, and with the one satisfaction which hee hath made to indure for euer: but they beare men in hande that hee is yet sacrificed dayly; whereas Saint Paule telleth vs that wee must holde vs to the Redemption that was purchased once for all. 2. Cor. 5. 8. Hebr. 7. 25.

Nowe remayneth that wee eate of this Sacrifice, that is to say, that wee become partakers thereof. As if hee had sayde, there are two thinges in the paschall Lambe: the one was the sprinkling of the Lambes bloud, and the other was the eating of his flesshe roasted. Now in deede it is the sonne of God that hath offred this sacrifice, and that office belongeth to him alone. The sprinkling of his blood is made in our Hebr. 7. 24.

hearts by the holy Ghost: for that cannot be attributed to ỹ cunning of men. We must now become partakers of this Sacrifice: not by eating Iesus christ after a fleshly maner, but S. Paul had an eye to this partaking that is giuen vs by the Gospel. For we be members of his body, and he knitteth vs so vnto him, ỹ looke whatsoeuer he hath, he cõmunicateth ỹ same vnto vs; so as we liue in him & he also in vs. And for as much as there is no seuerance betweẽ ỹ sonne of God & ỹ faithfull: therfore is he our meate. For we be no lesse fed wᵗʰ his power & his very substãce as in respect of our soules, than our bodies are fed and nourished with bread. Againe, to the intent we should vnderstand that wee haue not our sustenance by haulfes in Iesus Christ: he addeth wine also, to shew that hee is our drinke as well as our meate. That is ỹ thing which S. Paule ment to be broken, in saying ỹ we must now eat of this Easter lamb: that is to wit, that as now we should so cõmunicate with the sonne of God, as we might be knit vnto him by the secret and inarueilous working of his holy spirite, and he become our foode and nourishment, & we be susteined by the same, bicause we must else needs decay through our own feblenes. And this eating is not for once a yeere, but continually during all the time of our life.

Eph. 5. 30.

Iohn 14. 19. 20.

Then let vs learne, that as long as we be in this world, we must dayly frame our selues to the spirituall fellowship which we haue with our Lorde Iesus Christ, and to the confirming of the vnion more and more: for without that, the crucifying of our Lord Iesus Christ will boote vs nothing at al. He is the redeemer of all the whole world: & yet notwithstanding, what a nomber is there, which reape nothing else by his death but the greater condemnation? And that is bicause they refuse so excellent a benefite, wherby they make themselues vnworthy of it, and exclude themselues quite and cleane from it. But when wee communicate with him by faith, then doe we ratifie the grace that was purchaced for vs. And therefore let vs marke, that to bee partakers of the fruite and operation of the death and passion of our Lord Iesus Christ, we must bee linked vnto him from day to day by faith, profiting and growing still in that holy vnion, vntill wee haue the thing wholly and perfectly, which wee haue as yet but in part. After that maner ought we to eate ỹ sacrifice, to keepe the passeouer wel. And for as much as our faith increaseth according to our profiting in the holy scripture: if we intend to communicate wel wᵗʰ the sonne of God; euery one of vs must exercise our selues in the doctrine of the Gospell, and match the same wᵗʰ prayer, beseeching God ỹ seeing he hath vouchsafed to call vs once into his sonnes company, he will maintaine vs therein, & neuer suffer vs to be separated or wᵗʰdrawen from it any more. Therefore must we seeke all ỹ meanes which our Lord hath ordeined, to stablish the communion which we ought to haue in our Lord Iesus Christ.

Eph. 4. 13. 15. 16.

Now S. Paule addeth, that we cannot be partakers of ỹ sonne of God, nor haue any acquaintance with him, if we bee dubble minded ỹ there be any fraude or malice in vs. Then must we be changed if we will haue Iesus Christ for our substanance, that is to say, if we will haue him to feede vs with his substance. Certaine it is ỹ malice and hypocrisie are so rooted in vs, ỹ we must be faine to fight much wᵗʰ them, before we can be rid of thẽ. S. Paul then sheweth ỹ faithful there, ỹ doeng must be reformed, or else Iesus Christ will cut vs off frõ his body. And so although ỹ hypocrite pretend to seeke Iesus Christ & to sticke throughly to him: yet notwithstanding they haue none acquaintance at al wᵗʰ him. For why? They be things vtterly vnpossible, ỹ Iesus Christ should dwell in vs, & yet neuertheles that all maner of deceite & naughtinesse should raigne in vs. And therefore in stead of abstaining from leauened bread as the fathers of old time did in eating of ỹ pascal lamb vnder the law: let vs marke ỹ nowadaies God wil haue vs to discharge our selues of all naughtines & guile. And how may ỹ be? It will not be doone wout great inforcement: for we of our selues are not steady: but the spirit of our Lord Iesus Christ must be faine to worke after such a sorte ỹ vs, as we may be conformable to him in simplicitie & vprightnes. Thus ye see what we haue to gather of this exhortation which S. Paule maketh in ỹ first epistle to the Corinthians.

Now afterward heere followeth the thing that was treated of yesterday, namely the eating of ỹ pascall lamb wᵗʰ their staues in their hands, their shooes on their feete, & their loynes girded. For we cannot haue the companie of Iesus Christ vnlesse we be as wayfarers in this world, to go forward to seeke our inheritance elsewhere. And S. Paul in the Epistle to ỹ Colossians saith plainly that our life is hidden wᵗʰ Christ, and ỹ we must be as dead men, if we wilbe vnined to the sonne of God. And why? For he is in heauen, & therefore it followeth ỹ our life ought not to be tyed heere to ỹ earth. What is to be doone then? If we will haue Iesus Christ to auow vs to bee members of his body, & to quicken vs by his spirite: we must get vs out of this world; not ỹ we should not dwell in it, but ỹ we shold not be wedded to it. For these two things agree very well, ỹ gods children shall be cõuersant in this earthly life, & yet neuertheless be heires & citizens of ỹ kingdom of heauen, accordingly as ỹ Apostle saith to ỹ Hebrewes, ỹ God can well find in his hart to take vs for his children, if we be not tyed to this world, but passe on beyond it. Wherefore let vs marke, ỹ to haue felowship wᵗʰ our lord Iesus christ, we must depart out of this world: ỹ is to say, our earthly affections must not raigne in vs, we must not be married here, we must not bee snarled here: but we must consider ỹ seeing God hath set vs here to make a iourney, yea & short iourney, euery of vs ought to hie himselfe a pace, & to looke well to the leading of our selues of ỹ things ỹ may hinder vs in attaining to ỹ heauenly life. And we must vnderstand ỹ if we do so, Iesus Christ wil come vnto vs & reach vs his hand to strengthẽ vs, ỹ we may be able to ouercome all impediments. For it were impossible ỹ euer we should compasse ỹ matter, vnlesse we were aided frõ aboue. So then, we se now ỹ a man cannot be partaker of the Paschal Lamb, except he haue his loynes girded and his

1. Cor. 5. 8.

staffe in his hand, ỹ is to say, vnlesse he be like a wayfarer and that he stay not in this world.

And for the same cause also doth our Lord Iesus Christ warne al his Disciples to haue lampes in their hands, & their garments trussed vp, & to be alwaies in a readinesse til he come, & to stand waiting continually for his comming. And as he cõmandeth vs to haue our loynes girded vp, euẽ so willeth he vs to haue lampes in our hands, to shew ỹ there is neither night nor day for ỹ faithfull to make tarience, & therefore ỹ euen in the middes of darknes we must haue light, euen the spirituall light to guide vs; & that we must haue the one foote alwaies lifted vp, to ỹ intent we be not taken vnawares when he commeth, but ỹ we haue minded our way aforehand, to go stil forward to meete ẅ him. Ye see then ỹ the way to communicate aright ẅ our Lord Iesus Christ, ỹ we may bee partakers of the sacrifice which he hath offered: is to make none accoũt of ỹ world, nor to haue any loue vnto it, but to seeke ỹ inheritance ỹ is aboue, & to cõmunicate so one with another here beneath, as it may bee a meane to make vs draw the neerer vnto God. And so wee see ỹ although ỹ figures of ỹ law continue not any longer, yet the truth of them abideth with vs, and it behoueth vs to put the same in vre.

And hereby we be yet better informed of the thing ỹ I haue touched already: which is that the profit which redoundeth to vs by ỹ death & passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ, is much better knowen & beautifullier seene of vs, by laying it to the auncient figure, & by considering how ỹ things ỹ were set forth darkly at ỹ time, are nowe fulfilled to ỹ sight of the eye. And like as it behoueth vs to communicate with our Lorde Iesus Christ: so let vs mark also ỹ God giueth vs a helpe euen at this day in ỹ Sacrament of ỹ Lordes supper, bicause of our rudenes & infirmitie. True it is (as I haue touched alreadie) ỹ our communicating with our Lord Iesus Christ must not bee only a thrise or foure times a yeere, but continually all our life long. Yet notwithstãding we haue nede to be quickened vp, bicause we come not to it with such strength as were requisite. Therefore like as ỹ fathers of old time had the Pascall Lamb: so hath ỹ sonne of God left vs his supper to be a helpe to vs to guide vs vnto him. Will we then be partakers of ỹ supper of our Lorde Iesus Christ? Let vs vnderstand ỹ according as I haue touched before, wee must rid our selues of all malice & guile, & forsake the world. True it is ỹ the Hypocrits do thrust themselues in among ỹ faithfull, & come to defile the table of ỹ sonne of God: but what carie they thẽce but vtter curstednes? Therefore let vs keepe our selues frõ being guiltie of such a treacherie, & consider that if it behoued a man to be circumcised in olde time ere he might eate of the Pascal Lamb: it behoueth vs also at this day to be separated to the seruice of our God, & to be first made holy. And we know ỹ we ought to be circumcised euen at this day: howbeit not by mans hand, but by inwarde reformation of minde, accordingly as S. Paule saith therof in the second Chapter to ỹ Colossians, ỹ whatsoeuer is of our flesh must bee cut off: for there is nothing in it but sinne & corruption. Now thẽ, ỹ we may come to ỹ holy supper of our Lord Iesus Christ, & haue there ỹ warrant which he giueth vs ỹ we be members of his body: let vs looke ỹ we circumcise our hearts. For the figure is abolished: but yet haue wee the accomplishment of all things in our Lord Iesus Christ.

Moreouer, let vs come to ỹ chief point: which is ỹ our Lord Iesus Christ is named our Passouer. For by him must we be deliuered, not out of the land of Egypt, but out of the dungeons of death: and we must passe a passage that were vnpossible for vs, if God drew vs not with his owne hand, & by his own wonderfull power. For we be al borne the children of wrath, and we should rot in our miserie, if god pitied vs not, & reached vs not his hand. And that man beguileth himselfe which thinketh himselfe able to leape out of the myre wherin he is plunged. It is the office of our Lord Iesus Christ to draw vs out frõ thence, according to this saying of S. Iohns in his viii. chapter, If ỹ sonne of god make you free, thẽ shal you be free. Wherby he sheweth vs, that euen from our very comming out of our mothers wombes, we be in ỹ cursed thraldom of sin & death, & shold continue therin vnto the end, if we were not set free from it by him which not without cause hath taken vpon him the title of passouer, to shew ỹ it is his office to set vs free, as I said afore. And heereby we must learn to presume nothing of our selues, but to consider that we must think our selues beholden to the sonne of god for all things, that he may bee magnified, & all those diueliish opinions of freewill & of power & ability to prepare our selues to doe good, beaten downe: so as we may know ỹ as long as God suffereth vs to follow our owne swindge, we shall alwayes abide fast tyed in the chaines of the diuel & of death. And therfore let vs yeeld our lord Iesus Christ his dew honour, which is ỹ we acknowledge him to bee the partie which hath set vs free. Iohn 8. 36.

And herewall let vs marke further, ỹ when we bee graffed into his body, it is not for vs to serue sin. For, to be graffed into the body of out Lord Iesus Christ, & yet notwithstanding to serue Sathan, are two things as contrary as fire and water. Nowe then if wee intend not to disfeate the power of the sonne of God, & to bereaue him of his office: we must be in liberty to serue god. And let vs not think ỹ he ment to beguile vs in telling vs that that office belõgeth vnto him. But it becommeth vs on our part to offer our selues vnto him, & not to maintain willingly the cursed bondage wherin we be. For the very cause why men perish therin, is that they sooth themselues and fall asleepe in it, and come not frankly to Iesus Christ. Now then let vs note ỹ ỹ true mark of our Christendom, is ỹ we be in freedom to do good, & ỹ we haue a pure & free wil to dedicate our selues to god. Not that we can do it perfectly so long as we be in this world, (for we see how S. Paul, who had profited far aboue a nomber of other men, mourneth and confesseth that he is stil held as a captiue in part:) but for ỹ the grace of our Lord Iesus Christ must neuertheless worke so farre in vs, as wee may not bee held quite backe by these Rom. 6. 3. Rom. 7. 14. 23.

worldly things. But let vs marke also ỹ our Lord Iesus Christ hath not only drawē vs out of ỹ gulfe of death, but also will haue vs dayly to passe further. And forasmuch as we be not quite & cleane rid of this bondage of sinne: this passing on must continue still. What is al our life then? It is a continuall holding on to attaine to ỹ full and perfect freedome which God hath promised to his children. And ỹ is ỹ cause why I sayd ỹ it behooued vs to eate the Pascall Lamb euery day. For Iesus Christ is not our euerlasting Passouer, for ỹ he is sacrificed euery day: but for ỹ we doe daily take benefit by him, & for that he maketh ỹ vertue of his sacrifice continually auailable by his holy spirit. Notwithstanding, howsoeuer ỹ case go, yet must we still keepe on forward, vntill we bee taken out of this world.

This doctrine ought to be very common, yea and when it is preached, euery man will thinke he knowes it wellynough: but in the meane while where is ỹ practise thereof? Where is the sayd freeheartednes to shewe by our deedes that our Lord hath broken the bondes of Satan, so as we serue not sinne any more? Where is ỹ earnestnes of minde to proceede more & more vntil we be gone quite & cleane out of the world? And yet must we exercise this doctrine, & put it in vre, if we wil be acknowledged for mẽbers of our Lord Iesus Christ. But we cannot haue him to bee our Redeemer, except he haue alwayes ỹ saide title of Passeouer. And that is in respect of vs: for he hath made his passage, by comming downe into
2. Tim. 3. 16 the world & by reconciling men to God his father, & by being receiued vp againe into his glorie and Maiestie. Therfore there must not be any more chaunge in Iesus Christ. But we on our side must be made perfect in him: and as soone as he calleth vs to be of his body, we must begin to depart out of ỹ dungeons of sin, from whence we must withdraw our selues euer more & more, and still trauell to attaine to the heauenly righteousnes. To be short, let vs note that a Christian may well perceiue whether hee haue profited in the Gospell or no, by examining whether hee be withdrawen from the worlde or no, and whether he be ready and weldisposed to depart from it as oft as it shall please God to pull him away from it, so as his heart be not tyed to it as long as
Matt. 6. 21. he is heere beneath (For looke where our treasure is, there is also our heart with it) but that seeing Iesus Christ is our full life and felicitie, we alwaies tend to hinward, & euer haue our mindes lifted vp on high.

And let vs marke further, that to keepe the passeouer aright at this day, it behoueth vs to be vnited together, accordingly as we see how God hath giuen a strait commaundement thereof in this place, where he saith it is not Lawfull to eate the pascall Lambe in any other of the Cities or townes of the contrey, but ỹ they ought to assemble together to the Temple. Which thing I haue told you heeretofore, was doone to preserue the religion in his purenes. Will we then nowadaies be partakers of our Lord Iesus Christ? Let vs agree together that there may be a true brotherhood among vs. For if we bee at ods among our selues like dogs & cats, Iesus Christ must needes disclaime & disauow vs. And therefore let vs not imagine our selues to be vnited to Iesus Christ, except there be good agreement and brotherly loue among vs. And wherein must that be? We may not conspire together as the wicked doe for they make confederacies and ioyne hands together to make warre against God. Curssed be such vnion: it behoueth vs to bee farre off from such dealing. Nay, we must reforte to the temple of God. And although we haue not now a materiall temple as the Iewes had then in Ierusalem, (for our meeting togither is for common orders sake, and not after the manner of the Iewes, who had a place certaine appointed out to thē:) although (say I) we haue not the like figure; yet must we walke as in the presence of our God, we must be [illegible] ruled by his word, we must haue one melody of [illegible] faith to praise God as it were with one mouth, & we must shew our selues truly to be al one in him. Thus ye see how wee must be gathered together to Gods Church, if we will bee partakers of our Lord Iesus Christ.

And herein we see, ỹ these scorners which runn away from ỹ order of ỹ church, exclude theselues from al hope of the heauenly life. They can say wel ynough ỹ their intent is to be Christians: but yet for al ỹ, inasmuch as they forsake ỹ vnitie of faith, yea & euen fight against it by despising all order: is it not to be concluded, ỹ they cannot be partakers of the Pascall Lambe, at leastwise after ỹ true maner thereof which we haue nowadaies? Let vs marke well then, ỹ to be partakers of our Lord Iesus Christ, we must not be only vnited in ỹ doctrine of ỹ gospel: but we must also make confession of our faith, in assembling all togither as though God were present with vs. And truely we know how it is promised vs, ỹ where two or three are gathered togither in ỹ name of Iesus Christ he will beare rule there, & be present among thē. And therfore let vs haue a diligent regard of resorting vnto Sermons. And therwithal, let vs vse ỹ Sacrament of the Lords supper, ỹ we may take one another what is ment by it. For in the xii. of Exodus our Lord sheweth vs full well, ỹ wee must profit in his schoole, to be partakers of ỹ Pascall Lambe. If thy sonne aske thee what this act of ours betokeneth: Thou shalt answere, wee were bondslaues in ỹ land of Egypt, & God pitied vs. Thus ye see what we haue to doe at this day, not for ỹ eating of a rosted Lambe: but to be made partakers of our Lorde Iesus Christ in spirit and truth. Wee must inquire diligently to know ỹ benefits which our Lord Iesus Christ hath brought vs. And herein is our negligence bewrayed. For it is ynough for vs to heare Iesus Christ spoken of: yea & there are a great sort which haue not the skil to discerne the father from the sonne. They know not whether Iesus Christ were sent by God his father or nō: insomuch ỹ now & then a man shall finde more beastlines in those ỹ haue their eares dayly beaten w the Gospel, than among ỹ Papists. Nay it is to bee openly seene. Why then come we to Sermōs, but to be taught? Nay, there are a nōber which fulfil ỹ prouerb ỹ saith, a foole doubteth of nothing. And they ỹ haue most need

to learne, think themselues to know most, & that they need not to ope their mouths to ask which is Gods truth. But as for vs, let vs inquire. And for ỹ doing thereof let vs marke, ỹ it behoueth vs to liue soberly, for if we go to worke proudly & presumptuously as a nõber do which think thẽselues so great clerks (as I haue said) ỹ no man cã teach thẽ any more than they know alreadie: wee shall be ful enough, yea euẽ till we burst: but it shalbe but with wind, & we shalbe voyde of all light of life. But if wee can finde in our heartes to bee taught of God: we must bee learners, that is to say, lowliminded: and we must vnderstand that we haue neede to proceede further. And truely the verie vse of the Lordes supper ought to put vs in minde, that our cõming thither ought not to be without instruction. For (as I declared yesterday) a sacrament without teaching & instruction, is a deade thing, and a mocking of God, and a defiling of the thing it selfe. Therefore as oft as wee come to the supper, let it bee a whetting of vs, to make vs inquire of ỹ things that we know not sufficiently before though we haue had some tast of them. And truely if it be not lawful to admit young children to the Lords supper, vntill they knowe what is meant by that Sacrament, and wherefore it was ordeyned: shoulde such as haue liued a fortie and three-score yeares come to it like dogges or swine? And yet we see they doe so: and woe be to them for it. So then let the visible signe which our lord hath ordeyned be a meane to spurre vs forwarde the more, that wee may seeke to profite more and more in the knowing of Iesus Christ, specially seeing we be no more troubled nowadayes with reforting to a place which God hath appointed. For wee haue Iesus Christ who is Gods temple, and hee is not shut vp within any certaine place, but filleth both heauen and earth, with his power. True it is that in the nature of man wherewith he clothed himselfe, he is gone vp into heauen: and yet for all that, hee ceaseth not to dwell here in vs. So then we must go to Ierusalem, we neede not to goe on pilgrimage, but only to make our repaire to the son of God, and we shall finde in him the whole fulnesse and perfection of the Godhead. Neuertheless wee must marke well also, that forasmuch as the fathers of olde time had not the thinges that are geuen vs at this time, it shal be to our sorer condemnation, if they haue beene diligenter than we in exercysing ỹ figures & shadowes, and that we nowadayes be lasie and colde, so as the substance be put into our handes, and yet we make no reckening of it. The Iewes were faine to resort to the Temple of Ierusalem, leauing their houses and householdes. And their wiues and children were faine to come trotting thither, with great trauell and not without charges. And why? *Ye shall resort to the place which the Lorde shall haue chosen to set his name in.* He saith not to dwel there throughout, but to shewe his presence in such wise, as it may be knowen that we bee vnited to our God, not onely by figures and shadowes, but also by his dwelling among vs. As nowe there is not any one place which God hath chosen to put his name in, that hee might bee called vpon alonely there: but wee haue God manifested in the flesh. For what is Iesus Christ? Euen so is he intitled by Saint Paul. Seeing then that hee calleth vs to himselfe, and that we neede not to make any long circuites to finde him, but rather that he preuenteth vs, and that all his desire is to drawe vs to God his father: shoulde we nowe be lasie and colde? What excuse wil there be for vs, when the Iewes tooke such paine hauing but ỹ first principles like yong childrens Apsies, and ỹ we nowadayes being brought to the full perfection, doe fare neuer the better by it, or at least-wise it standeth vs not in so much steade, as the auncient figures stood the Iewes vnder the law. Thus ye see what we haue to remember vppon this text, where it is saide that they resorted to the place which the Lord had chosen. 1. Tim. 3. 16.

Now finally for a conclusion, Moses telleth them *that there should bee no Leauened breade in all their borders during those dayes: and secondly that on the day of the passeouer, they should keep as great solemnitie as on the Sabboth day.* And hereby he sheweth that it is not enough for vs to absteyne from fraude and malice, but that we must labor to the vtterm oft we can, to put away al filth frõ among vs. For if I alledge, that as for my selfe I will bee no hypocrite, and in the meane time doe suffer stumblingblockes in the Church, yea or mainteyne them: I must not thinke my selfe therefore discharged. It is saide, *There shall no leauen bee seene in thy coastes.* As if he had said, Euerie man must haue an eye to himselfe and to his house, ỹ ye be not defiled in any thing that may hinder you to eat of the pascall Lambe in all pureness. Therefore beginne at your selues and at your owne householdes. But yet therewithall bee so watchfull also, as there may be no corruptiõ in al ỹ rest of the people. Wherfore let vs haue an eie nowadaies to the wel practising of this doctrine, and let euerie man looke narrowly to himselfe. And afterwarde let such as haue householdes to gouerne, looke to the purging away of all filth and vncleanesse. And then generally, if there be any stumbling blockes among vs, which may put thinges out of order: let vs all looke to the reprooving of them out of hande. And aboue all thinges let vs assure our selues, that to bee partakers of Iesus Christ in true pureness, wee must begin at the cleansing of our selues, ỹ God may gouerne vs, and that our passeouer may be kept in spirit and trueth, by casting ourselues vterly downe, and by yeelding to forbeare all our owne thoughtes and affections, so as wee may keepe a spirituall Sabboth, not for one day onely (as I said afore,) but ỹ we may continue therein during all the time of our life.

Now let vs kneele downe before the Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs to feele thẽ better than we haue done, that they may so mislike vs from day to day, as euery of vs may inforce himselfe to repaire vnto him, and to frame our selues in such sort to his righteousnes, as all our whole life may bee ordered, &c. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the vij. of Nouember. 1555.

The XCix. Sermon, which is the third vpon the sixteenth Chapter.

9 Thou shalt recken seuen weekes from the time that thou beginnest to put the sickle into thy harueſt: thou shalt begin to recken seuen weekes:

10 Afterward thou shalt keepe the feast of weekes to the Lord thy God, with a freewill offering of thy handes, which thou shalt giue as the Lord thy God shall haue blessed thee.

11 And thou shalt reioyce before the face of the Lorde thy God, both thou and thy sonne, and thy daughter, thy Manseruaunt and thy Maidseruaunt, and the Leuite which is within thy gates, and the straunger, the fatherlesse, and the widowe which are among you, in the place which the Lord thy God will choose to set his name in.

12 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondseruant in Egypt: and thou shalt keepe and do these ordinances.

MOses teacheth heere of the seconde great solemnitie which was kepte yearely among the Iewes: and that was to giue God thankes after the gathering of their harueſt. And this day was named Pentecoſt, [that is to say fiftie dayes,] becauſe there were seuen weekes betweene Easter and that, so as there were nine and fortie dayes betweene those feastes, whereunto one being added for the feastday it selfe, made fiftie. And the Greeke worde signifieth the same thing: but the Hebrewes called it the feast of weekes, and all commeth to one thing. Thus then we see now what this feast was whereof Moses speaketh here, that is to wit a meane to put them in minde to honor God for sending his benefites to the sustenance of man. And this concerned all manner of fruites of the earth: Howebeit vnder one kinde, all the rest were cõprehended, as if God had exhorted his people to confesse that all good thinges come of him. The summe then is, that we must acknowledge not onely that God hath set vs in this worlde, but also that he sheweth himselfe continually to be a fosterfather, and that he mainteyneth vs, and that he maketh the earth to yeelde fruite to finde vs withall, and at a worde, that we liue by his meere liberalitie. True it is that this ought to be done at all times of our life; howbeit by reason of mens grosseneſſe, it was requisite that there shoulde bee yearely a feast kepte vppon some one certaine day of the yeare. Moreouer (as I haue tolde you alreadie) the feastes of the Iewes serued not only for the benefites that God had bestowed vppon them alreadie, but also for a seruice. And so, to be short, Gods will was that the Iewes should giue him thankes one day in the yeare, ỳ therby they might be prouoked to acknowledge all their life after, that they were susteyned at his hande, so as they should neuer take anie repast, but that they shoulde thinke thus with themselues, wee haue offered sacrifice to God after harueſt: whereby we were put in minde that it is hee which hath sent vs our sustenance. Therefore are we hypocrites, if we thinke not vppon his goodnesse dayly, or if wee turne not to him as often as we eate or drinke, to acknowledge him to be the author of al welfare. So then, this solemne protestation made once a yere was not a discharge for men to forget God all the rest of the time, but rather a meane to make them thinke, Goe too, we haue kept here a solemne feast for one day, that it might be a schooling to vs all the yeare after, that if wee haue any thing wherewith to susteyne our selues, it is Gods doing who hath had pitie on vs.

But nowe the ceremonie of this feast is no longer in vse, and yet the trueth therof abideth with vs still. And so wee receiue good and profitable instructiõ by ỳ doctrine therof, reason wherof it cannot be thought to be abolished, and ỳ it was written alonely for the Iewes. For it was Gods will that men shoulde bee taught by it euen to the worldes end, and that they should be put in minde not to swallowe vp Gods benefites into our paunches without thinking vpon him, but rather that wee shoulde be bolde to giue him thankes, as oft as we either eate or drinke; so that whensoeuer we take any repast, we may consider howe it is hee that giueth it vs, first opening the heauen to giue moysture and foyzon to the earth, and afterward giuing power to the earth to beare fruite, and finally blessing the Corne when it is sprung vp, that it may prosper to yeeld foode vnto vs. Seeing then that we perceiue al these things, let vs haue regard to benefite our selues by them. True it is (as I haue touched afore) that we must not haue anie one day certaine in the yeare, as the Iewes had: rather ought wee also to bee as young children. If a man alleadge for his excuse, that if hee do not his duetie, let him not vse his reward giuen him as a little childe hath: it will not serue to

excuse him. Folke doe not vse to giue a young childe his breakefast till hee haue prayed vnto God, because hee hath not the wit and discretion to doe it, vnlesse he bee compelled vo it by some certaine order. Nowe then if an olde fellowe of the age of thirtie or fortie yeares eate his meate without praying to God, he deserueth not to bee beaten with a rodde, but to bee driuen away and to bee abhorred as a swine. And if hee alleadge, I haue no rule as is giuen to young children: what is that to the matter? Hast thou not discretion enough to do so much of thy selfe? Hast thou liued so long in the world and doest thou not yet know that thou oughtest to yeelde God thankes for the good which hee doth vnto thee? Therefore it is saide that the Iewes were young children in comparison of the Christians: for God had giuen them rules according to their infirmities. As now although these thinges bee past away in respect of vs; yet are wee the more bounde to acknowledge Gods grace in his feeding & maintaining of vs. And why? The perfecter y the doctrine is which is imparted to vs in the Gospel, the more plainly ought wee to acknowledge the benefites of our God towardes vs. That is the thing which wee haue first to remember out of this text.

Nowe it is saide, *That the people shall reserue in Ierusalem to offer freewillofferings*. God pointeth out these thinges more particularly in the three and twentith of Leuiticus, where he sheweth what offeringes were to bee made on the behalfe of the people. Howbeit, hee speaketh there but of euerie particular person, and hee saith, *Ye shall bring offeringes according to your deuotion*. For although there was a lawe certaine; yet behooued it their offeringes to bee made with a free will, and not as by compulsion, accordingly as it is saide, that God loueth such as offer vnto him willingly and not as of necessitie. Yee shall see manie that will be liberall to Godwarde; howebeit, it is but a thing of constraint, which kinde of dealing God vtterlie mislikeeth. A man may spoyle himselfe of all his goods, and yet doe God no such seruice as hee shall like well of, if it bee not matched with his free will, as I saide afore. Besides this, GOD left it to euerie mans owne choyce to offer what hee thought best, but yet he addeth *according as the Lord thy God shall haue blessed thee*. To the intent that men should not withhold through niggardlinesse, as they be commonly wont to doe: God putteth them here in minde of his blessing: as if hee had saide, be well aduised, true it is that in this case I lay the bridle on your necke, offer what you your selues thinke good, I meane not to inforce you to any thing; I would haue the offeringes which you bring vnto mee, to be of a free will. But yet for all that, ye must come to account for it. Who is hee that blesseth you? If yee haue had a good and plentiful harnest, to whome are you beholden for it? Ought yee not to consider howe it is I y haue opened my hand wide, to the end that your hearts also should be open themselues wide on their parte? Know ye therefore that I haue allured you, by multiplying you; wherefore when yee haue a good croppe, looke that yee employe your selues so much the freelier in doing my seruice.

And hereby wee bee warned to looke neerely to our selues, that euerie of vs may put forth the good thinges which God hath committed vnto him. Here is mention made but onely of Corne, Wine, and such other thinges. Then if God haue inriched a man, hee must see that hee suppresse not Gods blessing, by keeping it close. For wee see there are Cormorantes which haue no care of otherfolkes pouertie: they thinke they may scrape all that they can come by, and that no man ought to haue any parte of their goods. On the contrarie part it is declared here, that accordingly as euerie man hath receiued aboundance at Gods hande, so must hee impart vnto his neighbours: for that is the ende which God aimeth at. And if wee thinke not of it, we must come to account for it: and wee shall finde at length, that God will impute it to vs for theft, when wee shall haue deuoured his goods after y fashion, without hauing anie pitie vppon the needie to succour them. In like case is it with spirituall giftes. For according as euerie man is of abilitie and skill to succour his neighbours, so is hee bounde to discharge himselfe and to put himselfe forwarde. Otherwise GOD will shewe vs to what purpose hee had bestowed his benefites vppon vs, and that wee haue fayled in our duetie. That is the thing which wee haue to beare away in that Moses alleadgeth Gods blessing to stirre vp the Iewes to offer sacrifice y more largely, after as God shall haue increased them, knowing that hee bindeth them thereby vnto him.

And whereas he saith, *That they shall reioyce with their children, their menseruauntes, & their womenseruauntes, the fatherlesse, the widowes, and the strangers*: thereby hee sheweth that his lawe was not ceremoniall onely, but that it tended also to the doing of almesdeedes: as indeede our Lord hath at all times shewed, that those are the very sacrifices which he requireth. True it is that parte of the thinges which were to be offered, were to be brought to the Altar, & there to be burned in sacrifice: but yet for all that, it was alwayes prouided that of the rest, the poore should be fedde and maintayned as well as the priestes & Leuites: and nowe doeth Moses speake thereof againe. Wherefore let vs marke, that euen in the time of the Ceremonies and shadowes of the lawe, God neuer required sacrifice, but that he willed men therewithall to haue pitie vppon the needie to succour them, according to this saying of his by his Prophet Osee. I require mercy & not sacrifice. True it is y he had commanded both of them: but he sheweth y such as think to discharge themselues by cõming to y church, and by offering their giftes there, doe beguile themselues, and that all their doinges are but hypocrisie, if they bee not kindehearted in succouring the needie, & in doing of Almesdeeds. For I pray you, can wee aduaunce GOD anie whyt by offering of our goods vnto him? Can we inrich

Hebr. 13. 16.

Osee. 6. 6.

Iob. 35.6. Psal. 16.2. inrich him? Wanteth he any thing? True it is that hee requireth oblations: howebeit, that was to the end that men shoulde acknowledge euen by eyesight, that they were bounde vnto him. It was a kinde of puting of them in minde of it. Yet notwithstanding it stood them alwayes in hand to consider, that they could not otherwise discharge themselues, than by giuing part of their goods to such of their neighbours as had want. Thus ye see howe the meaning of Moses was, that when the Iewes offered their sacrifices after harueſt, it was not enough for them to acknowledge with mouth and outward gestures, that they were bound vnto God for his sending of them wherewith to liue, but that it behooued them also to shewe towardes men that they intended to be faithfull stewardes of the thinges which he had put into their hands, and desired nothing but to be well discharged of them.

And to moue thē more thereunto, he telleth them *That they themselues had beene bondslaues in the Land of Egypt*, which warning peale hath bin set downe in other places heretofore. For wee know that when men liue at their owne ease and in pleasure, they bee not greatly touched with compassion though other men die for hunger: & euen so was it with the Iewes when they were come into the land of Chanaan after they began once to waxe ful. For the land it selfe was fat and specially because God had blessed it. Therefore doth he bring thē backe to the minding of their former state, and of the cruel bondage wherein they had beene. Consider (saith he) how ye haue beene bondslaues in the land of Egypt, and that as then ye would faine haue been gently intreated. When ye were too greeuously vexed, ye cried out vnto mee. Now therefore know ye that ye poore & needy which are among you, do craue likewise to be regarded at your handes, and that I for my part do make account of them. This is the effect of the matter conteined in that place.

Now to the end we may make our profit by it, let vs cal to mind the saying of the prophet Osee accordingly also as it is alledged by our Lord Iesus Christ, that is to wit, that God requireth the sacrifice of Almesdeeds. As if he should say, that he is not contented that men shoulde vse some Ceremonies towards him, but will haue vs to be kindharted in releeuing such as haue need of our helpe, if we haue abilitie wherewith to do it. And if men play the thankeleſſe churles with vs in forgetting the good which we haue done them: it is enough for vs that God alloweth our dealing, and putteth it into his booke of accounts. Also let vs bethinke our selues howe glad wee woulde haue beene of releefe, if euer wee were in necessitie, that the same may moone vs to pitie, and that we be not blinded with our wealth. I say to such as haue abundance, let them not lie welt'ring in their pleasures, and withdrawe their hand from succoring the poore: but let them cōsider that if euer they themselues felt the want of these worldly goods, they woulde bee glad that euerie man shoulde reach out his hande to releeue them: and therefore let they themselues doe the like. Yea and although wee had neuer felt any want, yet let vs consider that want may fall vpon vs hereafter. For what are we? Who can exempt himself from the stroke of God that he should not be driuen to begge his bread, yea though he had all the goods of the world? How of we see great store of examples. Seeing it is so, let no man be proude of his goods, but let vs al consider that we be men, and let vs not despise our owne flesh, as is saide in the Prophet Esay. And let vs not say, what be the widowes what be the fatherles children? what be strangers to vs? But seeing that God offereth it commendeth them to vs, let vs assure ourselues that wee cannot haue any soules more nigh vnto vs to whome to doe good. For when wee weene to bind men vnto vs, to haue recompense at their hande; wee shall be disappointed of all assayes, and good right it is that it shoulde so. But as for the thing that is put into Gods hand, that cannot perishe nor bee lost. Let vs marke then that Gods offering of the Strangers, the widowes, and the fatherles vnto vs, is as if he shoulde say, he made them his bayliffes to take vp his Rentes and Reuenewes. And when we bee to doe him homage for the benefites which wee haue receiued at his hande; let vs assure ourselues, that hee accepteth and auoweth all that euer is done to those whome hee speaketh of here by Moses.

Nowe we knowe what was done in the feast of Pentecost, namely that the holy Ghost was sent down vpon Christs disciples, and that there was a kinde of renewing of the worlde, to erect the kingdome of our Lord Iesus Christ: for there he vttered his power, yea more than hee did in his resurrection. For what had we bin the better for Christs rising againe in his own person, if he had not powred out the grace of his holy spirite vppon his Church, to shewe that hee was set at the right hande of God his father, to fil all thinges and to dwell in vs, and that he hath such soueraigne dominion ouer all thinges, that we be in safetie when we be in his protection? And if wee looke well vppon the matter, we shall find that the lawe was giuen the same time as after the Passeouer. For it is saide that the people came to Sinay the thirde moneth after their departure out of Egypte, the same day that they departed from Raphidin. Nowe that was the first day of the moneth, and the fiftenth day was the day of the Passeouer. And according as the moonethes were as then, which went by the course of the Moone, there was one whole mooneth added. And so in deede there were fiftie dayes from the Passeouer to Gods setting foorth of his lawe vppon Mount Sinay, so as the feast of Pentecoste or Whitsuntide was referred to that time. Now we know that the lawe coulde do men no good, if it were but onely giuen them: for it is a deade letter. And againe, it killeth vs, because it sheweth vs our duetie, and wee be all transgressors of it, so as it condemneth and accurseth vs. What are men the better then for the publishing of the Lawe? Nothing at all, but that it sheweth them howe they bee bereft of all hope of saluation,

Matt. 9.23. & 12.7.

and that they be all damned before God. And that is the cause why Saint Paul saith, that the Iewes at that time receiued the spirite of bondage, in terrour and feare saith he. It is sufficiently shewed in the nineteenth of Exodus how the Lawe affrighteth those that receiued it. For they went backewarde and entreated that God would speake to them by the mouth of Moses, because they could not heare his voyce but they must needes die for it. Ye see then that the Lawe taught men the will of GOD. But what? Forasmuch as wee be cleane contrarie to his goodnesse and righteousnesse: the lawe of it selfe can yeeld nothing but death, accordingly also as Saint Paul speaking thereof in the seconde to the Corinthians, saith, that it is a letter which killeth. Therefore it behooued the lawe to be renewed, and that God shoulde publishe it after an other fashion, not writing it in tables of stone, but in our heartes by chaunging them. For by nature our harts are as hard as stone, as it is said by the Prophet Ezechiel. Therefore must God be faine to soften them, & to make thē pliable, y they may be obedient to his lawe. Ye see then how the lawe was published after an other fashion vppon Whitsonday, than it was in olde time by Moses. For it was not deliuered vs in tables of stone, but God wrought so in vs by his holy spirite, that wee were then renewed, and the same continueth still at this day.

And therefore let vs marke, that besides the admonishment which the Iewes had to doe homage to God for their haruest and for their bodily sustenance which he gaue them: they had also a resemblaunce of the thinges which were fulfilled at the cōming of our Lord Iesus Christ, at which time GOD made another manner of Whitsontide than had beene in the time of the figures. For at that time he vttered the grace of the holy Ghost. Yet for all this, it is not meant y we should keepe a feast of Pentecost: it is cleane contrarie. Seeing that the thinges which were figured vnder the law, were fulfilled in our Lord Iesus Christ, and that the figures themselues are ended: if we bring them backe againe, wee doe wrong to him which hath brought the full accomplishment of all thinges. If the shadowes which were vnder the lawe, do come vp againe; Iesus Christ is to no purpose. So then let vs marke that the holy Ghost was not sent vnto vs, to the ende that these figures should continue still: but to shewe that we differ from the people of olde time. True it is (as I saide afore) that there is no ill in it for the Christians to haue a certaine daie wherein this historie shoulde bee declared vnto them: For we must not tie our selues to so streit a precisenesse, that it should not be lawfull for vs to vse that helpe for our infirmitie. But to make a service of God thereof, and to take example at the Iewes, as though it behoued vs to fashion our selues like vnto them, or as though the feast of Whitsontide ought to be obserued at this day, by reason of the sending of the holy Ghost: that were too grosse a fondnesse. Let vs vnderstand then, first that the Iewes had but a figure & shadowe of the trueth: and on our owne part wee may knowe in Iesus Christ, that God hath not figured anie thing in vaine, but that all the ceremonies of the Law tended to verie good purpose because the effect of them is shewed vs in him. Therefore let vs holde vs contented therewith, and now let vs learne to reioyce in the presence of our God, and to make otherfolks partakers of our mirth. Col. 2. 17.

The Iewes were commanded to resort to Ierusalem as soone as harueste was done, & not only to reioyce there, but also to impart of their goods to their neighbors, so as there might be a common gladnes among them, and God might be glorified with one accord. And now that these things are at this day accomplished: what haue we to doe? We must not run trotting to Ierusalē to worship God there and to doe him homage there. For we must lift vp our hands euerywhere, howbeit so as they be cleane. And moreouer for asmuch as GOD hath not only sent vs a harueste of corruptible fruits to nourish our bodies withal but also powred out y infinite riches of his holy spirit and sent vs the liuing waters as is saide in Ezechiel: let vs vnderstand that it is to y end we should haue the mirth whereof S. Paul speaketh in the fourteenth to the Romanes. Let vs now reioyce then seeing our Lord hath shewed himselfe so bountifull towards vs, that hee hath not withholde any of the cheefe good thinges which he had, but hath powred vppon vs all the benefites that concerne the endles life and heauenly glorie. Seeing then that we haue receiued the holy Ghost, let vs also be ioyful in our harts. As how? By withdrawing ourselues from y vanities of this world, & by holding our selues contēted with the fauor of our God, praising him euen in the middes of our afflictions. Albeit that wee haue not all things at wil in this world: yet let vs not cease to hold on still, assuring our selues that it ought to suffice vs that our God is fauourable to vs, & that he sheweth vs his loue. When wee be at that point once, then shall wee haue such peace and contentment in vs, as passeth all the ioyes of this world, yea and putteth away all the sorrowes that may trouble vs. And when wee haue such gladnesse our selues, wee must to the vttermost of our power make them partakers of it, which haue need. For if the Iewes were commanded to cal the widowes, the fatherles, and the strangers to make merie with them, in spending of the goods which God had giuen them: much more reason is it, that seeing the spirituall gifts which God hath bestowed vppon vs, belong to the common building vp of the Church as saith Saint Paul in the twelfth to the Romanes, and also in the twelfth of the first to y Corinthians, we should take heed y we defraude not our neighbours of the thing which GOD hath appointed for them. Exod. 19. 16. Deut. 5. 25. Heb. 12. 19. 2. Cor. 3. 6. Ezech. 11. 19. Ezech. 36. 26. Ezech. 47. 9. Rom. 12. 6. & 1. Cor. 12. 7. Phil. 4. 7.

Let vs marke also that as nowe there is no more any stranger as in respect of vs. For whereas God had separated the Iewes from the gentiles: nowe it is his will to bee knowen through the whole worlde; there is no more diuision of bodies; the wall is broken downe as saith Saint Paul in an other place. Seeing then that God Eph. 2. 14.

hath

hath knit vs together after this fashion, and that Ierusalem extendeth through the whole world as
Zach. 2. 4. the Prophet Zacharie speaketh thereof: wee ought to bee the more moued and prouoked to make al our brothers partakers of the ioy which wee haue receyued by the spirite of God. Thus ye see in effect what wee haue to marke vppon that text.

But herewithall wee must marke that Moses in this place leaueth out two feastes which are spoken of in the three & twentith of Leuiticus, the cause whereof is for that the people were not streitly bounde to repaire at that time to Ierusalem to worshippe there. There was the feastes of Trumpets and the feast of * Affliction; and although Moses speake here of no mo than of three solemne feastes: yet doeth it behoue vs to interlace these other two with them. And as touching the feast of Affliction, let vs marke that our Lorde ordeyned it not without cause; but it wil serue vs verie wel to the expounding of the text which is dek with alreadie. For wee be taught that the Iewes had certayne dayes in the yeare, to the ende that the trueth shoulde abide vnto vs, and that it shoulde beare his full force among vs all the dayes of our life. It behooued the Iewes to humble themselues both by fasting and otherwise in acknowledging their sinnes: and thereupon to make a solemne confession of their misdeedes, in humbling théselues to God, and in crauing forgiuenesse for the same. I saide afore that this was not ordeined without cause. For wee see howe men do couer their faults as much as they can, and that they bethinke not themselues of them but by constraint. They alwayes drawe backe if they bee not thrust forwarde: for to their seeming it is a matter of melancholie. True it is that wee cannot thinke vppon our sinnes without greefe of minde: but yet is it for our welfare. And therfore in the second to the Corinthians Saint Paul
2. Cor. 7. 8. saith, that this kinde of sorrowing is not to bee shunned, neither ought men to be sorie for their sorrowing when they be put in minde of their sinnes. For why? It is a sorrowing as pleaseth
Luke 15. 17. God greatly, and gladdeth the Angels of Paradise, and bringeth vs infinite ioye in the ende. And forasmuch as men make merrie & reioyce when they haue offended God: their condemnation must needes be dubble, and needes must this sentence bee accomplished vppon them
Luke 6. 25. which saith; Woe bee to you which laugh, for yee shall weepe and bee sorie. And so let vs marke that because men will not willingly know and perceiue their faultes, it was Gods will that there shoulde bee a yereminde of them, that the Iewes might bethinke them of the great number of the sinnes which they hadde committed, and humble themselues. Not that their so doing acquitted them: but to the intent it shoulde bee a warning to them all the yeare after.

Nowe then, their fasting and their protesting of themselues to be guiltie before God: was to the ende that when they were gone home into their owne houses, they shoulde consider thus with themselues: Alas it is not for one day onely that it behoueth vs to craue forgiuenesse for wee cease not to offende our God, euen minute of an houre we be entring into a newe bonde with death. For although God haue pardoned vs; yet returne we to our sinne againe, and there is no ende of sinning: insomuch that as long as wee bee in this worlde, there are euer some vices lurking in vs, and our corruption is so great, that it is vnpossible for vs altogether to absteyne from doing of euill. Then behooued it the Iewes to thinke vppon their sinnes, and meete was it that the sayde feaste shoulde be an instruction to them for all the yeare after. Thus howsoeuer it was, they hadde the figure. But we in these dayes must haue the truth without any such Ceremonie. And thereby wee see what superstition was among the Papistes: for they turned this feast of Affliction or humbling into their Lenton fast, saying that in that time they punished themselues with fasting, that they might acknowledge their sinnes: and they alleged the example of the Iewes. Yea, but we must alwayes come backe to the diuersitie which S. Gal. 4. Paul in the Galathians putteth betweene vs and the fathers of olde time, for els what am wee the better for the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ? If wee at this day must still haue the shadowes that were vnder the lawe: where is the freedome that he speaketh of? I meane not such a freedome as shall lay the reynes lose in our neck, to liue as we list. No, but y wee should not bee trayned vp any more like lule children Gal. 4. for that was continued vntill the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and vntill hee had fashioned himselfe to the worlde. But as nowe we must let the figures goe, and all that belonged to that rawnesse; and wee must goe to the verie pith and substance of them. And therefore whereas the papistes haue ordeyned their Lenton fast in steade of the feast of Affliction, which God had ordeined among the Iewes: It is but an Apetoye. I forbeare to speake as nowe of the other abuses and illusions conteyned therein: for they vpholde that their fasting of fortie dayes is after the example of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Yea but let them then absteyne from all meate and drinke, and bee as Angels of Paradise. Nay, they cramme themselues so full at their dinners, that at night they bee still cumbered with that which they had receyued before: and yet notwithstanding they will needes beare Iesus Christ in hande, that they fashion themselues like to him. Hee was exalted farre beyonde all state and nature of man when he fasted fortie dayes and fortie nightes: and hee did it to shewe his diuine power, and to magnifie the Maiestie of his Gospell: and these dreamers take vppon them to counterfeite his doinges. And after what sort? In cramming themselues, as I saide afore. Surely it was euen a deuice of Satan, to deface the heauenly power which was vttered in our Lorde Iesus Christ. Againe if they will needes resemble the fonte of God in fasting fortie dayes, they should doe but once in all their life. For Iesus Christ fasted but

* Otherwise called y feast of fasting, or of humbling themselues.

once in all his life. And why then will they goe beyonde him? Beholde the sonne of God discharged himselfe with once fasting, and these doctors will needes beare the worlde in hande that they followe the example of Iesus Christ. Besides this, they will needes frame themselues to the fashion of the Iewes also & because there was a feast among the Iewes, wherein it behoued them to afflict themselues: these men will also needes doe the like. Yea, but that was not Gods intent. For it was a commaundement peculiar to the Iewes, that they shoulde obserue the saide feast, as whereof the ceremonie was giuen vnto them. Neuertheless the truth thereof remaineth to vs, to shewe vs that as the Iewes punished themselues once a yeare, to take instruction thereby according to their small skill: so nowadayes wee must be sorie for our faultes as long as we liue.

And herein we see further, that the Papistes haue not onely played the hypocrites, but also moste shamefully and diuelishly exalted themselues against God. For first of all their fasting of the Lent, and their going to shrift, is but to haue the freer scope to dispise God, and to let him alone, and to turne their backes vpon him all the yeare after. They make a sorie countenaunce and wring their mouthes, and play the Popehypocrites when they come to the passion weeke as they tearme it, and yet afterwarde they chide the matter with belking out this diuelishworde, that they sende it away into Galile, and so like villains they skoffe at God and all religion. The tongues ought to bee plucked out of their heades which dare blaspheme after this fashion. And it is not the baser sort of the common people, but the wiser sort and as will needes be counted I wote not what, which vse that kinde of speech. And so ye may see what confusion is among them, sith they despise God after this fashion, and fall to kicking against him, like wilde oxen, and yet in the meane while wil needes shroude themselues vnder the example of our Lord Iesus Christ. But a man may see not onely that the thinges wherewith they woulde please God are baggagely trifles, but also they vse so shamefull abhominations as doe well bewray that they rebell against the holy Ghost, and against the Maiestie of God. And yet are they not contented with that, but they proceede also to the murdering and martyring of Gods children, shedding their giltles blood euen without any remorse or scruple of conscience. For when they come to shrift, they neuer bethinke them of that, but they confesse how they haue not obserued such an Apes toye, and howe they were not at masse such a day, and how they haue omitted the doing of such a flimflam. To be short, they mocke God openly. And if a man shewe them their wicked life by Gods worde: they be so vtterly past hope of amendement, that they spitte at all warninges and harden their hearts more and more, because they be forepossessed with such intollerable pride, that they fall to set vp their hornes euen agaynst GOD. Thus yee see what wee haue in effect to remember concerning the feast of Affliction.

Also there was the feast of Trumpets, which serued to put the Iewes in mind, that they ought to stirre vp themselues to be vnited in God. For as for them the haue glosed that it was in respect of the offering vp of Isaac in Sacrifices, (as the Iewish Rabbins haue fantastically surmised) they say nothing to the purpose. But it is not to bee doubted that God ordeined the feast of Trumpets or Cornets, of purpose to stirre vp his people to returne vnto him. And why? For they ought to consider thus: Although wee haue not the Trumpets sounded dayly to call vs to the Temple, yet ought we to remember that God calleth vs dayly, to the intent we should yeeld ouer our selues wholly vnto him, to worship him, & serue him, as he requireth: and moreouer bee knit & vnited together, that we may drawe still neerer and neerer vnto him. Thus yee see what manner of instruction the Iewes had by the feast of Trumpets. But what a thing is it that Christians wil needes haue the like guise, and resemblaunce of it once a yeare by ringing of Bels? Indeede the Papists do their indeuour to follow this commandement. For at euerie of their solemne feastes, they thinke that God is well paide, when they haue roong their belles lustily, and wakened the Ghostes of such of their friendes as are deade. Lo what witcheries they haue among them, yet stil at this day. But is it not apparant that the making of such a feast is against the intent of God, because it serued but for the people of olde time that were vnder the lawe? When the saide feast was obserued yearely, such as heard the Trumpets were warned by it all the yeare after to thinke thus: wel, although we be farre from Ierusalem, and cannot repaire thither dayly to doe sacrifice in the Temple: yet are sacrifices offered there in our behalfe, and God is worshipped there in the name of vs all. Neuerthelater, wee must not forget the good that GOD hath doone vnto vs: but euerie of vs must serue for a Trumpet to stirre vp himselfe, that our liues may be aunswerable and conformable to the thinges that are done daily in the Temple. Lo what the Iewes had. And what haue we nowe?

The figure (as I haue saide afore) is passed away and abolished by the comming of our lord Iesus Christ. Then remaineth it that wee our selues shoulde be Trumpets, that is to say, that wee should waken vp our selues, because we be besotted, yea and euen so wedded to the worlde and to the vanities that are here beneath, that it neuer commeth in our mindes to thinke vppon God. Therefore must wee not onely feele the sounde of a Trumpet or of a bell, but rather an inwarde remorse of good conscience, so as wee repent and bethinke vs thus: How now wretched wight? Beholde, the liuing GOD stoopeth so lowe, as to speake vnto thee dayly, calling and alluring thee by meanes of his Gospell, and crying vppon thee without ceasing, to come vnto him: and yet for all this wilt thou continue deafe still? Then must thou returne vnto him, when hee draweth thee so carefully

fully: and thou must not tarie till there bee a solemne holyday to call thee to the Church, there to keepe the feast of Trumpets: but it must serue thee al thy life long for a spurre to make thee to return vnto God. That is the thing (say I) which we haue to beare in mind. And as much also is to be noted concerning sorrowing: For it is not for one day onely that wee must be sorie in our heartes and bethinke vs of out sinnes. But forasmuch as we fal to them incessantly, & there passeth not any day wherein we offend not GOD: let vs match it with sorinesse, and let vs mourne for it, and not play the vnthrifites which make a skorne of all that euer a man can alleadge to them out of the worde of God: but let vs bee afraide of his iudgementes and threats, and yet therewithall let vs not doubt but he will giue vs whereof to reioyce, and that although wee bee faine to passe through many sorrowes and hartbitinges in this worlde, yet in the ende he will deliuer vs from them, to make vs partakers of the heauenly rest. After this maner (say I) must wee put this doctrine in vre, concerning the feastes which the Iewes had of old time in figure and whereof wee haue nowe the truth & substaunce, as it is brought vnto vs by the seruice of God.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, so as wee may returne vnto him, with true and vnfained repentance, and bee stirred more and more to amende our faultes, knowing that our good God is ready to receiue them all to mercie which come vnto him with lowlinesse. And that for asmuch as he hath graunted vs the grace to haue nowe so full light of his Gospell, as may wel inlighten vs throughly: it may please him not to suffer our eyes to be blindfolded, that wee should walke any more in darkenesse, but to graunt that wee keepe y right way, and indeuer to bring others into the same, so as God may be glorified with one common accorde of all men. And that for the performance hereof it may please him to raise vp true and faithfull ministers of his word, &c.

On Fryday the viij. of Nouember. 1555.

The C. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the sixteenth Chapter.

13 Thou shalt keepe the feast of Tabernacles seuen dayes, after thou hast gathered in thy corne feeldes and thy vineyardes.

14 And thou shalt reioyce in the feast, thou, thy sonne, thy daughter, thy manseruant, and thy womanseruant, the Leuite, the straunger, the fatherles, & the widowe which are within thy gates.

15 Seuen dayes shalt thou keepe the feast to the Lorde thy God, in the place which the Lord shall haue chosen: for the Lord thy God, will blesse thee in all thy fruites, and in all the workes of thy handes: and therefore shalt thou reioyce.

16 Three times a yeare shall all thy males appeare before the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord wil choose: that is to wit, in the feast of vnleauened bread, in the feast of Weekes, and in the feast of Tabernacles: and none shall appeare emptie before the face of the Lord.

17 But euerie man shal giue according to his abilitie, euen according to the blessing of the Lord thy God, which he shall haue giuen thee.

WE haue here to treate of the feast of Tabernacles, which was a memoriall of Gods preseruing of the Iewes in the wildernesse, where was no house. For he had kept them by the space of fortie yeares vnder Tentes, and small boothes: the cause wherof was that he had so remoued them from place to place, that they had no leasure to builde, nor stuffe wherewith to builde. Therefore it was meete that they should be put in remembrance of it, that being come into the lande of Chanaan, they should not giue themselues to iollitie, and forget it when God had set them at rest. For we see how men are giuen to fall asleepe and to nestle themselues when our Lorde remoueth them not. To auoide this danger, it was Gods wil that [illegible] shoulde yeare by yeare depart out of their houses and dwell in Tentes, that is to say vnder open skie in arbers made of boughes, and [illegible] seuen dayes together minde that [illegible] For it was an incredible thing that God [illegible] haue preserued so great a multitude of [illegible] with their yong children, in boothes & [illegible] wout houses. We knowe y houses serue [illegible] off both cold & heat and al other discom[illegible] Needs therfore must it be y god wrought [illegible]

wonderfull fashion, and it was meete that his goodnes should be acknowledged in that behalf. We see then nowe wherefore this feast was ordeyned vnder the lawe. For the seruing of God stifled not in ỹ peoples shifting of their places, for it had beene but a stage play, to haue come to Ierusalem, and there to pinch themselues, & to dwel a while in Cabanes, vnlesse it had beene to some ende, and that they had beene taught some thing whereby to magnifie Gods name, & to put their trust in him: accordingly as I haue declared heretofore that all ceremonies must implie some learning and instruction, or else they be but pelting baggage: yea it is but a mocking of God, if the faithfull be not edified, that they may alwayes liue in the feare of God to rest vppon him and to call vppon him with the better courage. If it bee not so, it is but superstition and the thinges are not onely vnprofitable, but also abhominable before God. Nowe then the feast of Tabernacles was a traynment to the people of Israell, to shew them that if they were at rest and at their ease in the land of Chanaan, they had not alwayes beene so, but that God had led them after a straunge fashion through the wildernesse: and that if they were contented with Cabanes and arbers, it behoued them also to applie themselues to the praysing of God for his deliuering of them out of the Land of Egypt by so manie miracles. The Iewes as foolues that woulde faine discharge themselues to Godwarde by hypocrisie, did indeede keepe the feast it selfe, but they lefte the meaning of him that had commaunded it. For euen to this day still they keepe the feast according to the letter, and they haue a number of pretie apes toyes which they obserue diligently. As, that their Cabanes be not too close, but made full of holes, nor that the boughes bee not too thicke planted, but so as a man may see the starrs through them, and that there bee Loopeholes to looke vpon the skie, so as the skie may glimse vpon their eyes. All of them (I say) doe vse such trifling toyes, but in the meane while they consider not whereunto God meant to direct them. By which example of theirs wee bee the better warned not to regarde the letter of the lawe but to seeke the ende which God pointeth vs too. And seeing that the Iewes had such instruction: let vs consider what fruit we ought to reape nowadayes of the feast of Tabernacles. It is not nowe any more in vse that wee shoulde be bounde to the keeping thereof: but yet the doctrine thereof continueth still, and concerneth vs as much or more than the Iewes. And our keeping of the feast of Tabernacles must not be for a weeke or twayne, but for all out life long, and why? For if wee be not straungers in this worlde, we shall haue no part in the kingdome of heauen. Will we haue God to auowe vs for his children? Let vs keepe on our way here beneath, affiuring our selues that this life of ours is but as a iourney, or rather but as a race. And it is not enough for vs to goe, but wee must also runne a pace, holding on our way still to that ende, and alwayes straining our selues to attayne vnto it. For except we streine and inforce our selues we shal neuer get one steppe forward, but wee shall rayre fower backe for it. Agayne we see howe slow we be, and how manie meanes Satan hath to hinder vs: and therefore we must euen fight against such impedimentes. And so let vs marke, that the thinges which wee reade here in Moses, declare vnto vs that for asmuch as it was Gods will that the Iewes in the time of the lawe shoulde haue a weeke to put them in minde howe they had beene as pilgrims in the wildernesse, and that he had maintayned them there after a straunge fashion: we in these daies (because the figure is abolished) must repaire to the trueth, that is to say, wee must remember that God harboreth vs in such sort in this world, as that he wil not haue vs to nestle here, nor to be so intangled in it as to make it our euerlasting resting place, but to flie vpward still, and to bee here as birdes sitting vppon a bough. True it is that God is so fauourable to a great number, that they neuer remooue from home of all the time of their life, and yet they be neuer the lesse Christians for all that: but yet must not any man make him a nest vppon earth vppon imagination that he will rest here. Where as Saint Paul saith that he had no rest, he meant it specially of himselfe and of certaine others of the faithfull, whome God tossed from post to piller. But as for the meaning of the mind, that must needes bee common to all the faithfull, namely that they haue no restingplace in this worlde. Although then that GOD do beare with some mens weakenesse, so as they neuer remoue out of the place where they were borne, but continue at home still in their owne houses: yet must they consider that they ought to bee alwayes readie and to haue one foote set forwarde, against the time that it shall please God to remoue them into some straunge countrie so as they make not their reckening to be so setled in any place, that they shoulde not departe from it, but rather bee readie to goe, whensoeuer GOD calleth to fleete anie whither else. 2. Cor. 7. 5.

Againe, let those whome God remoueth vnderstande, that he giueth them the prerogatiue aforehande, to put the thing in vre which the holy scripture sheweth vs: namely, that we bee made pilgrims here beneath, to the intent wee shoulde haue our resting place in heauen: and let it confirme them so much the more in ỹ hope of ỹ life to come, so as they may pluck vp a good hearte when they bee so driuen from place to place, and not be too much greeued at it, because it is a warrant to them that God hath reserued a better restingplace for them. After that manner ought all of vs together to obserue the feast of Tabernacles. Let such as remoue not, thinke neuertheless, that they haue not any perpetuall state of abiding in anie place certaine, but must offer themselues to GOD to goe whithersoeuer it pleaseth him. And as for them ỹ are fain to remoue out of their countrie, and are drawen a farre off, let them vnderstande that Gods walking of them after that fa- 2. Cor. 5. 6. Hebr. 11. 13.

shion in this worlde, is to the ende to drawe them out of it, and that they should not set their mindes vppon it. Yee see then howe with one common accorde, we shall make a good obseruation of this feast, I meane as spiritually. For nowadayes we haue not anie more the figures of the lawe: but yet must the trueth of the Gospell needes bee conformable to the figures that were among the fathers of olde time. And herewithall wee must also be readie to remoove a good pace, so as wee must not be tyed nor holde backe to this corruptible life, but goe to GOD with a free heart whensoeuer it pleaseth him to take vs hence. And indeede, what house soeuer we dwel in in this world, our bodie is always going away. If a man be asked which is his cheef house, he will not goe seeke his chamber, nor his kitchen, nor any other of his houses of ease: but hee will say it is his bodie. Nowe let vs consider what our bodies are. Wee may wel build vs houses of square stone. Riche men make them pallaces, and laye all their lande aboue them thereto. Their building is substantiall, it is able to indure much, it is not to bee feared that it will rotte ouer hastily, nor that it will bee marde with winde or wether; neither is there anie thing in it to be altered: And though some hanginges of it bee to be remooued, that is all one; the walles are so good, that at a hundred yeares ende they bee as sounde as they were at the first day. Well may a man make such a building: but can wee builde our bodies so, as they may be of any long continuance? No. Our Lord therefore doeth laughe those foolke to skorne, which are so blinde that they imagine they shal liue euer the longer for their building of their goodly houses, bearing themselues in hand that it is a meane to make them tarie ℣ longer time in this worlde. But (as I saide afore) all houses are nothing in comparison of our cheefe house, which is our bodie. If a man passe not for hys chamber, nor for his kitchen, nor for his parlour, but woulde go seeke some corner in his stable, and betake himselfe to that, saying, this is the surest and substancialleſt place, I had leuer tarie here thē in anie other part of al my house: folke woulde laugh him to skorne as a foole. Likewise if a man be proude of his house, and haue no regarde of his owne person whereof he ought to make much greater account: it is euidēnt, that he is out of his wits, and vtterly voide of reason. What is to be doone then? Wee must come backe to this lesson of Saint Paules, that 2. Cor. ℣ 1. if our outwarde man decay, wee haue a building prepared for vs in heauen. For this lodging of ours must decay, and fall quite downe, but yet shall wee be fully restored againe, and then shal wee dwell in an vncorruptible house. There Saint Paule sheweth vs the thing that I spake of before, namely that our bodies (when we haue neuer so great account of them) are but as arbours made of Leaues, which are of no continuaunce: one blast of winde will blowe them quite and cleane downe. Seeing it is so, let vs walke in lowlinesse, and lift our mindes aloft: for wee haue promise that there we shall be immortall & vncorruptible. And we must not thinke it strange that our bodies shoulde bee compared to Arbors of leaues which are of no continuance: for take mee the strongest bodie in the worlde, and yet cannot the force therof continue long time in one state; but that if the saying of the Prophet Esay be founde true as in respect of our soules, it must needes bee verified much more of our bodies: namely that a man is but a flower, and that allbeit he flourish for a time, yet is one blast of winde enough to make him to wither, and to bring him to nought. Such is our strength euen when it is at the best. But besides this, there is none of vs which feeleth not a great sort of inconueniences in himself, to the intent we should forsake this present life, and not bee too much addicted to it. Take me the strongest man that is, and hath hee not some disease or other that will not suffer him to indure long? Againe if a man be once past a certaine age, he falleth by & by to declyning; insomuch that a man may see and perceyue with his eyes, that euen without sickneſse he slydeth away like water. Insomuch most men doe neuer thinke of it: but what boteth it thē to blinde themselues? Nay it is a monstruous thing that euerie bodie shoulde see how a man goeth to naught, and yet bee so blinde as not to perceiue it in himselfe. On the contrarie part, if our Lorde be so gracious to the sillie soule as to remoove them to and fro, and to put them vnder many diseases: it is to quicken them vp to goe forwarde with earnester willes to their heauenly inheritaunce, because they doe but hang their winges in this worlde, continually drooping nowe after one sort and nowe after another, and liuing as it were halfe deade. Seeing it is so, let them vnderstande that God worketh for their benefite and saluation. And it is a very profitable lesson, when wee haue learned to keepe the feast of Tabernacles spiritually: that is to say, when we haue learned to passe in such wise through this worlde, as wee goe on farther.

And if we be demaunded howe such persons can be Christians, as are setled in wealth and at their ease: the aunswere thereunto is that every man must beware first of all that hee flatter not his owne ease too much. For we heare howe S. Paul saith, that wee must not cocker our flesh in ℣ lusts thereof. And why? Because there is no when wee once beginne to followe our owne kinges: they be so far out of order, that there always somewhat amisse in them. They there fore which will be lodged after their hearts fire, so as there may be nothing amisse in the state: doe put themselues in great hazard falling into a sounde sleepe, and of ling themselues in such wise in the worlde, they may neuer thinke more vppon the ly rest. And therefore a man cannot keepe good a measure nor too stayed a hand in that halfe. Not that wee can bee tyed to any rayne rule, for we must vse Gods creatures ly. If wee shoulde be scrupulous at euerie what woulde come of it? Either wee should uer be thankefull to God for the benefites

he bestoweth vppon vs, because we bee not sure that he hath giuen vs leaue to vse them freely: or else wee shall become hardhearted and stubborne to vse them as it were in despite of GOD, by meanes whereof all thinges shoulde bee corrupted. So then, we must vse our houses as wee doe all other commodities of this present life, without making any scruple of conscience in the matter. But yet therewithall, we must beware (as I said afore) that we giue not the bridle to our flesh, by satisfying the desires thereof: for it is a bottomlesse pit, and we can neuer come to the bottome of it.

Againe besides this, let such as are planted commodiously, beware that they fal not asleep. But rather whereas the children of this worlde doe wcher in their delightes, and so feede themselues with them, that they vtterly forgette the kingdome of heauen: Let the other sorte learne to consider thus: Goe to, albeit I bee planted here to my commoditie, yet must I not be tyed too much to this world. Wheras my lusts would holde me backe, I must so fight against them, as all the impediments in the worlde may not restraine me frō looking continually towards heauen. After that manner must the faithfull deale. And such as are not planted at their heartes desire, must consider how our Lorde putteth them in mind, to goe continually forwarde to the rest of heauen, warning thē of it both earely & late, a thing which is for their benefite, & behoofe to be put in mind of. Insomuch that if the Iewes had such instruction as was meet for them: ẏ exercise that God giueth to his faithful ones nowadayes in planting them not ouer much to their liking, is a far better learning than was the auncient ceremonie of the law. Whosoeuer then do find any discōmoditie, and are not at their ease; let them vnderstande that God by that meanes pricketh & spurreth thē to seeke the rest of heauen, & strengtheneth them therewithal in ẏ hope which they haue of their saluation.

And this concerneth not onely a mans housing, but also all other things as I said afore: so as ẏ body with al thing belonging therunto, is the chiefe house which we haue. Therefore if we be now & then diseased, so as we cānot take so quiet rest as we faine would, nor haue things ready alwaies at hand: let vs consider ẏ our lord handleth vs like wayfarers. When a man shalbe in his own house which is well ruled, they faile not to serue him at his own houre, & to haue such meat prepared for him as he best liketh: but if he be abrod in the country, he shall not haue al ẏ he would: for folk are not acquainted with his complexiōs & whereas he is wont to dine at such an houre, he must be faine to tary an houre or twaine longer. And again, when he hath supped peraduenture he shal not be so well lodged as in his owne house. Now must wee apply all this to our selues: namely ẏ in this world we be as waifarers. Therfore if our Lord do now & then disappoint vs of things ẏ we desire, it is to the end wee should run a pace through this world & alwaies keepe on forth stil, til we come to ẏ kingdome of heauen, & not be tyed & fastened to ẏ earth. Thus ye see how this lesson extendeth generally to al things that concerne this transitory life.

And yet neuertheles it is said expresly, *That she Iewes in keeping this feast should be merry, & also make other men merry with them.* Whereby we see ẏ we ought not to be sad, though our Lord make vs to waste away by litle & litle. Or rather hee sheweth vs ẏ he will not haue vs to make anie ouersūptuous building here below, but ẏ we shold be contēted with our lodgings of boughs which wil soon rot. Sith it is so, we must not be sory, but rather reioyce in our God. And it is a very profitable point and well worthy to bee noted. For it may be ẏ some man wil be sufficiently warned to depart out of this world, in ẏ he sees himself sick, or in ẏ som strange mishaps befal him: by reason whereof he thinkes vpon death ouerofte, and doth nothing but mourne, desiring to be dispatched at the first push. Such are to bee seene: but yet for al that, their departing is not without sorowing. For what ioy can they haue, except they know that God draggeth them through ẏ world of purpose to lift them vp to heauen to the companie of the Angels? If they know not that, surely they shal haue their harts alwayes distressed with anguish and greefe, accordingly as we see how the vnbeleeuers repine, and neuer commit themselues to GOD, but murmur and grudge against God. And although their mouth speake not, yet haue they no gladnes nor rest in their harts. Then let vs learne to keepe ẏ feast of Tabernacles after such a sort, as we may be merrie in the Lord: that is to wit, as it may not greeue vs that our bodies should consume away by litle and litle, vntil they be turned again into rottennesse; or that our Lord should cut vs quite off frō our bodies, & vtterly dispossesse & bereaue vs of all ẏ euer we haue in this world. For why? Hee doth it to draw vs vp to heauen. Therefore let vs goe ioyfully, and let our hart be inlarged to giue our selues wholy to our God. That (say I) is the thing which we haue to doe.

And it is the same thing ẏ S. Paul speaketh of, howbeit hee sheweth vs ẏ meane also how to put this lesson in vre. True it is ẏ by nature we seeke not to be dissolued or cast downe. If yee say to a man, my friende, are you willing to die? It were against nature for him to say yea, vnles it were to some better ende: for his desire is to haue being stil. Indede the vnbeleeuers do besot themselues in their desiring to be: for this beeing of theirs is but to cram themselues, to eat & drinke, to fil their bellies like swine, to sleepe like beasts, and to looke vppon pleasaunt thinges, as folkes that are caried altogither with sensualitie. Those are the things wherein the vnbeleeuers repose themselues. And in the meane while they be so dull, that they consider not that that beeing of theirs is no being at all, and that the state of this present life is but a shadow which is euer fleeting & neuer at any stay. But contrarywise when the godly say, it is good to liue, thereupon they conclude, that it is not for them to couet death vnlesse it be to exchaunge for the better. Neuertheless, when they take holde by faith vppon the heritage which God hath promised them

2. Cor. 5. 4.

then are they desirous (and not without iust cause) to depart out of this mortal body, ỳ it may be renewed againe. We see then as nowe, howe we may dwell with ioy in tentes: that is to say, by being assured that after wee be passed out of this worlde, we shalbe taken vp into the resting place which God hath prepared for vs, & which was purchased for vs so dearely. Therfore let vs go on with a free courage, & let vs not cease to keepe on our pace, vntill we be come to our end. And let vs always conclude with our selues, ỳ it is enough for vs to hope continually that the heauenly rest shall not faile vs, after that God hath exercised vs in this world, and tossed vs to and fro. Thus ye see in effect how we ought to keepe this feast with gladnesse.

Now for a conclusion Moses addeth, *that they must resort thrise a yeare to Ierusalem, and there shew themselues before God, as many as were males, & none to come empte, but euery man to make some offering to God, according to the blessing that God had given him.* This maner of speaking that the Iewes shoulde come before the face of God, serued for the better expressing that the sanctuary was not a vaine and vnprofitable figure, but that God vttered his power there, to shew in very deed ỳ he dwelled among his people. If Moses had saide singly, yee shall resort to the Sanctuarie: euery of you shall make his offering before the Arke of couenant: the Iewes had not bin so wel certified, that their comming to call vpon God in the sanctuary, was not in vaine. For they might haue said, very wel, indeed wee haue the figures & ceremonies, but yet are we not sure ỳ God wil heare vs. But when it was said, ye shal come shew your selues to god, it was a greater edifying of them, because they were wel assured that the ceremonies of ỳ lawe were not deceiuable. Yet notwithstanding, it was not to make thẽ to set their minds vpon the visible signes, & so to hold themselues still downe: but they were to consider, ỳ although God stoop to apply himselfe to our infirmitie, yet is it not his meaning therfore to hold vs downe to these earthly thinges: but contrarywise his comming downe to vs, is to make vs to stie vp & to seeke him aboue; so ỳ when we haue visible signes, we should consider ỳ his glorie surmounteth ỳ heauens, & is infinite, & therefore that we must worship him with our minds lifted vp aboue ỳ world, and aboue al things that are corruptible. And so yee see that this maner of speech where it is said, ye shalbe in the presence of your God when yee be come into his sanctuarie: was profitable, and imported a very good lesson to the Iewes. For why? God shewed in very deed, that he had not instituted those signes without cause, but that thereby he made his grace and power to be felt of the faithfull, when they came thither to call vpon him. But yet for all that, it behooued the faithfull therewithal to worship God spiritually.

Esa. 66.1.2. For we see howe the Iewes are reproued for this: in ỳ they corrupted his seruice, by reason ỳ they supposed to shut him vp within their Temple. Shall I dwell in a house made with mans hande saith the Lord? If the Iewes had replyed & said, Why not? for it is said, when ye come to the sanctuarie, ye shall bee there before the face of your God. Yea, but that is no excuse. For Gods ordeining of his sanctuarie to dwell there, was not in such wise that hee woulde forsake his heauenly glorie: but to come seeke men here beneath, and to lift them vp aboue. We nowadayes must remember the like.

For when God sendeth vs his word, and addeth ỳ sacraments for a confirmatiõ of the same, it is asmuch as if he shewed vs his face, at leastwise so farre as we are able to abide it. For we be rude and earthly, and cannot beholde God as he is, and therefore he is faine to applie himselfe vnto vs. Yet notwithstanding wee must seeke him after the maner that he vttereth and declareth himselfe vnto vs; as we be not tyed to the visible signes, nor intangled with them as we see the wretched Idolaters are, which alwayes take occasion to turne away from GOD by meanes of the helpes which hee giueth them to bring them to him. Therefore let vs beware of such abuse. Indeede when we speake of the Lords supper, wee can well enough say that Iesus Christ is there present, and that we possesse him. When we come to the receyuing of the bread and ỳ wine, we can say they be no empte signes, but that we haue there the very substance, insomuch that Iesus Christ imparteth himselfe to vs, so as wee bee fedde and nourished with his body and bloode. So then Iesus Christ offereth himselfe to vs in his supper. But is it to be saide therefore, that he commeth downe from heauen, and that he is to bee sought after in superstitious manner, as the Papistes and such other like doe in these dayes? No; but it serueth to lift vs vp to heauen, and to make vs vnderstand that although Christ dwelleth there, yet wee ought not to doubt but that his power reacheth vnto vs, and that we be made partakers thereof, and that when we receiue the bread & the wine, they be true warrantes of that which I haue saide. Yee see then that we be in the presence of our God, by beeing partakers of Christs last supper. As much is to be saide of Baptisme, namely that in the water of baptisme we behold the bloude of our Lord Iesus Christ, and the redemption which he hath purchased for vs: so as it is to vs as a liuely picture; & not only that, but also wee haue the trueth ioyned with the image and portrayture, as the effect must needs bee felt and perceiued. Neuertheless it standeth vs alwayes in hande, to bewart that wee abuse not the Sacraments: namely that wee be not so fleshly, as to sticke to the world: but that seeing God is come downe vnto vs, we also on our side doe mount vp vnto him: and therewithall offer our selues, that our Lorde in giuing vs his sacramentes, giueth vs not rittleraties and childishe trifles to busie our heades withall: but that hee giueth vs the verie trueth, to the end we should be knit vnto him, and that we might feele that his power is euer at hande with vs. Thus much concerning the saying where Moses speaketh against of Gods presence, & cõmaundeth ỳ Iewes to resort to Ierusalẽ, whẽ God should haue chosen ỳ place: & in the meane while to resort to ỳ place where

where ꝯ arke of ꝯ couenãt & ꝯ sanctuary were set vp. And finally he sayth, *That they should not come empty before the Lord, but that euery man should bring somewhat according as God had blessed him.* Some haue taken this text to bee a kinde of promise, as though God had sayd that such as resorted vnto him, should not go their way againe empty. True it is that if wee seeke God, wee shall finde plenty of all good things in him, according as it is sayd, Come vnto him and ye shall be inlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed. Therfore let vs not thinke that wee shall want any thing if wee seeke God, for he will fill vs; as hee is riche, so is he liberal, we shal be satisfied, and haue our fil of al thinges ꝯ wee haue neede of for our saluation. Then is it very true in it selfe, that all such as offer themselues before God, shal not return empty according as it is written; Open thy mouth and I will fill it. But as in respect of this present place, it is certaine that Moses speaketh of Offringes: and wee must not bring in any other glose. For hee declareth that euery man ought to offer according to the gifte of his hande, that is to say, according to his abilitie. For that kind of speeche were straunge to vs, if wee were not made to vnderstand it; namely, that euery man ought to consider what GOD hath giuen him, that hee may doe him homage for it. Therefore loke what wee haue in our hande, that let vs vse to offer vnto God, and to make sacrifice to him withall. In the tyme of the Lawe, the offeringes were applyed to such vse as wee haue hearetofore, and wee neede not to reuiue the Ceremonie any more. As nowe it remaineth that wee doe homage to GOD at all tymes, with the goods that hee hath bestowed vpon vs. And howe may that bee doone? By Almesdeedes. For wee cannot increase him by bestowing any thing vppon him: but yet hee accepteth whatsoeuer wee giue to the poore. Thee are the sacrifices which hee requireth and alloweth nowadayes. Therefore must we followe them there. And seeing that our Lord offereth himselfe vnto vs, not thrise a yeere only, but manifestly in the person of his sonne Iesus Christ, so as hee dwelleth with vs continually: let it bee a meane to drawe vs to him euen with an earnest minde, that wee may haue our hande alwayes open to offer vnto him. If wee had the Sanctuarie, and that it behoued vs to present our selues thrise a yeere at Ierusalem: wee should doe the thing that is commaunded vs heere, and yet should not that serue to excuse vs from doing of Almesdeeds al the yeere after. For if there were no more than the Ceremonie, it were a smal matter as I haue said afore. But where is Gods Temple now? Beholde Iesus Christ, who filleth ꝯ whole world; he is with vs, & dwelleth euen in our soules. Sith it is so then, let vs see ꝯ we imploy our selues to make our offeringes: seeing that our God doeth vs ꝯ honour to appoint vs to be his Sanctuaries & Temples; inasmuch ꝯ euery Christian man is ꝯ Temple of the holy Ghost, & euery Christian hath ꝯ honorable title of Priest: and ꝯ otherwise we shoulde neuer be counted ꝯ temple & house of God: it is good reason ꝯ euery man should occupy himself incessantly wout end, in offring him ꝯ sacrifice of praise, so as he may bee acknowledged in all his benefits & blessings which he bestoweth vpõ vs.

And it is not only the doing of Almes deedes, ꝯ he accepteth for sacrifices: but wee must also serue him & worship him, w al our thoughts, with all our desires, with all our affections, and with al our members. So then, that wee may not appeare emptie in the presence of our God, let vs looke ꝯ we bring him good fruites & such as he requireth: & let vs bewarc ꝯ we bee not vpbraided, as Ieremie vpbraided ꝯ Iewes when he said, What haue I done for thee my vine? I haue planted thee, I haue dressed thee; & thou bringest me forth bitter fruite. Therefore let vs bring good fruit to our God, seeing it hath pleased him to till vs, to the end we should doe good, and not be vnprofitable. And how may that be? True it is that we cãnot bring any thing to him, neither can he be inriched: but when we indeuer to glorifie him in our whole life; that is the fruite which he requireth and maketh account of. Seeing then that he graunteth vs the grace: let vs profit continually vnder him, & let not vs on our side be emptie. Notwithstanding, it is certaine that we haue not one drop of goodnesse, vnlesse he giue it vs: for we be barrein. In deede we be too fruitful in bringing forth euill: there are too many bryers & brambles to be found in vs: but as for ꝯ good corne, there is not one graine to be found in vs, vntill God haue put it in vs. What is to be doone then? We must pray our God to blesse vs, that is to say, to powre out his holy spirite so vppon vs, as wee may haue good fruite to bring vnto him: that wheras we be nothing, he may giue vs a being; and whereas we be nought woorth, he may make vs some what worth by his manuring of vs, so as hee may be glorified in vs. For it is not ynough for vs to haue Gods gratious giftes in vs; but he must also make vs to put them to the vse whereto he hath ordeined them. And heere let vs call to mind what hath beene declared heeretofore: namely that God will not haue vs all to reioyce our selues, but also to make our neighbours partakers of our gladnesse: and also to call vnto vs, not onely the husband and his wife, and the father and his children ꝯ but also euen those that are furtheſt off from vs, and to indeuour to bring them after such a sorte before the face of our GOD, as the veryest straungers and those that are furtheſt off from vs, may bee partakers of our mirth and feele the benefite of it, bicause it is made common, according to the same saying of Moses in this present Text, that the strangers, the widowes, and the fatherles must be merrie with those that present themselues after that maner to God, to offer sacrifice vnto him.

Now let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, that being vtterly in misliking with them, we may seeke to be reformed by his worde, and profite therein more and more: And that for as much as he doth chiefely commaund vs to passe through the world, and to aspire to ꝯ kingdome

of heauen; we by this making of vs to feele our owne wretchednesse, may bee stirred vp by the same meane to seeke the saluation which he hath promised vs, and whereinto our Lord Iesus Christ is entered to guide vs thither by his example: And that in the meane while we may be confirmed by the power of his holy spirite in the doctrine ỳ he giueth vs, so as we may neuer be turned from it for any impedimentes that can be

vs, but that we may alwaies keepe on our course till he haue rid vs of this mortall body, and clothed vs againe with his owne immortall glory. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the ix. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cj. Sermon, which is the fifth vpon the sixteenth Chapter.

18 Iudges and Officers shalt thou make thee in all thy Cities which the Lorde thy God giueth thee throughout all thy Tribes, to iudge the people with iust Iudgemement.

19 Thou shalt not wrest the Lawe, nor haue regarde of persons. Thou shalt not take any reward. For gifts blinde the eyes of the wise, and peruert the wordes of the righteous.

HAd wee continued in the same soundnesse of nature wherein God created vs: ỳ order of Law (as men terme it) should not be so needefull, bicause euery man should eary the law in his heart, so as no man needed to be compelled to obedience, but euery man should know his rule, & wee should all with one accord followe that which is good & rightful. And therefore law is as a remedie against the corruption ỳ is in men. As oft as there is any talk concerning earthly gouernmẽt, we must vnderstand ỳ therein we haue a mirror of our frowardnes, in ỳ we are faine to bee compelled to ỳ following of vprightnes & reason. For they that are in authoritie, haue the sworde in their hand: and to what end? To represse such as burst out into excesse and outrage. And whereof commeth that, but that whereas mẽ ought of themselues to seeke the thing that is good and iust, they turne it vpside downe, and goe about to bring all to confusion, if they bee not letted? Surely it is a great shame, (considering that God hath created vs after his own image, & giuen vs dominion & soueraignte ouer al his creatures,) ỳ we should be faine to be inforced to it by reasõ of our naughtines. Picke me out the most despised of all men, & yet doeth he carie in himselfe the image of God, and the saide token of soueraigntie. Yet for al that, wee bee faine to become vnderlings, and that is bicause of our sinne, as I saide afore. Let vs know therefore that God hath not stablished the order of earthly gouernment without cause: but that he had an eye to ỳ corruption ỳ is in vs. Hereby we be well warned (as I saide afore,) to humble our selues, seeing our sinnes require such remedie. But yet ought wee to magnifie Gods goodnes, for ỳ he hath prouided aforehand, ỳ all should not go to vnrecouerable confusion among vs, which thing woulde come to passe if we might do what we listed. For if the strongest might goe away with the gaine, what would come of it? It were much better for vs to be in ỳ forestes among wolues and wilde beasts, thã to be among mẽ, if all things were at libertie. For no beastes are so woode, as we are our own lustes. Therfore let vs acknowledge ỳ wonderful goodnes of our God, in ỳ he hath had such care to preserue vs, ỳ forasmuch as he saw we coulde not maintaine our selues vnlesse there were lawes to hold vs in, & Iudges to execute ỳ things ỳ are set down in writing: he hath prouided for al. Also hereby we are put in mind to loue the state of Iustice, forasmuch as we know it a singular gift of God, & a meane to preserue mankind. If we loue the light of the Sunne bicause we cannot liue without it; and if we loue bread and whatsoeuer else belongeth to our sustenance: let vs also loue ỳ order of Iustice. For it is to no purpose to haue meate & drink & all other commodities, seeing ỳ without lawes & Magistrates we should bee depriued of all Gods blessings, and it were better for vs to be dispatched out of hand, than to eate vp one another as it would come to passe. And therefore we must esteeme ỳ order of Iustice, to be a prefident of Gods grace, and we must make account of it as it is worthy, euery of vs indeuouring al ỳ he can to maintaine it: For wee shewe our selues to bee deadly enemies to peace & to the cõmon weale, if we loue not the state of Iustice. And all such as trouble it, & go about to peruert it, are as theeues, and are to be esteemed as enemies of mans welfare. In so much that all men ought to fight against them, when wee see them goe about to bring in such horrible confusion among vs.

Rom. 13.4. 1. Pet. 2. 14.

Gen. 1. 26.

Now it is not for nought said here *when the people were come into the land which God had promised vnto them, they should make Iudges and Magistrates euerywhere.* This matter hath beene expounded alreadie in the sixt Chapter: but yet is it not without cause that GOD repe-

repeateth it heere againe. For he intendeth to shewe that it is to no purpole to haue good and iust Lawes, vnlesse there be men to set them in force and to put them in execution. This hath beene told you afore; neuertheleſſe it is requisite that you be put in mind therof again. For we see how God speaketh of one thing oftentimes, to the intent we should set ỹ more store by it, and thinke vpon it, and not forget it. Euen so doth he now confirme the former speeche which he had concerning Magistrates. And indeede, it is not without cause ỹ the common prouerb termeth them the soule or life of the Lawe. For what are all the lawes and statutes of the world? They be but dead things. They be lapt vp in paper, and are nothing worth, vnlesse there be men chosen to giue them their force & to make them to bee obeyed. And so ye see what God meant here in saying *that the people should choose*. Surely such freedome was a singular gift: & we see it is not graunted to al men. Where Princes haue soueraignty, they appoint Iudges at their owne pleasure and liking, and ambition beares all the sway there. In so much that a Courtier which is in credite, shal not onely obtaine offices for himselfe, but also cause them to bee giuen to others at his appointment. Nay there is yet greater and more shamefull corruption. For offices are set to sale nowadays as wel as al other kind of marchãdize. Seeing then that we behold such examples, wee must needes thinke it an inestimable gift, when God graunteth a people or Nation libertie to choose their owne Iudges and Magistrates. And verily when God gaue that priuiledge to the Iewes, it was a ratifying of his adoption, and of his choosing of them to bee his heritage, and that he meant to haue them to bee in better and more excellent state, than any of their neighbours, who had kings and Princes, and no such freedome at all.

Now as this thing deserueth to be had in great estimation: so ought they that haue obtained such benefite, to vse it with a good and pure conscience. For what is the cause that our Lord beareth vs of his benefites, but that we marre them by our abusing of them? We know wel that whatsoeuer God bestoweth vpon vs is desirable, for we see ỹ commoditie therof: but yet in stead of vsing of it holily with thanksgiuing, wee will needes make it to serue our lustes. Nowe when God seeth his benefites turned so to our bane, & that we draw them cleane contrarie to his meaning: he bereaueth vs of them. Are we distitute of them? Wee see whereof it commeth: And we thinke it straunge: but wee consider not howe God hath borne with vs a long time, and that in the end he wil not haue his gifts to be scorned & reproched. Therfore whatsoeuer God hath done vs any good, let vs learne to maintaine ỹ same by our good & pure vsing therof. For ỹ next way to make the possession therof to abide with vs, is to beware that we defile not the things which God hath sanctifyed to our profite. And therefore if we haue libertie to choose Iudges & Magistrates: forasmuch as it is an excellent prerogatiue (as I said afore:) let it be maintayned and vsed with good conscience. When a people hath this prerogatiue, let them looke well to the setting vp of their Iudges, that thay may bee as the Lieuetenantes of God. Wherefore let no such men be put in place, as will either be brybed, or haue bin leaudly giuen aforetimes, or as are vnable to beare such a charge: But let such bee sought and founde out as are meete for it, as though they were marked out by God. And because we haue not sufficient discretiõ to choose aright: let God bee called vpon. For it is not ynough to seeke out such as are meete and sufficient to execute an Office; but for as much as wee may bee beguiled in that case, by reason of our owne weakenesse, and by reason of the deepe dissimulation that is in men, in so much that when neuer so narrowe search hath beene made, yet the euill will euer set it selfe foreward: let men desire GOD to ouerlooke them, and to giue them wisdome and discretion. Thus ye see what we haue to marke vppon this saying, where commandement is giuē to choose and ordaine Iudges and Magistrates.

And it is sayde expressely, *In euery Citie*. For what a thing were it, if men shoulde bee driuen to goe farre to seeke Iustice, when disorders are committed euerywhere? Seeing that misdemeanors are rife and touch vs neere: if the redresse should bee delayed too long, it would not boote at all: a hundred faultes would bee committed, before one could bee prouided for. Therefore doth our Lord say, ỹ they should bee appointed in euery Citie: as if he should say, that men haue alwayes neede of some bridle. And that is the thing which I touched afore, when I saide that we which are created after the image of God, and ought to raigne ouer al creatures, haue neede to bee held in subiection. For as wee haue peruerted the order of nature, so is it meete that God should cut vs short, & shew vs that wee bee so farre vnable to rule, that wee bee not meete to haue freedome, but had neede to bee helde in awe. So then let vs learne, that whersoeuer vice and corruption is, there ought the remedie to bee applyed out of hande. True it is that there was in deede a soueraigne Court of Iustice in Iewrie; yea and wee haue seene in the first Chapter, that the hardest matters and the cases of greatest importaunce, were referred to Moses. Yet notwithstanding, it was Gods will that there shoulde bee some order euerywhere, that if any disorder were cõmitted, it might bee prouided for out of hand, & men should not neede to run farre to require Iustice For in very deede it behoueth Iudges & Magistrates to watch, & not to tarie till they be called vppon & importunately required, but punish ỹ euil as soone as they see it. I say as soone as they see it: for they ought to spie & keepe good watch. It is not ynough for a Magistrate to punish ỹ he knoweth to be wicked: but he must also make diligent inquisition, as wee haue seene in other places. And if men went ỹ way to worke, matters should be in better order. That is ỹ thing which we haue to marke, in ỹ our Lord will haue Iudges and Magistrates in euery Citie. For otherwise

Exod. 18. 26

Deut. 13. 14.

many

many euils might be committed, before any redresse could bee had, so as the remedie woulde come too late as I haue touched before.

Furthermore, whereas Moses addeth *that they must giue iust iudgements, and gouerne the people after that maner:* it serueth to confirme that which wee heard euen nowe, namely (first of all) that men can not gouerne themselues, except they haue superiours to guide them, which thing is plainely expressed concerning the Iewes, whom God had preferred before all other nations. Let vs vnderstand then that of good right wee bee dispossessed of the freedome which God had set in mankind. For why? We turne the good into euill: and therefore is it meete that we should bee bereft of it. A man in health shall haue liberrie to eate what he listeth, and he shall not bee deale with so precisely: he needeth no Phisition to forbid him such a meate, or to restraine him from drinking, otherwise than in such measure or at such an houre. But if a man bee sicke, he must bee at obedience, he must keepe a dyet, he must bee holde short like a childe, and he is restrayned of all thinges that he lyketh, in so much that if he commaund his owne seruant to bring him this or that, his seruaunt must not be so bolde as to doe it. Yea and when maisters bee diseased, they are subiect to their seruantes, so as they cannot inioy their owne goods. And why? Because they be not meete to haue them; by reason of their disease which ouermaistreth them: and therefore are they fayne to bee as vnderlinges. Euen after the same manner standeth the case with vs: insomuch that if wee were in deede whole and sounde, God woulde guide vs after another fashion. But forasmuch as he knoweth vs to be so corrupted, he is fayne to compell vs, yea and to restraine vs in such sort, as wee haue heard of. Thus much concerning the first point.

Againe for the second, Moses declareth and setteth forth that which I said cõcerning choise making: namely that in the seate which GOD hath dedicated to himself, no such persons must be put, as turne all thinges vpside downe. For if such be chosen for publike Magistrates, as leade a wicked trade, as in whom there is no feare of God, no honestie, no vprightnes, but wildnesse, wantonnesse, and disorder; or in whom there is no more wisedome than in Asses, but to be short are madbrayned or frantike: if such (I say) be set in place of publike office; it is not a dishonouring of men, but a working of high treason against God, bicause it is a defiling of his seate. So then it behoueth vs to wey well how Moses saith heere, that when it commeth to the chosing of Officers, men must not set vp Idols, nor iudge of them without tryall. And why? Bicause it is a dishonouring of God, to set such persons in his roome, as are not worthy to haue the ruling of a house. Yea shall see a man that is not able to gouerne his owne household, such a one as is not to bee trusted to for any thing, folke shall say of him, yonder fellowe is a foole, hee is a dizard, hee hath no reason, hee hath no stay of himselfe, hee hath neither wit nor discretion to guide himselfe or his household: and yet for all this, shall men goe and set him in the seate of Iustice? He is a man that cannot liue quietly with his wife: & shal he be able to keepe a whole Citie in quiet? Men preferre him to bee a counsellor. And to what end? To see the peace maintained. And how can that be? Hee hath no mee lee his wife and household to gouerne, and yet he is not able to weelde them. When he is at home, he is not able to guide his wife and his children. How when thinges go arsiuerse after that sorte, God is openly despised. So much the more therefore doth it stand vs in hand to marke well what Moses saith heere: namely that the choosing of Iudges & Officers is not a matter of fourmalitie, or a Ceremonie; but a holy thing wherein men ought to proceed with all reuerence: and that God laieth not *his* bridle vpon any peoples neck, as if he should say, Take whome yee lift at aduenture without consideration: but he pourpoynteth out the persons, and pointeth them out with his finger. Looke to it (saith he) that ye vse discretion in choosing the persons that shall haue the ruling of the people. For the word: *To iudge* importeth to gouerne. And secondly, let them *iudge vprightly* sayth he. Whereas he speaketh of gouerning, it is not without cause. For it is to no purpose to choose such as haue needeof Tuition. To prefer those to the guiding of others, which ought to be put vnder the direction of others, is too great a skorning of God. Again, the cõmon weale concerneth Iustice and vprightnesse. Therefore *his* choosing of officers before they be well knowen and throughly tryed, is surely a marring of all good order. And therof come so many changes & turmoyles. We wonder to see our Lord ouerthrow Common weales, and to behold how the Nations that were free, are greatly diminished & ouerwhelmed with tyranny: but wee looke not from whence all those thinges proceede. The ground thereof was the abuses which were committed, bycause there was no regarde had of the mainteining of the state which God had established, nor care to follow faithfully the order that God had inioyned. So much the more therefore doth it stand vs in hand to beare well away the things that are tould vs heere.

Moses hauing sayde so, addeth *nowe. That men must not wrest the lawe, nor haue respect of persons, nor take rewardes or gifts.* And he addeth the reason. *For gifts* (saith hee) *doe blind the eyes of the wise, and peruert the wordes of the righteous.* First he setteth downe heere a generall rule, that men should not wrest the Lawe. For in deede wee may liken equitie to a right lyne: and if it wrythe to the one side or to the other, by and by it is iniquitie. And therefore Moses speaketh, thou shalt not wrest the Lawe, that is to say, thou shalt haue thyne eye vppon the lyne of Iustice, and followe it without swarving one way or other. And heerewithall he sheweth howe the same may bee performed, namely by respecting no mans person, and by eschewing to take rewardes. For when we consider a deede simply in it selfe; euen nature teacheth vs what to doe. True it is that wee had needs

steede to call vppon GOD continually: for wee see howe weake of vnderstanding and courage wee bee euen in the thinges that are most euident: oftentymes wee bee starke blinde in them. Then must not men presume vppon their owne wit, and thinke themselues wise ynough to iudge of all thinges that are set before vs; but wee must vnderstand that it is a heauenly gifte, as Salomon declareth. And if wee bee combered in the smallest matters; howe shall wee doe when we come to giue sentence of matters of great weight? Iudges therefore must first humble themselues, and consider that if they bee not gouerned by Gods holy spirite, they shall not bee able to holde them to true Iustice; and therefore they must referre themselues to GOD and aske counsell at his mouth, that they may bee taught by his word; and they must giue themselues ouer to his spirit, and submit themselues thereunto.

1 Kin. 3. 10

But besides this, Moses ment to shewe heere the cheefe causes of all the impeachmentes of Iustice. For (as I sayd afore) if wee haue an eye simply to the deede, without respecting the person, so as wee bee not possessed aforehande either with fauour or with hatred: it is certaine that wee can skill to giue sentence aright. And if it couldde bee brought to passe that the parties should not come in sight, that it might not be knowen who were the playntife and who the defendant; so as the Iudges might not bee allured and carryed away either with bryberie, or with flatterie, or with lyes and glosses, or with such other thinges; but that the case might bee layde before them simply and nakedly as it is: wee should not see the thing which all the world now reweth, that is to wit, that men commonly can obteine no right and Iustice. For by nature (as I sayd) we can wellynough skill to say, this is good, this is iust, this is vpright. But assone as the parties come in our sight, that we see they be our neighbors or friendes; or the one a great man or a rich man, and the other a poore man; and there is bringing of allegations on both sides, so as one seekes to win the goale by threatninges and bragges, another by sweete wordes and presentes, and bryberie trotteth a pace to make way: all then will be turned vpside downe, and they which sawe cleerely before, become nowe starke blinde. And therefore let vs marke, that it had beene ynough to haue sayd in one word, that men must not peruert the law, but that men are vnable to keepe themselues from euill, if they be not told how and after what maner they may maintaine themselues in soundnesse and vprightnesse: namely by hauing no regard of the persons; and by shunning all couetousnes, for taking of rewardes.

As for the worde *Person*, I haue expounded it elsewhere: namely that wee must not respect whether a man bee riche or poore, great or small, a straunger or a neighbour, and such other like thinges. For the woord person signifieth another thing heere, than is ment by it in our common speech, when we say, There is a person, that is to say, there is a man or one of mankind. For in this place the worde which Moses vseth in Hebrew, signifieth a face, visage, or countenaunce. Wee must not then regarde the countenance. And what is ment by that? The things that are seene, the states of men, and their outwarde showe. And the worde *Shewe* expresseth the meaning of Moses well ynough. Then must thou not rest vppon the outwarde showe; For if I see a man poore, I despise him; if I see him riche, I honour him; if I see a man of authoritie, I stand in feare of him; if I see a wretched abiect, I make no accoũt of him, but rather holde skorne of him. See howe the outwarde showe here marreth all. I see a man that is able to pleasure mee; O, I will incline to him, that he may pleasure mee againe. I see another that can doe mee neither good nor harme; O, it skils not howe he speede. Againe, I see one by whose hurt I may aduauntage my selfe: I will doe it. And why? Bicause my minde lookes no further but to the outward showe. Nowe wee see the meaning of Moses, and I haue spoken of it alreadie in the first Chapter of this booke: howbeit it is not for nought that the holy Ghost maketh rehearsall of it againe here.

Deut. 1. 17.

Wherefore let vs learne in fewe wordes, that such as haue an eye to mens persons, that is to say, regarde the outwarde showe, cannot holde their owne to deale vprighly and indifferently; but that they must needes bee moued either with feare or with fauour, to giue the vpper hand alwaies to the wirked person that standeth in the wrong. And why? For feare least he should be reuenged: and else for hope to be benefited againe at his hand for the fauour that he shall haue receiued. And therefore let vs remember, first that God requireth a stoutnesse in them that are Iudges. If they see a riche man or a man of honour: well, let them take him as he is, and yet neuertheless iudge the case as it requireth. But this stoutnesse of minde is seldome to be found any where. For although the Iudges doe purpose with themselues to follow ỹ law, yet are they commonly seased with a kind of fearefulnes, by meanes wherof they be daunted whẽ it cõmeth to ỹ point ỹ they should stand to their tackling. And therefore is there good cause why such as sit in the seate of Iustice, should resort to God, & carefully pray him to strengthen thẽ in such wise, as they may not be like to reedes ỹ are shaken w̃ euery winde, but freely follow ỹ course that God hath appointed them, without swarueing or bowing any maner of way. Let vs marke then first of all, that we must haue this stoutnes of not being afraide at the sight of any mans greatnesse or countenaunce, that his authoritie or riches doe not any thing auaile him, but that the case may stand in firme state, without hauing our eyes dazeled to say, This is a great man, and therefore I must fauour him.

Againe on the other side, I saide also that wee must not despise such as are had in contempt to the worldwarde. Bicause I see a man is poore, I beare my selfe in hande that it makes no matter though I doe him wrong. For wee bee oftentymes at that poynt. If there bee a man

of

of no reputation, we thinke our selues discharged if we can say; well, I haue doone wrong to a poore creature, which is not taken to bee of the common sorte: but that is nothing, for no man complaines of it. But God will haue right and equitie to be ministred to all persons. Therefore let such as are aduaunced to degree of honour thinke, that if they despise the meaner sorte and such as seeme to be the outcasts of all the world: they shall giue account for it. For if God vouchsafe to regard those kind of folke, and to haue a
Psal.116. 6. care of them; yea and (which more is) do name himselfe their defender: wil he suffer them to be so troden vnder foote, and to bee borne downe with oppression and tyranny, without reuenging them? So then, Iudges must match their stoutnesse with gentlenesse, and incline themselues euen to the meanest, receiuing them into their protection, and looking to the maintenaunce of their cases when they be good and rightful. Thus ye see what we haue to remember in this text.

Were this rule well held, we should not heare so many complaintes, neither should thinges be so farre out of order. But what? yee shall see a good iudgement giuen, and a fault or offence punished as it ought to be: and byandby in the turning of an hand, ye shall see the like case goe vnpunished. And why is that? Because the persons of men doe beare al the sway. There is a case wherin a man is conuicted by the thinges which he himself was to speake: it falleth out apparant, and thereupon he is to haue some punishment, and he hath it in deede. And why then is not the like done in al other like cases? O because the partie is fauored. In deede men seeke many colours and disguisings: & it is so much the woorse: but yet cānot God be deceiued, whatsoeuer shifts be made to shroude our matters with all. Neuertheless the worlde sees howe this respecting of persons peruerteth all right, and that it is almost an ordinarie thing. Insomuch that for some one nice point, a mā is oftētimes graueled in a case, which of it selfe were plaine & manifest ynough, if the parties themselues came not into the play, that the Iudge might giue sentence vprightly, without respecting the outward showes which I spake of afore. But the Iudges being preuented with the regard of the persons, doe cast great doubtes where none at all is, to say this & that. And what is the cause thereof? Alwayes the respecting of persons. And in deede, in some cases a Iudge will goe through with them, and dispatch them quickly: and in some other in all pointes like, he will haue so many deuises, that he can neuer determine it. Wee see then howe great the leawdenesse of men is in this behalfe. Yet for all that, our Lord wil not haue the instruction which he deliuereth here to his people, to be lost or vnprofitable. Therefore let vs looke that we make our profit of it.

And let vs marke that as Iudges and Magistrates are forbidden to haue any respect of persons: so is the same warning made to vs all. For what is the cause that wee fayle so ofte in dooing our dueties, but that wee bee so preuented with this respecting of parties? Therefore let vs haue such stoutnes of corage, as no greatnes, no pompe, no authoritie, no honour of this world may get the vpper hand of vs to peruert vs. And on the other side, let vs haue such myldnesse as wee despise not the meaner sorte, but rather bee gentle to receiue them. Thus much in effect concerning the woorde *Person*.

Now there is a second point concerning bribery and rewardes. *Thou shalt not take gifte*, sayth the Lord. He saith not, thou shalt not sell Iustice: but he saith, *thou shalt not take*. And why so? he addeth the reason: *For gifte* (saith he) *do blinde the eyes of the wise, and peruert the woordes of the righteous*. Heere is a reason well woorthy to be weied. For it seemeth at the first sight, that to take some presentes is not euil nor to bee condemned, I meane in a Iudge. For he speaketh here of the presentes and gifts that are giuen in respect of some case that is to bee heard. As for example, a malefactor laboureth to escape vnpunished, and hee goeth about to win the Iudge by sending him some present. Likewise another man puts himselfe foreward, and to haue sway against his aduersarie in partie, hee goes and gives the Iudge somewhat likewise. Now our Lord saith not, Beware of it: If thou receiue a present to fauour the partie that giueth it thee, it is ill done, and it is a setting of Iustice to sale. God speaketh not those precise wordes: but he saith, Beware of taking: for it is vnpossible that he which hath taken, should behaue himselfe vprightly and not swarue aside. Neuertheless there are a good sorte to be found which will say, As for me, although I take, yet doth it not therefore follow that I will swarue from myne office: For when I haue taken on both handes, I will giue him the glike which thought he had won me by his giuing. And is that so euill a thing? Why then may he so foolish so bring it me? If he bring, I take but yet for all that, I step not aside from my dutie. Such kinde of folkes would make GOD a lyer. For we heare how it is sayd heere, that gifts doe blinde the eyes of the wise. If they thinke themselues so sharpe sighted, that the receiuing of rewardes cannot dim their eyes: God sayth the contrary. And if they thinke themselues so constant, that they cannot be bowed, God telleth them that as soone as they haue taken any gift, they bee vtterly marred, and there is no more soundnesse in them. Now then it is a grosse a fondnesse to say, I will take rewardes, & yet for all that, I will keepe my selfe well enough from turning away, or from swarning from the right. But that is vnpossible; for then should God haue lyed in this text. Thus ye see what we haue to remember in the first place, concerning the second point.

Now therfore, they that sit in the seat of Iustice ought to thinke thus: doth he that bringeth me presentes, bring them of good will as one neighbour to another, or as one friend to another? he bringeth hee them rather for some matter that he which he hath before me? Then if a man haue a cause before a Iudge, & the Iudge take a present of him, he offendeth god. Who so? Because God hath so-

forbidden him, and he knoweth wherefore. It is not for man to say, It makes no matter, I wil take heede well enough for being bridled by it. But it is a tempting of God when we deale so, and God will hold shorne of our ouerweening, and will shewe vs that we bee not of such abilitie as wee imagine our selues to be, and that he did not without cause tell vs, that when wee be lyme fingred to draw presents vnto vs, and to hold them fast when we haue them: then are our eyes blinded, and then are our hartes wrested, so as wee haue no more wisedome nor vprightnesse in vs. Seeing that God sayth so, it is not for vs to reply against it. And in deede, whosoeuer they be that boast themselues to be vnable to be corrupted, or to bee made to steppe aside by taking of presentes: they needs not to bee brought before God to bee conuicted, but euen young children may iudge of them. It is too common a thing, and I could alledge examples thereof that are knowen inough. For there are some which are growē into so great vnshamefastnesse, that they sticke not to say, As for me, I will take on all handes. This hath bin heard, and there are witnesses now that can beare me record of the matter. And in the meane season what protested they? Tush, I wil not be corrupted for all that. No: but when lyke children haue seene that Iustice hath the fist to fide, and that a leawd man hath gotten the vpper hand in all cases, what is to bee sayd of it? As for him, so he might play his prankes, and deceiue his fates: he had cast his cardes afore hand. And on the other side, those to whome the presentes were brought, went lyke swine casting vp their groynes, so as there was lesse honestie and shame among them, than is euen among the heathen men and infidels. This hath his cause: and yet notwithstanding they pretended in their talke to be holy men. O there were a godly and sweete wordes as could be: yea, but when the matter commeth to be spoken of, euen boyes and idiots will giue their verdit of it for the thing is too much knowen. Seeing then that our Lord telleth vs here, that if mē receiue bribes, their eyes must needes be dazeled, and their hearts corrupted: let vs beare wel in mind, that except we will poyson our selues wilfully, we must first of all keepe this rule, namely that Iudges must not take any thing, at leastwise of any body that hath aught to doe in Lawe before the, but vtterly abstaine from so dooing, vnlesse they intend to turne away from all good order, right, and equitie.

And herein we see how our Lord who knoweth our diseases, or deineth immediatly meete & conuenient remedies for the same. What remaineth then but that we on our side enter into examination of our selues, and euery of vs searche himselfe narrowly? For the thing that maketh vs so bolde to tempt God, is that none of vs entereth into himselfe, to looke neerely to his own vices and infirmities. But if we had the discretion to bethinke our selues, wee would consider thus. Alas, I needs not any thing to peruert me, I am so frayle alreadie as may bee: though there were no occasion at all to surprise mee, I would seeke occasion of my selfe. And what wil I doe then when I meete with any euil occasion, or any cause of misdealing? I shall stumble and fall flat downe. So then, if wee aduise our selues wel of our vices it is certeine that we would seeke all the helpes that could be to preserue our selues. But seeing that God preuenteth vs, and on the one side sheweth vs how feeble and weake we be, and that on the other side, whereas we might fall into such mischiefe and inconuenience, he prouideth for it and saith, My friendes, true it is that ye be subiect to euill, but the way for you to bee preserued from it, is to abstaine from such a thing, and to take such a remedy: seeing (I say) that God speaketh so familiarly vnto vs, if wee refuse him, I pray you dooth not our vnthankfulnesse deserue, that wee should be caryed away vnto all euill, and that Satan shoulde driue vs and beare vs quite away, and that God should forsake vs and suffer vs to fall into grosse offences as all the world might abhorre vs?

Now then, it standeth vs so much the more in hand to marke well this sentence, where it is sayd that if men withstand not the temptations that may beguile them; of wise and discreete, they shall become blinde; and of iust they shall become vniust. God speaketh not here of such as haue alwayes bin naughtipackes, in whome neither reason nor vprightnes hath bonne sway at any time: but of the wise and righteous. And that is such a monstrous thing as ought to make our hayre to stand vp vppon our heades. As how? That giftes and presentes shoulde haue such force to corrupt, as that they should blinde the eyes of those which were of good discretiō. Now it is certeine that discretion is a singular gift of God. When wee speake of wisedome, we must not thinke that it groweth out of mens braynes, but that it is the gift of God. Ye shall see that God hath indued some mē with a good wit, by meanes whereof he behaueth himselfe in such wise, that he dooth good and commendable thinges. And yet if God let him alone, so as he giue himselfe to this corruption of taking rewardes: by and by the light which God had giuen him, not onely becommeth dim, but also goeth quite out. Therefore let vs learne to looke to our selues, and (as saith S. Paul) let such as suppose they stand beware least they fall. For our Lord vseth here a horrible threate, whē he saith that they which saw clearely enough, shall bee blinded if they giue themselues to taking of giftes: and that they which were well and holily disposed, shall be peruerted and turned away vnto euill. When we heare this, ought we not to stand vppon our gard and to keepe good watch; least we be surprised by Satans wiles? So then, let vs preuent such temptations a good way aforehand. And sith we see that our Lorde forewarneth vs: let vs stand in feare, and not run rushing against him wilfully, nor fall to stubbornnesse: but rather consider with our selues how that euen they which haue bin as halfe Angels, may be ouerthrowen and thrust out of the way, when they haue giuen themselues to it, & would needes vse too large dispensation. Wherefore let

Exod. 23. 8.

Deut. 10. 17.

1. Cor. 10. 12.

vs al learn to reine our selues short, and to submit our selues to the gouernment of our Lorde; and then we need not doubt but that if he haue giuen vs wisedome and discretion, he will strengthen vs more and more therein, and make vs to continue in them vnto the end; so wee goe to worke with praying vnto him continually to preserue vs, as I haue sayd afore.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe to touch vs in such sorte, that we returne vnto him with true repentance: & that such as haue publike charge, may behaue thémselues so dutifully, as they may be able to yeeld a faithful reckoning of ȝ charge that is committed to them: and that all priuate persons may in such wise suffer themselues to be gouerned by them, as God may reigne among vs, and haue all souereigntie, so as both great & small may be obedient vnto him. And for the bringing hereof to passe, it may please him to stirr vp true & faithful Ministers of his word, &c

On Wednesday the xiii. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cii. Sermon, which is the sixt vpon the sixteenth Chapter, and the first vpon the seuenteenth.

20 In all cases thou shalt follow the thing that is right, that thou maist liue and inioy the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

21 Thou shalt plant no groue of any maner of trees neere vnto the Altar of the Lord thy God, which thou shalt make thee.

22 Also thou shalt not set vp any Image: for that doth the Lord thy God hate.

The Seuenteenth Chapter.

THou shalt not offer to the Lorde thy God, either Ox or Sheepe that hath any blemish therin: I say thou shalt not offer any euilfauoured thing: for that is abhomination to the Lorde thy God.

HItherto Moses hath commended equitie & vprightnesse vnto vs, saying that those which are appointed to bee Iudges, ought to maintein euery mans right without swaruing. And thereupon he sayd, that as many as intend to continue in such soundnesse, must beware in any wise of taking rewardes: for if they take any, by and by they be corrupted, by & by they be blinded. And it is not to be replyed here, that a man may well receiue a present, & yet haue no meaning to fauor any wicked case. For ȳ holy ghost hath giuen sentence, that the man which is so giuen to taking of presentes, shall bee blinded though he were the sharpest sighted man in the world. Nay, he hath a towell before his eyes already, and besides that, whereas he was well & holily disposed before, now hee is quite peruerted. We see then how it is a deadly poyson, for a Iudge to receiue any presentes in any wise.

And now to hold men the better in awe, Moses addeth Gods promise, as if he should say, that we must not be wedded to our owne profit, whē God on the otherside offereth vs his blessing, & telleth vs that he will prosper vs, so we stick vnto him. And whether were it better for vs, to inrich our selues by vnlawfull meanes which God condemneth, and which shall come to an euill end: or to haue Gods fauor present with vs, and that the same should neuer faile vs? Thus we see now to what purpose Moses addeth this sentēce, *That men should follow vprightnesse*. Verily euen to the intent they may inioy Gods fauor & *thou maist possesse the land* (sayth he) *which the Lorde thy GOD giueth thee, and that thou maist dwell therein*. This is a continuing of the same matter still, which I haue declared before: namely that whereas God might commaund vs in one word, yet notwithstanding to win vs to him, he is so gentle that hee bindeth himselfe to vs, and maketh a couenant with vs as it were betweene two parties. He hath authoritie enough to commaund vs, and it is not for vs to aske wherefore. Againe, he is not bound to promise vs any thing for we owe him all that we haue, and he is indebted to none of vs. Neuertheless he vouchsafeth to yeelde to our infirmitie, according ly as we haue seene heretofore, that after his requiring of ȳ which is our duetie, he addeth that we shall not be disappointed in seruing of him. Yet must we not conclude thereupon, that wee can deserue aught at his hand: but rather we see his infinite goodnesse, in that hee promiseth vs his fauor freely after that fashiō. And therefore we ought to be the forewarder in doeing whatsoeuer he commaundeth, notwithstāding any impediments that might hinder vs to pluckе vs back. Vnexcusable are we in these dayes, if we feele not the force of his promises in quickening & stirring of vs vp to obey him. Hath God commanded? That ought to suffice vs. Notwithstanding howsoeuer we be slowe and negligent, he addeth this help, that he commeth to win vs by gentlenes, as if a father should flatter his child. See we this? Verily it not needes be ȳ our hearts are too too much hard-

haue cleane if they relent not at such goodnesse? Therefore when we feele that Gods commaundements touche vs not sufficiently to the quicke: let vs take these promises here, to stirre vp our selues the more, and to spurre vs the more forwarde.

Againe, let vs marke well the speach howe he saith, *Thou shalt followe vprightnesse in all cases.* The wordes are; *Vprightnes, vprightnes shalt thou follow.* So doth Moses speake, how beit that some men translate it, *Thou shalt follow iustice vprightly.* But when all is throughly looke vnto, he meaneth nothing else but that men should beare an euen hand in executing of iustice, following the right by streight line, and perseuering stedfastly in it without swarueing. I say it behoueth vs to marke well this saying, byeause men will needs alwayes discharge themselues to Godwarde by peeces: but as for to go through stedfastly with all things that he commaundeth; that is a very rare matter, (as the world seeth) specially in those which haue the handling of the lawe. Thus it is ỳ though they be wicked, yet wil they be ashamed not to haue some goodly shew: & so now and then a man shal find some vprightnesse and iustice in them. But haue they done right to one man? To morowe they will deale contrarie-wise with another. Haue they punished one misdoer? There shall go vnpunished for it, after as the persons are fauored and borne out. This parable is to be seene in maner continually: and it is sayd that there is no vprightnesse. And this is to serue God: insomuch that when iustice is not vsed in the ministration of iustice, those that are punished cry out vnto God for vengeance, as though they were wronged. And therefore Moses thinks it not enough that men should simply doe iustice; but bee will also haue them to proceede with it, and to continue it, so that there may be iustice vpon iustice: that is to say, a continuall holding on, so as no vndifference may be perceiued, nor any diuersitie of weights and ballances, nor any respect of persons: accordingly as hath bin sayd heretofore, that men must not leane to the one side for any fauor, nor forsake a good cause for any hatred, but be of such stoute courage that they bow not any way or other for any thing. That is the way to maintaine iustice.

This lesson is apparant enough of it self: there remaineth no more for vs but to fall to the practising thereof. But as I sayd, it is a very hard thing for men to frame themselues to keepe an euen hand. So farre off is it, that this was written in vaine: that it is sayd ỳ if we will prosper through Gods fauor, wee must keepe order continually among vs, so as euery man may haue his right: and that on the contrary part, without we doe so, God threateneth to bereaue vs of his blessing though he had giuen vs it before. And thereof haue we see so many chaunges and alterations happen in the worlde: namely for that when God hath blessed a people, & set them in a good state as were to be wished, by & by they fall to ryoting, so as the gouerners abuse their authoritie, & the people take libertie to doe euill, when they see ỳ their Iudges are corrupted, by reason whereof God is faine to lift vp his hand, & to take away quite and cleane all that euer he had bestowed vpon that nation. Wee see examples thereof too commonly. Wherefore let vs stand in awe, and let vs learne to liue the warelyer in the obedience of God, when he hath set vs in any prosperitie. Let euery man according to his abilitie, further the maintenãce of iustice: and let such as haue the sword in hand, vse it in such sorte as God may be honored, & not be driuen to bring vs to our arreignment for breaking of the order which he had set among vs: That is the effect of the thinges which we haue to remember in this text.

Now Moses addeth, *That men should not plant any tree neere vnto the Altar of the Lord, nor set vp any manner of image.* Wherby he prouideth ỳ there should be no resemblance betweene the & the Idolaters & Gentiles: and also that there should not be any memoriall of long continuance, for feare least they should learne or accustome thẽselues to doe sacrifice in diuers places. So are there two reasons which Moses hath an eye vnto in this text. The one is, ỳ he would haue ỳ seruice of God separated from all ỳ superstitions of the heathen. The other is, ỳ he would haue folke to accustome thẽselues to the worshipping of God, and to offer their solemne sacrifices in the place where ỳ Arke of ỳ couenant was, and that there might not be any peculiar religion throughout all ỳ countrie: As touching ỳ first, it is a point wel woorth the weying, ỳ God will haue his seruice to be such as he himself requireth & appointeth, & that he will not in any wise haue vs to meddle with those ỳ inuẽt & deuise superstitions on their owne head. In ỳ first place, Let vs marke thẽ how it is not without cause, ỳ God is so charie of ỳ seruice ỳ we be to doe vnto him. For in deed, is it reason that men should stand in defence & maintenance of their owne right, and that God should be disappointed of his? And is there any thing more precious & holy, than ỳ honor which we yeelde vnto him, in protesting him to be our God & father, of whome we hold all ỳ euer we haue, & at whose hand we looke for saluation? Is there any thing more holy than ỳ? Thẽ let vs learne to be attentiue when ỳ holy scripture speaketh to vs of the seruice of God. For it is a thing ỳ passeth all other in dignitie. Marke that for one point.

And it standeth vs so much the more in hand to giue our indeuour thereunto, because wee see ỳ world holdeth skorne to yeelde God his due obedience. If a man speake to a blasphemer, or to a despiser of ỳ orders of ỳ church, or (to be short) to one that is no better than a dog: if a man tell such a one of his leawdnesse: To whom do I any wrong, saith he? If he had giuen a man a fillip, or had chaunced to haue spoken a crosse worde, as small as ỳ wrong is, he would haue confessed his fault and say de, I haue done amisse: and yet is this but against a mortall man. But when hee shal haue spit God in the face, tush, it is nothing, it is no wrong to any mã. Dayly shal a man heare such speeches. Insomuch ỳ if God bee blasphemed, and his maiestie so shamefully dishonored

as would make a mans hair arise to see it: it is all one, there is no account made of it. But let vs mark (as I sayd afore) that our Lorde will haue his seruice to be placed formost & in highest degree: and when the case concerneth the ruling of our lyfe, we must begin at that end; To wit; To honor him as he deserueth.

Moreouer, let vs marke wel that it is not without cause, that he will haue his seruice so farre vnlyke all ỹ superstitions of ỹ heathen. For euen of our owne nature we be too much giuen to the corrupting & disguising of thinges, by meanes whereof the pureneſſe of the true religion is peruerted. Euery man hath in himselfe a storehouse of idolatrie, though hee be not prouoked thereto by others: & in what case then are we, when we light vppon stumblingblockes and occasions, yea & euen go to seeke them? I see idolaters ỹ haue disguised & falsified ỹ whole seruice of God, & I shall goe borrow of them I wote not what; because this thing or that thing lykes me, I shall goe put it to that which our Lorde hath commaunded me. Am not I by and by snarled in the same folly that they were, which played ỹ naughtipackes before me? Yes surely. For although I regard neither ỹ one nor the other, yet haue I many vain fancies in my hart. And if I fal to seeking of such thinges of set purpose: it is all one as if I did cast my selfe into Satans snares. And therefore let vs mark, that our Lord meant to preserue his seruantes from a deadly plague, when he sayd that they should holde them to ỹ pure simplicitie of his word, and not resemble ỹ paynims and infidels in any case. In those dayes the heathen for deuotion sake, made shadowes about their Altars, lyke as at this day in ỹ Popedome, if a place be darkesome, it seemeth to thẽ to cary some maiestie in it, and the simple sorte are as it were amazed when they come into a Caue, and where the windowes be dimmed with red or blewe glasse, mens eyes dazle at it, and sillie simple soules feele a kind of motion in thẽselues which maketh them afraid & astonished; and to their seeming, it is good to sturre them vp to deuotion, bearing folke in hand that it is a reuerencing of God, whereas in deede it is stark foolishneſſe. After the same maner did the heathen in plashing of trees to make places darke, that when men entered into them, they seemed to be agast, as though a woolfe had bin at their tayle as they say, by reason whereof they were moued to some fearefulneſſe. Now forasmuch as this custome was among the heathen, our Lord will not haue the faithfull to resemble thẽ. Thus in fewe wordes, we see heere how all maner of resembling the vnbeleeuers is forbidden vs, if we intend to serue God in such wise as hee may lyke of it and take it in good woorth.

And this warning is as needefull for vs nowadaies, as it was for ỹ Iewes in the time of Moses. For what a nũber of deuices are there in ỹ Popedome, which haue bin taken from the superstitions of the heathẽ? All that euer is termed Gods seruice in the Popedome, is but a cõfused heape, gathered out of the thinges that are commaunded in the Lawe of Moses, & the thinges that are seene to haue bin obserued of the Heathen: And to colour the matter wal, they alledge that in so dooing, is least the Iewes should vpbraide the Christians ỹ they haue not so goodly ceremonies in their Churches, as they haue. And therefore they must needes haue this and that, after their example. True it is ỹ they haue not bin so bold as to kil brute beastes in sacrifice; for ỹ had bin too detestable. But yet they reade vp their Lampes, their perfumes, their strayners, their altars, and a certaine maner of sacrificing, though it be not of Calues, Oxen & Sheepe. Besides this, the Iewes had their washings & dooings before the Papistes would needes haue any. To be short, the Iewes were so throughly counterfeited, that to all seeming, they could not tell that they had mo goodly ceremonies in their temples, than ỹ Christians had in theirs. But ỹ was high treason against God. And if there had bin no more but meere folly in it, it might haue bin better born w^th. But it tended to the darkening of the grace of our Lord Iesus Christ, by drawing a new veile ouer him. The veile ỹ God had commaunded to be in ỹ temple, is reason considered, they fal to hanging vp of another ỹ was made by ỹ hand of man: by means whereof Iesus Christ is as good as hidden, so as men can not behold the maiestie ỹ should shine forth in him. For he is liuely image of God his father; & in him whose his person or face we see whatsoeuer belongeth to our saluation. Now they fall to making of impedimẽts by such ceremonies, ỹ the worlde can not looke full vpõ Iesus Christ. And they are not contented w^th the intermingling of the things God had ordeined for a time and ỹ is vnder, they haue also borrowed of ỹ obseruances of the heathen. True it is ỹ euen in this case they pretended some color, as who should say that the world could not be drawen frõ those foolish ceremonies, & therefore it was better to let them stil vnder the title of God & his seruice, than vnder ỹ title of idols as they haue done before: by that meanes the seruice of God was saued.

Let vs mark then ỹ all that euer is termed by the name of Gods seruice at this day in ỹ Popedome, is but a confused botchpotch of all maner of superstitions; for they cannot shew that the holy scripture hath appointed men to do so. And whence haue they fetched their ground, but of a desire to counterfeit the things ỹ were vsed among the Iewes & Infidels? Sith it is so, what a thing is it if we shall now fashion our selues vnto them, and suffer a sort of polling hands & ceremonies to bee layd vppon vs, and binde our selues to ỹ keeping of thẽ, to ỹ intent we would not be too far vnlyke those ỹ name themselues Christians? It is ỹ same corruptiõ which God condemneth in this sentence. For it is not God will ỹ we should haue any resemblãces to those which haue w^thdrawen thẽselues frõ the pure teaching of his word. Therefore let vs be contented to haue Gods seruice reformed & stablished according to his cõmaundement. That is the thing which we haue to obserue in the first place.

As touching the second poynt, it is sayd that God would haue but one ly one Altar

to offer their sacrifices. At this day, this is no more in vse; we haue no more any materiall altar. For whereas the Papistes vse altars, in so doing they deface the death and passion of our Lord Iesus Christ as much as they can. Neuertheleſſe, Gods intent at that time, was to keepe his people in the vnion of faith, by allowing them but one Altar.

And now it is sayd, *that they should not set vp any wooden hill of long continuance*, in any certeine place. For by that meanes they might haue accustomed themselues to worship God there, or they might haue made some chappell for deuotion, and so had all bin mard. And therefore not without cause were they forbidden to plant any trees in the places where they sacrificed: for Gods Sanctuarie was to be plãted at length vpõ mount Sion. And as many as intended to serue God purely, it behoued them to resort thither, in theyr one common accord, and one true vnitie of beliefe. Lykewise nowadayes our Lorde Iesus Christ hath left vs his holy supper, for a warrant that he dwelleth among vs, and is alwayes present with vs by his power: insomuch that although he be exalted aboue the glory of heauen, yet doe not we faile to be knit vnto him to bee members of his body, to haue one common lyfe with him, and (at one word) to be fed and nourished by his substance. And because it is a secret that passeth all vnderstanding of man; he hath warranted it vnto vs, by ỹ visible signe of his supper. Come we then to the table of our Lorde Iesus Christ? The bit of bread and the draught of wine which we receiue there, doe represent vnto vs, ỹ Iesus Christ is truely our food, & that we be so incorporated into him, ỹ we be partakers of his owne proper life. By meanes whereof Iesus Christ is so present with vs ỹ we must all needes be gathered together vnto him.

But we see at this day what hath bin done in the Popedome. Was there a table for the receiuing of the Communion? No, it was turned into an Altar. And that was one corruptiõ aforehand For as I haue sayd already, it is not for any man to sacrifice Iesus Christ any more. That office belonged peculiarly to himselfe, and he discharged it throughly, & now must we receiue ỹ sacrifice that was offered vp vnto God, & let ỹ worde alone. Neuertheleſſe it is not enough with thẽ that there be but one table; they will needes haue three or foure: euery man buildes me his chappel, & there sets me vp an altar. Although it were a good thing of it selfe to haue one altar among ỹ Christiãs: yet doe they breake ỹ vnitie of faith, whẽ they build seuerall chappels after ỹ fashion. For why? It is ỹ will of Iesus Christ that there should be one common supper, & ỹ all his Church should meet together, & that the receiuing therof should be as a true band to hold the faithful in one with him. But they go to say their deuotions in such a place, & to sing Masse in an other place: And ỹ is an open defying of God, & a setting vp of idols in his stead. It is a turning of Gods tẽple not onely into a Swines stye, but also into a stinking dungeon of all abhomination & idolatrie. And therfore let vs marke, how it is not without cause ỹ God teacheth vs in this texte ỹ although we haue not ỹ auncient ceremonie of Sacrifycing Oxen & Sheepe: yet notwithstãding we ought to be vnited in faith, and not ad any thing at al to ỹ which is cõmãded vs, but simply keep this rule inuiolable, ỹ we vnderstand how & after what fashiõ God wil be worshiped, & agree thereto, wout presuming to put any thing to it. Deut. 12. 32.

Now also Moses sayth, *That they must not offer vnto God any beast that hath any maim or blemish in it*. He hath told vs hitherto that men must not meddle wth idolaters, nor haue any resemblance to their superstitions. For the true religion must be held in his pure singlenesse. But that is not all. For they that offer vnto God, & turne not away after the fond deuotions of men, must moreouer serue God soundly, that is to say, their discharging of themselues towardes him, must not bee lightly, as men doe commonly nowadayes. For we see howe men defraude God of his right. In deede when we be indetted vnto men, we discharge our selues one way or other: but whereas we be indetted vnto God, all our seeking is how to scape from him. True it is ỹ we wil indeuer to defraud men also: but yet wil we be ashamed to vse libertie towardes them as wee doe towardes God euen in dalying with him. If we owe a man either custome or rent, we will not stick to conceale it if wee can, if wee be of euill conscience: But yet for all that, wee will not be plucked too much by the eare: for wee thinke wee shall gaine nothing by so dooing. So then, as touching ỹ dettes ỹ men doe owe one to another, they discharge thẽ: but it skils not for God. Although he call vpon vs & threatẽ vs; yet euen after he hath shewed vs our duetie, we cease not to defraud him stil, yea & we be quite past shame in it. Verily we wil not sticke to say, it is good reason ỹ he should be honored & serued: but yet we wil haue this seruing to be after our owne fashiõ. But he requireth a right obedience. And what doe wee to him? Very well say we, we must discharge our selues to Godwarde. And after what maner? In mocking of him. Insomuch ỹ although ỹ doing of some ceremonies be nothing worth; yet notwithstãding men beare thẽselues in hand ỹ God ought to hold himself contented therewth, and that he dealeth too rigorously wth vs if he require any more of vs. For this cause it is sayd ỹ men shall not offer any thing in sacrifice which hath either blemish or spot. For vnder one kinde Moses cõprehendeth ỹ whole; as if he had sayd, let vs not thinke our selues escaped when wee haue serued God by halues and peeces; but wee must go to it soundly & roundly, so as we doe our duetie towardes him throughly in all pointes. True it is that there was a special reason for the Iewes: for ỹ Iewes were admonished ỹ their sins coulde not bee wiped out before God, but by meanes of ỹ sacrifice ỹ was to be offered. For it behoued them to lift vp their mindes aboue the world, vnto ỹ trueth, to say, there will bee a payment to discharge all our dets: whẽ Iesus Christ commeth, he wil reconcile vs to God his father, and discharge vs of ỹ bond of death, wherein we be bound. Therefore it behoued ỹ Iewes to haue their sacrifices pure & cleane, ỹ they might bee led by them to our Lord Iesus Christ, and their

faith be lifted vp aboue the world, to know that there is not any satisfaction nor offering that we can bring on our side to please God withall, but that he must be faine to giue vs the thing that we want to offer vnto him.

Notwithstanding, we must generally beare in minde ỳ which I haue declared already; namely how Moses sheweth vs ỳ we must so roundely yeeld vnto god that which he requireth, as he be not disappointed, as we heare him cõplain ther-
Mal.1.13.14 of by his prophet, that although the Iewes did not vtterly refuse to pay ỳ tenthes & firstfruites: yet they did it but by halues. But God cannot away with such parringes, nor to be played with lyke a little childe. And hereby wee may learne ỳ our seruing of God must not be by pangs and fittes onely, & afterward fall to lazinesse: but ỳ it must be done soundly & substantialy throughout, with obedience to his word. And again, ỳ in our doinges there must be no hypocrisie nor cõstreint: but ỳ we must goe to work ẅ a free will, & not set a faire countenãce on it to ỳ worldward, & in the meane while haue a back shop that displeaseth God: nay we must go to work freely, as I sayd afore. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to remember vpon this text. Wee nowadayes doe not offer any moe Oxen or Sheepe: but ỳ offerings which we make vnto God, are of
Rom.12.1. our owne selues & of all ỳ euer he hath giuẽ vnto vs, so as all be dedicated vnto him, & applyed to such vse as he alloweth; or else it is but vncleanesse. For if God haue giuẽ me a thing, & I abuse it: I am a traitor to God, because I vnhallowe ỳ thing which he had dedicated to the cleane cõtrarie vse. And therefore let vs mark, ỳ to please God in offering our selues vnto him, we must do it soundly, wout blemish or spot. True it is ỳ there can be no such perfection in vs, but ỳ very great fault may be found in our seruice of him: but yet must we alwayes holde vs to this principle, ỳ we come to God vnfeinedly, and whereas there are infirmities in vs, we must resort to our Lord Iesus Christ. For al our spots & blemishes are done
1.Iohn 1.7. quite & clean away by his bloud. And ỳ is ỳ cause
Hebr.13.15. why it is said, ỳ wee offer our prayses vnto God by him. If there were any sacrifice clean on mẽs behalfe, it were ỳ sacrifice of prayse: for when we fall to ỳ magnifying of Gods name, & confesse ỳ we be beholden to him for al good things; our so dooing seemeth to bee cleane. Howbeit forasmuch as we haue our lips so vncleane, ỳ we cannot yet discharge our selues in ỳ behalfe: therefore it standeth vs in hand to resort continually to our Lord Iesus Christ. Our sacrifices then are steyned with some spot & vice or other; ỳ is true: but yet must wee haue this roundnesse & soundnesse, of tending vnto God ẅout inforcement, necessitie, or hypocrisie. When we be at ỳ point, our Lorde will accept our sacrifices, as though they were offred vp vnto him throughly pure & perfect, & vtterly faultles. In deed it is by means of our Lord Iesus Christ; for there must wee be grounded as I said afore. But if we haue ỳ vertue, then doth God accept ỳ sacrifices which we offer vnto him, so we be not snarled ẅ hypocrisie, & come not to him as inforced or constreined, but with a free will. Therefore if men will serue God, they must beware ỳ they seek not to please men by it, as it often falleth out ỳ they thinke it enough to make some faire shew, & therein do content & sooth thẽselues. We beare our selues in hand ỳ we haue done al ỳ can be done, yea but we neuer entred into our selues, to giue ouer our selues wholy vnto God. Wee neuer sounded our selues to finde whether there were any euill intermingled, that we might be purged of it. And yet is that the ende which wee should haue begunne at, that our comming vnto God might not be as by constreint. For if it were possible, we would exempt our selues from all obedience, and neuer come to reckoning with him for it. But contrariwise wee ought to serue him with a free disposed minde. Then let vs consider, that if wee intend to make our lyfe allowable before God, then in all our thoughtes and all our affections we must haue this substantiall foundacion of dedicating our whole lyfe vnto him, so as our senses and desires be made captiues vnto him, and hee so reigne ouer vs, as our chiefe desire may bee to bee ruled by him and by his holy spirit, and to frame our selues in such wise to his will, that we take nothing in hand but that which lyketh him. When wee goe that way to worke then shall our sacrifices bee pure and cleane.

Besides this, let vs marke also ỳ we must likewise offer vnto God all ỳ euer he hath bestowed vpon vs. As for exãple, when we do almesdeede, let euery man apply ỳ giftes which he hath receiued, to ỳ common benefit of ỳ Church. Those are ỳ sacrifices of good sent, at least wise if they be without blemish or spot. For a man shall not edify ỳ Church when he himself is led with ambition & vainglory. And as for such a one, let him not thinke ỳ he hath offred any thing vnto God. For it is but vtter abhominatiõ, whẽ things haue not their right end, by giuing thẽ ouer again into Gods hande which had committed them to vs, & by putting thẽ to such vse as he hath remaunded. Again whẽ a man ỳ doth almesdeeds is led thereto by vaine ambition, to boast himself before men, & to be esteemed & honored for it; his dealing after ỳ fashion is but vncleanes before God. Now then, let vs learn to haue an eye vnto God, that our sacrifices may bee without blemish or spot.

Moreouer, as concerning ỳ order of ỳ Church, & of all other gouernment, we must vnderstand lykewise ỳ all our sacrifices must be so purified as God may accept them. As for example, ỳ ordeyning of Ministers to preach Gods word, and the doctrine of saluatiõ, the creating of Magistrates & the choosing of Officers, are sacrifices which we offer vnto God. Now we must offer them without spot. For if a man bring in any corruption in those cases, it is high treason to God, as I haue sayd afore. Therefore let vs bethinke our selues throughly, & consider ỳ although these things according to ỳ letter, were inioyned to the Iewes in ỳ time of ceremonies; yet must we apply them to ỳ sacrifices ỳ are in vse and force at this day. And for performance thereof, let vs come back to that which S. Iames sayth, namely ỳ he which

commeth,

commaunded the one, hath also commaunded the other; & that he which forbad the one, hath also forbidden the other. Will wee then please God in all the seruices which we doe vnto him? Let there be no parting of stakes, as if we woulde say, I wil do this for the honor of God, & for the rest he shal beare with me & giue me leaue to do as I list. For in so doing we would be hailfellow w God. And therfore let vs vnderstand ỹ the righteousnes of the law is a thing that cannot be deuided, neither is it for vs to rende it in peeces. Wherfore let vs submit our selues to the rule ỹ is giuen vs, after such sort as is conteined in ỹ Law of God. And therwithal let vs mark further, that we must not haue dubble or dissembling hearts, but that wee must submit our selues wholly vnto God. And if we cannot attaine therto at ỹ first as were to be wished: yet notwithstanding that must be the mark that we shoote at. Now we see what our Lord meant to require in this text.

But to the end wee may bee the more prouoked to deale soundly and substantially: let vs also marke this speech that Moses addeth here for a conclusion, namely *that it is abhomination before God*. For men do alwayes make themselues beleeue, that they cease not to serue God though there bee nothing but dissimulation and hypocrisie in all their doings. And we knowe howe hypocrites are puffed vp continually with this foule presumption, that although there bee nothing but counterfeiting in all that they do, yet (to their seeming) God is neuertheless beholden to them; and all is wellynough so there bee some gaie painting and some faire shewe. In deede they dare not vtterly deny that there is any fault at all in them: but yet would they still haue men in hande, that there is much good in them which God accepteth. As for example, when ỹ Popish Priests say their prime & hours, besides that they doe but bibblebable, their minds are elsewhere; one thinks vpon his kitchin, and another vppon his harlot. Well, they will graunt that this is ill done, and that they ought to bee more heedefull in their praying. But yet will they vphelde, that so they haue a finall intent to pray vnto God, it is a good and commendable deede; and their comming to Church deserueth verie much, so they haue this final intent to serue god there, though their mindes be distracted about other things. When they haue once worshipped a puppet, and taken a little holy water, though they looke vpon a woman after an vnchaste sort, although they be caried away with couetousnes, or although their mindes bee occupied about some other wicked, shamefull, and hellish lust: yet it skilles not, so they haue the saide finall intent of seruing God; all is wellynough, so they make a shewe of seruing God, notwithstanding that they spite him by all the meanes they can. Likewise in their fasting, though a man cast him selfe into all manner of leawdnes and ruffianry, yet if he fast vppon a deuotion, O thats a holy man, there is no more fault to be founde in him. Thus is it not possible to ridde the hypocrites of the false and diuelish opinion wherwith they be bolned, of paying God with this pelting trash, which is nothing else than abhomination before him; and in the meane while, to spite him in all the residue of their life: so as a man can neuer winne them so beleeue, that God vtterly misliketh all that euer proceedeth not from a sounde heart. So much ỹ more therfore doth it stand vs in hande, to marke well this saying which Moses setteth downe for a finall conclusion: namely that such dealings are abhominable before god. Indeede the blinde & ignorant wretches deeme it not so to be; nay, their doings are commended of men; behold (say they), here is a goodly vertue, here is a good desert. But we must come before the great Iudge, who hath giuen sentence already, that such things are but trash, filthines, and vanitie. And he is not contented with saying so; but he saieth also that they be vtter abhomination or lothsomnes. For indeede, besides their dalying w him to make him as an ydoll, they fal to opē defying of him. If mē thought not god to be starke blind, durst they come before him with a dubble heart, & fraughted ful of hypocrisie? No surely: it woulde make them euen agast at it. For whē they play ỹ hypocrites after ỹ fashion, it is al one as if they came to stop gods eyes, ỹ he might not discerne their dissimulation and cursed hypocrisie. So then let vs marke well, that we must not stay our selues vpon mens bearing of themselues in hande, that to their seeming they faile not to do well, and to deserue wel at Gods hand, though they go not to worke with a free corage, nor with hartie and substantiall soundnesse: Let not such follies runne in our heads. For God not onely reiecteth such thinges as pelting baggage of no value: but also auoweth them to be all abhominable before him, and that he will not suffer his seruice to be so shamefully disguised, without taking horrible vengeance for it. And therfore let vs know that he will haue euery of vs to examine our selues; & sith we see al our thoughts and affections to be corrupted, so as there is nothing in them but dung and vncleannesse: let vs pray him to reforme vs in such sort by his holie spirite, as he may be serued and honored by vs, and wee apply to good and holy vse the thinges that he giueth vs: and that therewithall he make vs to profite more and more in his obedience, vntill we bee come with a free will, to serue him with so good a corage, as wee may be wholly dedicated to his honour. And that we may so doe, let vs repaire vnto our Lorde Iesus Christ, that our spotes and steines may be scowred away by his pureness and perfection, as he hath promised vs. If wee shall doe so, then will our God approue of our life. Prou. 11. 20. 1. Pet. 1. 19.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgment of our faultes, praying him to make vs so to feele them, that wee may from henceforth fall to amendement and resort to his mercie, and that in the meane season he reforme vs in such sort to the obedience of his Law, as it may shine forth in all our whole life, and hee also beare with vs in our frailties, vntill he haue ridde vs quite and cleane of them. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xviij. of Nouember. 1555.

The Ciij. Sermon which is the second vpon the seuenteenth Chapter.

2 If within any of the Gates which the Lorde thy God giueth thee, there be found either man or woman that hath wrought wickednes in the sight of the Lord thy God, by transgressing his Couenant,

3 And hath gone and serued straunge gods, and bowed himselfe before them, whether it bee the sunne, or the moone, or any of all the host of heauen, which I haue not commaunded,

4 And it is told thee, and thou hast heard of it: then shalt thou inquire diligently. And if it be true and certaine that such abhomination hath beene committed in Israel:

5 Thou shalt cause that man or that woman which hath committed that wicked deede, to bee brought out of the gates, and thou shalt stone them with stones, till they die.

6 At the mouth of two or three witnesses, let him that is worthie of death, dye: but at the mouth of one witnesse, let no man dye.

7 The hands of the witnesses shalbe the first vpon him to kill him, and afterward the hands of all the people. And so thou shalt ridde away that euil from thee.

Deut.13.v.6

WE haue seene heretofore, that if there were either man or woman which went about to counsell others to peruert the seruice of God: they shoulde die for it. Nowe here is a Lawe, yet more sharpe: that is to wit, *that if there be any idolater founde among the people, whether the same bee man or woman, is muste cost the party his head and his life*, yea though hee haue not gone about to corrupt others or to intice them to leawdnesse. Truely this seemeth rough dealing at the first blush, as we see howe they blame God for vsing such seueritie against such as vppon deuotion did any act contrarie to his trueth. Because wee wey not Gods honour as it is worthy, wee make greater account of a mortall creature than of the liuing God. For if a man haue practised against his Prince, or gone about to alter the publike state: hee shall be condemned to death without any sticking. Againe, if a man bee vnderstoode to haue had secrete conference with his Princes enemie, to haue shewed him fauour, or to haue conspired with him; no bodie will excuse such disloyaltie: and yet for all that, all this dealing is but against men. But if a man turne away from the seruing of God to gad after y dols: men thinke hee ought to bee borne withall, as though it were a thing of nothing. Whereby wee bewray, that wee passe not for the diminishing of Gods honour, or for the defacing of his maiestie. But wee bee no competent Iudges in that case. Therefore let vs remember what is saide heere, and not thinke that God passed measure, when hee did set such price vppon his honour.

Nowe it is saide, *If there be founde either man or woman*, to the intent that no fraikie should bee a shrowding sheete to any euill doing. For els it woulde bee saide, it is a womans deede. If a man of wit, courage, and vnderstanding had done it; it had beene to haue beene regarded: but seeing it is done by sillie soules that are ready to be deceiued, is it meete that they shoulde be haled to death for it at the first dash? Sir I pray you howe we bee wont to qualifie things. But God on the contrarie parte intending to preuent such shiftes, by telling vs that wee shall not passe whether it bee man or woman, but that the deede of it selfe is so detestable, as that it ought not abide vnpunished. Yet notwithstanding, before wee proceede to punishing, he will haue vs to vnderstande perfectly howe the matter goeth, and hee will haue the truth of the thing tryed out. And therefore hee saith, *When it is reported vnto thee, inquire diligently thereof: and if thou find it true, then shalt thou take the partie which hath committed such crime, and stone him to death.* Hereby our Lorde sheweth vs (as he hath done afore) that wee must not bee hastie to proceede rashly vnder pretence of any good will or zeale: but vse aduisednesse that thinges may be well knowen. And that is well worth the noting. For wee see howe vnaduised zeale doth often carie men away, and make them to offende GOD. And when it is done, then they say, I did it of a good intent. Yea, but GOD telleth vs heere, that in this behalfe wee must behaue our selues discreetely. And in deede, God meaneth not that men shoulde so falsely abuse his name: For what a vile thing is this; that I shall suppose that I serue GOD and yet in the

the meane season haue no equitie nor vprightnesse in me? Is it not a foule iniurie, so to intermingle Gods holy name with mine owne follie and lewde imagination? Wherefore let vs well weigh ỹ God, by this place hath condéned that same too too violent heate which men haue, when they suffer themselues to bee so caried away by their zeale (as they say) without any moderation or stay at all. Let that serue for one point.

And it is some what more when he saith, *If the thing be reported vnto thee.* For therein wee haue to note, that faultes cannot bee punished among men, vnlesse they come to knowledge. Insomuch that a number of offenders escape the handes of worldly Iudges, though they haue offended more foully than others, and be worthy of great blame: and that is because God hydeth their vnhoneste dealings. For there are sinnes which make haste to come to their condemnation, which God thrusteth forward: and there are other some which linger, and God keepeth them as close as if they were buried. And hereby earthly Iudges are warned to be watchfull in serching out of thinges. For inasmuch as they perceiue, that after neuer so much paine taken in boulting out of matters, which belong to their office to haue knowledge of, yet a great sort of thinges doe scape vnseene: they ought to bee so much the more diligent. They cannot knowe all thinges: and why? for they be but men. Yet notwithstanding, for asmuch as God hath commaunded men to punish euill deedes as soone as they come to knowledge: we must consider howe his meaning is, that because nothing can be hidden from him; therefore although men require nothing of vs, nor make any inquisition or suite in Lawe against vs heere beneath: yet must wee euer bee faine to come to accoumpt before him. It is saide that an ydolater shall bee punished, for God hath commaunded him to bee stoned to death, vppon knowledge that hee is such a one. Nowe put the case that a man turne away from the pureness of Religion, and worshippe ydolles in secret. In deede hee cannot be touched by order of Lawe, neither shall hee abide iudgement for it. But yet must bee thinke in the meane while, that God will not suffer his eyes to be dazled. And therefore wee may gather vppon this text, that our Lord reserueth al those faultes, to his owne iudgement, which are not punished by ordinarie Iustice in this worlde. Not that hee pardoneth not those which returne vnto him by true repentance: but my meaning is of such as harden themselues in their hypocrisie, and take occasion to growe worse and worse, because they bee not reproued of their wicked deedes. But yet let them not thinke they haue made the better market for all that. For whereas God telleth the iudges of the earth that they ought to make diligent inquirie: because hee himselfe hath no neede to do so: he telleth vs that all faultes shall come before his iudgement seate, and that the hypocrites may well shrowde themselues for a time, but in the end they shalbe rooted out: and not without cause. For (as I haue touched afore) thinke wee that God wil leaue his honour in the fudder? Seeing it is his wil that euen men should be maintained in good reputation, and that all outrages shoulde be punished: what will he doe when the case concerneth his owne maiestie, & that his glorie is diminished by the malice of men? Ought such dealing to scape vnpunished? Wil God suffer himselfe to be mocked after that fashion? It will bee alledged that all of vs haue beene ydolaters, & so we are al worthie of death. And their saying so, is as it were to stirre vp all men against God. For the folke that make such replies, seeke but to poyson mens heartes, that Gods honour might bee lightly esteemed, and that we might quarrell with him when wee feele our selues touched.

But first of al (as I said afore) we must mark ỹ our Lord speaketh here of ỹ punishing of ydolaters, where order is stablished according to his word. If God had not begunne at that ende, his order had beene amisse. But seeing hee hath shewed howe men ought to serue him, and giue a sure rule thereof, telling vs that we must simplie doe whatsoeuer hee commaundeth; and seeing that both great and small are taught what God they ought to worshippe, and which is the true Religion: if a man or a woman doe afterward turne away, and become forsworn and disloyal to God by stepping aside into the superstitions of ỹ heathenis there any excuse to be admitted in that case? Then let vs marke wel, that this Lawe was made at such time, as God had alreadie stablished a Lawfull gouernement, directed according to his owne word. But wee haue all beene ydolaters. As howe? Euen by meanes of the horrible desolation, ỹ happened through ỹ whole world, as is to be seene yet still in the Popedome. Had this lawe bin well obserued at the first, Christendome had not bin so sore decayed. For had they beene punished which were the first ydolaters & had falsified the Gospel, and corrupted the pureness which was at that time: surely Gods order had bin maintained and preserued much better. But what? When hypocrites were once crept in, which would needes seeme holier than all other men; then inuented they many corruptions: and the more they were born with, the more did the mischiefe spread it selfe abroad, so ỹ it became a poyson that vndoeth al. The cause then why the Church of God came to such desolation: is that men haue not bin held in awe, that the pure simplicitie of the Gospel might be maintained, and God worshipped according to his word, so as mẽ might not assay to deuise any thing of their own braine, but that al men both great & smal, might be made to obey the doctrine which they knew already to be of God. Had this bin done: there had bin no such desolatiõ as we see stil at this day. And therfore let vs beare in mind, ỹ Gods speaking here, is but of such countries or Cities, as haue had ỹ grace to haue ỹ true religion stablished amõg thẽ, so as he is worshiped there, & they haue al consẽted to admit ỹ order which is set by God; & therfore if any of thẽ do afterward turne away, he deserueth to lose his life. As for exãple,

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wee haue now the light of the Gospel, whereby our Lord holdeth vs bound vnto him, to serue him & to be his peculiar people. Seeing then ỳ his Religion is knowen vnto vs, and that discipline is set vp among vs: if any of vs hereafter turne away from it, and giue himselfe to ydolatrie, spiting God wilfully: doeth hee not deserue punishment? Yes. For had a man committed any thing against the state, and after his giuing of his othe to the Magistrate, had broken it againe by doing some deede to the contrarie: surely he shoulde be punished for his vnfaithfulnesse. And what shalbe doone then, if men daly with God, falsifying the faith which they haue giuen vnto him, so as they confederate themselues with his deadly enemie Satan, and with ydols which serue but to deface his glorie, his maiestie, and all his seruice? So then, if the skorners of our dayes replie, that if ydolaters shoulde bee punished, all of vs shoulde die: the aunswere is easie, namely that if the Lawe of God had bin executed, as had bin for our benefite and behoofe, Christianitie had not beene so corrupted as it is, neither had Religion beene so imbased as wee see it is. For the remedie thereof was good and behouefull: but men haue not vsed it. And that hath caused all thinges to come to vtter confusion. Therefore it standeth vs the more in hand to take warning, that if this Lawe helde vs not in awe, wee shoulde alwayes bee in daunger of withdrawing our selues from the seruing of God: and he shold no sooner haue giuen vs his word, but it shoulde by and by vanish away againe, through the malyce and vnthankfulnesse of a great number, which woulde soone ouerthrowe the state that is stablished at this day among vs. Marke that for one speciall point.

Secondly let vs marke, howe it is not said that all ydolaters in generall should be punished, but onely such ydolaters as liue in some Church of God where order is set alreadie, and where Religion is certainly stablished, and thinges are sufficiently knowen. For then, if any man do wilfully playe the naughtipacke, and forsake the pure seruing of God, and defile himselfe with ydolatrie and superstition: that person deserueth death. Besides this, let vs marke well, that (as I saide heretofore) if wee bee not punished before men, we must early or late come to account before God: and there we shall finde that we haue deserued, not onely to be stoned, but also to bee vtterly banished from the euerlasting saluation. And why? Because we were baptised in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, euen before we knew any thing at all. True it is that wee haue beene mistaught: but that excuseth not our disobedience, but that wee our selues to the vttermost of our power, haue falsified our baptisme: for wee haue beene corrupted with ydolatrie. So then, our Lorde might with good right thrust vs quite out of his kingdome, and hee could doe it well ynough: neuertheleese wee see howe he hath gathered vs home to him. Nowe therefore let vs bethinke vs of the state wherein we haue beene: & being ashamed of our selues, let vs craue pardon at Gods hand. And as I haue saide afore, let vs not be ashamed to confesse our selues to bee wretched offenders, that God may vse no violence against vs, nor enter into the rigour of his iudgement towards vs. And that is the cause why it is sayde in Ezechiel, Thou shalt remember thine owne wayes, and be ashamed of them. For there God speaketh of the repentance of such as had beene deceiued for a time by ydolatrie: declaring that when they were brought againe into the right way of saluation, they ought to be verie mindfull of the euill which they had committed, yea they ought to thinke vppon it with shame and confusion. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde. So that although God drawe not his sword, to punish our bodies, yet faile we not to bee guiltie and damnable before God. Neuertheleese, we must vnderstand that hee will alwayes haue pitie vppon vs, if wee preuent his iudgement, & condemne our selues aforehand, acknowledging our selues to be worthy to sinke for the ydolatrie and superstition which we haue followed, but that God haue pitie vpon vs. But (as I saide) we haue wherewith to comfort vs, because we knowe ỳ he is readie to receiue vs to mercie, when wee acknowledge our sinnes, and repaire to him after the fourme manner. That is a thing which we haue to mark further, where it is said that if ỳ thing be reported, men must inquire of it.

Now he addeth, *that the parties which haue done the wickedde, shalbe caried out at the gates*: and why so? For (saith Moses) *hee hath committed abomination before the Lorde*, whether it be man or woman as hee had saide afore. For it is such a sinne as is wicked and grieuous in the eyes of the Lord. Wherin he doth vs to vnderstand, that we must not iudge after our own imagination, whether that deede be worthy of death or no. For it is a thing which beguileth many men, & mooueth them to striue against God and to blaspheme his Law: that they will needs giue sentence of their selues according to their owne opinion. But contrariwise our Lord bringeth vs backe here to his will. It is euill in my sight (saith he) it displeaseth me; I abhorre it. And hee telleth vs moreouer, that we must rest vpon his worde, saying, I haue commanded it. Hereby therfore let vs take warning that wee iudge not at all aduenture & with diuelish boldnesse as these gallants do nowadays, which would not haue religiõ to come in iudgement for the punishing of blasphemie and such other like things which are committed against ỳ honor of God. To be short, they would not haue the Magistrates to sit in iudgement vppon any fault committed against ỳ first table. If any fault be committed against men, as robbery, rape, murther, or aduowtry, they be contented that ỳ shalbe punished, but if Gods name be blasphemed, if any abhomination be committed to the putting away of al feare of god, if heresies spring vp to y trouble of the Church, and to the peruerting of all order: they would haue that to be suffered & excused. And what leadeth them thereto, but the saide hellish pride, that when a thing misliketh not them, they thinke ỳ God shoulde yeeld to their lyking? But herin appeareth their

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ouerweening matched w vngodlines of making none account of God, forasmuch as they can finde in their hearts that his maiestie should be so lightly esteemed at all assayes. Howbeit, let vs for our part marke what is set down here, namely that if any euill displease the eyes of the Lord, it is not to be borne withall: neither must wee in that case leane to our owne wisedome, as if wee wouldе say; O, I will shewe my verdit of it. No, no, we must thinke it ynough that God holdeth it for abhomination, and that hee cannot away with any such thing.

Furthermore he expresly sendeth vs backe to his word, to the intent wee should see it proued to our faces, that they which are such ydolaters ought not to bee excused: for they make warre against God. And is the crime of rebellion a venall sinne? Is it a fault that may bee pardoned, without making any countenance of doing any thing to it? If a man doe of wilfull malice rebell against his father or his mother, his master or his superior: it shalbe throughly weyed, and continually aggrauated to double & treble the fault. And shall a man be so rebellious against God as to defie him, and to doe quite contrarie to his will and intent: and shoulde we still cocker and fauor them that haue so grieuously offended? We see that our Lord speaketh but onely to such as haue bin dulie taught his wil aforehād. For he sayde not to the heathen, or the vnbeleeuers, I haue commanded you this, or I haue forbidden you that. No. And therefore this lawe must concerne a people that hath receiued Religion afore, and among whome some certaine rule is setdowne and stablished. Nowe then, when God hath once commaunded one thing and forbidden another, and hath tolde vs that his will is so: what remaineth more for vs, but to frame our selues thereafter? And as for those that refuse his yoke, can they say it is through ignorance, and through some fonde deuotion? Indeede it may well bee so: but yet there lyeth another crime shrowded vnderneath, namely the contempt of Gods worde; yea there lurketh secrete malice, hypocrisie, and pride: and all these (saye I.) are mingled togesther. Therefore must all excuses cease, and we must acknowledge that all such as haue beene duely trained in the worde of God, are lesse excusable than the ignorant.

And this is not to be applyed alonely to temporall iustice: but forasmuch as it is God that speaketh, let vs marke that accordingly, as wee haue proceeded in his doctrine, and he shewed his will vnto vs; our sinne is the greater if we followe not whatsoeuer he commaundeth vs. To this poinct must we come: it is God that hath spoken vnto mee, he hath graunted mee the grace to knowe howe hee will haue me to walke, and therefore seeing that hee inlighteneth mee, I must not stumble, I must not play the blinkarde nor the blinde bussarde: but I must take heede to the obeying of his doctrine. If we doe not so, we see that this foresaide punishment belongeth vnto vs: and if wee be not chastised by the hand of man, it is readie for vs from aboue. For God can well skill to vpbraide vs with the fauour that he hath shewed vs, in that hee hath vouchsafed to teach vs his will. Insomuch that although the poore ignorant soules were halfe to be excused; yet so it is that on our behalfe the crime is out of all square, when wee set our selues after that fashion against Gods will which is knowen vnto vs. Thus yee see what we haue to remember vpon this place, where it is expresly saide; *that God hath not commaunded those things*. Also let vs learne generally to iudge of Gods will according to his teaching of vs. For oftentimes we will needs lessen mens faults, or aggrauate them; and yet in the meane while we looke not at the thing that is tolde vs. Therefore let vs beare in minde, that Gods will is conteined in ỹ holy scripture, and ỹ that is the place where we must seeke it: & when we see that God speaketh so or so, let vs hold vs to it without any gainsaying.

Nowe Moses addeth, *that the hands of the first witnesse shalbe first against the partie that is to bee stoned, and then the hands of al the people*. Wherein he ment to shewe, that witnesse must not be borne, but with feare. But nowadayes, many men make no great conscience to giue euidence at allauenture against their neighbours, because they bee not put to the executing of the sentence. Hereyppon one goes and with his false tongue doeth wounde some man that is but halfe guiltie, or peraduenture guiltlesse altogether. And he bears himselfe in hand, that a iob with his beake is not so great a matter; by reason whereof he passeth not at all to speake against all trueth. Yee see then the verie cause why there is so much libertie of forswearing nowadayes; is, that such as giue euidence against their neighbours, are not put to the executing of the Iudges sentence. But it was Gods will that their shoulde bee another order among the people of Israel; namely that hee which gaue the euidence, shoulde cast the first stone at the partie, as who shoulde say; it is thou that putteſt this man to death. By meanes whereof folke were restreined from bearing witnesse against any man, vnlesse the matter were true and certaine. For he that had giuen the euidence, sawe himselfe dubble guiltie both of tongue and hand, in murdering an innocent if hee had not deposed the trueth. Wee see then howe it was not without cause, that God commaunded this Ceremonie; namely that the witnesses should bee the first in stoning the parties that were condemned to death by ỹ Iudges. And hereby they were all done to vnderstande, that no offender was put to death, but by the witnesse of such as had proued his offence by their owne knowledge.

Neuertheless God willed also that the hands of al the people should ioyne with them, to shew that all of vs must bee furtherers of the maintenance of his seruice, and of the pure Religion. If any trespasse haue beene committed between man and man, it shalbe pursued by such as haue taken the hurt or losse, or by such as haue to do therewith, or else some common sollicitor shal haue the prosecuting of it for them all. But when Gods honour is defaced, then ought euery

man

man to bestirre himselfe: and it is a singular fauour that God sheweth vnto vs, when hee imployeth vs in so honorable a thing, as the maintenance of his maiestie, to be as his Attourneys in that behalfe. For what are we? Now if God doe vs the honour to declare vnto vs, that he wil haue his honour maintained by vs and by our hands: shoulde we be negligent in that case? So then wee see nowe what was Gods meaning, in commaunding all the people to helpe to stone the ydolaters. For thereby it is done vs to vnderstande, that wee ought to haue a care to maintaine Gods seruice purely among vs; and that euery man must bee earnest and zealous in this behalfe, that (as much as in vs lyeth) wee suffer not religion to bee had in skorne or to bee peruerted: But that if wee beare good will to the common weale, when all thinges are well ordered, and that wee loue to haue equitie and vprightnesse among vs: there is much more reason that we shoulde bee verie chare of the worshipping of God purely, that men turne not away from his woorde, ne wander away wilfully from the Religion that hee hath stablished. For although that wee nowadayes, bee not bounde of any necessitie to the keeping of this Lawe, as in respect of the Ceremonie: yet doeth the substance thereof abide with vs. Euerie of vs is not to stone ydolaters: but yet our Lorde doeth vs to vnderstande, that wee must at leastwise haue so great regarde of his honour, that (so farre as lyeth in vs) wee suffer not his name to bee scorned, and his religion troden downe: but that euerie of vs doe set our selues there against, and make himselfe an aduersarie partie in that behalfe. That is the thing which wee haue to note. And so, although the Ceremonie of the Lawe be not such amongst vs: yet doeth the substance thereof stande in force still, and wee ought to obserue it.

And for the same cause also it is added expressly, *that they must roote out the euill from among them.* Whereby he doth vs to wit, that the suffering of ydolatrie and superstition, is a canker-worme and corruption that infecteth al things. And as I saide afore, if men had beene well bridled at the beginning, surely they had neuer come to such Apostasie; that is to say, they had neuer withdrawen themselues after that fashion from the obedience of God. For what else is Poperie, but a corruption which hath drawen all men from the obeying of God, so as all became backesliders, all haue gone astray, and all haue broken the promise of their baptisme? And whereof came this, but of mens nourishing of the euil by their winking at it and their concealing of it, vntil the infection was so spred abrode, that both great and small were poysoned therewith? Nowe then, if wee will holde ourselues in the pure obedience of God, let vs doe our indeuour that the mischiefe may bee rooted out from among vs, specially being a mischiefe that bringeth so greate an infection with it: For it is not possible for vs to scape infection, if it abide among vs. And for the same cause the Apostle (in the Epistle to the Hebrewes) exhorteth vs to Hebr. 12.15

plucke vp the wicked weeds, before they bee full growē: for it wil amaze vs when they shal pick out our eyes; and yet there is no remedie but it must be so, if we suffer them to growe any long time. Therfore as soone as we see any euil sprout out, we must take it away as much as we can, that we may bee quite and cleane rid of it. Yea and although one man coulde not be infected to wickednesse by the example of another, yet is Gods wrath kindled and increased still among vs, whē the euill abideth so vnpunished. And therfore S. Paul speaking of the incest that was suffered among the Corinthians, saieth vnto them, Put away the euil from among you. As if he had saide, yee wretched men, the crime that is among you prouoketh Gods vengeance against your whole Nation, if it bee so suffered: and therefore if you intende to be exempted from Gods wrath, let not that euill bee suffered or nourished any longer. And this is a sufficient proofe of that which I haue touched; namely that God in commanding all people to put to their hande to the staining of ydolaters, sheweth vs that the thing concerneth vs all: and that for as much as it mooueth vs his attourneys, it is good reason that euery of vs should indeuour to discharge himself of his duety. And thereunto doth God himself exhort vs, in that hee sheweth vs that the suffering of such euil, is an infection & deadly plague, and that our bearing with the thinges that are cleane contrarie to his maiestie, is a prouoking of his wrath against vs. 1 Cor. 5.13

Now remaineth, that wee come to this Law *that a man shall die at the mouth of two or three witnesses, but not vpon the euidence of any one singleman.* This Law serueth for order of gouernment. And indeede the very Heathen were taught by nature to follow this order, so as they could not say it was requisite that a matter should be proued by a couple of witnesses. And this was printed in their mindes, because our Lorde will vse to holde mankind continually in some kinde of vprightnesse, and that discretion should be vsed. But we haue this doctrine the better confirmed, in that God speaketh it with his owne mouth: he saieth, that a man shall die at the mouth of two or three witnesses, and not vpon the report of any one. Then let vs beare in minde, that things ought not to be iudged at aduenture without lawfull proofe. Neuertheless, it may bee that euen the iudge himself may sometimes be a witnesse in a matter: and yet notwithstanding he must iudge contrarie to that he knoweth & wil say, he doth amisse. Nay, he could doe no otherwise, and hee doeth well. For if I bee a iudge, and no bodie but my selfe doth knowe a man to be faulty, so as I cā haue no witnes of his doings: I must let him alone, because I cānot remedie it, & he must be quit by my sentence. And this dealing of mine is no preiudice to any offender: I cōdemn him before god as he deserueth: but yet I let his crime alone vntil it be reuealed, vntil God discouer it and bring it to light. Nowe then let vs marke that for ciuill orders sake, wee must alwayes obserue this rule, that we iudge not but vppon good proofe, so as the matter be proued and

and verified.

Hereupon it is saide that there must bee two or three witnesses. But sometimes men to couer their faultes and misdeedes, wil needes require an infinite number of proofes, which thing was to be seene in those lastie blouds, which woulde needes be wiser than God, and had inuented a very straunge lawe here in this citie of Geneua, which was that they would not be contented w two witnesses, vnlesse there were a Proctor beside. This went they about to controll Gods law, and all vprightnes of nature, and the thing which hath hitherto bin maintained of ỹ whole world. And what was the cause thereof, but that they would faine haue committed al manner of lewdnes, & bleared out their tongues against god, and yet there might neuer haue been any sufficient witnesse to haue conuicted them thereof? For had there come two witnesses, yea, three or foure, yet had mens eyes beene bleared, and all that had beene nothing. Therefore let vs note, ỹ this law was set downe, to make vs hold ỹ meane betweene the two extremities.

The first extremitie is, to iudge of a mater before it be throughly proued, for so to do is euil, & in so doing men are too hastie. Therfore is it requisite, that there should be a two or three witnesses of it. And whē there be a two or three witnesses, it is not for men to reply, as who should say it were meete that fower or fiue witnesses should be sought for, & that the matter were neuer wel proued, except there bee a spokesman with the witnesses. And that is a flat mocking of God. Let vs then beare in minde, that seeing our Lord hath told vs, that the offender shall dye at the mouth of two or three witnesses; it is to bee supposed that ỹ knowledge of the matter ought to suffice vs, so as there ought to bee no wrangling against it, but that iustice ought to proceede to execution. And we see how needefull this admonition is for vs. For men would euer shrinke back if it were possible: & if there bee any apparant colour to hyde their misdeedes, they beare themselues in hand that their hands are cleane inough of them. But here our Lorde summoneth vs, saying that if there bee two witnesses, ỹ iudge must not shrinke backe: for if he do, he is confederate & companion with the wicked, vnlesse he put to his hand to the redresse of their wickednesse. Thus we see nowe, that in saying that two or three witnesses are sufficient, for the conuicting of a man to haue deserued death: our Lord meant to cut off occasion of all shifts that men deuise to cloake their misdeedes withall.

Now furthermore, let vs apply this doctrine to our selues also: & let vs vnderstand that seeing God hath set such order in temporal iustice, hee will keepe it towards vs. But are we not sufficiently conuicted, that wee haue beene estranged from the worde of God? First euery of vs hath his own conscience to reproue him: and what a number of witnesses doeth that counteruaile? The Heathen haue saide, that it is as good as a thousand. Then if a man be condemned in himselfe, what shall it boote him to iustifie himselfe, seeing that his sinne gnaweth him and preferreth inditementes continually against him? For there is no man (howe blockish so euer he bee) whose owne conscience doeth not continually sting him. Therfore let vs learne to plead guiltie before God, seeing he stirreth vs therto inwardly & sheweth vs our faults: Besides this, the prophets and Apostles & the verie sonne of God himselfe, are faithfull witnesses of it, as the prophet Esay nameth him. Seeing we haue them to conuict vs; what should we henceforth seeke for startingholes? What wil that boote vs? And wee haue not the holy scripture onely; but wee haue also the thicke clowde (as the Apostle tearmeth them in the Epistle to the Hebrewes) of all the faithful & of al the holy martyrs which euer suffered for the name of God: & shall not al those be sufficient witnesses to condemne vs before ỹ iudgement seat of our Lord Iesus Christ? Nowe if we make no account to benefite our selues, by the example which they haue giuen vs: but do wilfully forsake the doctrine after we haue knowen it: what condemnation do we deserue? And that is the verie cause why S. Paul alleageth this text to the Corinthians, that iudgement standeth vppon the mouth of two or three witnesses. And whereof speaketh he there? Of his owne Epistle & of his owne comming: for hee sayeth ỹ he will come to the Corinthians. Not that I haue not written vnto you sufficiently already, sayeth he; or that I haue not warned you often ynough heretofore, and yet you continue stubborne and hardharted still. But thinke you that ye shal winne any thing thereby at Gods hand? Know ye (saith he) that iudgement shalbe taken at the mouth of two or three witnesses. Sith it is so, let vs bethinke our selues; and forasmuch as we see that God hath beene so gracious to vs, to giue vs so many prophets after him, & that Iesus Christ himselfe & his Apostles haue witnessed vnto vs the trueth of the Gospel: let them not be witnesses against vs to our condemnation, but rather let them be witnesses of our faith: and let vs bee so confirmed in the grace of ỹ holy ghost by our Lord Iesus Christ, as we may continually keepe on our course, and followe the vocation wherevnto our Lord hath put vs & called vs.

Esa. 53. 46

Hebr. 12. 1

2. Cor. 13. 1

And now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better; that thereby wee may bee the more inflamed to serue him and woorshippe him; not onely as in respect of the ceremonie, but also by applying all our whole life to his obedience, and by giuing of our selues wholly to the soundnes which he sheweth vs by his holy word: And that we may endeuour to bring other men to the same, & not suffer those to stray which are alreadie in the right way; but with one common accord hold them together in the sheepefold which are come into it alreadie, and drawe others thither by our good life & conuersation, preuenting all causes of offence & disorder, whereby the true religion might bee peruerted. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people, and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the xix. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cixij Sermon, which is the third vpon the seuententh Chapter.

8 If a thing be too hard for thee to iudge betweene bloud and bloud, betweene cause & cause, betweene wound & wound, & there be wordes of strife within thy gates: then shalt thou rise and get thee vp to the place which the Lorde thy God shall haue chosen:

9 And go to the Priests & Lenites, & to the Iudge which shalbe in those days, & aske; and they shall shewe thee the sentence of iudgement.

10 And according to the content of the sentence which shalbe declared vnto thee by those of the place which the Lord shal haue chosen, so shalt thou do: and thou shalt take heede to do according to all that they informe thee.

11 According to the sentence of the law which they teach thee, & according to the right which they tell thee, shalt thou do. Thou shalt not turne aside from the thing which they shewe thee, neither to the right hand nor to the left.

12 As for the man which through presumptuousnes will not obey the high priest which is there to minister before the Lorde thy God, or the Iudge: that man shall dye, and thou shalt put away euil from Israel,

13 That all the people may heare and be afraid, & do no more presumptuously.

HEre is the order shewed vs how to end matters in lawe. Forasmuchas when men are at controuersie, we see they be so wilful & hardharted, ỳ by their good willes they woulde neuer come to any end: God declareth ỳ it was his wil there should bee some soueraigne court of iustice among his people, against the sentence wherof there shold lye no appeale. True it is ỳ all people are taught of nature to do so. For if it were lawfull to make continual appeales: mens frowardnes is such (as I said afore,) ỳ their controuersies would neuer come to any end. Therfore is it requisite ỳ there should be some certaine stay: & that is it which our Lord hath declared in this text. Againe, as touching worldly gouernement, this order is greatly auailable, forasmuch as the thing which nature followeth through ỳ whole world, is ratified by the mouth of God: & that is a thing which ought to be well marked. For sith we see ỳ God hath humbled himself so much as to shewe vs the order of ciuil gouernment; we must conclude ỳ he alloweth of it. For otherwise he would not medle with it: & it were a dishonoring of his maiestie. Do we then see ỳ our Lorde in his lawe hath treated of ỳ order which wee ought to obserue among our selues? Let vs assure our selues thereby, that it is a thing which hee well liketh. Marke that for one point.

Againe, sith we see after what fashion he will haue vs to behaue our selues, & hath set ỳ same down particularly: it is yet a greater confirmation. And as for Iudges which are set in authoritie & preheminence: let them vnderstand that their doings are an acceptable sacrifice to God, because he beareth record therof in his law, and ỳ the people also do conform themselues so much the more willingly thereunto. Wherefore we must vnderstand, ỳ the peruerting therof were a rebelling against God, & a despising of him. Thus we see now how needful a doctrine it is for vs, & how greatly to our edifying, ỳ our lord hath declared, ỳ there should be one chiefe court of Iustice for men to rest vpon, that they might not be in continual dout.

Neuertheleſſe we must note ỳ our Lord would not admit appeales in all cases indifferently among his people. For he saith, *If there happen any hard case, whereof the iudgement is doutfull, & ought to be determined*, because the Iudges (namely) inferior Iudges of euery citie) be grouded in it. Wherfore sets he down this? Because it had bin too great a toyle for the people to haue bin driuen to repayre to Ierusalem for euery matter of sixpence, or I wote not what such like. We see (as I haue sayde afore) howe there are some vnsatiable men, and such as could alwayes be contented to findge themselues so they may scold others. Nay ye shal see some so spitefull, ỳ though they should eate their owne fingers, yet they would go forewarde with their sutes in Law, and whē they had wasted away their own substance, they would euen hazard their liues also, to procure trouble to their aduersaries. Seeing then that it is manifest that such folk are caried away with rage, or at leastwise with desire of reuenge: it is good to bridle them. And that is the cause why God woulde not haue all cases to come to Ierusalem. For he had set a good order, namely that there shoulde be iustice in euerie Citie, yea and men of vnderstanding, to giue iudgement of such matters as were to come to triall before them. Prouided alwayes that the cause were not harde and doutfull.

So then let vs marke, how it was Gods will that the controuersies should bee ended with speede, without troubling of the parties too much. And seeing that his intent was such, wee ought to frame our selues thereto as much as is possible for vs. And therefore if men intend to stablish a good order of gouernement, and such as God alloweth: let them followe this rule, that quarels be not maintey ned betweene man and man, but that if there be any controuersie they may soone be set at one againe, so as the suite in Law be not prolonged, nor men posted ouer from one to another, but that things may bee so ordered, as the parties may not be suffered to followe still their owne inordinate wils. True it is that this vice cannot be so corrected, but that some remnant of it will abide still. Yet notwithstanding wee muste goe as neere the marke as we possibly can, seeing that our Lord directeth vs thereunto.

Againe, if a man intend to prouide for the pacifying of quarels among men, so as might may not ouercome right: yee see that ordinary Iustice cannot be forborne. For inasmuchas God had chosen the people of Israel; it is certain that he prouided the best meane that could be deuised for the mainteyning of them in peace and concord. And in verie deede they were all of one linage, descended of the race of Abraham: and therefore inasmuch as there was such a brotherhoode among them; it ought to haue beene the easier to haue continued them in quietnes. On the other side they seeing themselues separated from the rest of the world, and being there gathered together into one bodie in the name of God ought to haue born one w another in reuerence of that holy bond. Yet notwithstanding for their further preseruation, God ordeyned this meane that there should be Iudges in euery Citie. Then let vs conclude, that as long as men liue here beneath; they cannot forbeare Magistrates, by reason of their infirmities. Truth it is that euery man ought to carie the Lawe in his heart, and euery man ought to doe al men right of their owne accord: but we be blind and our affections cary vs away; and besides that, wee subdue not our vnderstanding, neither do we holde our lusts captiues as we ought to doe. Therefore we haue neede of a bridle for them. And that is my meaning, in saying ℣ wee ought to loue the state of ciuil gouernement, and to reuerence it; namely because it is a necessarie meane to maintain mankind in this world, and wout it al things would go to horrible confusion, insomuch ℣ wee should not only become as Dogs & Cats; but also beworse than wilde beasts. Greately therefore ought we to bewaile our state, seeing ℣ (as I haue shewed afore) wee which beare the Image of God cannot vse our freedome to behaue our selues according to reason and equitie. Yet notwithstanding, seeing we be so sore corrupted, we must vnderstand ℣ Gods remedying of our discases after that fashion, is a poinct of his singular goodnes towards vs. But howsoeuer ℣ case stand, if we wil eschewe ℣ men scratch not our one anothers eies, ne eat not vp one another: let vs follow ℣ rule which our lord sheweth vs here, namely ℣ there be Iustice in euery Citie & in euery other place, and ℣ such as beare ℣ sword do watch so as no man oppresse another, no man work any outrage or iniurie, nor no man presume further than is lawfull. Marke that for one poinct.

Now let vs come to that which is set downe here concerning Appeals. *If there rise any difficult & doubtful case, betweene cause and cause, wound and wounde, or blood and blood.* As if he should say, if there bee any cause either criminall or ciuile whereof there riseth doubt, and men cannot decide it by giuing definitiue sentence on it: let the resort to the high courte. We see then that Appeales are ordeined as wel for matters of life & death, as for matters of trespasse. And now let vs see whither God woulde haue men to appeale. To Ierusalem. True it is that he doth not as yet name the place, because it was not appointed out as ℣ time. But he sayth, *Thou shalt go vp.* And Moseses speaking after that manner, was after a sort in way of prophesie, because the situation of Ierusalem was higher than all the rest of Iurie. But vntill the Ark was set there, it behooued them to resort to the place where that was. Againe, here is no speaking of the king. For the time was not yet come that God would set vp a kingdome among that people: ℣ was to be stablished in the person of Dauid. Yet notwithstanding there were alwaies Iudges, accordingly as wee see how Iosua succeeded Moses, and consequently the rest of the Iudges vnto Samuel, at which time ℣ people would needes change their state. Therefore vnto Samuels time, there was this order among them, that God raised vp certaine Iudges in Israel, which represented ℣ state of a king vntil the kingdom was stablished. That is ℣ thing which Moses meant in this sentence, when he saide, ℣ men should resort to the Iudge which should be at that time in Israel.

Also it was his will that the high Priest with his fellow Priests the Leuites, should haue authoritie to giue sentence of Iudgement. And why? He addeth; *Because they could giue sentence according to the Lawe of God.* And finally, vpon that sentence of theirs hee will haue men to rest: *and that if any man disobeyed it, he should be punished with death, that by that meanes pride might be corrected in Israel.* Now wee see what God intended to commaund concerning Appeales. There were Iudges in euery Citie: but yet there was one aboue them all as in the degree of a Prince. Not that it went by inheritaunce: but looke whomsoeuer God raysed vp by his holy spirite, him it behooued to gouerne the people. And wee see it came so to passe afterwarde. As oft as the people fel away from God, it was to their owne confusion: and as soone as he had pitie vppon them againe, hee raysed them vp Iudges newe againe, as the holy liystories doe shewe vs. There were in deede soome interruptions at such time as the people were worthy to be punished, insomuch ℣ all went to hauocke, they were giuen ouer vnto bondage and to the tyranny of the Infidels which were their enemies: bue as soone as God vouchsafed to gather them home againe, there was a newe Iudge set vp againe. Iudges 2. 17. 18.

And herein we see yet better, that it is a token of Gods presence, when we haue order of iustice among vs, so as there are men to gouerne vs which walke in the feare of God, and execute their charge faithfully: it is as much as if God came downe to vs & shewed vs his face. Contrariwise, when the order of gouernment is peruerted, it is as though God turned his backe to vs. If the magistrates be corrupted, & peruert al right & equitie, or if tyrants get dominion ouer vs: let vs vnderstand that God forsaketh vs, and withdraweth himselfe from vs, & is mynded to make vs feele his absence by such signe of his wrath: and that then wee haue good cause to mourne. But if wee see the lawes florish, & there be men that feare God, to make them to be executed, it is all one as if God made his face to shine vpon vs, and declared his loue towardes vs, and that hee is minded to maintaine vs vnder his protection. And it serueth to make vs to loue the state of worldly gouernement the better, seeing it is such a token of the goodnesse of our God, and of his fatherly loue towardes vs.

But as I sayde afore, the high priest and the trybe of Leuy were appointed to bee Iudges in all harde cases. It may seeme strange at the first sight, howe it commeth to passe that GOD woulde haue the priesthood to entermeddle in ciuil gouernement: for they be two things farre differing. Wee knowe that when Aaron was ordeyned to bee the high priest, Moses had the gouernement of the people. Nowe the Priesthood went by inheritance, and so did not ỹ temporall gouernement. In so much that Moses left his own children as priuate persons in their owne houses without any publike authoritie, & Ioshua who was not of any kinne or aliance vnto him, was his successour. The same order continued afterwarde, in so much that God raised vp whome hee thought good, nowe one of one trybe, and nowe another of another. Notwithstanding, it behooued the Priestes to hold them selues contented with the spirituall gouernement of the Church, and they ought not to take vppon them the ciuil gouernement. Why then doth God here set them in highest degree to iudge? Vndouredly, it was to ordeyne a Councell for him that was to bee the chiefe Iudge, and to holde the people in the better awe, as it it had beene sayde that all Appeales should come before God. For (as I haue declared afore) men can very hardly bee brought to giue their consentes, to obey a sentence that is against them. Therefore, to the ende that no man shoulde take leaue to stande in contention, God sayeth there shalbee a soueraigne Iudge, at leastwise to beare sway in Counsell of hard cases, and such as are giuen in fourme of iudgement. And to the intent that thinges may bee iudged according to my lawe, the high priest and the order of the Leuites shalbee present there. Nowe wee knowe that they were expounders of Gods lawe. For with that condition was the priesthood giuen vnto them, namely that they shoulde bee Gods Angels and messengers as the Prophet Malachie speaketh of them. And

Exo. 28.1.43
Deut. 31.7.
Iosua, 1.2.

Mal. 2.7.

therefore when men asked counsell at their mouthes, it was not to haue some dooting dreame of mans deuice, but to haue the certaine vnderstanding of Gods lawe. That then was the cause why the chiefe authoritie of iudgement was committed to the order of the priestes with the Iudge whome God had set vp.

But before wee goe any further, let vs note that vnder pretence of this text, the Pope hath vp his hornes, and vsurped such tyranny as we haue seene him vse in the Church of God. For thus doeth hee reason. Seeing that the chiefe authoritie of iudgement was giuen to the Priestes, it is to bee concluded that there ought to bee one head ouer all the Church. Againe, for as much as the sentence of the high priest was to bee holde without any gainsaying, the thinges that are determined by the Apostolike sea (as they terme it) ought likewise to be holde without gainsaying, and it is a deadly and unpardonable sinne, to incounter any thing that the Pope shall haue pronounced. But here we haue two thinges to consider, which are of sufficiencie to resolue all such and so childish argumentes. For first, the gouerning of the whole worlde by one man, and the gouerning of some one countrey or prouince by one man, are not both one. God hath made here a ciuil lawe for the countrey of Iewrie. And we knowe that at that time there was but one Temple, & that it was not lawfull for them to worship God or to offer sacrifice vnto him in euery citie. If a man had buylded any altar, it had beene abominable, and that citie must haue beene rased. And Gods doing hereof, was but to hold ỹ people in one right vnitie of faith. The like ordre was but one temple in the land of Iewry: so was there but one high priest. But must this be exteded to the whole world? No, not so. There needeth many mo: for what one mortal man nowdayes is able to weeld so great a charge? Againe, it were meete that there should one temple bee builded in the mids of the worlde, ỹ men might come rūning to it a foure or fiue thousād leagues off to worship God. And do ye not see what an absurditie that were? Therfore it were too grose a fondnesse to cōclude thus; There was but one temple & one high priest in al Iewrie, ergo there ought to be ỹ like throughout the whole worlde. For then ought there also some litle nooke to be made, where men might so assemble together, as they should not needs to go past foure or fiue dayes iourneyes from home: but we see that that were vnpossible, and moreouer it were contrarie to nature. Marke that for one poynt.

And secondly let vs marke, that the Leuitical Priesthood is come to an end & quite put down by the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ into world. Moreouer the high priest was a figure & shadow of our Lord Iesus Christ, and therefore it were an abolishing or putting away of the trueth, if men shoulde haue a high priest to be the vniuersall head of the Church, as the Pope woulde make men beleeue. It is saide that there was one high priest, one chiefe Iudge,

Heb. 7.18.

yet,

yes, & one king in Israel. Now if a man wil conclude hereupō, that there ought to be one high-priest through the whole world; there must also be but one chiefe king: & so should all common weales be cast downe, & the order which as now is distinctly set among kingdoms, dukedomes, & free cities, should be but a confusion accursed of God. And in what taking were wee then? Nay, wee must go to the chiefe point of all, which is that thereby our Lorde Iesus Christ shoulde be robbed of his right. For now that he is come, the kingdome is stablished euerlastingly in his person, & he is set ouer all the Empires and kingdomes of the worlde. Also he hath taken vpon him the euerlasting priesthood, ouer all order & gouernement of the Church. Not that there shoulde not as now be any mo Bishops & shepheards, as the scripture speaketh of them: but ỹ Iesus Christ be the only head, & the residue but as inferior members, and that the body be gouerned in such wise, as all things may be subiect to him of whome it is saide; This is my welbeloued sonne, Heare ye him. And so wee see that ỹ Pope is a traytour that robbeth Iesus Christ of his soueraignitie, by making of himself highpriest ouer the Church of God.

And by the way, if it be alledged that it is requisite there should be some meane to end quarels and controuersies that might rise for religion the answere is, that so there be an order set, there needeth not any one man to be set ouer al the rest; but they may assemble together w one consent accord, as we see hath bin done in times past. True it is that the men of olde time had a certeine order in the Church for the great Prouinces, namely that there were certaine Patriarches: but as for to haue any one head ouer the whole Church, that was neuer agreed vppon, so long as there was any pureness of the Gospel or any tolerable gouernement. But as soone as all things were confounded after a barbarous or rather beastly maner; then did the Pope lift vp his hornes. In deed he stroue long time against the Bishop of Constantinople. But howsoeuer ỹ case stood, it fell out anon after that all thinges were corrupted & confounded, & men wist not any more what the gouernment of the church ment. So then let vs marke, ỹ if it be said, that like as it is requisite there should be some stay for the pacifying of ciuil quarels, and for the determining of criminal [illegible]; so it is good reason that there should be [illegible] chiefe court of prerogatiue, for the appealing [illegible] rise & contention in doctrine: yet it followeth not that one man only ought to haue supremacie ouer the whole world: for (as I haue shewed afore) that is quite contrarie to nature. What remaineth then? That men assemble togither, & that Iesus Christ beare the chiefe sway among them.

But we must wey well the things that are contained heere. It is said that ỹ Priest must iudge according to the law of God. Wherein it is shewed that our Lorde layeth not the brydle loose on the necke, eyther of all the priestes together, or of the iudge which was in those dayes in state of a king: but that al of them ought to be subiect to the law: and that (as I said afore) God meant to reserue the soueraigne authoritie to himselfe, so as men should receiue definitiue sentence at his mouth, & that the persons which were to giue the sentence, should be but as instrumentes of his holy spirite, & expounders of his lawe. Therefore let vs marke wel, that God ment not here that men should do any thing on their own heads, but that his lawe should beare the sway, specially in Ierusalem rather than in any other place. But now let vs see what the Pope doeth, & what all the bastardly Councels haue done whereunto he would tye vs. There is nothing amongest them but to say: that the holy Ghost gouerned them; for as for the holy scripture they did let that alone. In deede they gaue it the honorable title of Gods word: but when they ment to determine what they thought good, was it according to that which God hath declared? No: but they tooke another rule; which is, that the Church cannot erre because it is gouerned by ỹ holy Ghost: & that as touching the holy scripture, it leadeth vs into perfection, but we must mount vp yet higher: for if we haue not the reuelations of the holy Ghost, it is nothing: If a man holde himselfe to that which is conteined in the holy scripture, it is but an vnperfect thing with them; but as for that which is determined by ỹ Church, that must be held inuiolable, and no man must in any wise gainsay it. Againe, the holy scripture (say they) is a nose of wax, which a man may wryth euery way, & there is no certeintie in it: but whē the church hath once pronounced a thing, there is no more dout in it. After ỹ maner went all the rable of them to worke, so as they haue troden ỹ holy scripture vnder foote. Although they grant in words that it proceeded from God: yet haue they taken it to be but as an apse, and as a cōmō doctrine: affirming that the Reuelations which haue beene giuen vnto them, are much higher doctrine. These blasphemies they haue not been ashamed to vtter, & their bookes are ful of them. Insomuch that they say that the holy scripture is a pliable thing (as I haue declared afore); so as if wee should sticke to that which is conteyned there, our fayth shold neuer be certein. And therupon euery man followes his owne fancye. Seeing they were come to such extremitie, a mā may wel perceiue ỹ the holy scripture bare no sway amōg thē. But on ỹ cōtrarie part it is said, ỹ the highpriest must be a iudge, not only in matters concerning the spiritual gouernment of the church, but also in ciuil cases; & that he must follow ỹ law though the case concern but the temporal iurisdiction. If it be so, what is to be done whē they haue to deale with ỹ law of God? Whē the case concerneth the saluation of mens souls, religion, & faith, which are things ỹ passe all the whole world: Shal men therein forsake the holy Scriptures? Shall men in those cases ouerrule matters at their own pleasure, as if they woulde say, This seemes good to mee, this hath ỹ holy Ghost reuealed vnto mee? See yee not how God is shamefully mocked in this behalf? So then, let vs mark wel, first that our lord ment not to giue infinit power either to the Priests or to ỹ Iudges,

but ỹ he hath sent & referred them backe to his law, ỹ they might iudge according to ỹ same. In deede here a man might reply; that euery man might say; It is not according to Gods lawe, vnlesse the exposition ỹ is giuen thereof be to their own liking. And truely the heretikes are so wilful, ỹ they wil neuer be conuicted. Akhough the holy scripture be alledged vnto them, & that the texts be set downe neuer so cleare & infallible; yet wil they not ceasse to contend stil, euen whē their own consciences condemn them, as saith S. Paul. Al this is true: yet must not they which are in auoritie abuse it, as though it were lawful for them to say; This is ỹ law, let it be followed. Neuertheleſſe, the Pope & al his clergie haue left ỹ holy scripture: & what should we do then but repaire to this rule; ỹ seeing God woulde haue the temporal iurisdictiō to be gouerned by his word, there is much more reason ỹ the Church should not be otherwise gouerned than by ỹ holy scripture. Whereſoeuer temporal Iudges are, they be lawmakers; neither haue they libertie to make new lawes for the spirituall gouernement of the Church. To be short, men must hold their peace, all mouthes must be stopped, men must content themselues with that which is set down by Moses, by the Prophets, & by the Apostles, & thereupon must men rest altogether. Seeing it is so ỹ God hath not authorised men to bee lawmakers as in respect of the spirituall gouernement of the church: let vs conclude ỹ it is not lawfull for vs to turne away from the law & from ỹ holy scripture: but ỹ we must hold vs to it. And so yee see what we haue to marke vpon this text, where it is said, ỹ the Priests & the Iudge for ỹ time being shall iudge according to the law of God.

Tit. 3. 11.

And in very deede I haue declared a litle alreadie, that we ought to receiue Iesus Christ, as wel for our Iudge as for our highpriest. For Iesus Christ hath a double office: in somuch ỹ besides that he is our chiefe prophet of whom we ought to hold al our doctrine & to feteh all trueth: he is also our soueraigne king, & highpriest. Howbeit forasmuch as they represented his person, being as it were his shadowes & figures: it behoued thē to follow this law. As now there are no mo such shadowes & figures (as I saide heretofore) because the sonne of God is come into the worlde, ỹ old priesthood is passed away, & the old kingdome is abolished. Therfore let vs be contented to haue an inferior order, ỹ is to wit, that ciuil gouernement be so maintained as Gods law do alwayes beare chiefe stroke, & as all men in the mean while haue a regard what is lawful for thē. When kings, & princes, & magistrates are to make lawes, let them vnderstand that if they make them of their own head, it is a marring & confounding of all things. For God saith, it is by me that magistrates discerne what is good and expedient. Therfore let them call vpon the spirit of God, that he may giue them wisdom & discretion to make good & conuenient lawes. And let them that sit in the seat of Iustice, referre thē selues to God, and seeke to bee ruled by his holy spirite. Let them that haue the spirituall iurisdiction knowe, that it is not lawfull for them to meddle any further than with the preaching of Gods worde, and to speake as out of his mouth, and to deliuer the doctrine faithfully which is contained in the law and ỹ Gospel, let them holde themselues within those bounders, and take no further vppon them. Thus yee see in effect howe wee ought to put this doctrine in vre.

Esa. 7. 14. Hebr. 1. 2. 8. & 2. 17.

Pron. 8. 15. 16.

And it is said expreſly, *That man shall stand to the sentence which is giuen by the Iudges and Priests, and that the party which disobeyeth is iustly to be dealt with because of his pryde*. Hereupon the Pope would needs grounde, that it is not lawefull in any wise to stand against the things that haue bin determined by the Councels. What? Beholde, the Pope hath sit as cheefe of the Councel, and the Byshops and prelates haue consented thereunto, and shall a man come and set himselfe against it, and say ỹ it was il decreed. O that were an intolerable crime in deed, God wilnot haue such pride to be borne withall in his people. This (as I haue sayd afore) may easily be ouerthrowen, as thus that forasmuch as this text treateth of matters of lawe, it treateth not of doctrine. For God hath deliuered his lawe, and hath said that men must not turne aside neither to the right hand nor to ỹ left. In so much that whē Moses gaue instructions vnto Iosua, he said to him, thou shalt follow whatsoeuer is conteined in ỹ law, & not swarue aside one way nor other. Behold, Iosua is ordeined to be the cheefe Iudge, to hold the people in good order, he is their head, and representeth our Lord Iesus Christ: yet for al ỹ he saith not to him, Thou shalt doe whatsoeuer thy mind giueth thee to do, & whatsoeuer is good & right to thine own seeming: but thou shalt do as ỹ meanest of all the people, submitting thy selfe to the doctrine which is giuen thee for the guiding of the Church. So then, as touching Gods seruice, and religion, wee see howe the lawe hath euer borne the swaye, and it behoued all men to haue their ears open and redie to receiue whatsoeuer is set forth there, and that no man might presume to stand against it, or to ouerrule it, for making of the people to murmure. Now therfore forasmuch as here is no speech concerning any other things than of matter in lawe, how they ought to be ended, and of the pacifying of quarels which else would be endlesse betweene man and man; the solution is very easie: namely that if a man stande against a definitiue sentence, his meaning is to peruert all order, and he is an enemie to mankinde, and woorse than a theefe. He that robbeth or murthereth, shalbee punished, and yet his breaking of the lawe, is but in some one point: but as for him that breaketh ỹ ciuil order, he openeth the gap to theft, to murther, and to all confusion: his meaning is that there should bee no more modestie nor humanitie among men. Therefore ought hee to bee taken as an enemie to all goodnes; and (according to Saint Paules saying) they that would set such disorder among men, set not themselues against creatures, but do make warre against the liuing GOD, because all soueraignetie is of him. Nowe then, it is not to bee marueiled

Deut. 17. 11.

that

that it should be sayde, that the partie which disobeyed the sentence of the prerogatiue court, should be cut off from among the Israelites.

And by this sentence wee be put in minde of that which hath beene spoken before: namely ỳ our Lord maketh so great account of the earthly policie, that he will haue it mainteined yea euen with mens liues. Precious is mans bloude vnto him; for men are shaped after his image: but yet doeth he not so much beare with a man, but that he will haue him stoned, & put to death, if he be disobedient to ciuill order. Therefore we can not by any comparison iudge how precious and holy a thing in Gods sight the authority is which he hath giuen to Iudges & Magistrates. For if any man step vp against it, he shall die for it. And why? Is a mans life no more worth than so? (for so will some men alleadge.) Yes: and make ye nothing of the image of God which shineth foorth much more in Magistrates, because God hath printed his marke in them? Againe, what is the life of one man in comparison of the liues of a hundred thousand? For the whole nation perisheth without remedy, where this order is not holde, that there be Magistrates, and that men yeelde obedience vnto them. For the men that can not finde in their heartes to bee gouerned, woulde become deuils, if there were no order of gouernement, that they might be holde in awe by their superiours: all would go to hauocke. So then it is not without cause ỳ God hath ordeined ỳ the party should dy which is disobedient to the order of Law. And therefore so much ỳ more ought we to yeelde to ỳ which is tolde vs here, & to humble ourselues in that behalfe, and to bow downe our neckes willingly & obediently to such as hold the sword of Iustice. For in so doing, we offer vnto God such sacrifice as is acceptable to him, & he receiueth it as we see in this text. And if we disobey the men whō he hath set in ỳ degree, we be his enemies and make warre against him, (as I sayd afore) and wee shall haue too mightie an aduersarie for vs to ouercome.

And he speaketh purposely of pride. For it is impossible that a man shoulde be so stubborne as to withstande the publike magistrate, & to ouerthrowe the order of the common weale, if he be not caried away with pride & diueliish ouerweening. So then, will we amend this rebelliousnes against the Iudges and Magistrates? Let euery of vs frame himselfe to a good lowelinesse. For if we be not puffed vp with pride, it is certaine that all men will keepe on his course, and thinges will be quiet among vs. What is the cause then that order is so peruerted? It is for that men can not finde in their hearts to yeelde so farre vnto reason as to say, let ỳ Lawes oberrule vs. And consequently let such as are appointed for Magistrates looke that they mainteine their state, & do their indeuour to beate downe such pride; and let all men submit themselues meekely to the order which God hath appointed. And Moses hath noted this thing, of purpose to shew that Gods vsing of such seuerite & rigor against ỳ disobedict, is not without cause. For in ỳ case, we must not simply looke vpon their disobedience, but proceed yet higher, namely ỳ they be led with an ouerweening of themselues, ỳ they be ful of pride & spitefulnes, and ỳ if there were any meekenes in thē, it would be discerned by their submitting of themselues to ỳ hand of God. But forasmuch as they be ful of pride & intollerable statelinesse, so as they wil not stoope either to God or man, but reiect al ỳ euer is: it is not to be wondred at, though God cōmand such persons to be put to death.

And he sayth expresly; *thou shalt rid away euill frō Israel.* For (as was touched yesterday) when wickednes is suffred, it is a marring of al thinges & a generall infection followeth vpon it. At the first, the greatnesse of the mischiefe is not perceiued that commeth of the pardoning of a sinne. Well, it passeth for once. Yea, it seemeth but for once. But it turneth to the infecting of all afterwarde; because that by ỳ meanes the euill was fostered still, and men stept not to the redressing of it in time: & so God is faine to punish our negligence. Now then let vs marke well, ỳ for this cause Moses warneth vs heere, ỳ if we suffer naughtines to settle, it will marre & infect all ỳ is, before it can be redressed: and that it is too late to go about it; when men haue tarried till the infectiō hath gotten the vpper hande.

Also he speaketh of the example saying, *that others hearing thereof shalbe afraide, and by that meanes, pride shalbe corrected.* Fitst of all we see hereby, ỳ pride is an odious vice before God, seeing he vseth so violent remedy ỳ he will haue the party to answer it with his life. And secondly let vs mark also, ỳ the punishmentes which we ought to execute belong to example. And ỳ is the cause why it is sayd, ỳ they which spare an offender in leauing his fault vnpunished, shalbe guilty of ỳ vndoing of the whole nation: for by ỳ meanes, the residue do fall to leaudnes as well as he. And when folke see a wicked deede cōmitted, & the party is not punished for it; euery man taketh libertie to do ỳ like. Therfore let vs take warning by these examples, ỳ we may be able to apply thē to our instruction: & when we see thē punished which aduance thēselues; let vs learne thereby to walke in meeknes. And although it were better for euerie man to learn by himself, thā by beholding ỳ punishmēts of other folks: Yet notwithstanding it is a great grace of God, whē he teacheth vs by other mens harmes. Let vs mark moreouer, ỳ if we cōtinue without amendment when we see ỳ punishments ỳ are executed by the authority of God; I say if we continue without amendment: our sinne increaseth so much the more. God warneth vs by a great many of instructions, yea & of chastisements also which he executeth; and wee make none account of them: nowe is it any wonder if in the ende wee see our Lorde sende so great and excessiue disorders, that wee wote not where to become? Then let vs learne to profite in this schoole, as oft of GOD lifteth vp his hande to punish the wicked: and let vs vnderstande that he teacheth vs by their example: wherfore let vs stoope, & let euery of vs yeelde to obey him with true meekenesse.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our

faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, so as we may all of vs seeke to frame our life according to the rightneſſe which hee ſheweth vs, and not looke to be drawen thereto by compulſion of the earthly ſworde, but rather that the ſworde of Gods worde may haue ſuch power in our heartes, as it may make vs to ſacrifice ourſelues vnto GOD, killing all our fleſhly luſtes, and renewing vs to ſuch a kinde of life, as our whole deſire may bee to haue God reigne ouer vs, and that we may be wholly reformed, according to his holy will: and that therewithall we may followe the orderly policie and ſpirituall gouernement of his Church; and that all the things which he hath ordeined for our benefite, may be ſo maintained & obſerued, as both great and ſmall may ſubmit theſelues thereunto. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but alſo to al people & nations of the earth. Reducing all poore ignorant people out of the bondage of errours and darkeneſſe wherein they are holden: That ſo be he may bring thē to the knoweledge of his trueth: And that for this purpoſe it would pleaſe him to raiſe vp true & faithfull miniſters of his worde, &c.

On Wedneſday the xx. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cv. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the ſeuenteenth Chapter.

14 When thou art come into the Lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee, and enioyeſt it and dwelleſt therein, and ſayeſt I will ſet a king ouer mee like as all the nations that are roundè about mee:

15 Then ſhalt thou make him king ouer thee whome the Lorde ſhall chooſe from among thy brethren: him ſhalt thou ſet ouer thee to be king, and thou muſt not ſet a ſtraunger ouer thee which is not thy brother.

16 But he ſhall not multiply horſes to himſelfe, nor ſende the people againe into Egypt to increaſe the number of horſes, foraſmuch as the Lorde hath ſayd vnto you, yee ſhall neuer hence foorth goe any more againe that way.

17 Neither ſhall he take him many wiues, leaſt his heart turne away. Neither ſhall he gather him much golde and ſiluer.

18 And when he is ſet vpon the Throne of his kingdom, he ſhall copy out this Lawe for himſelfe in a booke, before the Prieſtes the Leuites.

Deut. 16. 18. HEretofore Moſes hath ſpoken of the Iudges that were ordeined in euery citie to gouern the people, and ſpecially of the cheefe Iudge to whom all thinges were referred. Nowe he addeth that if ỹ people be diſpoſed to chooſe a king, he ſheweth what manner a one he ought to be. And firſt he ordeineth that he muſt be taken of the linage of Abraham: and ſecondly he declareth his duetie to him, to the intent he ſhould not go beyond it, nor play the Tyraunt in ſteede of playing the king. That is the meaning of Moſes generally. But here we muſt conſider what is the cauſe, why God ſetteth not vp a king by his owne authoritie, but rather leaueth it to the likeing of the people. For if he allowed the ſtate of a king, or if it were a thing that he liked wel of; ought he not to haue ſhewed the way, that the people might haue obeyed whatſoeuer he had cōmaunded them? But he ſayeth, *When thou art come into the Lande which thy God giueth thee, and inioyeſt it, if thou wilt chooſe a king as other Nations haue.* Hereby it ſhould ſeeme that God was not willing there ſhoulde bee any kingdome in Iewrie: but that if the people were ſo deſirous of a king that they could not be helde from it, then he granted it them by way of ſufferance. Notwithſtanding this, wee heare howe it is ſayde in Geneſis, that the ſcepter ſhould not be taken from the tribe of Iuda, nor the gouernour from betweene his legges, vntill the perſon that was to be ſent were come & had appeared. This propheſie was not a curſe that ſhould come vpon the people, nor a vengeance of God: but rather a ſingular and ſpecial fauour aboue all other. For in ſaying ſo, Iacob declareth that God would ſet vp an euerlaſting king, by whom ſaluation ſhould be ſent throughout all the world. And vntil the time of the manifeſting of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt it behooued the people ſo be maintained full in hope of him: and God gaue vnto him the kingdome of Iuda and that whole tribe. We ſee then in fewe wordes, that this kingdome was a figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, and as a warrant which God gaue to that people, that he himſelfe reigned ouer them, and the kinges of Iuda ſerued alwaies to holde the people vnder Gods protection, as it were in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. For albeit that all the Princes of the worlde be called Gods children and his lieftenaunts: yet notwithſtanding, the kingdome of Iuda had that title after a more ſpeciall and holy manner. And therefore wee ſee it was Gods will there ſhoulde be a king among his people, euen becauſe it was the full perfection of all felicity, that Ieſus Chriſt ſhould be the head of them.

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True it is ỳ if disputatiõ should arise cõcerning ỳ gouernmẽt of mẽ; it might be said ỳ a free state is much better thã to be vnder a Prince: but here is no cõtrouersie of any such matter. And in deed such disputatiõs are not very profitable. For they ỳ are vnder ỳ gouernment of a Prince, must not be fickleminded to make any alteration. And those to whõ God hath giuen liberty & freedom, ought to vse it w thanksgiuing, as a singular benefit & treasure ỳ cannot be prised sufficiently. And as for ỳ kingdom of Iuda, there was a speciall respect in ỳ, as I haue said afore: namely ỳ it was the image of the truth which was in our Lorde Iesus Christ, in gathering vs to himselfe to make vs Gods Church & his owne flocke. For ỳ is better than al ỳ gouernment in the whole world. If a mã should cõpare a principality, or a free state of a Senate, or whatsoeuer els can be imagined for a cõmonweale, with ỳ grace which God giueth vs in shewing himself to vs in his own person, of purpole to reigne ouer vs himself, & to take ỳ charge of our welfare, & in establishing his only son in ỳ office & dignity: I pray you is it not much better to be vnder ỳ obedience of our Lord Iesus Christ, & to haue him to reigne ouer vs as our souereine Lord & King; than to be Kings & Emperors euery one of vs? Yes verily. So then wee must conclude ỳ seeing God ordeined Iudges frõ ỳ beginning, hee sheweth therby ỳ it is a desirable thing for folk to be gouerned in cõmon & to haue laws to reigne among thẽ, ỳ there be no succession by inheritance, but ỳ euen those which are chosẽ [to beare office] be bound to yeelde account of their doings, & haue not absolute libertie to doe what they list or to say: I will haue this thing: Is shalbe thus done. This did God shew, whẽ he gouerned his owne people by ỳ hand of Iudges. And for the same cause did he vpbrayd & blame ỳ Iewes for requiring a king to be their head & to reign ouer them. It is not thou (sayth he to Samuell) to whõ they haue done this wrong. True it is ỳ thou hast executed my authority in ỳ thou art of my setting vpbut their vnthankefulnes & disobedience toucheth me, in ỳ they can not abide ỳ I shoulde haue the gouerning of thẽ. And afterward he addeth, wel then let them haue a king. But it shalbe to their trouble: for he shall spoyle their houses, take away their sons & daughters, consume their substance, lay taxes & tallages vpon them, & (to be short) vse them like wretched bondslaues. See what they haue wonne by requiring a king.

And in this text our Lorde sheweth, ỳ as in respect of worldly gouernmẽt, he had chosen ỳ best thing ỳ could be, namely ỳ the Law should reigne ouer the people, & therewithal ỳ there should be Iudges in euery citie, & a chiefe gouernour ouer all, to the intent ỳ matters might be determined and concluded, as was declared yesterday: howbeit with this most noble condition, which God reserued to himselfe, namely that our Lorde Iesus Christ should reigne ouer them. For it behoued thẽ to be vnder one head, howbeit not simply of a mortall man, but of ỳ sonne of God. But inasmuch as ỳ time was not yet come that such grace should be shewed: it behoued the hope therof to be feeded with some figure. And ỳ was the cause why it was promised by the mouth of Iacob, that the scepter should not depart from the tribe of Iuda. God did purposely choose out one tribe, & when he ment to set vp the king, he sayd that the reigne of him shoulde be durable vntill the comming of his owne sonne, who was the true heire, and the very partie to whome the crowne belonged, namely our Lord Iesus Christ. Thus haue wee nowe a briefe declaration after what sorte God ment to stablishe a kingdome among his people, howbeit, that was in respect of our Lorde Iesus Christ. But as in respect of worldly gouernement, the best and most desirable state, was to haue Iudges, that is to say, to be in libertie, and yet notwithstanding to bee ouerruled by Lawes. Nowe thereby we be doone to vnderstande, that although all worldely gouernment deserue to be esteemed as a holy thing, & behoofefull for the maintenaunce of mans state, yet notwithstanding, when it pleaseth GOD to giue vs a meane kinde of gouernement, voyde of tyranny, wherein the Magistrates doe rule after such a sort, that the Lawes haue their due course: the same is a speciall priuiledge, and wee ought then so perceiue thereby that God is neere at hand to vs, & that he pitieth vs as his houshold-folke, and as those that are of his flocke, & his owne heritage. Marke that then for one point. But therewithall we must marke also, that when we shall haue knowen Gods grace in his gouerning of vs in this earthly and transitorie life; it is nothing in comparison of the spirituall kingdom of our Lorde Iesus Christ, & therefore ỳ we must highly exalt or praise this benefite ỳ God vouchsafeth to gouerne vs by the hande of his onely son, yea and we must esteeme it, not onely more than all the libertie of the worlde, but also more than al the kingdomes and Empires of ỳ world. But anon this point shalbe touched now againe.

Furthermore let vs marke, that God intending to set vp a king, did tarry neuerth eleese till the people required one. And ỳ was to put them in a desire, that they might not afterward rebell against the king that was to bee set vp. For the vnthankefulnesse and malice of the people bewrayed it selfe, in that they coulde not finde in their hearres to holde them to the state which God had stablished already. And what a thing had it been, if he had set vp a Monarchie among them at the first day? For it is a farre more tollerable thing for vs to haue gouernours that goe by choyse and election, who in executing their office shall knowe themselues to bee subiect to the Lawe: than to haue a Prince whose worde must stande for reason, and whose childe must inherite, though he be neuer so very a babe, and consequently obeyed; though hee be the willfullest foole or the cruellest person in the worlde. Therefore it is a farre more tollerable state to haue Iudges and Gouernours. Nowe if the people of Israel could not away with this state, but wold needs through a wicked desire seek to haue a king: what would they haue done if God had at ỳ first day saide vnto thẽ, I set this or ỳ houle to reigne ouer you, & it behoueth you to obey the king? What murmuring would there haue beene?

Gen. 49. 10.

What

What practising would there haue bin? Therfore it was Gods wil to make ỹ people willing, to ỹ end there might be no occasion of rebelling, whē Dauid was to be made king. Verily we see what fell out. For soothly, their requiring of King Saul, was
1.Sa.8.5. 20. through a foolish ambitiō & spyte, which they bare to their neighbours. When they sawe how there were kings in Egypt, in Edō, in Ammon, in Syria, & in the other Countryes: they thought there was nō such dignitie & statelines amōg thēselues because there was no royall seate among thē. And therfore they would haue one. But see their folly. When they had chosen Saul, although he vexed thē & put them to as much hardnes as could be: yet notwithstanding they were so wedded to him, ỹ they would needs keepe ỹ crown to his childrē, & not suffer Dauid to reigne. Albeit ỹ God had declared ỹ Dauid was the mā whō he had chose, and ỹ they had not the authoritie to choose any other to be their king: yet ỹ people chose Saules son, as who would say, we will haue this house to continue for euer, yea euē as it were in dispute of God. And (as we see) was Dauid mainteyned in his kingdome, any otherwise than by Gods stretching out of his hand to preserue him? The people fel within a while after to rebelling against Dauid, & the example of Absolon sheweth ỹ the
2.Sam.15.14 insurrection was so great, ỹ Dauid was forsaken of the most part of his subiectes. So then it appereth ỹ if ỹ people had not bin as good as daunted aforehand, ỹ kingdom which God had determined on in his own purpose, had neuer takē place, neither would they haue submitted thēselues vn to it but by cōpulsion. But yet behooued it thē to obey it. And so by ỹ meane ỹ people were prepared therto by requiring a king of thēselues; & yet they found thēselues disappointed of their expectation. For it was not Gods wil to stablish the blessed kingdom at ỹ first, wherby ỹ whole world was to haue saluation: but hee chose a king of the tribe of Beniamin, & yet it was said ỹ the scepter should not depart frō the tribe of Iuda. Wherfore doth God turne away frō ỹ which he had spoken by ỹ mouth of Iacob? This was done not ỹ he is variable, not ỹ he repenteth him; not ỹ he intended not to fulfil ỹ prophesie: but for ỹ he was not minded to let his blessing appeare so soone, because of ỹ peoples seditiousnesse, in respect wherof, he hid it, or at leastwise delayed it til they had acknowledged their fault, & repented thē therof. And this doth shew vs sufficiētly wherfore god in this place reserueth not to himself ỹ chosing of ỹ king which should gouerne his people: but sayth thou shalt require one. It was to the end that his reigning should be of the more authoritie, & he bee ỹ better beloued of his people; so as euery mā should submit himself to him, & therby know in very deed, ỹ there was no greater happines, than to be vnder ỹ house of Dauid, forasmuch as the same was a shadow & figure of the sonne of god, who was to bring saluation & full perfection of al good things. In effect we see here two things. The one is that our lord blameth the people for their importunitie, in ỹ they would needs be aforehand w̄ him in desiring a king: as if he should say, You wil not suffer me to make him: (true it is ỹ I wil neuer forget you, but I wil set such rule among you, ỹ ye shal haue cause to thanke me & to reioyce of my goodnes.) But yet wil you be malicious & frowarde, ỹ when I shall haue giuen you a Iudge, you shall desire a king. And this frowardnes of yours shal cause me now to set vp the kingdom which I haue ordained, & which I haue reserued to my selfe, that is to say, of the tribe of Iuda. Yet notwithstanding our lord foreseeth ỹ he wil set vp ỹ kingdom, but that before & ter the people are made fit to obey, & haue acknowledged their sin, because they had committed change against Gods wil, & before ỹ he should come. Thus are all these places easily made agree. And hereupon we may gather a good lesson, which is that when God hath promised vs any benefite or token of his mercy, we must not our lustes in awe, and not runne whether they lendge him to do that which he hath sayd, when we list, but vse patience, and be quiet vntil God shewe vs by effect that he ment not to deceiue vs, in promising any thing ỹ belonged to our saluation. Here then is a generall rule, which is in all Gods promises we must be patiēt, & not be hastie as to say, how goes this geere? why doth God make delay? why performeth he not ỹ thing which we hoped for at his hand? Let vs beware of such impatiencie, seeing the example of ỹ people is such as we see it is in this place. But let vs be stil when God hath promised vs any thing vntil ỹ cōuenient time therof be come: & if we feel yet shal not this hinder vs but ỹ we may pray vnto him for it. For wherfore doth he exhort vs & cōmand vs to pray, but to ỹ intent we shal charge all our care & sorow vpon him, & make cōfort of it? Therfore we may wel pray vnto him whē we are stirred vp to impatience: for by that we euer refer all things vnto him. & good reason it is ỹ he shold dispose of thinges according as himselfe hath determined in his owne purpose, & not after our fancie. Also let vs beare in mind what I haue touched afore; to wit, ỹ seeing God hath giuen vs a cōuenient state, & we be gouerned by Iudges & magistrates, as ỹ doe now reigne ouer vs: we ought to giue God thanks for ỹ benefite, & to take good heed ỹ we prouoke not his wrath by our fonde fickleness, in desiring this or ỹ, and in saying why is it not thus or thus? For whē we wil nedes alter things after ỹ fashion of our own pleasure, we make not warre against men, but we defie God, & thrust him far frō vs so farforth as he should not reigne ouer vs. Therfore let vs be short, seeing there is some forme of gouernement among vs, let vs learn to thank God, & to hold vs vnder ỹ shadow of his wings, & not to cause this or ỹ through foolish ambition. For we see what happened to ỹ people of Israell. True it is ỹ God chose them a king: howbeit, ỹ was but to punish their wicked desire: & euen so wil it fal out to others. And in deede, we see how he giueth large scope to ỹ king which was set vp, namely to do as he list, saying, Thou shalt not reigne as a Prince, but as a tyrant, and shal execute al maner of tyranny ouer you, and yee must bee faine to abide it, spyte of your teeth.

But howsoeuer wee fare, let vs learne to re-

ferre all the benefites that GOD giueth vs to

this world, to the spiritual kingdome of our Lord Iesus Christ: assuring ourselues that though we had all thinges else at will, and liued here in neuer so great pleasure and welth, and had such gouernors as demeaned themselues as gently towardes vs as were possible: all this were nothing whilste our Lorde Iesus Christ reigned ouer vs, and bare all the swaye. On the contrary parte, though we be tormented according to the flesh, (as we see a number of people exceedingly vexed with tyranny) and that we haue not so much as bread to eate: Yet notwithstanding the blessednesse which God sendeth vs in that our Lord Iesus Christ reigneth ouer vs, ought to be preferred before all other thinges, and wee ought to take all afflictions patiently, so we may haue the assurance of his reigne ouer vs. Nowe the sceptet of our Lorde Iesus Christ is not a materiall sceptre, after the manner of the royall sceptres and scepters which Kinges and Princes haue had at all times: but it is the Gospell, which is the true token of his presence. And wee see howe he taketh vs for his people, wherof we haue a sure warrant, in that he will haue vs to be gathered together into the vnitie of faith by the doctrine of his gospell, and by that meane be made the heritage of God.

Let vs come now to that which Moses addeth concerning the office of the King. Hee sayeth first, *That the king must be chosen from among the people. Thou shalt take one of thine owne brethren* (saith he,) *and thou shalt not go seeke a stranger.* And surely by the prophesie of Iacob, the king was to be chosen of the tribe of Iuda. Why then doeth God speake generally of the whole linage of Abraham, and not marke out the kingly house by name? For it should seeme that hee ment not to declare that prophesie. Let vs marke what hath been sayd already: to wit; that the time was not yet come, and that the fauour which God had promised by the mouth of the Patriarke Iacob, must be kept close as yet for a time, by reason of the peoples vnthankefulnesse. Behold, wherefore God had spoken it so long time before: nowe he made mention of three hundered yeeres or thereabouts, he sayth there shalbe a king among you. As how? Shall the prophesie vanish away and be of none effect, which had bin vttered three hundred yeeres before, and spoken by the mouth of Iacob? Ought it not to haue beene set forth much more clearely at the publishing of the Law? Yes, but our Lorde doeth vs to vnderstande, that the people had drawen as it were a veyle before it, by reason wherof, in steede of comming to light, it behoued his fauour to be as it were hidden away in the darke. That is the thing which God meant to shewe in this text in saying, Thou shalt choose a king from among thy brethren, without passing out the house, as had beene doone afore. But howesoeuer the case stande, Gods holding backe of his fauour for a time, was no vtter abolishing thereof. Then did hee delay his promise of setting vppe a king of the tribe of Iuda: but yet hee did not vtterly bereaue his people of that hope. And so yee see, how the people of themselues made an interruption: and yet that God for all his chastising of them, vseth gratious goodnesse and moderateth his rigor: insomuch that the thing which he had ordeined abideth still, sauing that the time thereof is prolonged.

Let vs marke therefore, that God to correct the faultes of his people, doeth hide away his fauour for a time, so as it is not manifestly seene: but yet in the ende he wil cause it to come again. Thus ouercommeth hee our naughtinesse with his infinite goodnes, and we see it by experience. But yet sometimes wee feele it not though our Lorde shewe vs it. Howesoeuer the case stande, let vs learne by the example of the Iewes, that if our Lorde at any time withdrawe himselfe from vs, and seeme not to performe his promise to vs; our owne faults are the cause thereof, for that we be frowarde and haue pulled backe Gods hande when hee would haue reached it out to haue discharged his promise towardes vs. For how many times aday prouoke we his wrath? And is not that a kinde of shutting of the doore against him, that hee might not come at vs to make vs partakers of his goodnesse? Therefore when we haue thrust backe his grace after that fashion, if it appeare not againe vnto vs out of hande, we haue to humble ourselues, acknowledging that we our selues are to blame. But yet for all that, we must not be discoraged, but we must pray God that although he haue deferred the performance of his promises for a time, yet wee may not be vtterly bereft of them, howsoeuer the world go, but that after we haue languished for a time and bin chastised for our offences, we returne again without faile, and inioy ſ thing which he hath promised. Thus ye see in effect what wee haue to gather vpon this text.

And whereas God forbiddeth his people *to haue any straunger to be their king*: there are two reasons which we ought to marke well. The one is ſ that kingdome was a Sacrament of our Lord Iesus Christ, and therefore it was not meete that it should haue come to the hande of an vnbeleeuer or ydolater: for that had bin a defiling of holy thinges. If heathen kings reigned ouer their like, it was not to be wondred at. For although some vnbeleeuing kinges reigned ouer the people of Israell by Tyranny, as was done by the Babylonians and afterward by the kinges of Assyria: yet doth it not followe but that there was alwayes this exemption, that God had still a peculiar kinde of reigning, whereby he shewed as in a lookingglasse, that ſ people was gathered together as into his owne house. Therefore if a straunger had bin set vp in the seate of Dauid, it had beene trecherie against God, & the reproch had bin offered to God and to his onely sonne. For when the kingdome was stablished in the line of Dauid, this promise was added; I will be his father, and hee shallbe my sonne. And the Apostle declareth that it was so honorable a tide that it belonged not euen to the Angelles. True it is that the Angelles are sometimes called the sonnes of God: howebeit, that is not without an addition; whereas Christ hath it, because he is preferred before all creatures. Now then, had

2. Kin. 17. & & 25, 11.

Psal. 2. 7. & Hebr. 1, 5.

hadde they chooſen an ydolater, and ſet him vp in the ſeate which God had reſerued for his own onely ſonne, who was eſtabliſhed in his infinite grace, who was the marke of his diuine maieſtie, and who was aboue all the principalities of the world, yea and aboue heauen it ſelfe as in reſpect of the creatures; as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of him, in the firſt chapter of his Epiſtle to the Coloſſians: what a thing had that beene? Had it not beene an vnnaturall confuſion, and too ſhameſull a defiling of the grace of GOD? Then lette vs marke that for the firſt reaſon why GOD woulde not haue a ſtraunger to ſit in the ſeate of Dauid.

Col.1.16.17

And in ſo dooing, God ment alſo to ſhewe a dreadfull diſpleaſure, and to make the people to knowe howe they were vtterly accurſed, in that they were diſappointed of that kingdom, & that Gods Lampe was after a ſort put out. For, that ſimilitude is often ſet downe vnto vs in the holy ſcripture, to ſhewe that God maketh his light to ſhine vpon his people, and that although there be not at all times great light, yet there ſhal euer be a Lampe howſoeuer the world goeth. And the ſeconde reaſon was, that if a ſtraunger ſhoulde haue reigned, he would ſoone haue changed the religion, as wee knowe that the heathen will alwayes needes ſette vp their owne ſuperſtitions. And why? For commonly they haue not the feare of God to keepe them in awe: but rather they thinke God to be boundevnto them if they giue men leaue to worſhippe him and ſerue him after ſome ſort, & yet for all that they wil needes turne all the ſeruice of God to their owne luſtes and liking. If the Turke get the ſouereignetie in any countrey, although he be contented to abide the Chriſtians (as they call themſelues): Yet doeth he worke them all the ſpite and reproch that can be to diſcourage them. Where the Papiſtes beare ſwaye, they defile al the puritie of Chriſtian doctrine, and they can not abide that the Goſpell ſhoulde be preached, or that the Sacramentes ſhoulde be putely vſed: but they will needes put all to hauocke, and in any wiſe ſet vp their owne ydolatries. Thus yee ſee what would haue come of it, inſomuch if a ſtranger ſhould haue reigned ouer the people of Iſraell, it hadde bin the next way to haue ouerthrowen the whole Lawe. Not without cauſe therefore did God expreſſely prouide that they ſhoulde not chooſe any other king than of the lynage of Abraham, ſuch a one as were compriſed in the couenaunt, and bare the marke of the Church, that is to wit Circumciſion, which was the like Sacrament to the Iewes, that we haue noweadayes of Baptiſme.

1.Kin.11.36.

Col.2.11.12

But nowe muſt we apply this to our owne vſe, and vnderſtande firſt of all that the kingdome of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, muſt bee mainteined in ſuch ſoundeneſſe, as that wee muſt beware of bringing any defilemẽt into it. And what is the kingdom of Chriſt? I haue told you already it conſiſteth not in any viſible things, or in any things belonging to this preſent life: but it is the gathering of vs together by his holy ſpirite, into the hope of the heauenly life: and the preaching of the Goſpell vnto vs, that it may bee as a rule to holde vs vnder the obedience of God. And although the Sacramentes bee viſible of themſelues: yet are they neuertheleſſe ſpirituall, as in reſpect of their ende, as all other Ceremonies are. We come hither together; well, it is a viſible thing: we kneele downe to praye vnto God, & that is viſible alſo: but yet it aimeth at a higher ende, and hath a reſpect which is altogether ſpirituall. So then, let vs learne that the kingdom of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ought so be maintened in his full ſoundeneſſe: that is to ſay, we muſt beware that wee mingle not any corruption with the things that he hath commanded in his Churche, ne thruſt in ſuch perſons as may ſerue to ouerthrowe the common weale: For if we ſhould chooſe falſe Sheepheards and men of wicked doctrine, or of leaude converſation, were it not a diſhonoring of Ieſus Chriſtes kingdome and a putting of all thinges to hauocke as much as in vs lieth? Seeing then that the children of Iſraell were forbidden to ſet vp a ſtraunge King in the ſeate that was a figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: nowe that we haue the ſonne of God to gouerne vs, not in ſhadowes as in the time of the Lawe, but in full trueth; nowe that we haue our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt who is called the ſonne of righteouſneſſe as the prophete Malachie ſpeaketh him, who telleth vs that he is neere a kinſman to vs, and ruleth in the middes of vs rather a tyrannie were it if we ſhould deface his miniſtery and not maintaine it in ſuch pureneſſe, as that he might alwayes reigne by his worde, and that euerie man doe him homage, and both great and ſmall knowe him, and he haue alwayes his preheminence among vs? Thus yee ſee howe the firſt point is that God commaundeth vs howe we muſt haue a ſpeciall care of his Churche, ſo as there may be no defilement to hinder Chriſtes reigning ouer vs as he ought to doe.

Malach.4.2.

Nowe as touching the ſeconde reaſon, let vs marke alſo that if God haue giuen a people the grace to chooſe Kinges, Princes, Magiſtrates or Iudges, they ought to haue great regarde that the ſeate which God hath ordeined for the welfare of mankinde, be not giuen to a man that is an vnbeleeuer. For the people that chooſeth either king or Iudge, without diſcerning whether he be a man that feareth God or no: doe put the haultre about their owne neckes wilfully. And when they ſhall chooſe, and take Magiſtrates that are either deadly enemies of the Goſpell or Hypocrites, that ſeeke nothing elſe but to turne all thinges vpſidedowne, or worldlinges that coulde finde in their hearres to treade all religion vnder foote; is not the admitting of ſuch men as an opening of the gate vnto Sathan, that he might haue place among vs? Is it not a reuiling of Gods grace, to the ende that all abominations might haue their full ſcope? So then whatſoeuer wee chooſe Iudges, Magiſtrates, Gouernours and Officers of Iuſtice, let vs take warning by this text, to looke for this marke in them, that they bee men which feare God, and are aſwiſe deſirous that Religion ſhoulde be maintened in his pureneſſe: For otherwiſe it is all one

as if wee woulde driue God from vs, and seeke to banish him from among vs; which is too cursed a trayterousnesse. And thus much concerning earthly gouernement. After wee haue indeboured that the spirituall religion of ỹ church may bee maintayned: let vs likewise be so minded towardes the state of the temporall sworde and ordinarie iustice, that such as sit in iudgement may bee all one with vs in brotherly religion, and that the holy bande of faith may knit vs together in obedience to one selfesame God. And hereof there is a faire confirmation in the thinges that Moses addeth: for it deserueth to bee treated of immediatly, and we shall see it in place conuenient.

But he sayeth expressely, *That the king which shall haue beene chosen, must cause the booke of the lawe to be copied out in the presence of the high priest and of the Leuites.* Nowe let vs see why God hath made this so strait ordinance, that there should bee a booke of authoritie for the kings vse. Is it meete that a man shoulde bee ignorant and vtterly vnacquainted with the doctrine of God, when hee came to the crowne? No. For Gods will is that his lawe should bee knowen both of great and small, as wee shall see by his protestation hereafter. The secrete thinges belong to your God himselfe: but yet it hath pleased him to set his worde here before you, & ye must not say any more that it is a hidden doctrine, either for your selues or for your children. Wee see then howe it was Gods will that his lawe shoulde bee common both to great and small. And shoulde he then that was brought vp in the house of the crowne, bee a beast? No. Ought he not to bee instructed in the Lawe? And if hee ought, was it not requisite that hee shoulde haue a booke of it? Yes for sooth. And what is ỹ cause why God woulde he shoulde haue a copie of the booke at such time as hee were put in possession of the kingdome? It was to the ende hee shoulde exercise himselfe to bee double bounde, & vnderstande that if priuate persones bee bounde as pupils in Gods schoole, & to giue good heede to the doctrine that is preached or written, it is much more reason that the person which hath the charge of the whole bodie, which is set vp in the name of God, and hath God come neere vnto him, shoulde bee diligent to profite in the same schoole. Therefore let vs marke how it behoued a booke to bee appointed out specially for the king, and the same to bee written after a solemne fashion, and the Priestes and Leuites to bee witnesses thereof, and the same to bee deliuered vnto him as by the hande of God. For it was all one as if God had sayd vnto him; Go to, I haue giuen my lawe to all my people, & I will haue the remembrance thereof to bee renewed yerely. For the booke was brought foorth, & the bloud of the sacrifice was sprinkled first vppon the booke and then vppon all the people, to the ende they shoulde consider thus; wee be linked in vnseparable bonde with the lawe of God. But when this was done, there was a seconde booke brought and deliuered into the kin[illegible] as if it had beene saide vnto him; [illegible] thee much more than any priuate persons, to knowe thy duetie: namely that thou shouldest be better learned than all the rest, and shewe them examples, and behaue thy selfe in such wise as all the people may take thee for their guyde. That was the thing which our Lorde meant in this text.

And in deed, let vs consider a little how hard the charge of princes is. Although a Iudge had not past one citie or one towne to gouerne; yet shoulde he finde himselfe much cumbered: and what shal he do then, hauing a whole realme? It standeth al Magistrates and Officers of iustice in hãd, to apply this to themselues, & to know ỹ their charge passeth all their abilitie, so as they shall neuer be able to go through with it, except God giue them his holy spirite. But yet for all that, he wil not haue them to be negligent in ỹ mean while. What is to be done then? All Magistrats and al such as haue publike charge, must vnderstande that if it behooue other men to bee diligent to read the holy scripture, to haunt Sermons, to bee confirmed more and more in the doctrine, and to be well edified thereby: they themselues haue twyce as much neede to be so. And forasmuch as God hath aduaunced them to preheminence; it behoueth them to haue recourse to him dayly, and to call vppon him, and not to be so vainglorious as to thinke, O, I am able ynough to guyde my selfe, and to gouerne others. No no: Let them rather consider themselues to bee vnable, vnlesse God giue them power and strength, with wisedome and discretion to guyde themselues: Therefore let them desire to be taught, that others may frame themselues after their example, and let all resort vnto God, indeuouring to profit in such sort in his schoole, as the great men may haue wherewith to gouerne well, and the meaner sort may by that meanes bee allured to obey quietly; so as al mé may bee guyded vnto God with one common accorde.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them in such sort, as wee may seeke his mercie with true repentance, and hee graunt vnto vs, not onely to burie our faultes past, but also to reforme vs, that our whole seeking may be to please him, & to frame our selues in all points to his will: and also that in the meane whyle hee beare with vs in all our infirmities, vntill he haue rid vs quite and cleane of them. And so let vs all say; Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xxj. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cvj. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the seuenteenth Chapter.

16.17.18 But hee shall not &c.

19 The which hee shall haue with him, and reade it all the dayes of his life, that hee may learne to feare the Lorde his God, and keepe all the wordes of the Lawe, and the Ordinaunces to doe them:

20 That he lift not vp his heart aboue his brethren, nor turne not from the commaundement to the right hand or to the left, that he may indure long in his kingdome, both he and his sonnes in the middes of Israel.

WE sawe yesterday why GOD commaunded kings to haue a booke of the law. For although they had beene taught afore, yet when they were come to that state, it stoode them in hand to thinke that they had more neede than euer they had to rule themselues by Gods word, considering how hard a thing it is to gouerne a people, and that God must be faine to worke in that behalfe, and men must acknowledge themselues far too weake, that they may seeke ỹ help that is needeful for them; namely to be guyded by God, and for attainment thereof apply their studie to his worde. For it is in vaine for vs to hope that God will giue vs counsel, vnlesse wee seeke it in his lawe. If a man say that God will welynough giue him his spirite, & yet in ỹ mean while despise all the helpes, as the reading of ỹ holy scripture, & the hearing of Sermons: is it not a mocking of him? And so ye see wherefore it behoueth the kinges to haue a booke of ỹ lawe. There is a saying of a heathen man which is taken for a common prouerb, namely that ỹ common weale is happie where wise men holde the helme, or where such as hold the helme do giue themselues to wisedome. And that is a very rare thing. But yet men see that al this is very true: For when men are chosen to gouerne a people, it is meete ỹ they should haue wit and reason in them. And it is not ynough for a man to bee of some courage & discretion aforehande ere hee take the gouernment vpon him; but he must also indeuer to profit continually when he is come to it, and thereunto doth euen experience it self prouoke him: for our true wisedome is to harken to God when he speaketh to vs, and to obey his doctrine. So then wee see how needful it was for kinges to bee exhorted to read Gods worde most specially, and to giue themselues thereto, as wel for shewing example vnto others, as also for necessities sake, euen because their charge is ouerhard & high, surmounting all capacitie of man.

Now it is said expressely, *that they may learne to feare the Lord, without turning either to the right hand or to the left*. For it is not ynough for a king to haue a booke in his palace for fashions sake. It were to no purpose to make a faire shewe, as who should say, Looke yonder, there is the lawe of God, Gods booke is in the kings palace, as we see how the worlde contenteth it selfe continually with ceremonies. And in deede, the Iewes being peruerters of all things, and so farre possessed with the diuel that they haue gone about to deface the substance & whole power of Gods worde, whensoeuer this booke came in question among them, O say they, it must be written in such manner of parchement, & it must haue this & that done vnto it. But these things are more than childish, and yet in the meane while they haue let the chiefe thing alone. Let vs marke then that Gods intent was not to make a booke that should be as a relike, to be shewed for a mouerie that the king might haue a marke of his dignitie aboue all others: but the reason that is set downe here, is that he should learne to feare God. Now although this bee spoken expressely concerning the kings of Israel, (as was declared yesterday:) yet is it verie good reason, that they which are magistrates at this day, (considering that their gouerning is in the name of our Lord Iesus,) shoulde set their mindes vppon the doctrine of saluation, & indeuer to profit therin, aiming alwayes at the marke which God hath set before thē, namely to learn to feare him, knowing wel that vnlesse they haue the feare of God it is vnpossible for them to glorifie him, and al thinges within a while must needs go to wracke.

And by the way, let vs marke also, that here the holy Ghost meant to shewe vs the vse of the holy scripture. For (as saith Saint Paul) it is behoofefull to make the man of God perfect in all good workes. Therefore whensoeuer we read the holy Scripture or heare it preached, let vs haue this regarde of profiting in the feare of God, and let vs not think our selues to be so forwarde, that wee shoulde not needs go on still all our life long. A man might thinke it strange that it shoulde bee sayde, that he should learne to feare God. For why? Should a king bee a nouice when hee is once chosen? Ought hee not to bee well knowen aforehande to bee a man of excellent vertue? Yes verily. But yet doeth it stande vs in hande to bee learners still

the feare of God is a thing that is not learned perfectly at the first day. And therfore let vs continue in it all the time of our life, and yet wee shall finde that when wee haue liued neuer so long, wee be but in the middes of our iourney. The thing then which wee haue to marke in Moſeſes words, is that when kings haue ỹ booke of the lawe, they muſt not keepe it ſhut, or ſet it out to ſhewe like a relike; but the king muſt exerciſe himſelfe in it, & his reading of it muſt not bee as it were but for a paſtime, as who ſhoulde ſay, I haue read it, and that is a ſufficient diſcharge for mee: but it muſt bee to the ende that hee which was in good forwardneſſe alreadie, and had ſerued God in his youth, ſhoulde bee the more quickened vp to doo ſo ſtill: knowing well that in as much as God commeth ſo neere vnto him, hee is the more ſtraitly bounde to liue vertuouſly. That is the very thing in effect which wee haue to beare away, and moreouer wee muſt euery one of vs apply the ſame to his owne vſe, as I haue ſaide afore.

Nowe it is ſayde likewiſe, *that they bowe not aside right hande nor to the left*. Wherein it is ſhewed vs that the feare of God is the true rule, which beeing throughly rooted in vs becommeth a good and ſure loadſtarre to vs throughout all our life. For what is the cauſe that wee gadde after our owne likinges, and wander here and there; but that wee haue not our eye vpon God? Therefore wee may conclude that all they which turne aſide eyther one way or other, doe ſhewe ſufficiently by their life, that they bee deſpiſers of GOD. But will we haue a good remedie to inſtruct vs, and to direct our life in ſuch wiſe as it ſhall abyde continually in the right way? Let vs feare God: and this feating of God preſuppoſeth a willingneſſe and deſire that wee haue to obey him. If a man alledge that hee feareth GOD; and yet in the meane whyle regardeth not to bee taught by him: I pray you doeth hee not ſhewe that all is but hypocriſie, yea, and vtter ſhameleſneſſe in him? As for example yee ſhall ſee many in theſe dayes which pretend to bee verie deuout: but they cannot abyde to heare one worde of admoniſhment for their better inſtruction: it is ynough with them to make ſome faire countenance. But when Moſes ſpeaketh heere of not learning to the right hand or to the left, he preſuppoſeth that which is true, namely, that if we feared God, we woulde be deſirous to bee taught his will, and to know what things hee liketh of, that wee might frame our liues thereafter. That is one thing more which wee haue to remember vppon this text.

Now let vs come to that which is ſpoken here ſpecially concerning the kings of Iſrael. *They be forbidden to gather great numbers of horſes to returne againe into Egypt.* In deede it wilbee ſaide likewiſe hereafter, that they muſt not multiply the number of their horſes for couetouſneſſe ſake. But here is ſet downe a ſpeciall reaſon, which is, that this couetouſnes of theirs might prouoke them to go downe into Egypt, either vnder pretence to reuenge the wrongs and iniuries that had beene done vnto them, or vnder any other colour. But our Lordes will was, that although the children of Iſrael had beene miſintreated, & tyrãnouſly dealt with; yet notwithſtanding they ſhoulde acknowledge that they had beene harbored in Egypt for a time. True it is that they were forbidden to haue any familiaritie with the Egyptians: his will was to haue them vtterly diuided from them, becauſe hee knewe well that it woulde be their decay: and yet for all that hee woulde not haue them to make warre vppon them, but to abyde ſtill at home. And nowe hee ſayeth that the king muſt not multiply ỹ number of his horſes: For when a prince hath the helme in his hande, hee will take greater enterpriſes vppon him, than a commonaltie will doe. In deede ſome times there may hap to be ſome braynleſſe perſons, which would ſet all thinges in a broyle: but yet a Prince is alwayes boldeſt: and that boldneſſe is a cauſe of much confuſion in the worlde. That then is the cauſe why it is ſaide, that the king ſhall not gather him ouer many horſes to goe into Egypt when hee had made himſelfe ſtrong. And why ſo? For God forbiddeth his people to go that way any more for euer.

Nowe wee haue to note here, that when wee haue receiued any diſpleaſure, if the workers thereof haue done vs any good in times paſt, wee muſt lay them both into the balance, and the good muſt counteruaile the euill. Truely although this commaundement were not, yet were it not lawfull for vs to deſire reuenge: inſomuch that euen this one reaſon ought to ſtaye vs and withholde vs, namely, that if wee bee beholden to a man, and he chaunce afterwarde to doe vs ſome wrong, wee ſhoulde call to mynde the good that wee haue receiued at his hande, and the ſame muſt bee as a brydle to vs. And it is the very ſame thing which God conſidered when hee woulde not haue his people to practiſe any thing againſt the Egyptians. But what ſoeuer came of it, he would not that there ſhold bee any familiaritie betwixt them, & not without cauſe. For it was ſo frowarde a nation, that his people could haue learned nothing but euill among them. Againe, their idolatrie was as exceſſiue and out of all meaſure as could be. Therfore was it good that the children of Iſrael ſhold bee vtterly ſeparated from Egypt, leaſt they might bee wrapped in their ſuperſtitions. And we ſee howe greatly the Prophets ſtoode vpon that poynt: and yet it booted not at all. For it was the place which the children of Iſrael fled vnto for refuge, as oft as they were troubled by other nations. In ſo much that when the two kingdomes of Iſraell and Iuda were at diuiſion, if the one had the helpe of the Aſſyrians, the other reſorted into Egypt, and ſo were the cauſe of their owne deſtruction. And all this miſchief fell out, becauſe they did it againſt this forewarning, for God had forbidden them ſufficiently afore hande. Therefore let vs beare in minde, that when wee ſee corruptions before vs, wee muſt not enter into them wilfully, except we intende to tempt God: but when wee ſee occaſi-

Eſa. 30.2, & 31.3.

2. Kin. 15.7. & 17.4.

ons of euill, wee shunne them not, but rather runne into them, and wee wil needes bee ouerhardie. And therefore let vs learne to abstaine from all things that may seduce vs or make vs ouershoote our selues.

Nowe it is saide afterwarde, *That the kinge shal not haue vp much gold and siluer*. True it is that 1.Tim.6.10. couetousnesse is forbidden to all men as the roote of all mischiefe, where with when a mans heart is once possessed, he must needs be snarled in al the snares of Satan. Insomuch that if a man be giuen to couetousnes, hee becõmeth cruel, vsing all manner of outrage, violence, & crueltie. Agayne he falleth to pilling and polling, & maketh no conscience to deuour other mens substances. Afterwarde he falleth to periurye, cousinage, vntrustinesse, trecherie, poysoning, and whatsoeuer euill he can besides. And when malice is once set on fire, he proceedeth euen to open murder. To be short, if a man suffer himself to be wunne to couetousnes, he must needes become a verie bondslaue to Satan. Why then doeth hee forbidde here onely kinges to gather much gold or siluer? Surely our Lord giueth not priuate persons leaue to inriche themselues, when he forbiddeth kinges to do it: But rather the cleane contrary For if such as haue a better meane then wee, ought to be clensed from that vice: what ought we to be? For if any men should haue libertie to gather golde and siluer, kinges ought to haue it most. But God hath forbidden it them: and therefore let all other men looke to themselues. But Moses speaketh expressely here of kings, as of those that haue most neede of remedy, because they haue greater occasions of gathering than any other men. For when a king reygneth in a Countrie that is riche and plentifull, it is a temptation vnto him: insomuch that when he sees his subiects liue at their ease, he thinketh thus with himselfe, it will neuer grieue them to giue me such an impost, & when he hath raysed one tax or tallage, there is neuer any ende or measure of his gathering afterward. And so ye see how kinges haue need of the sayd restreint, by reason of the said temptation which is of more force towardes them than towardes other men.

True it is that all men are tempted to gather goods & to inriche themselues: but forasmuch as they haue not the like opportunities to bring it to passe, it is as it were an abatement & a cooling of their courages. A king hath means to drawe to himselfe continually, and to inriche himselfe more and more: for he hath authoritie to leuye taxes & tributes, and by that meane to lay vp much for himselfe. Therfore it is requisite that this euil should be corrected in him. And Psal.119.36. 37. in that respect did Dauid say, Lord reforme my heart, that it bee not giuen to couetousnes: and turne away myne eyes, that they be not intangled, beguyled, and carryed away at the sight of golde & siluer. Why doeth Dauid speake after ỹ manner? For he had much more neede, than if he had liued still in the house of his father Iesse: hee had beene there but as a poore countrey cloyne or sheepeheard: and thereuppon he had followed his common trade of liuing. But being once become king, and hauing the riches of the whole lande before his eyes, so as no man could let him to gather as much as he would: such opportunitie was a prouocation to his flesh, & hee might soone haue ouershot himselfe as men commonly doe. And therefore hee brydleth himselfe, saying, Lorde, keepe wee. And in deede, if he had not beene preserued miraculously by ỹ goodnes of God, hee had soone beene corrupted at the sight of such opportunities. Thus haue wee nowe the reason why Moses forbade the kinges of Israel expressely to gather much gold and siluer.

For (as I haue said afore) accordingly as occasions are offered vnto vs, so must wee also be brydled and held in, when our flesh tempteth vs to any thing: and there is none other remedie than that which I haue tolde you of. Although then that this be spoken to kings: yet may wee gather a lesson thereof that shalbe common to all men. And therefore whensoeuer wee meete with any opportunitie that may drawe vs vnto euill, let vs see that wee learne to represse our lustes, & make a shielde and bulwarke of this admonition, lest wee step aside to some vanitie, because we be ouerfrayle. That is the thing whereof all of vs in generall ought to take warning, when wee see that the king was forbidden to gather much gold & siluer, because he reigned in a plentifull countrey.

Also here is mention made consequently of wiues: namely, *that the king must not take many wiues*. It is certaine that this rule is common to all men. For although some of the Patriarches had many wiues: yet was it not therefore lawfull, for we must haue recourse to Gods institution. True it is that mans custome may well pervert the doctrine: but yet can it not change euill into good for all that. It is God that ordeyned marryage: and as he is the author thereof, so will hee haue men to holde them to his pure institution. Nowe did hee create two wiues for Adam? No: and yet (as sayeth the Prophet Malachie) hee had abundance of spirit in him. It had beene no harder a matter to him to haue created two or three women than to haue created one. Was God letted by any vnabilitie? Nay, and yet he created two in one flesh. Sith the case standeth so then, it is a changing of the order of nature & a despising of God, when a man taketh two wiues. O (say they) the Patriarkes did so. Yea: but thereby it appeareth that the custome of men cannot alter Gods ordinance, how great vertue or holines so euer be in them. And it serueth also to shewe ỹ such as shielde themselues vnder the example of other men, offend double. For is it meete ỹ Gods authoritie should be diminished vnder pretence ỹ men haue done this or ỹ? And therfore let vs vnderstand, ỹ it was neuer lawfull for any man liuing to take two wiues in mariage at once: for it is a breaking of Gods order. Why then is it forbidden here but onely to kinges? Because there was more libertie. And the thing that I haue touched already is the better confirmed vnto vs in this text.

If a priuate person had taken two wiues, hee should haue beene neerely looked vnto. What? Shall I go giue my daughter to him that is maryed alreadie? Shee shalbe sure to haue sorrowe to her soppes: shee shall liue in continuall stryfe and vnquietnesse. Yet were shee better to bee dead out of hande. But men were so desirous of honour, that if a king required a daughter of theirs to his wife, they easily condescended vnto it. What? I shall haue my daughter maryed to a king. And it was a blynding of a womā when shee was sued vnto by such a one. Nowe then, for as much as kinges had larger scope in this case, and consequently might more offend God? our Lorde hath specially forbidden them to haue many wiues, and moreouer because the example of such as are in authoritie, is woorse than the example of priuate persons. If a common person doe any euill, it goeth no further than his owne house and his next neighbours: but hee that is in authoritie standeth vppon a skaffolde, and is seene afarre off: and if he ouershoote himselfe; the corruption of him spreadeth throughout the realme. Therefore it was requisite that God should forbid kinges to haue many wiues, euen because the corruption therof woulde haue spread ouer the whole lande. And although it could not be letted altogither: yet came it first from the heathen. And if it bee asked from whence the hauing of many wyues came, it wilbee founde in the house of Cain, & not among the people of God. This leawdnesse then of hauing many wyues, was brought vp by Satan. And the Patriarkes were intangled in it: as in deede it is harde for a man to keepe himselfe from a thing, when it is once growen into a custome; for then it seemeth to be permitted. Yet notwithstanding to the intent it should no more be so, because there was occasion therof, our Lorde forbad kinges to haue many wiues.

But heere it might be demanded, what is to be sayd of Dauid, and much more of Salomō, in respect of wiues as well as of riches. It cannot be denyed but that Dauid had many wyues, and as for Salomon, he had many moe, and he seemeth not to haue bin blamed in that behalfe, for the scripture speaketh but of the turning away of his hart after strunge women which infected him with their superstitions and ydolatryes. And as touching gould and siluer, wee knowe how it is sayd that Dauid gathered so great a masse of them that Salomons Temple and his palace were buildid therwith. Therefore there was a maruelous riches. Yea and it is said expresly, ỹ in the raigne of Salomon, men made no more accompt of gold and siluer, than of grauel, ỹ quantity therof was so exceeding great. And there seemeth to be some contrarietie in the scripture, in as much as among other thinges our Lord sayeth that hee will cause the gould of Arabye and all the riches of the worlde to bee brought to Ierusalem. And why should he promise that, if he ment not that kinges should be riche and wealthie? Nay, it is a figure of the kingdome of our Lord Iesus Christ. If this blessing of God bee set downe as so worthie a thing, howe are kinges forbidden to gather golde and siluer? As touching wiues, no doute but both Dauid and Salomon offended in that behalfe, and Salomon most. As for Dauid, hee had many wiues: and all the excuses that can bee alledged, wil not be able to iustifie him before God. But howsoeuer the case stande, he did it not through inordinate lust. For he had maryed Michol Saules daughter, and hee coulde haue contented himselfe with that one wife, if shee had not beene taken away from him by force. And when she was giuen to another man, it was lawfull for him to take Bersabee.

Againe, there happened other things afterwarde, so that if a man consider wherefore Dauid tooke many wiues: surely there wil euer be some occasion to excuse him to the worldward; but yet for all that, he was blameworthie stil before God. And as touching Salomon, he rebelled openly, as a man too much giuen to ỹ flesh, in that he proceeded euen against the prohibition that was giuen both to himselfe and to all other kinges. And it appeareth what insued to him for it. For, that hee was so abused and deceiued by strange women, it was a iust punishment: and because he had taken such libertie to himselfe, God shewed him that he had cast himselfe into Satans snares. When a fish thinkes to swallowe vp other fishes, he himselfe is caught or choked by that meane. Euen so was Salomō faine to receiue his payment, because hee gaue himselfe too much to his delightes and pleasures. And it is a dreadful thing, & a thing that ought to make the hayre to stande vp vpon our heades, that so excellent a man, indued with so great giftes of Gods spirit, shoulde become an ydolater, and fall away from the pure seruing of God, specially being himselfe a prophet to teach the whole worlde, and a lampe to direct not only the children of Israell, but also the verie Infidels, and to draw them to the knowledge of the trueth. O that such a man shoulde ouershoote himselfe after that fashion! And whereof came this? Euen of giuing heade to his owne lustes: & therefore God payed him his iust hyre. Seeing we know this, ought we not to quake at such vengeance set before our eyes? Yes, and therefore let vs marke wel, that whereas Dauid and Salomon had many wiues, it was not without fault and transgression: and thereby wee see so much the more howe needefull this lawe is. For if God had neuer forbidden kinges to haue many wiues, had not their libertie beene yet the more excessiue? Yes verily. For they cannot bee withholde from rebelling against God. Their flesh carryeth them so away, that they forget the thing which ought to bee best knowen vnto them. This text ought to bee noted aboue all others, specially for kinges: and yet they thinke not of it at all. And therefore wee see it was not for nought, that GOD preuented that mischiefe.

But we must vnderstand by the way, how it is not ynough that the law be set downe, vnlesse God write it in our hearts by his holy spirite: For else it is but a dead letter, and so will kill vs, because wee shal bee iustly condemned by 2.Cor.3.6

the doctrine therof, which serueth to bereaue vs of all excuse. Therefore whensoeuer our Lorde commaundeth vs any thing, let vs learne that wee must runne vnto him, that he may write the things in our heartes, which we read written in paper or parchment. As touching riches, wee must not conclude that there was the like fault. For why? When Dauid gathered such a masse of golde and siluer, it was to build the temple of God, and not to make any other enterprises, as wee knowe. Againe, wee see not that he grieued his people, though there were great complaints after the death of Salomon: but of that wee will treate hereafter both for Dauid and for Salomon. The intent of Dauid then was good and holy, forasmuch as in gathering all thinges together which were requisite for the building of the Temple, hee attempted not any thing which was not commaunded him of God. Also the meanes were lawfull. For hee layde no tyrannicall charge vppon his people. As for Salomon, hee had the greate riches gathered aforehande by his father. And againe wee must marke, that a greate parte of those thinges were such as hee had conquered of the Infidels, and their spoyles were as yee woulde say, presentes, which God had giuen him, as is spoken thereof in the Psalme. And therefore Salomon for his parte might lawfully vse all those goods, specially forsomuch as it was sayde, that the kinges of Tharsis and of all the yles and farre countryes shoulde come and bring golde and siluer, and all manner of precious things, and againe, that there shoulde bee giuen vnto him of ỹ gold of Arabia, because it was Gods will that the kingdome of Israell shoulde flourish after that manner. It was lawfull for Dauid and Salomon to gather treasure, so it were not vppon ambition and pryde, nor to vndertake fooliſh enterprises and to ouershoote themselues into looseneſſe of life, and also, so the people were not grieued by it with any impositions, but that Dauid did but onely receiue the golde and siluer that was brought vnto them. But whether Salomon exceeded measure or no, I am not able to affirme. Wee see what his disobedient sonne Roboam sayde, namely that whereas his father had beaten the people with roddes, hee woulde beate them with whippes, and he would lay vppon them as much as they coulde beare, vntill hee made all the backes of them to bowe. In which saying, Roboam vaunteth of his fathers tyrannie. And wee may well gather therby, that there was some exceſſe in Salomon. So much the more therefore ought wee to marke, that God hath not for nought forbidden kinges to gather great masses of golde and siluer. And for the same cause also did Dauid vse the prayer which I haue rehearsed before: for there was good cause for him to doe it. He saw the temptations that myght assayle him on all sides, and hee coulde neuer haue withstoode them, if God had not strengthened him with his power. And in the same respect hee protesteth that Gods lawe is deerer to him than golde and siluer, and that all the riches of the worlde were nothing to him in comparison of Gods lawe, because hee saw there his true felicitie and glorie.

4. Sam 8.11. & 1. Chron. 22.14. & 1. Kin. 12. 4.

Pſa. 68.12, 13.

Pſal. 72.10.

2. Kin. 12.24

Pſal. 19.11.

So then let vs remember in fewe wordes, that whereas our Lorde forbad kinges to heape vp great treasures, it was not for that it is not lawfull for them to be riche, so their hearts inclyne not to pride, vayneglorie, and couetousnes, and that they vse not any tyrannie ouer their subiectes, but onely take that which is offered them as it were by the hande of God, & contente themselues therewith, applying the same vnto good. For wee see in what sorte king Ezechias was. Albeit that hee had not the thirde parte of Dauids reuenewe, by reason of the cuting away of the kingdome of Israell, yet had hee his chambers so well furnished and stored, that hee made a shewe and a boasting of it when Ambassadours were sent vnto him from Babylon, commending and serving out himselfe, to the ende that the king of the Chaldyes shoulde bee desirous of his friendship. But wee see what befell vnto him. The Prophet Esay brought him this message: Go too (sayeth hee) thou hast made a shewe this day of thy gold and siluer, and of the precious thinges which thou hast; but assure thy selfe thou hast kindled a fire which shall neuer bee quenched, vntill the Babylonians haue fetched away all that thou hast, so as there shall not remaine one peece of money in Ierusalem, but all shalbee sacked and pilled away: and wee see howe the same punishment was executed afterwarde. And this example sheweth vs sufficiently wherefore God forbad kinges to gather much golde and siluer. For when Princes haue such treasures, they can hardly keepe themselues from being prouoked to vaunt and exalt themselues continually after some manner or other. For asmuch as it is so, let vs learne that in this place God meant to holde the kinges of Israell within some measure and meane degree, that they might not looke too high.

2. Kin. 18.14

And afterwarde hee sayeth, *That his heart should not turne away*: that is to say, least his greatnesse make him to forget himselfe, and hee addeth yet further, *That her exalt not himself aboue his brethren*. Whereas it is sayde that the king must not turne away; that is because that when men bee aduaunced to honour, they commonly forgette themselues, and thinke not themselues to bee the same they were before. Aboue all thinges the dignitie of a king is a state that will bleare a mannes eyes, yea, and put them quyte and cleane out: in so much that Princes thinke not themselues to bee as mortall creatures, but rather as halfe Gods by reason of their high aduauncement, and wee see they looke as high as though nothing were vnpossible to them, so as they will not bee subiect any more to right or reason. And if men doe not flatter them and honour them as Gods, they thinke they haue the greatest wrong that can bee. And whereof commeth that? Euen of this, that when a man is great, hee can haue neither mieldneſſe nor lowlineſſe in him, except Gods spirite reigne in him. For this cause

cuse are kinges warned heere, to beware that they forget not themselues: yea and that is yet better expressed in that Moses addeth, *That they exalt not themselues above their brethren.* Whereof commeth it that kinges & Princes will needes set their feete vpon al mens throtes after that fashion? Euen of this pride which poysoneth their hearte, that they consider not themselues to be men, ne knowe any more what their state is. And when they be so blinde to Godward, it is no marrell though the fulnesse of their pride & presumption, make them to tread men vnder foote, and to looke that all men should stande in feare of them and stoope to their yoke. That is the cause why Moses matcheth those two thinges together.

Nowe then, if we intend to refreine from doing wrong or outrage to any man; leete vs looke that we knowe our selues. For (as is sayde in the common prouerb) he that knowes himselfe best, loues best by himselfe. And it is the way also for vs to behaue ourselues lowlily and meekely towards our neighbours. But if a man forget himselfe, he must needes by and by mount vp into a pride and outrage, without making spare of any thing. And seeing this was forbidden to kinges, what is done to such as are farre their inferiours? Therfore let euery man in his degree apply this matter to his owne instruction. Let such as are in authoritie be well ware that they exalt not themselues through pride, if they wil not be cast down to their shame. For the higher that the seate is whereon a man sitteth, the sorer is his fall, euen to the breaking of his neche perchaunce. Therefore let those who God hath exalted, haue a care to holde themselues continually in rest, and not swarue aside, but serue God and his people continually.

And it is sayde heere expressly *Against thy brethren, or about thy brethren.* For Kinges and Princes thinke themselues to be as it were cut off fró the company of men, and that they ought not a iote to be counted of the cómon aray of the. But our Lorde shorning such disdainfulnesse, sayth: Yet are they your brethren. In deede this is spoken of the children of Abraham which were descended all of one race. But choose mee out a king where yee will, is he not a man? And are not they his brethren, ouer whom hee reigneth? And if the case stande so with the greatest kinges of the earth: what is to be thought of those that are farre their inferiours? Now therefore, when a man is in authoritie or hath wherwith to maintaine himselfe in credit, if he be tempted to forget himselfe, let him consider thus: yet am I not separated from the rest of the body, I am a member therof still, and they that are my inferiours cease not to be my brethren. What a thing were it then, if I should vaunt my selfe? Were it not a despysing of God? Let such as are aduaunced to any state of great preheminence remember this warning as oft as they be tempted to despise other men and to shake them off. Leete them thinke thus: what, shoulde wee be as Lyons towardes Lambes where there is brotherhoode? There is no brotherhoode betweene a Lyon and a Lambe. If I haue a Lyons heart, full of pride, Lordlinesse, and ouerweening: what a thing is it? Can I line with them that are committed vnto me? Yea: for wee see what is sayde of king Ezechias, when ỹ Prophet Esay telleth him of the restoring of the people to their former state. And no doubt but he had an eye to this text, to shewe howe it was the duetie of Ezechias and of all kinges, to be a shadowe for the refreshing and easing of their people, & a fosterfather to the poore and fatherlesse, and a comforte of them that are in distresse and sorrowe. And for a conclusion he sayeth, that the feare of God shall bee a treasure in his time, according to that which I haue shewed already. So that if kinges will behaue themselues as they ought, they must sette their mindes vpon this lesson, as it is shewed them by the Lawe of God. It was applyed to the person of Ezechias: but yet must all other men looke to themselues. And if our Lorde tell this lesson to ỹ great ones, without sparing them, what temptations soeuer they haue: what will come of it, when the meaner sort wil needes play the loose colres, and not be bridled but kicke and spurne against God? Doe they not shewe themselues to be very much blinded with pride? And therfore let vs learne to profite so by the thinges that our Lorde teacheth vs, as all men both great & small may submit themselues euery one according to his degree, state & calling; that God may be honored of al men, and ỹ there may be one general obedience from the formost to the hindermost.

Deut. 33.8.

Esa. 49.23.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, ỹ by meanes thereof wee may be drawen to true repentance to mislike of all our vices & transgressions, & to rid ourselues of thẽ, till God haue so wrought in vs, that we be throughly clothed with his righteousnes: & that in the meane while hee so beare with vs in our weakenesse, as wee may not faile to obtaine fauour at his hande, although wee line not in such perfection as were to be wished. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, bringing backe all poore ignorant people, out of the captiuitie of errours and darkenesse wherein they are holden: that so he may leade them to the knowledge of his trueth: And that for this purpose it would please him to raise vp true & faithfull ministers of his worde. &c.

On Fryday the xxij. of Nouember. 1555.

The CVij. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the eighteenth Chapter.

THe Prieſtes Leuites, and all the tribe of Leuy ſhall haue no part nor inheritaunce with Iſraell: but ſhall eate the ſacrifices of the Lorde made by fire, and his inheritaunce.

2 Therefore they haue no inheritaunce among their brethren, for the Lorde is their inheritaunce as he hath ſayde vnto them,

3 And this ſhalbe the Prieſts duetie at the peoples handes, euen at the handes of as many as offer any ſacrifice, whether it bee Oxe or Sheepe. They ſhall giue the Prieſt the ſhoulder, the Cheekes, and the inwardes,

4 The firſtfruites of thy Corne, of thy Wine, and of thine Oyle, & alſo the firſt fleeces of thy ſheepe ſhalt thou giue him,

5 For the Lord thy God hath chooſen him from among all thy Tribes, to ſtand and miniſter to the Lorde thy God, euen him and his ſonnes for euer.

6 If a Leuite come out of any of the Cities of all Iſraell where he is a ſoiourner, and come with all the deſire of his ſoule to the place which the Lorde thy GOD ſhall haue choſen:

7 Let him miniſter in the name of the Lorde his God, as all the reſt of thy brethren the Leuites do, which ſtand there before the face of the Lorde.

8 They ſhall haue like portions to eate, beſides that which they haue of the ſale of their fathers goods.

Deut. 12.18. & 14.22.

MEntion hath beene made heeretofore of the right that God reſerued to the Prieſtes, and to al ỹ tribe of Leuy: and it is not for nought that mention is made thereof againe heere. For on the one ſide, it was more than needefull that the Prieſtes ſhould be put in minde of their dueties, ỹ knowing the honour which God had done them, they ſhould giue thẽ ſelues the more faithfully and cheerefully to the ſeruing of him: and alſo ỹ the reſt of the tribes might knowe, ỹ ſith it had pleaſed God to chooſe the ſons of Leuie, it behoued ỹ dignity to remain vnto thẽ, & no man was to beare them any ſpite for it. For in verie deede we ſee howe there were that did riſe vp againſt them, and God was faine by miracle to warrant that prieſthood which he had eſtabliſhed, and namely, in making Aarons rod to bud and bloſſome, the which he willed to be kept for an euerlaſting memoriall. It ſeemed to others ỹ Moſes would haue aduanced them in reſpect that they were of his owne kinred, for he himſelfe was of the tribe of Leuy. And becauſe he ordeined ỹ prieſthoode in the ſame tribe, they murmured at it, thinking ỹ Moſes had delt altogether vpon fleſhly affection: but God ſhewed himſelfe to be the Author thereof. And ſurely there was no cauſe of ſuſpition, if they that made the inſurrection had not bin carried away with great malice. For although Moſes had children of his owne, yet did he not ſet any of thẽ in the honorable degree of the prieſtes: but beſtowed it away frõ them, and ſet them in the laſt place, as though they had bin of no eſtimation in ỹ tribe. If Moſes had regarded himſelfe & his owne aduantage, ſurely he would haue preferred his owne houſe. But he did not ſo, but contrariwiſe did let his children alone as they were, and held them backe. Wherein he ſhewed ỹ he obeyed God, and did nothing vpon his owne heade. On the other ſide we ſee how in giuing ỹ prieſthood to the tribe of Leuy, he depriueth them of the inheritance ỹ was aſſigned to thẽ among the reſt of their brethren: For the land was not promiſed alonely to thoſe twelue tribes among whõ it was afterward deuided: For at the time ỹ God made Abraham Lord and Maiſter of the Lande of Chanaan, Leuy was compriſed among them that ſhould be the inheriters therof. Why then is he put beſide it? So we ſee ỹ Moſes followed Gods ordinance, & inuented not any thing of his owne head. We muſt go yet further: for he willeth the Leuites ỹ this ſcattering of them among the reſt of the tribes was a puniſhment of God, though it was afterwarde turned into grace, and ỹ God of his goodnes did wipe away the curſe ỹ he had layde vpon Leuie. But if we haue an eye to the originall grounde, it is ſayde thereof that Iacob denounceth Leuie and Simeon to haue bin wicked, inſomuch as he ſayth ỹ he will in no wiſe be matched

Numb. 16.1. & 17.5.8.

matched with them, neither in thought nor in worde, because it was not long of them ỳ Israell had not him put to hauocke. Whereupon he addeth, Thou shalt be scattered abroade. Wheras all the rest haue their inheritances assigned vnto them: thou must be as a vagabonde among thy brethren. Seeing ỳ Moses vttereth so harde and reprochfull a sentence against all his owne tribe, who can say ỳ he ment to be partiall towardes it? Nay the cleane contrary appeareth. As a man led by Gods spirite, he respecteth not himselfe or his, but purteth them to shame for euer, and will that if they haue any honour or dignitie, ỳ same should be acknowledged to come of Gods meere fauour, and ỳ the sayde note of reproch shoulde make it the more euident that Leuy had deserued to be vtterly bereft of his inheritaunce, if God had not remedied it of his owne goodnes. Therfore there was no cause of bearing any enuie to Moses or any of his. But such is the malitiousnes of the world, that men take occasion to grudge & repine at euery thing: and it is the thing ỳ Satan doth chiefly practise. When God is to be serued no man is willing to goe vnto God in trueth, but all inferiour degrees are waywarde, and woulde fayne haue superioritie without the charge. How many shall ye finde that are willing to giue themselues to the seruice of God by the preaching of his worde, or which seeke it with a right meaning affection, as who would say, I offer vp my selfe in sacrifice vnto God? Yet notwithstanding all are led with a kinde of selfeliking, vnlesse God holde them in awe by his holy spirite: in which respect this lesson is giuen vnto them, to the intent that Iohn 4. euery man should be contented to be only in the forecourt of the Lord his Temple. We see then that men indeuour not to come neere God, and yet could euery man finde in his heart to be admitted, so it were without charge. Euen so was it among the Iewes. For the rest of the tribes hauing their portions, & being in quiet at home in their houses, ceased not to grudge against the Priestes and Leuits. And therfore God was faine to authorise their priesthood after such a sort, as it might be exempted frō al slander, & no man might take vpō him to alter any thing therin. And so we see the cause why God repeated this doctrine a-gaine.

Nowe it might seeme to be a disordered kinde of dealing, to make an inheritance of the priesthoode for the fittest ought to haue beene chosen out: and why then should God go chose one kinred after that fashion, & make the children what soeuer they were to succeede their fathers? This seemeth to be no good order for the edifying of the Church. God therefore was faine to set his owne authoritie as a shielde against all these obiections. If a man be inquisitiue, what reason or Iohn 14. what respect moued God, to choose the trybe of Leuie for his seruice: it ought to content vs that God hath done it, and wee ought to thinke well therof though the reason therof appeare not vnto vs. He knoweth wherfore, and ỳ ought to suffice vs. And yet let vs not dout but ỳ when God ordeined ỳ tribe [to serue him in his Sanctuarie] he was able to indewe them with such giftes of grace, as were requisite for the executing of their office. Seeing that God hath ynough wherewith to inable men; should we fal to scanning why or wherefore he chooseth one man rather than an other? It pleaseth him. For by the same reason a man might demaund why God giueth his spirite to one man more than to an other. Ye shall see one man dulwitted, without learning or any other excellent giftes in him; and yee shall see an other indewed with great excellencie: and what is the cause herof? The goodwil of God, & thereupon must we rest; & whosoeuer grudgeth thereat, he shall finde in the end that he hath to deale with too great a maister. So then, it ought to be ynough for vs that GOD chose out that tribe. Howsoeuer the case stande, he ment here to stoppe the mouthes of all the Iewes, and to shewe that it behoued them to keepe the order which he had set downe, as holy and inuiolable. Marke that for one point.

Heerewithall (as I haue touched afore) hee ment to put the priestes in minde of their duety, that they might be the diligenter in doing their seruice in the Temple. For had they lated as ydlebellies, it had beene contrarie to Gods meaning, and it had bin a defiling of the order which God had set downe and stablished among them. So then, God had an eye to both these reasons, and it behooueth vs also to marke them on our part. And therefore let vs learne, that such as are called to any charge or office, ought to beare continually in minde and to bethinke them early and late, who it is that hath set them in that place, and for what purpose; that it may bee as a whetting or sharpning of them, to indeuour that they become not vnprofitable in their charge, but rather apply themselues faythfully vnto it, that they may bee able to make their reckening thereof vnto GOD. Let that serue for one point.

Againe, let vs learne to be contented with the degree wherein God hath set vs, and let none of vs be greeued when wee see an other goe before vs. For all the members of a body can not bee 1. Cor. 12. 18. eyes and eares; all can not be aboue; there must be legges and feete as well as eyes and handes. Therfore let vs vnderstande that, and let euery of vs submit himselfe, and let it suffice vs that it pleaseth God to accept vs into the companie of his people, to giue vs some litle corner in his temple, so as wee may bee incorporated into his Church. That is too great an honour for vs, and seeing it pleased God to place vs there, we ought to couet no further. Those are the things which we haue to remember vpon this text, in applying the doctrine to ourselues.

It is sayde further, *The Priestes and Leuites and all they of the tribe of Leuie, shall haue no portion in the inheritaunce of Israell, but shall eate the Sacrifices for their inheritaunce. And she Lorde will be their inheritaunce as he hath promised them.* Heere Moses on the one side depriueth his brethren and kinsfolk of all inheritance. Wherein wee see the execution of Gods sentence, which was ỳ Leuie should be dispersed, & ỳ he should not haue any habitation or abode in any certaine place. The children of

Leuie

Leuie then are as a body torne in peeces. And yet doeth God turne their punishment into an honour. And therein appeareth his goodnesse, forasmuch as he maketh the thinges to redound to our benefite and saluation, which should haue beene to our condemnation. Loe howe God worketh towardes those that are his. Insomuch that although hee punish them for their sinnes, yet doth he make them feele his goodnesse therwith, by turning the thinges to a contrary ende, which should haue beene to their shame. After the same manner befell it to all the posteritie of Leuy. For it is no small thing, that God shoulde be their inheritaunce: it was a title of honour aboue all others. Whereas all the rest of the children of Israell, had their portions in the Land of Chanaan: God reserued himselfe for Leuy, saying, Holde yourselues to me, I am your inheritance. Ye see then how their portion was better than all the rest, sauing the tribe of Iuda, which was priuiledged, as whereunto God had already assigned the kingdome. And whereof came that? If yee haue an eye to the originall, yee shall see that the sinne of Leuie made him worthie of banishment, that he might haue beene as a vagabonde without any certaine dwellingplace: but yet for all that, God prouided so for the matter, that hee turned the euill into good, and the reproch into honour. Therefore let vs learne not to be discouraged when GOD punisheth vs for our sins, & yet to be so ashamed of our misdeeds and offences, as we may not dout but that our Lorde pitying vs, wil make his chastisements beneficiall to vs, so as we shalbe the more honorable before him and his Angelles. If we be faine to abide some shame and reproch for a time before the worldt the thing that ought to be a good cõfort to the faithfull, when they be smitten by ỹ hand of God, is not to greeue thẽselues with the only beholding of their present affliction: but to thinke vpon the end and issue of it, which is, that God turneth bitternesse into sweetenesse.

Furthermore, wheras it is said to ỹ Leuites that God is their heritage; it is to the end they should be the willinger to giue themselues wholly to his seruice. For had they bin busied in husbandry, traffike of marchandice, & such other like things: they had bin turned away frõ their office, & not had leasure to doe the thing ỹ God had cõmanded them: ỹ is to wit, that those which were in Ierusalem should serue in ỹ Temple; & those which were dispersed abroad in ỹ countrey, shold maintaine the religion pure, & not suffer the people to growe out of order, but teach thẽ euery man in his place, ỹ they might be preserued in all purenes. For vpon ỹ conditiõ were they chosen. Not without cause therefore doth God say ỹ hee was the heritage & portion of the Leuites, to the end that such as are called to his seruice, shold not be pulled away, nor haue excuse to withdrawe them frõ the full executing of their duttie. Now in deed S. Paul applyeth this to ỹ ministers of gods word, saying ỹ if by the law of Moses they which serued at ỹ Altar were found of the Altar; they which at this day haue ỹ charge of preaching Gods word, and of the offring vp of spiritual sacrifices, ought of reason to be found and maintained, & to haue that which is necessarie for them. Yet notwithstanding wee must learne generally, ỹ God hath done vs the honor to make vs all Leuites, according to this saying, ỹ when God shall haue restored his people, those which were Leuites before shal then become Priestes, & all the cõmon people shall become Leuites. And this belongeth to the kingdome of our Lord Iesus Christ. Seeing then ỹ Iesus Christ hath shewed himselfe to the worlde: we which before were straungers & had no acquaintance at al with God, are nowe come into the Church to be of the body of Abrahams children, and are in as good case as they ỹ were heires of the promise. But we are become Leuites for we preace vnto our God, & haue familiar accesse to him in the name of his only sonne, so as we may boldly call vpon him as our father. And euen in the same respect doeth S. Peter call vs a kingly priesthod, because ỹ wheras we were gone backe before, and wist not how to come at God, ne had any meane to bring vs to him now he calleth vs to him, yea euen as though wee were priestes, not to enter into a materiall Sanctuarie with ỹ bloud of Goats, sheepe, or Calues: but with the bloud that was shedde to dedicate vs to God & to wash vs from all vncleanes. And so now we go into the sanctuary of heauen to present ourselues before the face of God.

Nowe then let vs apply this doctrine to ourselues where it is sayde that God is our heritage. True it is that such as haue goods & possessions in this worlde may vse them, howebeit with the condition which S. Paul setteth downe in the seuenth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians: namely that he which hath possessions be as he that hath none, that he haue the one foote euer lifted vp, and that he sticke not fast in the mire as tyed to the things that are here beneath; but that we remember ourselues to be but straungers in this world, and therefore looke euer vpwarde to the restingplace of heauen. After that maner we may well possesse whatsoeuer thinges are in this worlde: but yet must we euen goe further, and not be stayed or tyed heere. For why? Seeing our Lorde hath aduaunced vs to such dignitie, as to haue vs to be priestes: let vs goe to his Altar. For wee bee linked to our Lorde Iesus Christ, that hee might dedicate vs to GOD his father. Sith it is so, let vs doe as is sayde in the fixteenth Psalme. For although it was sayd alonely of the Leuites, that GOD was their portion: yet doth Dauid boast that hee hadde a faire portion, because God was his. Behold (sayeth he) I haue a fayre lotte, and henceforth I haue no cause to complaine, as though I wanted any thing: for my God hath giue himself to me; he is my portion, & I possesse him. Dauid came not of the tribe of Leuie; and howe falleth it out then, that he boasteth himselfe to haue as much as the priestes? He knewe well that Gods reseruing of ỹ tribe for a time was after such a sort, ỹ yet neuertheles he would haue ỹ whole people partakers of ỹ same blessing, accordingly also as it is saide in Exodus, you be a priestly kingdome. And S. Peter hath turned this into another maner

Mal. 2.7.

1. Cor. 9. 13. 4.

Psal. 16.

Exod. 19.

of speech, saying, Ye be a kingly priesthood, that is to say, ye be all as it were a sort of litle kinges, because God gouerneth you, and that is for your benefite: for he hath promised to giue you a redeemer, which shall leade you into al perfection. Neuertheleſſe yee muſt vnderſtande, that this kingdome is not like other kingdoms of ỹ world, but is matched with a priesthoode, that is to say, is consecrated and dedicated to God. Dauid therefore acknowledging this, sayeth that God is his portion. Nowe if this was sayd in the time of the figures: much more ought wee to doe the same now, forasmuch as the forealledged prophesie is nowe come to paſſe in our Lorde Ieſus Christ and in all his members, ſo as wee bee not kept back any longer as we were before, but may resorte vnto God with assured hope that hee will receiue vs, and that we ſhall be neere vnto him. Thus yee ſee howe wee ought to benefite our selues by this speeche where it is sayde that the Lorde was their portion, yea euen according as he had promised them.

And it was not for Leuy to boaſt of his owne worthineſſe or deſertes. All that euer he could alledge was no more but this: I ought to haue beene disherited, and yet notwithſtanding God hath turned it to mine honour. And therefore if we wilbe sure that God is our heritage, we muſt not looke what we can attaine by our owne trauell, for there is nothing but vtter confuſion in vs: but we muſt reſorte to ỹ promiſe which God hath made vnto vs, in that hee hath vouchſafed to make ſo great account of vs, as to take vs for his children, euen vs which deſerued to be damned. And that is the thing wherupon it behoueth vs to be grodded, to inioy the priuiledge and inestimable benefite wherof Moſes speaketh here. Let vs marke well then that he ſendeth vs backe to the promiſe without any reſpect had to vs, to the intent to doe vs to wit that wee haue not anie thing on our owne parte, but that we be beholden to the only freegoodneſſe of our God for the benefite.

Nowe it is sayde conſequently, that the people alſo muſt diſcharge their duetie towardes the Prieſtes. Ye muſt haue a ſpeciall eare (sayeth he) that the Prieſtes may haue their right which God alloweth vnto them: that is to wit, *The right ſhoulder of euery ſacrifice, the two cheekes, and the Paunch: theſe things muſt be reſerued for them, together with the firſt fruites of Corne, Wine, and Oyle, and alſo of the fleeces of your ſheepe.* Here God commaundeth the children of Iſrael expreſly to maintaine the Prieſtes, for they were bounde thereto, and therein they ſhewed themſelues to make great account of the ſeruice of God. It behoued them to haue men to miniſter in the Temple: and if theſe were not maintained, Religion ſhould be, as it were aboliſhed: and therfore it was not without cauſe that God commaunded the people to employ themſelues about that matter. True it is that they ought to haue doone well euen without exhortation: but we ſee the vnthankefulneſſe of the worlde, when any duetie is to bee doone towardes God, they muſt bee ſpurred forwarde, and they neuer goe willingly to it, vnleſſe they be vrged. And if it were ſo among ỹ Iewes; much more is it ſo among vs. For we be ſo slothfull that we neuer ſeeke to diſcharge our ſelues to Godwarde, and therefore we are faine to be called vpon and to be prepared. Sith we know this vice to be in vs, let euery of vs quicken vp & ſpur foreward our ſelues: & ſith we ſee ỹ our Lord calleth vpon vs, let vs follow him, & make the things effectuall which he telleth vs in his word. That is the thing which we be to marke in this texte.

But yet moreouer wee haue to marke ỹ which is sayde heere: namely that *if any of the Leuites bee diſperſed to come to the place which the Lorde ſhall haue choſen to be worſhipped there, hee ſhall haue his part and portion of all the offeringes of the Temple as one of their brethren, beſides that which he hath of his owne houſe.* For if they had houſes from their fathers in the Countrey, (as in deede there were Cities aſſigned them euerywhere:) they were to keepe them to themſelues, and yet they were to haue their part of the offeringes that were made in the Temple, ſo long as they ſerued there. But yet God sayth expreſly, *with the whole deſire of his heart*, to ſhewe that God ment not heere to giue occaſion of ydleneſſe, to ſuch as ſought but their owne eaſe and commoditie: but to ſpeake of ſuch as came with a right meaning mind to ſerue him. I tolde you afore, that the children of Leuie were diſperſed and had no certain portion to inherit, but had certaine Cities heere and there, one in one place and an other in an other, diſperſedly throughout the Lande of Chanaan. And therefore it is sayde, that if any of them being farre of Ieruſalem, had a deuotion to giue himſelfe wholly to the ſeruice of God: hee might doe ſo, hee might leaue the place where he dwelt, to goe to Ieruſalem, there to giue himſelfe wholely to the ſeruice of God. And this was no breach of the order that God hadde ſet, that is to wit, that the Leuites ſhould be ſcattered abroade as a ſeede, to holde the people continually in the puritie of religion: but it was ſpoken in reſpect of ſome of them. For all of them had not a deſire to reſorte to Ieruſalem: that is ſure. For the moſt part of the Leuites dwelt in places more fruitefull than Ieruſalem: for that part of the countrey was not one of the beſt of all the Lande of Chanaan. But they that dwelt in the countries of paſturage, were the welthieſt. And we ſee alſo how the prophets vpbrayde them, saying: Ye Bulles of Baſan, because the kingdome of Iſrael was become verie proude by reaſon of their abundance. The Leuites then would haue had no liking to haue abidden in a place ỹ was not very fruitfull, & to haue left all their owne cõmodities & houſes. Againe if any had bin led by deſire of vainglorie, God ment not to fauour them. Therefore it is sayde that if any of them woulde come of good will to Ieruſalem to ſerue in ỹ Temple, he ſhould not be refuſed, ſo it might appeare that his intent was to giue himſelfe to ỹ ſeruice of God, and ỹ he did it with a good corage. Now we ſee in effect ỹ gods intent here was to giue a preheminence to ſuch as beſides their common duetie of teaching the people, were alſo deſirous to bee continually at the Sacrifices. That is one point.

Amos. 4. 1.

But

But yet for the better vnderstanding of the whole; we must consider that the seruice of the Temple consisted not onely in the offering of sacrifices: but also in singing of praises vnto God both euening and morning, in saying of publike praiers, yea and also in watching anightes: and so there was some hardenes in performing that charge. In respect whereof it is sayde in the Psalme, Blesse the Lorde ye that serue him, yea and which doe keepe the watch anightes in his house or Temple. It was not enough for the Leuites in their order and according to their turns, to be occupied from morning to night in calling vpon the name of God, and in making of praiers and supplications in the name of the people: but it behoued them to holde out all the night also: and it was a set order among them, that when one sort of them had beene occupied all the day in singing the prayses of God, it behoued them to be present there the next morning when the people came together, to shewe ỹ way to others. Likewise, when solemne sacrifices were to be offered according to the commaundement of the Law, the Leuites were euer present. To be short, the Temple was neuer empty, but it behoued thẽ to watch as well for the keeping of the fire vpon the Altar, as for ỹ mainteyning of the lights and such other like things. Thus see we now ỹ cause why God vouchsafed to giue a certain priuiledge to those that came after that sort to Ierusalem.

Psal. 134.1.

And heereby we be done to vnderstande, first that the office of the Leuites was dubble: to wit, that on the one side they were to teach the people, & to be as keepers and mainteiners of ỹ law, to the intent that men should not turne away to any superstitiõ, nor become heathenish for want of good looking to, and so bring the seruice of God in contempt; but that they might alwayes beare in minde to what end he kept them in the worlde, and referre their whole life to the glorifying of him. That was one part of the charge of ỹ Leuites. Also they were to teach men the meaning of the Ceremonies, as namely that the sacrifices serued to shew euen to eyesight, ỹ all mẽ are accursed, & condemned to death, and that they ought not in any wise to come in Gods presence without sacrifice. And there was not any sacrifice sufficient to make attonement betweene God and the worlde, but onely our Lorde Iesus Christes offering vp of himself. Ye see then how the duetie of the Leuites was to teach the people, that the Ceremonies guided them to the promise which had beene made vnto them concerning the Redeemer. And therewithall it behoued the Leuites moreouer to pray vnto God: and the Hygh priest was to goe into the tabernacle in the name of all the people, to shewe that they were not worthy to haue accesse vnto God, but by meanes of a mediatour to goe before them and to enter as it were into Gods presence in their behalfe. Al these thinges were to be done. And therefore the Leuites that serued in the Temple, hadde a harder charge than they that were dispersed abroade in the Countrey. In respect whereof it was Gods will that they should haue the sayde aduauntage of taking their portions of all the sacrifices and offerings that were made in the Temple.

Hebr. 10.4. & 11.12.

Whereupon wee haue to note, that Gods esteeming of the Ceremonies was not without cause. In graunting this priuiledge to the Leuites, he doeth vs to vnderstande that he liketh well of Ceremonies, and will haue them kept. Withal, that he wil haue the meanes maintained for the strengthening of them: but that is not in respect of God himselfe: for wee must alwayes thinke thus What? Did God require men to offer him the bloud of brute beastes? Why? that is nothing but stinch. Againe, required he to haue the fatte burnt, which can ingender nothing but filth and stinch likewise? Yes: howbeit, that was not for any pleasure that he tooke in those outwarde things: but for the saluation and benefite of the people, to keepe them in continuall hope of the redeemer that was promised. Againe, their praying, their singing, and all the rest of their doinges serued to inure the faithfull, that they might pray to God with the better courage. True it is that we be cõmaunded to pray euerie man by himselfe at home in his house, in his Chamber, in his bedde, and at his table: but yet our Lorde perceiuing the weaknesse and coldenesse that is in vs, hath willed vs to assemble together and to call vpon him with one common accorde. And so was done in the Temple. There was singing of Psalmes, there was giuing of thankes in the name of all the people, there was praying and such other like thinges, and finally there was sensing with perfumes, to shewe that our callings vpon God after ỹ maner are sacrifices of good sent, & stie vp to heauen like the smoke of the perfumes. All these thinges were done for the better inuring of the people in the seruice of God, and that they should fashion themselues after the Leuites that serued in the Temple.

To be short, we see howe God did not this in fauour of ỹ one tribe onely: but rather that he tooke ỹ order for ỹ benefit of the whole Church. For had the Priesthoode ceassed, and the order of the temple beene abolished: at what point had the people beene? All had gone to hauocke. And wee see also ỹ when they were carried away captiue, and the temple beaten downe: they became as folk forlorne, & could not open their mouthes to sing vnto God as they had beene wont to doe. Sith it is so then, let vs marke ỹ our Lordes intent was not to fauour that one tribe alone: but generally to procure the benefite and saluation of his whole Church. And likewise when mention is made of the order of the Christian Church, it is not in respect of some small number of men: but Gods intent is to draw both great and small vnto him. And let vs marke that his ordeining of common prayer and of the administration of the sacraments, is because he seeth that without them our saluation could not stande, but all would goe to wreche, & his grace would after a sort vanishe away. And this ought to giue vs the better courage to giue our minds to the doing of the things which our Lord commandeth vs concerning the Ceremonies, concerning the resorting to his word,

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1. Tim. 2.

ward, concerning our meeting together in some place certaine to call vpon him in the company of ỹ faithfull. Let vs consider, ỹ seeing God hath ordained these things for our welfare, we must not withdraw our selues frō them, but euery of vs must resort to them as much as we possibly can.

And it is said expressly, *that they shall be there to minister in the name of the Lord, with their brethren which are there before the face of the Lorde.* This *Name of the Lord*, betokeneth nothing else but ỹ Maiestie of God, euen as he manifesteth ỹ same vnto vs. For it was not for the people to conceiue so grosse and brutish an imagination, as ỹ God should be inclosed in the Temple: but it behoued thē to beare alwaies in mind, ỹ God had onely placed his name there, ỹ is to say, that he meant to haue his Maiestie knowen there as he had giuen assured tokens thereof: For the Sanctuary, the Altars, (as well ỹ wheron the whole burnt offerings were sacrificed, as the others wheron the shewbread was set, and whereon the perfumes were burned,) & all ỹ rest of the things there, serued for a warrant to shew that God accepted the petitiōs of his people. That then was the cause why it is expressly said, that those which dwelt in the Temple serued the name and Maiestie of God. And herewithal mention is made of Gods presence (as we haue seene before,) which is a ratifying of the thinges that hee had spoken afore, that the people should not bee disappointed in resorting to the temple to call vpon him there, because the Leuites should alwayes be there ready to succour such as fled to him for succour.

Now this was in the time of the figures. But we must marke that if wee resorte to our God in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, in whome dwelleth the whole fulnes of the Godhead; God will shew his face vnto vs: that is to say, we shall finde by the effect that he regardeth vs, and that his face is not set against vs, but that we may come into his presence. And besides that, to the end we may be guided by our Lord Iesus Christ, we must put the thing in vre which he hath told vs, that is to wit, wee must come together in his name, to the intent that hee may bee among vs. Then if wee will bee heard of God, and that our seruice should be wel accepted of him: wee must meete together without hypocrisie, with a true & pure heart: and then will our Lord Iesus so beare sway amongst vs, that God also will therwithal reach out his hande to helpe & succour vs. And when we haue so offered vp our prayers vnto him, and euery of vs hath put himself into his hand: let vs not doubt but ỹ he regardeth our doings. As for example, for as much as we knowe ỹ these our present doings in meeting together to heare his word and to seeke him, are commanded by him: Let vs not doubt but we be before his eyes, and he loketh vpon vs with pitie, and will consider all our necessities to prouide for them, and to succour vs in them. And let vs on our part also so mount vp vnto him by faith, as wee may bee out of all doubt that he sheweth vs his face, that is to say, that he maketh vs to feele his presence, specially when we come to him by the way which he sheweth vs; for thē will he make vs to come in such sorte, that he will keepe vs still vnder his protection, vntill he take vs vp into his kingdome.

Now let vs kneele down before the Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea & that we may be so stricken down in our selues, as we may seeke him with true repentance, & rest vpon his promises, not doubting but ỹ he accepteth vs, howe wretched so euer we bee, because we come not to him vpon trust of our own deserts, but vpon his meere goodnesse wherethrough he hath elected and chosen vs: and that moreouer he suffer vs not to be defiled with any of the corruptions of our flesh, but that seeing he hath called vs to his Priesthood, hee will also graunt vs the grace to dedicate our selues to him by offering vp all our thoughts, affections, & desires, yea & euen our whole bodies & soules vnto him, that he may bee honored more & more by them, & that such as are yet farre off from him may be brought vnto him, to the end wee may all together worship him in his only sonne. And for the bringing thereof to passe, it may please him to raise vp true and faithfull Ministers of his word, &c.

On Wednesday the xxvij. of Nouember. 1555.

The Cxvij Sermon, which is the second vpon the eighteenth Chapter.

9 When thou art come into the Land which the Lorde thy God giueth thee: thou shalt not learne to doe after the abhominations of those Nations.

10 There shall not any bee found among you, which maketh his sonne or his daughter to go through fire, nor any witch that vseth Witchcraft, nor any man that is a regarder of times, or that regardeth the flying of foules.

11 Or that is a Sorcerer, or a charmer, or that asketh Counsell at spirites that are called familiars, or that is a soothsaier, or which asketh Counsell at the dead.

12 For all they that doe such things are an abhomination to the Lord: and for such abhominations sakes, the Lord thy God driueth them out before thy face.

13 Be perfect therefore before the Lord thy God.

14 For the Nations which thou shalt possesse, giue eare to regarders of tymes and to witches: but the Lord thy God hath not taught thee to doe so.

15 The Lord thy God will rayse vp a prophet like vnto me, from among thy brethren: him shall you obey.

IT is in vaine for God to giue vs many lawes & lessons, if we determine not with our selues to obey him in all pointes. For the first point wherat we must begin is to know Gods authority, & to learne to submit our selues to his word without any gainsaying. If the Law in generall haue not this force; to what purpose is it for God to speake of this thing or of that thing? Therefore let vs beare well in mind, that we must bee disposed to receiue whatsoeuer God inioyneth vs, before we can benefite our selues by any one sentence of the holy Scripture. As for example, when a man commeth to a sermon, though he heare the matter, yet shal it not touch him to the quick, vnlesse he know aforehand that Gods truth must be receiued, and that it is not to be incountered with disputing. And surely wee see many which are sufficiently conuicted, that the things which are told them are true, and that they be not able to reply against them: and yet passe not to make a mocke of them. And why is that? Bicause they be not touched with ỳ maiesty of God, and therfore they cannot thinke that wee ought to submit our selues to him that made vs, & fashioned vs to be obedient to him & to his commaundement. But on ỳ contrary part, when we be vrged to receiue the things which we knowe to come of God, his truth wil beare sway with vs. As soon as we heare that it is God which speaketh, we tremble at his speech, as is said by the prophet Esay. And so ye see now why God giueth this generall rule to his people, that they must houlde themselues to his pure and simple wil. But for as much as men are naturally giuen to superstition, & seeme to seeke euen wilfully to be beguiled: God here doth first withdraw vs from all errours and abuses, & afterward giueth vs a foundation wheron to stay & to be builded, that is to wit by herkning vnto him, & by sticking to ỳ which he saith. Thus are there here two principall reasons. The one is ỳ God correcteth the vanity that is in men, in that they rather giue ouer themselues to cousinages & lyings, than to the rightfull truth. And thereupon he sheweth after what maner they may be directed, giuing them a remedie against all the wiles of Satan. For if a husbandman wil haue his seede to thriue, he must first till his ground: & if there come vp any shrewd weedes, he must pull them vp or cut them off. After the same maner doth God deale with vs: to the intent his worde may haue enterance into vs, and be receiued without any let, he riddeth vs from all ỳ euil & vice that is in vs. For all our owne seeking is to giue our selues to follies: & the diuell is so wylie & suttle, ỳ hee findeth meanes to attaine to his purpose, bicause he knoweth that our minds are so sickle, that our whole seeking is to be beguiled. Therefore let vs marke wel that Gods meaning in this place, was to hold his people in obedience to his word, ỳ was the mark he shot at. And moreouer bicause we be forepossessed w̄ the said frowardnes, so as none of vs can forbeare to hearken to leasings, but our wits are so shettle that we be ful hearkening after this & that, delighting in fond curiosities & speculations ỳ are nothing worth, & serue to no purpose but to trouble our minds about vaine and vnprofitable things: therefore here our Lorde turneth those ỳ are his from all things that may corrupt them and withdraw thē from his truth. In respect whereof he saieth here in effect, *That if we will bee his people, we must not bee intangled neither in Sorceris, nor in Southsaying, nor in Witchcrafte, nor in couselinges of the dead, nor in calling vp of familiar Spirites*: but all these things must be rid away from vs, or elle he will disclaime vs and vtterly forsake vs. Marke that for one point.

Ma. 66. 5.

As touching these seueral sorts, we wil treate of them another time: for the time will not suffer to speake of thē al as now. And therfore in ỳ meane season, let it suffice vs to see whereunto God had an eye, & wherat he aimed. Let this then be one point: ỳ if we wil be the true disciples of our God, and receiue benefit by his word, to be taught as becommeth vs: we must put away all wicked superstitions, & all abuses whereunto ỳ world is giuen, & wherewith we also should be bewitched, if ỳ remedie thereof withdrew vs not therefro. And bicause wee be too much giuen to customs, in so much ỳ if a thing be once in vse, we think it to be lawfull: God telleth vs expressly ỳ wee must not set our mindes vpon such clokings, for they will stand vs in no stead. Therfore whereas we see the whole world imbrewed w̄ errors, so as Satan hath his full scope to deceiue both great & smal; let vs not run after them. For it wil not serue vs for excuse, to shield our selues vnder ỳ greatnes of the multitude, or to say, Euery man beleeueth so: I see the wisest folke doe so. Well may we alleage such things; but our Lord telleth vs that we must not yeeld our selues after such maner vnto men, that he shoulde not alwayes be preferred before them, and beare chiefe sway, and be regarded of vs though we were intised away by all the examples of the world.

This thing is touched expressely by Moses in that he sayeth, *Trust is it that when ye bee come into the Lande which ye shall possesse, ye shall finde it to be as a common Law, and that men haue so done: but ye must ye not think that God alowth it euer the more, or that he is contented with it*. For the world shall be condemned: and though all men were feyned with some one kinde of cryme; yet will not God forgo his office of Iudge, nor be ouercom by any multitude be it neuer so great. And therfore let vs remember first of all, that if we wil offer our

selues

selues to God to be his scholers; we must not inwrapple our selues in the vanities that raigne in this world, but wee must yeeld our selues wholly vnto him with a simple and right meaning mind, so as nothing may stop ỹ entring of his word into vs & our receauing therof, but ỹ it may haue full authoritie to the vttermost. That is ỹ first point.

The second point is, that wee must not passe what the world doth, or how other men behaue themselues. For God will haue vs for all that, to frame our selues according to his woorde. And although wee see nothing but rebellion heere beneath: yet must wee doe him the honor to submit our selues to him. For it is not enough for vs to worship him Ceremonially: the chiefe point is that his word do so raigne, as it be alwaie to hould vs backe, and that our life bee framed altogether thereafter. And although this was so straitly commaunded: yet we see how the deuil contrary came to passe. Wherein we see a liuely mirrour of mans wickednesse and vnthankfulnesse. For albeit that God doe shewe him the right way; yet doth he go astray still. Ye see how the Iewes had warning ynough that they should not corrupt themselues with the abhominations of the heathen: God shewed them wherwith they ought to haue contented themselues and wherein to haue staied; namely ỹ they ought to haue learned at his own mouth: he gaue them his law, and hee raised them vp prophetes: and yet for all that they ceassed not to go sowly astray, & to haue itching eares, and to be inquisitiue of this & that. And that was the cause why sorceries and inchantments, Coniurations of the dead, and such other like things reigned among them in so much that in the time of ỹ prophet Esay, we see there were very fewe folke that followed the law of God: Lo heere am I, (saith the prophet,) and the children whome God hath giuen vnto me. What? had he any great company w̄ him? No. But contrariwise he saith, that they were hated, and that they were pointed at w̄ mens fingers, as if they had bin monsters against nature. And those ỹ did so, would needes be counted wiser than all other men, like as ỹ Papists vpbraid vs nowadaies, that we will needs make a new world, & require a reformatiō alone by our selues, by reason whereof we be faln into sects: & euen so was it in ỹ time of ỹ prophet Esay, as he declareth in his eight chapter. Yet notwithstanding he forbeareth not to vtter this sentence, & to confirme ỹ same, saying: If any man go about to turne you away to familiars, and to coniuring of ỹ dead, hold you your selues to the things that your God hath deliuered you. Ought not he to reigne both ouer the quick and dead, and to be obeied of all? Yes: and therefore hold you to his law and to his testimonies. And if the people speake against them; it is bycause they haue no light. But let ỹ blind go on into decay & destruction, seeing they cannot be helde backe: & in the meane while hold you your selues to ỹ simplicitie of the doctrine. And for this cause it is said to ỹ Prophet Esay; Seale vp ỹ Testimonie of God, & let it be vnto you as a letter that is closed vp, seeing there is nothing but vnbeliefe emongst here. And yet for all ỹ, ceasse not to holde you still toit quietly and obediently.

Now if this fel out in old time among ỹ Iewes: needs must we find ỹ like nowadais, as is shewed by ỹ Apostle in ỹ Epistle to the Hebrewes, who applieth this text to ỹ raigne of our Lorde Iesus Christ, & to ỹ state of ỹ Christian Church. Then if they which were desirous to haue serued God purely were abhorred; & that not of ỹ heathen but of such as named themselues the Church of God: it becōmeth vs nowadayes to beare it patiently, if ỹ world not only looke awry vpon vs, but also hold vs for accursed. Yet notwithstanding, we may wel defie ỹ Papists w̄ all their pride and diuelish ouerweening, sith we see them to be backsliders & to haue forsaken God; & (as much as in thē lieth) to haue renoūced their baptisme. Let vs learn to hold our selues to ỹ law. And although Gods truth be not receiued; yet let vs keepe it stil as a letter closed vp, & as a treasure laid vp in store. And when we see all other men wander away, some after superstitiōs, & some after errors: let vs assure our selues ỹ the way is infallible, so we hearken to our God, and indeuour to behaue our selues according to his wil, & we cānot misse the way, it is so certain, as Moses saith hereafter: This is ỹ way, walk therin. But for the better vnderstanding hereof, let vs marke the words ỹ are set down here. The people (saith he) whose land you must possesse, are imbrued w̄ many lyes & abuses: but you shall not do so; especially if wee wil be taken for Gods flock, & accounted for his houshold folke, we must be separated from al the rest of ỹ world. Let vs learn then ỹ our faith must not wauer, nor wāder after our eyes: but we must settle our sight & al our senses vpon that which God telleth vs. Though we saw a thousād stumblingblocks to dazle our eies w̄all, yea & to put vs to trouble: yet must we yeeld such authoritie to Gods word, ỹ it may hold vs still in awe. They then ỹ run gadding at ỹ sight of this example or that example, do well shew that they were neuer throughly grounded vpon ỹ word of God. And therefore this saying is of great importance, whē God setteth the things which he vttereth w̄ his mouth, as a counterpeise against all things ỹ are to be seene in ỹ world. As if he should say, Must I be laid in ỹ balance against men, ỹ when I haue cōmanded them to demeane thēselues thus or thus, my authoritie should bee diminished and doubted of, & it might come in question whether my word ought to take place or no? Were it not a turning of all vpside downe? Can there be any greater or ouglier confusion, than to compare the creature w̄ me? What are men? There is nothing in them but blindnes & beastlines. Yea & when they thinke thēselues wisest, then are they ỹ most fooles: & their aduancing of thēselues against me is starke madnes: & yet must my word be defaced for their pleasure? Then let vs marke well, ỹ it is not for vs to followe mens customes; nor to esteeme ỹ more of things for ỹ they haue had their free scope, when God turneth vs from them & saith, Yee shal not doe so. For why? It is good reason ỹ we should separate our selues frō those whom God hath not inlightened. It is no maruel though men trip & stumble & go astray

Hebr. 2. 13.

Deut. 5. 33 & Esa. 30. 21.

ouer all the fields like silie beastes. For it is said ỳ
Eph.4.18. in this world we be as in the darke; & therwithal
2.Cor.2.14. it is said also, ỳ there is nothing but starke ignorance in vs, and that wee comprehend not the things ỳ concerne God. Therfore when we want Gods word, we be as in an irksome dungeõ. And so forasmuch as God graunteth not ỳ grace and priuiledge to al mẽ, to haue ỳ lampe of his word & truth lighted vp vnto them to guide thẽ withal: we ought not to wonder though we see them goe astray, but rather to make our benefite of ỳ good ỳ God offreth vnto vs, and to hold vs altogether to his word when it is giuen vnto vs.

And now he telleth them the cause why they should not do so. For *your God* (saieth Moses) *will raise you vp a Prophet, and him you shall obey*. If wee were but simply forbidden to giue our selues to superstition, sorcerie, and al other abuses: ỳ were not ynough. For we should be stil in vnquietnes, and euery man might iustly demaund, yea, but what will God haue vs then to doe? For he forbiddeth vs to haue any superstition among vs, and yet in the meane while he leaueth vs in vncertaintie, so as the state of the heathen & vnbeleeuers is better than ours. After ỳ maner might a man haue replied: But our Lord hath prouided well for it. For he saith, whereas I call you backe from al abuses & errors, it is not to leaue you in perplexitie & trouble, so as ye should not knowe on which side to turne you: but I giue you my worde, & that is the thing which you must take heede vnto. And if Gods trueth content vs not: what an vnthankfulnes is it? We see then now ỳ the thing whereby God will put a difference betweene vs and the Infidels, is that we must haue his word for our guide, to rule our selues therby: & therewall we must let the world run at rouers, forasmuch as they haue no other doctrine to ground vpõ, but their owne opinion, or ỳ folly of other men. And so when one blind mã leads another, he himself stumbleth first, & al the rest follow him. As for vs, seeing we haue God for our Maister and teacher, let vs hold our selues con-
Matt.15.14. tented therewith.

And let vs marke hereby, ỳ it is vnpossible for men to be withdrawen from errors, vnlesse they haue Gods word. In deede a great sort can well ynough mocke at the great nomber of follyes which they see: as for example, ye shall see many worldlings nowadayes which will condemne the abuses & fond toyes ỳ are in the Popedome, & lustily reiect them: but yet for all ỳ, they stand vpon neuer ỳ better ground themselues, neither haue they any setlednes or roote. And if they be not stained ẇ the errors which they condemne: they haue others as bad or worse. For many of them bee starke Atheistes, that is to say without Religion and without feare of God, whose shame must needes bee discouered at length, and God must needes giue them vp to a leaud minde, that euen yong children may laugh at their beastlines. And whence commeth ỳ? Euen of this (as I said afore) ỳ we shall neuer haue any certain rule, vntil God haue taught vs. And ỳ is a point wel worthy to be noted. For first, we needs not to be troubled at ỳ impediments which hinder many men to come to the Gospell in these dayes, when they see the whole worlde in a manner wilfully bent to superstition: for seeing that Gods word beareth no sway among them, what shal a man say, but ỳ blind folke may wel ynough wander in darkenes? Againe, we see the singular yea & inestimable benefite which God vouchsafeth vpon vs, when he giueth vs his word, and applieth it to vs for our soule health. For it is the only meane to draw vs out of ỳ bottomles pit. So long as we bee in this world, we bee hemmed in with so many temptations of the diuel, as can not be nõbred: & the world it selfe may well be likened to a maze, so as we cannot step one pace wout daũger of falling down headlong to breake our neckes: from the which there is none other meane to preserue vs but Gods word. Seeing then ỳ he vouchsafeth to looke mercifully vpon vs, & to open his holy mouth to shewe vs ỳ way of saluation: howe may wee excuse our selues if we vouchsafe not to come vnto him? So then let vs learne to imbrace this treasure which is offered vs, & to yeeld due reuerence to Gods doctrine, after wee haue once knowen what it bringeth vs, and howe much it is for our behoofe. And finally let vs beare in minde that by this text where our Lord telleth vs that *he will raise vs vp a Prophet*, he doeth vs to wit that we shalbe deliuered from all errors, if we receiue his worde to frame our selues thereafter.

And hereby we be done to vnderstand, that all such as in these daies do make none accompt of the Gospel, are wel worthy to erre: of which sort a man shall see many nowadayes, which shutte their eyes and stop their eares when God is so gratious as to draw them to him. They haue the meanes wherby to yeelde themselues into ỳ way of saluation, & they play the deafe & blind folke wilfully & wittingly: & therfore is it meete that such folk should perish. For inasmuch as they reiect Gods grace whereby they might haue been saued, & which could not bee sufficiently esteemed of: must he not needs be reuenged of their spite fulnes, in ỳ they bee so froward as to trample the word so vnder their feete, which serued to haue deliuered them from the gulfes of hell? Marke that for one point.

And therwithall let vs marke on our side, that seeing God teacheth vs, it ought to be a sufficient arming of vs against all errours and all vaine fansies; in so much that although the diuell lay his snares for vs, yet shall he not be able to catch vs as long as we hearken to our God, and yeeld him the dueti full obedience which he desireth at our hands, & which we owe vnto him. And for ỳ same cause doeth S. Paul say expresly, that if we Ephes.3.16. haue ỳ doctrine of ỳ Gospel throughly printed in our hearts, we shall no more be led to daunce after other mens pipes, nor play the yong children which are easily deceiued. Ye see then that Gods trueth is inuincible. And when wee receiue it by true faith, then are we armed with the spirituall Ephes.6.17. sword. For it is not for nought that ỳ title is giuen to Gods word. We cannot be exempted frõ being assailed by the diuel, for euen our Lord Iesus Matt.4.1. Christ himselfe passed through ỳ tentel. But yet howsoeuer the world go, we shal haue wherewith

to resist Satan, & al his wiles, so we receiue Gods word and sticke to it.

And by the way let vs marke, that whereas Moses saith that God will raise vp a Prophet: he speaketh of ỹ continual order which God intended to stablish in his Church, which shall indure to the worldes ende. For had there beene no more but the once publishing of the Law; truely it had beene ynough to make folke vnexcusable whensoeuer they had turned from it: but yet had it not beene a sufficient meane to hold them to it, specially considering the frailtie of men, how they slip away like water and vanish away out of hand, chiefely when the case concerneth the accepting of any goodnesse. Therfore if God had done no more but published his Law, truly men ought to haue submitted themselues to it, and to hold themselues as in captiuitie thereunto: but yet wee see such was mens feeblenesse and vnconstancie, that they would haue turned away from it by and by. God therefore vouchsafed to adde a second helpe, as if he should put to a double bond, saying ỹ he will raise vp Prophets from time to time, among the people. As if he should say, True it is ỹ I haue declared my will vnto you fully in my law: but yet wil I send you expositers of the doctrine and mainteiners thereof, which shall be as keepers thereof, that it perish not, ne be buried, nor bee corrupted with false interpretations. So shal there alwayes be Prophets. This doth vs to vnderstand, that God hath not onely once vttered his will vnto vs, but also ỹ he hath set vs teachers from time to time to keepe his Church in obedience, and by their meanes to make his word to be vnderstood. And so we haue to gather ỹ the Church cannot stand without teaching, and ỹ it is not ynough for mẽ to reade the holy Scripture: for if God had knowen it to haue bin sufficient for vs, he would haue gone no further. But it is his will that there should be teachers to speak dayly in his name, as instruments of his spirit, and (to be short) as his owne mouth. If this be not superfluous; we may conclude therupon, ỹ where no doctrine is preached in Gods name, there is no Church. And therby we see the abolution that is in the Popedome. True it is ỹ their hypocrites preach now and then: but for as much as they disguise themselues, yea and euen falsifie & corrupt all good doctrine: all that they doe is but abhomination. Againe, we know that those which beare the name of Bishops & Prelates in the Popedome, are but Idols and dumb pictures. For to what ende hath God set this order and policie among his people, but that his woorde should bee heard, and that it should bee sounded out with a loude and cleare voyce, so as both great and small may bee taught by it, and by that meanes submit themselues thereto, according to this saying, that his word is his Kingly Scepter or Mace wherwith he intendeth to gouern vs? So then let vs know that if we will be knowen and reckened to be of Gods church, and haue him to dwell among vs: his word must be preached to vs, and wee must not thinke it ynough to haue the holy Scripture, vnles we haue teachers also to bring vs back to the things ỹ are written, & to giue vs the vnderstanding of thẽ, & to apply them to our vse. That is ỹ thing which is shewed vs in this text. Now I tould you that this serued not for the people of olde time onely; but that it belongeth to vs also; and we see it in as much as the same text is applyed by the Apostles to our Lord Iesus Christ. The Apostles intending to shewe that Iesus Christ was sent of God his father with full commission to gouerne vs, and that it is he to whom wee must giue eare: say it is written that God wil raise vp a Prophet. Howbeit I haue told you already, that this place speaketh not of one Prophet alone, but of many, and of their continuall succession. Howe will that agree? Very wel. For in as much as God had promised his people, not to leaue them destitute, nor vnprouided: it is to be considered now, whether the same hath bin performed or no. True it is that there were Prophets sometime moe and sometime fewer. It is sayde of the time of Samuell that is to wit of his childhood, that Gods word was very precious that is to say: very rare. And why? It was a punishment of God, according as he threatneth by his Prophet Amos, that hee would send a dearth, not of bread and other vittels, but of hearing the truth, and of the doctrine of saluation. The Israelits then were sometimes as good as bereft of the thing that had bin promised them: but yet not so vtterly that God had no Prophetes at all. And after that maner did he incounter the malice and stubbornnesse of that people, in so much that although the Prophets were reiected, yea & cruelly murdered: Yet notwithstanding hee ceassed not to maintaine his promise still, euen to ỹ comming of Iesus Christ. In deede there was a certaine intermission, to ỹ end that the people should bee moued with the greater desire to receiue this great and cheefe Prophet ỹ was promised them. For we see there were no moe Prophets in Israell after the time of Zacharie and Aggeus. And had God for all that disappointed them? What was become of this Propheſie of Moseses? It is sayd expresly by Malachy, Call to mind the Law that was giuen you on Horeb. As if he should say, Sirs, looke to your selues, for ye haue the perfect wisedome; which is conteined in Gods Lawe, and therewal ye haue had prophets also, which haue expounded the same vnto you faithfully. Hitherto God hath euer performed his promise towardes you: & now hencefoorth he sendeth you back againe to his law. To what end? He addeth the reason. Behold (saith he) I will send mine Angell before my face, (that is to wit, Iohn Baptist:) and when he hath made ready the way, then will I come, & therfore loke that ye obey me. For else I must be faine to smite mẽ, & all ỹ wstand me must needs be beaten downe. This text sheweth how God promised Prophets, & yet notwstanding had an eye to our Lord Iesus Christ, at whom the finall conclusion & the perfect working of all the propheſies amed. Yea & this was so cõmon a thing among ỹ Iewes, that euen the wretched harlot of Samaria could say, that whẽ Messias came, he should teach vs al things. Not onely ỹ Iewes, but also ỹ Samaritans who had but a kind of shadow

Act. 3. 22.

1. Sam. 3. 1.

Amos. 8. 11.

Mal. 4. 4.

Iohn 4. 25.

of the law, & were but as Apes, knew it was ỹ office of ỹ Redeemer to giue full knowledge of the things ỹ were requisite for ỹ saluation of ỹ world. Not wout cause therfore is this text applyed to ỹ person of Gods son, forsomuch as ỹ Prophetes Matt.11.13. Luke.16.16. tooke their ende in him, & he hath made a perfect conclusion of all. And our Lord Iesus Christ spake not three yeeres & a halfe, to ỹ intent to hold his peace after: but he will haue his Gospel to be preached with a loud & cleare voyce, and ỹ those whom he hath ordeined Ministers in his Church, should be as trūpets. According wherto we heare how it is said, ỹ his Gospell must bee Matt.28.19. preached ouer all the world. And he limites no short time to it, but wil haue it done to ỹ worldes end. Sith it is so, wee see (as I haue touched before) ỹ Gods setting of this continuall order in his Church, was not for ỹ Iewes onely, but also for vs, so ỹ although we heare his worde, & haue it preached vnto vs dayly, & yet we be not disposed to learn as at his mouth: he shaketh vs off, & banisheth vs out of his kingdome, & we be not worthy to be reckoned in the nomber of his seruants. Thus ye see what we haue to marke.

But now forasmuch as this text is referred to our Lord Iesus Christ, & the Prophets that were raised vp afore, were inferiors to him & but his members: we must know also ỹ those that beare ỹ office of shepheards in his Church nowadayes, are in the same degree ỹ the Prophets were, to wit, compared to Iesus Christ, inferior vnto him. Mat.11.11. True it is ỹ they be preferred far before ỹ Prophets, as in respect that the Gospell is a higher and excellenter matter than any was vnder the shadowes of the law. But yet forasmuch as Iesus Christ is ỹ head of all, he alone is to be acknowledged for Maister of the household, as the Hebr.3.5.6. Apostle speaketh of him when he compareth him with Moses. Seeing it is so then, let vs marke that euery doctrine is as it were excommunicated, if it respect not Iesus Christ. In deede there are many Prophets and teachers: but yet must Iesus Christ ouerrule al; al ỹ is expounded must come from him; he must haue all preheminence; that the thing which the heauenly father hath spoke may be performed, namely, This is my welbeMatt.17.5. loued sonne, heare ye him. This is not spoken of any man, but only of the onely Son of God himselfe. And therefore let vs learne, that wheresoeuer there are Pastors or shepheardes, the brydle is not laid loose in their necks to set foorth what they thinke good: but they bee tyed to this condition, that our Lord Iesus must alwaies be their Maister, and alonly be heard, so as nothing bee set foorth but in his name, and that truly. Righly saith Moses, ye shal obey the Prophet. As how? not ỹ they haue the authority to bind ỹ Church & to bring it into bondage: for (as S. Peter sheweth in his first Canonicall Epistle,) it behoued ỹ 1.Pet.1.11. Prophets to speake by the spirite of our Lord Iesus Christ. And in the same respect also doth S. Paule say, that it was he which led & gouerned the people [in the wildernes.] Although Moses bare the countenance, yet was it Iesus Christ that bare ỹ sway. Now I pray you, if a man take more authority vpon him than Moses had, & aduaunce himselfe aboue him: what should a man say to it? Moses and all the Prophets are but vnderlings, to the end that Iesus Christ might speake: And seeing that the Sonne of God is come, is it reason that men should put foorth their owne dreames and dotages, & that Iesus Christ should hold his peace? But the Popish Religion tendeth to none other end, than to put Iesus Christ to silence. The Pope boasteth himselfe to be his vicar. But howsoeuer the case stand, he will needes make lawes at his owne pleasure: he will needes make newe articles of faith: to be short, the Gospell is but an Apise, if we beleeue the Pope: and the dotages ỹ he hath deuised, are the ful perfection of all. For behold, they haue not bin ashamed to say, that the thinges which the Popes and their Councels haue decreed, and all their gewgawes, filth, and pelting trash, (which yet notwithstanding are but diuelish abhominations to peruert the seruice of God:) are the thinges which the Apostles could not beare away, when Iesus Christ said vnto thē, I haue many things to say vnto you, but ye cannot cary them away as now. And what things be they? O they be the high Mysteries which the Pope deuised aboue the Gospell. Lyke as Mahomet saith ỹ his Alcoran is ỹ soueraine wisdome so saith the Pope of his owne decrees: For they be the two hornes of Antichrist. Sith it is so, doe we not see that we cannot in any wise cleaue to the Pope but by renouncing Iesus Christ? Then let vs beare well in minde, that seeing it is Gods will to exalt his onely sonne after that fashion, surely he wil haue vs to looke vnto him, and that all doctrine be referred vnto him, and doe concerne him, so as wee must conclude that all such as will not speake in the Church, must vtter nothing but ỹ which they haue learned in ỹ schoole of this great schoolemaister. According whereunto he hath giuen this commission to his Apostles, Preache the things which ye haue learned of me. Againe, when he promiseth them the holy Ghost, he saith, he shall teach ye all the things which ye haue hard of me. He sendeth them not there to a new doctrine; but saith that they shall haue vnderstanding of the thinges which they knew not by reason of their rudenesse. That is ỹ thing which we haue to remember in that God attributeth the soueraine authoritie to his sonne by name, and will haue all Prophets to be vnder that heade, as well whome he had rayled vp afore, as those whom he hath set vp in these dates in his Church, so as this order must be kept, that he onely doe speake, and that all others which open their mouthes, serue but to deale foorth the thinges purely which they shall haue receiued at his hand.

Mat.17.5. Iohn14.9

But by ỹ way, let vs also wey this speech where it is sayd, *Ye shall hearken vnto him*. For as God sheweth himselfe freehearted; not minding to forsake his Church, but to prouide the things which he knoweth to be long to the welfare thereof: so is it good reason that we on the otherside should not despise the benefite that he offereth vs, and imparteth vnto vs. Heere of his own free goodnesse he bindeth himselfe to vs in saying: *I will raise you vp a Prophet*. And on the other part hee exacteth

exacteth a couenãt, in cõmanding vs to receiue
ỳ benefit as it deserueth, & to make our profit of
it. Therefore see that you obey. Wherefore let vs
marke, that when God hath allured vs to him so
gently and after so fatherly manner, that hee is
ready to speake to vs as it were mouth to mouth:
he will not haue vs to giue him deafe eare, or to
runne gadding away, and to despise or mocke
him. It is not for vs to thinke that God will beare
such vnthankefulnes and contempt of his word:
for the reuendge thereof will be horrible as shal
be declared in due place. But in the meane while
let vs goe willingly to our Lorde Iesus Christ,
who is sent vnto vs in the name of God his fa-
ther, & protesteth that he will reach vs his hand
to leade vs to endlesse saluation. Therefore let
vs heare him, not onely to say, it is true that
he speaketh; but also to giue our hearts vnto
him. For the hearing that he requireth, is that
all wisedome be beaten downe, so as men be not
puffed vp with vain selfweening, as if they would
say, I will doe what I list: but that wee hearken to
our master which is giuen vs from heauen, and
that all our affections be subdued to him, and
that our lust be ouercropped when they woulde
carie vs here and there; so as Iesus Christ may
raigne howsoeuer the worlde goeth, and that
both great and small may knowe how ỳ to them
it is that God speaketh. For as touching the
great ones, it is sayde vnto them in the seconde
Psalme, Kisse the Sonne ye kings and Princes of
the earth: do homage to the sonne of God whõ
he hath sent vnto you. Nowe if our Lorde will
haue all highnesse to stoope after that fashion
vnder the soueraign dominion of our Lord Iesus
Christ: (accordingly also as S. Paul saith, that
the preaching of the Gospel serueth to pul down
all lofinesse that will needes be exalted:) what
shall become of these wretched wormes, when
they disdayne to receiue the Gospell obedi-
ently?

Let vs marke then that here is no exception,
and that Gods intent is to bring all the world to
his lure. For if it bee so that the Angels must
worship Iesus Christ, and reuerence his Gospel:
seeing then that wee be but creatures, not only
mortall, but also slightfull, and such as haue no-
thing in them but corruption: what shoulde wee
doe when our Lorde is so gratious to vs, as not
only to raise vp men to speake to vs in his name,
but also to sende vs his onely sonne, by whome
the doctrine is so authorised, as it cannot bee
doubted of any more. Seeing we bee at ỳ point,
what shoulde we doe but resort to our God, for-
saking all things that may hinder our obedience
towardes him, yea and euen our owne wits, lusts,
and affections euerichone? Hauing laide all
those thinges downe and hauing subdued them,
let vs come to the thing that is tolde vs here:
which is, that we must obey the Prophets. Also
let vs not prouoke our god to anger by vsing such
shameles hypocrisie as to say, O, I wil obey God,
as wee see a number of the Papistes doe which
say, tushe, I am a good Catholike. And euen a-
mong vs (without going anie further) how ma-
nie are there to bee founde which boast them-
selues like shameleſſe harlottes, As for mee I
woulde haue the gospell, and yet for al that, they
can finde in their heartes to spit at it? But wee
must not thinke that God accepteth such Pro-
testations, vnlesse we desire vnfainedly to be go-
uerned by his hand. For the doing whereof let
vs vnderstand that there is but only one meane,
which is to obey Gods word. For he separateth
not his maiestie from ỳ declaration of his righte-
ousnesse and iustice which he hath set forth vn-
to vs. The thinges that are conteyned in the law,
the Prophetes and the Gospell, are his liuely I-
mage. Will wee then obey our God and be
subiect to him? Let vs go to that which he decla-
reth, & there shew the obedience which we owe
him. And sith he sheweth himselfe so gratious
and freehartED towardes vs as to call vs to our
saluation: let vs also on our side answere him a-
gaine.

2.Cor.3.18 4.4.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of
our good God with acknowledgement of our
faults, praying him so make vs so to feele them,
as we may with true repentance seeke to be re-
formed by his holy spirit, that we may follow
his holy commaundements, and also that it may
please him to beare with vs & to bury all our of-
fences, vntil hee haue clothed vs with his owne
righteousnes, and rid vs of all the imperfections
wherewith we be now inuironed. And so let vs
all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the ij. of December. 1555.

The Cix. Sermon which is the third vpon the eighteenth Chapter.

10,11,12,13,14,15 There shall not anie bee found among you, &c.

WE haue seene howe our Lorde, to make his worde preuaile a-
mong the Iewes, hath willed them to put away all superſti-
tions from among them. For in verie deede the trueth of God cannot be cuppled with satans lies & corruptiõs: we must be either altogether the ones or altoge-ther the others. Also I haue declared vnto you, that this order of Preaching Gods word, must be obserued to the worldes ende. In doing whereof I haue reserued hitherto the declaring of the se-uerall sorts of the superstitions that are set down here: First of all it is saide *That the Iewes must not make their children to passe through ỳ fire.* And ỳ may be taken two waies. For we know they were ca-ried away ỽ such rage, ỳ they burnt their childrẽ in sacrifice, & ỳ was a terrible thing. But ye may see how foolish ỳ deuotiõ of men is, when they estrange thẽselues frõ God. Needs must they be

all humane sense, and needs must the deuil possesse them & driue thé into such furie as is horrible to al men. Yet notwithstanding, this mischeefe befell among the Iewes, that they sacrificed their children to Moloch. But there was yet an other fashion of making their children to goe through the fire, whereof Moses doeth rather speake in this place, according to the obseruing thereof among the heathen. They tearmed it a manner of purging or cleansing when they vsed such Ceremonies. As for example, there haue remained some remnant thereof in the Popedome, in their Bonfires on Midsommer night. They had such a kinde of witcherie as they did beare themselues in hande, that it was a kinde of purging to go take the aire of that holy fire (as they esteemed it) in going about it. But our Lord putteth such superstitions among the number of inchauntmentes. Likewise the Papistes haue their holy water: and what else is that than a kinde of cleansing inuented by them selues to set against the bloode of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and against Baptisme, which is the true signe thereof? Then let vs marke well that here our Lorde condemneth all manner of purgings or clensings which mé deuise of their own braine, when they will bee clensed by any other meane than he hath ordeyned, which is, by the onely sacrifice of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and by receyuing the records and assurãces of the same by the Sacramentes. True it is that the Sacraments of themselues haue not this power in thé to make men cleane: it is not the water of baptisme y washeth away our sins before God: but it is a figure that putteth vs in minde of the trueth and substance, which sealeth in vs the thing that was brought to passe by the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Thus much concerning this one point, that here our Lordes meaning is that men should not inuent meanes or fashions of purging themselues, but bee contented with that which he hath ordeyned in his lawe.

Also he speaketh of such as *haue regard of the flying of birdes, and obserue times*. Although it bee lawfull for vs to marke the courses of the times according to the starres: yet it is a cursed superstition well worthie to be condemned, when we goe beyond the order of nature. The measuring of the yeare by the course of the Sunne is according to Gods rule. So likewise is the measuring of the monethes by the course of the moone, and the obseruing of the other thinges which God hath set in all the planets and starres. For it is not saide for nought that God hath ordeyned the Sunne and the Moone to do vs seruice: but yet therewithal they haue a kind of gouernment ouer the day and the night: and thereof springeth the difference of times, as is said therof. Then if men holde themselues within those bounds, no euil wil come of it: but if they range without them, and fall to inuenting of other thinges beyonde the ordinarie course of nature: then it is diueliſh superstitiõ, like as that is which men call iudiciall Astrologie. For there are a great sort of fantasticall persons nowadayes, which will take vpon them to tel mens fortunes by the disposition of the Starres. Such a one (say they) shall come to such an ende: or else if hee take his iourney on such a day, such a thing shall betide him, because such a planet reigneth and hath his aspect to the taile of such a one. Againe if a man be borne vnder such an aspect, then must he die after such a sort. When men inuent thinges after this fashion beyond Gods limitation, they be but diueliſh deuises to corrupt the order of nature. Therefore let vs marke wel that here Moses forbiddeth all such diuinations as are made vppon the time: not meaning but that we shoulde haue respect of winter and sommer, that we shoulde sowe and reape, that wee shoulde dresse our vines according to the seasons of the Moones, and as we see that opportunitie will serue best: For otherwise it were an vnreasonable vndoing of all thinges, and an abolishing of the order that God hath set. But his meaning is that men shoulde not through their fonde and wicked desires, passe the boundes which God hath appointed. So then let vs keepe our selues to this playnesse that God hath set downe.

Moreouer, whereas he speaketh of *Diuination by the flight of birdes*: It was too common a vice among the heathen, as I saide afore. When they were to take anie thing in hand, they went gasing abroad in the aire, and they might not conclude vppon any thing, till they had seene some birde flying. And there were three or foure of them, or if they came frõ the East or the North, they tooke them by & by for signes: and that was a cursed kinde of diuination. For why? we must holde it for a generall rule, that wee marre all when wee drawe Gods creatures to ane other vse than he hath ordeyned them vnto. Let vs marke (say I) after what maner God will haue his creatures to be vsed. For as soone as we turne from that point, such disguising of his workes is a cursed corruption of them. God hath not created the birdes to speake vnto vs by their flying from one place to another, nor to the end that we shoulde make account whether there be foure or fiue of them, or take their flying out of this coast or that coast to be a token of euil luck. These are starke witcheries, forged by men out of their owne fonde curiositie, and blowen into their eares by Satan. And therefore let vs not maruell though our Lord haue forbidden vs such thinges: for as soone as wee happen to bee imbrewed w such superstitions and follies, we must needes bee turned away from Gods trueth. Yea and there followeth iust punishment vpon such curious persons, so as they bee euer doubtful & in perplexitie.

For in as much as they resorte to deade creatures, or to such creatures as haue no reason nor vnderstanding; they must needes bee alwayes vncertaine. But if wee feare our God, we shallbe sure of all things. The feare of God is the best hold that wee can haue. I meane such a reuerende feare of GOD, as therewithall we take him for our father. For if we be agast at him, we shall stil be in neuer the lesse anguish & vnquietnes. But if wee submit our selues to God for

Psal. 31. 6

for loue, surelie his protection shall auaile vs to rest vppon, so as we may defie Sathan and all that he practiseth against vs. On the contrarie part, when we feare not God, we shall be afraid both of the birdes and of the beastes, of the winde and of the rayne, of the Sun and of the Moone, of the earth and of the heauen; and to be short, euen our owne shadowes (as men say) shal make vs afraide. And as for them which submit them selues to the Sunne and Moone, and make Idols of them, as though they had dominion ouer vs: all such doe showe in deede that they haue no feare of God in them: and therefore needes must they bee caried away anewe. And that is the cause why the Prophete Ieremie expressely forbiddeth vs to be afraide of the signes of the heauen, at least wise according to the inchauntmentes which the Infidels haue inuented, as is saide alreadie. For if wee be afraide of them after ỳ maner, we bereaue God of his dominion, and impart it to the Starres and other dead creatures. But God wil haue the Sunne & the Moone to giue vs light, and to doe vs seruice with their natural vse, (as the Sun to heate the earth, & the Moone and the Starres to giue their influences) I say he will haue all these to keepe their natures and proprieties, as that he himselfe alone be the gouernour notwithstanding. For when we imagine that the Sunne or the Moone haue such power ouer vs, that we cannot goe one step without they bring vs some misaduenture or prosperitie by their aspectes towardes vs: is not God himselfe so much debased? Yea verily. If it be said that God worketh by his creatures: that is true: but yet will he not doe it after that fashion. We must haue an eye to the meanes which he hath lefte, and we must not go beyond that. And therefore as many as rend Gods dominion in peeces and impart it to the liueles creatures, are starke mad, and is good reason that they should alwayes bee as men in a traunce or astonished, & not know where to become. Wherefore let vs learne to stay our selues in such wise vnder the hand & guiding of our God: as we fall not to passing beyond the course of nature. That is the thing which wee haue to remember here.

As touching the other kindes, indeede a man might distinguish the, as many haue laboured to doe: but it is enough for vs to vnderstande that here is mention made of *Inchaunters, Sorcerers, Caters, workers with Familiers, and of such as aske counsel at the dead.* As concerning Inchaunters, they be not these lugglers that bleare mens eies with slights of hand, and make men beleeue they doe the things which they doe not: but the diuell hath such dominion ouer the vnbeleeuers, that although a thing be not done in very deede, yet the illusion is such, as makes men beleeue they see that which they see not. And so is it a kinde of inchauntment, that is to say of diuelish illusion, when a man shall bee made to thinke that one is transformed into a wolfe, or that hee sees the shape of a thing that hath no substance or truth indeede. Now it is demaunded whether such thinges can be done or no. And why not? we haue an example in Pharaoes sorcerers, who made frogges to come vp as well as Moses did: not that the diuell hath any thing in his owne power: for we must not imagine that hee can fight against God to doe aught whether he will or no: we knowe he is vnder Gods hande, & can doe nothing without leaue or licence. Hee may well attempte much, but yet can he not stir one finger, as ye would say. And hereof wee haue example euident enough in Iob: for we see ỳ the diuel is there among the Angels, that is to say, that he is faine to come yeelde an account before Gods seate, and to haue leaue of him, and to be admitted. As much is saide when God will haue Achab to bee beguiled for his Idolatrie. Ye see then howe the scripture sheweth that the diuell hath not a seperall dominion by himselfe, as though he could attempte any thing against God. But yet by permission he may indeede trouble the aire, and also do other thinges, after which maner God is saide to send tempestes & hailes. And by whome doeth he it? By the wicked Angels. For he speaketh not there of the heauenly Angels, but of the diuels by name, which execute Gods vengeance vpon men. And therefore let vs marke, that (as experience also sheweth) ỳ diuels may worke many such illusions by inchauntmentes. And truely such thinges are not done but in the dark. For so long as we be inlightened by GOD, we needе not feare that a man shall seeme a wolfe to vs, or that such trifles shall get the vpper hand of vs. But if we be faithles, it is a iust reward for our quenching of ỳ light ỳ should haue shone into vs, & of our turning of our backes vnto God. And when we wil not bee ruled by him, then discern we no more betweene white and black, but men seeme vnto vs to bee wolues, and al things are out of order, & that iustly. Therefore whereas here is mention made of such as mishape things by their inchauntments: Let vs note ỳ the law is not superfluous. For sith ỳ case standeth so, it is to be cõcluded ỳ such things may befall, as whereof we haue examples.

Iob. 1. 6.

1. Kin. 22. 22.

Psal. 78. 49.

But yet for al that, it is abhominable before God: and so likewise are *Soothsayers*. It is a questiõ whether it be possible for mã to foretel of things, for it is Gods office to foreknow things to come: and how then may it belong to the diuell? Sure it is (as saith ỳ prophet Esay) that idols can foresee nothing. And as for Satan, hee must alwayes needs be the father of lies, & deceiue al such as aske counsel of him. Yet notwithstanding God doth nowe & then suffer satan to tel of things to come, and ỳ is for the more hardening of such as wil not obey the truth, (as we haue seene by example in the thirteenth chapter) & it hath been treated of partly already. Yet notwithstanding it is true also, that soothsayers do ỳ most cõmonly, and by that meanes our Lorde deludeth them ỳ seeke counsel of Satan after ỳ fashion. And beside let vs not thinke it strange, though inchaunters, soothsayers, & such other like do now & then tel of things to come: for it is gods iust sufferance, to ỳ intent they should be ỳ deeplier plunged in error. For asmuch as they wold needs be willingly deceiued, he letteth thẽ be so, ỳ they may perish. Thus ye see why the law was made concerning

Esa. 41. 23.

2. Thess. 2. 11.

Deut. 13. 1.

such

such as diuine of thinges to come. Also hee speaketh of *Sorcerers*: And this sort conteyneth manie thinges: For what a sinne is it, that men shoulde forsake God, and giue themselues ouer to Satan? Must they not needes fall into horrible confusion? Yes: For after Satan hath once possessed vs and stopped our eyes, and that God hath withdrawen his light from vs, so as we bee destitute of his holy spirite, and voyde of all reason: then follow infinite abuses without ende or measure. And thereof come sorceries. Manie incredible thinges are reported of Sorcerers. And truely when wee heare them spoken of, we ought not onely to mislike of them, but also bee sorrowfull in our heartes, yea & the very haires of our heades ought to stand vp therat. But yet therewithall we must consider that they bee reuengementes of God cast vppon such as haue forsaken him. And that the same may be a cause to holde vs in awe and feare, let vs learne not to tempt our God nor to play with him, sith we see men become so brutishe after they be once turned away from the right path. Truely if there were no moe but two or three examples hereof, yet might it well seeme straunge vnto vs. But we know that in al ages and in al Nations Sorcerie or witchcraft hath borne sway, yea and y more sway for y reiecting of Gods truth. Insomuch y where men haue once fallen to withstanding y truth & haue disdained to be taught by the pure worde of God; there haue followed the moe illusions of Sathan, yea and the more excessiue, which haue also beene the more manifest and greeuous. And whereof commeth this, but of the cause which Saint Paul sheweth vs in his epistle to the Thessalonians? namely that such as will not obey the trueth, are vtterly peruerted by leasinges: and that thence forth the deuell must needes worke with the greater force, bycause God giueth him the bridle to carie men so away as they become ougly monsters. To be short, wee must beare in minde, that whereas God speaketh to vs of inchauntmentes and sorceries, it is to holde vs shorte vnder the obedience of his worde, least wee shoulde fall into such a maze as the wretched Infidels are in, yea and proceede so farre as to wander quite away, when we haue once forsaken his worde. Therefore let vs abide in this simplicity of obeying him and of submitting our selues to his mouth.

2. Thess. 2. 11 12.

Also here is mention made of workers with Familiars. As touching the which, needes must Satans illusions be horrible. But what? There haue beene of them in all ages, and wee see a notable example thereof in king Saule when he went to the Witch. He as king had erst forbidden all inchauntmentes and all kinde of damnable crafties, and hee had behaued himselfe vertuously in executing Gods lawe. And yet in the ende he became so wretched, that hee fell to running after a Witch. And what was y cause thereof, but that he dispised God? Whereuppon in the end he fell into despaire, and gaue himselfe ouer altogether to Satan: which thing hee shewed full well. For if ye looke aduisedly into the matter, ye shall finde that Satans illusions doe then get the vpper hand of men, when their wittes bee amased by reason of sorrowfulnesse that gnaweth them inwardly, & for that in steede of receiuing some comfort of Gods word, they bee ouerwhelmed with such anguishe, that they fall into vtter despayre. When doeth Sathan meete a man in some bodily shape, and wrappe him in his snares? When a man is in some greefe of minde, or in some hatred against his neighbour, or when a woman spiteth her husbande. Well then, although such affections beare sway, yet doeth not God by and by giue Sathan the bridle, to raigne ouer men, vntill they be come to such extremitie that they fall to chawing vpon the bit, and become so wilfull in their sorowe, that they fall into despaire and will no more admit anie comforte, but refuse all remembraunce of GOD, and woulde that his name were buried: for there is the gate open to Satan, and he entereth to worke his illusions, which a man is not able to withstande. Hereof we haue a faire warning in Saul. For hee had offended God, and therefore was to be bereft of his kingdome, because it was Gods pleasure it shoulde be so, and there was none other helpe for him but to humble himselfe. But he would not doe that. And when hee sawe there was no meane to appease Gods displeasure, but that for all his flattering of Samuell, yet hee auailed so litle thereby, that when hee had rent the Prophetes Cote, the Prophete saide vnto him, euen so will God rende the kingdome from thee: hee cryed out and flang himselfe out of his bounds, saying thus: What should I doe more? Seeing that God hath forsaken mee, I also on my side must forsake him. And what was the ende hereof? He went after Witches. Whereas hee had punished inchaunters before, nowe he goeth to seeke them. And what came of it? Samuell was shewed him in a shape, that is to say in a shadowe and imagination, so as he thought the Prophete to haue beene raised vp againe by meanes of the Witch. Sith we see it befell thus to such a king as God had chosen, and to whom hee had giuen the sacred authoritie, til the kingdome of Dauid were set vp: what shall wee say to it? Let vs applie it to such instruction as I haue touched alreadie, to make vs liue in feare. For when men doe feele themselues after that sort in euil, and wilfully shrinke away from God: Satan must needes take possession of them, and then is there not any thing vnpossible vnto him. Wee shall heare incredible thinges reported of Witches, and wee must not maruell though God execute so exceeding great vengeaunce. For when men haue once turned their backes vpon him, and forsaken him euen of wilfull malice: they must needs become starke beastes.

1. Sam. 28. 7.

1. Sam. 15. 27. 28.

Finally here is mention made of such as aske counsell of the deade. For it is not our Lords will that wee shoulde haue anie thing to doe with the deade. Therefore they that vse such conjurations, goe about to peruert the whole order of nature. For doe men what they can, yet can they not bring the liuing and the deade together: but the deuill steps in betwixt them and pre-

pretendeth the persons of the dead, so as to outward seeming, the dead man himselfe appeareth (as was not long since rehearsed) whereas in very deed it is the diuell that worketh such illusions. And therefore let vs marke wel, that seeing our Lord hath forbidden vs to haue to doe with the dead, we cannot be deceiued so long as wee keepe within our bounds, and attempt not anie thing which we see not to bee comprised within the order which he hath set. And thereby we see also, that al the things ỳ euer haue bin said of ỳ comming vp againe of dead mens ghosts, haue bin but sleights of satan: & when men haue bin beguiled by thē, it was al one as if they had wilfully yeelded thēselues slaues to satan. And yet was it held for great deuotion in Poperie. The cause why they made pilgrimages, and Masses to be sung, yea and their feast of all soules to be kept once a yeare, was by reason of a Reuelatiō or dreame of some deuout Monke that had an idle head. He heard ỳ crying of deadmens soules: and thereupon the Papistes concluded, that a solemne feast was to be kept for the dead, & such and such things were to be done for them. To be short, in that men haue inuented seruice for the dead in the Popedome, that was nothing els but meere witcherie, euen such as God disliketh in this text and vtterly abhorreth. And all they ỳ haue their deuotion after ỳ fashion to pray for ỳ dead, are witches and sorcerers: for they beleeue in Satans inchantments in despite of God.

And now let vs marke that these thinges here are not noted as smal & tolerable faults: but it is said expresly, *that they be abhominable before God, & that the people of Chanaan were to be rooted out for their sinnes & misdeeds.* Wherby we see ỳ although other vices were to be pardoned, yet ought this to be punished and vtterly roted out. Therefore if we wilbe taken for Gods people, let vs see that we vnderstand what this word *Abhomination* betokeneth: namely ỳ we must be very ware of sorceries, inchauntments, & such other like things. And indeed wee see how such things haue euer been misliked, euen among ỳ heathen. How much soeuer witchcraft had raigned, yet was it a great thing for a man to haue asked, is this well done? For euery man would haue said, How so? It is a murther: it is a shamefull & cursed thing. After ỳ maner did the heathen speake thereof. For it was Gods will ỳ it should be so ingrauen in mens harts, as it might be reproued euen without ỳ doctrine of the lawe. True it is ỳ in Poperie all are witches in their idolatries: for in ỳ fifteenth of the 1 Sam. 15. first booke of Samuel, God cuppleth those two sins together: yea & I haue told you already, ỳ the seruice of ỳ dead is a kind of witchcraft. Yet notwithstanding they alwaies abhorre ỳ terme, and vtterly mislike thereof. And why? Because God hath suffered it to make thē ỳ more vnexcusable. So then let vs marke, ỳ it is not for vs to suffer either inchanters or witches amōg vs. And if these be forbidden, we must vnderstand therwithall, ỳ all other kinds of Wisardrie are deadly crimes before God. And if Iudges & Magistrats do their duties, it is certain ỳ they wil no more beare with them than with murthers. It seemeth a smal fault to turne about ỳ fiue (as we terme it in this countrey): but it is more worthy to be punished, than ỳ fleaing of a man quicke. For why? It is an ouerthrowing of Gods seruice, and a peruerting of ỳ order of nature. Were it not worthy of punishment and punishment againe, if the order of nature should bee confounded betweene men and bruit beasts? Were there any reason in so doing? And surely when men begin with such inchauntments, it is certain ỳ they fall into a deeper and dreadfuller dungeon, than if they giue ouer their bodies to companie with the bruit beastes. And yet we see the selfe same illusions to bee wrought by satan vpon al witches & sorcerers. And what is the originall cause thereof, but that they bee turned away from Gods truth? Although there were no further euill in it than the attributing of Gods office vnto satan: yet were it a matter in no wise to be borne with. There is a thing concealed from me, & I wold know it: yea, but God is not minded to discouer it vnto thee. Thats no matter, I will find it out by some meanes or other though he say nay to it, yea I will haue vnderstanding of it by diuelish illusion. Is it not a making of warre against God, if this be suffered? So then let vs marke, that if we will be taken for Christians; Witchcrafres, inchantments, & such other like thinges must bee lesse borne with among vs, than Robberies and murthers.

Also it ought to make indeede the hayres to stand vpvpon our heads, when it is said ỳ *the heathen which were neuer ingraued vp in the law, were rooted out because of such things.* For if God pardoned not ỳ infidels which neuer had any knowledge of his truth: what shal become of vs ỳ are so wel warned, to whome God crieth aloude, that hee will not suffer it, and that such abhominations stinke before him, and that we must be cleansed from them, or else he vtterly disclaimeth vs? I pray you shall we hope to bee spared, when wee lie still asleepe, hauing such warning from heauen? God must first giue ouer his office. Againe, whereas it is set downe here, first that God cannot away with such abhominations, & secondly hath shewed in effect what punishment shall insue vpō it, by rooting out those that rebelled not wilfully against him, but had euer bin hardened in their superstitions, and neuer knew ne tasted of the good doctrine: seeing that such are rooted out for hauing to doe with satan: it standeth vs in hande to take the better heede, and to learne to withholde our selues in such wise from all illusions and wiles, that if there be either sorcerer, witch, or wisarde among vs, they be liuely represſed. If there be a poysoner or a theefe; euery man runnes vppon him. For it is knowen that they be the common enemies of mankinde which do so peruert al lawe, and indeuour to abolish all policie and order of nature. But these are much worse. For God hath commaunded that his worde shoulde raigne among vs: and ought not euery one of vs to be diligent in preuenting the mischeefe when the diuell goeth about to ouerthrowe all and to bring all thinges to horrible confusion? Verily it is not to be douted but that beeause manie superstitions Act. 23. 3.

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are suffered, God also doeth giue Satan head, to ouerwhelme vs altogether. Woworth them that haue plaide the blinde buffardes, and woulde see nothing, but haue suffered the mischeefe to settle among vs. For it must needes increase more and more, vntill it come to the top, and that wee be so far and so deepely plunged in it, as it is vnpossible for vs to get out againe. That is ỳ thing which wee haue to remember vpon this Text.

And further let vs marke well, that whereas Moses saith here, *that the Iewes must not doe so, but that they must giue eare to Gods Prophet:* it is according to that which I haue expounded alreadie: namely that forasmuch as God hath giuen vs so good a remedie by being taught at his mouth, it is good reason that wee should hearken vnto him. If we had no witnes of Gods will it were halfe an excuse for vs to alledge, yea but should wee knowe nothing? The Infidels haue meanes to finde out thinges by their illusions. True it is that they serue idols: but yet are they in better case than we bee. After this maner might we speake. But our Lorde telleth vs, that wee shall haue teaching enough, if we list to hearken to his worde. He addeth that he will raise vp Prophets from among vs. As if hee shoulde say vnto vs, Wretched men, seeing that I am so gratious to you as to condescende to your rudenesse and infirmitie, and to speake to you by the mouthes of men: are ye not too too vnthankefull and malicious in turning away for my doctrine, to satans trashe, so as ye can not finde in your heartes to acquaint your selues with the manner of teaching which I haue chosen as fittest and conuenientest for you? Then is it not superfluous that God saith here, that hee will raise vp a Prophet from among vs which shal be one of our brethrē. Indeede we couldo well finde in our heartes that the Angels shoulde come downe from heauen to speake vnto vs: but our desiring thereof, springeth of a foolish lust. For as shal be shewed more fully hereafter) ỳ people of Israel hauing founde by experiēce what it was to heare Gods voice in his heauenly maiestie: were so afraide, that they besought God to speake to them by the mouth of Moses. Now then, if the choice were put vnto vs, it is certaine that wee should euer finde it best for vs that God should speak vnto vs by the mouthes of mē. And it was knowē to be so: as we haue seene heretofore, and as God himselfe auoweth there againe, saying: I like wel of the peoples requeſt, that there shoulde bee a meane betwixt them and me, and that there should be a man to bring them worde from me in my name. And so here our Lord vpbraideth men with their vnthankfulnes, in that they wil not receiue his worde when it is brought them by the Prophets and teachers whom he hath appointed & placed in his Church. If he had said, I wil send mine Angels; it had bin much. But we see how men abuse euen the heauenly reuelations also. God therefore applieth himselfe so much ỳ more vnto vs, & commeth downe one step lower vnto vs, in ỳ hee saith, I wil raise you vp a Prophet frō amōg your brethrē. Sith we see that God cōmeth so familiarly vnto vs, & speaketh with vs as it were mouth to mouth: were wee not worse than mad, if we should say I would that God would send mee his Angels, I would he would worke some miracles, I would hee would send mee some reuelation, or raise me vp the dead, & tel me some newes of the things that are done in the other world? Needs must it be ỳ we be driuen by the diuell, when we haue so inordinate desires. For behold our God intendeth to teach vs familiarly. After what maner? I will raise vp men. Now seeing we bee wont to be fellowlike one w an other: what a prerogatiue doth he giue vs in applying himselfe so vnto vs? We be lyers by nature, we be full of vanitie: & yet doth God appoint vs to be preachers of his word, and messagers of his vnfallible trueth: he appointeth men as his instruments to speake in his name.

And so let vs beare in minde, that when God graunteth vs the grace to haue his word faithfully expounded vnto vs, and to haue shepeherds to teach vs: it is such a priuiledge as ought well to holde vs in such singlenesse of faith, that all curiositie be laide away among vs, and none of vs be led with fond desires, as they be which are euer seeking and neuer attaine to the knowledge of Tayt the trueth. Let vs beware (I say) ỳ we be not such questioners, and disputers of this and that and let it suffice vs to heare our God speake, assuring our selues that he hath so ratified the order as we neede not to doubt but that it is the verie way to be taught by him. For (as shall bee declared more fully hereafter) let vs marke that whereas our God hath ratified his lawe: yet to ỹ ende it shoulde be holde for the more certaine, he hath also left vs the Propheres, and that the Gospell hath yet had a more full approbation when it was published. For at that time (as is saide by the Prophet Haggeus) God shooke, not Agge. onely the earth, but also thē heauen. And therefore when we come to heare the doctrine that is drawen out of the lawe as out of the verie fountaine, and out of the Prophets, and out of the Gospell which is the perfection of all our wisdome: when we take that touchstone to trie the things that are set afore vs, and are desirous to be taught of God: Let vs not doubt but we stand vppon a sure grounde, and shall haue whatsoeuer is needfull for our saluation, and therefore let vs leaue al vnprofitable speculations; to such as can not find in their heartes to bee taught in Gods schoole; and let it suffice vs that our Lord speaketh not to vs by halues, nor as it were to leaue vs hanging in the aire that we might know neuer the more what to doe: but that he giueth vs such a knowledge as we may be throughly assured, and safely rest vpon the saluation of our soules. Thus ye see howe we should put this text in vre, tarying till the rest may bee laide foorth more fully.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgment of our sins, praying him to make vs feele thē better than we haue don, & ỳ we may more & more be drawē to him w such repētāce, ỳ forsaking al our own lusts our whole desire may be to be gouerned by him, & to be held in such awe to him, as we may not swarue ei-

either to the right hande or to the left, by withdrawing our selues from his obedience: but that seeing he hath once shewed vs the way of saluation, wee may neuer turne away from it for any practise of satan, howsoeuer he seeke to blind our eyes with his illusions & inchantments, nor bee suffred by our good God to fall into his snares, to be trapped by him, & in ỹ end to be swallowed vp and drowned; but ỹ we be so inlightened by ỹ holy Ghost, as we may shunne and eschew all satans allurements, which tende but to our ruine. That it may please him to grant this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Tewsday the iij. of December. 1555

The Cx. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the eighteenth Chapter.

16 According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God at Horeb, in the day of the assemblie, when thou saiedst, Let mee henceforth heare the voice of the Lord my God no more, nor see this great fire any more, least I die.

17 And the Lord said vnto me, they haue done well, to say so:

18 I will raise them vp a Prophet from among their brethren, like vnto thee: and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speake vnto them, all that I command him to say.

19 And it shall come to passe, that whosoeuer obeyeth not my words that hee shall speake in my name, I will call him to account for it.

20 But the Prophet that shall presume to speake words in my name, which I haue not commanded him to speake, or which speaketh in the name of other gods: that Prophet shall die for it.

AFter that God hath declared that he wil gouern his church by meanes of his word preached by men: he addeth that the same is done at ỹ request of the people themselues. As who shoulde say, that they which will not obey the doctrine of the law, are dubble guiltie. For they despise the maiestie of God: and that is too outragious a rebellion. And besides that, they be also thankleſse, in that God vseth them after their owne desire. For how was the Lawe published? Did not God giue signes of his presence as though he had come down from heauen, and spoken visible to the Iewes? But they perceiuing that Gods glorie amased them and made them at their wittes ende, desired to haue some Prophet to speake to them, and to bring his messages to them: which thing was graunted vnto them. Nowe if they cannot like of the condition that they themselues required: what excuse is there for them? Wee see then what the meaning of Moses was, in saying that GOD would raise vp Propheters from time to time among the Iewes, yea euen according to their owne request, as who should say that nothing could be better for them. Sith it is so, it was for them to holde them to that order. For if they could not abide the thing that was graunted them at their owne request; what a thing were that? Should they not shewe themselues vtterly vnreasonable and vnruly?

Moreouer it behoueth vs to wey yet better the circumstances that are set downe heere, namely *according to all that thou desiredst at Horeb.* God thinkes it not ynough to say that it came of the Iewes themselues to desire a Prophet: but he doth also shew that he condescended in al points to their desire. For the Gentler that God sheweth himselfe towards vs, and the more he fashioneth himselfe to our nature: the more are wee bounde vnto him: and if wee drawe not nigh vnto him, surely we bee dubble to blame. We heare how S. Paul saith; Brethrē, be ye as I am; for I desire not but to be as you are. If a mā speake after ỹ maner, shal he not be heard? If God thē shal appeare in his glorie, and shal say: That hauing pitie of vs, he will for our sake stoope downe & debase himselfe; and we hereupon remaine hardharted, & can at no hand bow our selues to obey him: must it not needs follow, that we are vtterly void of all sense, and ỹ the diuell hath so blinded vs, that there is no more natural vnderstanding in vs? Yes: For it must needes be a horrour to vs, not to followe our God when he sheweth vs such example. Who are we that our GOD shoulde as it were transforme himselfe (as wee see hee maketh himselfe both a father and a mother, and a nource towards vs,) and that wee on our side shoulde holde skorne to bowe any whit vnto him? Thus yee see what we haue to marke vppon this saying, where Moses telleth vs that God gaue his people all that they had desired of him. Gal. 4. 12.

But therewithall we must also remember the fearefulnesse of the people. It is saide, *Let vs not heare the voyce of our God any more, nor see this great fire any more, for feare least we die.* I haue tolde Exod. 20. 19

you already howe it was Gods will to authorise his Lawe by doing the myracles that were seene at mount Horeb. And it was meete that the Lawe shoulde be ratified after that fashion, to the intent men might knowe that Moses deuised it not of his owne heade, nor added any thing to it of his owne: but that God was the author thereof. When the trumpettes sounded in the aire, when the skie was on a fire, when the greate thunders were hearde, and when the order of nature was chaunged: the Iewes ought well to haue vnderstoode, that God shewed himselfe to bee their gouernour, and that the Law came of him, and that he auowed it to be his. Yee see then that that was as a seale to make the Law of God to bee of authoritie. But there was yet another reason; which was that God meant to make the Iewes perceiue that the Law could do them no good, but onely make them at their wits ends, I meane the Lawe so farre foorth as it sheweth vs the rule to liue well. For whereas God commandeth vs to do the thinges that hee alloweth, indeed it is the way of life and welfare. But what are wee? Wee haue a frowarde nature: and in steede of obeying and of behauing our selues as becommeth vs; wee cease not to offende God. Nowe hee pronounceth his curse vpon all such as transgresse his commaundements. All of vs therefore are condemned by the Law, and there is no remedie but God must be our iudge. And therefore it was meete that all the tokens which God gaue at ỹ setting forth of his Lawe, should be terrible; and that the people should be made afraide with them. And in the same respect doth S. Paul say that we receiue not the spirite of fearefulnesse in the Gospel; & after the same maner also is it spoken of in the Epistle to the Hebrewes.

Deut. 27. 26.

Rom. 8. 15. Hebr. 7. 25.

Also heere is a thirde reason alledged by Moses, which is, *that God meant to shew howe it was good for the maintenance of the Church, that men shoulde be the bringers of the doctrine of saluation*. For surely, God knowing that the best way to gouerne vs, was by sending vs Prophets and teachers to speake vnto vs in his name: would that the people also shoulde knowe the profite thereof. True it is, that whensoeuer God speaketh wee ought to bowe downe our neckes and yeelde him such reuerence, as none of vs refuse to obey him, though hee speake to vs by the mouthes of mortall men. Yet notwithstanding, his meaning is not that his worde should but only haue such maiestie among vs as to make vs afraide: but that it should be sweete and amiable to vs, and that wee shoulde receiue it with a free heart, and take pleasure in it, and knowe that to rest vppon it is our soueraigne welfare. So then, Gods intent was to make men desirous to bee taught by the Prophets and preachers whom he woulde sende vnto them. And that is the thing which Moses toucheth in this present place.

Now then, we must vnderstand first of al, that our Lorde will not come downe from heauen visible to speake vnto vs: for that were not for our benefite. In deede many men are of that minde that they would faine haue God to sende them his Angels: and they thinke it a matter of so great authoritie that a man which is but a fraile creature and but an earthen pot, shoulde goe vp into the pulpet: but yet doth God know it to bee for our behoofe. And therefore wee must vnderstand, that forasmuch as the Iewes found by experience that it was a dreadfull thing to them to heare God speake: it behoued God to alter that manner of declaring himselfe, and to send Moses vnto them. Therewithall let vs marke also that Gods authorising of the Lawe was not for the Iewes onely; but to the ende that wee also at this day shoulde receiue the same with all humblenesse, and vnderstande that whosoeuer despiseth it, aduaunceth himselfe against the maiestie of the liuing God, and maketh warre against him. That is the thing which wee haue to remember where mention is made of the terribleneſse of Gods voyce, and of the fire that filled the aire. And thereuppon let vs make (as hath beene treated of alreadie), that God promised a Prophet, not onely to the Iewes, but also to vs; and that it is a continuall order in his Church. So then, will wee bee reckened for the children of God? Let vs suffer our selues to bee gouerned by his word. Yea, and let vs not hold skorne to heare men that speake to vs in his name. But although they bee from among vs and of our owne companie, so as wee might alledge that we owe them no such dueetie as in respect of their persons: yet notwithstanding seeing they be set in Gods steed, and by his will: let that suffice vs. And if we intend to honour God, and to haue him to reigne ouer vs: it behoueth vs to shew it in this case, by yeelding such obedience to his worde, as those whom he sendeth to vs be heard of vs. And hereof wee see what is said by the Prophet Esay. For like as Moses had foretold ỹ God would raise vp a Prophet: so ỹ Prophet Esay saieth that at the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and in the time of his reigne, God would put his worde into his mouth, & into the mouth of his seed, and of his childrés children. This thing then ceased not when ỹ Gospel was published throw ỹ world: but rather it was newly confirmed, as I haue also shewed before. For who was this Prophet, but our Lord Iesus Christ? True it is that in that saying are comprehended all the Prophetes from Moses to Zacharie and his fellowes. But yet did GOD reserue all the prophesies in our Lorde Iesus Christ, which had beene as it were broken off for a time. For the Iewes had beene bereft of that benefite a long time together, and GOD had not appeared to them any more as hee had beene woont to doe before. And the reason was, to the ende they shoulde with the earnester desire looke for the Messias that had beene promised them, and vnderstande that hee shoulde bring them the full perfection of all wisedome. Our Lorde Iesus therefore is nowe come to performe all Prophesies, and to make such a restitution as men might perceiue that God had then laide foorth the treasure most bountifully which he had spoke of afore by Moses. And this was not done alonely for our Lord Iesus Christ himselfe,

himselfe as S. Paul sheweth in the fourth to the Ephesians, where he saieth that Iesus Christ being gone vp into heauen, hath prouided for the state of his Church to the end that it might bee maintained by the foresaide meane, ordeining some to be Apostles, some Prophets, some shepheards, and some teachers. To be short, it is the will of Iesus Christ, to execute his office by the mouthes of those whom he ordaineth to be ministers among his faithful. And herein is accomplished the forealledged text of Esay, that the seede of Iesus Christ and his childrens children shall haue the worde in their mouth at this day. God saieth not, I will sende you my worde from heauen, or, I will cause it to bee preached vnto you by mine Angels: What saith he then? I wil put my word into thy mouth. In deede our Lord Iesus is set there in higheste degree: but yet there followeth, and into the mouth of thy seede, and of thy childrens children. Then let vs conclude, that euen to the worlds ende, if we wilbe members of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and (to be short) if we wilbe taken for Christians: wee must hearken to the worde which God putteth into mens mouthes, whensoeuer it is preached vnto vs.

And in that respect is it saide, *that the man which will not heare the Prophet, shall die without mercie*. Here God thinkes it not ynough to haue exhorted the Iewes to receiue his woorde with meeke and lowly mindes: but also threatneth them, because thinges are neuer so well ordered among men, but that there is some inconstancy and rebelling. Our Lord therefore is faine to vse heere some rigor. Which thing he doth, saying: Looke to your selues, for my sending of Prophetes vnto you is to your benefite, and it were as much ease for mee to make my voice ring from heauen: but I know what is meetest for you, and you yourselues haue found by experience that it is most for your behoofe. Therefore see that ye heare my woorde, and receiue it meekely, and submit your selues to mee with all mildnesse. And hereunto also doeth S. Iames leade vs, saying that if wee wilbee edified by Gods word, we must be meeke. And as the earth that shal receiue seede to yeeld fruite, must first be well tilled: euen so the true preparation that God requireth of vs, is to humble ourselues: for our Lorde Iesus began at the same ende.

Howbeit forasmuchas there are some so blockish, that they cannot be moued by gentlenesse: therfore is this threatening added, wherein our Lorde declareth that if wee despise his worde when it is brought vs so by men, such a fault shall not scape vnpunished: for I will require a reckoning thereof, saith hee, As if he should say, Indeede it may well bee that such contempt shall bee let alone, and not once thought vpon in the worlde: but yet shall I continue still to warrant my worde, and yee must come to account before mee though yee bee scaped the handes of men. And this is to bee well marked. For when our Lorde will haue men to obey him, hee saieth not singly, hee that will not obey my worde; but he that will not heare the Prophetes whom I sende. For wee see many nowadayes which protest that they bee readie to submit themselues to God; but yet in the meane while they cannot finde in their hearte to yeelde him obedience in respect of his Lawe, or in respect of the holy scripture, or also in respect of the order of the Church. Yee shall see a sort of skoffers which will needes bee taken for good Catholikes, but as for sermons, they let them alone, and they thinke them to bee superfluous. And if they chaunce to come to any, it is but in a ceremonie, and for fashions sake, as men terme it: so as if it were not for shame of men, they woulde neuer come at the Church. Ye shal neuer heare that they be desirous to be taught: And what Christianitie is that? Contrariwise we heare howe it is saide heere, that God will haue vs to hearken to him. As howe? They can say wellynough that they bee willing to obey. But he addeth whosoeuer heareth not the Prophets whom I sende. I haue shewed already that seeing God hath set this order in his Church: it ought to be holde as vnuiolable. Therfore whosoeuer hee bee that maketh none account of Sermons, ne resorteth to them; doeth shew himselfe to be a rebell against God. Who sayes so? Euen he himselfe. We neede not go to reasoning thereupon. For our Lorde telleth vs that all such as will not quietly submit themselues to the order which hee hath appointed, are rebelles against him. Yee see then that the thing which we haue to marke here in the first place, is that we must not seeke starting holes to deceiue God withall; for if wee desire that he should reigne ouer vs, the men that haue the charge and office to speake to vs in his name, must be receiued, & all of vs both great and small must frame themselues thereafter.

Moreouer let vs proceed to ỹ cõparison which ỹ Apostle maketh in the Epistle to ỹ Hebrewes. For he sheweth (as truth is) that Moses and his fellow Prophets were but seruaunts. The master himselfe is come: and that is the onely sonne of GOD, who hath superioritie ouer the whole Church, and he speakes by his Gospel which if a man despise he is not to be borne withal. He that transgressed the Lawe of Moses, was stoned to death as we haue seene before. But nowe our Lorde Iesus speaketh more lively in the Gospell: and shall men make no account of hearing him? Let vs marke then that all such as striue nowadayes against the doctrine of our Lorde Iesus Christ, offend much more greeuously, and shalbe punished more rigorously, because they spite God openly, as though they protested in effect, that they passed not to prouoke him to battell, and to deface his maiestie vtterly. Therefore let vs beare in minde, that as oft as the Gospell is preached vnto vs, it is all one as if the sonne of God speake to vs himselfe: and therefore that hee ought much rather to bee hearde than Moses. True it is that the Lawe is of God likewise, and it was giuen by the verie spirite of our Lorde Iesus Christ. But as nowe we stand vpon the meanes that God hath vsed in the Lawe and the Gospell. For the more that our Lord hath vttered his glorie, the more ought wee to

Hebr. 3. 5. & 10. 28. 29.

Gal. 3. 19.

be prouoked to submit our selues vnto him: and that is done in the Gospell. Wherefore let vs conclude, that as nowe we must haue a greater regard to harken to the things that are brought vs and set forth vnto vs in the name of our God, than our forefathers had in the time of the law. And that is the thing which our Lorde Iesus ment by this saying, that Iohn Baptist excelled
Matt. 11, 11. al the prophets, so as there was neuer any man that had so excellent an office as he had, and yet that the least of them which preach the Gospell nowadayes, excelleth Iohn Baptist. Iesus Christ speaketh not there of the holinesse of mens persons: but magnifieth the doctrine of saluation which is preached to vs at this day, insomuch that Iohn Baptist was preferred before all the Prophetes, as in respect that he brought the tydings that the Redeemer was come.

But wee proceede yet further; for wee shewe
2. Cor. 5. 19. & Heb. 9. 27 that our Lorde Iesus hath performed his mediatorship in reconcyling vs to God his father;
1. Iohn. 1. 7. & 2. 1. that his death and passion are the euerlasting sacrifice whereby perfect righteousnesse is purchased to vs; that all our sinnes are washed away
Rom. 5. 19. Eph. 1. 5. by his bloude; that he continueth still our aduocate and spokesman at this day, to procure vs fauour in Gods sight: that his obedience is imputed to vs for righteousnesse: and that God adopteth vs in him to make vs heires of his kingdome. All these thinges then are at this day declared vnto vs largely in the Gospell. And seeing that God is so gracious to vs in preferring vs before all the kings and Patriarks that liued vnder the olde testament: Wo worth vs if we cannot fare the better by such a prerogatiue. Seeing that the kings (I say) which were desirous to haue
Luke. 10. 24 hearde the thinges which wee heare, and to haue seene the thinges which wee see, obtained not their desire; and nowe GOD hauing giuen vs more than them, can winne nothing at our handes by so doing but skorne and despite: what will our rewarde bee? Hee may well vpbraide vs as hee did the Iewes in olde time, saying:
Esa. 5. 4. My people what haue I done to you? My vyneyard, I haue planted thee, I haue husbanded thee, and I haue taken great paines about thee: and thou bringest foorth bitter grapes that are able to choke their master. If GOD blamed the vnthankfulnesse of his people after that fashion in olde time: howe much more may hee blame vs in these dayes? Are not wee worthie to receiue a hundred folde more damnation than they? Yes certainely. So then let vs marke well, that if God coulde not beare the despising of his Lawe: he will much lesse nowe suffer the skorning of his Gospell, or that men shoulde make none account of the order which hee hath set for them to resort to sermons, there to bee taught by the mouthes of those that are in that degree and office. For as I haue declared, it is not ynough for vs to say, Gods worde is worthie to bee hearde: but wee must also shewe the same by proofe. Whensoeuer our Lorde speaketh, although it bee by the meane of creatures: yet let vs receiue him quietly and obey him.

Let vs note further, that where as it is saide hee will require an account of it: the meaning thereof is: that wee shall haue gained nothing by scaping the handes of men. For why? God will maintaine his owne honour. And this is notable in many respectes. For oftentimes yee shall see, that they which shoulde holde the sterne to make Gods worde to bee receiued with reuerence, haue no regarde of it at all. The Princes, Magistrates, and Iudges of this worlde, doe punish thinges which they knowe to bee to their owne domage: such offences are straitely looked to. And why? For if they shoulde goe vnpunished, great disorder would insue thereof. This respect were not amisse, so they did not set the cart before the horse. For if God be offended, they let that slippe. And why? Because they thinke there growes no inconuenience of it. And in verie deede it is growen to a cõmon byword to say, Who is hee that accuseth mee? Whome haue I wronged? The partie that shall haue spited God openly, and therefore deserueth to bee rooted out of the worlde, shall but wring his mouth or rather his groyne, and steppe forth with a shamelesse foreheade to aske who accuseth him. The verie Angels of heauen, yea and all other creatures crie out against him; and yet hee hath not offended. And why so? Because no bodie is against him heere among men: for it may chaunce that no man will stande in Gods defence. Euerie man will wellynough pleade for themselues: but they be not so zealous as to set themselues against such as offende God. And yet in the meane whyle the Iudges are asleepe, and let all such manner of vngodly dealings slip. Yea there are some which are worse than Iewes and Sarasins, shewing no token of Christianitie, but openly despising both Sermons and vse of Sacramentes. Othersome are not contented with such contempt, but they doe also make warre against God, and play the venemous beasts in spewing out their vilenesse to make all religion to bee set light by. These thinges are to bee seene: and yet men winke at them. Therfore doeth God tell vs that hee will call them to account for it. Verie wel (saieth hee): let men bee as negligent as they will: yet wil not I forget these things, whatsoeuer come of it.

Heereby wee bee warned to receiue Gods worde when it is set forth vnto vs, and to inure our selues to the hearing thereof, not for feare of men onely, but to eschew the wrath of the heauenly Iudge, seeing hee is minded to defende the authoritie of his worde. Were this well marked, men woulde bee better disposed to suffer themselues to be taught by Gods worde than they be. Men woulde make more speede when they heare the bel tol, than they doe. But what? We can scarce finde in our hearres to goe three steppes to a Sermon. And why? For feare least wee shoulde afterwarde be censured. If I go continually to sermons, men will point at me with their fingers, and I shallbe called afterwarde into the Consistorie for it: and in the end I shalbe censured. After ỳ maner do these Sarasins speake

that

that dwell among vs here, who haue neither faith nor Christianitie in them more than dogs. Their comming hither commonly is but to scrape the ground with their pantoples in mockage of God. But it were better for them to breake their neckes, than to come to vnhalowe Gods temple after that sort. Others come with gay Ceremonies and outwarde shewes: and in the meane while haue no affection at all. But let vs bethinke vs howe it is saide here, that our Lord wil not let men alone so: for although no man maintain his glorie, but presume malapertly to despise him: yet shall not their so doing boote them. For why? He telleth vs that he will doe his office, & not bury things in forgetfulnes. Then if men winke at the despising of Gods worde: God himselfe must in the end shewe, that he setteth such store by it, that hee will be auenged of them for it. Thus yee see what we haue to mark, in Gods vttering of such threatnings against all the despisers of his Law.

Besides this, it is his minde also to prouide ỹ wee be not deceiued nor abused vnder pretence of this honourable title of Prophet. For as it becometh vs to obey God by being taught by such men as he hath set in the office of teachers: so on the other side it is not for any man to take that charge vppon him, thereby to deceiue the plaine and ignorant people. God then hath prouided here for both twain. First he sheweth how there is no cause why the people should grudge seing there was no want of teaching: and therfore that they which turne away after Witches, Soothsayers, and Inchanters, are leawd and vnthankfull. For why? God commeth to vs, and requireth no more but to teach vs familiarly. Therefore when men step aside after that maner to superstitions, and cannot bee contented with Gods trueth which is the perfection of all wisdome: must it not needes bee that they are possessed of Satan, and worse than starke madde out of their wits? Yes truely. And therefore seing our Lord protesteth that he hath so prouided for his Church, as men may well holde themselues to that which he hath done: Let euerie man bee readie to heare and receiue the doctrine which he setteth forth.

Nowe he commeth to those that are appointed to be teachers. *Let no man* (saith he) *Presume to speake in my name. For I must put my worde in the mouth of the Prophetes.* Hee saieth expresly, I will put my word in their mouthes: and therunto answereth the text of Esay which I cyted afore. Whereby it is shewed vs that God raiseth not Prophets vp to lay the bridle in their necks, and to giue them full libertie to preach what they list: but hee raiseth them vp to be as his instrumentes to deliuer the thinges faithfully which they haue heard of him. Yee see then with what condition God hath raised vp prophets in all ages, namely ỹ he put his word in their mouthes. And whereas we preach nowadayes, it is not for that Christ hath giuen vp his office. For he is alwayes a teacher, he is the heade of the Church, yea & the only head, not to be as an ydoll, but to rule vs with his doctrine. Therfore we must not presume to alledge any thing which we receiue not of the only sonne of God. Wherefore let vs marke well, that as it was Gods will heere to subdue folk to humble themselues, so as they should not refuse to bee taught by his worde when it is preached: so on the otherside he hath prouided that such as haue commission to speake, must not bring their owne dotages and dreames, nor deuise any newe doctrine, but onely first learne of their master, and afterwarde deliuer the same faithfully to others, without adding any thing at all of their owne. For whatsoeuer men inuent of their owne heades, is vtter corruption: there needs no more Leauen to sower the whole lump of paste. And if a man take heade neuer so little, he shall vtterly peruert Gods truth, and turne it into vntruth. And this serueth also to put al men in mind vpon what condition they should heare the Propheres. For here are two extremities, as in deede wee neuer keepe any meane, vnlesse our Lorde drawe vs to it by force. If wee keepe it not, wee become heathenish, and his worde is skorned of those to whom hee sendeth vs: which contempt wee see in the most part of the worlde. Howe deale wee when wee come to framing of our selues? We vse a kinde of fond and beastly deuotion, without putting any difference betweene good and euill, and God will none of that. Indeede hee will haue our faith matched with humilitie, but not that we should be starke blockes without discretion. For cleane contrariwise hee willeth vs to trie mens spirites. Then must wee haue skill to examine thinges whether they be true or no, when men speake to vs in the name of God. The way therefore which wee must holde, is that when Gods name is alledged, wee must bee touched with reuerence to hearken earnestly to the thinges that are spoken, and howsoeuer the world go, wee must bee prepared to receiue them. And when wee haue this modestie of yeelding our selues teachable by the thinges that are set forth in the name of God: Wee must also pray him to giue vs his holy spirite, that wee bee able to discerne aright and not be beguiled, nor imbrewed with lyes vnder false pretence of his name, but that although Satan transforme himselfe into an Angell of light, yet he may not so blind our eyes, but that wee may perceiue what is good. That is the way which wee must holde. And it is the thing whereto God intendeth to leade vs, saying that although he will haue vs to hearken to the Prophets, and addeth this threat that the despising of them shall not abide vnpunished: yet notwithstanding hee meaneth not therefore to bereaue vs of all discretion, and to stop our eyes that we should not knowe what to followe. No: but he wil haue vs to examine mens doctrine, & to sift the Propheres whether they teach aright or no. We must not be so doltish as to admit al that euer is tolde vs without exception? but (as I saide,) when men speake to vs in the name of God, we must serch whether it be truth or falsehood. And now must we lay forth the things particularly which are conteined here.

Esa. 59.21.

Deut. 13.1. & 18.20.

1. Cor. 5.6.

1. John 4.2.

2. Cor. 11.14.

First of all let vs marke, that God meant not

to exempt the preachers of his woorde from all examination, but will haue the faithfull to consider what is set foorth vnto them, according to the generall rule that is giuen vs thereof. It is
1.Cor.14.29 saide that they which haue the gift of Prophesying must speake in order, and that the residue must iudge. It is not saide, whatsoeuer they say, let it bee receiued: but, let men iudge and discerne of it. Lo howe the holy Ghost sheweth vs howe to measure our faith, and after what manner we may keepe a meane betweene the contempt and rebellion which we see in the heathenish sort, and the beastly blockishnes of such as say, as for mee, I am so well minded that I receiue whatsoeuer is tolde me. Yea, and thou art a good goose for thy labour. But God will haue such children as be of discretion & knowledge. And although our faith be not a worldly science: Yet doth it require skill to be taught vs at Gods
Esa.54.13. hande as the Prophet saieth. One point then is this, that when we preach Gods word, it is not for vs to say that men shoulde not iudge of our doctrine, or that we shoulde not yeelde any account thereof. For that were in vaine to be spoken, and not onely needelesse, but also vnreasonable, that a false Prophet should be punished and no examination had of him, nor any means to try him and to take knowledge of his case. We see heere in fewe words then, that God hath giuen his Church leaue to inquire of mens doctrines, and that hee woulde haue his prophetes accountable, so as they shoulde bee bounde to yeelde a reason of their doctrine, and to shewe that it is of God. And this condition was neuer refused, neither of the Prophets nor of the Apostles, who at all times when they were accused of false doctrine, were readie to shewe openly that they were sent of God, and that they had behaued themselues faithfully. And euē so must we do at this day. And thereby will all tyranny be shut out. If a man woulde nowadayes examine the doctrine of the Pope: he saieth it is not lawfull. And why so? Because I sit in the Apostolike sea, saith he. And meant not God to prouide for his Church? He saith expresly that the Prophet which is sent of him, shall haue his woorde in his mouth. To whom doeth God speake? He speaketh generally of all that euer were sent by him. For I haue prooued alreadie that this text is not meant of Moses alone, and of them that liued vnder the olde Testament: but that it extendeth euen vnto vs also, and comprehends in it the whole reigne of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Seeing then that God hath not excepted either Pope or any man else: it is to be concluded, that their doctrine may, yea and ought to be examined. And so wee see that the Papists in these dayes haue but a buckler of snowe, in that they beare men in hande that they bee exempted from yeelding any account. For our Lord hath declared the cleane contrarie as we see.

And we must marke further, that it is not ynough to haue the title of a Prophet, but the effect must be had also. And wherein doth that consist? In this, that they which speake in Gods name, haue his woorde in their mouth. He saith not, they must but onely haue his spirite, howbeit that hee addeth that also. And euen in this text of Esay hee saieth, My spirite shall rest vpon him. But doth that serue to exclude the Mat.3.
woorde? No: they bee thinges linked together with vnseparable bonde. It is saide, my spirite shall bee vppon thee, and my woorde shall bee in thy mouth. But what saieth the Pope to aduaunce himselfe? I haue Gods spirite. And where is his woorde? Or let that come behinde for I haue a greater and farre excellenter reuelation of mine owne. As for Gods woorde, it is but an Apsie: the greate mysteries haue beene reuealed to mee by the holy Ghost. See how this diuell will needes set vp himselfe aboue all order of the Church, and aboue all direction that God hath set downe to rule his Church by, in that hee will haue the Gospell to bee preached nowadayes in his name, and his woorde to bee in the mouthes of those whom hee hath set in that office. Is it not a hellish kinde of discreement, to breake the thinges so asunder, which God hath ioyned together? It is all one as if a man woulde clyue the skies, and plucke downe one halfe of the starres, and more too. For neither Sunne, nor Moone, nor any other creatures are comparable to Gods Maiestie, which vttereth it selfe both by his spirite and by his word.

Nowe he hath cuppled them two together, and it is not lawfull to take the one of them and to leaue the other. And therefore let vs learne that as many as will nowadayes bee taken for teachers in the Church, must haue the charge to bring Gods woorde with them, and also must haue his spirite: that is to saye, they must haue the gift of expounding the holy scripture, they must haue such vnderstanding as belongeth thereto, and they must bee faithfull so as they put forth nothing of their owne, but onely follow the trade that is appointed them, so as they may euer protest in the ende, that God hath spoken vnto vs. And that if any man doe steppe vp against them, they may say with Moses, Who am I? As for mee, I haue brought you Exod.3.
the message that was committed to mee of God nowe goe your wayes and striue with him for it. All they then that will bee knowen to bee teachers of the Christian Church, must haue the saide modestie: and then may wee boldly (as shalbe shewed more at large to morrowe) despise all such as presume to speake in Gods name, & in the meane while go beyond their bounds, and will not submit themselues to the condition which God will haue to be common to all his Prophets.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgment of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, and to leade vs to such amendment, as we may be willing to be ouermastred of him, and perceiue that all our affections are frowarde, and that all the sense and wit which wee haue in vs, is vtter confusion. Wherefore let vs be willing to submit our selues whol-

wholy to his will, desiring him to cause the same to be so vttered vnto vs, as wee may not walke wanderingly and at aduenture, but be throughly certified and assured by his speaking vnto vs, that we shall be guided to him, because the doctrine of his Gospell is the right way to saluation, wherein we cannot goe astray: and ỹ we may be confirmed more and more in the same, vntil we haue no more need to be taught by ỹ meanes of men, but are come to the singing of eternall prayses vnto him in the company of the Angels. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the iiii. of December. 1555.

The Cxi. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the eighteenth Chapter.

21 And if thou say in thy heart, howe shall wee knowe the woorde which the Lord hath not spoken vnto him:

22 When a Prophet speaketh in the name of the Lorde, and the thing that hee hath spoken commeth not to passe: that is a woorde which the Lorde hath not spoken vnto him, but the Prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; and therefore be not afraide of him.

YEsterday was shewed why Moses setteth downe here a Lawe for false Prophets, to the ende they shoulde bee punished for seeking to corrupt Gods truth, and for abusing their office. For he had declared before, that as many as wil be knowen to be of Gods house and sheepfolde, must submit themselues to the common order, which is to heare the Prophets whom hee hath sent. But yet must there be a meane in so doing. For were the bridle layd in their neckes which speake, and were there an absolute authoritie giuen them: what a thing were that? Great confusion would insue thereof. Therefore like as our Lorde bindeth the whole body of his Church to the hearing of his word and doctrine when it is preached: so wil he haue those to bee vsed, which haue the charge to teach others, with intent they presume not to put forth any doctrine of their deuising, but faithfully deliuer the things that are commanded them of God, and which they haue receiued as it were from his owne mouth. That was the meaning of Moses, to the end that such as haue preheminence shoulde not abuse it, and that the people also should al of them yeeld themselues teachable, and so there might bee no tyranny in Gods Church, but good order in all poynts. For if it might bee Lawfull for euery man to resist the doctrine, as who would say, I am wise ynough, I know how to behaue my selfe, I am able to teach others: and againe, I can reade it at home in mine owne house: if such libertie were giuen; all woulde goe to hauocke. And on the contrarie parte, if the partie that hath commission to beare abroade the word of God, should say, I am not to yeeld account to any body, it is not for any man to examine my doctrine whether it bee good and true or otherwise: it were a tyrannous Lordlynesse, whereby God should be excluded from hauing any preheminence or audience among vs. So then, we must keepe the meane that is shewed here by Moses, which is, that al such as disobey the common order must bee punished and cut off from Gods people: and therewithall, that they which are in office to speake, doe take good heede that it is not for thē to set foorth their owne dreames and dotages, but to behaue themselues as Gods messengers, faithfully and without adding any thing of their owne.

Now let vs come to that which Moses addeth here: *If thou say in thyheart, how shall I know when a Propheſie is not of God?* It is sayd, *If the Prophet tel thee a thing which commeth not to passe, assure thy selfe he is not sent, but he doth it altogether of pride: and therefore he shall be punishable.* Here wee haue to marke, that in this place God hath not set downe al the tokens whereby the false Prophets may be discerned from the true. And for proofe hereof, the office of Prophets was not onely to tell of thinges to come, but also to giue folke good instruction, to exhort them to amendment of lyfe, and to edify them in faith. As for example, wee see that the Prophets did not onely say such a thing shall befall: but also confirmed the couenant whereby God had adopted the people of Israell, and tolde them of the comming of the redeemer on whom the hope of all Gods children was grounded. Moreouer they comforted the sorrowfull, by preaching the promises of Gods fauour vnto them; therewithall they threatened the people when they became disordered; they discouered their faultes and transgressions; they cyted sinners to Gods iudgement to make them humble themselues. All these thinges belonged to the office of the Prophet. So then there were other tokens besides that which Moses setteth downe here, whereby to discerne false Prophets aright. And in very deed if we will know whether a Prophet serueth God

faithfully or no; wee must compare the thinges that are cleane contrarie. We knowe that the true touchstone whereby to try the goodnesse of any doctrine, is the referring of all thinges vnto faith, (as Saint Paul saith thereof,) and to the glorifying of God, that men be taught to put their whole trust in the grace of our Lorde Iesus Christ, to mislyke of themselues and to be ashamed of their own doings, & to frame themselues to a true amendment. Thus is it a true tryall of good doctrine, when we see ỹ preacher indeuour that God may be purely honored and serued, and that the prayse of all power, wisedome, and righteousnesse be yeelded vnto him. That doctrine is alwayes good, and that is an infallible rule. When men are condemned in themselues; when they be shewed that there is nothing but corruption in their nature, and that they be accursed of God; when they be so beaten downe as they wote not what to doe, but onely to craue forgiuenesse lyke wretched sinners: that is a sure doctrine. For faith leadeth vs thereunto, and compasseth it as a certeine rule. Againe, when sinnes are condemned by Gods lawe, and men are shewed what true repentance is, to wit, a mislyking of their sinnes & a desiring to be gouerned by Gods spirit, and to bee altogether chaunged: that is a sure doctrine. Moreouer, when men are tolde that they must flee to God for refuge, and call vppon him onely, and not be vnthankfull to him for his helping and succoring of them: the doctrine also is of the holy scripture, and men cannot faile in embracing of it. If it be sayd that the very vse of the Sacraments is to leade vs to our Lord Iesus Christ, and to assure vs the better of the benefites which he bringeth vs that we may be partakers of them, and that God also putteth vs in possession of thē: that also is a trueth which ought not to be reuoked nor doubted of. And hereof there is no disputing to be made: for men knowe that in those pointes is nothing but good doctrine. On the contrarie part, a man may iudge that a doctrine is false, when it darkeneth or diminisheth the glorie of God. If the thing that belongeth to God bee plucked away from him to be bestowed vpon creatures: it is a practise of Satans to turne vs out of the right way. Againe, if one doe puffe vp men with pride and ouerweening; and make them beleeue that they be able folke, & so rock them asleepe in their sinnes: or if he teach them to serue God with pelting toyes, and to forget his Lawe, and in the meane while to giue mens inuentions their ful scope: or if the Sacraments be vsed but as light or fond pastimes: a man may easily see that such doctrine is leawd and cursed, and that it was forged in Satans shop.

Rom. 12. 6.

Furthermore, whereas nowadayes men are inquiring whereon to stay in ỹ middest of these troubles and diuersities of opinions that are in the world: it is no very hard thing to doe, so they be attentiue and discreete in discerning after the maner that our Lord hath shewed vs. For all the whole doctrine of poperie tēdeth to none other end, but to aduaunce men, and to puffe them vp in such wise with their owne deserts, as they may be halfe at defiance with God, as though they could accuse him. Againe, it sendeth men too and fro. In stead of puting their trust in the onely freegoodnesse of God, and in stead of imbracing our Lorde Iesus Christ: men are taught other infinite meanes to saue themselues. Moreouer, in steed of hauing the only Lawe of God for their onely rule in all thinges, and for their onely holynesse and perfection: men haue set out their owne trifling traditions. Thus may ye easily iudge of these thinges. And what is to be sayd of their Sacraments? It is euident that they be meere witcheries in the Popedome, so as Iesus Christ is driuen a great way off by them, and men make idols of the visible signes & liueles creatures, and Satan hath so imbrued the wretched world with his illusions, that men are become starke beastes. Now then, if a man intend to make trial of a good doctrine, he shal find the thinges which I spake of afore, to be sure & infallible markes thereof. But in this text our Lord meant onely to tel vs that he will discouer the false prophet, at leastwise one way or other, whereof hee setteth downe one kinde here.

I haue told you alreadie that there are diuers other meanes to discerne the true doctrine from the false: but none of those come in question here. Our Lorde hath tolde vs, No no, ye shall not be beguiled so long as ye indeuour to follow the trueth that proceedeth from me. If a deceiuer haue any countenance among you, I will make his leawdnes to be layd open: I will giue you some such token thereof, as ye may alwayes keepe your selues vndefiled, so ye haue the mind and zeale to sticke to my pure worde. Thus much concerning this text, which importeth a kinde of promise, as if our Lord should tell his people that he would discouer the hypocrisie of deceiuers, and not suffer them to reigne euer, but that in the end they shall in some respect or other come to confusion. Now we see the principall drift of Moseses wordes.

But here a question might be moued. For heretofore in the thirteenth Chapter, it was said Deut. 13. that if a Prophet tolde a thing to come, and the same came to passe in deede: yet was he not to be beleeued, because God would suffer such thinges to try his people withall. And here it is sayd that a false Prophet shall be knowen and iudged by the not falling out of the things which he prophesieth. Now here seemeth to be some contrarietie. But the solution is easie, in marking that though a false prophet be knowen by his lying: yet it followeth not that he should be take and deemed a true Prophet because it falleth out that he speaketh some trueth. Truely if he spake the trueth at all times and in all cases, then were he a true Prophet. But hee may well say the trueth in some respect, (which may be done for some iust punishment from God, as is declared in this same text:) and yet he shall be but a deceiuer nevertheless. As how? Put the case that folke seeke to bee soothed in their vices, and are loth to be waked and quickened vp as they should be, and had rather to be borne with: (for such hath the fashion of ỹ world euer bin:)

Well,

Well, God seeing such leawdnesse, suffereth deceiuers to plaster them, and to beare the folke in hand (which are so desirous to sleepe in their wilfulnesse) that their faultes are nothing. Here ye see how those men are beguiled, because of the desire which they had before. And God addeth the same thing moreouer, namely that those false Prophetes and deceiuers shall haue wherewith to confirme their doctrine, that they which were imbrued w lyes before, may become more wilful. For they will thinke then, ỹ there is no more daunger in beleeuing them. And what is the cause hereof? Euen Gods iust vengeance. Forasmuch as men shut their eyes at the light, & wil needs dwel in darknesse: God giueth Satan the bridle. By meanes whereof it commeth to passe, ỹ the false prophets doe sometimes speake ỹ truth; as is to be seene euen at this day. For what a number are there to be found, which seek after witchcraft to abolish ỹ authoritie of Gods word? Ye shall see on ỹ one side a sorte of curious heads, & on ỹ other side another sorte ỹ haue no feare of God: & yet ỹ mark which they all shoote at, is to put away Gods word, ỹ they might not be ruled by it. And in ỹ meane while they wil needs haue some Wizard to tel them of their good for tunes: & our Lord suffereth thẽ to be drawen by such meanes into al ỹ deceites of Satan, notwithstanding ỹ some trueth bee mingled therewith. Now thẽ, though a false Prophet speake ỹ truth, yet is not that a warrãt that his doctrine is true: our Lord will not haue men to credit him a whit ỹ more for ỹ: for we see for what cause he putteth the trueth oftẽtimes into the mouthes of deceiuers. And so, notwithstanding the thinges that are set downe here, yet doth it abide true still, ỹ when our Lord is minded to haue pitie vppon his people, and not to suffer them to bee abused by false doctrine: he giueth them some token whereby to find the deceiuer: and whereas earst he was in estimation, and might haue amazed the wretched world: God bewrayeth his leawdnesse, & so he is found to be a lyer. Thus wee see now the whole meaning of Moses, concerning the thinges that are conteyned in this text.

These thinges were performed among the people of olde time, and the examples thereof which we see, ought to shewe vs the vse of them and what fruit we should gather of this warning which Moses giueth. When the Prophets meant to proue that they were sent of God: they would say, I am no prophet if this come not to passe. See how Ieremie submitteth himself to the Law, saying: I tell ye, ye shall be led captiue to Babylon, and thinke not your selues to be discharged by ỹ which hath hapned vnto you already: (for the citie had bin taken once before, and therefore they thought themselues discharged by being become tributaries after that fashion to the king of Babylon: and so they thought themselues escaped:) No no, ye must indure yet more. This chastisement, which hath not amended you at al, seemeth ouer hard and too sharp a rod vnto you. But forasmuch as god hath called you, and you continue still vnamended: he is feine to deale now more roughly with you: the temple must be beaten downe, the citie must be razed, you your selues must be no more a people, there must be no more sacrifice, all thinges must be so cleane taken away, as ye may seeme to bee vtterly perished. To this extremitie must yee come, because ye haue abused Gods patience euen vnto this houre. And if it come not so to passe, take me no more for a Propher, but let me bee stoned to death, for I am well worthie of it. But I am well assured of that which I haue foretold you, for God himself hath told it me. We see how the Prophets submitted themselues to the Lawe, & also did set themselues against the false-prophets, as we see by the example of Ieremie, when Ananias came and sayd, No, the vessels of the Temple shall be brought again from Babylon, and the kingdome of Dauid shal be set vp againe in our time, and we shall florish more thã euer we did: and thereupon did breake the chain of Ieremie, who walked about the streetes as it were with a with about his necke. For it behoued him to represẽt the captiuitie, because men were so blind in their sinnes, that they tooke all Gods threatnings to be but a ieast, and thereupon did make euen a mocke of them. And therefore it behoued the Prophet to goe about the citie after that fashion with a with about his neck, as who should say, Euen thus shall you be miserably haled into captiuitie, yee make a goodly shewe, nowe yee triumph, ye thinke it a goodly thing to beset your selues in your pleasures and delightes; but this yoke that I weare, serueth to shewe that you your selues shalbe put vnder the yoke of subiectiõ. Behold, Ananias breaks me this yoke asunder, saying: no, we shall liue still at libertie, and be deliuered from that bondage. It is a wonder. Yea, but how did these wretched and wicked folkes afterward behaue themselues? How did God ratify the thing that Ananias had spoken? I wishe it might be so, (sayd Ieremie:) but yet must I goe further and tell him his condemnation, seeing the Lord hath commaunded mee so to doe. So then, we see that Ieremie ratifyed the thing which hee had vttered in the name of God, and that maner of dealing was common among all the Prophets. Wherefore let vs marke that our Lordes intent here was to declare that he wil not suffer vs to be beguiled, so wee be willing to receiue his worde, and to bee taught thereby, and be diligent in discerning betweene trueth and falshood. Although there be neuer so many false Prophets, and that Satan striue continually to turne vs away from goodnes: yet shall we euer haue some discretion, that is to say, God wil giue vs some token whereby to keepe ourselues from being deceiued. It is a promise that can neuer faile vs. And therefore let vs holde vs thereto, and seeke to obey our God. His reaching out of his hand is enough for vs: and though there be neuer so many meanes to deceiue vs; yet will he not suffer them to preuaile, according to that that is promised here. Wherefore let vs looke to our selues. Whereas we haue no Prophets nowadayes to foretell vs thinges to come, or ỹ haue reuelations aforehãd of warre, pestilence, and famine: it is because we haue

haue greater perfection of doctrine, than the people had in old time. We therefore must hold our selues contented with the Gospell, for it is ỹ fulnes of light. But yet therewithall let vs also haue an eye to the thinges which are written, and let vs examine the doctrines that are preached vnto vs: and if we finde them to be drawen out of the Lawe, the Prophetes, and the Gospel: let vs be assured of them that they are certein. And if we vse that touchstone continually to try things by: surely God wil preserue vs frō all Satans falshoods. Thus ye see what we haue to remember vppon that text.

Now it is sayd expresly that *such a Prophet shal dye the death*. And that is a cause also why our Lord sayth, that he wil giue the sayd marke. For it were foule treacherie to iudge & condemne a Prophet without knowing why or wherefore. If a guiltlesse person should bee condemned vnder colour of some euill deed not vttered: it were too great wrong & vniustice to be done to a mortall man. But if a bringer of Gods word be condemned, euen as though he had done amisse in his office, without being found faultie: that toucheth not the creature only, neither is the wrong done to a mortal man alone: but it is an outrage done vnto God also, & that is high treason to his person. Ye see then that the cause why Moses saith here, that God will discouer the false Prophets, is to the end they should bee iudged, and also to warne folk that they should not couet to be fonded with vaine hope, as I haue tolde you that ỹ maner of the world is cōtinualy to doe. The prophets had hard hold from time to time with the most part of ỹ Iewes, because they brought nothing but threatnings. These Prophets (quoth ỹ Iewes) doe trouble vs, & are too importunate vpon vs, they speak of nothing but of Gods wrath & cursings: & should they not as well tell vs of gladsome and pleasant things? Those are the thinges which the world requireth. Yea but in so dooing we prouoke Gods wrath. We would haue him to be our friend: & wee on our side are enemies to him. If we came to God w^t true repentāce & sought him as our father: wee should haue no tydings but of peace & prosperitie to delight in. But what? We suffer not God to be fauorable to vs, nor to shew his loue towards vs. For we make war against him as I said afore. Therefore let vs learn ỹ god wil turn ỹ sayings of ỹ false Prophets to the contrarie, so as when they promise folke welfare and peace, mischief shall insue, whereby they shall be found to haue vsed vaine flatterie. Wherfore let vs not desire to be rocked asleepe with mens deceitfull speeches. For what shall it boote vs to be acquit by them ỹ haue no power at all: when we shall be condemned before God? And let vs not tary till God to our cost doe bewray ỹ leawdnesse of the false Prophets, & so we be caught in some calamitie. But let vs preuent Gods wrath as soon as we see our sins, & let vs be touched with them. And if there be any ỹ flatter vs, let vs not giue eare to them to bee seduced to our confusion.

Now our Lord setteth downe here two sortes of false Prophets. *The one is of thō that speake falsely in his name: and the other, is of them that speake in the name of straunge Gods*. Then is it not enough for a Prophet to shroud himselfe vnder ỹ name of the liuing God: but he must also execute his office faithfully. Neither is it enough for him to be put in commission by God, except he execute it with a pure and vpright conscience. For we see ỹ the deceiuers haue sometimes obiected thus against Gods seruāts: what? Am not I a Prophet as well as thou? Yes verily, thou art in office: but see how thou dischargest thy selfe of it. Let vs marke then, ỹ all the matter lyeth not in speaking in Gods name: and ỹ doth experience well shewe vs. For the Pope at this day will speake in Gods name; and yet we shall finde nothing but starke abhominations in his doctrine: there is nothing there but a gulfe of hell to swallowe vp mens soules into destruction. And therefore let vs marke well, that when a Prophet speakes in Gods name, we must examin whether it be truly or no. For if Gods name bee abused, ỹ expressing thereof is dubble wickednesse. And ỹ is ỹ cause why Moses declareth here, first that if a Prophet bring vs word in ỹ name of ỹ liuing god, we must consider whether the word be commited vnto him or no. That is one point which wee haue to marke here. And because the wretched worlde hath bin beguiled vnder false pretence of Gods name: let vs learne to make narrower search, and not suffer our selues to be seduced at aduenture, and so to be led by the noses lyke brute beasts. True it is that Gods name ought to haue such reuerence among vs, ỹ we should all bilde our selues to hearkē to ỹ things ỹ are set forth or spokē of him. But yet must we hold ỹ meane, as was declared yesterday; which is, ỹ wee must not receiue all things indifferently ỹ are spoken but ỹ our faith must be the tryer of them. For our Lorde hath not left vs his holy Scripure for naught. It is ỹ true touchstone whereby we must try all doctrines, ỹ we may iudge of them aright.

The second sort of false Prophets which Moses hath set downe heere, is *of those which speake in the name of Idols*; which abuse crept in at length euen among the Iewes. For after that thinges were once growen out of kinde; All tooke vpon them to be Soothsayers and Prophets: but that was altogether in the name of idols, according to the cities wherein they dwelt. Whersoeuer there was a Temple: there was a Iewe that said, we haue the foreknowledge of thinges to come, euen by byrth: and yet in the meane while they solde their Propheties, as these deceiuers doe which trot vp and down the world, and say they can tell folkes their fortunes. And it was a common practise of all the Iewes, as appeareth euen by the prophane histories, when they were once become idolaters. Surely it is a great vnshamefastnesse of them, to make such boast of the gift of Propheſie. And why so? They haue that gift because they be the linage of Abraham, because they be circumcised, because they bee Gods owne people and heritage, and because they haue the Lawe, and looke for their promised redeemer: and yet for all this, they giue ouer themselues to such abhominatiōs, that they will

will needes borrowe the meanes of idolaters. And we see in maner the lyke altogether nowadayes in the Popedome: For the Priestes and Monkes boast themselues to haue the office of praying for ỳ whole Church: and yet in ỳ meane while they will sing a Masse of our Lady, and a Masse of such a Saint & such a Saint: and so idols are intermingled with the maiestie of the liuing God. For although ỳ Saincts as in respect of themselues, be no idols: yet doe they make them so, which doe so abuse their names. And therefore let vs learne to keepe our selues from both these formes of falshoodes, by hearing no man speake but in the name of God. For wee know there is nothing but vanitie in mans minde, and that we shall be deceiued if we giue our selues to any mortall creature: and therefore onely God is to be heard. Againe, when Gods name is pretended, let vs try whether it be in trueth or no: we haue his word, we cannot lye: and hee will giue vs the vnderstanding thereof, if we be lowly and meeke. And if we submit our selues wholy vnto him, it is certeine that he will neuer suffer vs to be deceiued. Well may we be tẽpted, as we haue seene in the thirteenth Chapter, ỳ God wil try vs whether we loue him or no. But if there be such an vpright minde to be found in vs ỳ we wil seeke to serue him purely, & to obey him: surely hee will deliuer vs frõ all deceit. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to remember vpon this text.

Now in the end it is sayd, that when a false prophet is found out by tryall, *thou shalt appeare thereby vpon presumption, and therefore be not afrayd of him.* Here are two sayings which import no good and profitable warninges. The one is, ỳ he which aduanceth himselfe beyond measure, speaketh proudly. For is there a more diuelishe pride, than for a mortall man to thrust forth himself as if he were an instrument of Gods spirit, as though he were an Angel frõ heauen, whẽ in verỳ deed he is but a lyer, and hath nothing but winde in him? If I take vpon me another mans name, & say, such a one hath giuen me commissiõ: is it not too leawd a falshood? The partie to whom I haue done ỳ wrong may come and say, Ah thou lyar, how durst thou abuse my name? Such dealing (I say) would bee counted great iniurie. Then if a mortal man auaunce himselfe in the name of God, (as for example, if I step vp into ỳ pulpit & require audiẽce in ỳ name of God, & yet notwithstanding doe fal to seducing of ỳ people) is a pride which passeth al others, as I find afore. For it is not simple lying, it is not single deceit, it is not a simple falsifying of this or ỳ: but a turning of Gods trueth into vntruth, & a wrapping of God in our falshoods, & an vnhallowing of his holy & sacred name. Therfore let vs mark wel how it is not for naught ỳ Moses sayth ỳ the false Prophets shall be condemned, yea euen because of their proud & presumptuous dealing, and for their vntollerable rashnes. And hereby as many as haue ỳ charge to beare abroad Gods word are warned to walke warely & circumspectly, & to take heed ỳ in their preaching of ỳ word, they intermingle nothing of their owne: but ỳ they haue a speciall care, ỳ all their sayinges be referred to the true & pure expounding of ỳ which is written, & that they doe nothing else but apply Gods word to ỳ vse of the people: As for exãple, I stand not here to make newe Lawes, nor to forge new articles of faith. What then? Our Lord hath vttered his whole will vnto vs in the holy scripture, & it is not lawful to ad any thing there to. What am I to do therwherfore do we preach yea & that continually day by day? To the ende ỳ the scripture should be well vnderstood, that it should be applyed to our vse, & that men might know how to benefit themselues therby, as how to imbrace Gods promises, how to order their lyfe aright, & how to liue quietly euery man after his owne calling. The shewing of these thinges is to minister force to ỳ holy scripture ỳ wee may vnderstand it and fare the better by it, and bee edifyed therewith. Such (say I) as haue ỳ charge of preaching Gods word, ought to haue a special regard of these thinges. Deut. 12. 32

Howbeit forasmuch as no creature no not euen ỳ Angels of heauen, are able to execute so high & noble a cõmission: we must pray God to guide & gouern vs, bearing in minde therewithall (as S. Paul sayth) ỳ no man could say ỳ Iesus is ỳ Lord, (ỳ is to say, no man can giue glory to ỳ sonne of God,) but by the holy Ghost: & to bee short, ỳ he which is aduanced highest to teach others, ought to abase himself lowest, for feare least any thing may scape him which hee hath not receiued of God, so as he may safely protest ỳ he hath not aimed at any other end, than the worshipping & seruing of God, euen according to ỳ doctrine which hee hath deliuered heretofore in his holy scripture. Againe the people are to be exhorted to take heede ỳ Gods glory bee not defaced. For ỳ Papistes think it an humilitie allowable before God, & a very good & commẽdable deuotion, to be so brutish as to receiue all ỳ euer is put vnto thẽ. O say they, we must submit our selues to our mother holy Church, yea but in so doing they be guiltie of ỳ defacing of God himself & of ỳ bereauing & robbing of him of his authoritie. For why? The Pope & his cleargie are so full of stinking pride & statelynesse, that they make Lawes & subdue mens consciences to thẽ at their pleasure. Ye see thẽ ỳ that is an vsurping of tyrannie ouer Gods people. They excommunicate all good doctrine, to set forth their owne corruptions, & so they defile the pure simplicitie of Gods worde. Well, they be suffered in these thinges, yea & mainteined & defended in their malitiousnesse. And in the meane while God is halfe shaken off, & no account is made of him: for men doe ouermaister him. For as for all them that hearken to false prophets after that fashion, doe they not set vp their diuelish pride to the intent to thrust downe God thereby? 2. Cor. 12. 3.

Let vs mark well then, ỳ whereas Moses speaketh here of ỳ pride or ouerhaddinesse of ỳ deceiuers: it is not onely to make them to bee misliked, punished, and cut off from among ỳ people: but also to warne vs that if a man presume to mingle any of his inuentions with Gods word or goe about to alter any part of the order ỳ he hath set: wee must bee no fauorers of such rashnesse. For in so dooing wee diminishe Gods honor, and become guiltie of the vtter defacing of him

of him as much as in vs lyeth. And therefore all of vs in general, as well the preacher as the hearer, are warned to consider what the plaine reuerence is which God requireth at our hand. It consisteth not in ceremonies, nor in vaine bablinges as men say: but in this, that he onely doe speake and all mens mouthes be kept shut. Not ỹ there should be no Shepheardes, to preach the doctrine vnto vs: but that all should be fetched from him, and he be held as chiefe Maister. The way then to beate down all pride and rashnesse, is that the holy scripture haue his full force, so as men vnderstand that that is the standard vnder which we must gather our selues, and that God will be obeyed by mens submitting of themselues therunto. For without that, there will be nothing but pride and ouerstatelynesse among vs. And so ye see that the deuotion of the Papistes is diuelish, because they haue left God to submit themselues to creatures, and suffer thẽselues to be led lyke beastes without any discretion.

And in the same respect is it sayd in the end, *Thou shalt not be afraid of such a Prophet*. He saith not, thou shalt not feare such a prophet: but word for worde it is, thou shalt not be afraid *of such a Prophet*. For here God meant to arme his faithfull ones with constancie, that they might not be put out of countenance by any faire disguisement: but that when they are once instructed in the faith, they should defy all such as vaunt thẽselues and come to make gay shewes vnder the name of God, as I haue tolde you afore, that sometimes men are too fearefull. In deed there are that mocke at God and haue no feeling of conscience at all, but set as light by the trueth as they doe by leasings: & euen at this day, there are that make as much account of the Gospell, as of ỹ abuses of the Popedome: Iesus Christ & the Pope are all one to them. What a sorte of mockers are to be seene, which will needes bee coũted good Christians because they hold skorn of the popish superstitions; and yet in the meane while are despisers of God and his word? Surely they be but dogges and hogs, without any feare of God or ciuil honestie. And yet is the worlde too ful of such corruption and infection. Againe there are othersome very tenderharted. Not ỹ it is not a vertue to stand in some feare: but because they be ouerfearefull: when they be vexed with any scruple of conscience, they wote not which way to turne them. For if an error be put vnto them, they dare not receiue it for feare: againe on the other side, if the trueth be put vnto them, their agreeing to it (if they doe agree) is not with any certeintie. Ye shall see a number ỹ are euer wauering, lyke reedes shaken with the winde. The Masse is holy with them, & the Gospell is holy with them also, and yet they be certeine of none of both. Now our Lord will not haue vs to stand in any such feare. He will haue vs to be sure of his worde; & when his trueth is throughly proued vnto vs, he will haue vs to defy the world, & all the diuels of hell; Insomuch ỹ if the very Angels of heauen should set themselues against the Gospell, wee see how S. Paul sayth that we must hold them for accursed and excommunicate. God then will haue his worde honored so highly, that whẽ we once know it & are sure of it, we must not be any more afrayd.

It standeth vs in hand to put this lesson in vre nowadayes, because the Popes thundring were able to make all the world to quake, if men were not armed aforehand against him, with ỹ things that are told vs here by Moses. The Pope names himself Christes vicar, ỹ head of the Church, & Peters successor, & the mainteiner of the Apostolike sea, so as there is no Church of God but ỹ Church of Rome: nor any Shepheard, or Prelate, if the Pope be not head of all: nor any kingdome of Iesus Christ, otherwise than in ỹ Popes person, who hath the keyes of the kingdome of heauen. Woulde not the alledging of all these thinges make the stoutest of all to shrinke, if we were not armed against them? Yes: but when al these thinges are pretended, wee must consider whether the reporter of thẽ do discharge his dutie faithfully. For if he speake in Gods name, and yet be found to be a false harlot, hee is ỹ more to blame for abusing so honorable a title. And the more he was esteemed before, ỹ lesse is he to be regarded afterward. Let him thunder his belly full; yet shall all his excõmunications passe into smoke, and all his threatninges shall be but meere vanitie. The effect therefore of ỹ thinges which our Lord ment to say in this text, is ỹ being well assured of Gods word, and hauing examined all doctrine, (howbeit with humilitie,) & hauing vsed ỹ foresayd touchstone of the holy scripture: we may wel defye all thẽ ỹ cloke thẽselues vnder ỹ gay mantle of Gods name, abusing their commission & executing tyranny in stead of seruing the Church of God. I say we may defy all ỹ rable of them, & cry out against ỹ Pope & his abominable wickednesse, & not be afraid of any thing ỹ he can doe vnto vs. For so lõg as we haue God on our side, wee may boldly hold skorne of the whole Popedome, how proude & stately soeuer they be there. That is the thing in effect which we haue to marke, ỹ wee bee not fearefull where God will haue vs to be stout. But ỹ when we haue his doctrine & truth, we must so profit our selues by thẽ, that whatsoeuer ỹ diuell doe practise, he may not turne vs aside from ỹ way of saluation: but wee must hold on our course, according to this saying which we shall see hereafter, This is the way, walke ye therein: and also according to the Prophet Esayes account who saith

On Thursday the v. of December. 1555.

The Cxij Sermon which is the first vppon the nineteenth Chapter.

WHen the Lord thy God shal haue rooted out the nations, whose lande the Lorde thy God giueth thee, so as thou arte owner of them and dwellest in their Cities and houses:

2 Then shalt thou set thee out three Cities in the middest of the lande which the Lorde thy God wil giue thee to possesse.

3 Thou shalt prepare a way to them, and diuide the bounds of the land (which the Lorde thy God will giue thee to inherite) into three parts, that whosoeuer hath committed manslaughter may flee thither.

4 They shal serue for the manslaeer to flee thither, that he may liue: namely if he haue striken his neighbour ignorantly, and haue not hated him aforetimes.

5 [As for example] if a man goe with his neighbour to the wood to fel timber, and he casteth backe his hande with the axe in hewing the wood, and the head fleeth off of the helue, and hitteth his neighbour that he dieth: he shall flee to one of those Cities and liue:

6 To the intent that the next of his kinne followe not the manslaeer, while his heart is chafed, and ouertake him if the way be ouerlong, and put him to death though he bee guiltlesse of the other mans death, forasmuch as he hated him not before.

7 Therefore commaund I thee to appoint out three Cities.

ALthough ỹ Lawe that is set down here, serued for ỹ comō weale of Israel: yet may we also fare the better for it at this day. For therby god meant to declare what punishment ought to be executed vppon such as commit wilfull murder throw malice and of set purpose. Also it sheweth that we must not take ỹ for a crime, which a man dooth not willingly, but by chaunce medly as they terme it. True it is that such thinges are not so casuall but that God gouerneth them frō aboue, as is shewed in another place, where it is sayd, that if a man be lopping of a tree, and a bough thereof doe hitte one vppon the head that he dye, it is God that had determined it so. And the holy scripture will not haue vs to attribute the falling out of thinges to fortune, but that wee should knowe that God directeth all thinges, to the intent that although we see not his hande, yet wee should vnderstand by faith, that he setteth such store by our lyfe, that hee hath numbred all the hayres of our heades; as is sayd in another texte. Moreouer, to come againe to the matter, it is shewed here that all faultes are willing, that is to say, that men doe them wittingly and of set purpose. But let vs goe forward with the text that is set downe here. *God commaundeth the people of Israell to choose out three Cities, vntill he haue inlarged their boundes further.* For it behooued them to haue fixe in al as wee shall see in the next lecture, and as is declared in the twentith chapter of Iosua. Neuertheless, vntill such time as the people were in full and peaceable possession of the land, Gods will was that they should appoint out but three Cities of refuge, for all such to flee vnto as had committed any manslaughter by chaunce meddely (as they call it.) Notwithstanding, least any man should abuse that priuiledge, hee addeth what manner of manslaeers shoulde haue protection thereby. Such (sayth he) as haue killed their neighbours vnwittingly: and thereof hee alledgeth an example. *If a man goe to fell timber, and the Axe slippeth out of his hand, and hitteth one so as hee dye; forasmuch as the man purposed not to doe any such deede, hee may flee and haue himselfe in one of those Cities.* Now wee must marke that it was not enough for a man to protest that he had done it but by mischance: but it behooued him to haue it well proued, so as the partie that was to inioy the priuiledge should bee worthie of it, and the matter well knowen and the trueth of al thinges tryed out how the case stood by iust

Iosu.20.1.7.

Luk.22.35.

examination: and specially that there had bin no hatred betweene the parties aforetimes, so as it might appeare that there was none other cause of the committing of the slaughter, than Gods only determination, without any act done on mans behalfe otherwise than of minde to doe well. And the manslear that was able to proove this, should flee to one of those Cities, and there tary till the death of the high Priest: and then hee was to returne home againe, because in that while the heartburning of the deadmans kinsemen might bee appeased.

And hereby God sheweth, first how greatly he would haue vs to abhorre the shedding of mans bloud: and it is a point which we ought to marke well. For thereby we perceiue what loue he beareth vs, in that our lyfe is so deare vnto him, and that he is so charie of it. If God made no more account of vs th5 he doth of the brute beastes, hee would not set so much store by our lyues. Therefore must wee needes conclude that he loueth vs with a fatherly loue, seeing our lyfe is so pretious to him. Besides this, euery of vs ought to take knowledge hereby of his own duetie: for wee cannot doe any outrage or violence to our neighbor, but we must offend God deadly. And not without cause. For in so doing wee deface his image, as is sayd in the ninth of Genesis. Forasmuch as God hath ptinted his image in men; whosoeuer hurteth his neighbor maliciously, spiteth God to the vttermost of his power. And so are wee warned to abstaine from all euill dooing, and to liue in such sorte among men as no man bee hurt by vs. And in deede we see that the manslaughters which are committed euen of necessitie, cary with them neuertheless a kinde of defiling. As for example, when enemies are slayne in battel, although the thing bee lawefull, yet doth God say that it is a defiling of mens handes. Not that hee imputeth it for a crime, but to the intent that the man which is constreined to fight against his enemies, should bee sory to see the order of nature so troubled by reason of mens sinnes, that whereas wee ought to bee as brethren, and to acknowledge our owne flesh in euery man that is made after our owne lykenesse: yet notwithstanding wee be driuen to destroy them after that fashion. Yee see then how that euen in the time of warre, he y putteth on armour against his enemies ought to doe it, being sorie in his heart, and to bethinke himselfe that such outrage happeneth not but through the great lewdnesse of men. The meaning of all this, is that wee should liue quietly, and euery man indeuour to maintein peace and concord, and haue our handes tyed for committing of any euill deedes.

Gen. 9. 6.

2. Chron. 22. 8. & 28. 3.

And wheras God declareth how greatly manslaughter displeaseth him: let vs marke that (as saith Saint Iohn) before him all matter of hatred is accounted for murther. Then ought we to eschewe all wrong dealing that may be done against men, for if wee haue any rancor or enmitie towardes them in our hartes, wee be guiltie of murther alreadie afore GOD. Marke that for one point. But here our Lorde acquitteth the partie that shall haue slayne a man vnwittingly. Behold (saith hee,) there shall no iudgement of death passe vppon such a man: for there is none offence in him. Seeing that the heauenly Iudge hath pronounced such sentence: what creature dareth reply against it? Yee see then that such a one is guiltlesse, and so declared to bee before God. Yet notwithstanding hee must bee faine to forsake his owne house and inheritance, and go dwell in a strange place, and suffer many incommodities. And why doth God vexe him so, sith he findeth him guiltlesse? Hee sheweth vs that although the partie be faultlesse, yet is it done for examples sake, to the ende wee shoulde not admit any murderers among vs, but punish them as grieuously as may bee, and vtterly abhorre them. That is the cause why the partie that offendeth vnwittingly, shall neuertheless abide some punishment, and become as a man that is put to his penance, to the intent that hee may humble himself and acknowledge in this wise: Truely, I meant not to doe any harme; and this mischaunce is befalne mee vnwittingly: whereby God warneth mee that I haue great needs to pray him to rule both my handes and my feete. And moreouer forasmuch as mans bloude hath bin shed by me; although there were none euil meant on my part: yet must I bee sorie for it, and beare in minde that our Lorde maketh such account of mans lyfe: as he will haue it alwayes to bee had in estimation of vs. Let that serue for one point, concerning this lawe.

And nowe for the second point, Our Lord sheweth vs that wee ought to preuent all dangers and occasions, in respect whereof hee ordeth that the manslear shal flee to one of those Cities. And why? *For feare lest any of the dead mans kinsmen, being moued to wrath, should reuenge his neighbors death*, and so shoulde the mischiefe bee dubbled. Now then, to auoyd this inconuenience, There must be Townes appointed for refuge. And hereby wee see that (as I sayd afore) the Lorde will not haue vs to tary till the mischiefe light vpon vs, but hee will haue vs to take the remedie of it. It might so fall out that some kinseman of the deadmans being angrie with the matter would say, hee hath slayne my cousin, or my brother, and thereupon come running vppon the innocent partie in his rage, and kill him, whereby the land should haue bin defiled with bloud. Therefore Gods will is that the partie which hath committed manslaughter, should get him out of the sight of those that might bee stirred vp to anger against him. But it is certeine that hee couldo not excuse himselfe, which shoulde so beare malice to the guiltlesse partie. For what could he require of him? Lyeth it in man to ouerrule the things that come to passe by Gods prouidence, which is hidden to vs? Are wee able to withstande it? Needs then must it be too spitefull hartburning and malice, that should so moue a man to wrath

1. Iohn. 3. 15

against

against the partie that neither intended nor thought any euil. But although this commeth of infirmitie and of sinne, yet hath our Lorde vouchsafed to remedie that inconuenience. And so wee see that the lawes serue not to bring men to perfection, I meane the politike lawes that are made for ciuill gouernement. They serue not to stablishe perfect holinesse among vs, but to remedie the vices whereunto we be inclined. Because wee bee not throughly clensed, our Lorde is faine to set barres about vs, to the intent that if our hearts incline to naughtinesse, our handes may bee withholde from performing the naughtie desires that we haue conceiued in our mindes. Gods lawe is giuen vs to rule our hearts and minds by. For our Lorde not only commaundeth vs to abstaine from all euill, but also will haue our soules ruled altogether by his wil, I meane the moral lawe or ten commaundementes which I haue expounded heretofore. But as touching the earthly policie or outwarde gouernement, we must vnderstand that Gods intent was to bring his people to honestie, that there might be good order among them; and yet for all that, he restreined their affections that they might not come to effect. As for example, in this place, if we were required to shew what were euery mans dutie and what he ought to do: it might be said that when a man hath giuen a blowe with his hand vnwittingly, so as the same be sufficiently verified: the next friend or kinsman must not steppe to auenge it: for in so doing he offendeth God in two sorts: first in setting vpon the partie that hath not done him any harme by his will, and secondly in fathering that thing vpon a mortall man which God had ordeined by his owne secret prouidence. After that maner would God speake, if hee ment to bring vs to a perfect doctrine. But when he maketh a positiue lawe, he thinks it ynough to say that men should haue an eye to the inconueniences that may insue, and preuent them, and not tarie till the harme is done, but eschew it aforehand, and shut the doore against all occasions. In like case is it whē a manslaughter is committed: the offender must get him out of the way, and saue himselfe in one of the Cities of refuge that the next kinsmā which is desirous of reuenge, haue none occasion to do it: but that all further striking may bee layde aside, and the pursuer preace not into the citie, to follow the rage of his choler; but that the offender may be pardoned, so as if there bee any fault in him, the same may bee borne withal, and furthermore that the partie which is so dealt with may liue in safetie, according as it is sayd in another place that those cities of refuge should belong to the Leuites, thereby to shew that God had appointed them there, to bee as protectors of such as came thither for succor: so as if any body came to pursue the quarel against the offender, the Priests and the Leuites should set themselues against him, and take vpon them y protection of the partie. Thus much concerning that text.

Now to bee shorte wee haue to gather here-

of, that God meant not to make such Fraunchises as are deuised in the Popedome. For (to their seeming) God is well honored, when a murtherer, a theefe, or a robber taketh sanctuarie in a Church, so as the officer of Iustice may not bee bolde to lay handes vppon him. In deede it is an auntient superstition; but yet it ceaseth not for all that, to be euill. For God neuer meant to hallowe his temple after that fashion. True it is that such as were in daunger, were woont to flee for succor to his Temple: but yet it booted not the parties that were guiltie. It serued for such as being wrongfully pursued by their enemies, thought that the reuerence of God might appease the wrath of their pursuers: and therefore they fled into the Temple. But yet for all that the offenders escaped not vnpunished, neither was it any let that they receiued not a punishment according to their desertes. As for example, Salomon sware that although Adonias had caught holde of the hornes of the altar of the Temple; yet should hee be taken thence and put to death. Salomon was not so blind, that the reuerence of the Temple coulde make him to let the partie scape vnpunished that had deserued it. For why? It is a mocking and scorning of God, when his Iustice is displaced or disappointed vnder pretence of his name and Maiestie. Beholde, God commaundeth vs to punish murthers and robberies: and yet we will make him a bolsterer of them, in so much that if a cutthroate get him into a Church, hee must bee preserued there from the hand of Iustice for the honor of God: and so God should be contrarie to himselfe. Nowe then the bringing vp of such Fraunchises in the Popedome was a fondnesse, I meane before such time as the tyrannie thereof confounded thinges in such sorte as wee see they be nowe: and it was done of wicked superstitiō. True it is that in old time there were certaine kinds of priuiledges: but they were but for the poorer sort that were vexed out of measure. As for example, if a bondman were cruelly handled by his maister, hee might flee for refuge to some image. To say the trueth, the Emperors made themselues idols in so dooing: but yet the end whereunto it was done was not euil. For thereby their case came to examination. If a maister would needes cut his bondseruants throate, or misuse him without cause: he was compelled to sell him away, and to take mony for him: and so the innocent was deliuered from death. But the sanctuaries that were deuised among Christians, was a peruerting of all ciuill order and equitie among men. And in very deede our Lorde helde skorne of that fond kinde of deuotion, and shewed by the effect that hee misliked it. For in olde time, they that tooke Sanctuarie in Churches were those that neuer came at Sermons. Wee see howe complayntes haue bin made thereof by the auntient doctors that haue written thirteene hundred yeeres ago. For thus doe they say, As for them that take sanctuarie here among vs;

they bee none of those whome wee knowe, they bee none of those whome wee see dayly, they bee none of those whome wee take for our disciples, and which come hither to receiue Gods Doctrine: none of that sort do euer take sanctuarie among vs. Who bee they then that are desirous to inioy the priuiledges of the Church? Vnthriftes, despisers of God, and dayly haunters of Tauernes and brothelhouses. When they haue committed any faulte or offence, by and by they take sanctuarie and flee to vs for refuge. And how happeneth that? No doubt but our Lord hath declared that hee cannot abide any such disorder, that men should make his Church a denne of theeues, as is spoken of it by the Prophet Ieremie. In deede it is otherwise meant: but yet is this a generall ground, that God will not haue his temple to serue for a couert for any euill doers. And therefore let vs note that although the Churches of the Popedome had bin dedicated to God; yet were they vnhalowed againe by that meanes, forasmuch as they serued to priuiledge offenders, and beside to greeue the creditors, and for such other wicked thinges. Howbeit forasmuch as at this day they be Satans brothelhouses and nothing else but dennes of idols: they may wel haue such priuiledges, & we should not hate them for it. But in the meane while wee see how all manner of disorder reigneth there.

Ier. 7. 11.

And now for our part let vs marke, that Gods wil was not to giue protection to misdemeanors. For on the contrary side it is sayd, *That the parsie which committeth such a manslaughter shall offer himselfe* (That saying is set downe expreslly:) and againe, *that the Iustices shall make diligent inquirie of the matter, to knowe whether the parsie that hath committed the manslaughter did beare his neighbor aforetimes, or whether he had any quarell against him or no.* Herein our Lord sheweth that no excuse may bee admitted. And this discretion ought to bee in all Iudges to beware that they admit not the answere of a man that would couer his owne misbehauiour. For the deed must bee looked into, and the trueth boulted out. Oftentimes Iudges are contented to bee beguiled and to see and not see when some color is set vppon the matter, and to admit the excuse though it bee neuer so trifling, Tush (say they) hee excuseth himselfe of such a matter. Yea and if the offender may bee beleeued, hee will excuse himselfe euer. Therefore must wee make inquirie as God commaundeth vs, and wee must doe it throughly. So then let vs marke that when God gaue protection to such as commit manslaughter vnwittingly, he meant not y the same should serue for wilfull offenders; and therfore he hath shewed the meane how y thing being good of it self, might be kept from turning into abuse. And hereby wee bee done to vnderstand that if priuiledges bee good and vpright, they serue not for the wicked: and the graunters of them ought to consider that thing well: and they must haue an eye aforehande to all other respectes, whereby men may from time to time drawe their doinges to euill libertie to the ouergreeuing of such as are worthie to be maintained. But now whereas hee hath made a lawe of vprightnesse, for pitie of such as deserue to bee regarded at his hand: by and by the wicked sorte being sturdie, doe take the aduauntage thereof to themselues. Men therefore had needs of discretion in that behalfe, to disappoint such as would abuse priuiledges, which are grãted for none but for such as are worthy of them & deserue them. That is the thing which we haue to beare in minde concerning the inquirie which God commaundeth to be made when manslaughter is committed.

Deut. 21.

And heere wee haue a dubble lesson to gather of this text. The one is for such as sit in the seate of Iustice. They (as I haue sayd afore:) must take good heede that they admit no trifling excuses: but that when any open offence is committed, they trye out who is faulte therof, that hee may be punished for it. For wee see how God hath commaunded that if a mans body were found dead, the Iustice shoulde make diligent inquisition of it out of hand without any forrowing or partialitie: and that if the murtherer could not bee found, yet if it were within the boundes of any Towne or Citie, inquisition should be made for it round about, and solemne protestation should bee made by those Cities that they were guiltles of the bloudshed before God, and that if they knewe the doer thereof, they would bewray him: and after all this, it behoued them also to offer a sacrifice. And there is not any thing that can better shewe vs how greatly God abhorreth the shedding of mans bloud, than this that wee see that hee willeth the magistrates to come together after that fashion, to doe Iustice for dueties sake of their owne accord, though no man require it at their hand: and also to offer themselues before God in the open face of the world, with protestation that their intent is not to conceale the misdeed, but that they would to the vttermoft of their power auenge it, if it came to their knowledge, without cloaking of it. And yet is not that enough: but they must moreouer adde a sacrifice, to craue pardon at Gods hand, forasmuch as it was his will to humble them, by suffering a manslaughter to be committed within their iurisdiction, and in that they were not able to cleare the land thereof. So then let vs learne, that such as sit in the seate of Iustice must bee watchful, to see that no misdemeanor bee fostered. And if it bee concealed, they must looke diligẽtly to it that it may be brought to light. And when they haue proofe of the matter, they must not bee slacke in punishing of it, vnlesse they will be taken for accessaries before God to y deed doers. Mark y for one point.

And further, in all examinations of matters let Iudges and Iustices haue their eyes open, to see whether folke deale craftily and cunningly or no. And if they did so, there should bee better regard had to proofes than there is. But they let many thinges slippe, and are contented that they shoulde not come to knowledge. And yet doth

doth God shewe here how men ought to behaue themselues in the examination of offences. Wherein we haue a generall lesson that concerneth vs all. For although all of vs bee not ordeined to bee Iustices to beare the sworde for the punishing of offenders: yet doth God graunt vs the honor to bee our owne Iudges. Therefore let vs examine our selues diligently, when any matter befalleth vs, that wee flatter not our selues in our offences and misdealinges. And if we ought to be so diligent in examining our selues, that although wee feele no remorse or heartying of conscience, yet notwithstanding we should sift our selues whether wee bee worthie of blame or not: what ought we to do whē we be conuicted by the witnesse of our owne consciences, so as we perceiue there was some euill affection in vs? Let vs beware that wee can not iustifie our selues then. And so yee see how wee may proceede from one thing to another; namely that inasmuch as wee perceiue the Magistrates are here warned to doe their duetie diligently; wee may gather vppon that particular poynt, that God hath inioyned euery of vs to preferre inditementes against our selues, and to take good heede that wee flatter not our selues in any wise.

But now by the way, to come againe to the examinations which our Lord hath set downe here: it is sayd that *consideration must be had whether there bee hatred betweene the parties that is sayd to haue slayn another, and the other that gaue the stroke.* Let it be considered (saith he) whether there was any hatred betwixt them or no. Here wee see yet better the thing that I touched afore, that is to wit, that all crimes are willing, and that wee must repaire to that fountaine to know whether it bee a crime or no. As for example, If a man haue committed a manslaughter, how may it bee knowen that hee is guiltie of crime or no? By knowing whether hee bare any hatred or malice to the partie or no, saith the Lord. And here we haue to marke first of all, that forasmuch as hatred or malice is the welspring of murther, it is not to bee wondered at, or to be thought straunge, that God should denounce all them to bee murtherers, which hate men in their hartes, and that he should condemne the minde though it lye hidden within. For why? when a murtherer commeth to examination, is the hand to blame? is the sworde to blame? or is the stroke to blame that was giuen? No. But the blame is in the malice that was conceiued afore, which led the hand and prouoked the man to commit the murther. Therefore marke it for a point, that it is not without cause that our Lorde deemeth all those to be murtherers, which doe so hate their neighbors. And the same must warne vs to preuent all daungers, that the sunne go not downe vppon our malice; for in so doing wee giue Satan possession of vs. Ephes. 4. Beware my brethren (sayth S. Paul) that ye giue no place to Satan. And how doe wee giue him place? It is (sayth hee) by suffering the Sunne to goe downe vppon our wrath; for when we feede any harburning within vs, and multiply rancor in our mindes; although wee perceiue it not at the first, yet are we caught with so cursed affection, as we cannot ouercome it afterward. Seeing then that hatred procureth such wickednesse; let euery man looke to himselfe, and when wee be moued to any ill will, although some displeasure be done vnto vs, and it may seeme that we haue iust cause of reuenge as in respect of men; yet notwithstanding let all such thinges be layd aside, and let vs striue earnestly to ouermaister our selues, that our hearts be not hardened for feare least the diuel doe so worke in vs, that the hatred which we haue conceiued to day, do make vs ready to slea & kil to morrow, so as y hart being inuenimed doe cary y hande away in it. Yee see then how it is a thing worthie to be marked.

And generally let vs learne, that to examine our faultes well, we must not onely haue an eye to the thinges that are done by our hands, feete, eyes, & eares: but we must also goe to the inward parts & search our thoughts, our wicked desires, and all the thinges that doe tempt and prouoke vs: for there lyeth the right examination of our sins. When a man goeth about to iustify himself because he hath committed no murther, theft, or whoredome in a actuall deede, & yet is infected with wicked lusts in his hart: his laboring to acquit himselfe after that sort, is in vaine before God. And therefore let vs beare in minde, that to search our selues duely of all our offences and misdoinges, we must enter into our owne consciences, & not only condemne our wicked lustes, but also euen our thoughes wherby we were prouoked & induced to euill, and we must vnderstād that euen that is a damnable sin already before God. Thus ye see what we be taught in this text where it is sayd that inquirie must be made whether the man hated his neighbour before or no.

And here is expresse mention made of the time that went before. In deede in the Hebrewe it is, *yesterday or before yesterday*: but it is but their common phrase of speach, whereby they doe betoken all time that is past. And hereby our Lord meant to declare, that men must not looke onely at the present deede, but that they must proceede further, and see whether any mischief lay lurking afore. For if a man alledge circumstances to cleere himselfe, and bee not found faultie out of hand; that is not yet enough: an eye must be had what went before: the thing may be found out in a moneth which can not be found in a day: and the thing will bee found in a yeere, which is not to be found in a moneth. Now if this ought to be done in earthly Iustice: let euery of vs practise it likewise in our owne behalfe. When wee enter into the consideration of our owne faultes, let vs not looke onely vppon the thinges that are presently falne out; but let vs goe yet further and say; How is this befalne me? It is because I haue nourished this vice long time in me, whereas if I had cut it off at the first, God would not haue left me so much to my selfe. But what? I haue soothed my selfe in mine euill dooinges, and suffered this cursed seede to take roote in my heart, without regar-

ding to represse it, so as it may seeme that I haue bin minded to tempt God wilfully. And therefore it is good reason that I should fall so grossly, sith I my selfe am the cause thereof. Such examination should we make of all our faultes, and not onely condemne our selues for the present deede done, but also proceede further and say; Alas, if I had armed my selfe against Satan or if I had not of long time set open the way for him, or if I had not wrought the meanes for him to beguile me: God had preserued me. But mine owne negligence is to blame for it, thereof it commeth that I haue yeelded my selfe to this wicked lust, against the which I should haue striued at the first. And so yee see yet againe what we haue to marke when wee be to examine our selues well; and what doctrine wee haue to gather of this saying, ỹ inquirie must be made whether there haue bin any former hatred betwixt the parties that are spoken of in this place.

Now finally, whereas it is sayd, *That there is no iudgement of death vppon such a man*, it serueth to proue the thing better, which I haue spoken already: namely that if a man be not guiltie by his own purpose, intēt, or will, he ought not to be taken for an offender. God acquitteth him, and therefore he ought not to bee condemned by men or by any creature. This ought to serue vs for a further confirmation of the doctrine which I take in hand to expound. Men can alwayes wel grant ỹ faults are willing. Whē ỹ Heathen wrate of ỹ matter, they spake after this maner: the Lawe punisheth not the euentes of thinges, but the intences of them. And when the Philosophers wrate thereof, they could wel skill to say, there is neither vice nor vertue which proceedeth not of the will. Yet for all this, we cease not to bleare our owne eyes, neither doe we thinke our selues to haue offended, vnlesse our handes bee bloudy, or that there appeare some euident token to the worldward, or (to be short,) ỹ we be conuicted of the doing of some wicked deed. But ỹ is against my former saying, ỹ is to wit, that all sinnes proceede of the wil. Therefore when wee intend to examine our selues throughly, let vs learn to begin at our wils. And if we finde no euil deed in our selues, ỹ is to say neither malice, nor euil will, thē is it no crime. And whereas I say that euill affection is willing, yet for all that I exclude not mens inquiries: for it is not for naught that God hath distinguished sinnes and misdeedes into two sortes; whereof the one sorte are called crimes, and the other sorte are called ignorances. Although then that men haue no intent or meaning to doe amisse, yet is it not to bee sayd that therefore they bee righteous. But my meaning now is that there be no wicked affection or desire in vs, so as wee bee not disposed to it of any will, but that the whole matter standeth vppon mischaunce that insueth. And I call it mischaunce after the custome of common speach. For it behoueth vs to referre all thinges to Gods prouidence, and not to thinke that any thing can fal out through fortune. Neuertheless it is a common manner of speach among vs, to say that a thing happeneth by chaunce or fortune, when it commeth to passe on our side. That then is the thing in effect, which we haue to note, in that our Lorde sayth that there shall no iudgement of death passe vppon a man that shall haue giuen his neighbour a deadly blowe, without any malice borne to him before: but that hee shall bee quitte, if his stryking of him were without forepurpose or intent of will.

And furthermore wee see here in few words, how our Lorde meant to forbid vs to be mued to anger one against another, and hath vouchsafed to beare with our imperfections so farre, that to eschew greater inconueniences, hee will haue the guiltlesse person to get him out of the way for a time. True it is (as I haue declared heretofore) that his intent is also to shewe how greatly wee ought to abhorre murther. But howsoeuer the case stand, yet it doth behoue vs to marke well Gods gracious goodnesse, in maintaining peace and concorde by all meanes possible. Were wee such as wee ought to bee, there shoulde bee as it were but one common league of fellowship among vs: but now are wee faine to be separated asunder, so as euery man getteth himselfe alone, euery man hath his goods by himselfe, euery man hath his possessions seuerall, and euery man hath as it were a propriete from and that is because of our infirmities. And euen it is that this Lawe might bee general: for there are many other meanes whereby God sheweth vs how he beareth with our infirmities. Is it not a pitious case that two brethren cannot liue quietly together, without contention and strife; and that euen the father and the sonne also should be at the same point? These are shamefull thinges and vtterly against nature, so as it may well bee sayd that we be worse than wilde beastes, seeing that euen they which are linked together in so neere and holy bond, cannot beare one with another that they might liue together in friendship. But what? The vices of men are so great, that to eschewe greater mischiefes, sometime the parties that ought to be neerest together, are faine to be set furthest asunder. And the same maner of dealing doth God vse in this place. Hee will haue a man to forsake his owne house and possessions, and to goe into a strainge place. And wherefore? To the end that the partie which was moued to wrath for loue of his neighbour, should haue no occasion to doe worse, nor bee prouoked by seeing him before his eyes. Now then sith wee see this, let vs briefly marke the goodnes which God vseth towardes vs, which is more than the loue of a father, in that hee beareth with vs in our vices, and findeth fit meanes to keepe vs from flinging out at random, and moreouer giueth vs warning by his owne example to preuent or cut off all occasions of euill. Therefore let vs beware: for the diuell is alwayes watching & will soone take vs in a trip, if we admit neuer so small an occasion of doing euill. So then let vs bridle our selues afore, and be well aduised

shulde, saying thus to our selues: O, if I commit such a thing I may bee tempted with such an euill, and therefore I had need to labour to keepe my selfe from it. For why? The diuell is ouer wyle for me, and if I cast my selfe once into his nettes, what will become of mee? For God sheweth vs howe we ought to liue, and howe to eschue all occasions of euill, and that if there bee any thing that may leade vs to any euil, we must shunne it aforehande. Seeing then that God hath taught vs such a lesson, let vs take heede not onely that wee abstaine from all euill deedes, whereby wee may corrupt and defile our whole life and vtterly cast our selues into all disorder; but also that wee eschewe all thinges that may leade vs to euill by any indirect wayes.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the Maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, that euerie of vs may so bethinke vs of our sinnes, as wee become our owne Iudges and learne to condemne our selues, that wee may obtaine forgiuenesse of the heauenly Iudge; so as hee may pitie vs and bury all our transgressiõs by which we be guiltie before him: and that wee may examine our sinnes narrowly dayly more and more, to the ende that being mortified vnto them, wee may dayly drawe neere to his righteousnesse, whereunto hee calleth vs by his worde. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth &c.

On Friday the vj. of December. 1555

The Cxxij. Sermon which is the second vpon the nineteenth Chapter.

8 And when the Lorde thy God shall haue inlarged thy borders, as hee hath sworne to thy fathers, and hath giuen thee all the lande which he promised to giue to thy fathers:

9 (Condicionally that thou haue an eye to all his commaundementes, to doe them, which I commaunde thee this day, and that thou loue the Lorde thy God, and walke continually in his wayes:) then thou shalt adde three other townes to those three,

10 To the intent that innocent bloude be not shedde in the midst of the Lande which the Lorde thy God giueth thee to inherite, and that bloude bee not vppon thee:

11 But if a man haue hated his neighbour, and haue lyen in waite for him, and risen vp against him, and smitten him that he die, and thereupon be fled into one of those Cities:

12 Then the Elders of that Citie shall sende and take him thence, and deliuer him into the hand of the next kinsman, and he shall die.

13 Thine eye shall not spare him: but thou shalt take away the guiltlesse bloude from Israel, that it may go well with thee.

WE sawe yesterday howe it was Gods will to haue the inconueniences preuented, which are wont to be seene when men suffer occasions of euill vnout off: And that is somwhat better expressed in this saying which Moses addeth: *Beware* (saith he) *that guiltlesse blood bee not shed in thy lande.* Then it is not ynough to punish murthers after they be committed, but we must also haue the wisedome to preuent them aforehande and to take such order as they may not bee committed. And forasmuch as Satan needes but a small gap to thrust vs out at, let vs be watchfull in this cace of preuenting occasions of euill as hath bin said afore. Moreouer let vs also marke this saying, *that the blood shalbe vppon those that suffer things to slip.* For though a man can protest that hee consented not to the doing of an euill deede, yet notwithstanding if he suffered it so as it came to passe through his negligence: he shalbe taken as accessary. The olde prouerbe is true, *he which suffereth a thing to be done and may let it, is the doer of it.* And therefore if a Iudge that hath the sword in his hand do suffer euil deeds to be done and punish them not: it is al one as if he committed them himself. It is not ynough for him to say I would it were otherwise: but he must shew it by his doings. To bee short, when men beare with such as trouble the order of the common weale; it is al one as if they bolstered them in it. Again, by such examples thinges are set at a generall libertie, so as custome is taken for lawe. And therefore looke what mischiefe or inconuenience insueth afterwarde, the blame of it is to bee imputed to those that remedyed it not when time was. That is the cause why it is saide that the bloude shall bee vppon a whole Nation, when men haue not beene held short that they might not commit murthers.

For that maner of speech is verie rife in the Hebrue toung. And in the same respect also did the Iewes say, his bloude be vpon vs and vppon our Matt.27.25. children: that is to say, let the blame lyght vpon vs. We must not bring here fantastical imaginations as the Rabbines (that is to say the Iewish doctors) doo, who alledging abssurde their owne dreames, do say that the soules of the murthered doo aske vengeance continually at Gods hande, vntill they haue had Iustice done vnto them. All such sayinges are but dotages. For although their bloud cry not still, yet doth God heare them, as he himselfe declareth, and there needeth neither sollicitor nor attourney to require iustice at his hande; hee can tell well ynough howe to doe his office, without any importunate calling vppon him. The very Gen.4.10. cause why it is saide that bloude crieth, is for that God hath an eye to the euill that is committed, and it is all one with him as if the case were followed with neuer so great suite. Worldly Iudges make no greate force of a crime when it is committed, vnlesse they bee called vppon verie earnestly, and that the matter bee stoutly pursewed. But God declareth himselfe to be no such, and that his owne seeing of the misdeede is ynough, for nothing can scape him, and therefore it is all one with him as if the whole worlde tooke the quarell in hande, and euerie man followed the suite of it with tooth and nayle. God then taryeth not for our speaking, but as one y knoweth his office welinough, hee can skill to put to his hande when neede is: and therefore let vs tarie his leasure. And surely it is a doctrine of great comfort. For although wee holde our peace when men misuse vs; yet doeth not God faile to haue his hande lifted vp to succour vs. Therefore let vs bee patient in our afflictions and wrongs, and whatsoeuer come of it God will not forefowe: it is ynough that he seeth and perseuere vs wrongfully: let vs content our selues with that: the lesse that wee speake of it, the readier will he be to releeue vs: yea though wee speake not one worde of it: Not that it is not meete for vs to call vppon him, that hee may vouchsafe to pitie vs: but that wee shoulde not bee desirous of reuenge, nor beare any malice to our enemies. If wee holde our peace in that respect, and tary Gods leasure for the succour which it shall please him to sende vs: let vs not doubt but he will doe his office, and therfore let vs comfort our selues with that hope.

Moreouer forasmuch as it is saide that the bloude shall be vppon vs; les vs bee afraide of it: and although wee bee not pursued nor complaind of by men, yet let vs assure our selues our market is neuer a whit amended by it, for God sleepeth not, but marketh all the misdeedes that are done, and they must all needes come to account. Therefore let vs bee pure before him: and let vs not onely abstaine from euill deedes, but also beware that wee consent not to any euill, for then shall wee bee holde as accessaries, and wrappe our selues in the same condemnation with the deede doers, as it is wittnessed vnto vs heere. For God speaketh not onely to the murtherers themselues, but also to all the people. When this Lawe is broken and murthers are freely committed for want of good execution of Iustice; God saieth not that hee will require it at the hande of two or three, but at the handes of all in generall. Now then seeing the case standeth so, what shall become of those that are in authoritie and reigne in the state of Iustice, when they themselues are accessaries? Shall not they bee the first that shall answere for it? To bee short, wee haue to gather vppon this text, that when an outrage or wrong is done to any man, not onely the principall shall bee punished, but also the whole Nation in common shall haue the curse lye vppon them, and must come to rechening for it before God. To our seeming it is ynough when wee can say, that wee woulde faine that men should liue in peace, and yet in the meane while wee see men grieued and vexed before our eyes, and wee vouchsafe not to open our mouthes to succour the innocent, but though wee haue both opportunitie and abilitie, yet we let al slippe, & we beare our selues in hande that God ought not to require it at our handes: but heere wee see the contrarie. Let vs make well then, that to the vttermost of our power, wee must set our selues in defense of the innocents so as they may not bee vexed, forced or troubled, nor might bee suffered to ouerrun right, as they say. Let euery of vs in his degree looke to the remedying hereof. Let such as haue the sworde of iustice shewe themselues stout in this case and not suffer disorder to haue full scope. And as for those that are not of abilitie, let them yet at leastwise doe the best they can to comfort such as haue no body to vpholde them. And when wee see these lustie gallantes steppe vp and take more vppon them than is lawfull; let vs become their enemies, let vs hinder their misdealings, and let vs withstand them. That is the thing which we be bounde vnto by Gods worde; otherwise wee shall bee holde as accessaries to their misdoings. If wee haue not preuented them, it is a consenting to them, and God must demaund an account of it at our hands.

Heere it is to be noted further, that where as God saieth *that the people of Israel shall adde three other Cities of refuge, after that their bounds are inlarged*: thereby wee bee done to vnderstande, that the more power and ability that GOD giueth vs, the more are wee bounde to employ it, to comfort innocentes, and to succour them at their neede. And this ought to be put in vre generally by all men of authoritie and gouernours. The more power then that a Magistrate hath, the more ought hee to thinke himselfe bounde to maintaine the good and guiltlesse vnder his protection, and to bee a help to them that they be not troubled. Oftimes hee that woulde releeue good men, is not able: yea and peraduenture he himself also shall be oppressed. In such cases we must haue recourse vnto God, & bow down our sholders, tarying till he haue

hame plaie vppon vs, and in the meane while we muſt arme our ſelues with patience. But when a man is armed with Gods power; then it ſhall not be ynough for him to miſlike of thinges, and to bee ſomewhat ſorie for them; but hee muſt alſo imploy the authoritie that God giueth him, and the ſame rule ought to be obſerued of euery of vs particularly. To be ſhort, foraſmuch as God giueth power to Kings, Princes, and all other Magiſtrates; they ought to imploy all that euer they haue, to the defence of thoſe whome God hath committed to their charge, and to deale in ſuch ſort as their ſubiects be not wrongfully moleſted. Lo heere a rule that concerneth ſuch as haue the ſworde of iuſtice in their hand. Nearetheleſſe, it behoueth euery of vs to follow the ſame order. And although we be not armed with the ſworde of Iuſtice; yet notwithſtanding if God giue vs any abilitie or opportunitie, let vs looke to it that we help the good and ſuccour them in their neede. Therefore if a rich man ſee a poore man ſuffer wrong; let him helpe him and releeue him. If a man of diſcretion ſee a poore man deſtitute of counſell, ſo as he knoweth not what to doe: let him giue him his aduiſe as the caſe ſerueth. If a man haue credit where-by he may deliuer them that are in diſtreſſe: let him likewiſe imploy it for his part. Thus yee ſe howe wee ought to put this ſaying in vre, *When God ſhall haue inlarged thy bounds, then ſhalt thou adde three Cities more*. Yee ſee heere howe our Lorde meaſureth his ordinance for the reliefe of good men, and of ſuch as were in daunger without deſerning it or without any gilt. Therefore his will is to haue the thing doubled which he had ordeined for their reliefe. And why ſo? his is to doe vs to vnderſtande, that the mo benefits we haue receiued at Gods hande, the more are wee bound and indetted both to God and to our neighbours.

But nowe let vs come to that which Moſes inſtructeth heere, *inſomuch as thou ſhalt obſerue all theſe things which I commande thee, to loue the Lorde thy God, to keepe all his commaundements, and to walke in his feare*. Heere hee maketh (as yee would ſay) a kinde of coniuratiõ, as if he ſhould adiure the people after this manner: Looke vnto this commaundement that yee deſpiſe it not, if yee loue the Lorde your God and ſeeke to obey him. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, In deede a man woulde thinke at the firſt ſight that this were nothing: but be you ſure that your God will haue you to obſerue ſuch humanitie diligently. And therein hee trieth whether yee bee louing and obedient vnto him or no. To bee ſhort, Moſes meant to ſhewe heere, that this commaundement is of greate importance before God, to the intent that men ſhoulde not deſpiſe it. And herewithall wee haue to marke, that we cannot omitte any of the thinges that God commaundeth, without doing wrong to the Lawmaker: for it is an imbaſing of his authoritie. And for that cauſe is it ſaide that hee which deſpiſeth any of the leaſt thinges that are conteined in the Lawe, and imbreweth men with the like contempe, ſhal be called the leaſt in the kingdome of heauen; that is to ſay, ſhall be vtterly ſhaken off. Our Lorde then wil haue vs to reuerence his Lawe, and to obſerue it without reſpect of this or that, ſo as wee muſt not alledge, This is a ſmall matter, this a veniall ſinne, there is no greate conſcience to bee made of it. When GOD hath opened his holy mouth, and vouchſafed to ordeyne one thing or other; becommeth it vs to make ſmall account of it? If a Lorde Great maſter ſpeake a thing, men ſay not; is the matter greate or ſmall? but thus they ſay, the king ſpake it. And if that that may ſuffice in mortall creatures; ſhall wee replie to the contrarie, and make it an occaſion of euill doing and of rebelling againſt the liuing God, when he declareth his will vnto vs? Shall wee ſay it is a thing of no great importance, and that it is not ſo grieuous and heynous an offence? Indeede there are ſome commaundementes which our Lorde vrgeth more than otherſome, but yet muſt wee in all caſes and all reſpectes obſerue that which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſaieth: Thoſe things ought to bee done, and the other not to bee left vndone: ſo that foraſmuch as God hath giuen vs his Lawe, it behoueth vs to keepe it, and not to diuide it; as who ſhoulde ſay, I will keepe this point, and let that paſſe alone. Nay, if wee beleeue God, wee muſt looke that wee ſubmit our ſelues to him, yea euen to the vttermoſt title. But nowe let vs conſider howe it is ſaide here, *aſmuch as thou ſhalt not miſſe of the leaſt thinges*. Here Moſes driueth men to the obſeruing of the Lawe, when any particular thing is to bee done which God hath ordeined. And it is as much as if hee ſhoulde ſay, Haue an eye to the Lawmaker which ruleth you. Therefore when wee haue any thing to doe, we muſt alwayes haue this conſideration with vs, to thinke that God declareth his will therein: and that muſt ſuffice vs. Why ſo? For there is but one rule of welldoing; and to call the thinges in queſtion which are conteined in his Lawe, is al one as if we refuſed to bee ruled by the mouth and worde of God. Therefore the Lawe muſt haue his full courſe, and we muſt not go about to ſeparate the thinges which God hath ſo knit and vnited together.

But heerewithall Moſes bringeth vs backe againe to the thing that hee had treated of afore; that is to wit, which is the true keeping of the Lawe, and to what ende it tendeth. The true keeping of the Lawe is to giue eare vnto God in all that hee ſaieth. Keepe all the commaundementes (ſaieth hee), as if hee ſhoulde ſay, wee muſt not ſerue God after our owne liking, when thinges come to paſſe according to our heartes deſire: neither muſt wee take leaue to diſpence with our ſelues, when wee meete with any thing that is harde. It is not for vs to parte ſtakes with GOD after that manner: but wee muſt call to minde howe Sainct Iames ſaieth, that he which breaketh any one point is guiltie of the whole law. The reaſon is the ſame which I haue alleadged afore, namely that when wee incounter Gods ordinaunce, wee deface his maieſtie as much

Mat. 23. 23

Deut. 6. 24. 25.

Iames 2. 10.

much as in vs lieth.

True it is that wee can neuer fulfil Gods law, I say there was neuer yet so perfect a man in the worlde, but hee came farre short of the perfection that God sheweth vs. But yet must wee tende towardes it: though wee bee farre off from the marke, and but halfe way onwarde of our iourney; yet must wee goe forwarde still, and not thinke to content God by doing some little peece of it for the loue of him, and in the rest take leaue to behaue our selues as wee list. Let vs not thinke that God admitteth such compositions: but that wee must in all pointes conforme our whole life to his will. And although wee attaine not to the full performance; yet our desire must bee to doe so as I haue declared afore.

And nowe let vs come to that which hee addeth, namely to what end the keeping of Gods Lawe tendeth, that is to wit that we should loue him. Whereby wee bee done to vnderstande, that our Lordes intent is not to drawe vs to a slauish fearefulnesse, but to haue vs to take pleasure and delight in honouring him, and in doing his commaundementes: for it is certaine that without this loue, all our seruice shalbee refused as vnprofitable. In deede this matter hath beene expounded alreadie heeretofore: neuertheleſſe it is good reason that wee shoulde bee put in remembrance of it, as oft as the holy Ghost speaketh thereof: for heere is no superfluitie. And it is a doctrine that wee cannot be perswaded of at the first, that it behoueth vs to serue God freely and with a willing loue. Truely wee must not loue God as our fellowe or mate: but wee must stande in awe of him, not as inforced by neceſſitie, so as we shoulde grinde our teeth in grudging against him; but as yeelding our hearres to him, by setting all our delight in his Lawe, as Dauid
Pſal. 19.11. protesteth himselfe to haue done, by which example of his hee sheweth vs also our dewtie. Yee see then howe GOD requireth that wee shoulde serue him of free will, yea and that wee shoulde also loue him. And indeede whence proceedeth true obedience, but of the knowledge of the will of our GOD, and that wee take him for our father, to the ende that wee on our side might behaue our selues like childré towardes him? Vntill wee be come to that point, it is vnpossible for vs to goe about to serue our GOD with a good will: wee shall haue nothing but stubbornenesse in vs, so as (if it were possible) wee coulde finde in our hearts neuer to come at him. But when wee haue once tasted of his goodnesse; then are wee allured to loue him out of hand.

Seeing then that men haue felt God a father towardes them; it becommeth them to answere him in like sort againe, and to bee as children towardes him. And so wee see heere againe, howe the Lawe may bee duely kept by vs: that is to witte, by louing our GOD. For thereuppon it will come to passe that wee shall walke in all his wayes, for God cannot bee diuided from his worde. If we loue him, it is certaine that wee will indeuour to please and obey him. And this is seene euen among mortall men: but yet there is a peculiar cause therof in God. For (as I saide afore) God is neuer separated from his righteousnesse, which hee declareth vnto vs in his Lawe. Then if wee loue him, we must needes like well of his Lawe, and take pleasure in obseruing the same. And therefore if a man say, I loue GOD, I feare him, I honour him; and in the meane while despise his worde, and make no reckening of it: it is but hypocrisie matched with shamelesnesse. For as I haue saide already, it is vnpossible that God shoulde transforme himselfe, to become as an ydoll by surceasing from his righteousnesse which in verie deede is his very proper being. So then it is to be concluded, that we cannot otherwise loue our God, than by giuing our selues ouer vnto him, by indeuoring to serue and please him.

But nowe let vs come to that which is saide concerning such as woulde needes abuse the priuiledge by withdrawing themselues to the Sanctuarie when they had commited a murther. *If it happen that a man which hated his neighbour and killed him, doe flee to the place of priuiledge: let the Elders of that place*, that is to say the Rulers or Gouernours, (for it is a name of office): *let the Gouernours and Iudges and Magistrates, take him and fetch him thence*, that is to say, let thé fetch him from the priuiledged place by strong hand, *and put him into the handes* (of him *that ought to reuenge the bloudshed*, or of him) demaundeth Iustice, *that he may be put to death, and let not thine eye spare him*, that is to say, haue no pitie nor compassion on him. By cause we be moued when we see a man lament, and our eyes relent at it: that is to say, if wee see a man in extreame heauinesse of minde, by and by wee bee mooued to pitie his case: our Lorde saieth that hee will not haue him to bee pitifull, nor in any wise to relent, which ought to execute Iustice. Goe to worke stoutly (saieth hee), and let the offender bee punished, notwithstanding his misclaiming of the priuiledge which GOD had graunted for such as are guiltlesse and not for such as are faultie. This was declared partly yesterday: but it is well worthie to bee laide foorth more at large. To bee shorte, let vs haue an eye to the expounding of Moseses wordes, and it will suffice vs: for thereuppon wee easily gather a lesson greatly to our behoofe. The wordes are, *If a man shall haue hid his neighbour of prepensed malice and lying in waite for him, doe get him into one of those franchised Cities*. Wherein wee see that the wicked doe alwayes seeke to abuse the thinges that are ordeyned for the succour of good men, and are boldest in taking the benefite of them. The Magistrate therefore must haue an eye thereunto, and beware that the wicked abuse not the things that are graunted for the releefe of Gods children: for that is too great a shorning of Lawes. And it is not without cause that our Lorde speaketh of it heere: for it sheweth that the like

like kinde of corrupt dealing hath beene in all ages: and we must not marueil at it, seeing that the world is not amended since, but rather appaired. Let vs looke well about vs therefore, that if a man which hath committed any misdede doe go about to hide himselfe or to scape away by some vndirect meanes, it may not auaile him. That is the thing which wee haue to marke in the first place.

And whereas it is said that the *Iudges shall pull him out*: it serueth to shewe that it is not ynough for men to make good Lawes & statutes; but there must also be corage to execute them; there must bee a stoute and constant minde in those that beare authoritie. For although that Lawes be proclaimed by the sound of the trumpe, and written of recorde with neuer so great solemnitie: yet are they but deade and all is nothing worth, except that they which sit in the seate of Iustice, haue the constancie that our Lorde inioyneth heere, and be stout in maintaining the things that are inacted, that men may not laugh them to skorne as we see that the wicked doe, which make but a mocke at them. If a Lawe haue once beene proclaimed, they beare themselues in hande that it will be buried within three or foure dayes after. Yee see then howe it is a good and profitable warning for all such as haue the sworde of iustice in hande, to haue this stoutnesse of minde and constancie. And for as much as it is not to be founde in men, (for it is a speciall vertue attributed to the spirite of God): let such as are in office beseech God to strengthen them, so as they may vse force of hande when neede requireth, and not be afraide when they see such troubles as might abash them, but stoutly withstande them, yea and also outstande them. That is one thing further which wee haue to marke vpon this place.

Now this thing is to be applyed likewise to the behoofe of euery of vs. I say let priuate persons also looke well to the repressing of euill doings, and that with such stoutnesse that although they be threatned to put them in feare, yet it may not turne them away from doing their dutie. For what a thing were it if we should bee afraide at euery turne? The lifting vp of a mans little finger would scarre vs; and though we were neuer so willing to doe our duetie, yet if any misshapped afore vs to turne vs from our purpose, euery word of his mouth (as I saide) would bee ynough to put vs out of hart. But the case concerneth the seruing of our God, wherein we must ouercome all the assaults of Satan, and all the impediments that the world can deuise. Nowe if it behoue vs to fight so valiantly against Satan & all his indeuors: should we be afraide of men, or stand in dreade of them? Should they so scarre vs that we should leaue our God behind? So the, to the intent we may do our duetie, let vs learne to strengthen our selues. And at one word, it standeth vs in hande to marke wel, that no man shal euer discharge his duetie towardes God, except he inforce himselfe and haue such a courageous constancie, as may surmounte al temptations: and that is a thing greatly for our behoofe to marke. For a hundred times a day shall we haue occasions to thrust vs out of the way; & we resist them full coldly. Againe, if we be to do any good, wee make excuses and say, I would faine do my duetie, but I see such an impediment, and by that meanes I am holde backe. Because that they which are vnder the tyranny of the Pope in these dayes, cannot haue leaue to doe well and to serue God purely, without putting of their liues in hazard: they beare themselues in hande that they bee discharged, when they can make this excuse to say, I woulde faine doe otherwise, but I am not suffered to do it, it shall neuer come to account before God. And we needе not to go farre for proofe of the matter. Euen here where there is no persecution to hinder the seruing of God, but rather incouragement to men to do wel, yet neuertheleſſe wee haue many distresses. For Satan is subtle ynough to finde euerie day newe inuentions to turne vs from the right way. What remaineth then, but to go to it with force, and to doe our indeuour to serue our God in such wise, that if we meete with any lets to turne vs aside, they may bee ouercome by the constancie and corage that I spake of, which it behoueth vs to require of the holy Ghost.

Furthermore let vs marke, *that the offender must bee deliuered into the hande of him that is to auenge the bloudshedde, or els of him that demaundeth iustice*: Whereby we may perceiue that God alloweth no [priuate] reuenges. For wee knowe what rule is giuen vs in the holy scripture: My brethren, (saith S. Paul) forbeare reuenge, yea, Rom.12.19. desire it not: but put it altogether into the handes of the heauenly Iudge, to whome it belongeth. Nay (which more is) wee bee commaunded to render good for euill, to pray for Matt.5.44. them that curse vs, to doe good to our enemies and to such as persecute vs. Sith it is so then, wee must assure our selues, and be fully resolued of it, that our Lorde will haue our affections bridled, so as we desire not any reuenge though cause thereof bee ministred, but rather strine to ouercome the euill by doing good. Lo where vnto God calleth vs. And why then is it saide heere, that the offender shall bee put into the hande of him that requireth Iustice? Let vs note that the Lawes which are made for ciuill or outwarde gouernement, serue not to ouerrule mens affections: they be things that go asunder. Trueth it is that they bee not repugnant, neither is there any contrarietie in them: but we must haue the discretion to consider, that when God spake as king of Israel and made statutes but for cõmon policie, he respected not the spirituall perfection that is contained in the law which is our rule to all holinesse and righteousnesse. A Iudge therefore may well agree to one that requireth Iustice at his hande; and although he bee ledde with wicked affection, yet ought the Iudge to graunt him his right. And that is for our profite. For many men beare thẽselues in hand, that so they vse the ordinary way of Iustice, it is lawfull for them to doe what they can, & they shall not be condemned for it before

God,

God, if their quarell bee iuſt. But it may fall out many a time, that a quarell ſhalbe iuſt, and a man ſhall purſue it by good meanes; and yet in the meane while hee ſhall not faile to be worthie of blame before God. For there are three thinges required. The quarell muſt firſt bee iuſt and good: ſecondly the meane muſt be lawfull: and thirdly the affection muſt bee pure and well ruled. Nowe this thirde point wanteth in moſt men. As howe? Some man perchaunce is miſuſed, and hee hath iuſt cauſe to require redreſſe at the Iudges hand: hee intendeth neither to ſtrike nor to practiſe any thing againſt his aduerſarie by treacherie, but reſorteth to the Iuſtice: this is a lawfull remedie, it is ordeined of God, wee may ſafely vſe it with good conſcience. So are there two of the pointes to bee founde heere. But yet this man that hath the iuſt cauſe, and ſeeketh no remedie but by order of Iuſtice, faileth not ſomtimes to doe amiſſe. As howe? If he haue a deſire of reuenge in his heart, if hee conceiue ſuch rancour that hee ſeeketh to bee ſo reuenged as the partie may perceiue he hath done euill; and cannot bee contented and ſatisfied till hee ſee himſelfe to haue requited like for like to him y hath offended him: ſuch a man is blameable before God. For he taketh couert vnder the name of Iuſtice, to be reuenged of his enemie. It is in vaine for him to alledge the goodneſſe of his quarell; for hee doeth but abuſe the remedie that God had ordeined. What is to be done then? When wee bee deſirous to demaunde Iuſtice, let euery of vs enter into our ſelues and examine what our affections are, and ſee that wee bee cleare from all ill will. When there is ſuch ſoundneſſe in vs; then is it lawfull for vs to purſue offences done againſt vs, and to require that they may be puniſhed, namely ſo there be no rancour nor malice in our heartes. Nowe then if a man haue none other reſpect than the puniſhing of the miſdeede, and that he hate not the partie ne bee ledde by any wicked deſire: then ſhal he bee allowed of God, and not otherwiſe. But ſuch examples are verie rare. For as ſoone as men begin to go to Lawe, by and by enmitie bewrayeth it ſelfe, and ſuch a fire is kindled as cannot be quenched, ſo as this prouerbe is verie true, that ſuit in Lawe and friendſhippe are two thinges that can hardly ioyne to together. Nowe then let vs bethinke our ſelues, and not imagine that the hauing of good right, and our ſeeking of it by order of Law, can vtterly excuſe vs before God: for our hearts muſt be clenſed from all euill will, and from all wicked affection as I ſaide before. Moreouer let vs marke wel the concluſion which is added in this place: When Moſes ſaith thine eye ſhall not ſpare the man that hath ſo treacherouſly murthered his neighbour of ſet purpoſe; if a murther bee committed in heate of choler as they ſay, it ſhall not bee helde excuſed, but the lande ſhall abide ſtill defiled, vntill it be puniſhed. This was declared ſufficiently yeſterday. Now he treateth here of a more heynous murther: which is, that a man hauing conceiued hatred and rancour againſt his neighbour, lyeth in waite for him, and killeth him wilfully: for that is the name that is proper to the murthers that are committed of ſet purpoſe and prepenſed malice. And ſuch kinde of murther is vnpardonable: to graunt fauour in ſuch a caſe, is to ouerthrowe the whole order of nature, and all lawes written. So then it is not without cauſe y God ſaith here, thine eye ſhall not ſpare him. For ſometime wee make our market of other mens welfare, of their preſence of their harmes, according to the common prouerbe, which ſaith that wee cut large thongs of other mens lether. When a man hath offended, the Iudge, who was not hurt by it, as ſuffered any harme, will eaſily pardon it. What ſaith hee? It was a ſmall matter. But if a man had done the like to him: he could finde in his heart that God ſhoulde thunder downe from heauen for the puniſhing thereof: and yet [in another mans caſe] hee doeth make a mowe at it. Tuſh (ſaies he) this may well be let ſlippe, this will vaniſh away of it ſelfe. See howe a man ſhall oftentimes be moued to pitie and compaſſion towards ſome one, and deale cruelly with ſome other: yea he wil become cruel to a whole realme to ſpare one man. This is dayly ſeene: O ſay they, this poore man is to bee pitied. Yea, but in the meane time, if a wicked deede do paſſe vnpuniſhed, all y whole realme is defiled and corrupted by it, and it is a prouoking of Gods wrath againſt the whole Nation. Againe, when take example by it to giue themſelues to all leawdneſſe, when they bee in hope that crimes ſhall eſcape vnpuniſhed. Men conſider not that ſuch kinde of mercie is the cauſe of innumerable cruelties, and that it turneth to the common confuſion of all men. And therefore whereas our Lord ſaith that we muſt not ſpare him that hath done ſuch euill deedes; it is to ſhewe that we muſt not be mercifull after our owne maner, to ouerthrowe a great number for the ſparing of one man; but that we muſt haue an eye to right and indifferencie.

And herewithall he ſheweth vs againe, howe deare our liues are to him, in that hee will not ſuffer a murther to be committed, without vengeance for it. Herein wee ſee (ſay I) his fatherly care ouer vs. Now if he ſet ſuch ſtore by this tranſitorie life, and ſhewe himſelfe to be the defender thereof: what will he do touching the life of our ſoules? Well hath hee ſhewed by one gage howe greatly he loueth it, and what ſtore he ſetteth by it, in that he hath not ſpared his owne ſonne for it. Then let vs bethinke vs heere, that ſeeing our Lorde telleth vs howe he hath a care of this tranſitorie life, and vouchſafeth to take it into his cuſtodie, whereby hee ſheweth his fauour and goodnes towards vs in that behalfe, in ſo much y although our bodies bee but wormes and rottennieſſe, yet notwithſtanding he vouchſafeth to ſtoope ſo lowe as to haue regarde of it. We ought to conſider well ſuch goodneſſe, and to beare in minde that ſeeing God loueth vs ſo much, we ought not to bite one another, nor to be as cats and dogs, ſith our God wil haue vs to be knit ſo together in y bonde of brotherly loue.

There-

Therefore inasmuch as we knowe Gods goodnesse and fatherly loue towards vs; let vs learne to refraine our selues from doing any harme or wrong to our neighbours. And afterwarde let the same leade vs yet further: that is to witte, that forasmuch as God holdeth vs vnder his protection, and holdeth out his hand to succor vs in the mean season must looke vp higher, namely to the heauenly life which he hath prepared for vs; not douting but that hee will preserue our soules much more then our bodies. Let vs be fully resolued of that, to the intent that we may call vppon him with full boldnesse. And although wee bee beset with infinite dangers, yet let vs go forwarde still, assuring our selues that our God wil strengthen vs, seeing hee hath a care of vs. And moreouer, that although no man require reuenge for vs; yet he himselfe will require it. Therefore let vs be contented to bee in such wise vnder his protection, that if any man do vs any outrage, hee will haue his hande lifted vp to succour vs at our neede. Let vs content our selues therewith, say I; and let vs walke on in simplicitie and vprightnesse being patient in all our aduersities, waiting Gods leasure til he prouide conuenient remedie for vs. And as for those that sit in the seate of Iustice, and haue authoritie in their hand; let them also doe their office duly, so as they may yeeld a good & faithfull account of their doings at the last day.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better thā we haue done, that we may be drawen more and more to true repentance, and be so cast downe in our selues, as wee may rise vp againe in him & seeke him, and so rest vppon his promises, that through his inuincible power we may fight valiantly both against Satan and all his champions, and also against the worlde: and that although wee bee sometimes hindered to serue him, yet we may go through with our race, vntil wee be come to the marke whereunto hee calleth vs. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not only to vs, but also to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the vij. of December. 1555.

The Cxiiij. Sermon which is the third vpon the nineteenth Chapter.

14 Thou shalt not remoue thy neighbours boundes which bounded thy predecessours in thine heritage that thou shalt possesse in the lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee to possesse.

15 Let not one witnesse alone rise vp against a man for any maner of trespasse or fame, or for any fault that he offendeth in: but at the worde of two or three witnesses shall the matter be stablished.

FOr the better vnderstanding of that which is commaunded and forbidden heere concerning bounds or limits; we haue to marke first of all, that God in giuing the land of Chanaan to his people, had ordeined that partitions should bee made, and his intent was the same shoulde continue for euer. For although sales were made; yet behooued it that in the yeare of Iubily, all things should returne to their former state againe. And Eleazer the highpriest & Iosua were to make those partitions, which shoulde indure to the end. Nowe there was moreouer assigned to euery house an inheritance. For the trybes hauing parted the lande after that manner, agreed afterward as touching the heads of their houses: but yet for al that, it behooued the former partition to continue still, and that the others nevertheless should inioy their goods; and that if any sale were made, it should bee vnder such condition, as euery man might afterwarde returne to his owne inheritance, at the time that God had appointed. Now let vs come to that which is said here. Gods wil is that the *boundes* (which we in this countrey call *limites*) *shoulde remaine fast, so as no man might alter any of them:* and this serued as well for the vniuersall inheritance of the whole body of the nation, as for the peculiar possessions of euery seueral person. And although there was a special reason for the people of Israel (as I haue touched heretofore:) yet did the heathen know well ynough, that if the same thing were not obserued otherwhere also, there woulde bee no vprightnesse among men, but all would go to confusion. And therefore they held it for a crime, when any man altered the landmarks, & it was counted a kind of falshood euen among the Heathen. And to the intent it should be taken for a holy matter, they made a God of it, according to their cōmon maner, which was to mingle some superstition with their matters to hold folke in awe, when they intended to bridle them. Now it was a diuelish inuention to set vp an ydol for the maintenance of equitie between men. Yet notwithstāding, we see how nature hath alwayes taught vs this principle, that if bounds & limits were not kept and maintayned, there would be a horrible confusion among men, and no lawes would be any longer kept. Therefore to benefite our selues by this text, we must marke two things. The one is not onely that the children of Israel had the possession of the lande of Chanaan of Gods gifts; but also that

the partitions therof were made by his apoynt-
ment & authoritie. The other is, ỳ if the like or-
der be not kept among other men; there wilbee
neither equitie nor vpright dealing, but al wilbe
full of theeuerie & quareling.

Now as touching Gods bounding of the land
in that wise; wee may vnderstande thereby what
care he had of his people, how ỳ in so doing hee
shewed himselfe a father. Againe it was to ỳ end
that the trybes should alwayes be seuered, so as
there might be no confusion, because the trybe
Gen. 49. 10. of Leuie was to haue the priesthood; & the re-
deemer was to come of ỳ tribe of Iuda. In these
respects it was Gods will that this order should
be kept among his people: the mainteining of ỳ
bounds was not for their possessions sake, but
for the respects afore mentioned. And wee in
these days must aboue all things marke ỳ afore-
touched thing, that is to wit, the saide equitie,
which cannot be continued betweene man and
man, vnlesse their grounds be bounded our, so as
euery man may knowe his own possessions. And
this serueth as wel for kingdoms & lordships, as
Deut. 32. 8. for priuate possessions. It is said in the Psalme ỳ
our Lord pitched the bounds of kingdomes, at
such time as it pleased him that the nations
should be diuided asunder. But we see howe the
couetousnesse, ambition, and vnsatiable greedi-
nesse of princes hath put all out of order, & there
is not so holy a thing that can stay them from in
croching vppon the bounds of their neighbors
& next borderers. For when they seeke so to in-
large their own dominions, it is a breaking of ỳ
order of nature. Behold, God hath separated
one nation from another: and it is to the ende
that all should liue, and communicate one with
another, and that there might bee no confused
disorder. Ye see then how all men ought to hold
themselues contented with their own boundes.
But men play the loose colts; their couetousnes
carryeth them away; al their seeking is to make
themselues stil greater. We see then ỳ the wars
which are taken in hand vpon ambition, or co-
uetousnes, are as a spiting of God, by peruerting
the order which he hath set in nature, & which
he would haue kept as most holy. Now then sith
we see such confusion, we haue good cause to be
sorie, & to think it no wonder though so great a
mischiefe drawe a long taile after it. For when
God is so despised, by the peruerting of his or-
der, needes must horrible curses insue vppon it.
Thus much concerning the first point.

And herewithal let vs marke, that when men
go about to inriche themselues by wicked and
vnlawful meanes, it is a plucking vp of ỳ bounds
and limits as men terme them: and that is a
plaine falshood. What is to be done then? Like as
weights and measures ought to bee maintained
iustly, & likewise coynes, because that if faith-
fulnes be not obserued in them, there can be no
more dealing betweene mã & man: so are boũds
and landmarks to be kept & mainteined also. If
weights and measures be false, there wilbee no
more merchandise: there can bee neither bying
nor selling: men shall become as wilde beastes
among themselues. If coyne bee not lawfull, all
must needs turne to theeuerie & sleight. The
like reason is in bounds & limits. And therfore
let vs marke that Gods commaunding of vs to
maintaine them is not without cause: but that
vnder that one particular kind, he comprehen-
deth all other things; shewing thereby, that wee
must be careful to keepe the thinges which wee
know to be necessarie for the maintenance of ỳ
cõmon weale, & of louing kindnes betweene man
& man. That is the thing which wee haue to re-
member vpon this part of the text.

Also it is expounded allegorically by such as
wold haue men to hold themselues in al things
& in al respects to antiquitie. They be of opini-
on ỳ God would haue men to direct themselues
by the lawes & ordinances of their auncestors, &
that nothing should be changed which had see-
med to be good aforetimes. Yes, but we know, ỳ
though a thing be ancient, if it be not also good,
antiquitie doth but increase the euilnesse of it.
And therefore what a thing were it, if we should
be bound to obserue al things without exception
which our auncestors haue done or said? Indeed
changes are always to be feared, & we must es-
chue them as much as we can: but yet are ỳ Pa-
pists so much the more fond & foolish to say, O,
we may not alter the bounds which our ance-
stors haue set: & therfore wee must not nowe re-
ceiue any new thing. Truely they misunderstand
the case, in taking vs to bring any nouelrie into
the world. For what require we, but ỳ gods word
which hath bin at all times, should bee set vp a-
gaine? Whereas it hath bin troden vnder foote
heretofore, & vtterly forgotten; wee seeke to set
it in ỳ former state & authoritie. That is all ỳ we
desire. But vnder pretence of the ancient boũds
the meaning of ỳ Papists is to maintaine them-
selues in possession of all their errors, ỳ dolatries, & abhominations, which are so grosse as it
would pitie a mans hart to think on them, & eue
blind folks may feele them. Seeing thẽ that they
be so wilful, it is a flat mockerie to alleage these
things in defence of their so long continued er-
rors, which our Lorde hath ordeined heere for
worldly policie, & to the end ỳ equitie & vpright
dealing might be maintained among men.

Let vs marke then, ỳ as touching Gods word,
& as touching the doctrine of saluation, we had
neede of another maner of antiquitie than the
antiquitie of men. In this case it is not for vs to
stand vpon the decrees of our forefathers: but
God must be he by whom our faith must bee di-
rected. Ye see then how we must resort to Gods
euerlastingnes, if we wil make a sure foundatiõ.
Neuertheless, as concerning mennes lawes, an-
tiquitie is to be honoured, so as thinges be not
changed vpon foolish curiositie and rashnes for
that were to bee euer newe to begin. Therefore
let men hold them to the ancient lawes as much
as is possible. But when necessitie requireth al-
teration; there our Lorde wil haue vs to vse the
meanes ỳ he sheweth & putteth into our handes
& thẽ to be wilfully addicted to antiquity, is ve-
ter beetlines. As touching equity, (as Moses saith
here) let men beware of remouing their bounds,
& let euery man content himself w his owne, &

not

not incroche vpon his neighbor or next dweller by. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to mark vpon this place.

Now here is another lawe, *That one witnesse alone shal not be beleeued in any criminal cause, whether it be trespasse, offence, or forfait, but that the cause shall stande in the mouth of two or three witnesses.* This law hath beene admitted by men, without knowing that euer Moses spake it. For in very deede our Lord hath printed the things in mens heartes, which he did set forth in writing to his people. Surely it was a speciall grace that he vouchesafed to take vppon him the office of a lawgiuer to the people of Israel. Yet notwithstanding he would not haue men so brutish, as to bee without these groundes of equitie, euen as they are contained in the law of Moses. Seeing then that there is such agreeablenes, let vs note that God neuer left mankinde without some seede of vprightnesse remaining in them. True it is that men are sore blynded by reason of Adams sinne: but yet hath our Lorde left stil a certaine discretion ingrauen in their hearts, and that is but only to make them vnexcusable, as saith S. Paul in the first chapter to the Romanes. Howbeit, there was this further regard also, that mankind might be maintained, & that there might bee some difference betweene men & beasts. That is the thing which we haue to learn by the agreeablenes þ is found to be betweene the law of Moses & all the states of gouernment that haue bin among all the Heathen in the world.

Rom. 1.

Moreouer wee must vnderstande howe it was Gods intent to ratifie the thing among his own people, which was alreadie knowen & obserued of all men, to þ intent that it might be of þ more authoritie. For not only the consciences of the people of Israel did prooue it vnto them þ there could be no order among men, without þ things þ are contained here: but also they were taught by Gods own mouth, & therfore it behooued them to condescend to his saying with all feare & reuerence. Yee see then that the people of Israel had a great aduantage, & so haue wee at this day, inasmuch as wee be succeeded in their roome. But nowe let vs come to that which is said here.

Our Lord wil not haue any one witnesse to be beleeued in any case: that is to say, hee will not haue his euidence credited, to giue sentence vpon it. In deede witnesses must needs be admitted for vntill they haue beene heard, a man can not tell what they wil say. Sometimes it falleth out þ foure or fiue witnesses are brought forth in one case, & none of them all deposeth according to þ parties intent. And men beare themselues in hand, þ they haue witnesse their fleece: & yet when they haue brought men forth, all is found to be but smoke. A man thé may well take one witnesse alone: but yet must not iudgement be giuen vpon þ hearing of him onely. What a thing were it, if one person should be so credited that vpon his bare word a man should be put to death, & be punished by law? Ye see it were too rigorous a thing. So then, it is not without cause þ God hath ordained þ there should be two witnesses before a case were iudged, þ is to say, that a man should be conuicted by two or three witnesses before sentence were giuen vpon him as guiltie, or before he were cõdemned to any punishment. For his speaking of three, is ment of any number aboue two. But by this expresse number, God ment to shew how it were no reason þ any one witnes alone should be beleeued, & his saying so stoode vppon, þ a body should be condemned for it: but that it is meete there should be a larger & more sufficient proof of the matter. The third witnesse then is not of necessitie, but as it were of ouerplus. It is all one as if he should say, If there bee three witnesses, they bee mo than neede; but at the least there must needes be two. In deed here is no mention þ the witnesses should be vnblameable: but our Lord hath shewed alreadie in other places, that inquisition must be made of the hatred & rancour þ is among men; which ought to extend to witnesses as wel as to other men: for although it bee not spoken of them, yet doth Moses presuppose þ the witnesses must be worthie of credit, & such as haue no sufficient cause in them why they should bee reiected. That in effect is the thing that is contained here.

Deut. 19.18

Now we be taught first & formost by this text, þ if any of vs know of any euil, we must beare with it patiently vntill our Lorde do bring it to light. For we see a number of men led with so vnadui sed zeale, that they thinke themselues to haue wrong, if iudgement bee not giuen vpon their bare word. O say they, I know a man þ hath cõmitted such a wicked deede, I would therfore þ he should be condemned for it. Yea, but he is not yet conuicted of it. I know it, saith he, yea, but we must not peruert þ order of nature. Let vs keep our selues therfore from running headlong to be both witnesses & iudges in any case: & let vs tarry til our Lorde bring things to light. And very needeful it is þ we should so do. For we see daily exãples of great numbers þ are straight in a chafe if a man beleeue them not. Yea, but yet for all þ, was not our Lorde wiser than wee? Then let vs learne to restraine our selues, & remember how S. Paul sayes, þ there are some sins which make hast to come to their condemnatiõ, as though God did thrust the men forth by the shoulders, þ they might come of themselues to discouer their own shame: & that there be some other sinnes which God reserueth to himself, & those lye lurking a long time. And in deed if wee considered how God gouerneth the worlde, this thing were apparant ynough. But what? Wee iudge at aduenture, without consideration of our Lords doing. We be not worthie to reape þ benefite of his workes, seeing we haue not þ modestie to refraine our selues, & to wait patiently & quietly til God haue performed his worke, at which time we should perceiue þ hee was not a sleepe when we were grieued that things came not forward. Ye see then þ sinnes may bee committed, & some signes & tokens therof shal come to light, yea & it may hap that many men shall know of it. Behold there is a wicked man, & his faults are knowen: but yet it is not possible that

1. Tim. 5. 24.

he should be conuicted of them by order of law. This is a sin that lyeth stil in couert. Now of all this while (as it is said in Genesis) the party may go forth where he wil, & wander in his own affection; but his sin is stil at his doore, & watcheth him surely for going out. God then letteth men take their pleasure after that fashiõ for a time: & afterward bewrayeth thẽ when it pleaseth him. And we see examples hereof as I saide afore. There are some other sinnes which come to knowledge at the first push, as though God had sifted them out. Therefore we must marke this rule, that we may brydle our selues, and not bee too hastie to iudge, but tarrie patiently for the conuenient time. Also we haue to follow ỹ rule which our Lord Iesus Christ giueth vs; namely that if any man haue done amisse towardes vs, wee warne him secretely; & that if hee receiue not our warning wee take two or three witnesses to vs, that in their mouth the thing may be the better stablished. Nowe it is certaine that in ỹ place our Lord speaketh of ỹ faults that are vnknowen: for if there be an open offence giuen, so as the partie may be openly conuicted: it is not meant that I should say to him secretely in his eare, Sir you haue done amisse. We see that our Lord Iesus Christs meaning was nothing so. As for those that alleage that text nowadays when they haue offended in the open face of ỹ world, and say, Why do ye not warne me of it secretely betweene you & me? [We answer them,] & why did not you hide your self to doe your naughtines out of sight? Thou cõmest hither to poyson a whole streete; & thou wouldest haue mee to draw thee aside into some corner to tell thee of thy fault. Wee see a number of these nyce persõs which know not one word of ỹ gospel more than this text; & yet they do falsifie that too. Our Lord speaketh there of ỹ sins that are vnknowẽ, & wherof they haue no witnesses. Therfore it behoueth vs to follow the order which we heare in that behalf. When a man hath done amisse & there is none to beare witnesse of it, he must be admonished secretly, & haue his faulte layd afore him: & if hee bee wilfull, then must I take two or three witnesses with me, & proue it to his face: for otherwise it cannot be done. If we were so delt with, we should not be so lustie as we be, at leastwise as a number of vs are: but wee would vnderstand ỹ it is our Lordes wil to keepe vs in vre, & that wheras our faults come not to light at the first committing of them, but God seemeth willing to conceale them: the same is not without cause. And although it be a temptation that is hard for vs to beare, yet doth God do it to our benefite, to the intent that we should inure our selues to patience, & striue against the euill, though wee cannot discouer it when wee would.

Deut. 4.7.

Mat. 18.15.16

Moreouer let vs marke also, that wheras our Lorde punisheth not a number of faultes in the sight of men, ne suffereth thẽ to come to knowledge: therby it is his wil to shew vs, that we must walke before him, & that wee must content our selues with his record, although men knowe not what wee be. It is saide in the common prouerb, that a mans owne conscience is as good as a thousand witnesses: and they that haue saide so, knew neither why nor wherefore. Yet notwithstanding God wrested that saying out of their mouthes, as if a man should drawe an offender to execution. On our part we must vnderstande, ỹ the reason is, that inasmuchas God inlightneth our consciences & is the Iudge of them, we haue mo than a thousand witnesses. For our sinnes must be layd open, not only before ỹ Angels of heauen, but also before al creatures. Seeing then that our consciences are inlightened by God, & must aunswere before him: let vs not thinke it strange that it shoulde counteruaile a thousand witnesses. But now let vs come to that which I spake of. It may bee that I liue honestly & vprightly, so as my desire is to serue God, and to discharge my selfe towardes my neighbours also, & al this shalbe ill taken, & no man wil giue me thanke for my labour. If it greeue mee that men perceiue not the soundnesse that is in me, & therupon do seeke the more to bee knowen, I receiue my reward in this worlde, as sayeth our Lord Iesus Christ. Neuertheless let vs marke, that God to draw vs to him, will oftentimes not suffer vs to be knowen of men, but will haue vs to be taken for other than we be. And that is (as I said afore) to the end we should hold our selues contented with his only record, & that ỹ same should wey so much with vs, as wee might do ỹ whole worlde, so God allowe of vs. Marke that for one poynt. Againe, when men grudge against vs, wee must haue the courage and constancie to appeale continually vnto God, and to take him for our sufficient warrant. Thus ye see on the one side what we haue to beare in mind.

Mat. 5.

But in the meane whyle wee see how the wicked doe mocke both God and the worlde, & harden themselues in their leaudnesse, because they bee not called foorth to Iustice for it, nor are punished for it. For sometimes they be borne with, and somtimes also our Lord holdeth them at that stay to encrease their condemnation. Yet notwithstanding let not vs bee tempted to resemble them, neither let vs be grieued at their escaping so from the handes of men, and that they be not condemned out of hand by order of Iustice. For what shall they gaine by it? So litle is their market mended by it, that it shall serue to increase their confusion before God, as hath beene saide alreadie. If our Lorde bring a mans sinne to knowledge, it will surely grieue him at the first, and when hee shalbe driuen to his shiftes, it will make him to looke about him and to think thus with himselfe: What though I am false and haue committed this fault? Is it reason that men shoulde come and rebuke mee thus roughly at the first dash? I see such a one haunt these things more than I, and I see such a one offende more grossely than I, and yet they scape vnpunished. I in the meane whyle haue chaunced to make a scape, rather of ouersight than of any euill purpose; and must men bee so rough and fierce vppon mee? Such complaintes and murmurings shal a man heare, or if the partie that is greeued make not com-

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plaint after that manner before men, yet sayeth he not to repine in his heart. But we regard not the foresaid things as we ought to do. And therefore our Lord perceiuing vs to bee in danger of falling asleepe, if our misdoings should be suffered and let slip at the first: putteth vs into the handes of men to bee corrected by Iustice. And his so dooing is for our benefite. For wee must alwayes come backe to this saying, that God chastiseth those whome he loueth, shewing thereby that hee hath his eye vpon them as vpon his children, & that therefore hee holdeth them the neerer to him. That is the thing whereunto it would behoue vs to haue an eye. Neuertheleſſe if our Lord giue the wicked the brydle, so as they heape sin vpon sin before it come to ỹ knowledge of men, & no countenance is made vnto them of punishing them: it is an increasing of their condemnation, by raueling in their owne poyson, & the diuel wholly driueth them into a reprobate sense, vntill they bee come to their ful measure. Let vs see what the inhabiters of the land of Chanaan fared ỹ better by Gods bearing with them by the space of foure hundred yeres. They were alreadie malicious and froward, there was no faithfulnesse nor loyaltie among them, they were extremely cruel: moreouer, whoredome, extortion, & such other like things raigned among them: & for all that, God suffereth as though he saw it not. But what came of it? It was tolde Abraham that their iniquities were not yet come to the full. That saying is set down to vs for a general rule. And therfore whē our Lord forbeareth to condemne the wicked at the first push, let vs assure our selues that their iniquitie is not yet ful rype. And how so? Is the time of Gods children come to ful rypenesse at the first day as soone as they haue done amisse? No but our Lords intent is to chastice his children in such wise as amendment may insue of it, that his correcting of thē may serue for a salue to heale them: wheras his suffering of the wicked folks sinnes to come to full rypenesse, is for that he punisheth them not but deadly. Thus ye se what wee haue to beare in minde, where mention is made of two or three witnesses.

Furthermore, hereby we bee warned not to make delay till wee bee conuicted by witnesses before men. Let the remorse of our owne conscience be a sufficient rebuke vnto vs: for it is as much as if God cyted vs before him, & made vs to be indyted, & impanelled a quest vppon vs, & condemned vs. Doth our own conscience speak to vs? It is as much as if God had made great Registers of our sinnes, & wee sawe witnesses brought in against vs, not one or two, but a hundred. For (as I haue sayd alreadie) our own conscience is of more force than a hundred witnesses. Ye see how euery man ought to looke neerly to himselfe, so as wee wrye not our mouthes when wee haue done amisse, vnder colour that no man hath perceiued vs, & that there bee no witnesses that can shame vs for it before men. Also let vs marke, ỹ inasmuchas our Lord hath sent vs his Prophets and Apostles, they be such sufficient witnesses as shalbe heard before all ỹ priuate persons that can bee brought foorth at this day against vs. S. Paul speaking to the Corinthians sayeth that seeing hee had written to them alreadie, & told them of their faultes, and doth likewise againe the second time: if they amend not, it was all one as if they were conuicted by two or three witnesses. Yea & he vseth this selfesame text, ye know (sayth he) that God hath ordeyned that two or three witnesses shold be credited. Now, I come to you againe, & looke how many times I speake, so many recordes will it be against you before the heauenly Iudge. I summon you not here before men: neither will God forget the things that I doe towardes you: for his stirring of mee vp to giue you warning, is to hold you the more conuicted.

Now let vs apply these thinges to our selues, & let vs vnderstand (as I sayd afore) that seeing we haue Moses & the Prophets, wee haue witnesses ynow. True it is, that they speake not as now before men, they let vs alone and trouble vs not: but yet for all that let not vs fal asleepe, for our flattering of our selues will stande vs in no stede, but to plunge vs the deeper in Gods curse. But forasmuch as our Lorde setteth vs these witnesses before our faces: let euery of vs bethink himselfe, & seeing wee haue here our Lord Iesus Christ and his Apostles, let vs be the more moued to make our own indirements and to preuent Gods iudgements. For if wee condemne our selues, it wilbee a meane to obteine fauour at his hand: and our faults shalbee forgiuen vs; if we craue pardon ỹ vnfainted misliking of them, desiring to depart quite & cleane from them. And not only ỹ Prophets & Apostles shal be our witnesses before God: but also all ỹ faithfull that euer haue beene in the worlde shall reproue our vnbeliefe & disobedience, if wee become not the better by the doctrine that hath been preached vnto vs. And for that cause doth the Apostle in the twelfth to the Hebrues say, ỹ we must haue a good eye to the great and thick clowd of witnesses. Hee vseth this similitude there, which at the first may seeme fond; neuertheleſſe it is not without cause that hee saieth there is a great & thick clowd of witnesses, after he hath made mention of the Martyrs that had suffered. For we see that the faithful were constant to death, & held out to the vttermost when men went about to turne them away from the lawe of God, so as they could not bee made to swarue or step aside for any torments that were put vnto them. All they (saith he) are witnesses: As if he should say, there needeth none other proces against vs before god, for our negligence in these dayes: in so much that if wee faint for feare, & forsake God & his worde; our proces is sufficiently concluded, & information is already giuen against vs saith he. And why so? For it is not a two or three witnesses onely, but a great cloud of witnesses that stand vp against vs, which are able euen to stop our eyes. Seeing then that the case standeth so with vs: let vs note that it behoueth vs to set our eyes more aduisedly vpō God, & to better our selues in such wise by the thinges wherewith hee enlighteneth vs in his

2. Cor. 13. 1.

Deut. 32. 34.

Gen. 15. 16.

2. Cor. 11. 3.

Hebr. 12. 1.

worde, & by the doctrine which he will haue to bee confirmed vnto vs by ſuch witneſſes as hee raiſeth vp, & daily bringeth foorth, as wee tary not til he ſhame vs & confound vs before men: but let euery of vs condemne himſelfe. Thus ye ſee what we haue to marke in making compariſons betwixt the iudgements of men and the iudgements of God. Namely that although mẽ do let vs alone, we muſt not think we haue ſped the better, for our inditement is throughly framed afore the heauenly Iudge, though our faults were hidden & buried before men, ſo as neuer any mention or incling were made of them.

Now to make a concluſion of this text, whereas he ſaith *that all caſes ſhalbe ſtabliſhed in the mouthes of two or three witneſſes*: it was our Lords will to ſpeake here generally, doing vs to vnderſtand that if that were not, there woulde bee no more order among men. For if men will not be contented with two witneſſes, offences muſt needes be foſtered, & there wilbe euery day greater diſorder than other, whereby Gods wrath ſhalbee prouoked againſt the whole coumercy, as hath bin ſaid before. Therefore is it requiſite that all matters ſhoulde bee ſtayed & concluded at the mouth of two or three witneſſes. That is ỹ drift of Moſes in ſpeaking ſo. Howbeit, men wil allege thus: It is a dangerous matter: for falſe witneſſes may be ſubornèd, & if they be believed, a mã may ſoone be oppreſſed, & he might be wronged in a rightful cauſe. It is true ỹ ſuch allegation may be made, & examples therof are to be ſeene. But yet doth it not follow ỹ there ſhould not be ſome certeine rule for men to direct themſelues by, & to hold themſelues vnto, whatſoeuer inconueniences may be alleaged. For we ſee that when mẽ be minded to do euil, they ſeeke the darke by all the meanes they can, they ſounde no trumpet, they call no witneſſes to their doings. If it bee a thing that is for their aduauntage & profite, they can skill welynough to call witneſſes: but when they do euil, they hyde themſelues: & though they be ſpyed, yet they go about to bleare mens eyes. And what woulde come of it then, ſeeing there are ſo many ſhiftes vſed to conceale euill doings, if two witneſſes might not bee admitted in a matter? Neuer could any thing be condemned, but all iuſtice muſt needs go to wreck, & we ſhould liue together like beaſte beaſts. Not without cauſe therfore doth our Lord tel vs heere, ỹ two or three witneſſes muſt be credited, yea euẽ in all caſes: though it concerned a mans life an hundred times, yet ought it to ſtande for good. But wee ſee how the diuel hath practiſed continually to ouerthrow this order. And why? For he knoweth that hee coulde not deuiſe a better way to win vs, than by couering our faultes, becauſe that by that meanes Gods wrath is kindled daily more & more, & euery man taketh ỹ greater & more exceſſiue libertie to do what he liſteth: inſomuch that the nonpuniſhing of his leawdnes, maketh him to think it lawful, & ſo he goeth on from one wickednes to anocher. Yea, it becommeth a cõmon infection like ỹ plague: if it be not remedied in time, it will poyſon all. In like caſe is it with euil deedes. That is ỹ cauſe why the diuel hath alwayes practiſed that there might be no proofe of things, or elſe that there might be ſo many ſtartingholes, as meãs offences might not come to knowledge, ne be condemned. And therfore our Lord ſaith expreſſely that the matter muſt be tryed at the mouth of two or three witneſſes. It is not Gods wil ỹ there ſhold be any exemption in that behalf. For they that be in high degree, ought to giue ỹ greater light: & if they offend, the fault is double, & deſerueth to be the grieuouſlyer punished. Therfore they muſt hold themſelues to that, & there ought to be as great rigor at the leaſt vſed towards them, as towards thoſe ỹ may better be borne withall. And ſo let vs marke, ỹ ſeeing our Lord hath told vs that two witneſſes ought to be beleeued in all caſes: it is an ouerthrowing of that good law, to alleage that inconueniences may inſew of it, as ſome alwayes do, caſting this dout & that dout to bring al things to confuſion. O ſay they, ſuch a thing may come of it. A man may alleage that ỹ clouds wil fal out of the aire. And we haue ſeene examples therof. For without going any further, when one [was to be puniſhed which] went about here to ouerthrow Gods order, & ỹ things that our Lord Ieſus hath ordained by his word. O we will none of that, ſaid ſome: And why? For ſuch an inconuenience might inſue of it. And was that inconuenience ſeene? No. But a mã can not tel what might come. And their meaning was, that Ieſus Chriſt ſhoulde not reigne by his word. After that maner did they greeue God. And vnder what pretence? For ſooth that ſome inconuẽnience might enſue of it. Lo here a deuiliſh wiſedome. Nowe then if wee ſee neceſſitie pinch vs & hold vs ſhort; whatſoeuer impediment or quarel doe ſet it ſelfe againſt vs, let vs learne neuertheleſſe to follow Gods cõmandement without diſobedience in word or deede. And that is a thing which we haue to gather vpon this text, ouer & beſide the things that haue beene declared.

Nowe let vs caſt our ſelues downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to vouchſafe to hold vs ſo within our bounds by his word, ſo that the great number of our vices & imperfections hinder vs not from obeying his holy wil & from abyding within he liſtes which hee hath ſet vs, but that we may be quickened vp by ỹ witneſſes which he giueth vs; And ſeeing hee draweth vs to him by ſo many meanes, we may not be ſo vnthankful as to drag backe when he calleth vs, & to ſeeke ſtarting holes to hyde our ſinnes, & ſo bury them before men, but rather giue him glorie by confeſſing them, & conceiue not any other hope of ſaluation than through his meere mercie: & that euery of vs may ſo looke to himſelfe, as we may be witneſſes and Iudges to our ſelues, ỹ he may receiue vs to mercie, when hee ſhall ſee that the euill diſpleaſeth vs, and that we haue not goone about to ſhrinke away from yeelding obedience vnto him. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and nacions of the earth, &c.

Ou

On Munday the xvj. of December. 1555.

The CXV. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the nineteenth Chapter.

16 If a falsewitnesse rise vp against any man, to beare witnesse against him for any transgression:

17 Then the two men that are at variance shall stande before the Lorde in the presence of the high Priestes and Iudges that shalbe in those dayes.

18 And the Iudges shall make good inquirie, and if it be founde that the false witnesse hath giuen falsewitnesse against his brother:

19 Then shalt thou do vnto him, as he ment to haue done to his brother. And so thou shalt rid away euil from among you.

20 And others hearing thereof shall be afraide, and not doe any such wicked deede among you from thenceforth.

21 Thine eye shall not spare him: but life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hande for hande, and foote for foote.

WE haue seene heeretofore after what maner God wold haue all thinges brought to end: namely by proouing the truth by good record: and yet that no infinite number of witnesses should be required, but y men should hold themselues contented with twain that could beare record of the deede. For as I sayd, offences should abide vnpunished, if men should not stand vpon the recorde of two witnesses. Yea and we see how a number doeth conceale the truth and foreswear themselues, insomuch that when the proofe of a crime committed commeth to triall, a man shall haue much ado to finde one faithfull witnesse among three or foure. Therefore if the nũber were not determined, what a thing were it? Notwithstanding forsmuch as y witnesses doe more in a case than the Iudge himselfe as the common prouerb biddeth beholdeth them for their part to be held in awe, and that they haue no libertie giuen thẽ nor gap opened to them to oppresse giltlesse person. For if y might be suffered, it were better for men to be in the woods among theeues, than to be in a citie where law is to be executed: for false witnesses would murther such men with their tongues, as could defend thẽselues from the robbers. And therfore our Lord addeth, y if an vnfaithfull witnesse be falsly deposed; and that the defendant feeling himselfe greeued alledge that the record is false and wicked: he shalbe heard. Now a man may mislike of the witnesses before they giue their euidence, if there be iust cause, or els otherwise if there be some colour: but here it is for the defendant to shewe that the witnesse was false.

And it is sayde, that both of them shall come before the High priest and the Iudges that shalbe in those dayes, and the Iudges shall inquire diligently of the matter. And if they finde that the giltlesse person is greeued, the false accuser must be punished, yea euen without any spa-

ring: insomuch that if he approched his neighbours of a matter of life, his owne life shall answere for it: or if he intended any hurt to him, he shall forgeue eye for eye, foote for foote, hande for hande: that is to say, hee shalbe serued of the same sauce himselfe. That is the very effect of our Lorde his meaning in this text. And let vs marke that here our Lord sheweth vs that witnesbearing is a holy thing: and in deede, when witnesses are brought foorth, they ought to thinke that it is God whome they come to serue in y deede. True it is that man may well bring thẽ forth, but yet in the meane while, who is the founder of that order? Is not God the author thereof? Then must men haue an eye to him aboue all. Againe, he that bringeth foorth a witnesse, can not say that he is to be examined in his name: But God is there to receiue the oth: & when a man is made to lift vp his hand when he should giue euidence, he is called as it were before God. Therefore to be short, let vs marke, that whensoeuer we heare witnesse in any matter of Lawe, we do as it were a holy deede; in respect whereof we ought to goe to it with the more reuerence and care. For periurie carrieth with it high treason against God: insomuch as we blaspheme against the name and maiestie of God; And it is he, against whom the trecherie is committed, and not against a creature. And that is the cause why so grieuous punishment is heere expressly appointed vnto it, insomuch that God will not haue that witnesse to be spared. True it is that hee hath an eye to the wrong and wicked dealing which hee offered to the guiltlesse person. Neuertheleſse his intent is also that there shoulde be a reuerence hadde to the order which he had set downe for the common benefite of all men. And moreouer forasmuch as he himselfe beareth chiefe stroake there, hee will haue men to honour his maiestie, and not to dally with him after that fashion. And in deede, we see how men take more libertie in for-

ſwearing theſelues, thā in any other miſdoings. And why is that? Becauſe they beare themſelues in hande, that God will eaſily forgiue it. Yea forſooth, as who ſhoulde ſay hee made not more account of his owne glorie than of all that euer concerneth vs. Againe in all other faultes men haue ſome ſhame to holde them backe, they be afrayde leaſt it ſhould be prooued by them, or that it ſhoulde be perceiued. But the wicked ſort make but a mouth at it when they forſweare themſelues; Tuſh (ſay they) who ſhal aske vengeance of it? Who ſhall followe the ſuite of it? Yea, as who ſhould ſay there were no GOD in heauen. Nowe then let vs marke, that foraſmuch as men take leaue & diſpenſe with themſelues ſo eaſily in committing of periurie; and that it is not looked vnto of men, but it is let ſlip without puniſhing: that therefore God muſt bee faine to reſerue it wholly to his owne examination, and the crime muſt be ſo much the more accountable before his iudgement ſeate, where it ſhall be puniſhed dubble. Marke well therefore what we haue to beare in minde, that euery man may looke to himſelfe, and that we may be fully reſolued, that we be bounde to yeelde recorde to the trueth, as oft and whenſoeuer wee be called thereto: and that wee defraude both God and our neighbours of that which is due vnto them, when we can help them in any good eaſe and doe not; which is all one as if we robbed them of that which belongeth vnto them. That is an Item to them that conceale and diſſemble the trueth when they be required to ſpeake it.

Furthermore let vs beare in minde that our comming to doe that, muſt be as though GOD called vs before his owne face, and did ſet downe his name there before vs ſaying, as ye haue any eſtimation of my name, ſee that ye beare faithfull recorde, without fauour or hatred: bee not led by any affection, but onely doe what yee can to report what ye knowe, without reſpect of any perſon. Were this well obſerued, wee ſhould ſee another manner of feare of God in all giuing of euidence than we doo. How great libertie ſoeuer the world take, & although moſt men paſſe their boundes without any awe of God: yet muſt not this leſſon be loſt but we muſt learne to practiſe it, euen with horrour to beholde the great blockiſhnes which reigneth euery where, in that men do ſo mocke God, and ruſh againſt him with ſuch boldeneſſe and preſumpcion.

And nowe it is ſayde expreſſly, *that the parties muſt come both into the preſence of the Lorde, before the Prieſtes and Iudges*. Whereby Moſes doeth vs to vnderſtande, that God is preſent at the executing of Iuſtice, becauſe all is done by his authoritie and in his name. And this text is yet verie well worthie to be noted. For when men come before a Iudge, they thinke they haue hyed them well, if they may deceiue him: but there are very fewe that conſider the Iudge to be Gods lieutenaunt. In deede men can finde in their hearts to confeſſe that Iuſtice is a diuine thing, and that God beareth chiefe ſway therin, it coſteth them nothing to ſay ſo: but as for to be touched with it to the quicke, and to beare well in minde that when we appeare before a Iudge, God doth preſently beholde vs, ſo as we can not conceale any thing from him, but he writes vp all thinges in his regiſters, inſomuch that although wee be ſpared by men, yet we muſt come to accoumpt for it before God: wee neuer thinke of that. But yet doth this text warne vs, ỳ we muſt neuer goe to law, but ẇ intēt to demeane ourſelues as in Gods preſence: aſſuring ourſelues ỳ although nothing in the worlde be hidden from him; yet hee will haue men to acknowledge a certain ſpeciall preſence of his maieſtie in the order of Iuſtice. True it is that euen when men be in their chambers or in their beddes, they ought to thinke ſtill that they be continually in the ſight of God: and although it be his propertie to ſearch all things & to examine euen the bottom of mens thoughts: yet notwithſtanding, it is his will to haue a notable marke of his maieſtie and glorie to appeare in the order of gouernment which he hath ſet in the worlde, by appointing Iudges to bee as his lieutenaunctes and officers, and he will haue men to knowe that he himſelfe is there, and that he guideth and gouerneth the whole action. In the Popedome, becauſe men knowe not that God is preſent at the executing of Iuſtice, they haue Puppets and Paintinges, and Crucifixes, and I wote not what elſe. For thoſe beaſtes bear themſelues in hande, that images are laymens bookes as they terme them. But it ought to ſuffice vs that God telleth vs here with his owne mouth, ỳ he himſelfe ſitteth in the ſeate of Iuſtice where earthly men be ordeined in his name; and that whereas there be Prieſts and Iudges, he will haue men to know that that is not done without him, but that he maintaineth that order becauſe he hath once eſtabliſhed it among vs. When we heare ſuch doctrine proceeding out of Gods owne mouth, muſt it not needes be that we be too too dull, and ỳ the deuill hath made vs ſtarke beaſtes, if wee be not touched with it? Nowe then let vs not looke to haue ſtockes and puppets ſet before our eyes to gaze vpon: but let vs haue Gods liuely image printed in our hearts, and let vs conſider that ſeeing it is his will to haue mankind gouerned by that meane: he doth alſo aſſiſt it, and is at hande vnto it, ſo as the thinges ỳ are done there, are guided by him, & ought alſo to be referred vnto him: And that whē we come thither, it is to appeare as it were before his maieſtie, as I haue declared already.

And this ſerueth, not only for earthly Iuſtice, but alſo much more for the meetings ỳ are made to the ende ỳ God ſhould teach vs by his worde. For when we come hither to heare the doctrine of the Goſpel, God is much more apparantly preſent with vs therein than in the order of Iuſtice. True it is (as I haue ſayd already) that when we come before a Iudge, we come before God: but here is the ſpirituall doctrine whereby we ſhould be lifted vp to heauen, & mens lawes are of no account here; becauſe there is none ỳ ſpeaketh but God. Therefore let vs marke, that when we come to the Church to be taught, or when any of vs openeth the byble at home in his owne houſe; Ieſus chriſt muſt needs be there as though

we saue him before our eyes. Not that wee must haue any fleshely conceite of him: but that we must approch vnto him by fayth, and consider howe it is not in vaine that he hath tolde vs, that wheresoeuer two or three meete together in his name, there is he in the middes of them. Then let vs consider that not onely we be heere before the Angelles of heauen, but also that the eyne of God beholdeth vs. And as hee liketh wel of the confession of the faith which we make vnto him; and of our obedient resorting hyther to knowe the will of GOD his father, and to suffer ourselues to bee gouerned by him and by his doctrine: so likewise when we come hyther sayndly, so as wee make none account of his worde, or beare ourselues in hande that wee be discharged for tarrying heere an houre or twaine: wee must come to a reckening for it; for we vnhallowe the thing which our Lorde Iesu Christ had made holy for our saluation. Wherefore is the doctrine preached vnto vs? Is it that God hath any profite by it? No, but for our benefite. Nowe if the same be disappointed through our vnthankefulnesse; is it not a treading of the precious stones vnder our feete which were offered vnto vs? It is the foode of our soules, and wee will not eate of it, but will needes fast still: or rather wee bee filled with winde, there is no true sustenaunce in vs. Of whome is it long but of our owne leaudenesse, that we thrust away the grace which God did put into our handes? And therefore, that wee may bee the better disposed to receiue the Gospell, let vs vnderstande that wee must neuer repayre to the Church, but we must thinke that our comming thyther is to offer ourselues into Gods presence, so as our Lorde Iesus Christe may beare such sway there, yea and bee so present, as it may appeare that the grace and power of his holy spirite accompanie him, that his worde may haue such force as to enter into our hearts, to touch vs to the quicke, and to edifie vs. But if wee haue our eares beaten with the things that are preached vnto vs, and in the meane while our liues bee nothing aunswerable to the same; but wee continue as colde as wee were before: that commeth to passe because we consider not that our Lorde Iesus Christ is present to make his worde auaylable, which is vttered to vs by the meanes of men. That is the thing which we haue to gather vppon this text, where it is sayd that the parties which are at variance must appeare in the presence of the Lord.

Matthe. 18.

And it is added, that they must also appeare *before the Priestes and Iudges for the time being*. It is an exposition of these wordes of God. And to what ende serueth that? That folke shoulde not haue an eye to mennes persons; but rather consider what state they represented there? Were the priestes made at their owne pleasure? No. No more were the Iudges. GOD was the author of them both. Nowe then forasmuch as he hath sette them in that office, and gouerneth them by his power: hee will haue men to knowe that he himselfe is there. And Moses will in any wise haue the priestes to be there: not that the ciuill iurisdiction is allotted vnto them, (as I haue declared heeretofore): but to strike the greater reuerence into such as hadde to deale or to doe in matters of so greate importaunce. For if a man be annoyed by falsewitnesses, hee is as good as halfe dead already. And therefore he was to be succoured by an extraordinary means. That is the cause why God ioyneth the Priestes and the Iudges together.

Yet notwithstanding it is sayde *that the Iudges shall make good inquirie of the matter*. Wherein he sheweth that which wee haue seene heeretofore: namely that to comforte one man, wee must not greeue an other. For it is no small thing to ouerthrowe an euidence: I haue tolde you heeretofore howe it is a holy thing. Nowe if any man abuse it, he must be punished for his labour. But yet on the other side, it must also be well knowen and verified that such an abuse is committed. Therefore is it sayde expressly, that diligent inquirie is to be made. For it is a sore matter to alter or reuerse a thing that hath passed by order of Lawe. And for the same cause it is sayde, *If hee be founde to haue giuen false euidence, and to haue practised to doe his neighbour wrong: let him be punished with the selfesame punishment, and let not thine eye spare him, but vtterly take away the euill from among you: to the ende that they which heare thereof may be afrayd, and no more such deedes be committed afterwards*. Heere Moses noteth the circumstances, which euen the heathen themselues knewe. For we must alwayes come backe to that which is spoken in the eight Chapter of Salomons prouerbes, where it is sayde, that it is through Gods wisedome that kinges reigne and that Lawes and statutes are made thereby. Therefore when as the heathen made Lawes, it came not first of all of their own brayn: for whereas they made fonde and blockish Lawes, therein God gaue them the brydle, and it was to the ende that men shoulde knowe that when men followe their owne wit, they ouershoote themselues pitifully, yea euen in the thinges that concerne this present life. And what must they needes doe then, when they be to passe beyond the worlde? In that case men are vtterly blinde. God then ment to shewe by some thinges, that mens wits are too weake to iudge well of equitie and vprightnesse; and yet notwithstanding, that forasmuch as he was minded to shewe his prouidence ouer all mankinde; he inspired those with equitie and vprightnesse, whose duetie it was to make Lawes & statutes. And it is the very same thing which I was about to tell vnto you out of Salomons prouerbes, that the wisedome of God chalendgeth this to be her office. The heathen knewe that thing well ynough, affirming y Lawes were Gods gifte, and not the inuention of man. And God wrested out that confession frō them, to the intent that their vnthankfulnes should be the lesse excusable, as we see here.

Prou. 8. 15.

For whereas Moses sayeth, that the partie shall bee punished which *hath but euen practised against his neighbour*: hee sayeth not simply, against the trueth. And thereby he excludeth ouersight, so that if there were any error he wold not

not haue the punishment to bee so grieuous. Against whereas he setteth downe *that the offender should not be spared*: his meaning is that if a man spare one that hath procured the death of the guiltlesse, hee is dubble cruell to him that was in danger of his life.

Whereas he sayeth that *others hearing thereof shall commit no more any such act*: hee sheweth the principall ende, which is also set downe by ciuill Lawes, namely that punishmentes shoulde be executed for examples sake. The punishing of a theefe is not onely for his misdeedes sake or for the crimes sake: but also to teach others by it, and to holde them in awe, so as they may be ashamed of such dealing and abhorre it. In like case is it with murthers when bloudshed is reuendged. And why is that? Is it onely for the faultes sake that is doone and past? No, but to prouide for afterwarde that murthering and all maner of shedding of mans bloud may be eschued. Ye see then howe punishmentes doe serue for example. And that is a thing well worthie to be marked: for we may gather a dubble lesson thereof. First that such as occupie the roome of Iustice, ought to thinke themselues worthie of blame before God and the worlde, for all ỹ faults which they let slip vnpunished. And why? For it is an opening of the gate and a giuing of liberty to all others to do the like. Beholde, one that is founde to be a theefe, a murtherer or a whoremonger, is winked at and let slip. And why? because he is pityed. And by that meanes the offender scapeth scotfree. By reason whereof other become the bolder to doe the like. For why? It is an increasing of the mischiefe, when men see offences scape vnpunished; and the bridle is let loose which otherwise had bin restreined, if euill doinges had bin punished without respect of persõ. Behold, one aduoutry is cõmitted after an other, two or three murthers are cõmitted together, and three or foure robberies are done one in an others neche. And who is the cause of all this? Euen the Iudge himself, he is the principall theefe, he is the principall adulterer, he is ỹ principall murtherer. It is he that hath robbed God of his glory and men of the right which he would haue to be obserued, it is he that hath as it were made open proclamation that offenders should make their hand and scape scotfree for it. Now then let vs marke well, that whereas Moses hath declared that wicked witnesses must be punished, that other men may beware by them, and be afraide when they heare of it, and doe no suche deede any more: hee sheweth thereby, that if Iudges haue not the sternnesse to punish misdeedes without relenting, when they come to their knowledge, they be the cause of all the mischeefes that are committed afterwarde. For they did as it were giue leaue to them, in that they punished not the parrie as they ought to haue done, whome they sawe to haue offended. And therefore let them looke wel to their charge vnlesse they will bee blamed as procurers of horrible confusion aboue all other men, for want of executing of Iustice as they shoulde haue done. Let that serue for one point.

And herewithall we be taught further, that wee must learne to make our gaine of other mennes harmes. The punishmentes of other men for their offences must be a bridle to vs, or else wee bee verie blinde, for they bee as looking glasses vnto vs. When we see a theefe punished, it is as a warning giuen vnto vs by our Lorde, to put vs in minde that robberie is condemned before him. The same is to be sayde of murthers, of adulteries, and of other like things. Trwe it is that euen without those examples men ought to be wise ynough to restreine ourselues: but yet if we be so harde hearted and negligent as not to haue sufficient regarde of the bridling of our selues without warning by such visible examples: at leastwise lette vs learne to vse the better by those thinges, when they be added for our help. But when a theefe is whipped or hanged, or when a murtherer is beheaded, if the sight therof wey no further with vs than to make vs refraine for feare of men or for feare of punishment by order of Lawe: it is a small matter, and we be neuer the better by it. Nay, we must steppe one steppe further: which is, to consider that GOD who reigneth ouer vs in heauen, will haue the punishmentes of offenders to be as liuely pictures to shewe vs that murtherers, & theeues, and al such like, shal not scape his hande, but that although they be not punished here beneath, yet they must come at length before the heauenly Iudge. Let vs then consider that: and let vs take such warning by it, as euery of vs may bridle ourselues. For that is the seconde point whereto wee must come, if we intende to receiue good instruction by any of the punishmentes that are executed vpon mens crimes and misdeedes. Yea and lette vs not tarrie till men setto their handes: but whensoeuer GOD executeth his iudgementes, let vs awake to thinke vppon them more aduisedly, as Saint Paule exhorteth vs. Beware (sayeth he) 1 Iohn 4. that no man deceiue you: for by reason of such thinges doeth Gods wrath come vpon the disobedient. He sayeth not that the disobedient shall bee punished by earthly Iustice, for many times Iustice sleepeth vpon earth, and is not executed with such force and liuelinesse as were requisite. But Saint Paul sayeth, that Gods wrath is wont to come vppon the disobedient; and therefore take heede (sayeth hee) that vaine wordes deceiue you not. And in that place hee speaketh of Theft, Murder, Whoredome. O, will some say, It is lawful for a man to reuenge himselfe: and if a man haue done me a displeasure, I may requite him with the like. Likewise concerning Lecherie, the despisers of GOD and these leaude persons which are not worthie to goe vppon the grounde, say it is but a naturall sinne. But Saint Paul sayeth, Looke well about you, and although euill deedes scape vnpunished in this worlde, thinke not that GOD will therefore omitte his dewtie: all thinges must come to account before him. Neuertheless, when yee see that he layeth his hande vpon an offender; lette it be as a sommoning to euery of you, and let it doe you to wit, that his graunting of

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you the fauour to see otherfolkes punished before your faces, is to the ende you beneffite your selues by his correction. And so yee see what we haue to marke in that Moses sayeth that the punishing of crimes must serue for common example and instruction, yea euen when they bee but heard of.

Nowe besides our Lordes chastising of such as haue offended, hee doeth also make vs to heare of his Iustice by his wordes, in that the threates of his Lawe be dayly rehearsed vnto vs, and in that we be tolde of the examples which are sette downe in the holy scripture, concerning such as haue beene punished at Gods hande: and are not we too too dulwitted if we take no heede by them? Albeit that GOD spake not at all, but onely wrought in the punishing of murtherers, theeues, blasphemers, periurers, aduouterers, and whoremongers: yet ought wee not to be so blockishe as to take no heede by it. But nowe seeing that God by stretching out his arme after that fashion against the transgressers of his Lawe and ordinaunce, doeth put vs in minde that his so doing is not for nought, but rather to call vs to amendment: must it not needes bee that we be too too harde hearted, if we continue still in our former state? Nay let vs followe that which Moses telleth vs heere, and learne to open our eares when God speaketh vnto vs, and to marke well not onely the examples of the punishments which we see presently executed vpon the wicked: but also all the examples that haue beene since the beginning of the worlde, so as we may apply them to our owne vse, & learne by them to liue in awe, that no such act may bee committed among vs. For hee sayeth not heere that the punishing of misdeedes shall be to the ende that men should onely condemne them in wordes but to the ende that all men should be afraide and doe no more so. And that is a thing very worthy to be well noted. For we beare our selues in hande that it is ynough for vs to haue condemned a crime, and to haue liked well of the Iustice that is executed for it. O (say wee) he deserued it right well. We condemne an other man, and in the meane while wee ourselues are offenciues more faultie than he. But God will haue euery man to be his owne Iudge. Therefore when we see offences punished, let vs be afraide, and let vs restraine ourselues, that no such things be done among vs any more. Ye see then that that was one thing more which wee had to remember vpon this text.

And let vs marke, that whereas here is mention made of feare, although Moses treate but of ciuile gouernment, yet must we conceiue a better kinde of feare, that is to wit a reuerende awe of God. To say the trueth, the onely feare which we haue of punishment would not suffice. It were too slender a thing, and God shoulde be so ill serued at our hands, if there were none other ende yet neuertheleſſe, because of our infirmitie, the punishmentes that are executed ought to bee as prouocations vnto vs, to liue in the more awe. Good reason woulde that the loue of GOD should goe before, and that the reuerence which wee beare vnto him, shoulde breed an earnest desire in vs to fashion ourselues all wholly to his righteousnesse; but forasmuch as we be slouthfull and slowe: God vouchsafeth vs this helpe for our weakenesse, that wee may take warning to amende, by all the punishments which he executeth. Alas that I shoulde bee so madde as to goe make warre wilfully against GOD. I knowe by such an example which hee hath giuen me, that hee abhorreth such a crimes and shall I nowe runne headlong into it? Were it not an open fighting against him, if I shoulde deale so against all wit and reason? Yee see then howe we ought to be restreined by the chastisementes which GOD executeth, and that the feare of him ought to beare such sway in vs, as to make vs indeuour to fashion ourselues according to his righteousnesse, and to submit ourselues to his good will.

But nowe let vs come to the punishment that Moses addeth. His saying is that there shalbee *Life for life, Eye for eye, Tooth for tooth, Foote for foote, and Hande for hande*. As if he should saye, that hee which hath gone about to do his neighbour harme, shall be serued of the same sawce himselfe. For when one man practiseth an others death, if he shoulde be but put to his fine, and so discharged of it for a peece of money without aunswering any further: what a thing were it? Is all the goods of any man able to counteruaile the life of an other? Peraduenture the partie whose life is sought is but a poore man that hath nothing: but yet is hee such a creature as is fashioned after the image of God. There commeth a riche man to oppresse him, and in deede, the poore soule is as good as halfe dead aforehande, if hee bee oppressed by false witnesse.

Nowe if it be sayde, yea, but his aduersarie is a rich man, hee may well make him good recompence: what recompence I pray you, can be made for a mans life? Therefore our Lorde minding to take away all such shiftes, sayeth, that if any man haue practised the death of his neighbour, he himselfe shall dye for for it, without any pitie or compassion. If hee haue gone about to hurt him in his eye, or in his arme, or in his foote, he himselfe must abide the like punishment in himselfe: that is to saye, if I haue gone about to doe any reproche, or dishonestie to my neighbour, the shame thereof muste light vppon my selfe. We see as nowe whereat GOD aimed: Like as when hee setteth downe the Lawe concerning women with child in the xxj. of Exodus, he sayeth that if a man haue hurt them, and any mischaunce followe thereof, the partie that hath doone the hurte shall be punished for it: so also doeth hee adde heere, eye for eye, tooth for toothe, foote for foote, and hande for hande. As if hee should saye, no recompence is to be admitted in that behalfe: the purse must not bee pinched, but the life it selfe muste answere for it, at leastwise if the deede concerne life. And so wee see nowe in effecte, howe it hath euer beene Goddes will, to shewe that hee setteth

Exod. 21. 22. 23.

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great store by mans life, as he will declare it, yet better hereafter: but yet we haue here a good recorde thereof in the meane while.

Moreouer he sheweth that wee must haue no respect of persons: but that although a man bee neuer so wel able to forbeare money to saue himselfe withall; yet must not that bee admitted in matters of Iustice. Let ransoming be let alone for warre matters: But in cases of Lawe, faultes must be regarded as they bee in deede. If the fault bee such as may be punished by fyne or amercement, and that the Lawe will beare it; very well, it is good reason it shoulde be so. But if it be a crime that deserueth death, and that the Lawe it selfe doe iudge a man to death for it: if the punishment of death bee turned into a fine, vnder colour that the partie offended shall become wealthy, or for that it seemeth better that it should be so, ỹ law is by that meane peruerted, and the common order is altered by hauing respect of persons: and so all goeth to confusion. And therefore let vs marke well, that whereas our Lorde hath sayd, life for life, eye for eye, and so foorth: hee hath shewed vs that in iudging, there must no regarde bee hadde of the persons that are to be condemned. But if it be not a matter of life and death, but a single misdeed or trespasse (as they terme it) that is to say, a light fault and such a one as deserueth not the punishment of death: it is to be punished according to ỹ qualitie of the offence, and according to the Lawe prouided in that behalfe. But if it bee a deadly crime, the Iudge must shut his eyes as in respect of the person, and deeme simply of the crime and deede it selfe: accordingly also as it is sayd here, that no pitie must be shewed in that behalfe. For the alleadging of mercie and pitie towarde offenders, is a thing that alwayes deceiueth many men. What, say they? Should we not bee pitifull? Would not God that wee should resemble him? Seeing it is sayde, that if we be his children wee must be kinde hearted and inclined to pitie and compassion; is it not a barre to all rigour? Yes, but though it be sayde that wee must pitie the partie, yet is it not ment that the fault should be vnpunished. If a malefactor be brought afore a Iudge sitting vppon the bench, the Iudge may well he sorrie to see a poore creature that is shaped after the image of God, to go to destruction. Yea, he must be moued therewith, and haue pitie and compassion of him. But yet for all that, he must also looke to his cõmission, what charge he hath receiued, and he must doe Iustice. Hee sitteth vpon the bench to punish offenders, it is not now for him to shewe pitie, or to alleadge any such thing. Nowe then it is Gods will here to cutte off all by shiftes of pitie and compassion that can be alleadged; and to shewe that Iustice ought to haue his course, so as in examining of crimes and misdeedes, the Iudge must be blinde as in respect of persons, and haue both his eyes sette fast vppon the deede, and vpon the deserte of the case. Yea and to the ende there shoulde be no gainesaying; let vs marke that heere God hath vsed a worde wherein there is some shewe of vertue, saying: *Thine eye shall not spare him, neither shalt thou haue any pitie on him.* Howsoeuer It is sayde that our eye ought not to spare him, nor our heart to pitie him. And what is to bee lowe then, but such extreeme rigour as is more cousen to cruelties? In deede so will men thinke. But yet is this rigour acceptable to GOD. For we must call to minde howe Salomon sayth, that he which iustifieth the wicked is as fowle before GOD, as he that condemneth the innocent. Is it not a great and ougly abhomination, that a sillie innocent shoulde be condemned to death? Yes: and yet if an offender be let goe, God misliketh it as much as the shedding of guiltlesse bloud. So then, let vs not deceiue ourselues any more, vnder the shadowe and colour of any of these faire pretences that are made at aladuenture. There are that abuse the holy scriptures by wresting them euerie way, and this pitie is alleadged continually though they vnderstande not why nor wherefore. Nowe then let vs vnderstande, that as GOD commaundeth vs to be mercifull, so he sheweth vs after what manner and howe farreforth hee alloweth our mercie: that is to wit, so farreforth as the course of Iustice be not letted. Yea and let vs looke vppon ourselues. Is it gentlenesse to be cruell to one man for the sparing of an other? Beholde, there are two men, both of them be my neighbours, yea be all three created after the image of God, we bee all of one nature, they bee my flesh and my bone as wel the one as the other: one of them playes the false witnesse of purpose to haue his neighbour put to death, and it is not long of him that his neighbour is not dead already: the other on one comes vnto me and sayes, Sir, ye must haue pitie vppon him. Very well: I shall be pitifull to the one and cruell to the other. Yea but howe the poore man which was at deathes doore is preserued by miracle, and shall I nowe go fill away his life so good cheape? Is it not an horrible matter that mercie should be pretended after that sort? Yes. But if wee were well aduised and had good stay of our affections: surely we woulde neuer pitie any such crime, for any mans vpbrayding of vs with cruelties. But it is yet farre worse when a false witnesse stepped vp against his neighbour: for that is much more than the oppressing of some one man priuily, that is falne in his daunger. For if the sillie soule being so falsely accused, had beene executed: by whose hande had he beene punished? The Iudges had beene halfe accessarie, Gods wrath had beene prouoked against the whole countrey, and moreouer a gappe had beene opened for the like inconueniences euer after. A false witnesse therefore sinneth not against one or two, nor against two or three: but first against his owne conscience, secondely against the Lawe, and thirdely against his whole Countrey, in that hee prouoketh Gods wrath against it. For his intent is to deface Iustice, and (as much as in him lyeth) to put all thinges to hauocke. Nowe then if the Iudge haue pitie vppon him, hee sheweth himselfe to beare neither loue nor feare vnto GOD, nor reuerence vnto Iustice. For hee ought to thinke thus with himselfe: Of whome had

had it beene long that I had not beene guiltie of manslaughter, if I had iudged an innocent to death? Indeede I had not done it wittingly: but yet had I not beene excusable for al that. Then was I in danger to haue beene guiltie of murther, and in what case were I then, if I shoulde suffer such a facte to scape vnpunished? Now then if a Iudge beholde him not of these thinges: it is a token that he hath no feare of God in him. Therefore it behoueth vs so much the more to marke well this saying of Moses, that ỹ Iudges eye must not spare the partie that hath done a fault worthie of punishment. For it is but cruelnie to vse such kinde of mercie, as maketh vs to runne headlong to the breaking of al order set by God, and of al vprightnesse among men.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowlegement of our sins; praying him to make vs so to feele them, as we may be drawen to true repentaunce, and learne more and more to repaire vnto him, not tarying till he hale vs thither by force, but seeing hee vouchsafeth to allure vs so gently by his worde, let vs come willingly vnto him, and prouoking our selues forward, become our owne iudges, ỹ in condemning our selues we may seeke to be acquit by his mercie: And that it may please him to guide vs in the meane time; as that being rid of our wicked affections, & cares that holde vs backe from comming to him, we may shewe by our deedes that we be his true children, and that we beare the marke of his holy spirit. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the xvii. of December. 1555.

The Cxvj. Sermon which is the fifth vppon the nineteenth Chapter, and the first vpon the twentith Chapter.

19 Thou shalt doe vnto him as he meant to haue done to his brother: and so shalt thou rid away euill from among you.

20 And others hearing thereof shalbe afraid, and not doe any such wicked deede among you from thenceforth.

21 Thine eye shal not spare him, but life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foote for foote.

The twentith Chapter.

WHen thou goest forth to warre against thine enimies, and thou seest horses and Chariots, and a greater multitude of people than thy selfe, be not afraid of them, For the Lorde thy God which hath brought thee vp out of the lande of Egypt, is with thee.

2 And when yee come neere to giue battell: then shal the Priest come forth and speake to the people,

3 And say vnto them: Hearken ô Israel, now that ye be come hither this day to giue battell to your enimies, let not your heartes faint, be not afraid, neither be ye discouraged or abashed at the sight of them.

4 For the Lorde your God goeth with you, to fight for you against your enimies, and to preserue you.

WE saw yester day what punishment God ordeined for such as practise mischefe against their neighbours And that concerneth Iudges and such as haue the sword of Iustice in their hande. But as for vs, we for our parte ought to suffer the wronges patiently that are done vnto vs. Or elle if we pursue them that they may be punished, it must not be done of malicious spite, nor with desire of reuendge: but to the intent that the partie which is to be punished, may bee kept from offending any more afterwarde; and also that no outrages or violent dealinges may bee suffered, least others shoulde growe bolde to doe so too; but that all men may bee made to stande in feare, by beholding the example of him that is punished. And by this meanes wee see howe the

doctrine of our Lorde Iesus Christ, agreeth verie well with the doctrine of the Lawe. For hee telleth vs that wee must not resist euill.

The Lawe commaundeth that hee which procureth the death of his Neighbour, shall be put to death, and not bee spared. Nowe at the first sight heere seemeth to be some contrarietie. But wee must consider to whome our Lorde speaketh, when hee sayth that the offender must bee punished: namely that hee speaketh to those whome he hath put in authoritie. When hee saith, resist not euill with euill: hys meaning is that euerie of vs shoulde liue quietly, and put vp wronges patiently, rather than require like for like. And that is the cause why hee sayth in the fifth of Matthewe, yee haue Matt.5.38. hearde howe it hath beene saide to the men of olde time, An eye for an eye, and a hande for a hande: but I say vnto you, if a man strike you on the one cheeke, turne him the other also: and if a man take awaie thy Cloake bee willing to giue him thy Coate too: or if hee take awaye thy Coate giue him thy Cloake too. We see howe the Iewes abused the saide Lawe. For vnder pretence that GOD woulde haue no iniuries to scape vnpunished, they bare themselues in hande that euerie man might seeke to bee reuenged of his enemies. But wee must in anie wise put a difference betweene the lawes of policie, and the Lawes of GOD, which require a perfection, and serue to rule our heartes and affections by, so as it is not Lawfull to procure harme to anie man, though hee haue deserued it. The ciuill Lawe and earthly policie giue men leaue to seeke amendes of the wronges doone vnto them; and the Iudge is bounde to satisfie their demaunde: but yet for all that, if the partie that is wronged haue a malicious hearte, and his accusing of his enemies is to bee reuenged of him; hee is not excused before God. Although hee haue right ministred vnto him before men, and they say that his cause is good and lawfull; yet for all that doeth GOD condemne him. And why so? Because (as I tolde you before) wee must bee patient. For what vertue is it, to bee friendlie to such as loue vs, and to wishe no euill to such Matt.5.46. as doe vs pleasure and seruice? Doe not the heathen as much? But if men vexe vs and put vs to shame and trouble, and wee beare with it, indeuouring to ouercome their euill by doeing good: then doe wee shewe our selues to be Gods children, and followers of his example who causeth his day sunne to shine both vppon good and badde. Therefore let vs first marke this foretouched difference betweene the Lawes of policie and the Lawe of GOD, which is spirituall, and seeketh to rule all the affections of a mannes hearte. Nowe in policie, there is no more to bee looked for, but that no man attempt anie thing agaynst his neighbour, that men doe one an other no harme, that men worke no displeasure one to an other, neither in goods, nor in person, nor in name, and that whosoeuer offendeth, bee punished. But when GOD sheweth vs howe wee should liue, hee saith not onely refrayne your selues from euill, and let him that offendeth bee punished: but hee telleth vs also, that it is not lawfull for vs to looke vppon a woman with the fleshely lust of desiring to commune with her: nor to hate our Neighbour any more than to murder him. Yee see then howe the Lawe of GOD mounteth higher than the earthlie policie. God will haue vs to walke before him in all pureneesse. In so much that besides that it is not lawfull for vs to offende our Neighbour, or to hate him without cause: Nay not then, when wee haue iust cause and couerture for the same to the worldewarde. For wee must euen then not onely forgiue the wronges that are doone vs, and not require like for like; but also pray for our enemies, Matt.5.44. although they speake euil of vs, and coulde find in their heartes that wee perished a hundred times; Yet must wee worke their welfare to the vttermost of our powers. Marke that for one point.

Indeede it is a verie harde thing to bridle our affections after such a sorte, as to desire the welfare of our enemie when hee hath purposed about to doe vs harme: but yet must wee straine our selues to doe it. For though wee feele a gainstriuing in vs, yet will not that excuse vs for an excuse: neyther must wee doe as the Papistes doe, who perceyuing this to be clearlie contrarie to mans nature, haue gone about to salue it with this glose, that it was a counsell, and not a plaine and expresse commaundement: and that is a manifest blasphemie of God. For hee saith, that if wee will bee taken for his children, wee must fashion our selues after his goodnes in pardoning those that haue offended him. Therefore let vs not haue an eye to our owne strengthes, nor to the lothsomnation of our owne nature: but if wee feele anie heartburning in our selues, or bee desirous of reuenge through heate of impatience when a man hath vexed vs: Let vs refer it to our GOD, praying him to ouermaster the excessiue passions that are in vs; and to giue vs the spirite of meekenesse when wee bee in such heates, that wee may become patient, so as the harme or iniurie bee not too harde and cumbersome for vs to beare, but that wee may passe it ouer mieldelie. After that manner ought we to deale. And therfore let vs learne to beware that wee beguile not our selues with vaine colours.

Seeing that our Lorde hath giuen vs a good Lawe; Let vs not turne it vpside downe by pretending our owne wicked and corrupt affections for an excuse: Yea and let vs marke, that mannes nature is so frowardlie disposed, that if they looke not verie narrowlie to themselues, they shal alwayes abuse the name of GOD. The Lawe which I expounded Yesterday, namely that the partie which shall haue practised the death of anie innocent person, is not to bee borne withall, is verie righteous,

ſelfe. But yet for all that, is it meete that we ſhould haue leaue to auenge our ſelues? ſhould the bridle be layde looſe in our neckes to runne ſtill for euill? No ſurely. And yee doe not excuſe in your excuſe. Wee ſee then that naturally we ſhould be euer inclined to abuſe Gods name: and therefore wee haue ſo much the more needeto be watchfull, and to conſider at what ende God aymed in ſaying this or that, that is, that wee ſhoulde not be blinde therein. For it will not auaile vs at all, if wee make as though wee ſawe it not. And therefore let vs firſt and formoſt correct our vices, and lay aſide all our wicked affections: and then may we vſe the lawes that are good and holy. As for example: If a man deale by order of lawe, and in the meane while haue his heart full of rancour, ſo as he ſeeke to ouerthrowe his enemie by crooked meanes: it is a wicked manner of proceeding, and condemned of God. Yet notwithſtanding, it is ſuch an ordinarie cuſtome. For there are fewe that goe to lawe, which are not enemies one to other, according to that common ſaid ſaye, that ſuite in lawe and friendſhippe doe ſeldome meete together. And yet for all that, if a man haue anie ſuch hartburning, he offendeth God. Yea, but hee vſeth the meane of Iuſtice; and is not that lawfull? Is not that manner of dealing permitted? Yes: but it woulde behooue vs firſt of all to haue our wicked affections ſubdued according to this ſaying; that all Gods creatures ſerue vs for ſuch as are of a pure and cleane vſe. Saint Paul ſpeaketh there of meates; but we may applie the ſame ſaying to all other things, namely that whenſoeuer God appointeth any thing to our vſe, the ſame is good and holy, yea verily, ſo wee on our ſide defile it not by our wicked affections. If wee haue any ſuite in vs, by and by all that euer wee touch becommeth filthie out of hande. Ye ſee that the order of Iuſtice is a holy thing, appointed of GOD to our vſe and benefite: and yet if I haue a wicked heerte, and beare anie malice to mine aduerſarie, then do I defile y^e thing which God hath dedicated to a holy vſe, and which was pure and cleane of it ſelfe. And therefore let vs learne to reforme our wicked affections. When wee haue done ſo, then may wee ſay that the thing which GOD hath ordeyned, is good and profitable to vs: For wee turne it not contrarie to his meaning and will. That is the thing which wee haue to remember in effect concerning the Text that was treated of yeſterday.

Now let vs come to that which GOD adioyneth concerning matters of warre. *When thou goeſt out againſt thine enemies* (ſaith hee) *and ſeeſt horſes and charriots, and a people more than thou, feare them not: for the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt.* Therefore put them thy truſt in his goodneſſe and might. Nowe, wee muſt preſuppoſe, that in ſaying GOD giueth not leaue & liberte to his people to make warre when they liſt at their owne pleaſure: but onely vppon iuſt cauſe. As for example, when the Iewes entered into the Lande of Chanaan, they made no warre but by the expreſſe commaundement of God: in ſo much that they were forbidden to ſaue anie of the people of that countrie alyue, and it behooued them to put all to the ſwoorde ſauing the young infantes and women which were reſerued to make ſlaues of: but as for the men, they were all appointed to the ſwoorde; for God had giuen that iudgement vppon them, and not without cauſe. For he was a great while that he had beene with them ſo long a time; and yet that they continued ſtubborne and vnreformable ſtill. Beſides this, when the people of Iſraell had once made a full conqueſt of the lande of Chanaan which was giuen them to inherite: then might they reſt at reſt; and they might not make any inuaſion vppon their neighbours vnleſſe they were troubled by them; as in deede it fell out afterwarde: yet is it true that the people of Iſraell neuer poſſeſſed the whole Lande that was giuen them. And that was through their owne faulte and vnthankfulneſſe, ſo as they were euer in trouble and vexation vnto the time of Dauid. Did Dauid ſubdue all his enemies? Did he ſee the people in full poſſeſſion of the heritage that had beene promiſed them? If hee had done ſo, then was he to make warre by and by vpon his neighbours: howbeit not by picking any quarels to them, nor to ſeeke to inlarge his kingdome by conqueſt. But he was prouoked vnto it; and therefore hee was to maintaine the ſtate of his owne people. And ſo let vs marke that this text treateth of ſuch warres as GOD alloweth, as when a Prince is vniuſtly aſſayled, then may hee withſtande his enemie by force. For why? The man that euer purſueth to moueble another bodies poſſeſſion, or the territorie of a Citie, or the prouinces of a countrie, is no better than a robber. True it is, that men indeede call them Kinges and Princes, but yet are they but honourable theeues in deede, which doe ſo abuſe the power that GOD hath giuen them, and are not contented with their owne bounds, but will needes inlarge them without iuſt cauſe or title. Such then are but Robbers. And as a Iudge ought to punihe a theefe or a robber: ſo likewiſe they that haue the power ordeyned of God, may enter into armes againſt all ſuch as fall to troubling and vexing of their ſubiectes; and ſuch manner of warres are not onely lawfull but alſo of neceſſitie to bee vndertaken by them. It is not without cauſe then that God doeth incourage his people, ſaying that they muſt not bee faint hearted and cowardly when they goe to warre againſt their enemies.

That is the thing which wee haue to marke firſt of all, leaſt wee might furmiſe that Gods will is to helpe ſuch as maintaine an euil cauſe: for

for then shoulde he renounce himselfe. And therefore whensoeuer he promiseth to bee with his people, his meaning is that their quarel must be iust and reasonable. And hereupon wee may gather by the way, that it is lawefull to make warre vppon necessitie, conditionally that the war be to none other end than to procure peace & to obtain it. There are some fantastical persons which imagine that this serues but for the olde testament, and that the case standeth not alike in these dayes. But we must make this a general rule, that whereas God graunteth to succour his people against their enemies; his promising to do so, is not for once only, but for euer. Indeed it is promised that vnder the reigne of our lord Iesus Christ, swordes and speares shall be turned into Plowshares and Coulters, and that there shall be no more anoyance nor violence. That is verie true as in respect of such as shall be truely conuerted and reformed by the spirit of God. For if we will be Christians, we must become as Lambs. Insomuchas it is said expressly, that the Beare and the Lion shall dwell together, & that a little babe shall rule them both. This must bee vnderstoode of such as God shal haue chaunged and renewed by his holy spirit. But we see that so farre off is it that the worlde is conuerted to God, when the gospell is preached, or that all of them chaunge their maners: that many of the become worse and worse, and othersome more and more inuenimed, hauing heard Gods word: and therefore worthie are they to bee deliuered vp to Satan through a reprobate sense, because they haue hardened their hartes against God, & haue manifestly despised him, by refusing the grace that is offred them. Is it not reason (ỹ premisses considered) that God also shoulde turne away from them, and ỹ Satan should drawe them and carie them away into all euill? Marke I pray you how a number of people become worse and worse after they haue heard the preaching of ỹ Gospel. All then are not so conuerted as to become Lambes: but rather their rage is inflamed more & more. And therefore forasmuchas there are wicked men continually in this world, yea & the Princes themselues are so caried away by their own ambition, couetousnes, and other wicked lustes, that they keepe no measure in their doings, but wil needs turn al things vpside down, and make hauocke of all, for ỹ satisfying of their owne wicked wils: God hath left the vse of the sword to men of authoritie, & ordeyned ỹ they should bee stronghanded, as S. Paul declareth. Whereupon it is to be concluded, that if a war be lawfull, this promise of Gods standeth in force stil. For otherwise what a thing were it? True it is that we ought to possesse our soules in patience, as our Lord Iesus Christ saith: but yet doth it not follow, ỹ therefore the office of the magistrates should cease, & that his arming of them is to no purpose, & that they should be but as idols. Nay rather they ought to hazard their liues so far as God inableth them, whensoeuer their subiectes are assaulted & tormented. And for this cause I haue stood the longer vpon this text, to the end we might know that faithful Princes haue Gods promise stil at this day, that he will be their guide in the time of war, and take their part when they be to fight with their enemies, & giue the victory: to the intent they should assure themselues of his helpe, and alwaies flee to him for refuge. And so ye see how that is one point which wee haue to marke vpon this text.

Neuerthelater we must vnderstand also, that there is no war iust, vnlesse God be the author of it. For if we intend to be armed with ỹ strength of his hand, we must also aske counsel at his mouth: & his spirit must be the ouerruler of the affaires which we haue taken: for we see that al enterprises are accursed, which men do take in hand vpō their owne head, without inquiring of his will. As for example, when the Iewes made leagues with the Realme of Egypt, or entered into other familiaritie with them, Cursed be those (saith he) which weaue a webbe, but not by mine aduise. And by and by hee addeth the exposition, yea (saith hee,) for yee determine vppon matters without taking counsell at my mouth; that is to say, without considering by my worde whether the thing be lawfull or no. Ye will not hold your selues to my will, nor suffer my spirit to be your gouernour, or to haue the ouerruling of you. Woe to you therefore, saith he. And the Realme of Egypt shall be as a Reed ỹ wil breake vnder you if yee leane vnto it, it shall serue but to bruise your neckes; yea and it shall pricke you like a sharpe reede that runnes into the hande of him that leaneth vppon it. Then let vs marke, that if we intende to be succored by our God, we must fashion our selues wholy to his will, and not attempt any thing which is not permitted by his worde, or which we be not sure that he alloweth. And then may wee throughly assure our selues, that he will bee on our side, and that we shall be so fenced with his power, that we shal get the vpper hand of al our enemies.

But it behoooeth vs to wey well the words ỹ are set downe here. *Although thou see that thine enemies are stronger than thou* (saith hee) *and haue better furnished with horses and Chariots, and that they haue a greater number of people: yet be not afraide.* Hereby hee sheweth (as king Iehosaphat declared) that we must not measure Gods power by the thinges that are seene with our eyes, for it is no harder matter with him to discomfite an host of an hundred thousand men, than to discomfit an handful, or to giue victory to a dosen persons as wel as if they were a great army. The thing ỹ moueth vs is this: If we be wel furnished of worldly strength, then we think ỹ God helpeth vs and fauoureth vs: but if we be bare & naked, and our enemies too strong for vs, then are we discouraged. And why? Because we bind God to these inferior meanes, and we beare our selues in hande that he can do nothing, vnlesse he tel aforehand how and wherew he wil doe it, and that he giue vs a good pawne of it as they say. But that is too great an imbasing of his mightines, and a turning of al order vpsidedowne. For how shal God be honored at our handes? Euen by continuing vndysmayed, though our enemyes bee too strong and mightie, for God needs no mans but

Mich. 4. 3.

Esa. 11. 6.

Rom. 13. 4.

to bleare vppon them, and by and by all their power is dasht. The thing wherein God sheweth himselfe almightie, is that the creatures which seeme to be of most power are able to do nothing at all, but God maketh euerie whitte of it to vanishe awaye. If God coulde doe no more but say, I wilbe a let to men that they shal not aduance themselues, I will take away their courage and scatter them: it were a small thing, but he hath diuerse wayes to succour those that are his. Sometime he setteth our enemies on such a fire, that they be as madde folkes against vs, as elles they haue all thinges in a readinesse against vs: and sometime when they haue practised to ouerthrowe vs, hee letteth them haue hearts like Lions, by meanes whereof they be ranged with such furie, that by all likelihoode they must needes beare downe all things before them like thunder. Hath hee permitted all this? Yet when it commeth to ỹ verie push: then shal they haue no strength at all, insomuch that the thinges which they had purposed, shall vanish away. Although they come onwarde so terribly at the first, as that they make al things to quake against yet will he strike the sworde out of their hand, so as they shal not be able to put any thing in execution: to be short, they shall slide away like water. Therefore let vs marke here, that in such cases wee must wey well the power of God, for doubting but that when hee shall haue stirred men to aduantince themselues, and all things to bee fully furnished according to their desire; he will dasshe it all vnder foote. Marke this for one point. True it is that when wee fall to the considering of our owne state and condition, we must not imagine that God is not mercifull towardes vs, so wee haue our recourse to him. Yet notwithstanding, nowe and then to giue the greater glosse to his owne goodnes and power, he will suffer vs to bee in some distresse: insomuch that when we looke about vs, we shall crie out alas, howe shall I doe, what will become of me? We shal not knowe to whome wee may betake our selues: and when wee haue made all the shiftes we can, we shall bee as folke halfe vanquished afore hande. But our God hath wherewith to supplie all our wantes: onely let vs take his leasure and say with Iosaphat, It is as easie for our God to giue victorie to a smal number against an infinite number, as to giue victorie to a great armie against a fewe folke: all is one with him. So then, let vs trust in him, let vs lay our selues vppon his strength, and let vs not doubt but hee will giue vs wherewith to withstande all temptations that shall bee laide vpon vs. And specially when Satan goeth about to weaken our courages, and to cast vs into despaire: let vs resist that. Thus ye see what wee haue to remember vppon this saying here, that although our enemies be neuer so strong, and neuer so able to ouercome vs: yet wee must not be dismayed at it.

And indeede, wee must take this for a generall rule, that the welfare of the Church consisteth neither in horses, nor in Chariotes, nor in Speares, nor in any manner of armour or artillerie, but in the power of God, as is oftentimes touched by the Prophetes. And it is a lesson which is more than necessarie for vs: For if we shoulde tryumph to the worldward, and were of such power as were glorious to see too: what a thing were it? Gods glorie shoulde bee diminished among vs, and wee woulde surmise our selues to bee preserued by our owne meanes, so as wee woulde not call earnestly vppon God as were requisite we shoulde, but our calling vppon him woulde be but in way of Ceremonie, or rather our heartes would be puffed vp with pride and otherwetning. Nowe because we bee so giuen to this ouerloftinesse, God bringeth vs lowe. And for the bringing thereof to passe, his will is to haue vs to bee as sheepe among wolues, destitute of all force and furniture, and hemmed in on all sides with such enemies, as are armed, furnished, and fenced in all points: so as by al likelihoode we bee as sheepe that are dragged eueriday to ỹ slaughterhouse, and haue the knife setted continually to our throate to kill vs. Sith we be in such state, let vs vnderstande that our Lorde will be glorified by vs, and that hee calleth vs to him, to the ende that we resting wholy vppon him, and putting all our trust in his goodnesse and protection, should cal vpon him, when we see the necessitie pinch vs, as they that shoulde not know where to become, if he shoulde not reache out his arme to helpe vs. Thus yee see after what manner wee ought to put this lesson in vre, where it is saide that in considering the power of our enemies, we must not bee discouraged at it, be it neuer so great.

And let vs marke howe Moses vseth manie wordes here; the cause whereof is, that we can not by and by ouercome the feare wherewith we be caught when any perill seemeth to bee towardes vs. *Thou shalt not feare (saith hee); thy heart shall not quayle, nor shrinke, thou shalt not bee dismayed at it; thou shalt not be afraide of it.* See howe hee vseth foure sundrie tearmes, to betoken one onely thing. And yet is it no superfluitie of speech. Whereat then did he looke? Let euerie of vs examine our owne hearts, and we shall find ỹ God doth not without cause stand so much vppon this point, namely ỹ we must not be afraid, nor astonished, nor dismaid, nor out of heart, nor discouraged, when we see the force & puissance of our enemies. Trueth it is that as long as wee are farre from blowes, we can sleepe soundely enough, and a man would wonder to see howe blockishe we bee: and we beare our selues in hande that neuer anie daunger can come neere vs. But if it come to good earnest, and that wee bee once pinched: then it woulde pierce our hearte to see howe farre wee be out of countenaunce. Let GOD comforte vs, and let him incourage vs neuer so much, and all will not cheere vp our hearts. For why? we be forepossessed with fearefulnesse which beareth such sway in vs, as wee cannot bee releeued of our discouragement. Wee see in what taking Achaz was, when he sawe the Citie Ierusalem at the point to bee besieged. 2 Kin. 7. 12.

Albeit that the Prophete Esay beeing sent vnto him, promised him deliuerance in ỹ name of God: yet was he still like the leafe of a tree, as the similitude likeneth him in the same place, insomuch that he was in vnquietnesse and vexation of minde, yea and quite besides himselfe for feare. True it is that hee went about to repaire the bulwarkes of the citie: but yet neuertheleſſe he quaked still for feare. Be of good corage (saith the Prophet to him) and feare not. Indeede thou hast two mightie Kinges against thee: for the king of Syria had alied himselfe with the king of Israell. Well, well, in deede it is their meaning to burne vp all: but yet for al that they bee no better than a cupple of smoking fire brandes that doe nothing else but smoke. There is some likelihoode that they shoulde make hauocke of all thinges: but all this is nothing, God will set a stoppe in their way, bee thou quiet and still. Yet notwithstanding, this wretched man was so sore afrayde, ỹ he could not take any cõfort. True it is that he did set a good face vpon the matter, and he played the hypocrite so stoutly, that hee woulde not aske a myracle when GOD offered it him. Demaunde some token of thy God, saide the Prophete. What, saide hee, shall I tempte my GOD? And yet neuertheleſſe, hee tempted him through his vnbeleefe. And the Prophete Esay saide vnto him, Is it not enough for you to tempt the Lorde, but yee must also greeue those whome he sendeth vnto you, O you house of Dauid? Ye royall and holy house, ought there to bee such hypocrisie among you? Nowe sith wee see such an example in the successor of Dauid who was a figure of our Lorde Iesus Christ, let vs bethinke our selues well, and vnderstande that when we bee so astonished, there is no way nor remedie to cheere vp our heartes agayne, but by Gods owne working after a maruellous fashion. And the case standeth so with vs, that wee haue such a roote of vnbeleefe in vs, that vntill such tyme as we bee grounded in GOD and in his promises, euerie fisking of a flie before our eyes wil make vs by and by afraid, accordingly as it is saide that the wicked shall tremble for feare when no man pursueth him. And wee see that among other curses of the lawe, God threateneth such as leane not vnto him, that they shall bee euer in a maze, not knowing where to become. Seeing then that this infirmitie is so rooted in vs by nature, let vs learne to arme our selues against it.

And moreouer, let no feare so ouermaister vs when wee come in daunger, but that we may wade out of it agayne. And that wee may so do, let vs marke howe it is sayde here, *Bee not dismayed, let not your hearetes faint, bee not discouraged.* When as our Lorde vseth such maner of speech, it is all one as if hee saide, Goe to, If I saide no more to you but bee not afraide: it ought to suffice you. But I see well that yee will not cease to bee afraide, euen when ye bee assured on my behalfe. Nowe therefore plucke vp a good heart, and gather newe strength to you, and stande to your tackeling so stoutly, as yee may in the ende get the vpper hand of all temptations that come before you. And hereby wee be doone to vnderstande in fewe wordes, what we haue to doe when wee feele such trouble of minde in our selues, that wee cannot bee comforted againe out of hande. If one promise of God be not enough for vs, let vs goe to another and so foorth to a thirde: yea and let vs inforce our selues to get the vpper hande of all distresses, so as the seede of vnbeleefe may bee vtterly rooted out of our heartes. After that maner must wee deale. When a man hath heard one of Gods promises, if his minde bee still out of quiet, let him striue with himselfe, and bethinke himselfe thus: Although I be weake, yet must I not feede mine owne follie, but I must strengthen my selfe in God. And howe may I doe that? Indeede I am too vnthankefull if I quiet not my selfe with any one promise of his. Is not the very opening of Gods mouth enough for mee? Am I not too too froward, if I beleeue not his saying? Yes: but for asmuch as this cursed vnbeleefe raigneth in mee, I must fight against it: and the harder that the battell is, the more must we inforce our selues. Then must God be honoured at my hande, euen in despite of the misbeleefe that is in me; so as his promise may preuaile and I perceiue the fruite thereof in me. And howe so? [If one promise will not serue,] we must take a seconde. It is not once only that my God hath saide, I will helpe thee: but all the whole scripture is full of such promises. Againe, when wee see that that doeth not yet sufficiently auaile vs: we must proceede further and take holde of an other of Gods promises, and resolue our selues by that. To be short, we must heape them vp one vppon another, so as Satan may bee beaten backe. And if we be not able to wrestle with him hande to hande, let vs make vs a fortresse, or bulwarke of Gods promises, yea let vs make a Rampyre and a double Ditch of them, so as the enemie may by no meanes come at vs, but that we may boldely defie him. Thus yee see that the thing which wee haue to gather vppon this texte, where Moses doeth so oft repeate, that wee must not bee afrayde of our enemies; is, that wee must first consider the disease that is in our nature, namely that we be afraide as soone as anie danger appeareth: and secondly that wee must seeke the remedie thereof, not by taking some small taste of Gods promises as it were ata glance onely; but by fixing our mindes vppon them, and by exercising our selues dayly in them.

After this here followeth the reason. *Because thy GOD goeth with thee: yea euen thy GOD which brought thee out of the Lande of Egypt.* Here Moses sheweth vs ỹ there is none other meane wherby we may ouercome the feare of our enemies: but only by hauing recourse vnto God. For as long as we stand weying of our own strength, and stande gasing about vs: alas in what taking be we? Needes must we be continually vexed with a number of terrours and carefull thoughtes. Therefore if we will haue good assurance & stoutnes of courage, let vs learne to resort

resort simply vnto God, and to keepe our selues close vnder the shadow of his wings. And heereby we be warned, that all the hardinesse which men do build vppon themselues, is accursed. If wee put our trust in this or that, because wee haue maintenance and aide to ouercome our enemyes: if wee tie our trust to that, woe to vs. True it is that for a time wee may bee puffed vp with winde, and we may beare our selues in hand that nothing can daunt vs: but in the end God will laugh such malapeartnesse to skorne, & shew howe is was no better than smoke. And that is the cause why I said that the foundation of true stoutnesse, courage, and constancie, is to haue our eye vpon God, and to assure our selues that he is on our side. Notwithstanding, it is not in vs to send it; but we must imbrace ỹ promise which he maketh to vs. Thy God (sayth he) will goe with thee. Yea verily, so wee attempt not any thing without the warrant of his word, as I haue sayd afore; and ỹ we runne not a head: For God will not be our tennis ball to trotte whersoeuer we will send him. But when we doe him the honour to take him for our Captaine and king, so as we fight vnder him, and enterprise not any thing which is not permitted vs by his woord; but yeeld him the whole soueraintie ouer vs: we shall neuer be destitute of his helpe. Now then, whensoeuer we be scarred, and there is any occasion to make vs afrayde: let vs learne to cast our eye vppon God, and imbrace the warrant that is giuen vs heere, which is that he will be euer at hand to succour vs at our neede. Yea verily: for he hath not only taken vpon him ỹ cuition of vs; but also telleth vs ỹ he wil be an enemie to our enemies. Is it not a singular priuiledge, that besides that our God auoweth himselfe to be the mainteiner of our welfare, he telleth vs also that if men vex vs and goe about to doe vs any harme, they set themselues against him, and he putteth himselfe as a shield betwixt them and vs? The holy scripture is ful of such similitudes. Sometime God is called our Rampyre, sometime our high tower, sometime our bulwarke, and sometimes our shield. Againe, when he will shew how greatly he loueth vs: he that toucheth you (saith he) toucheth the apple of mine eye, which feeleth or perceiueth all the harme that can bee purposed against vs. Seeing it is so then, that wee haue this warrant that God watcheth for vs; let vs not doubt but he is strong ynough to confound all our enimies. And therefore let vs yeeld him his deserued honour, in making no account of all the force of the worlde, forasmuch as wee knowe that all that euer men can bring of their owne, is but vtter vanitie and leasing in comparison of Gods arme. So then, it is a speeche of great importance when as Moses sendeth folke vnto God, saying, My friendes, Neuer stand musing what ye bee of your selues, but know for a certaintie that yee be able to doe nothing. Though yee had neuer so great furniture for the warres, yet haue your recourse still to your God, and be strong in him, and take courage there.

And he addeth *that is it is God which brought them out of the Land of Egypt.* Whereby he meaneth that they had found already by experience, that God was ynough for them, and that they ought not to be astonished at the power of men. So long as God is on your side and maintaine your parte, neuer be afraid. For when the people came out of Egypt, what lykelyhood was there of their safetie? When they were come to ỹ red sea, was it not like that they should haue bin vtterly vndoone? The sea was on the one side of them; and on the other side was Pharao with such a power, as it was vnpossible for them to haue scaped his hand. True it is that the Israelites themselues were a great multitude of people. But what? Were they inured to feates of armes? No verily, they were as a flocke of sheepe, which had a rout of wolues harde at hande. There it appeared howe God wrought for them. And therefore Moses putteth them in mind of the things which they had felt and knowen before. As if hee should say, your God hath shewed you sufficiently already by his doinges, that yee shall not bee disappointed if you hang vppon him. And his power is no whit abated. For asmuch then as ye knowe that it is ynough for you to bee vnder his protection, hold your selues still thereunto. Now the remouing of the Israelites out of Egype, was a putting of them in minde that God had giuen them a president after what maner he would maintaine the state of his Church: that is to wit, after such a maner as passeth the reache of mans capacitie. And let vs marke that euen at this day we must haue the same rule still. For (as I haue alleaged already out of the Prophetes) the welfare of the faithfull consisteth not in the multitude of horses or of Charlots, or in the strength of armour or men of warre; but in the goodnesse and helpe of God. And this is to be referred most peculiarly to our state vnder the raigne of our Lord Iesus Christ. For it is the Christian Church which the Prophets speake of, when they vse such kind of speeches. Sith it is so, let vs assure our selues that the wonders which God wrought in bringing his people out of Egypt, are a sure warrant vnto vs that hee will maintaine vs. So that, although it seeme vnpossible to men, and although we bee dismayed when wee behold the power of our enimies and the weakenesse that is in our selues: yet will God woorke aboue our capacitie and vnderstanding. That is one thing which we haue to beare in minde.

Exod. 14.10

1. Pet. 1.16. 2.

Againe, let vs also marke therewithall, that all the experiences which God hath giuen vs afore, must assure vs the better of our saluation, and make vs to trust the more vnto him, for his former succouring of vs. And let vs gather thereuppon, that he can wel find other meanes which we neuer thought of: and moreouer, that his goodnes diminisheth not, and that he is alwaies alike strong. Let vs conclude that he is able to saue vs, so we resorte vnto him. And therefore let vs bethinke vs of the gratious goodnesse that God hath extended towardes vs aforetimes, and of the succour that hee hath giuen vs. And in considering those thinges, let vs not onely giue him thankes for his shewing of himselfe to bee

our preseruer heretofore: but also let vs take further matter and occasion to trust to him afterward, and to resort boldly vnto him, and not to doubt but that he will continue as he began, vntill he haue brought our saluation to full perfection. Nowe if this bee spoken concerning our bodily enemyes: much more reason haue we to apply the same to Satan, to sinne, and to al other things that fight against the endlesse saluation of our soules. But I cannot as nowe make any larger discourse of this matter. Let it suffice vs for this time to make our benefite of this doctrine: which is, that if we resort vnto our God, he hath promised to preserue vs, so as euen whē wee bee hemmed in on all sides, and wee seeme to be out of al hope, and men seeme to haue the vpper hand of vs, yea euen ỹ vnbeleeuers whose onely desire is to ouerthrowe vs: yet euen then we may boldly and safely keepe on our way. For why? We passe not what wee ourselues bee, nor what wee can doe: but forasmuch as God telleth vs that he will be at hand with vs, and haue pitie vpon vs, and that he loueth vs in such wise that he will vtter his wrath against our enemies, and bee so inflamed at them as if their dealing were immediately with himselfe, and take the quarell vpon him as though the dishonour were offered to himself, and that defiance were made to his owne person: forasmuch (say I) as we haue such promise at his hand, let vs trust boldly vnto it, and walk on still in feare and reuerence, praying him to vouchsafe to giue vs peace, and to maintaine good agreement among vs. And although it bee his will to giue bridle to the wicked, so as they doe what they can against vs: yet let not vs ceasse to resorte to him, forasmuch as wee bee sure that if wee put our life into his handes, he will shewe himselfe a good and faithfull keeper of it.

But now let vs kneele downe before ỹ Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done; and that when we once know the wicked affections that are in vs, it may cause vs not only to mislike of them and to condemne them, but also to resort to the remedie of them, and to pray him to reforme vs according to his own image, as our whole desire may bee to shewe our selues louing and gentle to all men, and to seeke peace and to procure it as much as we can, remouing all occasion that any man may haue to doe vs any harme. And moreouer, that it may please him to receiue vs so into his protection, as we may be bold to proceede in our conuersation: and that seeing he sheweth himselfe to bee our defender aforehand euen in this bodily and transitorie life, we may not doubt but ỹ he watcheth ouer vs to defend vs against Satan and all manner of sinne, and that wee may be more and more confirmed with assurance of his goodnesse, in such sort as wee may not liue any more in our selues, but to him, as good reason woulde that our life shoulde bee dedicated vnto him, seeing that hee vouchsafeth to take the care of it. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xviij. of December. 1555.

The Cxviij Sermon, which is the second vpon the twentith Chapter.

2.3.4. And when yee come neere, &c.

5 And the Officers shall speake vnto the people and say, Is there any man here which hath builded a new house, and not dedicated it? Let him goe hence and tarry at home, least he dye in the battell, and another man dedicate it.

6 What man is there that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not gathered of the grapes? Let him goe hence, and returne home, least he dye in the battell, and another man gather the grapes.

7 And what man is he that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? Let him depart hence, and goe home againe to his house, least he dye in the battell and another man take her.

8 Moreouer the Officers shal speake to the people and say: What man is he that is afraid and faint hearted? Let him get him hence, and goe home to his owne house, that he make not his brothers faint hearted as well as himselfe.

9 When the Officers haue made an ende of speaking to the people, they shall set Captaines of the Armie ouer the people.

WEe sawe yesterday what exhortation God commanded to bee made to his people when they came in danger, and I told you shortly that forsomuch as vnbeleefe is hard to be corrected in vs by reason of the deepe roote which it hath taken in vs, our Lorde would that a much more vehement kinde of speache shoulde bee vsed towardes vs. And thereupon I sayd that wee haue greatly profited, when we haue once ouercome the fearefulnesse which turneth vs away from our

our truſt in God, and from abilitie to call vppon him with aſſured faith. Now remaineth the applying hereof to our ſpirituall battels. If we haue any enemies that trouble vs, and ſeeke to deſtroy vs; wee muſt reſort vnto God, and aſſure our ſelues that ſeeing he hath taken vs into his protection, he will not faile vs at our neede. And if this perſwaſion take place in the daungers of this preſent life which are nothing; what muſt we doe in caſes concerning the ſaluation of our ſoules which are much more precious before God? Thinke we that he will fayle vs in that behalfe? And therfore let vs ſo apply this promiſe where it is ſayd that our Lorde will goe with his people to helpe them in their neede, as our ſoules may be gouerned by our God: And if the deuell aſſault vs roughly, and we fall into ſo great perplexities that we wote not where to become, ſo as to our ſeeming we be vtterly ſonke: Let vs hope ſtill that our GOD hath not forgotten vs, but that he goeth ſtill with vs, that is to ſay, that he is ſo neere at hand, that his fauour and power ſhall ſtill ſuccour vs. And this is a thing more than needefull. For we ſee how feeble wee bee to incounter againſt Satan, and againſt all the aſſaultes which he maketh againſt vs: If wee bee not afraid, we be too blockiſh: for there is none other remedy for vs, but to flye to our God for refuge, and to depend vppon the ſuccour that hee hath promiſed vs. For if wee ſeeke our helpe in our ſelues for the withſtanding of Satan and of his ſpirituall battels: we ſhall be diſappointed of our hope, and God (as good reaſon is) will laugh our ouerweening to ſkorne. Therefore there is none other way for vs, but to ſeeke in God that which wanteth in our ſelues; and vpon the knowing of our owne weakneſſe, to looke for ſtrength at his hand. And when he hath once ſtrengthened vs, let vs not doubt of our deliuerance, but let vs extend the ſame deliuerance to our whole lyfe, yea euen to our death. For it is not ynough for me to hope y God wil helpe mee for the preſent tyme: I muſt be throughly perſwaded both for to day and for euer after. Thus yee ſee what we haue to remember vpō this text, where God comforteth his people, and forbiddeth them to be aſtoniſhed, fainthearted, feareful, or diſmaied. His vſing of ſo many words ſheweth that although wee haue neuer ſo much cauſe to miſdoubt, to be afraid, to be agaſt, or to be diſmayed; yet muſt Gods promiſes come alwayes to our mind, that wee may make a buckler, yea and a rampyre of them to reſolue vs throughly that our Lord will helpe vs howſoeuer the world goe, ſo as we ſhall be ſuccoured by him, and be ſure of victorie in the ende, and bee recouered by his mightie and inuincible hand, how great extremities ſo euer we be falen into.

And now we haue to note, how it is not without cauſe that God would haue this doctrine vttered by the mouth of the Prieſt. It may ſeeme that it was ynough to haue the Law written and proclaimed, and that euery man ought to haue minded this leſſon by himſelfe. But yet it was Gods wil expreſly that the Prieſt ſhould be there preſent, to ſpeake in his name and by his authoritie. True it is that our eſteeming of Gods word muſt not depende vppon the perſons that bring it: for then ſhoulde it bee of verye ſmall authoritie among vs. As for the Preachers of GODS will vnto vs, what are they but frayle veſſelles of earth? To bee ſhort, all that euer they coulde ſaye vnto vs were to no purpoſe, if wee ſhoulde haue an eye but to their perſons. But when wee once knowe their office or Commiſſion, then is it not for vs to gaſe vppon the creatures, but wee bee to looke vnto GOD himſelfe, who hath commaunded his woorde to bee preached to vs by perſons choſen and pycked out for that purpoſe. Therefore when wee heare them, it is a meane to wake vs that wee may be the readyer to heare GODS woorde, aſſuring our ſelues that he which ſpeaketh is not brought in by himſelfe, ne thruſteth himſelfe in on his owne heade: but that GOD hath ſet downe that order, and will haue it to be obſerued in his Churche. Nowe then, if any man preache vnto vs the thing that is for our ſoule healeth, although the partie that ſpeaketh were a little Babe; yet doeth it behooue vs to receiue with all reuerence, the thinges that wee knowe to come of GOD. The trueth muſt neuer bee euill intertayned, neither muſt wee make an excuſe of the partie that ſpeaketh. For whoſoeuer hee bee that commeth and bringeth vs the trueth: hee is as a Meſſenger of GOD. And if wee deſpiſe him, it is a diſhonouring of his Maiſter, and wee doe him wrong when wee will not receyue that which is brought from him. Notwithſtanding, bycauſe wee bee ſo colde and ſlowe to bee edifyed in the doctrine of our ſaluation: GOD hath giuen vs this helpe, that there ſhoulde bee men appoynted to repreſent his perſon and to ſpeake in his name. Therefore whenſoeuer a Miniſter of GODS woorde that is choſen in the Church ſpeaketh: let vs knowe that GOD wakeneth vs, and giueth vs as it were a preparatiue, to the ende wee ſhoulde giue the better eare to the thinges that are tould vs. Wee will take yet a more particular Example. When a poore man is in anguiſh of mynde, thinking himſelfe to bee as good as forlorne by reaſon of the ſinnes which hee knoweth in himſelfe, ſo as hee is caſt downe and woteth not where to become, bycauſe of the vnquietneſſe that vexeth him through remorſe of conſcience: if a faithfull man come vnto him and ſet the mercie of GOD before him, and tell him that in the holy ſcripture ſillie ſinners are called to mercie, and that GOD neuer refuſeth them when they ſeeke him in fayth and with repentaunce; it is a rayſing of him vp agayne, and hee hath cauſe already to taſte of GODS goodneſſe and to thinke thus with himſelfe; Alas, I haue beene as it were in hell, and GOD is come to ſeeke me heere, by ſending me this man which ſpeakes not as of himſelf, but bringeth me things which God himſelf hath giuen me. Thus

2. Cor. 4. 7.

it is

the poore sinner hath cause to reioyce, and to be discharged of the sorrow that ouerwhelmed him before. But if the doctrine be vttered by one that is a Shepheard, and hath publike charge: therein we haue yet a better assurance. For it is sayd that they be sent to preache the forgiuenesse of sinnes. The Prophet Esay speaking of the raigne of our Lord Iesus Christ, and of the state of the Christian Church, sayth that the office both of Iesus Christ and of all those that preache the Gospell in his name, is to hearten the fearefull, to heale the diseased, to asswage the sorrowes of them that are in anguishe of minde, and to let out them that are in prison. And this is declared yet more plainly by the mouth of Gods owne sonne where he saith, Go your waies, whatsoeuer ye binde vppon earth shall be bound in heauen. To whome speaketh he? To his Apostles. And he presupposeth that they will preache the promises of salvation in his name. For hee ment not to set vp heere a tyrannie as the Pope beareth vs in hand, who taketh couert vnder that text, and wickedly defyleth the holy Scripture. And that (as ye see) is a diueliish shamelesnesse. But our Lorde Iesus Christ will surely authorise the message of his Gospell, specially when it is brought by the mouth of his Shepheardes, and of such as he hath called to the like state. Therfore when wee see a man that is chosen of God, to preache the forgiuenesse of sinnes: it is as if a bargaine were passed by a publike and sworne Notarie. That then is the cause why God in this text hath expressely commaunded the Priest to come into the Armie and to speake those words. Why so? To the ende they should bee receiued with the greater reuerence.

2. Cor. 5. 19.
Esa. 61. 1. 2.

Matt. 18. 18.

Hereupon let vs gather, that we haue neede to haue the Gospell preached vnto vs, to confirme vs in the strength of our GOD, and to giue vs full assurance of his succour, so as he can neuer fayle vs. And let vs not bee as these fantasticall folke are, which thinke it ynough for them to reade the word at home in their houses, and absent themselues easily from the common doctrine which God will haue published to al his people: assuring our selues that the same is no superfluous order. And seeing that our Lorde woulde haue the Priest to open his mouth to speake to the people, that they might not bee afrayde of the daungers of this present life: much more reason is it that wee should neede to bee taught that our Lorde Iesus is alwayes readie to succour vs, and that wee shall bee deliuered by his strong hand as in respect of our soules, and therfore that wee must leane vnto him. Wee haue neede (say I) that these things should bee pronounced by the mouth of those whom God calleth, and vnto whom he committeth the charge of teaching in his Church: so as our faith must thereby growe double, and wee must gather our wittes the better about vs, as if wee should say, Truely it is God that speaketh, though it be but a childe that vttereth the wordes vnto vs. For he hath an eye to our rudenesse, and beareth with it, in that he so qualifieth the persons of them that beare the name and title of Shepheards, and that they be as his Angels. Now then let vs so much the more receiue his word, and giue the better heede to it, and be the more touched with it, knowing that our Lord offereth himselfe the more liuely vnto vs, and therfore let vs not prevend any more excuse. For he sheweth himselfe the more expresly, in that he vouchsafeth to haue a man chosen thereto. Wherfore let that man speake, and let vs receiue his sayings as though God himselfe spake them to vs after a visible maner, as we haue sayd already heeretofore in the eyghteenth chapter. Thus ye see what we haue to remember in matching this sentence.

Deut. 18. 15.

Nowe let vs proceede to that which Moses addeth. Hee sayth, *that before they goe to battell, the Gouernours of the people shall giue leaue to depart to such as had builded newe houses and had not yet dwelt in them; to such as had planted vineyardes, and had not yet gathered of the fruite; and to such as had espoused themselues to wiues, and had not yet married them to take them home into their houses.* There are three kind of men to whom God giueth leaue to depart, whome hee will not haue compelled to goe to warre against their enimies. And afterward in the end he sayth, *that if there be any fearefull or fainthearted men, those also must be sent home again to their owne houses* not hauing like lyberty as the other sortes, but as men cast off in way of reproche. And hee setteth downe the reason, namely *least they should discourage the hearts of their brethren, and make them like themselues.* This being doone, *His will is to haue Captaines ouer them*: not as though they should then demaund truce or respite of their enimies for the appointing of their Capeaines: but his meaning is, that when warre is to bee made, the chiefe point is not to haue men of great experience and skill. What then? Aboue all thinges to trust in God, and to resorte vnto him first; and then to proceede according to the order which hee alloweth. When all this is done, then may Captaines and officers of skill be chosen. But if men thinke to strengthen themselues with worldly ayde, and in the meane while forget God; so as they resorte not to him; it is an abuse and they shall find themselues beguiled. That in effect was the meaning of Moses.

Nowe as touching that hee giueth libertie to *such as had newly taken wiues, and had not yet married them: to such as had planted vineyards, and had not yet gathered the fruite of them: and to such as had builded houses, and had not dwelt in them*: it is to shew that there is a kinde of vpright dealing to be vsed, to the ende that those of whome any regard was to be had, should not bee constrayned out of measure. Therefore vnder these three sortes God ment to shewe, that albeit there bee great neede, yet ought such to bee spared as are worthy thereof. For it were a kind of cruelty to hale out a man to death, before he had taken the benefite of dwelling in his owne house, and of gathering the fruit of his vineyard, specially whe there were other men ynow besides him to goe to battell. Againe they bee auen naturall greefes also. For this cause Moses exempted such

persons

persons from the warres by Gods commaundement. But yet must wee chefely come backe to this point (as I sayd,) that although necessitie pinch vs and constraine vs: yet must we vse some gentleneſſe in bearing with such as are meere to haue some priuiledge and freedome more than other men.

Moreouer whereas hee speaketh of *dedicating of houſes*: although it signifie to dwell in them: yet was it not Lawefull for the Iewes to settle themselues in their houses, before they had made a kinde of dedicating of them, that is to say, till they had vsed some kinde of Ceremonie of blessing the house in the name of GOD. That Ceremonie was obserued vnder the Lawe: howbeit that as nowe it is not any more in vse among vs. But yet the institution thereof abideth vnto vs, that is to say, that it is not Lawefull for vs to vse any thing without thankes giuing, and without praying vnto GOD that all may be pure and cleane vnto vs. Saint Paule sayth that our meate and our eating and drinking are sanctified: And how? By prayer and by the woorde. The bread (as yee see) is a creature whereunto GOD hath giuen vertue to nourishe vs: and yet wee eate thereof without regarding him that feedeth and susteyneth vs by it, wee defile it. When the thing that GOD had created for our sustenance, is peruerted by our defiling of it, it is treason agaynst GOD. And therefore there is none other meane for our foode to become pure vnto vs, than to acknowledge GOD to bee the giuer of them, and to yeeld him thankes for the same, praying him to guide vs as his children, that wee may lawfully receiue the benefites which hee bestoweth vppon vs. For although the wicked and the faythlesse be fedde in this world as well as wee, and haue the same Sunne shyning vppon them which we haue, and eate of the same bread that wee doe: Yet notwithstanding, all despysers of GOD, all vnbelecuers, all Cormorantes that fall to their meate like swine and Asses, without praying vnto GOD or without lifting vp their heartes vnto him, are all themes; and they eate not one bitte of bread whereof they shall not yeeld an account. And why so? For there is none but Iesus Christ that is rightfull heire of this world, as he is named. And wee must bee his members, or else wee can haue no parte in any of GODS benefites. And howe may wee bee members of our Lorde Iesus Christ, except wee bee graffed into his bodie by fayth? Wee see then howe all our meates are vncleane, and that wee on our parte doe defile them, vnlesse we yeeld thankes for them vnto GOD, and pray him to gouerne vs as his children, that we may receiue sustenance for our lyfe at his hande as at the hand of our father. In lyke case is it with apparell and with all other thinges: GOD must be faine to blesse them to our vse. For to that condition is our apparell, sustenance, and dwelling tyed. Now then, when a house is to bee dwelt in, we must not vse the olde figure of the Lawe in dedicating it: but yet must the partie that is to dwel in it, acknowledge that it is GOD which lodgeth him there, euen as hee hath lodged vs alreadie vppon the earth, making the waters to withdraw by themselues, that wee might haue some roome to dwel on heere beneath. Also let euerie of vs thinke thus with himselfe: although I haue but a little rottage, yet notwithstanding seeing that our Lorde hath placed mee heere, it becommeth mee to acknowledge it: and although my house bee of myne owne purchasing, or that I haue it by inheritaunce, or by leaſe, or by any other tytle whatsoeuer; yet am I alwayes the tenant of the Lorde my God. Let vs haue an eye to that, and let vs call vppon the name of God; for that is the right hallowing of thinges, and so shall Gods fauour dwell with vs, bycause wee defyle not our houses at our comming into them, but acknowledge that GOD hath had pitie vppon vs, and that it is hee which hath giuen vs the commodities of this lyfe. Thus ye see to what ende this Ceremonie of the Lawe tended, and what wee haue to gather thereof at this day.

Nowe it is sayde on the contrary part, *that a vine is vnhallowed or made common, when the fruite thereof is gathered*, bycause it was not lawefull to gather the fruite of their vines vntill the fourth yeere. It behoued the first croppe thereof to bee common, and then the Owner thereof was to take the benefite thereof afterwarde. In that respect therfore it is said that the Vyneyard was to be made common. But we haue no such custome nowadayes. For we be not bound to the yoke of the Lawe, since the tyme that our Lorde Iesus Christ deliuered vs from it. But howesoeuer the case stande, although the bondage bee past away: yet must wee holde fast the instruction that commeth by it, that is: That wee must enter into an account of the benefites that GOD bestoweth vppon vs, and giue parte of them to such as want. The riche must vnderstand that hee is a detter to such as haue neede: and although hee be not taxed and sessed, as who shoulde say thou shalt giue thus much of thy goods: yet ought it to suffice vs, that GOD putteth them into our handes with condition to bee as his receiuers, and that our inioying of the goods which wee possesse through his goodnesse, is in such wise, that wee bee bounde to succour them that haue neede. Thus yee see how the old figures are profitable to vs still at this day, not that we be bound to obserue them, but for that the truth of them belongeth vnto vs. To be short, we see how in al the commodities of this present lyfe, we be taught first of all to magnifie the goodnesse of our GOD, for that hee hath a fatherly care of vs, and prouideth vs all things that are requisite for vs. And we must also haue a regard of our neighbours, & of the Communion or fellowship which our lord commandeth. Not that there should not be any ciuill order, or that no man myght keepe that which is his own: but that euery man shold strain himselfe to be liberal of the things y God giueth

Leu. 19. 23. 24. 25.

so

so as the needy may be succoured by vs. Thus yee see in effect what wee haue to remember as touching the exemption that was giuen to the three sortes of men spoken of before.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moses addeth. He saith *that if there be any fearfull and faintharted fellowe, they must be sent home to their houses, least they discourage their brethren lykewise.* Here our Lord declareth y he would haue the warres which y Iewes were to make, to be made in his name. And therefore hee woulde haue souldyours that should goe to it with a franke courage. For if a man bee afrayd, it is a token that he hath no trust in GOD: for faith hath power to ouercome and to kill all fearefullnesse. Not that wee shoulde bee without feeling; for although wee rest vppon the fauour of GOD, and call vpon him not doubting but that hee heareth vs: yet are wee not senseleesse so as wee shoulde shewe no token of infirmitie at all, but wee shall alwayes get the vpper hande of it. Then if wee bee ouertaken with fearefulnesse, it is a signe that wee haue no trust in GOD. And howe shoulde hee helpe vs, when we do him not the honour to trust vnto him? And if we be not hardy hauing his promise; whom may we blame but our selues, that wee obteine not the victorie? Nowe then if wee trust not to that which our Lord hath promised; then is it meete that hee should withdrawe himselfe from vs and giue vs ouer. Thus ye see why expresse commaundement is giuen to Gouernours in this texte, to send home faintharted and cowardly souldiours. I haue tould you already howe it was not lawful for the Israelites to enterprise warres vpon ambition or couetousnesse, as wee see men doe noweadayes, who vppon an eager desire of bearing rule in the worlde, become vnsatiable gulfes in making warres and in shedding of mans bloud: but the warres which the people of Israell made, were vppon necessitie, and GOD auowed them and blessed them in so dooing. And bycause it was so, hee woulde haue the souldiours to looke vnto him, and thereby to assure themselues of his helpe. Therefore such as were weakehearted were not worthy to bee in the hoste of GOD: for they should but haue bred confusion, and that two wayes. Moses noteth the one heere to bee that they should haue discouraged their brethren. But there was this more, that it was as a nourishing of GODS curse, when such men were mingled with those that ought to haue their eye vppon the banner or standard of GOD displayed before them. And this reason is to bee well weyed, where Moses sayth that they might discourage the heartes of their brethren; and that as their owne heartes faynted, so they might make the rest of the people afrayde and dismaied too. And (as I sayde) this reason is to be marked well: for we haue experience of it in all things. Let vs looke vpon any other businesses if there be but one loytering lubber, he is a discomfort to all the rest of the company. For one giueth courage to another: and when men goe lustily to their worke, there is no labour nor occupation so harde, but it is gone through withal and it not halfe so much payne to them, when they doe their indeuour with a good will. Contrarywise when any one falles to loytering, hee makes al the rest of the company to droope. But that is not all the ill yet. For besides that such a slouthfull body will not straine himselfe to doe his duetie: he will euer finde some occasion to cloake his shame, and he will fall to murmuring and grudging, so as a man were better to haue but two or three lustie fellowes that are well disposed to take paines; than to haue two dosins of lither loyterers, of whome one is ynough to marre all his fellowes. This is manifestly seene. If there bee any trouble, what is commonly the cause of it? It is, that if some disordered person thrust himselfe into a companie of men, hee is as a firebrand to kindle such a fire as cannot easily be quenched. He falleth to sowing of his Darnell, which spreadeth so farre from one to another, that at length the trubble and disquietnesse growe so great, as they cannot bee appeased agayne. This is to bee seene in all our lyfe throughout. And when yee come to publyke offices, if there bee six aboue personnes moe or lesse well disposed to gouerne the people, and there bee but a two or three that drawe backe: those feaw shall bee able to doe a hundred fould more harme, than all the rest doe good. As for example, in drawing of a cart; wee see howe one reltie Iade shall hinder foure or fiue good horses, which would haue gone away roundely with the loade, if that naughtie beast had not bin among them. Likewise if in a common Councel or in a great companie there bee but one or two ill disposed persons, which shall goe about to ouerthrowe all good order: You would wonder to see howe towardly thinges will fall out. And although a man woulde make an account of the contrarie bycause the greater parte seeme willing to doe good: yet those two or three are ynough to ouerthrowe all, and to put al to hauocke. So then it is not for nought that GOD woulde haue all sueh to bee cutte off from his armie, and that if men intended to haue GOD to beare sway among them and to shewe his power in giuing them victorie, they shoulde at their going to warre, shake off al that rabble, which are good for nothing but to marre the rest by their mistrustfulnesse and leand behauiour. Wee see howe Gedeon went to woorke: and his example is notable aboue all others, bycause that then GOD shewed himselfe after a most visible manner, and by myracle more woorthie to bee had in remembraunce than euer before. And in deede, it is not without cause that the Prophet Esay speaking of the deliuerance which GOD woulde woorke by the hande of the Redeemer: sayeth that it shall bee as in the day of Madian, that is to say in the victorie that was giuen against the Madianites by the hande of Gedeon. For when hee had assembled a great multitude of men: in the ende hee was commaunded to send

send home the most part of them againe, because GOD intending to giue the greater glorie to his owne power, woulde haue but a small nomber of men to doe it withall. And who were they whome Gedeon reserued for that purpose? GOD gaue him a token to know them by, which was that when they came to drinke, as many of them as lapped the water or kneeled downe to drinke, should be sent away; and that those which tooke vp water in their handes to drinke as they passed by without staying, should goe on agaynst the enimies. GOD gaue that marke. And to what end? To doe them to vnderstand, that he would haue none to be of his Crewe, but such as were throughly disposed and well willing to go to battell against their enimies. For that thing could not proceede but of an assured trust that GOD was with them. For howe coulde three hundred men haue fought against a great armie, specially with pitchers, Lanternes, and Lampes, (as though they had caryed bladders full of puse made for little children) to scarre their enimies withall? Woulde they euer haue gone that way to worke, if they had not all of them bene certainly perswaded in their heartes after this manner? It is GOD that gouerneth and defendeth vs, and therefore if wee goe forewarde according to his wil, shal we doubt y he is not able to succour vs at our neede, and to discomfite the infinite multitude of the Madianites when they shall set themselues against vs? So then let vs marke howe our Lordes intent was to shewe hereby, that all such as goe a warfare, must marche as it were vnder his standard, and put their trust in him; and that the stoutnesse which he requireth in them, must bee as a record of their faith.

Nowe let vs apply this to our owne vse. In deede this doctrine ought to be put in vre nowadaies by the princes that cal themselues Christians. And when they goe a warfare, they should consider first what reason mooues them thereto, whether their warres bee rightfull or no; and then ought they to followe the order which GOD sheweth them heere. But they seeke no further noweadayes than to blynde themselues with vaine ouerweening. In deede when they goe to their warres, they make processions to their Idolles. But all is but flat mockerie, I meane euen of their superstitions, wherin they bee as deuoute as they that knowe no diuinitie at all. For wee see howe they bee blynded in their couetous desires, and all their trust is in their owne force and furniture. They haue thus many footemen, thus many horsemen, thus much artillerie, such and such intelligence, such and such alyances, and such and such I wote not what. True it is that all these things are necessarie for the warres: but yet ought they to begin at another ende, which is, to walke in the feare of God, and to rest vppon that poynt, and to referre themselues to him that hath all power in him, and not to stay vppon their owne strengthes, but to waite altogether vppon God who giueth the victorie. But there is none of all this.

Nowe haue wee a more generall doctrine, in that wee bee all souldiers of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and that our state is such, that we must fight, not for one day onely, but all the tyme of our lyfe. Wee cannot serue our GOD otherwyse than by fighting. Sith it is so, let vs apply this doctrine to our instruction. As how? Let vs take an exposition of it out of the hundred and tenth Psalme. It is sayde there, that in the day of the Musters which the King shall make whom GOD hath let ouer vs, (that is to say our Lorde Iesus Christ) the people shall come vnto him willingly and with a free courage. The marke then which Dauid attributeth to all Christians, whereby they may be knowen to bee Christes good souldyers, and bee auowed to bee of his armie and company; is that they must present and offer themselues to him, with a pure and free heart, not as folke that come by constraynt, or inforced as slaues; but as they that offer vp and dedicate themselues wholly to him. That is the true practising of this doctrine, I meane as in respect of all priuate persons. In deede this doctrine ought to beare sway among the faithfull in the necessitie of warre: and without that, it were better for them to suffer their throates to be cut a hundred tymes, than once to drawe a sworde in their owne defence, vnlesse they goe to it with a pure conscience, acknowledging after this manner: God alloweth and admitteth vs, and for as much as we fight vnder his guydance, hee will surely bee on our side. If a man haue not this: it were better for him a hundred thousand times to perish, than to stirre one finger towardes the sauing of his lyfe, as it were in despite of GOD, hauing no leaue nor licence of him to doe it. Therefore in necessitie of warre, the faythfull shoulde bee armed with this doctrine, of strengthening themselues in GOD, and of calling vppon his name without doubt or feare. But wee (as I sayde afore) haue a continuall warfare all our lyfe long, because Satan neuer ceaseth, and wee haue sinne fighting against vs, yea and euen within vs. We neede not goe farre to incounter with our enemyes: for looke howe many thoughtes and affections wee haue in our nature; so many enemyes haue we against GOD, which procure the destruction of our soules. Then standeth vs it in hande to bee disposed to fight. And how may that bee doone? If wee knowe not the succour that GOD vouchsafeth to giue vs, surely wee shall bee put to the foyle at euery turne. For why? How great is our weakenesse, as I saide afore? Needes must wee bee straught or rather vtterly blockish; for wee are not able to make any resistance. Besides this, our enemie is Prince of the world, sinne holdeth vs as it were in his bondes and cordes, and wee cannot scape from him except GOD set vs free. So then let vs learne that our Lorde calleth vs to himselfe, to the ende wee should bee confirmed, and fight valiauntly vppon assurance of his helpe. But doe wee so? Can wee call vppon our GOD? Can wee assure our selues that hee will assist vs? Wee

Psal. 110. 3.

1. Pet. 5. 8. Rom. 8. 7.

Eph. 6. 12. & Rom. 7. 14.

ought to resort vnto him with a pure and free heart, and to chooſe to be beſeeged with infinite perilles, and to indure ſore aſſaultes: rather than to bee at reſt and to haue him farre from vs, ſo as hee ſhould not bee our head, nor our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt be our King. Therefore although it bee a hard and painfull ſtate to the fleſhe, yet let vs chooſe this condition, namely: to fight vnder Chriſtes Standard, and to appeare at the day of his muſters rather than to ſit idle at home and to doe him no ſeruice. Nowe this day of muſters is all the tyme of our life, yea and alſo of our death. For looke howe oft we be exerciſed by diuers temptations; ſo oft doth Ieſus Chriſt make his muſters in vs. It is not for naught that Saint Paule ſayth hee was ſet as vppon a ſcaffould, to bee ſeene by the Angels of paradiſe. Hee ſpeaketh of himſelfe and of his companions. But yet doth the ſame concerne euery one of vs, namely that GOD will haue vs to bee heere as it were to make our muſters before the Angels of heauen, that we might knowe that his looking ſo narrowly to vs after that manner, is to the end wee ſhould ſhew good example one to another. Seeing it is ſo, let vs learne to offer our ſelues to God with ſuch obedience, as wee may bee accounted of the number and company which Dauid ſpeaketh of in the foreallegged text, that is to wit, of ſuch as offer themſelues to their King with a free courage, vnconſtrained and not forced.

1. Cor. 4. 9.

Nowe then foraſmuch as the ſtate of the Church is a warfare: we know that firſt of all it ſtandeth vs in hand to gather ſuch as are of a good courage, and that if we ſee any weakelings, wee muſt bee well ware that wee match not our ſelues with them: for there is infirmitie ynough in euerychoneof vs, without procuring any more frō elſewhere. Though no other body intice me to naughtineſſe, or make me cold in goodneſſe: I am Lazie and colde ynough of my ſelfe, vntill God doe heate mee and ſtrengthen mee. And therefore what a thing is it when I ſhall bee furthered in euill by my companion, and bee made the weaker by him? Seeing then that wee be to liue in this world, yee ſee howe it ſtandeth vs in hand, to take heede that wee meddle not with ſuch as may diſcourage vs. Why ſo? Becauſe we be ſubiect ynough of our ſelues to our owne luſtes, and foreward ynough to all vanities and delightes, and ready ynough to ſhrinke away from the ſeruing of God: al of vs (ſay I) are too much inclined to euill of our ſelues, without further prouocation. But now if I match my ſelfe with drunkards and gluttons, with whoremongers and ſwearers: what ſhall become of mee? Whereas I haue the ſeede of vice and ſin in mee already: will it not bee an increaſing of it, if I ſeeke occaſions of euill? Is it not a tempting of God, and a caſting of my ſelfe away? And yet ye ſee we doe it ordinarily, inſomuch as we may ſeeme to ſeeke occaſions to miſcheeſe our ſelues, and if any body goe about to drawe vs from wicked companie: wee grate our teeth at him as though he did vs great wrong. But contrariwiſe wee ought to put this leſſon in vre, by thinking thus with our ſelues: God hath graunted me the grace to be of his campe, & will haue me to fight againſt ſinne, againſt the world, againſt all mine own luſtes, yea and euen againſt Satan himſelfe. In deede it is a very harde incounter: and when I haue gotten the vpper hand one day, I muſt enter into new battels againe the next day. What wil become of mee therefore, if I be not minded to play the valiant champion? Seeing I not onely find ſuch a number of impediments in mee as is pitie to thinke on, but alſo doe vtterly faint afore hand: what ſhall become of me, if my God ſtrengthen me not? But hee hath promiſed mee to doe it, and therefore I will call vpon him. Againe, when I ſee great numbers of ſtumbling blockes, and impediments that may hinder me or put mee to trouble: I will looke to the helpe which God giueth me, and that will bee ynough to make me ouercome all diſtreſſes: ſpecially if I bee guided by his holy ſpirite, that will ſuffice to repulſe all feare, and all diſtruſt that might diſcourage mee. Were wee then wiſe and well aduiſed, wee would thinke better vppon theſe thinges than wee haue beene woont to doe: and euerie of vs woulde followe ſuch as are of good courage, and ſhewe vs good example by marching on before vs, and haue beene tryed afore in the ſeruice of GOD. With ſuch would wee keepe companie, and with ſuch would wee haue familiaritie, knowing that nothing is better than to linke in together one with another, and to keepe our ſelues occupyed in that exerciſe, ſeeing wee haue ſuch neede thereof. Thus yee ſee howe haue ought to put this ſentence in vre.

But yet it is then to bee doone moſt ſpecially, when the caſe concerneth them that ſhould ſhewe the way howe to fight, as thoſe that are in publike office, whether it bee of gouernment and execution of Iuſtice, or of preaching Gods woorde: for if fayncthearted and cowardly men be put in thoſe places; what ſhall they doe but ouerthrowe all? And therefore men ought to make better choyce than they doe, when officers are to be appointed in the houſe of God, ſo as they muſt not goe and chooſe at aduenture without conſidering who bee meete and fitte for the purpoſe, or without regarde whether they haue a good will and bee rightminded to ſerue God and to imploy themſelues as they ought to doe or no. And no maruell though oftentimes thinges be out of ſquare in the world, and that all thinges are ſeene to be out of order: for men refuſe the meanes that God offereth them. And when they ſo forſake him: it is good reaſon that they alſo ſhould bee forſaken of him, and that they ſhould finde themſelues to bee forlorne. But yet muſt wee aduiſe our ſelues the better to followe the rule that is giuen vs heere, and euery of vs muſt haue a regarde of himſelfe to gather courage: and if we be fainthearted, we may bee ſure that it is not for vs to bee of the armie and companie of GOD. What is to bee doone then? The Miniſters muſt doe as the Prophet Eſay commaundeth them, that is to ſay, they muſt ſtrengthen the weake kneees, and

Eſay 35. 3.

incourage

incourage the weake hearted. For the right vse of Gods woord is, that when wee see mens handes quake and their knees shake, wee must raise them vp and strengthen them againe by our lively incouragements. And haue the Ministers once doone their dewtie, euery other man also must do the lyke, as the Apostle sayth in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. For this text of Moyses is alleaged there, to shew that not onely such as haue the charge to preach Gods word must strengthen the weake: but also that euery man must doe the lyke towardes himselfe. Therefore let vs examine our owne weakenesse. And where as wee see our selues so feeble: let vs knowe that God hath giuen vs a good helpe by his woord. Let vs applye his promises to our vse, that when we feele our knees shake wee may quicken them vp, and when our handes quake we must strengthen them, and our hearts must be so fenced with constancie and courage, as wee may not bee afrayde to offer our selues to the incounter, as they that are sure that our Lorde goeth before vs, so as wee shall be backed by him, and his grace shal neuer fayle: and that moreouer our neighbours be led to him by our example, so as wee may with one common accorde bee strengthened to fight against Satan, hauing Christ for our head, who guideth and gouerneth vs in all incounters and assaultes which we haue to indure, vntill he haue taken vs vp into his heauenly rest.

Heb.11.34.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, & to forgiue vs them, and to gouerne vs hencefoorth in such wise, as wee may bee the better disposed to fight vnder him and vnder his hande, vntill wee haue gotten the victorie against all our enimies, and haue inioyed the fruite of our victorie, being gathered all together vnto him. And so let vs al say, Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xix. of December. 1555.

The Cxviij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the twentith Chapter.

10 When thou commest neere any Citie to fight against it, thou shalt offer it peace.

11 And if they aunswere thee peaceably, and open vnto thee, al the people that is in it shall bee tributarie vnto thee and serue thee.

12 But if they will not make peace with thee, but make warre with thee: then shalt thou lay seege to it.

13 And the Lord thy God will giue it into thy handes. Thou shalt slea all the males in it with the edge of the sword.

14 But the women, the children, and the cattel, and al that is in the Citie besides, and all the spoile thereof thou shalt take to thy selfe: and thou shalt eat the spoyle of thine enimies which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

15 After that manner shalt thou doe to all the Cities that are farre off from thee, which are not of the Cities of this nation.

16 But of the Cities of the nations which the Lord thy God giueth thee to inherite, thou shalt not leaue any soule aliue.

17 But thou shalt vtterly destroy thē: namely the Hethites, the Amorrhites, the Chanaites, the Pherezites, the Hiuites and the Iebusites, as the Lord thy God hath commaunded thee:

18 Least they teach you to doe according to all the abhominations which they haue done to their gods, and so you sinne against the Lord your God.

IT might well seeme at the first blushe, that wee haue no great need to haue ỹ doctrine expounded to vs which is conteyned heere, bycause it declareth howe men ought to behaue themselues in warfare. But when all is well looked vppon, wee shall finde that wee may gather good and profitable fruite to our instruction, of the thinges that GOD hath commaunded his people heere. For first wee see what a care hee had to teach

those of whome hee had taken charge, that they might knowe howe to behaue themselues in all thinges. Nowe seeing that GOD hath such a care: let vs learne to walke in his obedience, not doubting but wee shall finde sufficient instruction in his worde, whereby to rule our whole lyfe well. I say that all they which yeeld themselues teachable vnto GOD, and are ready to fashion themselues after his will, shall finde sufficient in his worde wherewith to guide themselues aright without any want at all, insomuch that whereas men are disordered in their dealinges, and knowe not what to doe: the cause thereof is, that they submit not themselues wholly to GOD, but take counsell by themselues, and runne gadding heere and there, whereas all they that seeke to be taught by Gods worde, as well in matters of state as in priuate matters, and as well in time of warre as in tyme of peace, shall finde a perfect doctrine and such as is fitte for them. The thing then which wee haue to marke vpon this text, is that GOD woulde not faile them in any one point, whom he had taken into his tuition.

But there is yet more. For it may well seeme that where open warre is, there all thinges should bee put to hauocke. But our Lorde meint to shewe, that all his seruauntes must alwayes brydle themselues, yea euen where they seeme to haue most excessiue libertie, to breake the bondes of all humanitie and vprightnesse. GOD sheweth that such as belong to him must euen in those cases keepe and mayntayne themselues vndefiled; so as howesoeuer the worlde goe, they must stande in continuall awe, that no extremitie may driue them beyond their bondes, but that they holde them still to this ground; Wee must obey GOD. True it is that euen the heathen coulde skill to say, that euen in tyme of warre it was not Lawefull to assault or beseege a Towne, vntill they had offered it conditions of peace. But yet wee see there was nothing but furie and crueltie: for as soone as they were entered into armes, they bare themselues in hand that it was Lawfull for them to beare all thinges downe before them without sparing. GOD then meint to shewe heere, that his people ought to bee so courteous as to spare their enemies, euen in tyme of warre. That is the thing which is conteyned heere. A man shall finde in the bookes of the heathen, that they also commended this vprightnesse, that although there was iust cause of warre; yet the shedding mans bloode was to bee forborne; but this rule was not well kept. And howesoeuer the case stande, our Lorde hath heere separated his people from all the rest of the worlde, shewing that they which are led by his worde, must looke more straitely and narrowly to themselues, than they that followe their naturall inclination, and are not taught as they should be.

And nowe let vs come to the doctrine that is conteyned heere. It is sayde, *When thou commest to a Citie to beseege it, shew it offer thine peace: and if they yeeld or bee willing to fall to composition, then shalt receiue them to mercie, so as no bloud shall bee shedde. The inhabitauntes shall bee onely bee subiect to thee and pay thee Tribute.* In so saying GOD sheweth that although there bee iust cause of warre, yet must we not bee so whot and firie at the first dashe, as to put all to the swoord and slaughter. For howesoeuer the worlde goe, men are created after the Image of GOD: and there must we beholde our nature. Wherefore it must needes bee that wee are caryed away from all reason, if the same withholde vs not, and that wee haue no pitie of those which are our owne fleshe and bones, and which beare the marke of our GOD, euen of the same GOD which hath fashioned vs after his owne lykenesse. If this (say I) bee not able to asswage our passions, which myght carie vs away to crueltie: it must needes be sayde that wee bee bereft of all reason, and woorse than the brute beasts, which knowe their owne kinde, and doe not so deadly pursue one another. That is the thing which wee haue to marke in the first place. And hereof we may gather a good lesson expedient for vs all. For heere God speaketh of those against whom he armeth his people. But we cannot say the like of our enemies. If a man haue done me all the wrong that is possible, yea and haue euen sought my death: yet doeth not that arme me to be auenged of him: God doeth not giue mee leaue to requite like for like, but I am commanded to render good for euill. Howbeit the case standeth otherwise with Princes and Magistrates which haue the sword: for God hath set them in his owne stead to execute vengeance. Ye see then that heere is a people armed with Gods authoritie, as if God had sayde, draw your swords, for I dispence with you at this tyme, so as ye may slea your enimies, and it shall not be layde to your charge for a cryme. When a warre is rightfull, and God giueth men leaue it is a permission or priuilege which he graunteth them. And yet for all that he will not haue men to goe to it at alauenture, but that they shoulde seeke peace, and abstayn from shedding of bloud if it be possible, so as no man may be hurt or wounded in his person. Seeing that God wil haue men to brydle themselues after that manner in the tyme of warre, I pray you what is to bee doone where our handes are so tyed vp, as it is not lawfull to giue our enimie a philluppe, but to loue them rather, that haue grieued vs or wrought vs any wrong or iniury? Ought we not to offer them peace, & to be al ready to receiue them to mercy when we see them willing to be reconciled to vs? So then, seeing that euen in the tyme of warre, when all thinges seeme to be lawfull, our Lorde will haue vs to offer peace to them that haue deale amisse with vs and haue deserued to be punished in their bodies: Seeing (I say) that God will haue vs to seeke meanes to saue them, and that wee should not deale rigorously with them:

much

much more ought euery of vs in our owne priuate cases, to be inclined to beare with our aduersaries? If we be troubled and molested, so as we haue iust cause to the worldwarde to pursue the iniurie doone vs: yet ought wee rather to fall to composition, if it be possible: And if we doe not, what excuse will there bee for vs? If those whom God hath armed against their enemies, may not strike one stroke at them vntill they haue assayed to make peace with them: what shall become of vs who ought to be men of peace, and to loue our enemies; if we be vnreconcilable, fierce as Lyons, harde as steele, and such as can bee brought to none attonement? Must it not needes be said that we haue shaken off all feare of God? Yea and yet we see howe men doe sooth themselues in this case. Insomuch that if a man bee grieued: he is so far off from warning ỹ offender of his fault quietly, to bring him to good attonement againe; that (to all lykelyhoode) he will rather turne the whole world vpside downe, than he will by any meanes be reconciled. Wee see that this wilfull stubbornesse is vtterly past amendment in most men. And so wee perceiue now what fruite wee ought to reape of this text: namely that although he speake of warre, yet he giueth good instruction to his people and to euery of vs.

And therefore let vs remember, that whensoeuer any man hath offended vs, wee must as much as in vs lyeth indeuour to fall to agreement with our enemyes. As howe? By warning them of their faultes. For reconciliation presupposeth that the offender shoulde vnderstande his offence and mislike thereof, and that we shoulde bee ready to receiue such as are so minded, so as wee shoulde bee desirous to bee at one with them as with our brethren, notwithstanding that they had beene as enemyes to vs before so much as in them lay. And if we ought to yeelde this courtesie towardes them that haue broken the bond of all peace and brotherly vnitie: howe much more should we maintayne peace and concorde with our neighbours that haue not doone vs any wrong? And so wee must come by degrees, euen to the procuring of our peace with all men as much as wee can possibly, bicause it is Gods will that all men shoulde bee linked together in one bondes as in very deede the nature ỹ is common to vs all, ought to bee as a common lawe to vs all. Nowe then, seeing it is so that we ought to maintayne peace and brotherly loue among vs: let vs see that we offer peace to all men, not onely in wordes, but also in such wise as our life may beare record that we be desirous of nothing more than to be friendes to all men. Insomuch that if there happen any quarel, we must not minister occasion thereunto, nor kindle the fire on our behalfe, but so refraine our selues, as wee prouoke not our neyghbour to enmitie. Thus yee see howe after the order afore mentioned, wee must come to the doctrine which the holy Scripture sheweth vs in other places: That is to wit, that it must not bee long of vs that wee bee not as brothers to al men, and that wee communicate not together, without any iarring or disagreement. That (say I) is the meane and maner to offer peace accordingly as GOD commaundeth. And nowe let vs proceede to that which followeth.

When a Citie will not receiue peace, God giueth his people leaue to destroy all the men, reseruing onely the young Children, the women, and the Cattell. True it is that although a Citie fall to composition, yet will bee haue it to become tributarie. For (as I sayde afore) hee presupposeth that the warre must bee rightfull, and allowed by him, as made in his name and by his authoritie. And therefore it is not to bee wondered at though he lay trybute vpon those that submit themselues. For why? It is as a penaltie. Lyke as in Minister of Iustice, men punishe offenders according to the Lawe, and when the case requireth not the punishment of death, there is some other chastisement or amercement layde vppon them for a penaltie: Euen so our Lorde giueth leaue to such as haue iust tytle of warre, to lay some correction vppon those whom they shall haue vanquished and subdewed. And herein wee see howe we ought to take good heede, that wee giue no cause of warre. For whereas wee see our Lorde hath giuen his people leaue to lay trybute vppon others, it is all one as if hee shoulde say that all such as minister occasion of trouble, are to bee punished, and that if they bee borne with, it is but of fauour and courtesie: but yet are they woorthy to haue some correction for all that.

Therefore let vs learne heereby to bee so peaceable, as wee moue not any trouble or discord on our side. For by setting downe such a Lawe, GOD hath shewed that whosoeuer soweth any discord among men, or procureth any trouble, deserueth alwayes to bee punished; and that although hee bee spared, yet hee is to bee chastised after some sorte neuertheleſſe. And although warre bee nor made against vs, not any tribute bee layde vppon vs: yet notwithstanding wee must not therefore omitte to acknowledge our selues faultie before GOD. For if a whole Nation bee not spared: what shall a priuate person bee? I see that GOD condemneth a whole Citie or a Countrie: and what will become of mee, when I shall haue kindled the fire of discorde, and giuen occasion of enmitie? Am not I much more worthy to bee condemned? Is it meete that I which am but one man, shoulde bee more borne with than a whole Nation? This therefore ought to bee a good warning to vs, to liue in peace and to maintaine myeldenesse, so as no man bee troubled or vexed by vs. For sith wee see so sharpe execution, that God giueth leaue to put the men to death, and to reserue ỹ women to bondage and slauerie: is it not a thing that

ought to make vs afraide? Yes: and this doeth vs to vnderstande, that when swoordes are once drawen, there must needs be horrible confusion, and it is not possible to remedie it. For it is GOD that speaketh heere, and hee setteth downe the best order of gouernment among his people, that is possible to bee founde: and yet so horrible is that kynde of dealing, that when a Citie is assaulted and taken by force, all the men must bee destroyed. Surely such shedding of bloud ought to make the hayre to stande vp vppon our heades. And yet for all that it is GOD that speaketh it, and (as I sayde afore) hee intendeth to set downe heere the perfectest Lawe of armes that can bee among men. Then let vs conclude, that if warre bee once kindled, there is no remedye to appease it. And therefore it behoueth men to haue the more staye of themselues beforehande, and to consider thus: What a thing is it to come to battell, wherein so manie murders are to bee committed, and so manie slaughters are to bee doone, as though the whole world shoulde goe to confusion, and all bondes of nature were to bee forgotten, and men shoulde shutte their eyes wilfully to the intent they myght not see whether the folke whome they so murther bee men or no? Ought it not to bee a good brydle to vs, when wee see so great enormities insue thereof? Let such as take warres in hande looke well to themselues, and bethinke them thus: What? Peraduenture I must come to the sacking of a Citie: and so from one to another, and battell vppon battell shall bee fought. What a nomber of poore widowes and fatherlesse children shall bee made thereby? What a heape of confusions wil insue thereof, so as ye woulde thinke that the worlde shoulde bee turned vpside downe? And shall I bee the cause of all this? If Princes considered that they shoulde fall into such extremities by taking warres in hande, surely they would deale much more myldly than they doe.

But if they benefite not themselues thereby, yet let vs looke to our selues, and consider that the mischiefe which our Lord sheweth vs to bee in warre, may also befall to priuate persons. For when two men fall at variaunce, and runne out into heates of euill speeches, strypes will ensue of it, and when swoordes bee once drawen, bloudshed doeth lyghtly followe after. And in this case there is no lawfulnesse at all: it is not as when God giueth men leaue to kill their enemyes in battell: for whosoeuer sleeth a man for any priuate quarell, is a murtherer. So then, wee must looke neerelyer to our selues, and eschewe quarels and debates the more, knowing that it is a giuing way and an opening of a gappe to Satan, that hee may raygne among vs, whensoeuer wee seeke occasions of quarelling, or when wee shunne them not as we ought to doe.

Yee see then howe the warning which wee haue to gather vppon this text, is that seeing GOD hath giuen leaue (as it were of force and necessitie) to kill such as resist the assault of a Towne: it behoueth vs to take good heede, that quarelles, troubles, and contentions procede not so farre through our faulte, as there is none other remedie but the shedding of bloud. For if wee be slaine in any such fray, vnhappie bee wee; and if wee chaunce to slea our aduersarie, vnhappie bee we so too. For wee see that GODS spirit beareth not the sway in that case. True it is, that if a man that is assaulted, doe slea him that assaulteth him, hee shall not bee punished for it, neyther ought hee to bee: but yet is hee not excusible before GOD. For why? Who is hee that can so brydle himselfe, that hee is not inflamed with choler, or with some excessiue and inordinate passion? Seeing then that such thinges doe raygne in vs, wee bee blame woorthie though wee haue iust cause to doe it. For it is not ynough for vs to haue a good ease; but it must also bee well ordered, that is to say, it must bee done with a quiet minde, so as wee procede not into such extremitie as to commit manslaughter. And therefore let vs learne to preuent Sathan, and to seeke meanes of atonement, that our quarelles may not procede into shedding of bloud.

Besides this, wee haue also one other lesson to gather, namely that if there bee any agreement among vs, or any meane of reconcilement whereas wee were deadly enemyes before: the cause thereof is, that God stablisheth a holy brotherhood among vs, by calling vs to him, and by adopting vs to bee his children. And in that respect is the Gospell called the message of peace. For why? Whereas we bee at warre with GOD, and he must needes hate vs in as much as wee be corrupted, and there is nothing in vs but vnpurfednesse: hee vouchsafeth to become our friend, and receiuing vs as his owne children, promiseth to forget and to burie all our faults. The Gospell beareth vs recorde hereof. And therefore not without cause is it called the doctrine of peace, seeing it vniteth vs againe to our GOD. Sith it is so, wee ought in deede likewise to bee at one among our selues. For howe is it possible that GOD should acknowledge vs for his children, if there bee not vnitie and agreement among vs? And if wee receyue not the sayde message, then must greater warre bee proclaymed against vs than euer there was afore. And therefore our Lord Iesus Christ sayde to his Disciples, Into whatsoeuer house yee enter, greete the same with peace. For (as I sayde afore) it is the propertie of the doctrine of saluation, to shewe that God is minded to come vnto vs and to receiue vs to mercie though wee bee not woorthie thereof. Therfore all the Ministers of his word are commaunded to beare witnesse thereof: and to tell men that if they refuse it, cast it off, and make none account of it; there is a harder battel towards than this is. For the case concerneth

neth not the destruction of their bodies onely, but also of their soules. It is not onelie the males that shall bee slaine for it; but both males and females must passe vnspared. Not the greate ones onely shall beare the punishment, but both great and small shall feele the whole weight of Gods vengeaunce. Nowe then, if men accepe not your peace, gette you out from among them, and shake the dust off your feete. As if hee shoulde say, Such folke are so accursed, that yee must not haue anie thing at all to doe with them. But for asmuch as they carrie nothing about them but infection; yee must shewe by outwarde tokens, that yee woulde faine bee separated from them, euen as it were into another world. Thus ye see how the things that are spoken here concerning the law of armes, ought to be applied in way of similitude to the peace which our Lorde sendeth vs by the preaching of his Gospell. For there was enmitie betweene him and vs before: by nature (as I haue said alreadie) we be all straungers to our God, and we cannot but set our selues against him. Yet for all this, hee seeketh attonement with vs. Vppon what condition? Not that we shoulde pay him tribute, as though hee were minded to inrich himselfe with our goods. True it is that hee liketh wel to haue vs to serue him: but yis for our benefite and welfare, and not for anie aduauntage to himselfe. For hee hath no want of anie thing, neither needeth he to be inriched: but by pleasing vs, he would that wee likewise should inriche him. And that is as amiable a condition as can be. Nowe what is to bee doone, but to receiue his peace? Yea verily: and therefore let vs not tarie til God inforce vs; but let vs preuent him, by imbracing the inestimable preroguie which he offereth vs in vouchsafing to forgiue vs all our sinnes. But if wee be so wretched as to refuse so great a benefite: let vs mark that wee bee not onely cast vp as it were to the foule, and that GOD shaketh vs quite & cleane off: but also that his wrath must needes bee vttered vppon vs, because of such vnthankfulnes and churlishnesse, in despising our GOD so wilfully and stubbornely, that wee had leuer to haue him our deadly enemy than our protector. Seeing then that his intent is not to haue vs as thiefes that are conquered by right of warre, nor to raise tributes vppon vs to increase himselfe withall; but to reigne ouer vs for our welfare, and yet wee will not abide it, but shake him off vtterly and pursue him still with a venemous heart to prouoke him to anger: is not our deseruing such as hee may iustlie bee so rigorous vnto vs, as to commaunde his seruauntes to withdrawe themselues from vs, and to shake off the dust of their feete? As who shoulde say, wee bee not worthie to treade vppon the earth, because wee defile it. The verie thing therefore which wee haue to marke, is that wee cannot prouoke Gods wrath any way more, than by refusing the peace that is offered vs by the Gospell, so as wee vouchsafe not to hearken to it. For then, because God findeth vs past grace, God also is faine to arme himselfe with terrible and dreadfull vengeaunce against vs, and not onely to punish vs in our bodies, but also to extende his vengeaunce vnto our soules, and so to roote vs out quite and cleane, in which behalfe women are no more to bee spared than men. For when as God calleth vs all in Christ Iesus; there is no difference of male and female (as saith Saint Paul,) but faith reconcileth vs all vnto God. Likewise vnbeleefe and stubbornesse make vs enemies to God, both men and women, the punishment whereof extendeth both to great and small. For seeing wee are become traitours and rebels to our God, it is good reason that all our whole ofspring should perish with vs: because Gods curse lies vppon the wicked euen vnto the third and fourth generation, as the law auoweth & we haue seene heretofore. Thus ye see in effect what wee haue to remember vpon this text.

Gal. 3. 28.

Deut. 5. 9.

And let vs marke herewithall, that seeing God doeth so preuent vs aforehand to seeke attonement and to sende vs tydings of peace: we also ought to seeke meanes to bee friends with such as haue offended vs, and to followe the example of our heauenly father, as if wee shoulde say, What shal become of mee who am but a worme and rottennesse, if I continue wilfull and holde skorne to come to attonement with mine enemie when he hath once offended mee, so as I chawe vppon my bridle still and will not by anie meanes bee pacified, when in the meane time my God seeketh mee? Beholde, my GOD is wel contented to stoope vnto mee which am but rottennesse: and shall I not withstanding refuse to be reconciled to him that is my fellowe and brother? Although he haue offended mee, yet can I not renounce mine one nature: yet can I not bring to passe but that he is still a humane creature shaped after the image of God as well as my selfe. So then let vs learne to mecken our stomackes though they bee neuer so stout, and let this example of God induce vs to greater gentlenesse and compassion than wee bee woont to haue.

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ought to make vs afraide? Yes: and this doeth vs to vnderstande, that when swoordes are once drawen, there must needs be horrible confusion, and it is not possible to remedie it. For it is GOD that speaketh heere, and hee setteth downe the best order of gouernment among his people, that is possible to bee founde: and yet so horrible is that kynde of dealing, that when a Citie is assaulted and taken by force, all the men must bee destroyed. Surely such shedding of bloud ought to make the hayre to stande vp vppon our heades. And yet for all that it is GOD that speaketh it, and (as I sayde afore) hee intendeth to set downe heere the perfectest Lawe of armes that can bee among men. Then let vs conclude, that if warre bee once kindled, there is no remedye to appease it. And therefore it behoooueth men to haue the more stay of themselues beforehande, and to consider thus: What a thing is it to come to battell, wherein so manie murders are to bee committed, and so manie slaughters are to bee doone, as though the whole world shoulde goe to confusion, and all bondes of nature were to bee forgotten, and men shoulde shutte their eyes wilfully to the intent they myght not see whether the folke whome they so murther bee men or no? Ought it not to bee a good brydle to vs, when wee see so great enormities insue thereof? Let such as take warres in hande looke well to themselues, and bethinke them thus: What? Peraduenture I must come to the sacking of a Citie: and so from one to another, and battell vppon battell shall bee fought. What a nomber of poore widowes and fatherlesse children shall bee made thereby? What a heape of confusions wil insue thereof, so as ye woulde thinke that the worlde should bee turned vpside downe? And shall I bee the cause of all this? If Princes considered that they shoulde fall into such extremities by taking warres in hande, surely they would deale much more myldly than they doe.

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Besides this, wee haue also one other lesson to gather, namely that if there bee any agreement among vs, or any meanes of reconcilement whereas wee were deadly enemyes before: the cause thereof is, that God stablisheth a holy brotherhood among vs, by calling vs to him, and by adopting vs to bee his children. And in that respect is the Gospell called the message of peace. For why? Whereas we bee at warre with GOD, and he must needes hate vs in as much as we be corrupted, and there is nothing in vs but vnrighteousnesse: hee vouchsafeth to become our friend, and receiuing vs as his owne children, promiseth to forget and to burie all our faultes. The Gospell beareth vs recorde hereof. And therefore not without cause is it called the doctrine of peace, seeing it vniteth vs againe to our GOD. Sith it is so, wee ought in deede likewise to bee at one among our selues. For howe is it possible that GOD should acknowledge vs for his children, if there bee not vnitie and agreement among vs? And if wee receyue not the sayde message, then must greater warre bee proclaymed against vs than euer there was afore. And therefore our Lord Iesus Christ sayde to his Disciples, Into whatsoeuer house yee enter, greete the same with peace. For (as I sayde afore) it is the propertie of the doctrine of saluation, to shewe that God is minded to come vnto vs and to receiue vs to mercie though wee bee not woorthie thereof. Therfore all the Ministers of his word are commaunded to beare witnesse thereof: and to tell men that if they refuse it, cast it off, and make none account of it; there is a harder battel towards than this is. For the case concer-

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And let vs marke herewithall, that seeing God doeth so preuent vs aforehand to seeke attonement and to sende vs tydings of peace: we also ought to seeke meanes to bee friends with such as haue offended vs, and to followe the example of our heauenly father, as if wee shoulde say: What shal become of mee who am but a worme and rottennesse, if I continue wilfull and holde skorne to come to attonement with mine enemie when he hath once offended mee, so as I chawe vppon my bridle still and will not by anie meanes bee pacified, when in the meane time my God seeketh mee? Beholde, my GOD is wel contented to stoope vnto mee which am but rottennesse: and shall I not withstanding refuse to be reconciled to him that is my fellowe and brother? Although he haue offended mee, yet can I not renounce mine one nature: yet can I not bring to passe but that he is still a humane creature shaped after the image of God as well as my selfe. So then let vs learne to mecken our stomackes though they bee neuer so stout, and let this example of God induce vs to greater gentlenesse and compassion than wee bee woont to haue.

Hereuppon Moses addeth, *That this law serueth but onely for the Nations that were farre off. For as for those nations* (saith he) *whom God giueth you now presently, as the Chananites, the Hethites, the Amorrhites, the Pherezites, the Heuites, and the Iebusites; all those you must vtterly roote out, and inherite their lands, howbeit hauing first purged it cleane from all those.* Here wee see howe the lawe which I haue expounded alreadie, serued for the time then to come when the Israelites shoulde haue any newe warre against such as had not beene their enemies before. But as for the people of the Lande of Chanaan which God had promised for an inheritaunce to the Iewes: it was his wil that they shoulde bee vtterly rooted out, which thing at the first sight might seeme ouerharde as I haue saide thereof heerebefore, [but it was not so indeede.] For to the intent that men shoulde not accuse God of crueltie, it was shewed why hee vsed so great rigour. But forasmuch as all of you [perchaunce] vnderstood it not; it is requisite to declare againe where-

fore our Lorde commaunded all those Nations to bee rooted out and to bee put to sworde and hauocke without any mercie at all. For they were no such enemies as had doone any speciall wrong to the children of Israell, but they were enemies to God, yea and enemies alreadie condemned euen by the space of fourehundred yeares afore. True it is that the children of Israell had iust cause of warre against them, because Abraham came into that coūtrie by Gods appointment to dwell there. And although GOD did not yet put him in possession of the souereigntie thereof which he had giuen vnto him: yet was it his will that hee shoulde bee an inhabiter of that lande. But they draue him from place to place: so did they also to his sonne Isaac, and likewise to Iacob, insomuch as they euen denied them water. Not that they went about to borrow water at their neighbours pits; but that their neighbours stopped vp the pittes which they had digged, and draue them from them without al humanitie. Howbeit there was yet a much higher respect: which was that God knowing the excessiue wickednesse of all those nations to be vtterly vnreclaimable, determined to take them quite and cleane out of the world, and yet woulde not that their lande shoulde lie wast without inhabitaunte: and therefore hee appointed it for an inheritaunce to his owne people. Here therefore wee must behold Gods speciall iudgement, to the ende wee accuse him not as I saide afore, ne dispute as a number doe, which presume to replie and to say, why was GOD so seuere? What cause had he so to doe? To the intent therefore that wee may honour God in his iudgementes, acknowledging him to bee vpright, and iust, yea without fault in all thinges: let vs marke that the condemning of this people here is not without cause. Might not God (if he listed) wipe vs out of the worlde euen at the first? And what shoulde we gayne by pleading agaynst him or by going to Law with him? Nowe if hee may so destroy vs at the first dash, and yet we may not complaine thereof or goe to Law with him therefore, but that he shall continue righteous still in his punishing of vs: what may hee doe to vs when we be past grace, when he hath borne with vs long time, and patiently tarried for vs, and yet wee growe euer worse and worse, and cease not to increase his wrath still against vs? If God finde vs so hardhearted, is not our wickednesse then ripe? Is it not come to the full growth, as hee speaketh of these Nations here? Yes verily is it. For we see how these people were so wicked long aforehand euen in the time of Abraham, that it woulde greeue ones hearte to thinke on it, so as they were not to bee borne with anie longer. They sawe what befell to Sodome and Gomor, which were their Neighbour cities; and yet they became neuer the better for it, but continued still in all manner of outrageous wickednesse. Yet notwithstanding, it was Gods will to holde his hand, and not to punishe them at the first. And howe long a time did hee waite for them? Not a tenne or twentie yeares onelie:

Gen. 15. 16.

Gen. 12. 19. & 26. 16. 19. 20.

but he saith, I haue condemned them, and giuen diffinitiue sentence vppon them, and yet will I giue them, fourehundred yeares respite, so as I will not execute my iudgement til then. God (I say) deferred the execution of his iudgement against those that were worthie to haue beene rooted out of the worlde at the verie first. And yet for all his long delay what commeth of it? Did they amende? Did they bethinke them of their faultes to mislike of them and to craue forgiuenesse at Gods hande? No: But they grewe still worse and worse, insomuch that the thing which God had foretolde to Abraham fell out to bee true: namely that the wickednesse of the Chananites was not yet as then growen to the full. As if hee shoulde say, Indeed the measure is full enough alreadie: but yet there must be such an ouermeasure, as they may come to destruction of themselues, and their owne wickednesse may be their ouerthrow.

Gen. 15. 24.

Sith we see that God did so refrayne himselfe and vse so mielde a kinde of proceeding towardes these Nations: what shall wee say, but that wee haue good cause to glorifie him, and to confesse him to bee so kindehearted towards mankinde, as yet notwithstanding wee must not dallie with him, but liue in his feare? But if God beare with vs, wee take occasion to mocke him for his labour, and we thinke our selues escaped when hee hath delayed his punishing of vs. But beholde, GOD on the one side is loth to giue vs anie cause to complaine of ouermuch rigour: and therefore hee is patient and long-suffering, as hee termeth himselfe in the holie Scripture. Howbeit forasmuch as wee abuse his goodnesse, and become the bolder to doe euill: hee sheweth vs that wee must come to a reckening for it in the ende, and that hee will pay the most vnrulie sorte of vs for the arrerages that he is behinde hande with vs. The thing then which wee haue to remember at the sight of this fayre lookingglasse which wee haue in the Amorrhites, Hethites, Chananites, Pherezites, Iebusites, and their like; is to conflict with our selues, that if GOD anie time do let men alone as though hee had layde the reines in their necke, and do wincke at them, and make no countenance at all of punishing them: it is no consequent that therefore hee acquiteth them, and that nothing is registred vp before him, and that their sinnes shall scape quite and cleane vnpunished. No no: but hee waiteth for them with patience, and in the ende they must come to their account. And therefore let it not trouble vs when we see y our Lord punisheth not the wicked at y first dash; neither let it grieue vs to see them ruffle it out in the meane while, & to make good cheere: for their triumphing shall cost thē right deare, because they haue despised God, yea & euen falsely abused his grace, in making it a shrowding sheete of their noughtinesse. Therefore let it not be a meane to drawe vs to follow their example: but let vs patiently abide Gods leasure til he worke, & vntill the conuenient time bee come for him to execute his wrath: and that wil serue vs for a double lesson.

For

For on the one side, when wee see that GOD punisheth not the wicked: we woulde by and by take part with them, if we bethought vs not of this threate. Well though GOD shewe not his arme to day, yet doeth it not follow but that he may doe it to morrowe. If wee were not restreyned by this feare, wee woulde soone be out of all order, and the verie Angels woulde be corrupted by the example of the duelles. Marke that for one point. Againe, wee must bridle our affections and lustes that carrie vs away because wee bee amased yea and astonished, to thinke howe GOD leaueth those vnpunished which haue offended him so sore: and that on the contrarie part, whereas he letteth them alone, yea and giueth them full scope to doe what they list in this worlde: in the meane time hee seemeth to forget vs as though hee had no regarde of vs at all. Wherupon we think thus with our selues: If wee be his children, where is the pitie that he hath promised vs? Such complaint doe they make, which haue not an eye to Gods long-sufferance. And so the seconde lesson which we shoulde receiue, is that seeing wee perceiue that our Lorde taried so long a time for those nations which had offended him as highlie as could be, and we see him delay their punishment so long a time, that their sins seemed to lie buryed by the space of fourehundred yeares, and that yet nevertheless God executeth his sentence at the ende of those fower hundred yeares, which was fiue times beyonde the remembrance of men: In the beholding hereof make vs to feare the rigour of our God afarre off: and though no token of his wrath appeare, yet let not vs fayle to feede them by faith. As for example, when the Apostle speaketh of Noe, he saith that he fore-saw the flud by faith. While men were sorted in their delightes, and gaue themselues to feasting, Noe beheld the flud. And howe beheld he it? For it was yet faire weather, and euerie man toke his pleasure and pastime. Yet did hee see all the worlde drowned and destroyed: For hee saw it by faith, because God had threatened that it shoulde bee so. Nowe, the same threate haue we, and therewithall wee haue the proofe of it also, euen in this, that our Lorde punished those nations that are spoken of here, at the end of fourehundred yeares, when they thought nee of it, ne tooke anie heed of it, insomuch that if a man had then threatened them any such thing, they woulde haue blurted out their tongues and shaken their heads at him. But their indicement was framed in heauen, iudgement was giuen vpon them alreadie, and the Iudge had power & might to put it in execution in spite of their wilfull stubbornesse. And therefore let the sight hereof make vs to stand in awe of our God. And when he letteth vs alone in quiet, and spareth vs, let vs not thinke our selues to bee scaped his hande: but let vs enter into account, and euerie man quicken vp himselfe, and looke into his owne faults, and that in such wise as we may preuent his wrath, and let vs not tarie till he be armed against vs to proclayme war against vs, but let vs preuent the rigor of his iudgement, that by comming vnto him, whereas we shoulde else finde him our Iudge in the end, wee may finde him to bee our pitifull and kinde hearted father.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them continually more and more. And for asmuch as there is none of vs which hath not prouoked his wrath exceedingly, so as we be all guiltie before him, let vs seeke to returne to the refuge of his mercie. And seeing there is no meanes to come at him except he reach vs out his hande and drawe vs by his holy spirit: let vs not refuse to goe to him when he calleth vs, nor tarie till the gate be shut against vs: but let vs vse the opportunitie of the time when he causeth his Gospell to be preached vnto vs, and let vs imbrace our Lorde Iesus Christ with the peace which he offereth vs, resorting to his death and passion, that we may haue him for the gage of our righteousnesse, and the verie raunsome whereby to come in fauor with our God againe, so as all our sinnes may be buried through his mercie, and we labour to drawe others also vnto him, that all of vs with one common accord may tend vnto our God, and he be serued and worshipped of al me. And for the bringing hereof to passe, it may please him to raise vp true and faithfull ministers of his worde, &c.

On Fryday the xx. of December. 1555.

The Cxix. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the twentith Chapter.

16.17.18 But of the Cities of &c.

19 When thou shalt haue beseeged a Citie a long time, in fighting against it to take it, thou shalt not marre the trees therof by putting an Axe vnto them: for thou maist eate of them, and therefore cut them not downe: for the life of man is the tree of the feelde to come with thee to the seege.

20 Onely

20 Onely thou maist destroy and cut downe the trees which thou knowest to be no trees to eate of, and thereof thou maist make bulwarkes against the Citie which holdeth warre against thee, vntil thou haue wonne it.

YEsterday was shewed why God gaue so rigorous sentence against the Nations that had dwelte in the Lande of Chanaan: It was tolde you that hee had borne with them ere that time, and suffered them till such time as they were condemned: and thereupon that we must benefite our selues by such examples, partlie that wee abuse not Gods patience when hee spareth vs and delayeth the execution of his iudgements; giuing vs leasure in the meane while to returne to repentaunce: and [partly] that when wee see him execute so extreeme rigour vppon men, we shoulde assure our selues it is because hee knoweth them to bee vtterly past grace, and haue heaped vp such condemnation vppon their heades a long time afore hande. Now remaineth to note that GOD appointed the Iewes to bee the executers of the saide sentence, so as the Chananites and such like were to bee rooted out by the hande of the Iewes. And why? It is saide expressely in the Text, *As the Lorde thy God hath commaunded thee.* Then was it not for the Iewes to enterprise it on their owne heade, except they had had Gods worde for their warrant: for it is not lawfull for vs to attempt anie thing, vnlesse it bee our duetie, and that God haue commaunded it. And it is a generall rule for vs to beare in minde and to obserue all our life long. For men may doe goodly and commendable thinges, which notwithstanding shall not bee reputed for vertues before God, when they passe their boundes, that is to say, when they holde not themselues within the listes of that which God hath vttered vnto them. For if a man shoulde say, It were good to doe thus, and therefore I will applie my selfe thereto; and yet in the meane while God calleth him not to it, neither hath he anie worde commands him to deale so: his vnaduised aduenturing vppon things after that sort, shall alwayes be condemned at Gods hand. If we alledge that the deede is good and excellent of it selfe, that is not enough: for god wilbe obeied at our hands whatsoeuer come thereof. And therfore let euery man haue an eye to himselfe & consider how farre his duety wil beare him. If a man that hath but a little household to gouerne should take vpon him the office of a magistrate: what were to bee saide vnto it? There would be verie great confusion in that. Likewise if he that is a seruant in a house should take more vppon him than belonges to him, yee see that all were out of order. Againe if the wife shoulde ouermaster her husband, and make him her vnderling, all honestie of nature were quite goone. So then, it behoueth all men to holde themselues warely within their boundes, and to followe what way soeuer God calleth them. And when we haue Gods commaundement, we must not be holde back nor letted by men. If God bid vs goe, we must goe, & though all the worlde should set themselues against vs, yet must wee not turne head, but goe on still. As for example, in these dayes the Magistrates & ministers of Iustice haue the sworde in their hand, and that not in vaine (as saith Saint Paul) for God wil haue them to punish offenders. How if they do nothing therein, and yet in the meane season will needes alledge some excuse to God they deceiue themselues. For in asmuch as our Lorde hath set them in office, he hath willed also that hee will haue them to be stout and full of courage in maintaining their state. And so looke what commaundement was giuen vnto all the Iewes in olde time for the rooting out of the Pherezites, Amorrhites, Chananites, Iebusites, and their like, the same is giuen to all ministers of Iustice at this day: namely that they must rid the earth of all such as do nothing els but bring vp all maner of infection. As for vs, it is not saide to vs that wee shall roote out and put to death such as may put vs to any plunge: and therefore let euerie of vs looke to the rooting out of our owne vices, for we shall haue an inough hard enough there.

Rom. 13. 4.

And besides this, let vs beware also that we haue not to doe with such as may corrupt and marre vs: for we be but too forward of our owne nature. For like as it was saide to the Iewes, you shall put the Chananites to death: so let vs flee the companie of such as wil intice vs to nothing but euill, nor can doe aught else than prouoke vs to naughtinesse. For wee bee as fraile as is possible, and the least occasion in the world will thrust vs out of the way, and make vs to lose our God behinde vs, as hath bin declared not long since afore. And moreouer, let vs to the vttermost of our power indeuour to rid Gods Church of all such as could finde in their hearts to ouerthrowe the order of the Church and Gods seruice, and all honestie. As for example, when S. Paul saith, rid away the euil from among you, he commaundeth not the Corinthians to vse the materiall sword for the punishing of such as haue committed anie crime: for they were not in estate of Magistrates: but he meaneth excommunication, so as if a man be found to be a whoremaster, a drunkerde, or a swearer, he should not be borne with all. For why? It were a corrupting of Gods church which ought to be his holy temple, & it is a making therof a swinestie. Should filthines lie there? & what a dealing were that? Therefore wee must cut off all such folke as leade a wicked and laweleese life. And that is the lesson which wee haue to gather vppon that Text. For wee haue not the sworde in our handes to kill the despisers of GOD and such as leade an vnrulie and disordered life. But yet must we cast them out from among vs,

1. Cor. 5. 13.

and

and therewithall remember the warning that is giuen vs in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. Take good heede (saith the Apostle) that there growe vp no roote of bitternesse among you, least it be a meane to infect all the rest. Experience sheweth that there needeth but a verie little corruption to marre all, by reason of the infirmitie that is in men. And therefore let vs learne to remedie the matter, that wee bee not an occasion to feede vice still. The way then for vs to bring to passe that the Church of God may be maintained in all pureneſse of his seruice, is that stumblingblockes bee not nourished and maintained, and also that euerie of vs indeuour to mortifie vice in all men, sparing the persons themselues, and doing the best we can to drawe them to saluation. Whereas the Iewes were commanded to kill the Chananites: what ought we to doe insteede thereof? I see a leawde man running into destruction; & yet notwithstanding he would bee borne withall, and flattered, and haue neuer a worde spoken to him. Against such a one I must vse rigor. And how so? To bring him to shame? No, not if it may otherwise bee. Truely if hee holde on, and continue stubborne against God, hee must needs become the more vnexcusable, and wee must procure his saluation euen by rebuking him sharpely, as it were by letting of him bloud, or by ministring some loothsome medicine vnto him. Thus yee see howe wee must spare mens persons and yet kill their vices to ỹ vttermost of our power. And in that respect doth Saint Paul liken ỹ doctrine of the Gospell to a sworde wherewith wee bee sacrificed to God. For the mortifying of our wicked affections is an offering of sacrifice vnto God: and whereas wee were vnholy before, henceforth we be dedicated vnto him when we be so brought downe, that we liue no more after our owne lustes, but doe vtterly renounce our selues. Yee see then that that is one kinde of death, which is not wrought vppon our persons, but vpon al the vices that reigne in vs. And after that maner ought we to deale for the rooting out of sinne.

Howe if it bee demaunded heere, whether is hee not lawefull to bee conuersant with the wicked and frowarde to winne them: I answere, yes verilie, vntill a man finde them to bee past remedie. For to giue ouer a man at the first dash when hee hath doone amisse, or when hee is as it were in the high way to destruction: is a furthering of the destruction of the wretched soule that was redeemed by the bloudshed of our Lorde Iesus Christ. So then, a man may well labour to bring them backe agayne which are strayed out of the right way: but yet must wee not hazard ourselues. If I knowing my selfe to bee weake, doe ouerthrowe my selfe with him vnder pretence of winning my neighbour that is misaduised: what winne I by that? And yet wee see it fall out so continually. And therefore let vs beware how we tempte God in that behalfe, and let euery of vs look narrowly to himselfe, and not deale after his owne imagination.

Notwithstanding let vs herewithall put in vre the saying of the Psalme concerning the hating of all such as despise GOD, yea and of hating them in such wise as we cannot by any meanes abide them, but that forasmuchas we see them despise God after that fashion, wee bee so sorie and greeued at it, that wee separate our selues from them, and vtterly shunne their companie, refusing euen in good earnest to haue anie conference with them: according whereunto it is saide in the next verse of the same Psalme, that wee must beare a perfect hatred against all such as doe so make warre against God, so as we become their deadlie enemies to the vttermost of our power, not in respect of their persons, but in respect of their vnrecouerable wickednesse. Psal.139.10 Psal.139.21

Besides this wee must also maintaine the order of the Church. For if anie one bee cast off as a rotten member, and wee goe and keepe him companie still: is it not a separating of our selues from the bodie of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and of all the faithfull? Haue wee not made a Rent (as much as in vs lay) to shewe that wee list not to be members of the Church? When we bee so familiar with those that are so cast off, and wee fall to rubbing of our selues with them: is it not a skorning of all Gods children, and a letting of them goe, as though we had nothing to doe with them? True it is that (as Paul saith in an other place) wee must not take euen those for enemies, which are cast off by the Church, but wee ought to warne them still as brethren. Yea verily. Notwithstanding, when men doe haunt their companies familiarly, and to enter so farre into friendshippe with them as to bee partakers of their naughtinesse: it is a token that they bee willing to intangle themselues with them, and they bee woorthie to receiue like condemnation with them. Thus ye see in effect howe wee ought to put this lesson in vre nowadayes; namely that the Magistrates ought to bee verie carefull to rid their Landes from all corruptions, and to vse the sword which is committed vnto them, in the punishing of all crimes, euil deedes, and disorders: And moreouer, that euery man in his owne behalfe doe looke to the keeping of the same order, and yet neuertheleſse that euery of vs doe learne to keepe this rule among vs, that if there bee any stumblingblockes in the Church, they bee not borne with, but that such as serue to infect the rest of the flocke like scabbed sheepe, bee thrust out; and that although they bee not killed with the materiall sworde, yet they bee cast out of the companie of the faithfull, so as they may bee ashamed of themselues, and other men may beware least they defile themselues with them, that they may bee made after such a sorte to knowe themselues to bee despisers of GOD, as that men can not away with them, nor abide their acquayntance, but that they be to be shunned as deadly plagues. That is the second point. 2.Thess.3.15

The third point is, that we must labor to roote out the vices, and yet to saue the parties themselues:

selues: and when we see wretched men misaduised we must bring them back againe into the way of saluation if it be possible. But yet in the meane while wee must sacrifice all their affections vnto God; that is to say, wee must mortifie all euill in them, for the bringing whereof to passe, wee must vse the sworde of Gods worde, as indeede the preaching of the Gospell ought to haue that power, as I haue saide afore. And afterwarde, let euerie man enter into himselfe; for it is not enough for vs to haue rooted out the vices that are in our neighbours, but the cheefe point is to amende and reforme our selues, and to beware that the mischeefe settle not in vs: for it will be no time to remedie it, when we bee once hardened in it. Therefore wee must preuent it.

And here it is to bee noted also, that seeing God speaketh here of Idolatrie, wee may see thereby howe greatly hee misliketh the corrupting of his seruice. Truly this point hath beene expounded alreadie heretofore: but yet we haue neede to bee put in minde thereof oftentimes. For manie of vs will neuer sticke throughly to the soundesse of Gods seruice, that is to say, to the Religion that is well ordered according to his worde. Wee haue alwayes some fonde deuotions of our owne, which carie vs away: and whatsoeuer wee thinke well doone doeth like vs so wel, that to our seeming, God doth vs wrong if hee allowe it not too: and that is a deuelish ouerweening. For it becommeth vs, if wee will serue God well, alwayes to beginne at obedience, that is to say, wee must not attempt anie thing which is not according to his wil & agreeable to his worde. Nowe then as God hath declared heretofore that hee abhorreth all superstition and Idolatrie: so he confirmeth it againe in this place, euen in the worde *Abominations*, which is as much to say, as thinges loothsome, yrkesome, detestable, and such as hee reiecteth and cannot away with. When wee see God so stirred, and his wrath so prouoked by our superstitions; alas what thinke we to doe? Therefore let vs holde vs to the pure doctrine that GOD hath giuen vs, and whensoeuer he is to bee serued, let vs not swarue aside one way nor other, as I haue saide herebefore: but let vs hearken to that which God hath saide, and imbrace it with all singlenesse of minde. Let that serue for one point.

Deut. 18. 9.

Again let vs mark on the otherside, that whē God saith, *Least they seduce thee, and teach thee the abominations which they haue doone vnto their gods*. Hereby hee sheweth that naturally we be easily misseledde in this behalfe. True it is (as I haue declared not long since) that as touching vices, wee will soone be ouerthrowen if the bridle bee slacked neuer so little. Whoredome will raigne to the vttermost, and so will theft, and so will drunkennesse and all manner of loosenesse, and so will blasphemie. For as it is harde to bring vs into the right way; so on the contrarie part we bee soone turned from it, insomuch that the whisking of a flye will make vs streightwayes to runne astray. So as wee can no more skill of seruing GOD though wee were well entered therein before. And that is the cause why wee see so fewe holde out in weldoing. Many make faire wether for a time, so as yee would thinke them to bee maruellous good men: but in the turning of a hande all is marde. Other some are not so soone peruerted, but yet in processe of time yee would wonder to see how they bee chaunged, and howe they haue turned their backes against God. And whate is the cause thereof? Euen for that (as I haue saide afore) wee take not heede to our selues, ne consider howe frayle wee bee, ne therewithall watch in praying vnto God, ne seeke to preuent the occasions of wickednesse. And because men trust so much to their owne steadinesse, and thinke themselues well able to withstande euill: they ouerthrowe themselues headlong, and God punisheth such presumption, because it is not without a kinde of selfeweening, and consequently is the cause that wee liue not in the feare of God, ne resorte for refuge to the grace of his holy spirite. Let vs learne therefore that wee be so easie to be led to all vices, but specially to Idolatrie, as is pitifull to see. And why? For euerie man keepes a schoole of it. Although wee haue no example of superstition, yet can euerie one of vs forge it in our selues. If the litle children, which neuer wist what the filth of poperie meant, were let alone and not held in awe by Gods worde; when they came to age euerie of them woulde haue his deuotion by himselfe, with, such a thing and such a thing were good. Our mindes are so ticklishe, as is pitie, and our wittes are verie surtle to inuent superstitions & Idolatries. And what will become of vs then, whē we shall haue sowers of Darnel among vs, which shall say, I haue seene such a thing, and such a thing was wont to bee doone? The mischiefe shall be nourished continually. Without going any further, ye shall see that these olde pageants of Idolatrie which are among vs, doe alwayes keepe still some of their olde filth, and they haue euer some wicked roote of their former superstitions remayning within them. And if they might haue their scope, wee shoulde soone bee caried backe againe into the dungeons that wee bee come out of. Not without cause therefore doeth our Lord say that the faithful must keepe good watch, that they bee not misse taught by such as haue beene vsed to superstition. For our nature will bee ouercome by and by, if the mischeefe be not preuented. The meane [of redresse] that was appointed to the Iewes, hath no place as in respect of vs, nowe adayes. For the sworde is not put into our hands to put Idolaters to death, I meane of vs which are priuate persons: but we must eschewe the companie of all such as seeke to intangle vs in their diuelishnesse. And the remedie thereof is (as I saide afore) to acknowledge but one GOD, and to knowe his will, and (for asmuch as hee separateth vs from all the defilements that men forge to themselues:) Let vs holde our selues to the pure doctrine of his worde. That is the vnfallible rule, let vs follow it.

And now let vs go on with that which Moses addeth.

deth. He saith *that when a Citie is besieged long time, men may cutte downe some sortes of trees to besiege it withall if neede be*; for men of warre haue their Artillerie. And in stead of our Guines, they had in those dayes certaine engines to breake the walles. Therefore if they had neede of timber, they should not cut down the fruittrees, but the trees that bare no fruite, and serue their turne with them. *As for trees that beare fruite, and whereof foode may be gathered, those were to be preserued*. Yee see then howe heere is a commaundement set downe. Howbeit the meaning of the sentence is somewhat darke, and therefore it is expounded diuersly. And indeede I will somewhat stay vpon it, howbeit but as in passing ouer it. Word for word it is thus: *Man is not the tree of the fielde, to come to the seege before thy face*. Nowe, some take it that heere God ment to skorne such as destroy the trees after that fashion. [As who should say.] What? Are *y* trees as enemies to thee, to come against thee and to resist thee? Then if men heawe downe the trees and waste the Countrie: it seemeth to be a childish kinde of reuenge. Yee see then how some men haue vnderstood this text, that it was our Lordes meaning to make those men ashamed which make such waste, and destroy the foode of the inhabiters. They bee not your enemies: Against whome make yee your warre? Against the trees and thinges that haue no life? Surely yee bee valyaunt men. Some perceiuing that this construction is somwhat streyned, say: The tree of the field is mans, that is to saie, is for man. Whereas GOD hath giuen fruitfulnesse to a tree, hee hath appointed it for the nourishment of men and of the inhabiters of the Countrie. For if the people bee ouercome, they haue whereof to liue when they bee brought in subiection, and wherewith to pay tribute to their conquerours. Other some vnderstande these wordes, (*to come vnder foote before thy face*) thus: to helpe them that besiege the Cities: for what can they doe if they want foode? When a Citie is beseeged, they must needes depart thence, if there bee not wherewith to susteine their armie, which turne the trees will serue. Our Lorde then (as they vnderstande it) reprocheth it as a great folly in vs and disappoint themselues of their owne sustenance. Howebeit forasmuch as the Hebrewes doe commonly supplie the similitude, it may bee taken thus: Man shall bee in steede of the tree of the fielde to come against thee in the seege. And this construction is verie fit and naturall, and I will make no long scanning of it, because it were but lost time: but I will holde that sense which may serue for all men, and whereof all men may take profite. GOD then hauing forbidden to heawe downe fruittrees yea euen in time of warre, addeth the reason: namely that seeing the men ought to be in stead of the trees of the fielde, therefore they ought rather to set themselues against them and to vtter their rage there, as against those that are professed enemies. For why? The men may come to the seege, yea and to the shocke of the battell against thee. To bee short, our Lorde (as I saide afore, howbeit that I speake heere of another litterall exposition, though all comes to one end) meant to declare that in time of warre men must not wreake their teene vppon the trees but vppon their enemies, because their enemies seeke to annoy them, and therefore those are they that are to be resisted.

Nowe let vs come to consider what this Lawe profiteth vs. It is saide in time of warre wee must not cut downe the fruitetrees. Heere wee haue to note, that although our swordes bee drawen, yet it is not lawfull for vs to vse all manner of crueltie at our owne pleasure: and yet notwithstanding GOD speaketh heere of rightfull warres, such as hee himselfe alloweth, where hee giueth leaue to slea men, and yet hee will haue vs to keepe some kinde of humanitie, that we lay not the Countrie vtterly waste. Let vs marke then that warres are not lawefull in such sorte, as to beare downe all before vs and to make vtter hauocke of all thinges. But wee must beare in minde, that although men bridle themselues as much as is possible, yet there will bee too much euill committed. If there shoulde bee but one man slaine; alas, yet doe wee see that an image of GOD were defaced. But when it commeth to the killing of a greate multitude whereby are made so many widdowes and fatherlesse children; what a thing is that? Besides, though the goods and possessions of men bee spared, yet are many men thrust out of their houses, and being ill handled die some for colde and some for want and penurie: And what a pitifull thing is that? Therefore although men deale as indifferently as is possible in time of warre: yet must there needes bee manie disorders, in respect whereof men ought to streine themselues the more to abstaine from all manner of cruelnie and euill dealing. For if our Lorde woulde haue such euen hande kept among enemies, euen when hee had giuen leaue before to kill: what is to bee done among vs which shoulde bee friendes, for whom it is not lawfull to lifte vp a finger, no nor the tippe of our tongue to speake amisse of them that haue offended vs? For although a man spyte vs and vexe vs; yet doeth not our Lorde giue vs leaue to bee at warre with him, but will haue vs to possesse our soules in patience, and to striue to ouercome the euill by doing good. Luk. 21. 19. Rom. 12. 21.

Nowe if it behooue vs to maintaine friendshippe with those that doe vs wrong and iniurie, and to procure their welfare, so as it is not lawfull for vs to greeue them in any manner of wise: I pray you is it to bee borne with, when wee practise to annoy those which neuer did vs wrong or harme, nor neuer procured vs any losse? So then, yee see howe this Lawe concerneth not onely men of warre: but also that our Lorde will haue it to bee a common lesson to vs all, to keepe so euen a hande to the vttermost of our power, as no man may complaine

that hee was indomaged by vs. And so yee see howe wee ought to applie this Lawe to our instruction. Againe, if it behoove vs to spare the fruite trees, which notwithstanding are thinges without life: howe much more ought wee to spare mens persons? Truely this is not spoken in fauour of the trees themselues, but in respect of men which are fedde and sustained by them: and surely trees are not to bee priuiledged any thing at all in comparison of men. What a thing then is it, when men shalbe put all to the sworde without sparing? Is it not as good as a defying of God? That is a seconde point which we haue to beare in mind. Now let vs proceede.

Whereas it is saide heere, *that there must no waste bee made*: it is to shewe, that men ought alwayes to maintaine the ordinance of GOD: specially sith wee knowe his goodnesse and fatherly loue towardes men. Behold, God hath giuen the earth to men to dwell and rest vppon. Nowe when wee fall to making of hauocke, and thrust out the poore indwellers thereof, so as euen in the time of peace when euerie man may returne home againe to his owne house, yet they finde all thinges wasted and the land made barren, and whereas heere to fore it had beene well husbanded, it is nowe become as a wildernes, so as there is not one tree left to gather an apple of: is it not as good as a defeating of Gods goodnesse which hee had vttered towards mankinde? Must it not needes bee that wee be starke blind in our rage, when we fight so against Gods grace, yea and against such a grace as ought to soften our hearts though they were harder than stone? Ye see then how here is a generall rule for vs to marke well, namely that as oft as wee bee tempted to make any waste or spoyle, we ought to bethinke vs thus: Goe to, our Lord hath placed vs all in this worlde, and prouided vs of the thinges which hee knewe to bee necessarie for this life: nowe if I will needes spoyle the ground of the thinges which God hath giuen it for the sustenance of man, I doe the best I can to defeate Gods goodnesse which he hath vttered to mankinde, that it might no more appeare. And am I worthie to bee sustained on the earth when I doe so abolish Gods gracious goodnesse which serued as well for my neighbours as for my selfe, not suffering it to haue his course and to reigne any longer? Am I not as a very monster? This is a thing (say I) which ought wel to restraine vs. When wee bee caried with any malice, and are become so mischeeuously minded as to waste the trees, Houses, and such other thinges, let vs bridle our selues with this consideration: yea, but who is it against whome wee make the warre? It is not the creatures, but the partie himselfe who euen there doeth shewe forth his goodnesse, and that not towards any one man alone, but towards all men, in the which number euen we our selues also are comprehended. Were this well considered, warres shoulde not be vndertaken so vnaduisedly nowadayes as we see they bee, neither shoulde countries be wasted euery where without sparing. But nowadayes this kinde of crueltie is farre greater among them that beare the name of Christians, than it hath bene in times past euen among the Infidels. For nowe there is nothing but burning of Countries; and that is worse than the cutting of mens throates. For what shall the poore inhabiters doe, when their Corne is burnt vp a tenne leagues round about? They must needs go die vnder the hedges and bushes, or lye pining away vpon the plaine ground: but it were a greater point of mercie to dispatch them by death out of hand. And yet notwithstanding it is a lawfull thing nowadayes, because it is a custome so to doe. And whence commeth this custome, but that men haue not regarded Gods word, by reason wherof they haue vtterly alienated from him, and in the ende are become starke beastes? And so it is an horrible thing to see, that they which name themselues Christians, and Catholikes, and the vpholders of Christianitie, are nowadayes so farre out of order, that barbarousnes reigneth most fully among them. Insomuch as they hold not themselues contented with the wasting of their enemies landes, but they doe also flea euen their owne subiectes without sparing. Nowadayes the law of the Turkes reigneth among the Christians, which is, to make no conscience of the wasting of their own countrie, so men may keepe the soueraignetie of the same. For if they doubt that the enemie is like to haue the forehande, they burne vp all before his comming. And what doe they burne? The poore subiectes whom the Prince himselfe hath vnder his protection. It is said, Thou shalt bee a couert in the storme accordingly as is spoken of the office of a good king in the person of Ezechias. The Prophet Esay saieth hee shalbe a place of harbrough and refuge for his subiectes. When a storme commeth, so as all thinges seeme likely to go to wrecke; the king shall haue his winges stretched out to couer his subiectes, and to defende them, insomuch that he ought euen to hazarde his life for them. After that maner ought a prince to maintaine his subiectes. Contrariwise yee shall see a prince so blinded, that hee commaundeth all to be burnt and wasted, that there may not so much as one graine of corne be lefte. Yea, but thereby the poore people are starued. There is no remedie, nothing must bee spared, but all thinges must be borne downe, so the intent I may reigne like a conqueror. Needes must God bee forgotten, when men proceede so farre. Wee neede not to go fetche examples of threescore yeares hence, neither neede wee to heare our auncestors speake. For we haue seene as much within these last twentie yeares, and not farre hence. And the mischiefe not onely continueth but also increaseth still. For why? they bee the fruits of the contempt of Gods worde. So a Prince doe shrine himselfe, and bee assoyled and make a Crosse vpon his backe, it is ynough: Hee shall haue Ceremonies ynowe. When hee hath performed a sort of counterfaite seruices, hee is quite and cleane assoyled. But if a man shoulde come and

and shewe him his dutie by Gods worde: hee cannot abide to heare of it. To be tolde what he oweth first vnto God and then vnto men, hee can abide much lesse. To bee tolde after what manner he ought to take warres in hand, and howe hee should holde himselfe within his bounds and liftes, without attempting any further than God giueth him leaue: he can no skil at all; it were a derogation to his maiestie; it is ynough for him to mocke GOD with a sort of peking trifles, as though hee were to please a young babie. But let vs on our side consider what is lawfull for vs, and not meddle with those which prouoke Gods wrath and curse vppon their heades after that fashion. And seeing that God hath ridde vs from so great confusion, let vs yeelde him thankes, and not followe them any more, least we prouoke his vengeance to bee the more horrible against vs.

Nowe, howsoeuer the worlde goe, although wee bee priuate persons yet must wee put this lesson in vre, of not making any waste, forsomuch as wee knowe that our Lorde hath appointed the earth to bee as our fostermother. And seeing shee openeth her bowels after that sort to sustaine vs; wee must vnderstande that it is all one as if God shoulde reach vs his hand and offer vs the testimonies of his goodnesse. If wee bee of that minde; then will this doctrine auaile vs, not onely in time of warre, but also in time of peace. And would God that it were well regarded. But nowadayes men are set altogether vppon euill doing. Insomuch that although wee haue our eares beaten dayly with such matters, yet wee minde them not: whereof the examples are too euident. Yea and there are which had leuer that their corne shoulde bee marde in their Garners, and bee eaten with vermine, and rotte where it lyeth, rather than to sell it in time of neede. For they couldde finde in their heartes to hunger-starue the poore people. And is not that all one with cutting vp the fruitetrees? Behold, the corne is gathered in, and our Lorde hath powred out his goodnesse and blessing to the ende that the poore folke shoulde bee sustayned. Nowe, it is hoorded vp in Garners, and is kept fast vnder locke and kay, till it rise to so great a price that folke crie out for hunger, and are no longer able to abide it. And what becomes of the Corne in the meane whyle? It fusheth and rotteth. Indeede our Lord doth nowe and then mocke them that thought themselues to haue gained much, and shewe them that that is not the way to doe it. But yet for all that, they to the vttermost of their power doe burie Gods grace, as though they fought against the goodnesse and fatherly loue which hee vttered towards all the people. And in so doing they peruert the whole order of nature, as if they went to cut downe and to destroy the fruitebearing trees. What is to bee done then? Seeing that our Lorde woulde haue a certaine humanitie to bee obserued euen among enemies: forasmuch as it behoueth vs to liue fellowlike together in peace and brotherly loue: let vs looke that wee endeuour to liue in concorde and friendshippe as much as in vs lyeth. And when God shall haue bestowed his spirituall giftes vppon vs, (which are much precyouser than all the worldly thinges which wee can receiue) let vs indeuour to make our neighbours parteners with vs, and not through our malice disappoint them of the good which God doeth vnto them. For if wee ought to behaue our selues with such discretion in the vse of temporall benefices: what ought wee to doe in the spirituall blessings, which concerne the saluation of our soules? Then let vs learne not to stubbe vp the fruitetrees. But rather seeing that Gods worde is the seede of life; let vs indeuour to spreade it abroade euerie where, that it may take good roote. And that when it hath taken roote, it may not bring foorth a barren tree, but a tree that beareth good fruites. Thus yee see what wee haue to gather of this text, if wee intende to profite our selues duly thereby, yea euen in such wise, that although wee be not in warres, yet notwithstanding forasmuch as GOD hath chosen vs for his people, hee hath shewed vs heere such a point of vprightnesse, as ought to continue with vs all our life long.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the Maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, so as we may be better setled in true repentaunce: and that therewithall wee may mourne and mislike of our selues when wee see the infirmities that are in vs, and pray our good GOD to vouchsafe to holde vs in awe, that although wee see the worlde nowadayes to bee vtterly out of order, and our selues horriblie beset rounde about with al maner of stumblingblockes, yet wee may bee holde still vnder his banner, to followe him whithersoeuer hee listeth to call vs, that by that meanes hee may bee glorified in vs, and wee also rightly glory in him for that wee be his people, and hee hath shouled vs out to doe him seruice. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, bringing backe all poore ignorant people from the superstitions and ydolatries wherein they are holde: that so hee may leade them to the knowledge of his trueth: And that for this purpose it would please him &c.

On Saturday the xxj. of December. 1555

The Cxx. Sermon which is the firſt vpon the one and twentith Chapter.

VVHen a bodie is found ſlaine lying vpon the ground in the Land which the Lord thy GOD giueth thee to poſſeſſe, and it is not knowen who killed him:

2 Then ſhall thine Elders and Iudges come foorth, and meaſure the Townes that lye rounde about the ſlaine man.

3 And when they perceiue which of the Townes is neareſt to the ſlaine man, then ſhall the Elders of that towne take a young Hekfar from the droue, which hath not beene labored nor hath drawen in the yoke:

4 And the Elders of that Towne ſhall driue the young bullocke downe into a harde valley, which hath neither beene plowed nor ſowed, and they ſhal ſtrike off the bullocks neck there in the valley.

5 Alſo the Prieſtes the children of Leuie ſhall come forth, for the Lorde thy God hath choſen them to miniſter vnto him, and to bleſſe in the Lords name: And at their worde ſhall all caſes and euery plague be determined.

6 And all the Elders of that towne ſhall come to the deade man, and waſh their hands ouer the bullocke that is beheaded in the valley:

7 And proteſt and ſay, Our handes haue not ſhed this blonde, neither haue our eyes ſeene it.

8 O Lord, be mercifull to thy people Iſrael whom thou haſt purchaſed, and lay not the guiltleſſe bloud among thy people Iſrael. And the manſlaughter ſhalbe forgiuen them.

9 And ſo ſhalt thou take guiltles bloud from among you: for thou ſhalt do that which is acceptable in the eyes of the Lord.

HAue ſpoken of this Law alreadie heretofore, and declared briefly what god ment in the ordeining of that Ceremony: namely that wee ſhoulde abhorre the ſhedding of bloud, and murthers, and outrages. He had ſpoken heretofore of the law of armes. And nowe hee addeth that the killing euen of one man is a defiling of the whole countrey, vnleſſe the remedie bee ſought by praying vnto God to forgiue the fault, and by proteſting that none of them is guiltie thereof. Wee ſee then that mens liues are deare vnto God, ſith hee will haue ſo ſolemne a redreſſe to bee made of a murther committed, yea euen when the doer thereof is not knowen, nor the trueth can bee founde out. If a man had beene murdered, and the doer thereof knowen: then woulde not this ceremonie haue ſufficed. For God commandeth the crime to bee puniſhed: and if a murtherer be ſuffered to ſcape, the Iudges and all the people become guiltie of the fact. But when it is vnknowen by whom a man is ſlaine, then GOD thinketh it not ynough for euery man to proteſt for himſelfe yhee is neither partie nor priuie to the matter; but he will alſo that the town where the deede was done, or which was neareſt to the place where the deede was done, ſhoulde bee examined for it. For wee knowe that a partition of the townes & villages was made to euerie tribe. Inſomuch that euerie Citie had the Countrie about it, and the townes and villages in it were called as it were the daughters of that Citie. Yet notwithſtanding, in this caſe our Lorde will haue them to make a newe ſurney and meaſuring of the diſtance of places againe, and that the Citie which is found to bee neereſt to the dead bodie, ſhalbe at the charges to make a ſolemne ſacrifice, whereat hee will haue the Elders, Iudges, and Prieſtes, to be preſent. And he ſetteth downe the Prieſts by name, as wel for ſacrificing as alſo becauſe it was their Office to make the purgations: whenſoeuer there befell any blotte, ſo as the people were defiled before God, it was the duetie of the Prieſtes to make them cleane againe towards God. And that was the cauſe why that order was required in this caſe.

And

And therefore Moſes addeth, that God hath appointed them to ſerue him, and to bleſſe in his name, and that it belongeth to them to iudge of Leproſies and all other like thinges, and of all other kindes of vncleanneſſe wherewith the people might be defiled. In attributing this office vnto them, he declareth to what purpoſe their preſence ought to ſerue in this act. Alſo there was prayer to bee made, and the prieſtes were inioyned thereunto. And becauſe the whole order of them was a figure of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: they bleſſed in Gods name, as I haue declared heeretofore, and as I ſhall ſhewe ſomewhat more hereafter as I paſſe ouer it. And therefore our Lorde appointed them to make the ſolemne prayer that is ſet downe heere. Nowe wee ſee whereto this Lawe tended: Namely that our Lorde hath ſhewed howe precious mens liues are vnto him, that wee on our part might bee the more prompted to take him for our father. For what an vnthankfulneſſe is it, that God ſhoulde haue ſo great and ſo fatherly a care of vs, of vs I ſay which are but Caryons: and yet notwithſtanding that hee ſhoulde not bee honoured of vs as of his children, nor finde any obedience at our handes? So then, foraſmuch as we ſee our Lord vouchſafeth to haue a regarde of our life; let vs be the more moued to honor him, and to yeeld him all reuerence.

Herewithall it is ſhewed vs alſo, that wee muſt maintaine our neighbours as much as in vs lyeth, and abſtaine from all violence. For murder bee ſo hatefull to GOD, that although the doer thereof bee vnknowen, yet it behoued a ſolemne clearing thereof to be made: what will become of vs if wee ſpare not our neighbours? Is it not a ſetting of our ſelues vterly againſt God? Here then is a bridle to reſtraine vs from all violence and outrage, ſo as vnleſſe wee will bee hatefull to our God, wee muſt liue in concorde and brotherly loue with all our neighbours. Nowe I haue tolde you heretofore, that whereas murder is forbidden vs, it is not meant thereby that wee ſhoulde but onely forbeare the drawing of our ſwords to ſlea man, but alſo that foraſmuch as all they which hate their brethren euen in ſecrete, are murderers; we ſhould beware to haue our hearts as cleane as our handes, and abſtaine from all hatred and enuie. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to remember in the ſeconde place of this Lawe which is ſet downe heere. For it is not ynough ſerue to loue our neighbours and not to haue ſtepped our into any iniurie or violence: but wee muſt alſo (to the vttermoſt of our power) bee alet to the anoyance that is done to others. Indeede it is a great thing to be peaceable: but God requireth yet more of his children, namely that they ſhoulde procure peace towardes others. Therefore whenſoeuer any man falls to quareling or offereth wrong to his neighbour, let vs looke that wee ſet our ſelues againſt him as much as wee can. I knowe that euerie man is not armed with the ſworde, neither may euerie of vs take vppon him to redreſſe wrongs: but yet let vs haue an eye to that which GOD permitteth, ſo farre as our duetie will beare, and as occaſion is miniſtred to deale: And therein wee ſhall ſhewe our ſelues not to conſent to any outrage, but rather that wee bee willing to ſuccour the innocent that is oppreſſed and wronged, whom let vs looke that we help to our power and abilitie. That is the third point which we haue to gather vpon this text.

Moreouer let vs marke, that Iudges and Miniſters of iuſtice are warned heere to doe their duetie. For it is not ynough for them to proteſt that they haue not ſupported nor fauored any euill: neither is it ynough for them to bee able to ſay, that they haue yeelded euerie man his right when they were complained vnto: but they muſt alſo inquire diligently of miſorders, and although no man ſpeake to them or moeue them, yet muſt they of their owne ſelues bee vigilant in making ſerch. And if they finde any fault committed: they themſelues muſt followe the ſuite of it. But this is ill obſerued of moſt Iudges. For they thinke themſelues to bee come to the full perfection of vertue, and that they be greatly to bee commended, when they haue not refuſed to giue men the hearing. If a man that is grieued doe come to complaine to them, and they heare him and make countenance to helpe him: they thinke they haue acquitte themſelues verie well. But our Lorde is not contented with that. Although then that the partie which is hurt doe holde his peace, and patiently put vp the wrong: yet notwithſtanding the Iudge or the Magiſtrate that is in office muſt not forbeare to doe his duetie for all that. And therefore it is a fonde allegation to ſay, there is no information, no man complaind of it. Yea: but yet neuertheleſſe the euill is committed, and God ſeeth it, and hee hath commaunded that it ſhoulde bee punished; hee will haue all miſdeedes redreſſed, and that no libertie bee giuen to the ſtronger to beare downe the weaker. And ſhall the Iudge in the meane while holde his peace? Let vs marke then, that God will not haue the miniſters of iuſtice to winke at mens miſdeedes: no not euen though there be no informer, proctor, aduocat, attourney, or plaineſſe to moue the thereunto. For they bee bound to puniſh crimes euen of themſelues, though no man proſecute any ſuite in Law. And what ought they then to do, when they be ſued vnto, and when the partie that is miſuſed commeth ſorowing and declaring his griefe? If hee bee not hearde, or if hee bee ſcorned for his complaining, or let alone, or peradauenture ſo vexed that hee is inforced to giue ouer his right, and in the meane while the offender goeth vnpuniſhed: ſhall ſuch trecherie be excuſable before God? Yet notwithſtanding, we ſee oftentimes, that if a man which hath bin wronged do come to demaund Iuſtice, he ſhalbe trayned on. In deede hee ſhall not bee driuen away with a ludgell, it ſhall not bee ſaide vnto him that hee doeth but loſe his labour: but he ſhal bee ſo driuen off with ſhifts and delayes, that the poore ſoule is ſorie that euer hee attempted any ſuite,

and is faine to leaue off to his great griefe. That is the common course which is kept in executing of iustice on the earth. But wee see heere that such persons as haue so abused their authoritie, must come to account for it. For the heauenly Iudge will haue them not onely to heare mens complaints and to releeue them: but also to make inquisitions, and to search out matters to the verie bottome, though it be not knowen that any fault is committed, or that any man is wronged, yea and euen though no man open his mouth to complaine. And when men haue done the best they can, yet will he haue them to offer Sacrifice, as though some blame lay vppon the countrie it selfe, vntil forgiuenesse of the offence were desired.

So then, let vs learne on our part, that our Lord watcheth ouer vs, so that although we be oppressed and haue all the outrages in the world done vnto vs, yet our Lord ceaseth not to haue a care of vs. True it is (as I haue said afore) that Iudges and Magistrates haue heere a good lesson, and that they ought to consider that they shal not scape the hands of the Heauenly Iudge, when they haue bin negligent in mainteining good men that are troden vnder foote. If they passe not to defende them, they must make a reckening for that loose dealing of theirs. For it is al one as if they themselues were confederate with them. And therefore we must vnderstande, that seeing God hath such a care of those that are deade, it is much more of consequence, that our Lorde beholding all things would we should resort boldly vnto him for refuge, when we pine away in this worlde, suffering many troubles & vexations, though we speake neuer a worde, ne finde any defence or helpe at all among men, in how great extremitie so euer we be. For although he shew not himselfe by and by neere at hand: yet must we not thinke that he hath turned his backe vpon vs: for hee marketh all the wrongs that are done vnto vs, and our teares (as it is saide in the Psalme) shall come vp before him. For Dauid saith that the tears of the faithfull are put vp as it were into bottels, as men put vp sweete waters into glasses, and oyntmentes into vyols. And so our Lorde keepeth the treares of such as make their moane to him, and resort to him for refuge. He keepeth all those teares of theirs, to be reuenged for them in time conuenient. But we must passe yet further. For if God succour them that are departed; it is a token that we be not as the brute beastes. For (as is shewed in S. Luke) hee is not the God of the deade, but of the liuing. Therefore let vs conclude, that when wee be gone out of this world, we shall haue a better life and be in the hand of God. Loe what a recorde of the immortall life here is vttered in the marke that God giueth vs here, namely in that if a man be found murthered, solemne sacrifice must bee made to clense the Lande from the defiling whereto it was subiect. For thereby hee witnesseth that after our decease we liue with him, and that wee must not thinke our selues to bee vtterly done away and come to nothing, when God taketh vs out of this worlde; but rather that it is but a passage whereby to goe into the seconde life which hee promiseth vs. Seeing that this was spoken in the Law, we ought the more to assure our selues thereof nowadayes. For we haue the holy scripture more at large. Wee haue the heauenly life shewed vnto vs much more apparantly in the newe Testament, than it was shewed to the fathers of olde time before the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And therefore wee ought to bee so much the more assured of it, and not bee like the vnbeleuers, who quake when they heare death spoken of, as though all were for done with them, and as though they shoulde vtterly perish. But wee must vnderstand, that when God gathereth vs to him by death, wee cease not to liue still to himwardes. Although a mans bodie rot away, and become a Carion like the bodies of brute beastes: yet is God a faithfull keeper of our soules, so as they be preserued in his hand & by his power, wherein he giueth vs hope of the last resurrection, in the which we shalbe wholly restored againe. For wheras we be nowe corruptible, and tende to corruption by death: we shall then be clothed again with such a newe nature, that ỹ thing which is now corruptible and transitorie in vs, shall become newe and vncorruptible, when we be renewed after ỹ likenesse of our Lord Iesus Christ. Thus ye see what we haue to remember yet further, in that God sheweth him selfe to haue such care of them that are deade.

As touching the things that are spoken here concerning the priests, we neede not as nowe to stande verie long vppon them: but it will suffice to speake a word or twaine thereof. Moses saith that *they were ordained to bleese in Gods name*, that is to say, to make publike prayers. True it is, that wee at this day haue the same office of making praiers in the name of ỹ whole church, and that the people must say Amen, (as S. Paul saith in the xiiii. of the first Epistle to the Corinthians): but there was a speciall consideration of this matter in the tribe of Leuie, & in the priests of the Lawe: namely, that they bare the figure of our Lorde Iesus Christ who is our aduocate, and our mouth, as it were. Forasmuch then as it belõgeth to our Lord Iesus Christ to offer vp our requests to God our father, bicause they can neuer bee acceptable to God but for his sake, neither are we worthie to preace vnto God, except hee leade vs and make way and meanes for vs: Therefore in the time of the Lawe, the Priestes blessed the people, that is to say, they made the publike prayers for them. Againe there is another thing, namely, that their blessing of ỹ people was a witnessing of Gods fauour and loue towardes them. And that also belongeth to our Lord Iesus Christ, howbeit that the same pertaineth not to himself alone, but also to al the preachers of the Gospel. Whẽ we preach Gods mercie, the blessing of God is vpon al them that harken to vs. For it is all one as if God himselfe came to declare his fauour towards vs, and ỹ for asmuch as wee be reconciled vnto him, hee intendeth to take vs into his keeping. Seeing then that the doctrine of the Gospell importeth such

Psal. 56. 7.

Luk. 20. 38.

such thinges, wee see that all the Shepheardes of the Christian Church, doe blesse the people. But this is not because they are figures of our Lorde Iesus Christ, but because of the charge that is committed vnto them. They doe in deede represent his person as his officers; but in the time of the Lawe, this was of force that the Priest during the continuance of those shadowes, did after a sorte supply the roome of our Lorde Iesus Christ vntill hee was come. That then was meant by *blessing the people in the name of God*, as we see our Lorde Iesus Christ himselfe hath declared. For hee blessed his disciples by laying his handes vppon them. Therefore let vs resorte to him as oft as wee thinke vppon our owne cursednesse: that is to say, forasmuch as wee knowe our selues worthie to bee reiected of God, and to bee as it were accursed, because there is nothing but vtter wickednes in vs: Let vs flee to our Lord Iesus Christ. For if God gaue that remedie to his people vnder the Lawe, of being blessed by the priestes who were but mortall men: shall wee mistrust that our Lord Iesus Christ hath not sufficient power to doe away all our accursednesse, so as God shall looke fauorable vppon vs, and receiue vs as his children? Then let vs hardily giue eare hereunto, and rest vppon it with full trust. And when wee bee about to pray, let vs assure our selues that wee haue an aduocate, who will make vs to finde fauor. And let vs not alledge as the Papistes doe, I am not worthie to pray to God; but let vs bee sure that our Lorde Iesus Christ calleth vs to him. Trueth is that wee ought to perceiue our owne vnworthinesse: howbeit not to make vs to raunge away when wee pray vnto God, or to cause vs to seeke long windlasses, as who shoulde say, such a Saint shall bee mine aduocate, or such a Sheesaint shall bee my patroneesse: but to driue vs to him which is giuen vs of God his father, namely to our Lorde Iesus Christ. Thus much concerning the blessing.

Now the seruing of God imported the sacrifices and all the rest of the ceremonies. And at this day, they that are appointed ministers of Gods woorde, haue the administration of Sacramentes, because it is an appurtenance to Gods worde and doctrine which they bring: but our Lorde Iesus is hee that hath made the onely and euerlasting sacrifice whereupon wee must rest. And herein wee see the foolishnesse that is in the Popedome: for the Priestes will needes counterfeit his sacrifice, saying thus: O beholde the tribe of Leuie was appointed to serue God. Yea, but we must consider what maner of Sacrifice God requireth and alloweth at this day. Will hee haue vs to slea Bullockes, Sheepe, Lambes, and such other thinges? No verily. But Saint Paul sayth that the sacrifices which the Shepheardes of the Church must offer to God, are mens soules whome they winne by the preaching of his worde. Those doe they dedicate vnto God, and that is the seruice which hee lyketh of. This is a part of that seruice of God, which is spirituall. And therefore let vs marke that wee must let Iesus Christ alone with that which the holy scripture reserueth vnto him: Namely the offering vp of himselfe once for all, to purchase vs euerlasting forgiuenesse of all our sinnes, and the making of vs cleane and pure yet still before God. Now then, there remaineth nothing but this onely, that wee be confirmed in the power that is brought vnto vs by his death and passion. And howe may that bee? By the vse of the sacramentes. When we receiue the Supper, wee make not a newe sacrifice, as the Papistes were woont to doe in that diuelish abhomination of their Masse: but we protest that God is at one with vs, when we be grounded in the death and passion of his onely sonne, and that we be partakers thereof: and our present receiuing of the bread and wine that are giuen vs, is all one as if we were fed with his body and bloud as with meate and drinke. Thus ye see how we ought to apply the thinges to our instruction, which are spoken here concerning the sacrifices that were to bee offered to GOD by the priestes of the Lawe.

Now let vs proceede with that which Moses addeth here. He saith that *the Priestes shall resort thither with the gouernors and Iudges of the Citie, and take a young Heckfar* (or Bullocke as they terme it here;) *and cut off the necke of it*, yea and that *in a valley* (saith he) as in a secret place, *and namely in a valley that is barreine, and vntilled, as in a desert place*. This circumstance is set downe to moue the standers by to the more terroe, when they saw the cutting off, of the Heckfars neck, and that they were come as into a secrete place. For it is certeine) God passed not for the bloud of the Heckfar. Hath God a care of Oxen or kine (sayth Saint Paul,) as though he regarded them? His speaking of them is for mens sakes. And therefore let vs marke how God poynted out a valley, yea and a barraine valley, to the end that they which were there present, should conceiue a certeine terror in themselues. Wherat? At the smiting off of the bullockes head, as who should say; Must wee come to this deserte place for such a matter? And what a thing is it thē that a man which is shaped after the image of God should be slayne, and that such a crime should be committed? Shal not the Sunne, and and the Moone, and all the starres of the skye cry out for vengeance to God? Shal not the largenesse of the earth frame an indizemēt as though it were written in paper or parchment? Thus yee see what we haue to consider, in Gods appointing out of the place so with such circumstance.

Now afterward followeth the protestation. *Our handes haue not doone this deede, neither haue our eyes seene it*. When the Iudges & gouerners say, *Our handes haue not done this deede*; they meane the whole people as well as themselues. For it is not enough that the rulers themselues bee cleere of the murder: but they speake in the name or behalfe of the whole bodie of the people whome they represent. And hereby it appeareth, that

if the Magistrates suffer any wickednesse to lie lurking in any citie or countrie, they themselues are guiltie thereof, and it is as much before God, as if they had giuen their consentes to the dooing of it. Therefore let men marke well this saying, *Our handes haue not done this deede*: namely that such as are in authoritie must answere for the whole bodie of the people, so farre as lyeth in them: that is to say, that wicked dooinges haue not bin suffered to nestle by their slouth and negligence: but that they haue searched them out diligently, and done their dutie in that behalfe: otherwise it will be in vaine for them to say, I was not the dooer of the deed. No, but thou diddest represent the whole people, thou wast put in commission by Gods appoinment, and therefore sith thou hast suffred leawdnesse to be committed within thy Iurisdiction, it is at thy hand that God wil require the account. And in very deede, wee see how it is Gods will, not onely in this place but also throughout the whole holy scripture, that when any trespasse was committed in any trybe, the Elders should stand forth as it were to confesse the peoples offences in their persons. For inasmuch as they were set in authoritie and place of honor, it behooued them to know that their charge was so much the more hard and weightie. That is the point which is to bee noted here.

And he addeth *Our eyes haue not seene it*. And hereby we may knowe (as I sayd afore) that it is not enough for vs to haue our handes cleere: but it is required also that we should not be priuie to any euill: For if we cloke it knowing of it, to whom is it to bee imputed? Truely we may well Matt. 27. 24 washe our hands of it (as Pilate did) before men, as who should say, I did it not, I am guiltlesse of it: but God admitteth no such mockerie. Therfore whensoeuer we bee examined or deposed vpon any matter, let vs not imagin that we shall scape skotfree before God because we haue not done the actuall deede: For we must to the vttermost of our power find meanes that the mischiefe may be redressed, so as one man may not be trodden vnder foote, and another be bolstered and borne out, and consequently common robberie be suffred to reigne disorderly among men; but that right and euen dealing may bee mainteined among men: and let euery man further the same on his owne behalfe. And as concerning Iudges and Magistrates, let them also learne to haue eyes, that they play not the blinkardes and blindefolkes when euill is committed, ne thinke to escape when they can say, As for me, I haue no such thing. Yes, but such as are in authoritie of Iustice, must know that God hath set them aloft as it were in a watchtower to discouer thinges afarre off. If the Magistrates themselues doe set a watchman in a high tower, and he excuse himselfe saying, I sawe nothing: will they hold him excused? No, For hee was set there to looke about him, and that was his charge. Euen so our Lord ordeineth Magistrates to keepe good watch. And if they notwithstanding doe shut their eyes, and make as though they sawe nothing at all: shall it serue to acquit them? What an excuse were that? Were it not too fond and trifling? So then, let vs marke well, that Magistrates must open their eyes and bee watchfull, that they may see what their duetie is. And if they wil be taken for guiltlesse, they must looke to it that they may bee able to vtter this present protestation in trueth, *Our eyes haue not seene it, neither haue our handes done this deede*.

But yet besides this, Moses sheweth that the citie or towne where a murder is committed, is not altogether cleere of it, and therefore that they must bee faine to craue pardon at Gods hand. Surely this seemeth to be with the vttermest. What? Seeing we haue not consented to the euill, but woulde haue punished it, if it had bin done in our presence, and wee proue that wee our selues did not the deede, neither doe wee knowe the dooer of the deed that we might punishe him: ought not God to bee contented with all this? Nay, there is yet a further thing, namely that the committing of such a fault, is as a defiling of the whole countrie, and a warning giuen vs of God to looke narrowlyer to our selues. True it is, that he will not take vs for murderers: but yet for al that, his suffering of such an offence to be committed, is as though he should shew vs with his finger, that he is gone fro vs. For when God blesseth a countrie, he purgeth it from all defilement. And the falling out of any defilement, is as a turning of Gods backe vppon vs, as if hee should say, I haue no more care of you, I let you alone, I giue you ouer. The nation therefore that perceiueth God to giue any signe of his displeasure, haue good cause to humble themselues. And that is the cause why hee commaunded the Iudges and gouernours of the citie where a murder was committed, to thinke earnestly vppon it, as if they should say, Lorde haue pitie vppon thy people Israel, and take away this guiltlesse blood from among vs, and let not this deed bee imputed vnto vs.

Now if it be so, and sith there be no remede to be found but only to flee to Gods mercie, and to craue forgiuenesse not only for sinne, but also because men ought to feele sin he is angrie with the whole Citie: What is to be done when the misdeede is apparant? Ought not men much more to make supplication to God, and to flee to his mercie, at leastwise if they were well aduised? Yes; but wee see what hardnesse or rather blockishnesse is nowadayes in most men, yea and well neere in all men. For when a misdeede is committed, who is hee that regardeth it? True it is that if an outragious wickednesse be committed, men will peraduenture say, hee is a wicked man. But they consider not that God warneth all folkes generally to say euery man in himselfe, Alas how happeneth it that such an enormitie is committed among vs, that all of vs shoulde bee defiled with it before GOD? For that this is come to passe and wee neuer wist it, is a token that wee haue euill profited in Gods worde. For wee thinke not that his giuing of such exam-

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pleasure vnto vs, is for our instruction. But although wee sleepe, yet dooth not GOD cease to doe his office. Wee heare what hee sayth when there is no Iustice nor vpright dealing in a citie. They bee princes of Sodome, they be theeues and murtherers. Hee sayth this to Iudges. Not for that they had cut mens throates that were trauailing: No; but because they had not maintained the good and guiltlesse. Therefore he saith, Beholde, it is a citie of bloud. The very citie of Ierusalem it selfe, which God had chosen to bee his royall pallace and Temple, is called a citie of bloud and a denne of theeues. And why? because many outrages and disorders were there committed, and many poore soules were troden vnder foote without succor, and Iustice was become as an open robberie. So then, let vs learne to resorte to our God when any offence is committed, and let euery of vs thinke with himselfe, Alas, our Lorde doeth vs to vnderstande that he is angrie with vs, in that such things are hapned, and that such enormities are committed among vs. And therefore let euery of vs craue pardon of them, and also thinke thus with our selues: Of whom is it long that I am not like one of them, but onely of Gods preserving of me? And let vs also beware for the time to come. Thus yee see in effect what wee haue to beare in minde, as in the respect of the things that are spoken here concerning murder.

There was also the striking off of the Heifers heade, to make men the more afraid: as who should say, that the beholding of a poore beast lyen after that sorte, doth moue men the more. And what is to bee sayd then of a man, which is shaped after the image of God? Wee see then, how our Lord meane to teach the Elders and Iudges that were present at the sacrifice, that they might the better learne the horrible nesse of all murders. For if wee bee afraid of a beast: it is good reason that wee should bee touched much more to the quicke without all comparison, for a humaine creature. As touching the washing of their handes, it is added to make the people to vnderstand, that they were after a sorte defiled, or rather that they should declare both before the Angels and before all creatures, that they might washe themselues from it. And this serued for the time of the ceremonies of the Lawe. But wee must vnderstand that it was not our Lordes meaning to feede his people by such signes in counterfeiting and hypocrisie. What gayned Pilate by his washing of his handes? Was hee cleansed from the death of Iesus Christ? No, that washing of his was a token of his defiling. Wherefore washed he his handes, but because hee knewe himselfe guiltie of the death of Iesus Christ? Whereof hee thought to cleere himselfe by a drop of water: and that was too great a dallying with God. And that is the cause why I sayd that his washing ingraued his fault the deeper before GOD, and made him the more vnexcusable. And therefore had the people come dissemblingly to washe their handes; it had bin but a further charging of their faulte, and a making of themselues the more faultie. But Gods will was that the Elders should vse such ceremonies, to doe vs the better to vnderstand, that wee be fleshly, and consider not our sinnes vnlesse they bee as it were painted out with the finger. Wee conceiue not Gods wrath, except wee haue some signe of it before vs. God then meant to declare, that when there is any such offence, wee bee defiled, so as there is nothing but filthinesse in vs, but God misliketh of vs, & we cannot preace vnto him without prouoking him to wrath. Marke that for one point.

And therewithall hee meant to shewe vs, how we ought to apply our indeuour to cleanesse. And this cleanesse is not compassed with corruptible water; but it must bee first in our consciences, and afterwardes in all our members. Wherefore let vs learne to looke to it, that our handes bee not bloudy, as the Prophet Esay termeth the hands of those which did wrong to their neighbours: and let not our feete runne after bloud, neither let our members bee defiled, nor made instrumentes of vnrighteousnesse, as Saint Paule speaketh of them in the first to the Romans. When we indeuour after that sorte to keepe our selues vndefiled to Godward; then do wee obserue the washing that was vnder the Lawe, to receiue the trueth and substance thereof. And at this day whereas we haue baptisme, the water betokeneth the lyke; not that it is sufficient of it selfe, nor that it is of force to washe away our sinnes, for what should then become of our Lord Iesus Christes bloud? It were too grosse a blasphemie for a man to put his trust in a visible signe: we must lift vp our mindes higher. In lyke case is it with the Lordes supper, insomuch that when wee come to the table of our Lorde Iesus Christ, if wee thinke to finde our soules health in a bit of bread or in a droppe of wine; wee bee very beastly, and there is neither reason nor vnderstanding in vs. But when we bee led further, so as by eating of the bread we conceiue that Christ is our very sustenance, and that although wee bee spiritually dead in our selues, yet we cease not to liue in him: then doth the sacrament turne to our benefite. And to that vse must we apply the doctrine that is set downe here.

And for a conclusion let vs marke further, that although the men that are murthered doo no more speake vnto vs, because they be dead: yet the bloud of them cryeth out for vengeance against vs. See wee not what proceeded from the bloud of Abell? Hee needed no man of lawe to pleade his cause: for his very bloud cryed vnto God as is reported therof. Whereby wee bee done to vnderstand, that although the parties whom we haue misused doe forgiue vs, yet will God euer be a Iudge to vs, vntill we haue acknowledged our faults, and indeuour to amend thē. Insomuch that although his wrath appeare not towardes vs, & that our wrong dealing haue lyen long concealed, so as it seeme to bee starke dead & quite forgotten: yet notwithstanding, the remem-

Psal. 2. 5.

remembrance thereof is alwayes fresh before God. Let vs consider this, and let euery of vs in true repentance rebuke himselfe and amende his misdoings, indeuoring to liue quietly & without doing any harme. And for the doing thereof, let vs thinke vpon the outcrie whereof the Apostle speaketh in the Epistle to the Hebrues, saying that the blood of our Lord Iesus Christ
Heb.12.25. cryeth much better than did the blood of Abell. Not to aske vengeance of God against vs, so we receiue him in such wise as our sins bee washed & clensed away. For to that purpose was that holy blood of his shed. True it is that the blood of our Lord Iesus Christ shall cry out for vengeance against all the faithlesse and froward sorte, & against such as haue refused the doctrine of ỹ Gospel & troden it vnder foot, & made a skorn of it, & al prophane folk, for al such shal be guilty of the bloudshed of our Lord Iesus Christ. But when we receiue his blood by faith, & know ỹ it ought to serue vs as a purgatiõ to make vs righteous and innocent before God, let vs assure our selues ỹ the same blood hath his cry. And in deed we see how the Gospell soundeth and ringeth in our eares to ỹ intent we should know the vertue of ỹ bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ. For it is no dead thing, but it is euer fresh, as the Apostle
Heb.10.20. speketh of it in another place. Yea & it is so fresh ỹ it hath his liuely force continually, to reconcile vs vnto God. Therefore let vs rightly weigh this inestimable benefit, & receiue the peace of the Gospell, whereby God witnesseth vnto vs, that he admitteth the blood of his sonne for our washing, that we may appeare before his maiestie with full hope.

Now let vs cast our selues downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledging of our faults, praying him to make vs perceiue them more and more. Yea and let vs confesse namely the faultes which we know by our selues, and which we perceiue, & whereof we ought to be ashamed before men: but also our ignorances & our secret sinnes whereof we be now guilty. And forasmuch as we know how there be many vices and infirmities in vs, let vs mourne for them before God, and let it make vs to proceede more and more in true repentance. And in the meane while let vs not continue wilfull, but let vs take courage to turne vnto him; and let vs not looke to haue a bullock or a brute beast to suffice for vs nowadayes, as though the blood thereof should serue vs for a sacrifice: but let vs retire to our Lorde Iesus Christ, that seeing he hath offered vp the onely and euerlasting sacrifice in his death and passion once for all, to set vs free from all our debtes, and that hee calleth vs daily vnto him by his Gospell: wee seeke not any other meane to serue God withall, but proceede in all purenesse vnder his hand & guiding. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not only to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xxv. of December. 1555.

The CLxi. Sermon which is the second vpon the one and twentith Chapter.

10 When thou goest to battell against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath giuen them into thy hand, and thou hast led them into captiuitie:
11 Then if thou see a woman among the prisoners that is faire to looke vpon, and thou fall in loue with her, and canst finde in thy heart to take her to thy wife:
12 Thou shalt cary her home to thine house, and there shee shall shaue her head and pare her nayles:
13 And thou shalt strippe her out of the apparell wherein shee was taken prisoner, and keepe her close in thine house, and let her bewayle her father and her mother by the space of a moneth. And after this thou shalt goe in vnto her, and so be maried vnto her, and shee shalbe thy wife.
14 And if it fall out that shee like thee not, thou shalt let her goe where she listeth: but thou maist not sell her for money, nor make marchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her.

HAd the Iewes held themselues within the rule which God gaue them, they should rather haue taken them wiues of their owne tribes, that they might not in any wise haue intermingled themselues with the idolaters. But forasmuch as mens lusts can hardly be bridled, God graunteth heere a toleration, that when a man which hath taken a heathen woman prisoner by the law of armes, and is minded to take her to his wife: ere he doe, hee shall cause her to mourne for her father and her mother, as though they were dead, to the intent shee may forget both her countrie & kinred whereof she came, as though she were made new againe, and grafted into the body of the people of Israell.

Therefore let vs marke that in this text GOD meane to restreyne the lustes of such as had no hold of themselues in the time of warre, but would needes take strange women, that

had formed idols afore. Now the meane was (as I haue sayd afore) that the women should bee as it were changed, so as they might no more remember their former lyfe. And that is the cause why hee sayth *that they should shaue their heades, and pare their nayles.* Some translate it, *and make their nayles*, (for so it is word for word,) that is to say, let them growe that they might become vgsome, to disfigure them. And they thinke that by that meanes God meant to bring their husbandes in mislyking of them. But it is cleane contrarie. For lyke as in French, they say commonly to *make heard*, and to *make a beard*, [when they meane the powling or rounding of the beard, and the shauing, clipping, or trimming of the beard:] so doe the Hebrewes vse the selfesame phrase of speach. And Gods appointing of this ceremonie to be vsed, was to take away all rudenesse: as who should say, that if it were possible for them to scrape off their very skins, they should doe it, to the intēt they might no more be the same that they were before, but rather vtterly renounce their own byrthright, & become seruaūts to serue ỹ god which gaue his law by ỹ hād of Moses. To the same end also tended the sorow which they were to make in mourning for their fathers and mothers. Thus we see now to what end this Lawe was giuen.

Now remaineth to gather the instruction that is contained therein. For we see what libertie mē vse. When they haue any worldly prosperitie, then their lustes increase and boyle more and more, so as they cannot easily be quieted. When we haue taken a Citie, or made any conquest, we cannot stay thēselues frō taking too much spoil. If the Iewes had taryed quietly at home in their owne houses, and euery man followed Gods ordinance in taking a wife of his owne kind, (not the brother the Sister, for that was forbidden by the Lawe: but I meane of the lyne of Abraham, which was the lynage that God had chosen out of the whole worlde): they had bin preserued from defiling themselues with the Infidels. For it was a kind of defilement whē a man maried a Heathenwoman, which had bin nuzzled in superstition all her life long. They should not then haue ranged abroade. But had they once any warre, and ỹ God gaue them the victorie ouer any people, then their licentiousnesse rāne out beyond his bounds. Wherby we see how it is not alwayes for our profite, that our Lord should giue vs too much aduantage. For if we grow too strong: our headines becommeth vnruleable. If wee think ourselues able to make our part good: by and by we set vp our bristles & our combes, as the common saying is: and it is found by experience. Therfore if God deale not with vs after our owne lyking, let vs assure our selues that his humbling of vs is for our benefit, to the end we should alwayes continue in some feruentie and mildenesse. Yea and euen when he increaseth vs, we must learne to humble ourselues willingly. For whēsoeuer we aduaunce our selues our pride shal euer be punished & beaten down. And if we be stifnecked, God must needes strike vpon vs with maine blowes. Such as submit thē-

selues of their own good will, and passe not their boundes, are comforted of God. But as for those which wil needs win him by stoutnes, they must needs feele his hand the sorer and heauier vpon their heades.

The thing then which we haue to note in the first place, is ỹ men abuse Gods blessinges & gracious giftes. Insomuch ỹ if he send them worldly prosperitie, they take occasion to glory too much therein, hardening their hearts and following their lustes so licētiously, as though (to their seeming) all thinges were lawful for them. We see it too much: so that if men haue obteined a victorie, they beare thēselues in hand ỹ they may vse all maner of pillage & rauishing, so as nothing is spared. When we haue any superioritie aboue others: at what point be we? We could finde in our hearts to make thē our vnderlinges, & to set our feete vpon their throtes. Sith we see it is so, let vs vnderstād ỹ our Lord hath good cause to hold vs at a low stay, to the end he may ỹ better weald vs, and make vs to beare his yoke quietly. And therefore let such as haue any worldly prosperitie, looke wel to thēselues, ỹ they be not puffed vp with too much pride, knowing for a certeintie ỹ our nature is disposed thereunto, and that it swayeth too much that way. Wherfore let euery man suspect himself in the time of prosperitie, and be wel aduised to hold himself within the bounder of modestie.

And now we haue to treate of mariage: & to shew why our Lord did so straitly will and commaund ỹ Iewes, ỹ they should not marry with ỹ heathen & infidels. S. Paul not doubt cause lyketh our matches in marriage to yokes. For like as when a cupple of Oxen are yoked together, if ỹ one goe, ỹ other must needes follow, & if the one draw awry, ỹ other cānot but sway aside too: euen so fareth it in ỹ familiaritie betweene man & man. True it is ỹ we may be cōuersant among ỹ heathen, yea our marching with thē for else (as saith S. Paul) we should be faine to get vs out of ỹ world, if we would come in cōpanie of none but good men & Gods childrē. But there are meanes to trafique man with man, & yet ỹ must be done but in maner of wayfaring. He ỹ buieth of a mā, would not inquire of his good behauiour, except he feared ỹ he should be deceiued by him: Only he buieth his ware & goes his way, & yet for all ỹ he is not in any couenant w̄ him with whome he bargained. But if he once enter into familiar cōuersation, and fall to eating and drinking with him, and there groweth such acquaintance betwixt them, that they liue commonly together: then becommeth it a yoke saith S. Paul. Now we knowe that mariage is the holyest kind of companie in all the world: insomuch that a man shal leaue both father and mother to keepe companie with his wife. Therefore it is vnpossible for a man to contract mariage, without coupling himselfe with his wife, so as eache bee made priuie to others minde, will, and purpose in all things. For we see what hath happened, how the parties that haue giuen themselues ouer in that wise, haue in the end bin vtterly mard, & God did as it were cut thē off from

Deut. 17. 17 & 1. Cor. 6. 14.

1. Cor. 5. 10.

Gen. 2. 21. & Mat. 19. 5.

his

Numb.25.1 & 31.15. his people, so as they became as rotté members, and all through the counsell of Balaam. For whé he sawe that God opened not his mouth to curse the Israelites, but rather that when as hee had conspired to vtter curses, hee was inforced to speake the cleane contrarie: for his last shift hee gaue counsell, that they shoulde let the Iewes enter communication with the heathen women, that they might deceiue the Iewes hearts, & corrupt them with Idolatrie, whereby they should prouoke Gods vengeance against them, & that should turn to their confusion. Nay

1. Kings.11. if there were no mo but Salomon, his example were enough to make their hayre stand vp vpon their heades, which did well consider whereinto he fell. Surely he was an excellent man: It was Gods wil to set him forth as a lookingglasse, or as a peereles pearle, & he was indued w so excellent wisedome, that all men wondered at him, yea & he was euen a Prophet of God. Yet for all this, the heathen women deceiued his hart, insomuch that hee suffered idolatrie to haue full scope, & to reigne in the countrie which GOD had reserued & dedicated to himselfe, so that he builded Temples vnto idols. When we see that such a man (who was an Angel of heauen) did fall downe to hell, & that God gaue him ouer to a wicked minde, by meanes whereof he became so beastly that he ouerthrew ỹ seruice & religion of God: how shal they doe which are far off from profiting so much as he? So then we see it is not without cause that God so streitely forbade the Iewes to take wyues of forraine nations, & specially of the countries of Chanaan. But generally his meaning was, that they should not match themselues with idolaters. For why? It is a making of an enmie & an opening of a gap to Satan that he may put all to hauock, & bring all things to disorder & confusion. God therefore ment to preuent that. True it is ỹ at this day now that ỹ Gospell hath bin preached ouer all the world, there is neither Gentile nor Iew any more: wee haue no more any such distinction as was vnder the Lawe. For the separation wall (saith S. Paul)

Col.3.28. is brokē downe, so as we must now link together in brotherly concord, forasmuch as God will be

Eph.2.14. called vpon of all nations, & that all men should call him father: and therefore we must knit our selues together. Yea, but there are which separat themselues through vnbeleefe, & wil not be of ỹ bodie of the Church, but refuse ỹ God which is declared to vs by Iesus Christ, & will not be partakers of the adoption which hee offereth to all men both great & small. Vnto such we must not cleaue, at leastwise if we intend not to alienate our selues from God & from the way of saluation. Whosoeuer thē matcheth himself wittingly & wilfully with the vnbeleeuers: dooth as much as in him lyeth to banish himself from the kingdome of God. And for that cause doth S. Paul vse this exhortation, that wee should not beare the yoke with vnbeleeuers, telling vs that the thinges which were spoken in olde time to the Iewes, belong also vnto vs, so as it behoueth vs to flee far from all superstition, & frō all such as intangle vs therein. And why? For we not only beare the materiall vessels of the Lordes Temple, but also are his very Temples wherein he dwelleth by his holy spirit: and therefore wee must offer both our bodies and soules in sacrifice to him, that we may be wholy dedicated vnto him. For seeing he hath chosen vs to be his childrē, ought we not to be clensed frō al corruption both of bodie & mind, as hath bin declared?

Seeing it is so then, let vs learne that when a man is to marrie, he must (as neere as hee can) choose him such a wife as may further him in the seruing of God purely. For why? We be frayle enough of our selues, without being corrupted of other folkes. And if a man be in a good way, and be neuer so wel minded and desirous to doe well: he shal soone be marred by euil company. And the world sees it. If a man doe but fall to drinking with a leawd fellow or a naughtipacke: he is in daunger to turne backe and to become euery day worse than other; so that yee would wonder to see him become a very diuel. Now if a little tippling doe this; what will insue when a man shall be faine to keepe company with his wife as long as they liue? Truely it is a manifest tempting of God, when a man throwes himself headlong downe after that fashiō, and feedeth his eyes at the taking of a wife, hauing no regard of his choyce ỹ he might be helped by her, so as they might behaue themselues holily & according to Gods will with one commen consent. That (I tell you) is a poynt which it behoueth vs to marke wel. And what is the cause that nowadayes so many mariages come to il end, but that men haue not an eye to God, but their mindes are set vppon their lustes and pleasure, or else they seeke for wealth? God then is not accounted of, & therefore he is faine to reuenge such contempt, and so doth hee as experience sheweth. So much the more ought wee to marke well how it is sayd in this text, that if a man will marrie a straunge woman, (that is to say an infidel) which hath not bin brought vp in the feare of God, nor bin instructed in his word) he must looke that shee be cleane chaunged, before hee euer come at her. For a wife is as a deadly person, vnlesse she haue first forsaken her former conuersation, and professed to line thenceforth to Godward, and to sticke purely to his word, & haue put her old bringing vp quite out of her minde, yea & euen cast her slough as they say.

And furthermore, whereas it is sayd here, *that she woman must shaue her head, pare her nailes, put away her [old] apparell, and weare as it were for hatred forgone her father and mother* in deed these ceremonies serued for the Iewes, and wee be not to vse those figures nowadayes. But yet must wee haue an eye whereunto the same tended namely that the women (as I haue sayd afore) should be as it were chaunged, ỹ they might be brought into ỹ body of Gods Church. This is a ground therfore, ỹ when a man intēdeth to take a wife, he must looke ỹ she be reformed aforehād & that she know God & his word, so as she ioyne herself thereto, & be ready to giue ouer al idolatrie. Vntil a woman be at ỹ poinct, it is not lawful for a Christian man to take her to his wife.

And

And if he take her before, and graunt him the grace to reclaime her afterwarde; yet muſt hee vnderſtand that he hath done amiſſe. And looke what is ſaide of men, concerneth women likewiſe. For as women haue their inticementes to allure the hearts of men: ſo men may eaſily tépt women to turne them from the right way of ſaluation, and to ouerthrowe them as the world ſeeth. And therefore when a woman doeth of her owne will go take a husbande that is a deſpiſer of God, a wicked and looſeliuer, a lawleſſe perſon, a drunkarde or a ſwearer: it is all one as if ſhee forſooke God, and baniſhed her ſelfe out of his Church, and ſhee deſerueth to haue all manner of curſedneſſe to light vppon her head.

And where as this is tolde vs concerning wiſlocke; let vs vnderſtande it likewiſe of al other things that may thruſt vs out of our way: and let vs learne to bee conuerſant with ſuch companions, that wee may euer bee edified ſtill to the better. For wee haue neede of ſuch folke as may amende vs, becauſe that euery of vs is ſtyle of himſelfe. And therefore let vs ſeeke to match our ſelues with ſuch as haue the feare of God, and leade a holy & honeſt life: & let vs ſhunne ſuch as go about to intangle vs in their abhominations. When wee ſee a malicious and froward perſon, a deſpyſer of God, or a luſtie Gallant that paſſeth not to bee an offence to all men: let vs eſteeme him as a plague, and let vs vtterly eſchue him. For why? whoſoeuer comes nye him, ſhall ſurely be infected by him out of hande: And that is apparant. So then, let vs beare well in mynde, that here our Lorde intended to ſhewe, that wee muſt haunt ſuch compaines as is fit to teache vs to doe well, and that on the contrarie parte, wee muſt ſhunne all occaſions of euill, becauſe of the infirmitie that is in vs, and wee neede not much to turne vs away from weldooing.

Alſo it is to bee noted, that ſeeing God hath ordeyned ſo many ceremonies *for the women that were to renounce their owne kinred*: therein he meant to doe vs to wit, that wee muſt forſake our owne nature, if wee will ſerue him purely and as hee commaundeth vs. Therfore when wee haue had any wicked trayning, and haue beene nuſled in any euill cuſtome; it is not ynough for vs to bee tolde that ſuch a thing is euill. For although wee ſee it is ſo, and haue it throughly prooued vnto vs: yet do we not ceaſſe to bee fleyned with it ſtill. It is ſo deepely rooted in vs, as it cannot bee plucked vp at the firſt dash. And this ought to bee throughly knowen vnto vs, that when a man hath beene naughtily brought vp from his childhood, and hath dwelled in a houſe of diſorder till hee come to twentie yeares of age: although hee take paynes all the time of his life after, to forget the corruptions which hee had ſeene, and wherewith hee had beene imbrewed before: yet can hee neuer bring it to paſſe, but that hee ſhall alwayes retayne ſtill ſome ſpot or blemiſh. And hereby wee ſee howe gracious God is to ſuch as are ſo well brought vp, that they haue ſeene none other but good and honeſt examples, whereby they haue learned to ſerue God and to honour him. It is an ineſtimable priuilege, when God graunteth vs to haue ſuch bringing vp: and vnhappie bee they which abuſe it. And this ought to bee ſo much the greater prouocation to fathers and mothers to nurture well their children, and to take paynes in the good bringing of them vp, becauſe there is ſuch corruption in men, that when they haue once beene imbrewed and infected with vices, they can hardly refrayne them with great payne. This then is that which in effect wee haue to remember vppon this text, to the ende that all men ſhoulde be vigilant in bringing vp their children in true religion and vertue.

Again, on the other ſide let children on their parte be well ware that they diſappoint not the grace of God, but rather that they make it auaylable, that by their good bringing vp, they may fare the better all their life after. Alſo fathers and mothers muſt take good heede, that they ſuffer not their children to runne at rouers: for wee ſee howe it is ynough to marre them out of hand, and to bring the poore ſoule to vtter vndooing. Specially when wee our ſelues haue beene euill brought vp, that is to ſay euill taught; let vs doe the beſt wee can to weede out the infections that are in vs. And let vs not thinke it an eaſie thing to do, ſo as wee ſhoulde neede no more but to ſhake our eares at it, as a number doe, who when they haue played the naughtie packes, thinke themſelues to bee the beſt reformed men in the worlde, ſo long as they runne not out into all extremities, when yet notwithſtanding they faile not to retaine ſtill ſome parte of their former corruptions, and all the worlde may ſee ſtill the markes of their euillbringing vp in them. For why? They conſider not howe harde it is for a man to reſourme himſelfe, which hath beene naughtily brought vp. And aboue all things, let this bee obſerued in religion. For as for thoſe that haue beene brought vp in poperie, I meane which haue beene nuſled in it, that is to ſay, made beaſtes, (for one of the holyeſt poyntes of doctrine that is taught and eſteemed of among the Papiſtes, is that men ſhould be without wit and without reaſon, and not diſcerne any thing themſelues, but rather ſuffer themſelues to bee led by the noſes like brute beaſts;) when, I ſay they haue beene nuſled in ſuch ignorance, although they come afterwarde to the pureneſſe of the Goſpell, yet notwithſtanding they keepe ſtill ſome dregges, vnleſſe they take marueylous great payne to ridde away all their former corruption, as euery of vs fyndeth by experience in himſelfe.

True it is that many fillie ſoules perceiue it not in themſelues. For when it is tolde them that the Maſſe is an abhomination, that diuerſe things in it are of Satans deuyſing, & that they muſt holde themſelues to Gods worde: very well ſay they, all is one to mee, I will forbeare

the Masse, and shrift, and all the thinges that I haue seene in times past, I giue them ouer. And why? Because they bee no longer in vse. Therefore they bee nowe layde aslepe. But if an alear were set vp againe, a man coulde not so soone turne his hande, but they woulde by & by bee gadding to Masse, as fast as they flocke nowe to Sermons. And their comming to sermons is not to bee edified; but rather the word of God serues to condemne them, and to make them vnexcusable. And as for such, they wote not what it is to fight against popish superstitions. But such as are well wakened and touched to the quicke with the feare of God, when they examine themselues, will thinke thus: Go to, I haue yet still this smatch of my wicked bringing vp in my chyldehood remayning in mee. A man which is duely touched with the feare of God, and desirous to profite in Gods worde, shall finde at tenne or twentie yeares ende that there remayneth still some roote thereof behynde, and must bee fayne to fight against it. Euery man sees this in his owne case. For looke howe much one man hath bin deeper plunged than another in those curled meetinges or assemblies, so much the more nourishment of them doeth hee retayne still euer after. In so much that euen those which haue profited best in Gods schoole, if they haue once beene drowned in these Munkeries, or in the hellish dungeons of Poperie, do feele in themselues I wote not what dregges thereof remayning in them euer after. And our Lorde holdeth them downe, and by meanes thereof giueth them as it were a Whetstone to sharpen them to the incounter, that they may the better knowe their owne vyces, and bee the fitter to teache others. But howsoeuer the ease stande, wee may well assure our selues that wee shall not by and by haue rooted out the corruptions which wee haue receyued by our euill bringing vp in our chyldhood. And that is it which our Lorde meant by the figure which hee setteth downe heere, namely, *that the women must shaue off their hayre, pare their nayles, put away their accustomed apparell, and bee quite and cleane chaunged, if they will dwell among the people of God: so as they must after a sorte bee made newe agains, and haue vtterly renounced their owne kinred.* Wee see nowe howe such as haue beene trayned vp in euill, and plunged in superstition, must fight all their life long against their vices, that they may reclayme themselues fully vnto God.

But wee must goe yet one steppe further, and put the thing in vre which is sayde in the fiue and fortith Psalme, agreeing vnto that which is sayde heere: Hearken my daughter, forget thine owne people, and thy kinred, and thy fathers house. There it is spoken concerning Salomons wife: but vnder that figure it is shewed vnto vs howe Gods Church is marryed spiritually to our Lorde Iesus Christ: namely vpon condition that shee forget her father and her kinred, and all her former trade of life, and all the customes of her countrey. And I tolde you that this text concerneth the thinges that are contayned heere. For why? Shee was a woman of a straunge countrye, and had beene an ydolater all the tyme of her life: and therefore it was sayde vnto her that shee must forget all the tyme past, and put her bringing vp out of her remembrance, to the end shee might dedicate her selfe to GOD, and then the king woulde loue her beautie. And if it were sayde, that king Salomon ought not to take any pleasure in his wife, nor haue any delight or liking in her, vntill shee had protested herselfe to bee desirous to bee wholly vnited to Gods people, and had separated herselfe from all the abbominations of Egypt. And I haue tolde you, that herein wee haue a general rule for all men, of what kinred or countrey so euer wee bee. For why? It is the sonne of God that is our true Salomon, who contracteth holy wedlocke with his Church, and will haue vs to bee as a wife vnto him. And to the same ende serueth the preaching of the Gospell, as sayeth Saint Paul in the eleuenth Chapter of the seconde Epistle to the Corinthians. I must marrye you (sayeth hee) as chaste virgines vnto Iesus Christ. And therefore let vs marke, that whensoeuer the Gospell is preached vnto vs, it is all one as if Christ wooed vs to marrye with him, after the same manner that men sue vnto women when they woulde match with them in wedlocke. And so our Lorde thinkes it not ynough to take vs as his souldiers and seruants: but hee will also haue vs to bee incorporated into him, and to bee as neere vnto him as the wife is to her husbande. But vppon what condition? So long as wee continue in our owne nature, we cannot be ioyned vnto him, neither can he take any pleasure in vs: and therfore we must forget our owne stocke, & our kinsfolkes, that is to say, we must become new creatures. For what haue wee so long as we hold of our father Adã, or any thing at all that is of man? what haue we (say I) but vtter frowardnesse? Wherefore let vs marke well, that this figure must serue vs for an instruction at this day: namely, that whereas vnder the lawe, our Lorde willed heethen women to pare their nayles, to shaue off the hayre of their heads, & to put away their former apparell & attyre; it is all one as if hee shewed vs in a liuely picture, that we cannot bee of the body of his Church, nor of the household of faith, nor admitted into his fauour, except we bee stripped out of our accustomed apparel, that is to say, except wee forsake our olde maners & trade of life, and bee so chaunged, as wee may shewe openly that our desire is not to bee worded any more to our selues, but to be gouerned by him, & to forsake all that we haue of our own nature, & al ỻ euer we haue learned by euill custom. Now we see how beneficial this lesso is for vs, & that God spake it not for ỻ Iewes only, but ỻ he ment to giue vs also a profitable instruction if we can skill to put it wel in vre.

Now whereas it is sayde, *that she woman shall*

bewayle

knight her father and her mother: it is not meant that women shoulde be sorie to come to liue after Gods worde: but here our Lorde hath done vs to vnderstande that the naturall affections cannot bee mortified at the first chop, without some striuing against them, as we see too much by experience: insomuch that euen after a man hath beene trayned vp in Gods worde, although hee bee desirous to behaue himselfe as becommeth him: yet shall hee finde great gaynstryuings and contrarieties in himselfe, so as hee must be faine to inforce himself. And it is not for one day, but for all our life long, that our lustes and fleshly affections striue against Gods spirite which dwelleth in vs and stirreth vs vp and prouoketh vs vnto good. Wherefore let vs marke that whereas our Lorde speaketh heere of forcing, it is all one as if hee had sayde, that although a woman mourne for her kinred and be greeued with her sinfull and corrupt affections: yet notwithstanding, her lamenting must be after such a sort, that in the ende shee thrust them vnder foote and forget them. And hereby wee haue to note, that our seruing of God, must not bee alonely when thinges fall out after our lyking and after our heartes desire, so as wee bee nothing pinched in the dooing thereof, but also euen when wee bee vexed and stoong with our wicked lustes; In so much that although it bee harde for vs to frame our selues to the obeying of Gods commaundementes, and wee feele it a bitter medicine: yet must wee not therefore bee out of heart. For it is much better for vs to weepe in sorrowing for our sinnes and offences, and to forsake them; than to bee merry and to laugh, and in the meane whyle to haue this threat sounding in our ears, that our laughter shalbee turned into weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And therefore let vs marke well, that herein our Lorde ment to put vs stil in minde, that whatsoeuer infirmities bee in vs, yet must they not make our heartes to quayle, but wee must still so inforce our selues to amendement, as wee may alwayes goe on forwarde, howsoeuer wee fare. And if Satan cast stoppes in our wayes, to make vs retyre or turne head; wee must thrust them backe, and strayne our selues to ouercome them. Although then that we be driuen to mourne as though wee bewayled our kinsfolkes and friends; yet must wee still holde out in renouncing worldly things, that we may giue our selues vnto our GOD, and that Christ may haue the possession of vs quietly, and wee faithfully keepe the promise of the sacred & spirituall mariage which he contracteth with vs by the Gospel.

And it is sayde, *that this must bee done by the space of a moneth, during which time the man shall keepe her in his house without vsurping her, yea, or without vsurping on her.* Hereby wee see, that (as was sayde at the beginning) God in this place did somewhat beare and dispence with the Iewes, because they were too greatly giuen to their owne lykings; howbeit that was but with a moderation. And thereby wee bee taught (as I haue touched alreadie at the beginning) to eschewe the occasions that might deceiue vs by their intycementes. For wee can no sooner open our eyes, but Satan hath some meane or other to dasle them in such sorte, that hee will drawe them to him by and by. And hee hath his snares so layde aforehande, that wee shalbee caught ere wee bee aware. What will become of vs then, when wee seeke occasions afarre off? Wee had needs to betake our selues to God both earely and late, as the holy Ghost him selfe doeth vs to vnderstande where hee sayeth [in our behalfe:] Lorde, turne away mine eyes from all temptations. As much is sayde of our eares and of all our other senses. For all of them are but as messengers of lecherie and leawdnesse, vnlesse our Lorde put to his hande, and rule vs by his holy spirite. Therefore let vs learne to shunne the temptations that might serue to intyce vs to further naughtinesse; and let vs so eschewe them, as GOD may quietly haue the fruition of vs. And when soeuer any temptation happeneth vnto vs, let vs seeke to cut it off out of hande, and not to feede it: neyther let vs be too hastie to followe our owne lykings, which is the last poynt that wee haue to marke here. Psal. 119. 37. Psal. 141. 4.

To conclude, whereas it is sayde, *that the woman whome a man intendeth to marrie, must bee kept close by him as home in his house, a whole moneth before hee come neere her*: therein our Lorde hath shewed vs a remedie that is more than requisite and needefull for all such as haue so whotte and headie lustes. Wee see that when any lust is once entered into a mannes heart, it letteth him on fire at the first brunt, and carryeth him away after such a sorte, as hee can take no rest. In respect whereof our Lorde giueth men heere a brydle, telling them that he which will take a wife after that manner, shall not goe in vnto her, vntil hee haue first giuen her a monethes respite to mourne and to forsake her owne native people.

True it is (as I haue saide afore) that this ceremonie continueth not nowe any longer as in respect of the vse thereof, but yet it must serue vs still for our learning: That is to witte, that forasmuch as the diuell driueth vs after our lustes, and that as soone as any toye takes vs in the head by and by wee runne gadding after it, so as wee breake all bandes and brydles; wee must consider that with our selues: But yet must thou brydle thy selfe in this case spite of thy teeth, and if thou beest a woode beast, thou must bee subdued by strong hande to the obeying of thy GOD. After that manner ought euery man to fight against him selfe, and wee shoulde put this lesson in practise daily. For when so euer wee bee tempted to euill, if wee indeuour not to reproue our selues, wee bee ouercome immediately, and the diuel hauing once caught holde, will not let vs goe againe, for hee hath seised vppon the pray that is his owne alreadie.

But if wee through Gods grace, and by the power of his holy Spirite, doe striue to beat backe temptations, and take pleasure in myndyng the things that God commaundeth vs; and whereas Satan seeketh to surprise vs, and indeuoureth to make vs turne our backes to al good doctrine and admonitions, wee on the other side conclude with our selues, saying, Nowe must I gather my wittes to mee and bethinke mee of that which I haue learned, and whereunto God calleth mee: If we (I saye) take such aduisement to subdue our lustes: Satan shalbee ouercome, and our Lorde wilbee so gracious vnto vs as to turne the euill into good, and to inable vs to vse his benefites in such wise, as they shall not bee marred by our taking of any inordinate liberte. The thing then which wee haue to remember yet further vppon this text, is that although Moses speake here of none but women; yet wee must applye the doctrine to all other temptations which befall vs, that wee bee not wonne by them at the first brunt, but that wee behaue our selues so stayedly, as God may in the ende reigne ouer vs, and wee not enterprise any thing which is not permitted vs by his worde.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs so to feele them, that beeing sory for them wee may bee so cast downe and grieued in our selues, as we may bee readie to renounce all that euer we had the worlde and of our owne nature, and to giue ouer and consecrate our selues more and more to him that hath called vs to this state, that we bee a holy people to him, according to his adopting of vs by Iesus Christ, the members of whose body hee woulde haue vs to bee. And so let vs all say, Almightie God, heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxx. of December. 1555.

The Cxxxij. Sermon which is the third vpon the one and twentith Chapter.

15 If a man haue two wiues, the one beloued and the other hated, and they haue brought him foorth children, as well the hated as the beloued, and the first childe is the childe of the hated:

16 And the time is come that hee will diuide his goods among his children to inherite: he may not giue the title of eldership to the sonne of the beloued, in derogation of the hated womans sonne which is the first borne.

17 But he shall acknowledge the hated womans sonne for his eldest, in giuing him double portion of all things that he hath. For he is the beginning of his strength, to whome the right of the firstbegotten belongeth.

HEre wee may see howe harde it is to keepe men in good order, by reason of the naughtinesse and rebellion that is in them. For the lustes of our flesh are like maddie beastes that cannot bee tamed. And therefore the lawes which Moses setteth downe heere, serue as it were to fetter men when they will not bee ruled quietly. If any thing bee to bee counted holy and inuiolable among men, it is marryage. For it hath a testimonie that God would haue it stablished in his name, euen to liue and dye therein. And yet men sticke not to breake so great a bonde. And so wee see that the brute beastes are easier to rule than men bee, for all the reason and vnderstanding that God hath giuen vnto them: for they set all their wittes vppon euill.

It is not for vs to finde fault with the Lawes in this behalfe, as though they were a hardehearted people, and wee were not the like: but wee ought rather to beholde our selues in their persons, and to consider that wee bee no better than they. The text speaketh heere of a woman that was taken prisoner, howe that when a man had marryed her, hee ought thence foorth to keepe the same rule with her which our Lorde hath set downe for all others, namely, that hee forsake both father and mother, and cleaue to his wife. God sayeth that if he be wearie of her, he shal let her

gue franke and free, and not sel her as a slaue. Surely God meane not to giue a marryed man leaue so put away his wife: for that is against the ordre of nature, and against the first institution or ordinance of mariage, which ought to continue to the worlds end. But it is all one as if God selde vs, that men cannot behaue themselues wisely & vprightly, & that they presume vpō many things which are not permitted to the And therfore like as men put shackles vpon euill conditioned horses, euen so to the intent y men also should not ouershoot thēselues too far, God setteth them a barre to stop at: not that he confirmeth their vyces altogether, but that hee maketh some restraint of them. If wee haue an eye to the perfection which God requyreth, whosoeuer hath once marryed a wife, must keepe his faith and troth towardes her to the vttermost, that is to say, euen vnto the death. And although there bee faultes to bee founde in her, yet must hee beare with her as with the weaker vessel. Likewise the wife must behaue herself so quietly towardes her husbande, that to the vttermost of her power shee must frame herselfe to his disposition. The thing then which maryage requireth, is that the two parties liue together with one consent in the obedience of God, and that neyther of them drawe aside by themselues, but that if there bee any faultes in the one or in the other, they beare with them & passe them ouer as I sayde afore. If a man put away his wife whome hee tooke as a prisoner among his enemies, although hee doe not hold her still in bondage, yet is the marriage broken thereby. Yea verily: and yet is not that putting away made lawfull by God, as who shoulde say hee had set men free at their owne choyce. Neither must men soothe themselues or thinke themselues acquit, because they bee not punished by earthly iustice: but Gods intent was only to shew, that although a man be so leawd as to breake his faith, yet must hee not presume so farre as to play the tyrant too, and to sel his wife as though shee were his bondslaue still for euer. *For he hath dishonoured her.*

Wee see then (as I haue touched afore) howe rauenes wickednesse is so great, that it cannot bee reformed, and that it is much if hee can bee brought to some measure. And therefore wee must put a difference betweene humane policie and the lawe of God which serueth to rule our life, to the intent wee may walke as before him. Humane policie keepeth a certaine meane. It is no such perfectnesse as can acquit vs before God, though wee haue not transgressed the lawes thereof. But our Lorde draweth vs yet further in shewing vs the way to liue wel. Hee resteth not vppon the thing that is possible in mannes sight; but sheweth vs what is due to himselfe, and wherein wee bee bounde vnto him. Why bee not mennes lawes perfect in all poynctes? Because that in them respect is had what is possible to bee obtained. Lawes are not made in respect that it is good that men should do so: but to the ende that men might liue together one with another. But when our Lorde giueth vs his doctrine, shewing vs the way to liue well and holily: hee respecteth not our ability [to performe it.] For can wee loue him with all our hearte, with all our strength, with all our soule, and with all our reason? Alas, it is much if wee did take paines about it, and enter into the way, and indeuour to set forward. Although wee were still farre from the marke, yet had wee profited very much. But yet doth not this barre God from demaunding his right. You must loue mee (sayeth hee) with all your heart. If a man reply, that it lyeth not in vs to doe it; it is nothing to the purpose. Wee must rende thereunto whatsoeuer coste it. He will haue vs to bee cleere from all euill affections, & from all wicked lustes of our flesh: and is that possible? No. And yet are wee bounde vnto it, and the lawe requireth it. And for that cause did I say (according to my treating of the same matter heretofore) that it standeth vs in hande to discerne well the spirituall law whereby God gouerneth our soules, from all that euer is set downe in the lawes of this worlde for the ciuile ordering of this present life. And hereof wee haue examples in this present place. For (as I haue declared before) what meaneth mariage, but that a man shoulde holde himselfe to the companie of his wife euen vnto the death, quietly maintaining her and bearing with her?

But God seemeth here to giue a maner leaue to put away his wife. It is no giuing of leaue, as I sayde afore. For the bonde standeth still in force, that hee which putteth away his wife is accursed, because hee hath broken the order which God hath set, and sanctified. But yet as in respect of worldly gouernement, such a man was not punished among the Iewes. As for nowadayes, that libertie is not permitted. For it is good reason that Christians shoulde vse a more perfect kinde of gouernement than the Iewes had, considering that our Lorde Iesus Christ hath shewed himselfe in the worlde, and vttered the will of God his father vnto vs more fully. Therefore wee must not take such libertie nowadayes, as the Iewes did in old time.

Nowe let vs come to the seconde lawe that is set downe here. It is sayde, *If a man haue two wiues.* What? Is this agreeable to the order of mariage? Nay, it is cleane contrarie to it. A man cannot breake wedlocke more, than by taking two wyues. It is sayde that they shalbee two in one flesh. It is not sayde there, that they shalbee three or foure. But our Lorde created onely one woman, to the intent shee should bee the mannes companion. And before hee created her, hee sayth not, it were good for a man to haue many helpes. Let vs make him one helper (quoth hee) to bee with him. Now seeing that God thinketh one helper to be ynough for a man; surely whosoeuer goeth beyonde that rule, turneth all thinges vpside downe, & it is al one as if hee would disanul the ordinance of God. Yea verily. For who is the author of maryage? Hath not God spoken the thing that ought to stande inuiolable, namely y they shalbe

Gen. 2.24.

Mal. 2.15.

1. Cor 7.2.

two in one flesh, and that a man shall haue but one helper? Now if notwithstanding this, a man will needes take two wiues, is it not an open defying of God? Yes verily. And therefore our Lorde sayeth by his Prophet, that it were more tolerable for a man to put away his wife by giuing her the leaue that was permitted vnder y lawe, than to haue two wiues at once. And there he sendeth such vnruly persons backe againe to the creation. Behold (sayeth hee,) God created but one man. And the very same thing doth our Lorde Iesus Christ meane in saying that at the beginning it was not so. For God created but one man: namely male and female created he them. Nowe the Prophet Malachie in alleaging this, sayeth further that God had sufficient aboundance of spirite in himselfe. And therefore what shoulde haue letted him to haue created two wiues for Adam, if he had thought it good? But God thought one to bee ynough. Therefore it is to bee concluded, that he which coueteth to haue two wyues, marreth all, and regardeth not the keeping of wedlocke in such sorte as God hath ordeyned it. Then is it whordome and not wedlocke for a man to desire a seconde wife after that fashion. Yet notwithstanding, this vyce hath beene of olde tyme, & thereby a man may see & iudge what certeintie there is in grounding our selues vpon custome. Tush say wee, it hath beene so in all ages, it hath euer beene wont to bee so. Yea, but that will not serue to discharge vs before God. For this Polygamie as they terme it, that is to say, this hauing of many wyues at once, shoulde haue a very goodly couer for it, if it might rest vppon custome and antiquitie. But what? Gods institution or ordinance went afore custome, and ought to continue vnto the last ende. Wee see then that it was too disordered and vnruly dealing, when men tooke such scope and libertie to haue many wiues at once. And yet the thing fell out euen in the Patriarkes themselues. Whereby it appeareth that men doe but deceiue themselues when they ground themselues vppon men, though they bee the holyest that euer were. Yee see that Abraham who is the father of the faithfull, had mo wiues than one. Yea, but hee fayled not to bee condemned for it. In all the residue of his life hee was a mirrour of Angelicall perfection: but in this case he ouershot himselfe. Therefore let vs holde our selues to Gods pure worde, and not presende that any thing is lawfull for vs, excepe it be ruled after the same. Thus much concerning the hauing of many wyues at once, which is spoken of heere. In so much that if any man haue two wyues, hee doeth contrary to the order which God hath set. By reason whereof the men that doe so passe their boundes are neuerthemore acquit, though they bee not punished for it by the lawes of men: but they must alwayes come backe to this poynt, that God hauing an eye what might bee obtayned of mennes infirmities, ordeyned it as a lawe of policie. And this is no impediment at al to the perfection that is conteyned in Gods worde, whereto it behoueth vs to aspire. And if wee fourvie neuer so litle from it, wee bee guiltie before him by and by. And well may wee alleage this or that; As for example, men require nothing at our handes, yet must wee come to account for it before the heauenly Iudge.

Mal. 2. 15. & Matt. 19. 8.

It is sayde heere expressely, *If a man leaue his one and leane vnto other*. Whereby it is shewed vnto vs, that the hauing of many wyues at once, proceedeth of a corrupt affection, in that a man beareth not such loue to his wife as he ought to do. For if a man loued his wife chrstely, as loue is commaunded; his heart will neuer bee withdrawen from her to desire a newe marriage. Then must a man needes bee corrupted and infected in his heart, and conceiue a mislyking of his wife, so as hee is loth to yeeld his dueties vnto her, before hee can long for a seconde marriage. It is sayde: Yee husbands, loue your wiues: for no man hath euer hated his owne flesh. The same matter is alleaged concerning all men by the Prophet Esay, because wee haue one resemblance of nature common to vs all. It is sayde there, thou shalt not despise thine owne flesh, and it is meant euen of the furthest straungers in the worlde. But betweene man and wife, there is another respect: for (to speake properly) they bee both but one man. And so doeth the Scripture terme them, saying: They shalbe two in one flesh; that is to saye, in one person. Nowe if any man hate his owne body, must it not needes bee that he is worse than madde? Vpon Saint Paul concludeth, that if a man loue not his owne wife, hee is as a monster. That is that wyues will oftentimes giue their husbandes cause to hate them, and thatherbe some of them such feendes as were able to vexe euen the Angels of heauen, and to put them out of patience. That is true. But yet must a man fight against such temptations, and ouercome them howsoeuer hee fare, by the power of Gods spirite. When he is once matched with a wife, hee must not thinke it to bee by hap-hazarde, but that it was by Gods will. And therefore hee must bridle himselfe, in so much that although it bee right harde and grieuous to do, yet must hee take paynes to reforme the vices of his wife that is so euill disposed, and yet in the meane while beare with her and vse her as gently as is possible for him. To that poynt must a man come. Hereunto Saint Paul addeth the example of our Lorde Iesus Christ, besides the inward vnderstanding which we haue of nature. Marke (sayeth hee) howe Iesus Christ loueth his Church. For hee hath giuen him selfe to death, to make vs cleane from all spottes, euen vs that are fowle and full of vncleannesse. If our Lorde Iesus haue not spared his owne bloud for the washing of vs; what ought a mortall man to doe for his wife? But wee knowe that wedlocke is as a liuely picture of the sacred vnion which our Lorde Iesus vouchesafeth to haue with vs. Therefore when so euer the husbande is displeased or greeued at his wife, though hee bee neuer so angry with her, let him haue an eye to

Rom. 12. 4.

Eph. 5. 29.

Eph. 5. 25.

thir example. Beholde, the sonne of God offereth me his owne bloud to wash me withal, shewing me thereby that I must brydle my selfe in this behalfe, and performe my dueetie throughly towardes my wife, howsoeuer the worlde goe. So then let vs marke, that a man will neuer couet a seconde wife, except hee haue first falsified his faith and troth towardes her whome he putteth away. For if he loued her truely, soundely, and rightly, hee woulde leuer dy than let his minde runne vpon any seconde mariage. Let vs marke well (I say) that heere our Lorde ment to bring vs backe to the welspring and head of the mischiefe, to the intent that euery of vs should examine his owne vices, and specially the vices that are hid from men vnder this wicked roote that is within vs. He that forsaketh his wife to marrie another, shall perhaps bee condemned by the common iudgement of men: but to iudge thereof as is meete, we must goe to the welspring thereof, and then shall wee finde that the greatest euill is euer inwarde. Now then, if the hauing of many wiues were once a wicked thing, and that God finde fault with it, insomuch as he had leuer that a man should put his wife away, than y mariage should be broken and the order thereof ouerthrowen: let vs assure our selues there is yet a greater mischiefe, namely secret hatred, when a man loueth not his wife, but is inflamed with a wicked desire to haue an other beside her. And so ye see that the greatest wickednesse that can be, is this vnfaithfulnes wherethrough mariage is corrupted, and men haue no more care to followe the order of GOD and nature, and to frame themselues thereafter.

Furthermore, as touching the worde Hate, here note that it is taken heere for *ouer colde louing*. For inasmuch as the Lawe punished not a man for putting of his wife away, if he had hated her in deede, he would surely haue thrust her out of his house and companie. Therefore in keeping her still, he shewed plainely that hee hated her not as we meane by hating in our common speech, and yet doeth God accounte it for hatred and not without cause, which is a text well worthy to be noted. For if a man hate not his wife deadly, so as hee woulde kill her with bearing, or with her in her graue: he will beare the world in hande that although he loue her not, yet he doth not vtterly hate her. But heere ye see how God speaketh farre otherwise. For he sayeth and auoweth, that if a mans heart be not whole and sounde towardes his wife, it is to be taken for hatred. Therefore let vs imbrace this saying, That a husbande must loue his wife as himselfe, euen as his owne person. If hee doe not so, yet shall this sentence of God alwayes take place. And this lesson ought to serue, not onely for the mutuall loue betweene man and wife, but also generally for the loue towards our neighbours. When a man hath an offence committed against him, if he seeke no reuendge, if he practise no wicked wayes, if he intende not to murder him by sword or by poysoning, if he goe about no wicked conspiracie against him: he will say, As for mee, If I would him any euill, let it light vpon my selfe, I wish him nothing but his benefite and welfare. That is true: but yet in the meane while there is a secret rancour lurking within. And wee must not thinke that God acquitteth vs when we haue such heartburning in vs, bearing in minde the offence that hath beene committed against vs, so as we be loth to pleasure the partie, and could rather finde in our heartes that euill mought befall him. On the other side, some man is so far reconciled, as hee can not finde in his heart to commit any wicked dede by trecherie or vnfaithfulnesse, nor by any maner of violence: and yet he thinkes with himselfe, such a one is mine enemie, he hath gone about to vndoe me, yet will I forgiue him so farre, that I will doe nothing against him. But yet if some mischaunce might befall him, he would be glad of it and say, O, it is well bestowed, for what had he purposed against me? When we keepe such backe shops, it is a token that our heart is not rid quite & cleane. The hatred appeareth not openly, but yet it abideth lurking still within. And he y hateth his neighbour in his heart (sayeth Saint Iohn) that is to say in secret, is a murtherer before God. So then let vs marke, that loue consisteth not onely in wishing none euill to our neighbours, but also in seeking their welfare as much as we can, and in reioycing at the welfare of our enemies. And specially, if a man intende to discharge his duety towardes his wife, he must not loue her slenderly, but he must accept her as his wife, that is to say, as the partie whom God hath linked to him, and therefore he must beare with her and maintaine peace and concorde with her as much as he can possibly. That is the thing that Moses meant in saying, *If a man hate his wife*. For else a man might say, as for mee if I hadde hated her, I woulde haue beene diuorced from her, and not haue kept her still. For what a thing had it beene for me to haue kept her still in my house? Yea, but wherefore hast thou taken an other wife to her, but because thou diddest misslike of the first? All the pretences which thou canst alleadge are to no purpose; vaine are such excuses. For God who is y iudge of mens hearts, telleth thee that if thou beare her not a right and pure loue, thou hatest her.

Now Moses addeth, *If he haue begotten her sonne and loueth the other*, if he haue children by them both, he may not make the childe of the beloued, his heire by giuing him the prerogatiue of dubble portion aboue the rest of his children. But the birthright must remaine to him to whome it belongeth by nature, though the mother of him was not so well liked of her husbande as the other. That is the thing in effect, which Moses commaundeth in this text. And as touching the birthright of the firstborne: it was verie auntient euen before the Lawe, yea euen before the going of the people into Egypt, there was a regard had of the birthright. For although Iacob was in Egypt when hee dyed: yet spake hee as of a thing growen already into custome and holde for a common rule, that is to witte, that there shoulde alwayes bee a kinde of prehemminence in eldership, so as y eldest brother should

beare chiefe sway in the house ouer his brethré. And we see it in very deede in the blessing ỳ Isaac gaue vnto Iacob, taking him neuertheleſſe to haue beene Esaw. For he maketh him his eldest sonne, with prerogatiue of Lordshippe and soueraignetie ouer all his brethren, that is to say, ouer all his kinred. Yee see then howe it is an auntient prerogatiue, insomuch as a man may say, it came as it were by inspiration, & that it was not of mens inuenting, but of Gods owne appointing, though we haue no recorde thereof, ne can proue the thing otherwise than by single coniecture. Yet notwithstanding, this serueth not to excuse the ambition of such as will needes giue al that they haue to their eldest sonne, to the intent to maintaine their houses in greate estate, which we see is the marke that men haue shot at. Whereof comes it that in many countryes, the elder brother hath all, and the younger brothers as good as nothing, and that men doe giue them a morsell of breade as though their fathers had layde the wallet vppon their neckes to bid them shift for themselues? Whereof comes this, but of a pride, that they will needes haue their houses to continue in their name, and not be diminished? Yea, but our Lorde telleth vs that we must passe through this worlde as wayfarers. And wee knowe how the prophet skorneth those that will needes plant their names vpon earth after that fashion. In the nine and fortith Psalme he de- Psal. 49. 12.
clareth that they must needes be very dulwitted sith they see that they must goe to the graue like sheepe, and that their life is as fickle as can bee, and yet notwithstanding will needes (as it were in dispite of God) haue an euerlasting monumẽt here belowe, where all thinges are transitorie. But yet doeth this madnesse continue alwayes, as he sheweth anon after. Wee see with our eies how God mocketh such beastlinesse of men, and yet their aftercommers continue still hard hearted and wilfull, following the madnesse of their fathers. And when there be Lawes that giue al the substaunce after that fashion to the eldest brother, and leaue the rest of the children vnprouided: let vs assure our selues that those Lawes are vnrightfull and wicked. And why? For (as I haue sayde afore) we must goe to the roote, and when we will iudge of thinges aright, wee must haue an eye to the originall from whence the same proceedeth. For although God put men neuer so much in minde of their frailtie, yet is there such an ouerweening in them, that they will needes be abiding still in this worlde, and leaue an euerlasting remembrãce behind them. Againe we see that this kinde of dealing is contrarie to all naturall affection. For ought not a father to loue all his children? Yea, but this is my firstborne. And what are the rest? Wilt thou leaue them to the wide worlde? Wilt thou haue no regard of them? He that careth not for those which are of his owne housholde, is worse than an Infidell (sayeth Saint Paul) and hath forsaken the faith. Euen the very heathen had this gra- 1. Tim. 5. 8.
uen alwayes in their hearts, that howsoeuer they themselues fared, they had especiall care of their children. Although a mannes children be not worthie to be beloued, yet ought nature to ouerrule in that case whatsoeuer come thereof. Nay, although you yourselues be euill (sayth our Lord Iesus Christ) yet do ye not faile to procure good to your children. Therefore as for the that haue Mat. 7. 11.
vtterly done away all naturall affection, they shewe themselues to bee woorse than the heathen, and more corrupted than they. So then, we must alwayes holde vs to this rule, that a father is bound to prouide for all his children, and that the eldest must not be as a guise. Againe, the birthright which was allowed of before the Lawe, and also put in vre afore the Law, allowed but dubble portion to the eldest. And that was reasonable, because the eldest is commonly put to the greatest charges: and when his brothers are left fatherlesse, hee must be faine to be their guyde, and to be as a head and a father to them all. Moreouer, he is as it were the strength of his father aboue all the rest. And it is the reason that is set downe here, which reason we see that Iacob also vseth, saying he is the beginning of my Gen. 49.
strength. God bestoweth a kinde of dignitie vpon men, when he maketh them fathers: for hee imparteth his owne name vnto them. All kinred proceedeth from him, and to speake properly, there is no father but he, I meane as well of the body as of the soule. And yet notwithstanding, the same title is attributed to men, euen because God vouchsafeth to yeelde them that honour. Nowe when God honoreth a man so much, as to make him a firstbegotté, and to giue him preheminence aboue his brothers: if he abuse it, he casteth away the grace that God bestoweth vpon him.

Neuertheleſſe, we see it is not so perpetuall a rule, but that an elder brother may be dispossessed of his roome, as we see befell to Ruben, who Gen. 35.
was Iacobs eldest sonne. And the Testament that Iacob made was not after the common manner of men, as though the matter had been to haue bin ordered after his owne liking: but God spake by his mouth, so as there escaped him not any one worde, which was not a prophesie. And therefore he sayth, Thou Ruben my firstbegotté which wast ỳ flower & beginning of my strength, thou oughtest to haue bin innobled in my house, but nowe thou hast beene sorrowe and heauines to me: Thou must then vanish away and be bereft of the honour that belonged to thee by nature. Thus was Ruben dispossessed and after a sort banished from his birthright. For he had committed too too wicked a deede, & too deadly a crime. And although God forgaue him, so as he dyed not for it: yet was he noted with endlesse infamie, both he & all his ofspring, because of the incest which hee had committed. The right then of the eldership is not a thing so peremptorily assured, but that a child may be dispossessed of it for his misbehauiour, or for some other lawefull cause. But that a man shoulde bee suffered to peruert the order of nature for one wiues sake who hee loueth better than an other, that were no reason. Nowe then let vs marke in fewe wordes, that God ment to make a bridle to restraine men withall, least they might be won

by

by their wiues allurementes to conuey away the right of their children from one to another. God (I say) ment to prouide a remedy for it aforehande.

And first of all let vs marke, that the affections which we bring naturally with vs from our mothers wombe, are vtterly corrupted in vs by, I wote not what a kinde of lustes. And if it be so in them, what is it in the rest? As I sayde afore, ye see howe the loue of a father is common to all men by nature. It is not a vertue peculiar to the faithfull, as it were for that they be willing to obey God, and haue an eye to his commaundements: but although a man were neuer taught it, ne euer wist what the seruice of GOD ment; yet shall he well vnderstande that it is but ambition and pride, to defraude the rest of his children of the portion of his goods, for the aduancing of his eldest sonne. True it is that he is the beginning of his strength: but what for that? should a man be so bewitched with the liking of a woman, that he should vtterly forget what nature it selfe teacheth vs, and which ought to be printed in all men euen from their mothers wombes? Therefore we haue heere a good and profitable lesson, to put vs in mind that we must fight against our lustes, as though they were enemies inflamed against vs with all rage, and that we must inforce ourselues in this case, for we shal neuer bring it to passe with ease. And the hardnesse therof must not discorage vs, but although we see it to be a verie difficult and troublesome thing to be able to ouermaister our lustes; Yet let vs goe forewarde with it still. In deede wee must not presume vpon our owne strength; but we must acknowledge our owne weakenes & flee vnto God, who in the ende will giue vs a happie victorie.

Furthermore, to knit vp this matter, let vs mind the thing that I haue touched afore: which is, that although we be not punished before men for our faultes and misdeedes, yet must not that serue to lull vs a sleepe. For why? God keepeth still his iudgement in store: and before him wee shall not be quit. Nowadayes if a man can say that the Lawe can finde no fault in him, he thinketh himselfe to be an Angell. Yea, but if a man do cocker himselfe vnder that pretence, should God also cease to doe his office therefore? Then let vs learne to order our liues after such a sorte, as our eye may not be alonely vpon men. For the ciuil Lawes (as I haue told you already) serue but to deale with vs according to our power and ability: but the righteousnesse which God commaundeth vs in his spirituall Lawe is a perfection whereunto we are tyed and bounde. And although we be not able to performe it: yet must wee holde on still towardes it, by setting our mindes therupon, & by streyning all our powers to the vttermost. And when we finde any thing amisse: we must bee sorie for it, and condemne ourselues. For although men require nothing at our handes; yet shal we be euer guiltie before God. Thus ye see what we haue to remember, to the intent we be not so blinded as to beare ourselues in hande, that because wee be scaped the handes of men, therefore we be also acquit and discharged before God. Let that serue for one point.

And thereupon let vs learne further, that wee must not imagine as a number of fantastical persons do, that all the thinges are allowed of God, which were not punished in the commonweale of the Iewes: For our Lorde executed a dubble office among that people. Hee gaue them an earthly order of gouernement, after the maner of the Lawes which we haue: and also he deliuered them a rule whereafter hee will haue vs to behaue ourselues as his children. For if we intende to haue a sure recorde of Gods will, wee must resort to the tenne cõmandementes, wherin is comprehended the sume of all holines and righteousnesse. He that frameth his life according to the tenne commaundementes, may wel say that he hath the perfect righteousnesse. But forasmuch as we come farre short of it, and can by no meanes come neere it so long as wee bee clothed with our flesh: let vs acknowledge ourselues to be wretched sinners, and resort for refuge to the mercy of our God, fighting manfully in the meane season against our owne vices, and indeuouring continually to cutte off all impediments, vntil we feele ourselues to haue profited: and there must be none ende of this battell, vntill our Lorde haue throughly reclaimed vs to him, which will not be before he haue taken vs out of this world. Thus much for the first point.

Secondly let vs note, that whereas God discouereth the frailtie of such as forget themselues, as of husbandes that loue not their wiues: the same ought to serue vs for a bridle, to make vs to bethinke ourselues the better. For if a man put away his wife, the bonde which God hadde made is broken. And to whõ is the wrong done? Not to a mortal creature, but to God the author of matiage, who is offended thereat. And wherof commeth it but of this, that the husbande is not rightly minded towardes his wife, to thinke with himselfe, God hath giuen her to me to be as a part of mine owne flesh, and therefore it becõmeth me to maintaine her as mine owne person. When men haue not this consideration with them, they be blinded with beastly lust to put away their wiues. Forasmuch therfore as we see that Gods order is in so dooing confounded and ouerthrowen: let vs bee ashamed to suffer ourselues to be tossed to & fro after ỹ fashion by our leaud affections, specially when we fal to the considering of ỹ which is sayd here, namely *that if a man haue two wiues.* As how? God hath created but one wife for one man: hee hath sayde it with his owne mouth, that it was ynough for a man to haue one helper. He had spirite sufficient ynough to haue created a hundred women if he had lifted: but hee gaue vs to vnderstande that a man ought to holde himselfe contented with one wife, and that it is the order which hee made at the beginning. Nowe then it ought to make vs to quake, when wee see men fall to pushing with their hornes after that fashion against God, breaking the bonde which ought to be holy and inuiolable. Againe, when wee see

Mal. 2. 15.

that

that a man hath so vnhallowed wedlocke by his tossing to and fro: it is a meane to make vs bethinke ourselues. If a man haue a wife, be shee once dead, it is lawefull for him to marrie again: but yet the worlde sees that the second wife will be gathering for her owne children, yea euen with filching & stealing from her husband. And that is a token of Gods curse, & of the wretchednesse that is in vs by reason of sinne. But if a man haue two wiues at once in one house, what a braule will there be? He shall finde himselfe to be as it were drawen in peeces, doe the best hee can. Wee see what befell to our father Iacob. Now then, seeing we knowe all these thinges, let vs learn to submit ourselues to God, trusting that his blessing shalbe vppon vs, if wee liue soberly, mildly, and chastly, as he commandeth. If a husbande liue in peace & concorde with his wife, & loue her as God commandeth him to doe: God will surely blesse him and all his issue after him. We may well hope (say I) that God will make vs to prosper after that manner, if we liue so in awe vnder his brydle. But contrariwise let vs looke to be cursed of him and to haue all maner of cōfusion come vpon vs, if wee will not obey Gods ordinance, as we see that men are hardly subdued, but that their wicked lustes and affections do carry them away continually. Neuertheless let vs be afraid, and let vs learne to beholde ourselues in the examples that are shewed vs heere. The way (say I) to preserue mariage vnuiolated, to maintaine loue and concorde betweene man and wife, is to beare in mind that God hath knit them together in one, and that he hath therewithall promised to be the gouernour of mariages, and to powre out his blessing vpon the; and if we also do put our trust in him, & haue an eye to him; it is certaine that he wil rule vs, and subdue all our wicked affections. Let vs be diligent in doing our duetie, euery man in his calling, & then shall we not only liue in peace and concord during this present life, but also our temporall mariage shall leade vs further both men and women, that is to wit to the holy vnion betweene the sonne of GOD and vs, not onely which he hath stablished already by his bloudshed, but also which shall then come to perfection, when wee be vnited to him in the kingdome of heauen.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God and father, praying him to rid vs dayly more and more of our flesh and of all the corruptions thereof, and to make vs so to feele our sinnes, as wee may at leastwise bee sory that we haue offended him, and desire to be ridde of them continually more and more, proceeding still forewarde in the doctrine of repentance, vntill we be fully brought home vnto him, and that he will vouchsafe so to beare with vs, as in the meane while we may by his holy spirit, be drawen vnto him, euen vntill we be come altogether home vnto him. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not only vnto vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the last of December. 1555.

The Cxxiij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the one and twentith Chapter.

18 If a man haue a sonne that is stubborne & disobedient, so as he will not harken to the voice of his father, nor to the voyce of his mother, and they haue chastised him, and he will not obey them:

19 Then shall his father and mother take him, and bring him to the Elders of their Citie, and vnto the gate of their place,

20 And shall say to the Elders of their Citie: This sonne of ours is stubborne and disobedient, and will not harken to our voyce, he is a ryottour and a drunkard.

21 And all the men of that Citie shall stone him with stones vnto death. And so shalt thou rid away the euill from thee, that all Israell may be afrayde when they heare thereof.

HEere first of all is shewed what their charge & duetie is which haue children: and secondely that when children growe past amendment by their fathers & mothers, they must be rooted out, bycause their doing is against nature, and it is such an infection as prouoketh Gods wrath vpon the whole Countrey. Nowe as touching the first point, it is sayde *that if a man haue a frowarde and stubborne sonne, and that he haue done his indeuour to reforme him*. Here God presupposeth that the father and mother doe performe their duetie; for their children are giuen them with con-

condition that they must yeelde account of them. If a man haue layde the brydle vppon his childes necke, and let him playe the looſe colte: he is worthy to haue his eyes pickt out by him, and all the euill that the childe doeth is to be imputed to his father, becauſe he was negligent in correcting him. Therefore wee ſee heere (as I ſayde afore) that Moſes doeth here warne fathers and mothers to bee diligent in nurturing their children. And if chaſtiſement will not preuaile, their children are to be taken for vtterly vnrecouerable. Wherefore, that wee may benefite ourſelues by this text, let vs marke well, that he to whome GOD giueth children, muſt haue a ſpeciall care to bring them vppe well: for, that is a ſingular treaſure, which ought to be preferred before al the goods in the worlde. Then if a man be ſlothfull, and ſuffer his children to runne at randone: is it not an vnthankefulneſſe that offendeth GOD greeuouſly, ſeeing hee deſpiſeth the benefite and honour which hee had vouchſafed vppon him? Muſt it not needes be that men are ſtarke blinde, when they make more account of ſome other thing in their houſe, than of their owne children? Some haue more care of their kine, Oxen, or Horſes, than of their children. Euery man makes account of his wares, of his Lands, and of his Medowes: and in the meane while they let the chiefe thing alone. Worthy be they to bee ſent to ſchoole to a certaine Heathen man, who beeing in a houſe where all things were as finely furniſhed and dreſſed as could be deuiſed, & finding the good mãs ſonne to bee a ranke ſlouin and euilnurtured, did ſpit in his face, ſaying: I muſt needes ſpitte vppon this filth that is left heere. As for thoſe which are ſo diligent and watchfull about their marchandiſe, their reuenewes, their poſſeſſions, yea and their Cattell, inſomuch as they take more care for their dogges and horſes than for their children; accordingly as wee ſee howe greate Lordes ſette more ſtore by their haukes and houndes than by their children: Doe not ſuch blinde wretches bewraye their beaſtlineſſe, that men may abhorre them as folke too too farre voide of all witte and reaſon? Yet notwithſtanding our Lorde telleth vs heere, that if men or women haue children, they muſt looke to the bringing vppe of them. True it is, that chiefly it is the fathers duetie: but yet muſt not the mother alſo be barred of her right. If a childe be ſo luſtie as to ſay, my mother is a woman; he muſt goe and finde fault with GOD. For wee ſee heere howe the authoritie is giuen as well to the one as to the other, ſo as God will not haue the father alone to haue the gouerning of the childe, but that the mother alſo ſhoulde haue part of the honour and preheminence, and that y child which will not obey his mother, ſhall be taken for paſt grace, & be condemned to death. And therefore both of them ought to do their endeuour to the vttermoſt of their power. For ſeeing that GOD hath honoured the mother, it is good reaſon that ſhee on her ſide ſhoulde ſtreyne her ſelfe to doe her duetie. And it is not ynough for fathers and mothers not to giue their children leaue to doe euill, or not to traine them thereunto: but they muſt alſo nurture them and inſtruct them in goodneſſe, as nature it ſelfe ſheweth. If a father ſay, As for mee, I vpholde not my ſonne in this euill, I miſlike of it, but I can not doe withall: it is a very ſimple excuſe, and it is not meete to be admitted or to be taken in account. For it may be ſayde vnto him, thou art a very blocke; for ſeeing thou art ſet in that place, and he will haue thee to bee the maiſter of thy childe: thou art but a dolt in that thou makeſt no countenaunce when thou ſeeſt him doe amiſſe. So then, lette vs learne that heere GOD requireth a carefulneſſe in fathers and mothers, that they ſhoulde take paines to teach their children, and haue an eye to their behauiour and diſpoſitions: and that if there be any fault in them, they correct it, and be very diligent in that behalfe.

Nowe if onely negligence be ſo condemned though fathers and mothers allowe not of their childrens faultes: what will become of them when they bolſter them in their euilldooinges, and cloke them as much as they can, and are offended when any other bodie goes about to bring them into the right way from their vnthriftineſſe? And yet we ſee that parentes doe ſo. Truely, negligence is too common a thing: for fathers & mothers haue no further regard of their children, than to receiue ſome ſeruice at their hands. In deede they coulde well finde in their heartes that their children were taught what to doe? To thinke vpon their houſhould buſineſſe and dealinges, or to occupy ſome trade that they might put them to no coſt when they came to age, but rather that they might reape ſome profite by them. For theſe wayes there is commonly care ynough. But as for the feare of GOD, honeſtie of converſation, and all other vertues: they neuer thinke vppon them. For (as the prouerbe ſayes,) there is no likelihoode that thoſe thinges will bring gryſt to the mill, and therefore a father can finde in his hart to winke at y vices of his child, ſo long as he ſees no diſaduantage to inſue of it. But there is malice alſo matched with it: inſomuch that if a man goe about to reforme their children, they will ſteppe vp againſt him, and fauour their children, and maintaine them euen againſt GOD. And our Lorde payeth them the wages which they haue deſerued. Wee ſee howe the verieſt pinchpennies in a whole Citie or country, and the verieſt niggardes and vilanes, which would gnawe off their fingers endes for a pennie, or for a dodkinne to white their teeth withall: haue whoremongers to their children, who can not but picke their fathers purſes for a harlotte will alwayes be crauing. The child therefore becomes a robber of his father, and yet the father is contented to maintaine him, and will be angry that any body ſhould chaſtiſe him for it, ſpewing foorth his poyſon like a diuell as hee is. In deede this is no newe thing, for it falles out ſo in all caſes; and likewiſe alſo in this behalfe. Nowe whenſuch thinges are to be

seene, ought we not to beholde Gods vengeance also? Thou art a pinchpenny, thou art so giuen to couetousnesse ỳ thou pinest vpon the ground, thou darest not eate one bit of breade but with greefe: and yet in the meane while thou hast a sonne that filcheth and stealeth from thee to maintaine his whoredome. Because thou art a despiser of God, and a wicked keytife, and wilt needes haue thy sonne to resemble thee, and thy mainteyning of him after that fashion, is a furtherance of his sinne and wickednesse: Therfore doeth God recompence thee according to thy desert. For thou art worthy to haue thy goods deuoured, and to be mocked at of the whole worlde, so as all men may beholde thy shame, & thou thy selfe neuer perceiue it. Herein we see Gods manifest iudgement. Whatsoeuer it be let vs beare in minde this lesson, that if fathers and mothers be negligent, they be as blameworthy before God, as if they had giuen their children leaue to doe all maner of wickednesse. But if they be offended at other men for correcting them, & for indeuoring to bring thẽ backe into the right way: they shew thẽselues to be become starke diuels, and ỳ God hath giuen them vp to a reprobate sense. Therefore let euery of vs for his owne part take warning, to discharge ourselues of his duetie. And let such as haue children take paines to teach them, howbeit not for the reaping of any earthly profite by them. Truly, that may well be an accessarie to it: but it ought not to be the chiefe point. Whervnto then must they haue regarde? Forasmuch as God hath done them the honour to set them in the degree of fathers: they must do their best to yeelde vnto him their children whom he hath put into their handes, & to make true sacrifices of them vnto him, that there may alwayes remaine some good seede to honour him withall. For we see howe ỳ scripture telleth vs oftentimes that Gods name must florish from generation to generation. And that is to the end ỳ hauing serued him all the time of our life, we should indeuour to the vttermost of our power, that there might remain a good ofspring after our decease so as Gods glory might not be quenched nor buried, but ỳ his praise might indure for euer. That (say I) is the marke whereat fathers & mothers ought to aime: insomuch that euen they ỳ haue no children, ought to haue the same minde and desire, yea and to shewe it also by their doings as much as they can possibly. What ought he then to doe, who is bound to it by some speciall reason? When he seeth a mirrour of Gods grace in his house, it is the blessing which the scripture doth so highly commende as who would say, I haue my yong children about me, & God sheweth me as it were with his finger, ỳ he loueth me & hath a care of my house. He hath created mee heere yong children of my seede, after his own image, and they be baptised in his name, to the intent I should bee the more mooued to dedicate them to him, & to frame them to the obeying of him. If a man haue such a teaching, and such a marke to set his eyes vpon, and yet is neuer the more prouoked to doe his duetie: must it not needes be that he is worse than a block? So then let this respect bee well marked, and let men beare it in mind, that it may stirre them vp to do the thing that is tolde them heere, namely to bring vp their children faithfully if they haue any. And moreouer when they see any euill touch or vice in them, let them labour to reforme it, so as the father and mother may protest that they haue done their duetie.

Psal. 128.

Nowe moreouer, heere is expresse mention made of stubbornnesse. For as concerning peculiar faultes, a father and a mother ought to indeuour continually to bring their children into the right way. True it is that God meane not to haue other faultes to goe vnpunished. When a childe hath any way offended hauing a father or mother aliue; it is not meant that hee should be exempted from punishment, vnder colour that he is vnder correction of his father and mother. But heere God speaketh of an other case, which is, that fathers and mothers should bring their children before the Iudge to haue them put to death. Loe, heere is a great extremitie. We knowe well what a heartbreaking it is to a father to see his sonne punished by Lawe, euen though it bee by some other bodyes meane. Then is it not possible for a father to deliuer his sonne to death, vntill he haue assayed all the remedies that can bee: for otherwise it were against kinde. Therefore not without cause is heere mention made of so great pride and stubbornnesse, that the father hauing streyned himselfe and done what hee can to the vttermost to reclayme his childe, perceiueth that it boteth him not to doe any more, and therefore that he must bee faine to deliuer him into the Iudges hande to be put to death. And so wee see that fathers and mothers must proceede in chastising their children, vntill they see them vtterly past hope of amendement. And I adde this, because that parentes are so out of patience sometimes when their children will not be reclaymed at the first choppe, that for very spyte they let them alone: and so their children fall into all excesse. But they ought not to deale so. Howe then? Vntill they finde by experience that their childe is out of measure stubborne, and sheweth himselfe to bee of so frowarde and ildisposed nature, that hee can not be reclaimed the father and the mother ought to proceede still with that nurturing of him which God commaundeth heere. And parentes ought to bee patient in this case: for mieldenesse is a verie right requisite in this behalfe, because that if a father trust to his owne courage, he shall marre his children if he finde any hardenesse in the teaching of them, forasmuch as it is alwayes a painefull thing, and yet GOD will haue men to occupie themselues in nurturing of their children, notwithstanding the painefulnesse thereof. And if they can not frame their children according to their desire, but that they will needes take the brydle in their teeth: truely it can not but turne to the great griefe of the parentes. What say they? Ought not one worde to serue to the childe? Ought he not to be ashamed

ged if there were any droppe of honestie in him? After that manner might a father speake. But howsoeuer the worlde go, yet must not the creature be left at randon, without regarde of winning him to God. Wee must rather vse patience still, as Saint Paul counselleth vs in speaking of corrections. In deede hee telleth vs that we must vse sharpnesse and rigour to moue such as be ouermuch hardened in their naughtinesse, but yet hee woulde haue it matched with meekenesse and patience. Nowe then, what ought fathers to doe? Should they bee so far out of patience, as to giue ouer the correction of their children? No. And therefore let vs learne that in this text fathers for their parte are warned to haue a stay of themselues, when they see their children giuen to lightnesse & vnconstancie, and to misbehaue themselues: and that although they cannot winne them at the first, nor bring them to such meekenesse as to make them take ỹ right way of their owne good will; yet they must consider with themselues howe it is Gods will to keepe them occupied in that kynde of paines taking, and to trye their patience after that manner. Thus yee see one other poynt more which wee haue to marke in this text, where mention is made of such vnreformable stoutnesse and stubbornesse as fathers and mothers doe finde to bee past remedie, in respect of themselues, and therefore are faine to resort to the Iudge.

Nowe let vs come to the euidence that is to be giuen by the father and the mother. It is said, that *they shall come to the gate*; for that was the place of iustice in olde time. So then they shall repaire to the seate of iustice, and *there say, This sonne of ours is stubborne against vs, & froward*, wee haue assayed to reforme him & cannot preuaile with him: *He is a riotour & a drunkarde*: and therefore wee put him now into your handes. Gods will is that vppon this euidence, the chyld shall bee stoned to death. And it is not without cause ỹ he giueth such authoritie to fathers and mothers. For it is not likely that men wilbe so cruell as to spill their own bloud: that were vtterly against nature. Therfore it is good reason that ỹ father & mother shoulde bee beleeued without further scanning or sifting of the matter, seeing the case concerneth their own children. For it were a shaming of the father & mother, to driue them to bring witnesses against their own children, & their dealing by ordinarie maner of iudgement should be a derogation to the degree wherein God hath placed them. And seeing such prerogatiue is giuen to men, they ought to haue the more regard of their duetie. But Gods will is that the father and the mother should be beleeued. And why? Because hee hath printed & ingrauen such an affection naturally in their hearts towardes their children, as that they had leuer to dye than to do them wrong. Nowe if a man bee so wicked and beastly, as to practise any thing falsly against his owne childe, and so shewe himselfe voyde of the louing kindnes which our Lorde hath printed in mankind, and whereof some foote-steppes and sparkes are to be seene euen in the brute beastes: what a thing is it, that a man should so farre ouershoote himselfe? And therefore parentes see here what honour God doth them, in making them to be beleeued against their children: which thing ought to make them to inforce themselues the more to loue them, and to bring them vp with al gentlenes, yea, and (euen in their chastising of the) to vse the rule that Saint Paul giueth vs, which is, that parents shoulde not put their children out of heart by their ouergreat rigour. For dyuers tymes it falleth out, that a chyld is put out of heart, because he sees his father vse no mildnesse towardes him, nor any reason or loue in his doings. Therefore must discretion be vsed in this case. And to bee short, let vs note, that the more honour GOD doeth vs, the more are wee bounde to doe our duelies. As for example, such as are aduaunced to any degree or state of honour, ought to consider that GOD hath bounde them exceedingly, and that they ought to straine themselues the more to doe their duetie: and this belongeth generally to al states. But it is sayde here expressely, concerning fathers and mothers. And therefore such as haue children, must looke that they loue them after such a sorte, as they may well keepe themselues from abusing the power and authoritie which they haue of God: for it is not committed to them to that end. Eph. 6.4.

Also it is declared heere further, that the father and the mother may not accuse their children iudicially, vnlesse they finde them vnreformable. I haue tolde you alreadie that this place speaketh of punishment by death. For if fathers and mothers fall to putting of their children to death, before they haue vouchsafed to take paynes with them to see them well instructed: ought they not to bee coupled with them, as causers of their destruction? A father perchaunce will say, I haue not consented to my sonnes lewdnesse, I haue let him alone. Yea, but shouldest thou haue falne asleepe, when as God appoynted thee to keepe watch? Thou shouldest haue guyded thy childe, so as hee shoulde not haue stepped one pace, but thou shouldest haue beene at hande to direct him; Thou wouldest haue guyded a brute beast, and hast thou made no reckening of thine owne seede? Thou letteſt the creature alone which is formed after the image of God, whereof notwithstanding thou wast appointed to bee the keeper: and thinkest thou to scape by so trifling an excuse. Then if fathers and mothers come to this plunge of shewing their children to haue beene sturdie and vnreformable, if they can not first protest that they haue done their duelies in chastising them, they themselues also shalbee taken for guiltie, forasmuch as it is apparant that it was long of themselues that their children did leaudly, because they did suffer them to runne at randon. By reason whereof if a man bee punished by lawe, it may well bee inquired howe hee hath beene brought vp, and what teaching hee had in his fathers house: and when the mischief procedeth from that spring,

the father ought no more to scape scotfree than the sonne. Thus yee see what wee haue to beare in mynd.

And here is mention made of two vices. *Our sonne is a ryotour & a drunkard.* Doth this import that other vices ought not to be corrected? No, but vnder these two kyndes, God ment to shew that fathers & mothers ought to bring vp their children in all vertue and honestie: For vnder ryoting and drunkennesse, hee meant to comprehende all loosenesse of life. If ryotousnesse bee punished, what is to be doone to other much heynouser thinges? What shall become of whoredome, theft, and periurie? What shall become of such other like things? God then restreyneth not this lawe to these two vyces, but intendeth to shewe generally that all fathers and mothers ought to haue a vigilant eye to the conuersations of their children; and that if they finde any misbehauiour or vnthriftines in them, they must do their indeuour to reforme them, and to bring them back againe from their euill trade. Thus much for one poynt. To bee short, it is all one as if hee had sayd, that if there bee any priuie faultes in children, their fathers and mothers must haue a vigilant eye vppon them, and reclaime them againe, that they growe not desperate. For what a thing were it if a man shoulde marre his chylde, by bearing w him in some particular fault? One euil woulde drawe on a hundred mo after it: and so the chylde should bee lost and vndone. Men therefore must take good heede, and preuent the danger, that their children growe not worse and worse, and that the forgiuing of one fault make them not to fall into another, and so they become euery day worse than other. For if men suffer ryot or drunkennesse in their children, those vyces are ill ynough of them selues alreadie: but yet in the ende a ryotour becomes a swyne, and wilbe altogether vnprofitable. And though there were no more in it but the vntemperance in y abusing of Gods creatures: soothly it were too much. What is drunkennesse? It is a kynde of beastlinesse, that bereaueth men of the grace which God had bestowed vpon them in nature. A ryotour being an ydle and vnprofitable lubber, and hauing spent all vpon bellyfare, must needes fall to stealing when he wanteth wherewith to furnish out his excesse. But a drunkarde is yet worse. The worlde sees these euil inconueniences. Therefore wee had neede to preuent them, and to lay aforehand that such mischiefes come not to passe. Notwithstanding it is shewed vs herewithall, howe men tumble out of one euill into another, vntill they come to deadly ruine. If a chylde bee a glutton or a drunkarde in his youth; well, men will say they be euill touches: but yet shall they be bornwith, and they wil not be thought to be deadly sinnes. But wee see to what poynt children come by y meanes. If that ryotousnesse bee not reformed in them, but that they continue stil in their stubbornes: at length they must bee deliuered into the hande of the iusticer, and bee put to death. Seeing it is so, let vs beware that wee flatter not our selues; but whensoeuer there is any vyce in vs, let vs affaire our selues that if that bee ioyned or matched with it, we shall grow euery day more wilfull and hardharted than other, in so much y a fault which is counted but small before men, and as it were a veniall sinne, wil become an intollerable cryme. Now it is God which seeth so. Therefore let vs learne to examine our selues, and when we perceiue any vyce in vs, let vs doo our indeuour to amende it, for feare lest it throwe vs downe headlong altogether, and finally sinke vs in such sorte as there remaine no mo punishmentes but the last, that is to say, the mortall and deadly punishment. Thus much concerning that poynt.

Nowe let vs treate of the duetie of children towardes their fathers and mothers. In deede it were to bee wished afore all thinges, that children were of themselues so wyse and welladvised, as not to vexe their fathers and mothers in teaching them, and specially in chastising them for their faultes. And soothly, were our nature so well ruled as it ought to bee, a childe woulde not tarry till hee were rebuked or compelled: but rather hee woulde thinke, alas, to what ende liue I in the worlde? And on y other side hee woulde consider thus, God hath brought heere, to be serued and honoured by them, it is gaine to obey my father and mother whom he hath giuen vnto mee to that end. Contrariwise if they reape nothing but sorow by my meanes, it had bene better for mee to haue dyed when I was borne, y the earth might haue couered me vp. After that maner ought a child to thinke. But forasmuch as youth lacketh discretion, & children are not so reformable of themselues as requisite: at leastwise let them suffer themselues to bee gouerned by others. And if their father spye any vyce in them, let them acknowledge it when they bee put in mynde of it, and not onely confesse the misdeede, [but also reforme it.] For it is but hypocrisie when a child leadeth on in his vnthriftinesse, after hee hath made pretence of repentance, by humbling himselfe before his father. If hee change not his conditions, but continue stil in his vnthriftinesse, it is a lying before GOD, and mocking of his father. Therefore if a childe haue done amisse, or see himselfe faulty in any vyce, and God is so gracious to him that hee hath a father or mother: Let him consider thus with himselfe: Go too, God reacheth thee his hande in this behalfe: for what is my father and my mother but the handes of God, and his instrumentes wherewith he inuenteth to serue his turne, to guyde thee into the way of welfare? For when I see my father and my mother goe about to correct my vyces: I must needes set my selfe against GOD, and defye him openly; if my stomache bee not abased and pulled downe, to receiue their correction. And surely, children ought to vnderstande that this superioritie ouer vs is the amiableste in all the worlde: I meane the superioritie which our fathers and mothers haue ouer vs. For although Kinges, Princes,

princes, & magistrates be to be reuerenced: yet is not that kind of superiority so amiable. A man wilbe ashamed to be corrected by his prince, or by his superiour that weeldeth the sword of iustice: but if a father speake to his sonne, yea and beate him too, it is no shame at all for the child to stoupe to him, though the father doe him wrong, or reuile him saying, thou villaine, thou arrechesher, thou graceleſſe knaue, what wilt thou doe? When thou hast killed me with greife and sorrow of mind, thou must needes cal down Gods vengeance vpon thee. When the father vseth such roughneſſe towardes his chylde, and the chyld humbleth himſelfe vnto him, and beareth as it were dumme without replying at all against him; it shalbee a great honour to him to haue receiued correction at his fathers hande, and to haue beene touched by him after that fashion. Now then, sith wee see that this superioritie which God hath giuen to fathers & mothers, is a thing which wee ought euen naturally to haue in estimation: if a chyld nod his head at all the warninges that are giuen him, hauing himſelfe brazen faced and vttesly past shame, so as hee regardeth not what his father and mother say vnto him, but wringe his groyn at them for their putting of him in mynde of his faultes: is he not quyte & cleane past grace? What can a man say more, or hope for at his hande? Now then, let children haue regarde hereof, and let them note also that the honouring of their father and mother is the first commaundement that is giuen in the seconde table, and the onely commaundement of the law that hath any promiſe, I meane speciall promiſe, as S. Paul declareth. And hereby wee bee put in mynd, that such as holde scorne to honor their fathers and mothers, doe not only deſpiſe God, but also shewe their vnbeleefe in mocking at all his promiſes, and in refuſing and casting away of all his blessings wilfully; as if they should say, I passe not for prospering by Gods grace, I will haue of that meane. And for proofe that it is S. God hauing sayde that we must honour our father and mother, addeth, To the ende thou Exod. 20. 12. mayst liue long in the lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee: as if hee shoulde say, Looke not that I shoulde prosper you or blesse you, but vpon this condition, that yee obey your fathers and mothers. Nowe then, as for those that harden themselues, do they not shewe that all is one to them whether they bee depriued of Gods grace and blessing, or no? And that is an vnspeakable vnthankfulnes.

Moreouer, let vs mark also, that wheras God speaketh of the honouring of our fathers & mothers, hee meaneth not of ceremoniousnes, but that children shoulde thinke thus with themselues, God hath giuen mee a father and a mother to the intent I shoulde bee ruled by their hande, and liue vnder their direction. The honour then which a chylde oweth to his father & mother, consisteth not in pretending some ceremonious and counterfet humilitie: but in behauing himſelfe meekely, in suffering them to haue the gouernement of him, and in being tractable to bee reformed when his parentes tell him of his faults. Those bee the things that children ought to regarde, but specially religion. For often times fathers and mothers deserue well to bee disobeyed at their childrens hands. And in deede, they can no skill of serving God, otherwise than by disobeying their fathers and mothers. If there bee any man so wicked, that hee woulde haue his sonne giuen to craftinesse, to lasciuiousnesse, to vnthankfulnesse, to periurie, and to treecherie: what a thing were that? And yet we see a number of fathers, which haue beene despysers of God all their life long, and all their seeking is to bring vp their children in their owne schoole. A father will say to his sonne, I renounce thee if thou bee not like me. Such cursed wordes shall we heare men speake: In so much that hee which hath beene a whoremonger and infected a whole countrye with his filthinesse all the time of his life, or a blasphemer, or a drunkarde; will needes haue his sonne to bee like himſelfe. Nowe in such cases children must disobey their parents: for otherwise they cannot obey God. And therefore S. Paul speaking of the honor and obedience that children should yeeld to their parentes, addeth this exception or afterspeeche, *in the Lorde*. For Eph. 6. 1. God must euer haue the vpper hande. And for the same cause also did I say erewhyles, that the honour which is required in this commaundement of the lawe, ought then cheefely to be put in practise, when fathers and mothers doe their indeuour to trayne vp their children well, and to correct their vyces. Then must the children in any wise obey, assuring themselues that if they admit not both the warnings and the chastisements of their parents, and reforme themselues thereafter when they heare their vices so condemned: they shewe themselues to be disobedient both to God and to the order of nature. Notwithstanding to the intent that children excuse not themselues, and beare themselues in hande that it is a light fault to disobey their parentes; heere God condemneth such disobedience to death. It is God that giueth this sentence, and not man. And hee sayeth that it is an vnpardonable fault, when a childe is so hardhearted, that his fathers and mothers correctiō cannot preuaile with him. For why? wee must euer come backe to this point, that such a one is as a monster: and whatsoeuer is against nature wee ought to lothe & abhorre it. And no doubt but Gods curse & vengeance would bee kindled against vs, if we should suffer the thing that is against nature. Nowe if a child wil not heare his father and his mother, when God vouchsafeth to giue him gouernours at home to tell him his faultes: his despysing of them is a manifest despysing of God. For why? God hath printed his marke vppon the father and mother, insomuch that if there bee any religion, the same must bee acknowledged in the person of the father and of the mother. Euen the very Heathen had a common saying concerning the obedience which they yeelded to God and to their parents. As if they should say, (as nature had taught them)

that fathers & mothers beare the image of God in this world, & ẏ he which hath any religion in him, & acknowledgeth any soueraine maiestie & submitteth himself therto: must also needs obey his father & mother. The verie heathen spake after ẏ maner, it was their common style. Nowe then, if we receiue not this instruction, must it not needes follow, ẏ wee be too destitute of wit? Greatly ought we to be ashamed, to be taught in the schoole of the Heathen, to knowe our dutie. Therefore (as I saide afore) let children knowe that it is no light fault nor easie to be pardoned, when they bee disobedient to their fathers and mothers. For why? They had the instinct of nature, which they ought to haue followed. And therefore it is an vnpardonable cryme to disobey a mans father & mother, according whereunto it is sayde in another place, He that smyteth his father or his mother, shall dye ẏ death without fauour. If one strike another man: well, he shalbe punished for it: but if he beate his father or his mother, it is as much as if hee had killed a man: else there were no order or reason in nature. And why? For let vs alwayes haue an eye to the grounde which God hath set downe in nature: namely, that it is all one as if a man woulde confounde heauen and earth together, when hee setteth himselfe so against his father and mother. And this serueth to hold children in awe, if they haue any sparke of myldnesse in them, and that they bee not vtterly vnreformable, ſo as Satan possesseth them wholly. That is the thing which we haue to remember more vpon this text.

Exod. 21.15

However, forasmuch as the time wil not suffer mee to speake so much therof as were to bee spoken, wee will nowe come to the conclusion: which is, that if the disobedience which is committed against the fathers of this worlde, bee so grieuously punished by Gods lawe: what shall become of men when they will not heare the voyce of their heauenly father? True it is that heere God speaketh of the corrections which proceede from himselfe: for when a man nurtureth his chylde, he is Gods minister in that behalf, and his voyce is not the voyce of man but of God. But yet when as God declareth after a more manifest fashion, that it is hee which gaue his lawe, so as wee haue his holy writte, where wee may heare his heauenly voyce: that is a voice of more authoritie, than the speaking of a father or a mother at home in their house. Againe, wee come to the Church, where Gods worde is preached vnto vs, and God hath dedicated that place and the pulpit to deliuer out his worde to be heard, as though he were there in his owne person. Seeing then that Gods worde is so set downe vnto vs in the holy scripture, and so preached vnto vs: are they not to bee reiected as monsters, and in no wise to bee suffered, which disobey the same and make no account of it? And if men beare with them, is it not a procuring of Gods wrath? When it hath lurked neuer so long among vs, in the ende it must needes bewray it selfe, and wee must feele to our cost what it is to haue maintayned euill willingly and wittingly. So then, let vs alwayes make this comparison. Seeing that God will bee acknowleged in his creatures according to the degree which hee hath giuen to euery of them: and seeing also that hee will haue them to bee obeyed which are in preheminence, so as the rest must receiue their correction and submit themselues to them: it is much more reason, that hee himselfe shoulde bee heard and obeyed, when hee speaketh with his owne holy mouth, which thing hee doeth when wee reade the holy scripture, and when we heare his word preached. For inasmuch as he hath set this order in his Church, that they which preache his worde should represent the person of his owne: can wee say it is a light fault to haue despysed Gods maiestie, and to haue made no reckoning of the hearing of his worde? Then let vs looke well to it.

Finally, let vs marke how it is said here, *Thou shalt roote out the euill from thee, and all Israel shall heare thereof and be afrayd.* Here our Lord repeateth that againe which wee haue heard afore,) is, that when outragious crimes are fostered among vs, it is the next way to infect vs, & we see there needeth not much leauen to make sower a whole lump of dow; besides that we be tolde it by Gods word, experience also doth shew it vs. And therefore let Magistrates bee vigilant in rooting out wickednesse, yea and in punishing mennes faultes as they deserue. If there bee neede of mannes correction, let it bee had, and let this extremitie of putting men to death bee alwayes preuented. But if the cryme be vnpardonable, then must seueritie and rigour be vsed. For if wickednesse bee willingly fostered, men shall see in the ende what they shal haue wonne by it. Also let vs take warning therewithall, to benefite our selues by the examples which we see before our eyes; that when any punishment is executed by order of lawe, wee may vnderstande that God teacheth vs at other mennes cost, and therefore wee ought to haue regarde thereof. Moreouer if Magistrates and Iudges bee called here of God, yea, and expressely commaunded by him to punish the disobedience that is committed against earthly fathers and mothers: let vs mark, ẏ whensoeuer there is any manifest contempt of God, any irreligiousnes, or any withstanding of his worde, those things are much lesse to be suffered: and that if they be borne with, it is rank treason to God ward, which he will not leaue vnpunished. And therefore let all Magistrates and all such as are set in place of gouernement to execute iustice, vnderstande that God commendeth his owne honour to them aboue all thinges, and that they must bee vigilant in that case chiefely, yea, and that after such a sort, as al of vs together may shew by our doings, that our whole desire is that God should reigne among vs, & that we would not haue his words to be despised and scorned, but rather reuerenced as it ought to bee. Wherefore let vs shewe this zeale, if wee will haue our Lorde to blesse and prosper vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of

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our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe so to tame vs, that whereas wee bee inclyned to much wretchednesse and corruption, at leastwise wee may not become frowarde and vnreformable: but that when wee bee warned by his worde, wee may euery of vs humble our selues, and quietly take the yoke which hee layeth vpon our shoulders, and patiently beare the corrections which he layes vppon vs by men, specially by those to whome hee hath giuen the charge to guyde and gouerne vs, so as euery of vs acknowledging himselfe to bee subiect to his superiours, may yeeld God his due obedience, and in no wise tary till wee bee compelled, and spurred, but receiue the warnings that are giuen vs, (from whence so euer they come) as the warnings of God, knowing that all trueth is of him, and that by that meanes also hee procureth our saluation. That it may please him to grant this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all nations and people of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the first of Ianuarie 1556.

The Cxxiiij. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the one and twentith Chapter.

22 If a man haue committed an offence worthie of death, and is put to death for it, and thou hast hanged him on tree:

23 His dead bodie shall not hang all night vppon the tree, but thou shalt burie him the same day: For the curse of God is on him that is hanged. And therefore defyle not thou the land which the Lorde thy God giueth thee to inherit.

THE lawe that I haue rehearsed here, containeth two parts. The one is, that when an offender is executed by order of lawe; men must not bee ashamed of the hanging of his bodie. Why so? For a witnesse that his death is a thing neither against God, nor against right: but rather that for the mainteining of ciuil gouernment among mankynd, it is requisite that misdeedes should bee punished, as wee haue seene already that the euill must bee rooted out from among the people. And the seconde parte is, that the dead bodie (for all that) shall not hang vpon the gibbet aboue one day, because it striketh a horror into men and maketh them dismayed, to see a mannes bodie so hanging in the ayre. God therefore willed that men shoulde content themselues with it for one day in respect of iustice, and that afterwarde the bodye shoulde be buryed. In deede it is true that this lawe was peculiar to the Iewes, and that at this day wee bee no more bounde to it than to the ceremonies: it is now set at libertie. But yet doth the doctrine thereof continue still. The vse of the lawe is vtterly abolished: but yet must wee haue an eye to the ende wherefore God commanded it, and apply the same to our learning.

First of all then let vs marke, that although it bee a dreadfull thing to put a man to death, because hee is created after the image of God: yet notwithstanding, when it is done vppon iust cause, and by those to whome God hath committed the sworde of iustice: it must needes bee done, and wee must not esteeme it, as an vnkindly thing. For what a thing were it, if faultes shoulde scape vnpunished? It were better for vs to bee wylde beastes. So then, seeing that mankynde cannot bee maintayned, but by rigour of iustice, and by the punishing of such as haue disturbed the common order: it must not bee taken for cruelnie or for a defacing of Gods image, when a man is put to death. All such manner of allegations must bee set aside. For God him selfe speaketh and telleth vs, that wee ought to bee so little ashamed to put an offender to death; that his body must bee layde out to the sight of euery man, and thereupon God is to bee praised, for hauing so great and so fatherly care of men, as to roote out the person that is a disturber of the peace, and to cut off those as rotten members which might marre all the residue, that the rest might abyde in safetie.

To bee short, wee haue here a maintenance of the iustice that is executed by magistrates, in punishing mennes faultes and misdeedes euen vnto the death. Iustice is not to be abhorred or misliked, because a man is sent to the gallowes. Well may wee bee afrayde when wee see such examples before vs: but yet must wee also commende and reuerence iustice. For why? Yee see here howe God alloweth and vpholdeth the punishing of offenders, as a thing acceptable to him; and that he will haue the verie heauen to bee a witnesse thereof, by hanging vp the body vppon a gibbet, and hee will haue all the elementes to bee there also, to saye; No, no, yee must not spare them: God hath appoynted that this execution should bee done, and commanded the same, and therefore you ought to obey him. For if that were not, wee shoulde come to vtter confusion, and God hath shewed vs that wee ought not to bee so wise as to incounter his will. I tell you this is a lesson verie behoofefull for vs in these dayes.

Although this lawe was but for the outwarde man; yet was it Gods will that the instruction thereof shoulde indure for euer. And in very deede it hath continued among men, euen by nature. For the Heathen, (who had not the lawe of Moses) fayled not to followe the same order: insomuch that whensoeuer any man was executed by iustice; it was set foorth for an example. Whereby wee may perceiue, that God hath grauen this principle in mennes heartes, that the executions which are done by persons of authoritie, and by such as are in office & haue the charge committed vnto them, are not to be euil spoken of, but rather that wee ought to cõmend them for obeying God, and for doing the thing that belonged to their degree. For if a Iudge beeing armed with the sworde, doe spare the partie that hath committed a wicked deed: he is as blameworthie before God, as if hee had
Prou.17.15 condemned a guiltesse person, as Salomon auoweth. And this serueth to ouerthrowe the fantasticall opinions of such as say that among Christians no man ought to be put to death, because the like rigour is not as was vnder ỹ lawe. Verily as who shoulde say that God had changed his mynde and resigned his office: for wee knowe that hee is Iudge of the worlde for euer. And although hee reserue the execution of that office till the last iudgement, and haue committed that charge to our Lorde Iesus Christ: yet is it his wil that there should be some resemblance of iustice euen in this earthly life. True it is, that it shall not come to perfection heere, and that the most parte of such as shalbee condemned at the latter day, shall in this worlde scape the handes of the earthly Iudges: but yet for al that, howe soeuer the worlde goe, God will not haue inordinate looseneſſe to reigne, so as men might do what they list, and al crymes scape vnpunished. Therefore his will is that vengeance should be executed by those into whose hands hee hath put the sworde of iustice, as sayeth S. Paul in the thirteenth to the Romanes, where hee telleth vs that Gods arming of them after that sorte is not for naught, hee will not haue them to bee but as a shadowe to scarre babes, and to bee vtterly voyde of power: but hee will haue Iudges to knowe that they bee bounde to punish misdeedes. And so farre off is it that their so doing shalbee imputed to them for euill or sinne; that God hath shewed by this ceremonie of the lawe, that all the Elementes of the worlde accept it and allowe of it as witnesses to God, as who shoulde say that the body hanging in the ayre is as a solemne Record that such execution is not to bee condemned, neyther ought the magistrates to bee desirous to hyde it as though they were murderers of such as they cause to bee put to death, but rather to set them out for an example, as who woulde say, wee haue done a sacrifice vnto God, it is our office, it is our charge, thus behoueth it vs to doe: for if wee shoulde spare men in this behalfe, wee shoulde sell that good cheape which is none of ours, that is to saye; Gods iustice. For it is committed vnto vs vppon condition that wee must yeeld account thereof. Thus much concerning the first poynt.

Nowe there is also a seconde poynt, which is that the body must not hang in the ayre aboue one day. And that is, because such sights doe in trueth make men afrayde. Also it was Gods will that one dayes recorde shoulde suffice among his people, & that they should not keepe the corps there any longer. But I haue told you alreadie that wee be no more bounde thereto by necessitie. In some countryes they haue deuised certaine brotherhoods, who should goe and take down the bodyes from the Gibbets & burie them. And truely that was a foode deuotion, for they knewe not wherefore they did so. The Iewes also were so bewitched with their owne dotages, that they thought that the burying of all of them commaunded in this place did concerne the welfare of their soules. Likewise the Heathen imagined that the soules of men were wandring and straying heere and there, vntil their bodyes were buryed. But these are doteges of the diuels owne deuysing, to turne away men continually to a multitude of lyes. Gods care is rather of vs which are alyue, as though hee meant to set a meane betweene the rigour of Iustice and the gentleneſſe which ought to bee among vs. This meane therefore is well woorthie to bee marked; for wee euer fleete aside to some extremitie. In shunning crueltie, wee become cowardly, and haue no more regarde of Iustice, but woulde haue all faultes forgiuen, and that men might haue free leaue to do all manner of mischiefe without correction. On the other side, in mynding to bee seuere, we run in daunger of being too seuere. God therefore appoynteth a meane: which is, first of all, that we should punish the offences that deserue death. And secondly to the ende that Iustice shoulde bee had in honour, and that we should not surmise any reprochefulneſſe in it; hee will haue the offenders bodies hoysed vp into the aire for men to looke at, as it were in way of warrantie ỹ whē a magistrate punisheth an offence, he offereth vp a sacrifice acceptable in heauen, & consequently which ought to be well taken on earth. Yet for all this, hee will not haue vs to be too hardhearted, but alwayes to reserue ful some pitifulneſſe and compassion. And when iustice is so approoued, he will haue the body to bee buryed, yea, euen remooued from of the earth as an infection. For why? So long as a mannes body hangeth vppon the gallowes, there are two thinges seene: the one is, that God hath well prouided for mankinde, in disdeyning the execution of iustice, and that malefactours should not bee spared. That is one poynt. Another is, that men may say thus with themselues, Lo here is a wicked deede done: for these are tokens that the land hath bin defiled. Therefore when a bodie is so hanged vp, it is a signe of the defyling of the lande by the committing of some robberie, murther, or other haynous cryme. When it is so, let this also bee euer marked. God therefore intendeth to shewe that where iustice is executed the fault is

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forgiuen, and the countrey ſtandeth no longer charged therewith, but his wrath is pacified: And as though the miſdeede had bin ſpared, he will haue the body buried. Thus yee ſee howe the executing of iuſtice vpon offenders and wicked doers, and the cutting off of leaudeneſſe, is a warraut that Gods vengeance ſhall not light vpon the Lande. Nowe then wee ſee in effect what God ment by his Lawe. Alſo we ſee howe the inſtruction continueth ſtill vnto vs, though we haue not the vſe of the Lawe it ſelfe, becauſe the Lawe commaunded a thing whereunto wee be no more bounde ſince the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. So to be ſhorte, this doctrine is not vnprofitable: for wee knowe Gods meaning, which concerneth vs as well as the Iewes.

But nowe muſt wee come to the chiefe point that is to be gathered of this text. For whereas our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was hanged on tree, it happened not by happe hazarde. Truely the Iewes deſired that he might be crucified, which in thoſe dayes was the moſt horrible, reprochfull yea and painefull death that could be. For the hanging of Chriſt vpon the tree, was not after the maner that is ſpoken of heere. Such as were ſtoned among the Iewes were alſo hanged vp vppon a gibbet after they were dead: and although they were not ſtrangled, nor beheaded, but ouerwhelmed with ſtones: yet were their bodyes taken and hanged vppe, that all others might take example at them. But our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was crucified, yea euen as though he had beene a cutthrote, after the ſame maner that men lay murtherers nowadayes vppon the wheele. And (as I ſayde) that was a verie cruell kinde of death. Neither was it doone by the Lawe of Moſes, but by cuſtome of the Romanes who raigned at that time in Iewrie. Yet notwithſtanding, the ſonne of God was hanged on tree. And the Iewes regarded it not, but cryed out to haue him crucified. Alſo when Pylate condemned him thereto, his meaning was not to put him to it, as in reſpect of the reprochfulneſſe thereof before God: but God gouerned it in ſuch ſort by his ſecret prouidence, that Ieſus Chriſt was accurſed when he hung vppon the croſſe, according to that which had beene ſpoken of him afore. And that is Saint Paules meaning. For in telling vs that we be ſette free from the curſe of the Lawe, hee ſayeth that our Lorde Ieſus bare it in his body by being hanged vpon tree. Alſo it is the ſame thing that Saint Peter ment in ſaying that he bare our ſinnes vpon the tree. And otherwiſe this ſaying of the prophet Eſay had not beene fulfilled, that the chaſtiſement of our peace was layde vpon him, ſo as hee was faine to beare our puniſhment, whereby we might be reconciled vnto GOD. And in the foreſayde text which I alledged out of Galathians, S. Paul treateth of two things. He ſayeth that becauſe wee can not attaine to righteouſneſſe, but by fulfilling the Lawe in all pointes, and by being diſcharged before GOD: it behoued our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt to bee ſubiect to the Lawe, to the intent that his obedience might nowe be imputed vnto vs, and God accept thereof as though we brought the like obedience of our owne. When we ſpeake of being iuſtified before God, howe is that to be vnderſtoode? Verily that we ſhould obey the thinges that God commaundeth vs in his Lawe. For the righteouſneſſe that hee ſpeaketh of is, that he which doeth thoſe thinges ſhall liue thereby. Leuit. 18.5. Then muſt our life be ruled altogether after the will of GOD, and then ſhall wee be taken for righteous before him. Is there nowe ſo much as one man to be founde, which commeth anie thing neere this obſeruation of the Lawe, and that with ſuch vncorrupt ſoundneſſe? No. The holieſt Saintes that euer haue beene, were farre off from ſuch perfection. Then are we all diſappointed of righteouſneſſe, ſo as we can not in any wiſe ſtande in Gods fauour. But yet are we righteous in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And why? For he beeing the ſouereigne king in whome there was no bondage nor ſubiection, did willingly ſubmitte himſelfe to the Lawe, and beare the yoke thereof for vs: for we knowe that he performed the will of GOD his father in all pointes to the full. And ſo by that meane we be taken for righteous in Ieſus Chriſt: Why ſo? Becauſe hee was obedient. Yea and that obedience of his was not for himſelfe; there was no ſubiection in him, neither was hee bounde to any thing: for he is altogether aboue the Lawe: therefore it followeth that he was obedient for vs. And therefore when wee flee to him for ſuccour, our heauenly father admitteth vs as if wee brought perfect obedience with vs. For looke what is wāting & miſſing in ourſelues, we go to ſeeke it like poore beggers in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and al is applyed vnto vs by the vertue of faith. Marke that for one point.

But Saint Paul addeth, that foraſmuch as we bee all accurſed by the Lawe, our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt was faine to beare our curſe. And he bare it (ſayeth he) for he was hanged vpon tree. And whereas the Lawe of God had ſayd, Curſed ſhall he be that hangeth on tree: the ſame was verified in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And S. Paul had an eye both to that which hath bin, and to that which we ſhall ſee hereafter, namely, Curſed ſhall the man bee which performeth not all the things y are written here. Ye ſee how God hath declared his will. Thereupon he promiſeth that whoſoeuer keepeth his Lawe, ſhalbe taken for righteous and obtein the endleſſe life. But yet on the contrarie part he telleth vs, y if a man faile in any one point, he ſhalbe curſed & forlorne without remedie. Now let euery of vs looke into himſelfe. Was there euer any man y hath not failed many wayes? It is ſayd y no man ſhalbe founde righteous in his ſight. And againe in an other place, Lorde, if thou looke ſtreitely vpon ſin, who can abide it? Who is able to ſhew himſelfe before thy iudgement ſeate? Needes muſt all men be confounded: and not for ſome one ſin, but for a number of wicked deedes ſhall we be put to ſhame, if god do once enter into account with vs. Then are we all vndone & damned as in reſpect of the Lawe, there is no more

Iames 2.10. Pſal. 143. 2. Pſal. 130. 4.

Deuit. 8. 5. remedy, Cursed shal he be which doeth not all those thinges. Alas, we be neuer able to doe the hundredth part of them. I say, although God guide vs vnto goodnes by his holy spirit, yet do we faile through our owne infirmitie, and there is euer great want in vs. Ye see then that we be vndone and past hope of recouery, vnlesse the curse be abolished. And that was done in the person of our Lord Iesus Christ, who as he hath performed all righteousnesse, so hath he also receiued the curse to himselfe which lay vppon our heades, & he hath borne it in his person, to the intent that henceforth we should be free from it. As how? For he was not hanged vpon tree without the prouidence of God his father: wee must alwayes looke backe to y point. For as for these rascals which goe about to deface Gods prouidence, they shew that they neuer knew what religion meaneth; nay they be mastife dogges, yea and much worse than dogs, beleeuing no more in God than brute beastes, as the worlde knoweth. Notwithstanding forasmuch as God hath giuen his sonne to death, as the scripture beareth witnesse, that he hath so loued the worlde that he hath not spared his only sonne, but hath deliuered him to death for vs: Let vs assure ourselues that God ment to shewe vs to our faces, that he layde vpon him the curse due to vs, so as the thing which we hadde deserued was layde vpon the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Therefore when wee beholde Iesus Christ hanging on the tree, wee knowe that hee hath taken our bondage vpon him, euen to the intent that wee should not be any more bounde to the curse of the lawe, but free, and that the sayde threate should no more take place to condemn vs, Cursed shall hee bee which performeth not all those thinges. For why? When wee flee for refuge to the death & passion of our Lord Iesus Christ, our sinnes are wiped out, God layeth them not any more to our charge, they be quite & cleane done away. And why so? Because the curse lyeth not any longer vppon the transgressors, when they trust and rest vpon the satisfaction that was offered vnto God the father, by him that was ordeined to that office.

Here it might be demanded, whether Christs hanging vppon the tree, and his beeing accursed before GOD, was not a derogation to his maiestie? Surely so farre off was it from diminishing or defacing of his glorie, that it is rather the chiefe thing wherefore wee are to magnifie him. For we ought to be euen rauished at the inestimable loue of God towardes vs, in that he vouchsafed that his sonne, who is the heade of the Angelles, before whome all knees ought to bowe, and vnto whom all creatures ought to do homage, should so humble himselfe euen to the loweste depthes, and beare our curse. When wee see that our Lorde Iesus Christ hath so forgotten himselfe, and had so litle regarde of himselfe, that for very feruent loue which he bare vnto vs, he tooke vpon him the curse wherewith wee were all ouerwhelmed, receiuing it wholely to himselfe: is there any heart so harde, which ought not to cliue at the sight thereof? Againe, how ought we to be inflamed to glorifie our Sauiour, who hath abased himselfe so farre to saue vs? Moreouer, let vs marke also, that hee cursed not for all that, to be blessed of God, according to the common title which was giuen among the Iewes. And in very deede hee is so named in the hundreth and eighteenth Psalme [where it is sayde], Blessed bee hee that commeth in the name of the Lorde. It was a prophesie concerning the redeemer of the worlde that had beene promised. Nowe seeing that God auoweth him to be blessed; howe came it to passe that hee is accursed, and that the curse should take place in his person? These two agree very well. For whereas Christ became as it were accursed; not onely before men but also before God: it was because he was our suretie, and represented vs, setting himselfe in our steede. Notwithstanding he reteined still the thing that was due to himselfe, to wit; to be the blessed of the father, who will have him to bee knowen so to be, and that all the worlde should beare witnesse of y blessednes. For the same should have beene spoken by the people, euen as wee see that the children did sing the same song at the entrance of our Lord Iesus Christ into Ierusalem. Then was it requisite that this blessing which was peculiar to himselfe, shoulde bee knowen to the whole worlde. And so our Lorde Iesus Christ was not made so accursed, as y the blessednes which was giuen vnto him could perish, and not continue alwayes vnappaired.

Moreouer we must come to that which Saint Paule sayeth to the Colossians. For there he Colos. 2. setteth out the crosse of our Lorde Iesus Christ vnto vs, as a Chariot of Tryumphe, saying that our Lorde Iesus hath defaced and cancelled the handewriting that was against vs, and finally, nayled it to his crosse. The Lawe hadde shewed Gods wil: And by meanes thereof it behoued all men to knowe themselues to bee indangered vnto God, and to feele themselues to be accursed as I haue shewed before. But what remedy was there to comfort poore sinners? In deede God ordained sacrifices and washinges and such other like thinges: but were they able to doe the deede? When men came to doe sacrifice, it was tolde them in deede that their sinne should be wiped away. Yea, but that was not by the power of the brute beastes which was offered at the Altar. Could the bloud of an Oxe, a calfe or a Heckfer clense away the spottes of the soule? We knowe that the bloud of such thinges is not onely corruptible, but also filthy. Therefore it could not satisfie Gods Iustice, it came farre short of it. Againe, when a man washed himselfe, it is true that he hadde a promise: but was that promise tyed to the water? We knowe that water is a transitorie element, and can not atteyne to the soule to clense away the filth thereof. To be short, both the Sacrifices and the washinges which GOD hadde ordeined in the Lawe, were a kinde of renewing of the bond which all sinners haue ingrauen in their consciences. Like as if an offender shoulde be taken and made to confesse all his misdeedes, and

haue all his former confessions rehearsed vnto him, to the intent to put him in minde of them: euen so was Gods meaning towardes the Iewes in willing them to take water at their going to the Temple, as if they should haue sayde, wee acknowledge and protest before heauen and earth, that we be defiled so as there is nothing but vtter infection in vs, and y we haue neede to be washed. Againe, came they once at the Altar: there a sacrifice was offred vp, an innocent brute beast was put to death, and that was as a lookinglasse to sette before our eyes, that wee bee worthie of death, and not of bodilie death onely, but also of euerlasting death before GOD, and to be plunged into hell. Ye see then howe the sacrifices and such other like thinges were as matters of recorde and authoritie, to assure all sorts the more of their sinnes, and to conuict them of the same, and to make them the more to abhorre their misdeedes. But was Iesus Christ hanged on tree? Saint Paule sayth that in so doing he tooke vppon him the bonde that was against vs, that is to say, all the thinges whereto the Lawe bounde vs, all the fetters, all the condemnations, and all the sentences that serued to put vs to shame, and to bewray our lewdenesse. All these thinges tooke he vpon him, and cancelled them, as if a man shoulde take a handewriting and teare it in peeces, to make it of no force by defacing it after that fashion, and euen so dele our Lorde Iesus Christ, with vs. And Paule addeth there immediatly, that Christ tryumphed ouer all our enemies; so as the deuill was ledde in tryumphe. As howe? Ye see that Iesus Christ was put to the vttermost reproch that could be in being hanged vpon the crosse, and (as the prophet Esaie sayth) he was so disfigured that folke vouchsafed not to acknowledge him for a man, but all men abhorred him. And where is then this tryumphe? Although the sacrifice which he offered vp imported a curse in it at the first sight: yet ceased it not to yeelde a verie good sent before GOD as the scripture termeth it. And therefore our Lorde Iesus tryumphed against Satan, against Sinne, and against all our enemies. To be short, let vs marke, that Iesus Christ hath so borne our curse, that he hath abolished it quite and cleane. Because hee was the fountaine of all glorie, it must needes be that the condemnation which he tooke vpon him on our behalfe, is quite and cleane discharged by his power. In like case standes it with his death. He suffered death, but was he ouercome of it? No, but hee did rather abolish death. And the very staye and trust of our righteousnesse, is the diuine power of his resurrection, as wherein hee hath shewed himselfe to haue gotten the vpper hand of death, accordingly as Saint Peter sayeth in the thirde chapter of the Actes, that it was vnpossible for him to be holde downe by the sorrowes of death, because he had ouercome them, and by that meanes hadde purchased righteousnesse for vs. Nowe wee see that whereas Iesus Christ is sayde to haue beene forlorne and accursed for our sakes, it did so litle abace his maiestie, that we ought the rather to magnifie his glorie in that behalfe; assuring ourselues that we shall no more be accursed, because hee hath done away our curse, and borne it in his owne person.

Also let vs marke therewithall, that notwithstanding his being accursed before God, yet he ceased not to be Gods welbeloued sonne, according to this saying vttered by the heauenly father himselfe, This is my deerebeloued sonne in whome I am wel pleased, and in whome I am pacified. And serued that but for one instant? Nay it was to continue for euer. How is it then that Iesus Christ was accursed, seeing that the father was pacified by him? And that hee was not only well liked himselfe, but also the meanes to reconcile the whole worlde. He is our peace and although through our corruption of nature GOD hate vs, yet are we beloued in the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ; and howe is it then possible that he should be accursed before God? They agree both very well. For (as I haue sayde afore) Iesus Christ hath borne our curse, yea and he hath borne it in such wise as GOD ceaseth not to loue him still for all that. And this curse is so abolished, that the reproch of his crosse is turned into glorie and tryumph; because it is vnpossible that the sonne of GOD should not continue euerlastingly the same that he was afore. True it is that he was somewhat abased for a while; but yet it behoued him to be also crowned with honour and glorie, as it is now come to passe. After this maner must we put this text in vre.

Nowe therefore, forasmuch as wee perceiue that GOD hath set downe heere a Lawe for the ciuill gouernement of the Iewes: let vs assure ourselues also, that hee knewe well in his owne euerlasting counsell, what should come to passe, namely that his sonne should be hanged on tree: for hee had so ordeined it. And why? To giue vs the surer grounde of our saluation. For had not our Lord Iesus Christ borne our curse after a visible fashion, wee might still hang wauering and in doube of it. And whereas it is sayde, that we be reconciled vnto God by his death, and that he hath satisfied all our debtes, so as the deuill can not henceforth any more accuse vs, but that wee haue our defence for him, that is to witte, that our sinnes are wyped away: notwithstanding the reporte of all this vnto vs, yet might we still be in perplexitie, and stande scanning after this manner: Yea but howe bee wee sure of that? Lette vs open our eyes and looke vppon the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ, yea and let vs looke vpon it in such wise, as wee may vnderstande that euen from the beginning GOD ordeined the tree of the Crosse to bee a recorde of cursing. Nowe then, whereas it is sayde, Cursed shall he be which performeth not all the things that are contained in the Lawe: therewithall GOD sendeth vs to his onely sonne, and would haue vs to knowe that he was hanged on tree to y intent to be accursed. As how? Was he cursed in his owne person? No, but for our sakes.

Yet

Iohn.19.

Matt.3.17.

Heb.2.9.

Act.2.23 & 4.28.

Yet notwithstanding, we may nowe glorie, that the curse of the Lawe hath no more power ouer vs, but that he hath discharged vs thereof. After this manner ought wee to put this text in vre.

Howbeit let vs marke by the way, that it is not by the vertue of the wood, that wee be so blessed before God by meane of our Lorde Iesus Christ, as the papistes brutishly beare men in hand. For when they beare the crosse spoken of, they be tyed to it with a deuilish superstition, yea and with so brutish a superstition as is pitie to see, that they should leaue Iesus Christ, and fall to worshipping of a peece of wood. But when the scripture speaketh of ỹ curse which our Lord Iesus bare in his body to set vs free withall: it setteth before vs two thinges. First, that when we looke vpon the wood, wee should take it as a token of the curse, and thereat conceiue a terrour in ourselues: for the thing of it selfe is horrible. Thus much concerning the wood. And therefore as for all the crosses which the Papistes set vp, what betoken they else but that they bring Gods curse continually vpon themselues? It appeareth manifestly that they despise the sacrifice which was offered once for all by the sonne of God. Wee be reconciled to him for euer, and they come to bring vp ỹ curse againe, as though they were desirous to haue their sinnes abide vpon their heades for euer, without any defacing or dooing of the away by Gods mercy, through the power of the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And therefore looke howe many crosses there are in the Popedome, so many recordes are there that crye out for Gods vengeance against those wretched vnbeleeuers, which content not themselues with the amends that was made for them when our Lorde Iesus Christ indured the curse in himselfe which was due vnto vs. But knowe we once this curse? If we resort to Iesus Christ, there we finde that the same curse is quite and cleane wiped out & done away. After what manner? By the wonderfull power of God, euen after the same fashion that we knowe that God made light to spring out of darkenesse in the creation of the worlde: and is it possible that light shoulde come out of darkenesse? Surely this chaunge is not to be done by man, nay, mannes wit can not comprehende it. But God ment to shewe that the meanes which he hath to worke by, doe farre exceede all ỹ euer we can conceiue. And therefore let vs marke wel, that he which at the beginning of the world turned darkenesse into light, yea and made light to spring out of darkenesse: was also able to turne cursednes into blessednesse, in the person of his onely sonne. And that is the thing which I ment in saying afore, that forasmuch as hee is life and the very fountaine of life, therefore he abolished death, and not without cause. In deede Iesus Christ yeelded himselfe to death; but after what manner? Was it in such sorte that he ceased in the meane while to be the life of the worlde? Nay: euen therein did he shewe himselfe most of all to be the life of the worlde. Verily he was at the creation: For he is the same liuing woorde whereby wee were created, and whereby all thinges are still preserued and maintained in their state & being. But when our saluation was restored vs by our Lord Iesus Christ, then did he shewe that he had life in himselfe, & that he is the welspring frō whence is behoueth vs to drawe it. Then like as hee lost not his life when he submitted himselfe to death: so he ceased not to be blessed of God his father, when he submitted himselfe to the curse.

Nowe, to knit vp the whole, it remaineth to be knowen after what manner our Lorde Iesus became accursed to serue vs free from the curse. The first is, that we should no more be cast off by God as we deserue. For when as the scripture termeth vs accursed, the meaning thereof is that God vouchsafeth not to regarde vs. And of good right may he hate vs, because there is no agreement betweene him who is the righteousnesse it selfe, and vs that haue all maner of wickednesse reigning in vs. Forasmuch then as by nature we be enemies vnto God, by reason whereof he shaketh vs off, and vtterly disclaymeth vs, so as we be not worthy to come neere his maiesty, and if we come, he must needes thunder against vs: therefore Iesus Christ became accursed euen by bearing Gods hatred as it were in our behalfe, to the intent that henceforth we should be beloued. Nowe I haue tolde you already, (and it behoueth vs to print it well in our mindes) that Iesus Christ was neuer hated of God his father, for that were vnpossible. But he was faine to beare our curse, because he was our pledge, and wee could not be freed otherwise, than by the satisfaction of his death made once for all. And that is the very meane wherby we be come in fauour again & are beloued of God. Therefore if we will haue Gods fauour, and find him a father vnto vs, (for that is the title which we must vse, if wee intende to pray to him with true trust): we must euer resort to the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ. All our prayers (say I) must be offered vp by the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ, or elles they shall neuer come at God. The Papists vse holy water and sprinkle themselues, when they go into the Church; but such things are gewgaws and they haue borrowed them of the Iewes, not knowing whereunto those figures serued. For they leaue the clensing ỹ was made by our Lord Iesus Christ, & stād buzzing about such dongs and superstitions. But as for vs let vs assure ourselues, ỹ we must haue al our prayers besprinkled with the bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ, or elles they will be vncleane before God, & they can neuer be made clean but only by ỹ kind of clensing. The way then for vs to proceede to the obteinment of Gods fauour, is to resort to the sacrifice which Iesus Christ hath offered vnto him. Secondly we must vnderstande ỹ God forgiueth vs all thinges of his owne freegoodnesse. For why? The scripture giueth the name of curses to all the punishmentes which God sendeth vpon men by reason of their sinnes. Therefore let vs marke, ỹ whereas God might iustly powre out his vengeance vpon vs, and ỹ we should lye euer-

euerlastingly vnder the burden of his wrath: the chastisement which his sonne hath suffered, hath deliuered vs from it. As howe? Because he reconcileth vs into fauour, and is at one with vs, in not charging vs with the sinnes that we haue committed, but forgiueth vs them in the person of his sonne. True it is that God will chastice vs for our faultes: howbeit, ỳ is not with rigorous punishment, as one that entred into accoũt with vs to be our Iudge: but to warne vs, and that the correctiõs which he sẽdeth vs may become as so many medicines to vs. But howsoeuer we fare, we alwaies obtaine free forgiuenes of our sinnes because Iesus Christ hath borne our curse vppon his crosse.

Nowe let vs fall downe in the presence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, as we may bee sory for them as becõmeth vs, euen with such griefe, that we may bring vnto him the broken heart which is the acceptable sacrifice vnto him. And to the intent we may be the more prouoked to mislike our sinnes and to abhorre them, it may please him to grant vs the grace to looke wel vpon his horrible vengeance of them which was executed in the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ, that thereby we may learne to mislike so much of our vices and corruptions, that our whole seeking may bee dayly to cut off some thing, and to clense ourselues better & better, vntill he haue ridde vs quite and cleane of all, and clothed vs againe with his owne righteousnesse. And so let vs all say, Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the ij. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxv. Sermon, which is the first vpon the two & twentith Chapter.

THou shalt not see thy brothers Oxe or his sheepe goe astray, and withdrawe thy selfe from them: but thou shalt bring them home to thy brother.

2 And if thy brother be not neere thee, or that thou knowe him not: then shalt thou take them home to thine owne house, and they shalbe with thee till thy brother require them, and then shalt thou deliuer him them againe.

3 Likewise shalt thou doe to his Asse, and likewise to his rayment, and also to all other thinges which thy brother shall haue lost and thou found: Thou shalt not hide it away from him.

4 Thou shalt not see thy brothers Asse or Oxe sinke vnder their burthen in the way, and withdrawe thy selfe from them: but thou shalt helpe him vppe with them againe.

FOr asmuch as wee restraine the commaundement of the law too much, wher by theft is forbidden; therefore ỳ warning ỳ is giuen vs heere is very needeful. It seemeth to vs that if we haue not taken away another mans goods or substance, we be cleere before God, & can not boe accused of theft. But God hath a further respect, to wit, that euery man shoulde worke his brothers welfare. For we be bound therto, & he that maketh none account therof is condemned as a theefe before God, though he can not be blamed before men. If I abstaine (say I) from doing any man harme, and keepe my handes vndefiled from robberie, and extortiõ: yet am I not discharged for al this. For if I haue seene my brothers good perishe, and suffered it to goe to destruction through my negligence: GOD condemneth mee for it.

Therfore let vs mark wel, ỳ ỳ law in forbidding theft hath also bound vs al to procure ỳ welfare & profit one of another. And in deede it is a rule to be obserued of vs in all cases, ỳ God in forbidding any euill, doth therewith command vs to do the good that is contrarie therto. Thou shall not steale, sayth he. And why? For he that doeth his neighbour any hurt or harme, is abhominable before God. Then is it to be concluded, that as I would haue mine owne goods preserued, so must I be charie of other mens also, & euery mã must do the like on his owne behalfe. And therof we haue an example heere: namely that if I see my neighbours Oxe or cowe or any other cattell of his straying in the feldes, I am bounde to driue them home to his house, and to say vnto him, I haue founde thine Oxe straying, looke better to him. Yea and if I finde a beast which I knowe not and see it straying abroade, I am bounde to keepe it till the owner thereof come, I must not hide it, to make mine owne gaine of it, but I must declare it abroade that I haue founde stray cattle, that the owner may come to require it, and I must bee readie to deliuer

deliuer it him againe. And Moſes addeth that the like is to be done in all thinges that are loſt, whether it be rayment, money, or any other thing, that ye liſt. Then if I finde any loſt thing, I am bound to keepe it ſafe, and to reſtore it to the owner. And truely euen vprightneſſe doth ſufficiently leade vs thereunto: For if a man haue loſt either money or anie other thing, and can not finde it, hee will make mone for it, and that iuſtly. Nowe the more wee be inclyned to our owne profite, the more let vs looke to bee condemned, when any body hath ſuſteined loſſe by our ſpitefulneſſe or negligence. I my ſelfe will blame others if they reſtore me not mine owne when I haue loſt it. And why ſhoulde not I be condemned in the like caſe? And ſo we ſee now that it is not ynough for vs to knowe the tenne commaundementes which are conteined in the Lawe: vnleſſe wee haue the expoſition of them alſo, ſo as we knowe what God ment and intended by thē. For if I take this ſaying, Thou ſhalt not ſteale, and thinke it ynough for mee to haue abſteined frō taking away of other mens goods: it is an ouer ſlender expoſition. And if I flatter my ſelfe and boſt of my pureneſſe and innocencie, it ſhall nothing boote mee. For GOD ſheweth that he had yet a further meaning, namely, ỳ euery man ſhould haue a care of his neighbor, that being knit and vnited together, we muſt labour to maintaine our neighbours right as wel as our owne, and be ſo faithfull one towardes another, and on both ſides be ſo vprightly minded, as we might ſay, as I would not ỳ an other man ſhould ſuffer my goods to periſh, but that he ſhould preſerue them for me: ſo muſt I do the like to al thoſe with whom I am conuerſant, that is to ſay all men, as ſhalbe declared more fully hereafter.

And if we be bound to ſende home our neighbours Oxe or Aſſe that is loſt, let vs ſee whether wee may take away an other mans goods by extortion & leaude dealing. For there are manie which think it no offence before God, to conuey to thēſelues by ſuttle meanes the thinges ỳ belong not to them. And wherefore is that? Bycauſe they ſhall not bee impleaded for it at the Lawe. Yea, but who is he that acquiteth them? Thinke they to dally ſo with God? But as I haue declared before, the Lawe ſayeth, not only that we muſt abſteine from all robbery, but alſo preſerue the goods of our neighbours. For if I lay waite to finger to my ſelfe and to inrich my ſelfe by impouerifhing them that haue wherewith to ſerue my turne, ſeeking mine owne profit by my neighbours loſſe: I muſt not thinke ỳ God liketh of my ſuttle dealings, craftines, & ſhifting. When we haue waſhed our hands neuer ſo clean before men, what ſhal it boote vs, if the heauenly Iudge condemne vs? Thus yee ſee ỳ the way for vs to put this text in vre, is to conſider Gods intent in condemning theft in his Lawe: which is, ỳ he will haue vs to indeuour to beneſite our neighbours to the vttermoſt of our power, ſo as euery man may peaceably inioy his owne, and ech of vs helpe other, eſchewing all hurt & hinderance of our neighbours, and doing to all men as we would be done vnto. That is the effect of the thing which we haue to beare in minde.

We ſee that euen in the beaſtlines of Popery, ſome tracke of his doctrine was retained ſtil. True it is ỳ thoſe ſhauelinges being as gulfs, and ſpreading out their nets to drawe in the pray to thē from all ſides, willed folke to make reſtitution of the thinges ỳ they had found, bearing thē in hand ỳ if the owner were not found, thoſe things were excheated to God, meaning to their owne purſe. Yet notwithſtanding, this ſhoode euer as a rule, ỳ vnder peine of theeuery it was not lawfull to conceale any thing that was found, being knowen to be loſt, but that all meanes poſſible ſhould be wrought to finde out the owner. Now ſeeing the blind wretches which were ſo beaſtly knew this: what excuſe will there be for vs? Nay, we ſee what libertie many folke do take nowe-dayes: inſomuch that euen they which pretend to haue the Goſpel, do play the theeues for euery triſle, ſo as there is nothing but pilling & polling wᵗ them. But in very deed the moſt nūber of thē neuer taſted what Gods truth is. But howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, this ſaying of God ringeth ſhirle heere, & our eares are continually beaten with this leſſon, ỳ we ought to procure the welfare of other men. Yet notwithſtanding, let a man go into ỳ fields, & he ſhal finde nothing but robbing and filching. And what ſhall he finde in townes & cities? much worſe. A man ſhall ſee ſnatching and catching euery where, & al mens indeuour is to fleece one an other. Wo worth vs therefore if we bethinke vs not better of ỳ thing that is tolde vs heere, which is ỳ God commandeth vs to procure the welfare of other men, and to looke to the doing of it in ſuch ſort, as no man may be hindered by our default, and not only ỳ we be cleere from all euill dealing, but alſo from all negligence or ſlothfulneſſe. For God admoneth vs, ỳ as we thinke vpon our owne profite, ſo we muſt not forget the weldoing of our neighbours. But as we would haue others to looke about for vs, when we had loſt any thing: ſo muſt we be likeminded towardes all ſuch as we can ſuccour in their neede.

Now if it be ſayde that we muſt bring againe our neighbours Oxe or Aſſe: what is to be done to his owne proper perſon? Or to his children and houſholde folke? I ſee a houſholde out of order, and the maiſter thereof deceiued: If I warne him not thereof, I am to blame. So then we muſt proceede ſo farre by degrees, that if wee muſt haue a care of beaſtes, much more muſt wee haue it of humaine creatures. If I ought to bring home a mannes Oxe when I finde him ſtraying, for feare he ſhoulde be loſt: what ought I to doe to his children that are readie to periſhe, and runne a ſtraye like brute beaſtes? Shal I not thinke vppon them to bring them into the right way? Againe in generall, if I ſee my neighbour goe to decay and deſtruction, I ought to reclaime him, accordingly as S. Iames warneth vs ſaying: If any of you bring backe his neighbour into the right way, when hee was gone aſtray: he hath wonne a ſoule to God. Now if our Lorde extend his loue euē vnto

Oxen

Oxen and Asses; what ought we to do to those whome he hath created after his owne image, & which are like our selues, & to whome we be linked by a kinde of brotherhood, not onely in respect of our bodies, but also in respect of our soules? Shall we see them run astray & go to destruction, & not reach them our hand nor do our indeuor to bring them backe againe to the way of saluation? Therefore when we see mens soules in danger to bee lost, let vs learne to reclaime them, & let vs apply our selues thereto as much as we can possibly. For if we be slacke in that behalf, there needeth none other witnes against vs than ỹ bruite beasts. For if we suffer their owners to lose them, we shalbe condemned before God. So must our inditement be made and framed against vs by the brute beasts, when we shal haue held shorne after that fashion, to bring back the wretched creatures that are gone astray, to cause them to be reduced againe vnto God: For if we be bound to maintain mortal men in their right: I pray you, be we not double, yea a hundredfold more bound to do it vnto God? Behold, God telleth vs that we belong to him, & that we bee his heritage. Now, I see a poore man goe astray like a beast that is lost, and shal I suffer God to be bereft of his right, or to haue his possessions diminished? True it is, that we cannot inrich him: but yet doth he shewe howe deerely he loueth vs, in ỹ he hath purchased vs with the bloud of our Lorde Iesus Christ. I see Gods possession go to ruine, and make no account of it, and so is it lost from him through my default: and how shall I excuse my selfe? Wherefore let vs marke well, that if wee ought to mayntaine the welfare of mortall men, because God hath ordeyned that there shoulde be faithfulnesse among vs one towardes another: wee ought much more to indeour and procure that God may abide vnimpeached in his state, and that those which be of his house (that is to say of his Church) may not miscarie, but that they may all be presented vnto him. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vpon this text.

Nowe Moses addeth, that men must doe it, though it be the more to their owne paine. For although I be vnknowen to the partie that hath a beast so strayed; and he be not my neighbour: yet must not his beast be lost by my negligence, but I must bring it backe least it fall into euill handes: and my so doing must bee of purpose to restore it to the owner. Here wee see (as I haue saide afore) that it is not enough for vs to abstayne from all misdealing, but wee must also doe our neighbours seruice, as wee woulde they shoulde doe for vs. The taking of payne or care for an other mans benefite, must not make vs shrinke from the doing of our duetie. If wee alledge, What am I bound to him? What hath he done for me? It is not for vs to regard the doinges of men, whether they haue done vs any pleasure or no, and there after to requite them, as who would say, I should shewe a man no friendship, vnlesse he had first befriended mee before. No, it must suffice mee, that God wil be acknowledged in all those things. And therfore we must not haue an eye to mens persons to say we know them not: but it must suffice vs that God saith vnto vs, Although the parties bee vnknowen vnto you, yet must you doe your indeuour to saue their goods and substance: for it is my will that there shoulde be that bonde among men, and that by meanes thereof they shoulde bee knit together, and euery man willingly become detter to other. Although men can not bring ye before earthly Iudges to compell you thereto; yet ought euerie man of himselfe to yeelde vnto it and to beare in minde that I will haue you to exercise such charitablenes amõg yourselues. Thus much concerning that point where it is said, that although the partie bee not our neighbour, no nor knowen vnto vs: yet wee must not forebeare to keepe his beast for him, or any other thing that he hath lost.

There is also an other point, namely ỹ if we light vpon our Neighbors Oxe or his Asse falne downe by the way by reason of some disease or tyring vnder his burthen: wee must helpe to get him vp. And this sheweth vs yet better, that all they which procure not the benefit of other mẽ, are esteemed as theeues. For we commit not any offence, but the same is a breaking of the Law of God. It behoueth vs to marke that. Now what is said in Gods law? Thou shalt not steale. It is but one word. But we must haue an eye to the lawemakers meaning. And so we must conclude, that if we see our neighbor stand in neede of our succour before our eyes, and faile him: if wee perceiue he is like to sustein losse, & we remedy not the matter, hauing the meane to do it: we be cõdemned of felonie before God. It is a hard case, men may well dispute of it, yea & imagine ỹ they shal get ỹ vpper hand: but al replying must be laid downe: for as much as God hath spoken it, his saying is an vnreuocable sentence. Therefore let it content vs ỹ the law telleth vs that if we saue not our neighbors goods to ỹ vttermost of our power God condemneth vs and taketh vs for theeues. Indeed if wee were to bee called before worldlie Iudges, we might alledge, hẽ neuer bound me to do so much for him, I am not beholdẽ vnto him, I haue not promised him any thing, what couenant is there betwixt vs? & such other like things But whẽ we come before God, we must shut our mouthes, & acknowledge ỹ if we haue bin negligent when we haue seene the losse or hinderãce of any mans goods, so as wee haue not helped to saue them, but haue shut our eyes at it, and not vouchsafed to put forth our finger to ỹ succouring of them: it is all one with theft or robberie, before God.

And herewithall let vs marke wel, ỹ seeing it is said here ỹ we ought to succor the beasts whẽ they be falne downe vnder their burthen: howe much more ought we to do ỹ like to men? When an asse is falne down, what is ỹ to vs? And yet for the loue of my neighbor, I am bound to lift him vp againe if I can. A poore man ỹ hath toild himselfe to ỹ vttermost, standeth in need of my help, and I forsake him: is this cruelty excusable before God? Behold, I am condemned for not doing my dutie towards a brute beast: & what shal

then become of me if I forsake mine owne image & the image of God, so as a poore man is borne downe & I succor him not, but wring my mouth at it as if I had done no fault at all? So then let vs marke, ỳ in speaking of the brute beastes, God ment to induce vs ỳ rather to the discharging of our owne duelies one towardes another: Like as when S. Paul alledgeth this text, Thou shalt not muzle the mouth of the oxe ỳ laboreth for thee, thinke we (saith hee) ỳ God hath no further respect than of the beasts? Nay verily, his speaking of it is for the loue of men. As who should say, If we ought not to withdraw foode from the beast that laboreth vnder our hand & for our profite: ought wee not to giue sustenance to the handicrafts man, or to any other person when he doth vs seruice? Indeede S. Paul speakes there of the ministers of Gods worde; but yet generally wee be led to this vprightnes of maintaining such as take paines for vs, according to reason. For why? God hath spoken so of Oxen: And he hath spoken it to doe vs the more shame, as if he shoulde say, The Oxe shall haue iust matter to condemn you. Indeed ỳ Oxe hath not speech as we haue; but yet wee cannot so scape but ỳ God will condemne vs for cruell and vnkinde soolke, if we pitie not the brute beastes. It is saide in Salomons Prouerbs, ỳ the righteous man hath in regarde, the bloud of his horses & of his beastes ỳ labour for him. Sith it is so, then if the poore soules that haue bestowed their labor & trauel, & spent their sweat & bloud for you, be not paid their wages as they ought to be, nor succored and susteyned by you as they should be: if they aske vengeance against you at Gods hand, who shalbe your spoke man or aduocate to rid you out of his handes? Now then, whereas here is mention made of the releeuing of Oxen & Asses when they bee falne downe vnder their burthens: let vs learne thereby, that it is much more reason we should releeue our neighbors, when we see them vexed and ouermatched. Verily a beast cannot speake to moue vs to pitie and compassion: and therefore we must go to him of our owne good wil, though we be not moued nor requested therunto. Hereby we be warned, that although a man crie not out at a murder, ne make any great bewailing: Yet his verie necessitie ought to suffice to make vs to step to him aforehande, & not to suffer him to lie languishing to the last instant, that he bee constreined to say, Alas helpe me. We must not be so slow. For why? Although a beast cannot speake a word, yet doth God commaunde vs to succour it. And therefore much more do we owe like duetie towards our neighbors.

1. Cor. 9. 10.

Prou. 12. 10.

Furthermore, if a man demaunde what those burthens are: S. Paul sheweth vs them saying, Beare yee one an others burthens: as if hee had said, ỳ our infirmities are burthens, & wee haue need to be eased of them. Therfore we must exercise our charitie after that maner. I see a neighbor of mine that is weake, I meane this of al mé. For how perfect so euer men be, they haue euer some faultes in them, and they haue need to be borne with. And I for my part cannot away with it, vnles men haue pitie vpon me: I haue my burthens as well as all other men. In respect hereof God saith vnto vs, Beare ye one an others burthens: for this is Christs lawe, saith S. Paul. And yet hath this law beene for euer. For if the brute beasts were to be releeued by the law of Moses, likewise were men to be releeued, as I said afore. But S. Paul telleth vs that we haue more needs to doe it nowadayes than euer: For our lord Iesus Christ telleth vs that ỳ cheefe sacrifice which he requireth of vs euen for God his father, is to haue a regarde wherein euery of vs may helpe his neighbors, & to indeuour to remedie infirmities where he sees thé to be. Indeed we ought not to foster vices. Neither is that S. Paul meaning when hee exhorteth vs to beare one anothers burthens. His intent is not that we should dissemble, or that we should foode men in their naughtines by playing the blinkards when they haue done amisse. For ỳ were rather a leasing of the wretched soules still in their straying, vntil they were tumbled downe into the pit of destruction. Then is not ỳ S. Paules meaning in commanding vs to beare one an others burthen, but rather, ỳ when we see an other man in sorrow, we should comfort him: when we see him vnkinde minded, we should harten him: when we see him too much intangled in the cares of this worlde, we should labour to pul him backe, perswading him, to put his trust better in God, & not to be so wedded to worldly thinges. When we labour after this fashion to remedy al vices: then do wee beare one anothers burthens. And to induce vs thereunto, we must vnderstande ỳ there is none of vs all, but hee hath neede to bee borne with. That is the thing which we haue to gather vpon this place, where it is saide that we be bounde to helpe vp an Oxe or an Asse or any other beast ỳ is falne downe abrode, and that we ought to releeue it as much as may be.

But here is no mentiõ made of any other but a brother. It is said, ỳ if thy brothers asse or any other thing of his be lost: or if ỳ Oxe or beast of thy brother be falne down by ỳ way, thou shalt help him vp againe. Who be the brothers of whō God speaketh here? The word *Brother* is to be extended further than a number do extend it, who alwaies excusing thémselues, do pluck their heads out of ỳ coller as easily as they can, whé they see Gods cõmandements to be too hard & difficult yea & vtterly vnpossible for them to do, they seke ỳ coller by such fond shifts as this: I am bounde (say they) to do this for my brother, ỳ is to say, for such a one as I am acquainted with, or to whō I am linked by any familiaritie, neighborhoode, or friendship: those indeed are our brothers. Yea. But what if we haue to do with the furthest strangers in ỳ world? should we account them for our brothers? To what purpose were ỳ? O how ỳ hypocrites would dally with God, & breake ỳ bond which he hath made betwixt vs, vnder pretence of this word *Brother*. But the exposition therof is giuen vs in ỳ three & twentith of Exodus, where it is saide, If the Oxe or the Asse of thine enemie be falne downe, thou shalt helpe him vp againe: thou shalt do good to him ỳ hateth thee, and to him that seeketh to hurt or hinder thee.

Thus

Ye se then who are our brethren, namely euen our very enemies, such as persecute vs, & such as could find in their hearts to eat vs vp. And yet for all that, euen with them must we maintaine brotherhood. As how? Verily it seemeth a right hard case at the first sight: for haue not they already broken the bond of brotherhood? What though there were an vnion among al mankind? Yet as touching those which are so malicious & froward, and despise God by doing leawdly, are not they worthy to be shaken off, & to be barred from the companie of other men, seeing they haue sundred themselues from them? Truth it is that if we shoulde haue respect to their persons, we might wel say, shal such a one be my brother, hauing set himself after that fashion against me? Were he a member of my bodie, would he haue cut of himselfe from me? Seeing then that hee hath forsaken me, I will haue no acquaintaunce with him in any maner of wise. The alliance which I had with him was of god, God made it betwixt vs: but he hath vtterly withdrawen himself from it, & therfore may I likewise forsake him. So long as we plead against the person, such excuses may well take place: but as for before God, they will not go for payment. For his planting of neighborhood among vs was with condition, that although a man make himselfe vnworthie thereof yet we must not faile to do him all the good we can. And so the bond of kinred ordeined by god, cannot in any wise be defeated. Were a man become the veriest naughtipacke that could be, yet ought we to intreat him as our neighbour.

Truth it is that there are cases wherefore we ought to forsake men, & to giue them vtterly ouer. But yet for all that, we must not cease in the meane while to procure their worldly welfare, and much more the health of their soules, yea euen of such as are excommunicated & cast out of the Church, as saith S. Paul. We must not seek them, for that were the way to infect vs with their defilements, & to make vs their partakers. Nay, we must rather mislike them & abhorre them, as it is expresly commaunded vs. But yet in the meane season, we be bound alwaies to succour them in their need, & to forbeare to hurt or hinder thē. That is the thing which our Lorde compelleth vnto. And therefore let vs marke well that it was neuer lawfull vnder the law to beare enmity against any man: yea & although a man had enimies: yet was it not lawfull for him to seeke reuenge. And if I be bound to succor mine enemies Ask or how: what ought I to do to his own person? Shall I be exempted from himselfe, when I am bound vnto his cattell? It is well knowen so. And herein we see the beastlines that hath been & yet still is in the Popedome. For the sizely doctors say, that to do good to ones enemie is not a commaundement of God, but a counsell giuen by our Lord Iesus Christ. And marke I pray you wherupon they groūd thēselues. What say they? It is too hard a thing for vs to haue the heart to do good to such as hate vs & persecute vs. And therfore it is to be concluded, that God hath not commanded vs to do it: for that were too great rigor. If Iesus Christ counsel vs, verily then is it a point of perfectiō: but yet are we not bound to it. And thereupon they hold opinion that none are bound to it but only the Monks, whose state is angelical, & yet notwithstanding, of al mē in the world they be fullest of reuenge. Neuertheles, it is for none but Monkes to haue such perfection, & as for vs that are lay people, they say that for vs to become Christians it is enough to take it as a counsell, and to tend that way, howbeit without thinking our selues guiltie of deadly sinne, though we doe it not. True it is that they can find in their harts to say, that we ought not to hate anie body, but to say that we be bound to loue our enemies, and to do good to such as seeke to hurt or hinder vs; no no, they cannot digest that worde. And why? For they be forepossessed with this diuelish opinion, that God cōmandeth not any thing which is not possible for men to doe. And thereupon they make as it were a counterpeise or euen balance, of freewill & of all Gods cōmandements: insomuch that they stand scanning thus: Cannot we doe this or that? God then hath not commanded it, neither ought it to be done: & if a man did it, it were more than needed. As who should say that God had forgone his right, because we bee so corrupted and vntowarde as not to be able to performe that which he hath ordeyned. And what a dealing were that? If a man owe me monie, & haue wasted all away by his leawd behauiour, is hee therefore cleerely quit and discharged, because he hath so mispent both his owne & mine? No surelie. Whence commeth it then that we cannot loue our enemies, and that we be so reuengefull: but of our owne corruption & of the sinfulnesse of our nature? Yet notwithstanding, we cease not therefore to owe still vnto God the things that he hath inioyned vs. And therefore wee conclude that our Lord hath bewrayed the blindnesse of the Papistes, in making them to spewe out such blasphemies as these, namely, that to doe good to our enemies is not a commandement of the law, but a counsell of our Lord Iesus: For we see what was inioined by the law of Moses. And again on the otherside, a man may wel say there is great odds betweene the perfection of Christians, and the conuersation of the fathers: yea verily, & the hardest part of all our life, is to loue our enemies & to doe good to such as persecute vs. But the fathers that liued vnder the law were bound so that as well as we. And therefore wee must not imagine that our Lord Iesus brought any new rule as the Papists auouch blasphemously against Gods lawe, saying that it was but an Apes & an entrance: and that there is nowe a true holines and perfection, in the things which the Gospell sheweth vs. But we see the cleane contrary, namely that euen vnder the law God did expresly forbid men to auenge themselues: & againe on the otherside cōmanded them to doe good to their enemies, & to indeuor to ouercom euill by doing good, which is the perfection of the gospel as S. Paul sheweth in the twelfth to the Romanes. And it is the verie same thing that is cōteined in the Sermon which our lord Iesus made frō the fifth chapter of S. Matthew to the seuenth. Also the same thing is brought to our remēbrance

by the thinges which Iesus Christ saith, in the similitude of the man that was wounded in his way by theeues, as he went from Iericho to Ierusalem. There he taunteth the Iewes, who came of the linage of Abraham, and ceased not to vaunt themselues of that holy pedigree. And yet he saith to them, I cānot tel what kinred or brotherhoode there is among you. For if a man bee falne behinde hande. and haue neede of helpe, I see not that ye succour him: ye acknowledge none other brotherhoode than that which is of the flesshe. And if yee see any gaine to be had by allying your selues with any man: he shalbe your brother and your great cousen. But if yee see no profite to bee had by him, farewell he, he is no more your kinseman. Hereby hee inferreth a similitude, how a Priest looking vpon a poore man that was wounded and sore hurt, and in daunger of death; passed by him and tooke no heede of him: and likewise a Leuite, and also a common Iew. Then came a Samaritane, (ỹ Samaritanes were hatefull to the Iewes, as they who indeede had nothing but apes toyes and meere superstition in their Church) & yet our Lord saith there that the Samaritane had pitie vpon ỹ Iew which was so sore wounded, and succored him. Was not this man the Iewes neighbor? Ye cannot denie but that he was so. Hereupō Iesus Christ concludeth, that when the law speaketh of neighbors, it meaneth not those which are allied vnto vs, or which are of our owne bloud and kinred: neither meaneth it those neighbors onely with whome we be conuersant and familiar: but generally all men, yea euen the farthest strangers vnto vs. Although we may say ỹ such a one belonges not to vs, yet are we his neighbors as in respect of god. For our Lord could wel haue vsed another word: but hee intended of set purpose to touch vs to ỹ quick in saying, Looke how many men are in the world, so many neighbors haue we. And wheras in this text ỹ word is a *Brother*, indeed it had respect to the linage of Abraham. But nowadaies wee haue all one father, who is called vpon in al languages and in all countries. He hath not chosen the race of any one man, nor shut vp his seruice within any one certaine countrie. For the partition wal is broken downe, so as there is not now any difference of Iew and Gentile, accordingly as is told vs that we bee all one body in our lord Iesus Christ, and ỹ seeing God is proclaimed by the Gospell to be our Sauiour & father, we must maintaine a brotherhood among vs. And as touching the word *Neighbour*, the law hath vsed it of purpose to shew mē ỹ they may well shrink away one frō another, but yet they be all of one knowē kinde, according to this saying of the Prophet Esay, Thou shalt not despise thine owne flesh. If I can say, This man is of a far countrie, there was neuer any acquaintāce betwixt vs, one of vs can not speake a word ỹ the other can vnderstande: what is all this to the purpose? Let me looke vpon him & beholde him throughly, & I shal find the same nature in him that is in my selfe: I shall see that God hath made him so like me, as if we were but one flesshe. And all mankind is of such shape and fashion, that wee haue good cause to loue one another, and to know ỹ we ought to be all one. Although there bee some difference as touching this present life: yet ought we to consider that we spring al out of one roote, & therefore that we should tend all to one end, euen vnto God who is the father of vs all. And therefore it is not without cause that in steede of saying, thou shalt doe so to al men, our Lorde saith, thou shalt do so to thy neighbors. And albeit we fall to disputing of the matter, and would finde our heades out of the coler, seeking to shift off ỹ matter by alledging that we bee strangers vnto an other: yet can we not bring to passe that all men should not be our neighbors, because we are al of one selfe same nature, wherby God hath knit vs & linked vs all together. The thing then which we haue to mark in this part of the text vpon ỹ word *Brother*, is ỹ whereas God speaketh after that maner to the Iewes, because hee had adopted the linage of Abraham: it sheweth vs nowadaies that we must al be as brothers, seeing much as our Lord Iesus Christ hath proclaimed peace through the whole worlde, and God is at one agayne with all nations & all men. Seeing it is so, it behoueth vs to maintaine the brotherhood which was procured by Christs bloud, & whereunto God calleth vs. And although many spiteful persōs go about to violate it by their vnkindnes in shrinking away from the Church and become our enemies, by giuing vs occasion to do them harme: yet notwithstanding let vs striue against their naughtines, & labour to procure the saluation of their soules, and ỹ welfare of their bodies so far as we can. And whē we see ỹ we on our side are weak, & cānot frame our affections to ỹ obeying of God so wel as were to be wished: let vs pray our good God to strēgthen vs by his holy spirit, ỹ we may outstand all assaults are put vnto vs, so as we may haue ỹ vpper hand of them, when hee hath once rid vs of our flesh.

1. Tim. 2. 4.

Rom. 10. 12.

Esa. 58. 7.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our sins, praying him to make vs so to feele the more & more, as ỹ being cast downe in our selues, we may be lifted vp again by his hand, & ỹ being so lifted vp & vpheld by him, we may follow his example towards our neighbors, indeuoring to cleaue in good peace & concord, & bearing with ỹ weaknings, so as we may al with one consent keep our way vnto him, & attaine thither by his grace. That it may please him to graunt this grace, &c.

On Fryday the iij. of Ianuarie. 1556.

The Cxxvj. Sermon, which is the second vpon the two and twentieth Chapter.

5 A woman shal not weare the apparel of a man: neither shal a man put on the gar-

garments of a woman. For whosoeuer doth so, is an abhomination to the Lord thy God.

6 When thou goest abroad and findest a birds nest in a tree or on the grounde, and young birdes or egges therein, & the dam sitting vpon her young or vpon the eggs: thou shalt not take the dam with her young birdes:

7 But thou shalt let the dam goe, & take the young ones to thy selfe, that it may goe well with thee, and that thou maist prolong thy dayes.

8 When thou buildest thee a newe house, thou shalt make a battlement about the roofe of it, that thou bring not bloud vpon thy house by the falling of some man downe from it.

THe first law which I haue rehearsed here, sheweth ỹ in all our behauiour, we must haue a care to be honest, & eschue all loosenes. Truely it should seeme to be no matter of great importance for a man to be apparelled after one fashiō or other: but yet for all that, God wil haue things done in order. For if men go disguised, & weare such apparell as serueth not for necessitie but for follie: that is not conuenient. If women bee dissolute, what a thing is that? They forget their nature: for women ought to bee modest. If there bee no shame, but that they will needes be out of order: it is a very beastlines. That is the effect of Gods meaning in saying that men ought not to put on womens apparell, nor women ought not to bee clothed in mens apparell. For it is good reason that there should be a difference betweene men and women. And although there were no lawe written, doeth not euen nature teach it vs? And (1. Cor. 11.) S. Paul telleth vs that women must come to the Church with their heades couered & not with their haire about their eares: hee sheweth the same thing. What saith he? haue we need to speake to you of such things? For if a woman were polled, durst she shew her head abroade? A man may well be bold to shew his head bare, though he be polled: and shall a woman do so too? That were a shame, euerie bodie would mocke at her, and she shoulde be faine to hide her heade. Now sith ye know this without any scripture or worde written: doe ye not see howe God hath sowen as it were a seede of modestie in you, to the intent that euerie man shoulde haue a regarde to that which is comelie for him? So then, let vs marke ỹ here God intended to shew vs that euery bodies saying of themselues ought to be such, as there may be a difference betweene men and women. And truly we see what daungers doe insue when folke go so disguised: many inconueniences doe accompanie them, & God is offended with the. Therefore the setting downe of this lawe is not without cause. For they that loue to go so disguised, do despise God: as for example, in these maskings & mummings, when men put themselues into womens apparel, and women put themselues into mens as ye know: what comes of it? Although no euil ensued thereof, yet the verie thing it self displeseth god. We heare what is said of it in this place. *Whosoeuer doeth it, is an abhomination.* Ought not this saying to make the haire of our heades stand vp, rather than wee would prouoke Gods wrath vpon vs wilfully? But besides this, we are sure ỹ the suffring hereof is the opening of a gap to all whoredome. At a word, such disguisings are but inticements of baudry, as experience prooueth. Therfore let vs not think, that it was more than needed, for God to appoint men a seuerall kind of apparelling by themselues, and the women another kinde of attiring by themselues agreeable to their seuerall sexes. Whereupon wee haue to remember, that God liketh well, ỹ there should be an honestie euen in our apparel. Truely (as I haue said afore) ỹ is not the cheefe point: For if a man should set ỹ perfection of our life in this thing: it were al one as if he should set the cart before the horse: but yet is it not to bee omitted. For euen the Heathen themselues haue shewed vs our lesson, telling vs that if there bee no regard of honestie, men do bewray ỹ the rest of their vertues are not counted for vertues any more. For if they obserue not some order, discretion and modestie in their behauiours & maner of dealings, they may seeme to bee degenerated into brute beasties. Then is it as a witnes that we walke as before God, when we regarde a kind of honestie in our apparell. Truely men may soone ouershoot themselues. Although they attire not themselues like women, yet if they vse any gaudishnes, and make themselues to bee as gasing-stocks: such superfluitie displeaseth God already in another respect. Likewise though women attyre not themselues in the raiment of men: Yet if they be too gallant & brauie, and couet to haue too great a show, they faile not to offende God, euen in another respect, as I said afore. Yet notwithstanding, we must first of all see that men be so apparelled as they become not womanlike, as we see diuerse times ỹ they attire theselues like brides, in so doing they seeme to be sorie ỹ God made them not women, & to bee desirous to renounce their owne sexe. And that is a shamefull thing. Againe, when women go apparelled like men of war, (as there be some which had leuer to beare a hackebutte on their shoulder than a distaffe in their hand:) it is against kinde, and we ought to abhorre it. Although wee were not spoken to, ne had any law or ordinance of God: yet do we euen of ourselues perceiue it to be strange and whosoeuer hath any sparke of pureneese in him, wil iudge so. Ye see thē ỹ first of al the fashiō which men do vse in apparelling thēselues, must shew ỹ God hath created them to be as men: and that the women also must obserue the modestie that is agreeable to their sexe. Thus much con-

cerning the first point.

And as touching the second, let vs marke also generally, that in our apparelling of our selues God wil haue vs to respect vse & honesty. Those are the two thi ngs which we ought to set store by. The first is vse. And my meaning by vse, is ỳ men should be contented with such apparell as will defend them from cold and heate. And by honestie I meane that they should not be clad & attired after a disguised fashion, as though they went to play an enterlude, or were desirous to make folke to gase at them for the strangenes of their apparell, that it might be said, who is this? O, it is such a one. Now then, if wee obserue the vse, that is to say, if we hold it enough to bee clothed onely: and therwithall do keepe such measure as we breake not common order: it is a rule that God alloweth. Also whē women be not too curious in attyring themselues, nor desirous to drawe all mens eyes vnto them to behold them in their decking: that is the honest kinde of behauiour, which God commendeth vnto vs. 1. Tim. 2. 9. And in the same respect doeth S. Paul say that womē ought to haue a holy honestie, or a comelie holines. In speaking of the attire and apparell of the faithfull women, he vseth a worde which importeth that they must not onely bee honest, but also therewithal haue a certaine mark of holinesse, that men may know them to haue profited in Gods word. And soothly if we considered wel what was the first cause of apparel, we would not be so greatly giuen to superfluous brauerie as we be. For as oft as we put on either shirte or Cote, we be put in mind that our Lord commandeth vs to hide our selues, because his image is disfigured in vs: and our clothing of ourselues ought to make vs thinke vpon the sinne of our father Adam. For by reason of sin, we become subiect both to heat & cold. And againe, God telleth vs that it is a signe of our shame. For nakednesse of it selfe is not vnhonest, were it not ỳ Gods image is disfigured in vs by our corruption. Had we this regard with vs, surely we would be warer to keepe order and measure in our apparel, than we be. Howsoeuer the worlde go, let vs learne ỳ God wil haue vs not only to be pure and cleane from all lecherie, but also to preuent all inconueniences. As for example, when he saith, Thou shalt not commit aduoutrie: that commaundement hath an eye to this present text. I haue tolde you alreadie, that all the lawes which are writtē here, cōcerne maners, & are rules of good lyfe, & are to bee referred to the ten commandements: For God hath not added anie thing to those tenne sentences. Therefore whereas in this text it is said ỳ the man shall not weare the apparell of the woman; doeth God set downe an eleuenth commaundement? Did God bethinke himselfe better afterwarde, and adde somewhat else to that which we had heard of him heretofore? No, it is but onely an exposition of this saying of his, Thou shalt not commit adulterie. As how? For in forbidding aduoutrie, God not onely forbiddeth ỳ act it selfe, which were punishable & worthie of reproch euen before men: but also hee forbiddeth in effect al vnchast behauiour, so as none may appeare, neither in apparell nor in any part of our conuersation. We must keep such a measure, as our apparell tend not to vnchastitie, least we runne into such loosenesse, as we be blamed for seeking to make a hotchpotch, & to haue had no regarde of bringing all things to confusiō by such disorderly dealing. Which selfe cheese to eschew, both men and women must haue a care to follow euerie of them their owne vocation. If we bee not of that minde, although we commit not any adultry in act, yet are we attainted already before God, with some vice that tendeth towards adultry. Wherefore let vs learn that by this sentence where our Lord saith that men and women ought to differ one from another in the fashion of their apparell, he meaneth to expound and confirm this former saying of his, Thou shalt not commit Aduoutry. Were this wel borne away as it ought to be, we should haue better rule amōg vs than we haue: & there would be no such impediments in the redressing the abuse of apparell. The costlinesse thereof would soone be corrected in some countries. And why? For ye shall see nothing now but imbroderie, & such ouersumptuous things, that by al likelihood men are wilfully bent to ouercharge themselues with the deckings of women, but these things would be prouided for. And in the meane while men looke not to other vices which are as much or more to be condemned. For there is neuer any ho, when folke beginne once to seeke newe fashions to disguise themselues. This seemeth to be nothing: but as it commeth from an euill roote, so tendeth it also to an euill ende. For it is certaine that if it were not for ambition and pride, these thinges shoulde not bee seene so common as they be. Insomuch that there are a great sort, that can finde in their hearses to indure hunger and thirst and a number of other incommodities in their bodies, onely to bestowe their monie vppon thinges that cannot serue them to none other ende than pompe and vanitie. And why doe they so? O, they loue wel gay apparell: they haue a delight to bee wondred at and gased at a great way off. And we see it more nowadayes than euer it was seene. This fond curiositie hath reigned in al ages among ỳ Frenchmen, and they cannot be reclaymed fro it as yet at this day, but they despise God & nature more than euer they did. But we heare what God saith by his Prophet Sophonie, where he threateneth such folke as seeke newfangled and straunge attires, coueting alwayes new fasshions. No doubt but he condemneth this pompousnes and the persons thē selues which seeke euerida new fashions, that they may be gased at afar off, and be the more esteemed, and ỳ men may say of them, Such a one hath inuēted a new fashiō, such a one is skilfull in finding out new attires. Surely such folke are wel worthie to be condemned to be sailours. These great lords & braue lads which wil needs weare rabbets at their necks, ỳ is to say superfluous Iewels for folke to gase at a great way off, ought of reasō to be al made saylors, seeing they haue so great pleasure in finding out so diuerse sortes of apparell to disguise themselues with.

And

And by the way let vs marke, that in saying so our Lord sheweth vs that we must come backe to the said vse and honestie, and to the rule which he hath giuen vs: and if wee keepe that; let vs assure our selues that it shall bee an acceptable seruice to him. Contrariwise, if we be led with a foolish and inordinate lust, to chaunge euery minute of an houre and to disguise our selues: it is a thing that displeaseth God, though it impeache nothing at all. And moreouer, we see how it proceedeth of fond vaineglory: and when men are so giuen to vanitie, surely they despise their owne Soules and neuer care for them. Also they bee infected with ouerweening, so as they will needes be commended. Nowe when men deale after that fashion, can it be sayd that there is no euill in it? No: for whereto doe all these disguisings and superfluities tend, but to all maner of corruption, and whoredome, and such other like things, besides superfluous expenses? And therefore let vs marke, that to keepe our selues from such dangers, and from defiling our bodies with lecherie, and other infections; we must eschew euill occasions, and not meddle with any thing that may allure vs to any wicked lust of lechery, or otherwise, but apparell our selues soberly and modestly. Thus ye see in effect, how we ought to put this commaundement in vre.

Now Moses addeth, *That if a man finde a birdes nest, he may take the young ones, but he must let goe the dam, when shee broodeth her egges or her young ones.* At the first sight this seemeth not worthy to bee set downe in Gods Law. For were there no greater & necessarier things to speake of than young birdes? Why doth not God say rather that if a man see a mother nursing of her childe, he shall not trouble her, but rather succour her and helpe her, and in any wise beware that he touche her not, for that were a hurting of the infant which is a tender innocent soule. Why doth not God speake after that maner? What needed it to goe say that a man should let a Birde alone when shee broodeth her young? Hereby hee ment to expresse the better, howe greatly hee abhorreth all crueltie. For if hee cannot beare with it when it extendeth but to the little birdes: shall a man scape vnpunished when hee falleth to hurting the image of God himselfe, that is to say when he offereth wrong to another man? So then let vs marke that in speaking of little birdes, GOD hath much better declared his meaning, than if he had spoken simply of me. For it is all one as if hee had sayd, Accustome your selues in such wise to bee kinde hearted, and to doe no deede of crueltie, as that euen the little birdes may feele it. Not onely practise you it among your selues; but also when yee see a little Bird, consider thus with your selues: so our Lord, to inure vs by better to vprightnes and reason, will haue vs to giue some proofe and witnesse of it euen towards the creatures which cannot complaine of vs. A young bird hath no way to craue reason at our hands, or to attempt an action against vs. Yet notwithstanding, albeit (to our seeming) there is no account to be made of them, neither is vprightnes to be vsed but among men; yet for all that God will haue vs willing to frame our affections the better thereby; that whē we come to deale with our neighbors, we may be restrained by it to say, What is it not lawfull for vs to be cruel to the Birdes: and howe may wee then bee cruell to such as are of our owne kinde, in whom wee see the image of God imprinted? Thus ye see what wee haue to remember in the first place, where our Lord speaketh so of little Birdes.

Nowe let vs come to the pith of this Lawe. It is sayd, *Thou shalt let the Damme goe, and onely take the young ones to thy selfe.* When a Henbird broodeth her young ones, therein we haue an image of a mothers durie towardes her children. And the sillie birdes doe sometimes teache vs our lesson, when men and women are so brutish, that GOD is fayne to send them to schoole to the beastes. For when as the Prophet Esay saith, The Oxe knoweth his Maisters stable, and the Asse knoweth his Crib: thereby hee ment to put men in minde of their leawdnesse, and as it were to vpbraide them thus, Yee bee woorse than the brute beastes, therefore go learne of them. For the Oxe in knowing his owne Crib or stall, doeth shewe you that you ought to knowe the Lorde your GOD. And seeing hee vouchsafeth to gather you into his flocke and into his Church, and yet you remaine woorse than the wilde beastes: doe ye not shew your selues to haue vtterly forgotten the order of nature? Nowe then, seeing that the birdes haue such a care of their young ones, surely they may teache men and women their lesson, when they shewe themselues to haue no care of their Children, as wee see some ryotous folke doe, which care not though they let their wiues and Children starue at home, without regarde thereof, and in the meane while goe and spende thrise as much at the taueme as would find their whole house. Againe there are mothers that haue no care at all of their children, all their seeking is to rid their hands of them, they cannot finde in their heartes to take the paines with them: wherein they shew themselues to be vtterly void of louingnesse and kindnesse, and to bee woorse than the brute beasts, which teache vs our lesson in this behalfe. For although the beasts haue no further care of their young, than til they be able to shift for themselues: yet are men taught their dewtie and charge thereby, and what they haue to doe all the time of their life. Why doe not the birds take care for their young ones, further forth than till they be able to shift for themselues? Because a bird is not created in the world to be gouerned by his sire and his dam all the time of his life. He is not bound to that: for he is a reasonles creature. But the case standeth not so with men. For euen when they be come to yeres of liberty, they must still be guided and gouerned by counsell, and their fathers and mothers must put them in mind of their dewty when they haue done amisse. This needeth not in the beasts: but yet doe the beasts discharge themselues of their duety so long til their yong ones be exempted out of their charge. And sith it is so, what shall men doe?

Let vs resorte to that which is sayd heere, namely, Thou shalt not catch the dam when shee sitteth vpon her young. And why? I see the dam brooding her yong ones, and (as we see) she had leuer suffer herselfe to bee eaten with vermine, than forsake her yong: she sitres there as vpon a torture, and shee passeth not for it. For why? Shee hath such a care of her yong, that shee forgetteth her selfe for their sakes. If ye demaund a reason of it, there is none that we know, but this, it is a naturall inclination and mouing impressed by God in birdes, that when they see their little ones, to their seeming they be deerer to them than their owne life. And although it bee a painefull thing to them to tary sitting there in such care: yet goe they to it with a cheerefull courage. Nowe when wee beholde this, is it not all one to vs as if we sawe a picture wherein God shewed vs our dewtie? Let fathers take warning heere, to trauell earnestly for their children. And as they ought to haue a care for the feeding and maintcyning of them: so must the mothers also doe their diligence in that behalfe, assuring themselues that it is an acceptable seruice to God, when they take such paines in respect that GOD hath bound them to that Condition, and that it behoueth them to yeeld thereunto, willingly and with a franke and free goodwill. Seeing then that wee see an Image of our charge, and God sheweth as it were with his finger, what dewtie fathers and mothers doe owe to their children: shall wee goe ouerthrow it, were not that all one as if a Child should goe burne his booke? When he hath a booke bought for him to goe to schoole with, and he teareth it in peeces, shal he not be beaten for it? Then if wee burne the booke which our Lorde sheweth vs, and wittingly defeate the order which hee hath set in nature, by playing the butchers in killing with our owne handes the silly bird, brought thereto by constraint of necessitie for the discharge of her fatherly and motherly duetie: what will become of vs? True it is that God hath giuen vs the birdes for our foode, as wee knowe hee hath made the whole worlde for vs. Yet notwithstanding if wee bee so cruell that wee will not spare the poore birdes, euen when they bee as it were vnder Gods tuition, imploying themselues in his seruice: is it not a refusing of the grace which he offereth vs, in setting before our eyes as in a lookingglasse, the duetie which we owe towardes those whom hee hath committed vnto vs? Yes verily. In so much that if wee bee not besides our wittes, and caryed with too cruell a rage, wee will haue pitie and compassion vppon the poore birdes, when wee see them yeelde their life in that sort, to discharge their duetie. And in deede, it shoulde seeme that men intended to defye God and nature, when they take the dammes so vppon their little ones. For they bee so leane, that they bee as it were frothe or slime. Nowe our Lorde meant to restraine men, and to shewe them that their lustes are altogither out of order. As if he should say, What will ye doe? Ye see there is no substance or strength in them. For during the time that I take them into my tuition, they be not good for sustenance. Now then if a man bee so cruell towardes the birdes without hauing regard hereto: surely he wil be cruel to his neighbours also. And he that maketh no sticking nor cõscience to kil birdes in their breeding time, will also cut his neighbors throat if he thinke he may haue any gaine by it. Thus wee see nowe why our Lorde hath tolde vs that hee woulde haue the Broodbirdes to bee in safetie though their young ones bee taken from them. Hereby we bee taught so to vse Gods creatures, as the vse of them may bee orderly, and specially that wee may inure our selues to pitie and compassion all our life long. For to that ende is this commaundement to bee referred. As I sayde afore, GOD standeth not vppon the birdes, to put any great perfection therein: but hee ment to teache vs by an argument from the lesser to the greater after what maner we ought to behaue our selues towardes our neighbours. Therefore if we trouble any man whyle he is doing his dutie, and put him to any vexation vnder colour that he is busie in discharging himselfe towardes God and towards those to whom he is bound: we bee worthie of double blame. If a man disquiet a nurce or a mother in doing her duetie towardes her child, surely it is double crueltie. The instruction that wee must take hereat, is that euery of vs must straine himselfe to help his neighbours. When we see them take paines to doe the things that God hath inioyned them, we must indeuor to succour them, & no man is to bee troubled or molested in that behalfe. For if it be not lawfull to trouble them, what may we do towards them that are ioyned vnto vs, as our brethren, as hath bin declared heretofore?

Nowe it followeth, *that when a man buildeth a house, he must make battlements or railes about the roofe of it.* This serued for the houses of Iewrie. For there they builded their houses with flat roofes, and in all the East Countries they haue kept the same fashion still to this day. And in that respect our Lord Iesus Christ said, looke what ye heare now tolde in secret, ye shal preach hereafter vpon the house toppes. When wee reade this text, it seemeth strange to vs, if we haue an eye to the forme of building that is vsed here in these countries. For how shall a man get vp to the house top, to preach there? But their houses were made like Towers, that a man might walke vp and downe vppon them. Now if those had no battlements or railes, men had beene in daunger to haue fallen downe from them. For their children went vp to the tops of their houses, whereby many might haue beene slaine through want of heede; sometime a mans seruant, sometime a chambermaide, and consequently a child might haue fallen downe, and so all should haue bin in daunger. Now our Lorde commandeth thē to prouide aforehand for it, by making battlements about their houses. But wee must first of all aduise our selues whereunto all the sayinges are referred, which are set downe heere. Following the keye which I haue giuen already, which is that there are but ten articles

whereby

whereby to rule our whole life well: we must not goe seeke for fiue legges in one sheepe, as they say: but we must alwayes hold vs to this point, ỹ God gaue vs a perfect rule of all righteousnesse and iust dealing, when he comprised his Law in two Tables and in ten commaundements. Now whereas here is mention made of building mens houses in such sort as they bring not bloud vpon them; hereby we see how our Lord hath shewed vs how deere the liues of al men ought to be vnto vs. Marke that for one point. And so haue we the exposition of this commaundement, Thou shalt not kill. But is it ynough for a man, ỹ he abstaine from murthering, from cutting of throats, from beating, and from vexing his neighbour? Truly it would be abhorred, if it were but spoken of in common speeche: but God hath yet a further respect in forbidding murder. Why is that? Let vs come to this reason: that forasmuch as mans life is precious vnto him: therefore it followeth that wee must preserue our neighbours liues to the vttermost of our power. For although wee offer them no violence, yet shall wee not be discharged. But euery of vs must looke that hee vse no anoyaunce, nor giue any cause or occasion of harme or losse to insewe to our neighbour. Yee see then howe our Lorde hath taught vs yet better in this text, the thing which he had spoken afore when hee sayd, Thou shalt not kill. And so according to my rule, wee must come to ỹ foreseid owne and foreexpressed commaundement, Thou shalt not kill. Well, God maketh there but a single forbidding: but yet must we learn thereby to seek al the meanes we can to maintaine the life of our neighbour. Thou wouldest not that any man shoulde put thee in daunger of thy lyfe, but rather that hee should preserue it, and that thou mightest not be in perill by another mans ouersight. Therefore looke that thou yeeld ỹ like minde to thy neighbour.

Moreouer let vs marke that heere God hath vsed the part comprehended the whole. Hee speaketh of the making of battlements or Railes vpon the rooues of mens houses: but it is all one as if he had said, whensoeuer men build, let them bee well ware to build after such a sort, as no inconuenience may insue therof. Many be so grosse wonted, that they make things in their houses as it were of set purpose to intrappe them that come in: so as a man had needs of good skill where to set his foote, and if hee bee not very ware and looke well to himselfe, hee shal be in daunger to breake his necke. There are some which bee so ill disposed. And God sayth that he which doeth so, bringeth bloud vpon his house, that is to say, defileth his house with mans bloud. Nowe then, let vs looke wel about vs, and let vs so seeke our owne commodities, as our building may bee without daunger. And why? For otherwise wee shulbee worthie of blame. But (as hath beene declared already) we haue to gather vpon this text, that God doth well vouchsafe to lay for the preseruing of our liues, & to prouide aforehand for all inconueniences, that none of vs may fall in daunger. For as much then as wee see that GOD hath such a fatherly care of vs: haue we not cause to acknowledge his gracious goodnesse, and to be vtterly ruinshed at it? Therefore although our dewtie bee shewed vs heere; that is to say, although God tell vs that euery of vs ought to prouide for the safegarde of his neighbours life: yet haue wee another good lesson to gather here, namely that GOD descendeth hither vnto vs, and sheweth that hee hath his eye vpon our life, and that he intendeth to bee the defender thereof. Nowe sith wee see this, haue wee not a singular recorde of his goodnesse? Yee see howe our bodyes are but Carions: and yet GOD vouchsafeth to mayntaine them, and giueth vs heere a commaundement to prouide long aforehande for the daungers that may insue to it, that it may bee preserued from them. Ought not the sight of all these things to touch vs to the quicke, and to make vs to magnifie the goodnes of out God?

And furthermore, when we know this goodnesse, as in respect of this present life and this world: let vs mount vp one step higher, and not doubt but hee hath a farre greater care of our soules, as hee sheweth by experience. And therefore let vs rest boldly vppon him, and not doubt but wee shall bee preserued if wee abyde vnder his protection, and play not the loose Coultes, but come broode our selues vnder his winges (as the Scripture sayeth) not doubting but hee will keepe vs safe and sounde. And besides this, let vs marke also, that if they which put their neighbours in perill of their bodyes are guiltie before GOD: much more shall they bee accountable to him, which cast any stumblingblocke in their neighbours wayes, whereby they be turned from the way of saluation. If a man shoote at aduenture and wounde one as hee passeth by, hee is worthy of blame, yea and of punishment too. For why? Men ought to looke one to another. Am I to be excused if I shoote at aladuenture and kill a poore man that mistrusted no such thing? Nay, I ought to be aduised for him aforehand. Euen so is it with all other lyke thinges. Insomuch that if any neighbour fall into any misshappe through my fault or negligence, it is an offence committed against GOD, and the world also knoweth such thinges to bee punishable. But I make my neighbour to stumble, not onely to the breaking of his arme or of his leg, yea or euen of his necke: but also to the destroying of his soule: and what a thing is that? For wee see that the stumbling blocks which are cast in mens wayes, serue to the vtter destruction and casting downe of the silly soules that were puchased by the bloud of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Therefore when men procure troubles & stumbling blocks in the Church, doe they not cause the thinges to goe to destruction, which God had begun to build vp? And is not that one of ỹ highest points of treason against God? Therefore let vs looke to our selues, and seeing ỹ God hath such a care of our persons, let euery of vs follow his example: & if we prouide aforehand ỹ no hurt may befal

to mens bodies, let vs haue much greater regard of their soules.

And moreouer, let vs marke what is sayde heere concerning euery mans house. For if a man giue euill example to his household: he not onely bringeth bloud vpon his house, that is to say, he not onely defileth the house wherein he dwelleth, but also he bringeth much worse vpon it, that is to say, all manner of cursednesse, and hee prouoketh Gods wrath. There is a man which is a despiser of all Religion, hee passeth not to haue GOD dishonoured in his house, nay hee neuer openeth his mouth, but to the spewing out of some blasphemie or diuelishnesse: againe on the other side his wife is a harlot, or a drunkard, or a feend of hell, vtterly voyde of the feare of GOD, voyde of courtesie, voyde of modestie: and besides all this, there are a great sorte of other euil examples to bee seene there in diuers maners: and is not the dooing of all these thinges a wilfull defiling of his owne house? And what can come thereof? When a man hath goods, and a great household, if in the meane while hee defile the place that was giuen him and wherein hee dwelleth, so as all is full of filth, as for example, his children are ill nurtured, his seruauntes are vntruly, and in stead of giuing themselues to the seruice of God, there is nothing but looseneſse and cause of offence: what other can come of it than is sayde in this text, namely that his house is defiled? And therefore let vs marke, that after our Lorde had declared in this text, that all those are counted for murderers before him, which are not careful to preserue all mens liues hee addeth likewise, that euery man must so prouide for his owne household, as no offence may bee committed there, and that the poore soules bee not destroyed: [as for example,] that the young children be not corrupted and marred by wicked bringing vp, nor the seruaunts and householdfolk see any thing that may offend them: but that the Maysters and Mistresses do so behaue themselues that GOD be honoured and serued, to the intent their house be not defiled and infected with the common filth of the worlde, but that wee may shewe that God raigneth there, so as his blessinges may be powred out vpon it in all respectes, as well of body as of soule.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs so to feele them more and more, as we may resorte to him as the Phisition that can heale vs of all our diseases: Praying him also, so to call vs home to himselfe, that with all sobernesse and modestie we may cast aforehand to keepe ourselues cleane and vndefiled for his seruice, and that therewithal we may euerichone of vs haue a care and regarde of our neighbours, being ready to helpe one another, & (as much as is possible) eschewe all anoyaunce and harme dooing: and that by this meane wee may with one common accorde shewe our selues to bee true children vnder him, and bee able to call vppon him with full trust. And for the bringing hereof to passe, it may please him to rayse vp true and faithfull Ministers of his woorde, &c.

On Wednesday the viij. of Ianuarie. 1556.

The Cxxviij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the two & twentith Chapter.

9 Thou shalt not sowe thy Vineyard with diuers kindes of seedes, least thou defile the increase of the seede which thou hast sowen and the fruite of the Vineyarde.

10 Thou shalt not plowe with an Oxe and an Asse together.

11 Thou shalt not cloath thy selfe with cloth of diuers sortes, as of wollen and linnen together.

12 Thou shalt make thee fringes vpon the foure quarters of thy vesture wherewith thou coueresst thy selfe.

THere is no doubt but God in forbidding the Iewes to sowe their Vineyardes with diuerse seedes, to clothe themselues with wouen garmentes of diuers stuffes, to plowe their grounde with an Oxe and an Asse, minded to bridle the multitude of inuentions which men forge vnto themselues, to alter the plaine simplicitie which we ought to hold vs vnto, and which nature it selfe hath taught vs. For the minde of man is a wonderfull storehouse alwayes to deuise some one thing or other. And (as a man by dayly experience may see) it keepeth therein neyther meane nor measure. Nowe all this while superfluities in all thinges encrease dayly. For men giue themselues ouer only to delights and pleasures, to their gorgeous pompes and braueries, and I knowe not what trimmesse (as they terme it:) so as they haue cleane forgotten to liue after

common order, and according to that vse and fashion wherewith men ought to content themselues, if they had any stayednesse or sobrietie in them. Wee see (I say) howe men giue the bridle to their lustes, and take to themselues such lawlesse libertie, that there is nothing but a iangle mangle in the whole order of nature. Nowe our Lorde minding to holde his people in some modestie, hath spoken in this place more grossely, and vnder certaine particular things, meant to shewe them, howe he liketh of plaine simplicitie, to the intent hee might refraine such straunge deuises as dayly arise, and that men although their lusts bee so tickle, should not be ouercurious, but liue and hold themselues in such contentation, as to say: Well, that which the Lord hath giuen vs ought to suffice vs if any reason might content vs. And therefore let vs not bee set vppon such wandering fansies as alwayes to deuise some thing or other without any ende, neither let euerie man bring his peece of deuise, and trauayle vainely in marrying themselues to satisfie their inordinate desires: but let vs enioye the benefites which GOD hath bestowed vppon vs, howbeit in such wise as that wee remember howe his minde is that wee shoulde vse them soberlie. Ye see then what the meaning of God is which we haue to beare in minde touching this place;

Nowe a man might treat very largely of euerie matter, & yet we in the meane while should reape small profite therby: because wee should not vnderstand the true marke which God heere aymed at. We must therefore begin at this point; I say wil, to know why God forbad the Iewes to sowe in this sorte diuers seedes in one vineyard, to cloath themselues with garmentes of diuers things, and to plowe their ground with an oxe and an asse. But let vs nowe returne to euery of these lawes. It is said *Thou a man shalt not mingle seedes together*: as it is spoken heereof likewise in the 19. Chapter of Leuiticus: For God there vseth a preface saying, Yee shal keepe my statutes. And hee doeth it because wee alwaies alledge examples to cloake our faultes withall, and leane our selues in hande, that if others doe any thing, all ought to bee lawfull for vs. But God bereaueth his people of all such excuses by saying, Know yee that I am your gouernour: follow me, and hold your selues to my will. And this word is well worth the noting, to the intent we behinke our selues well that if the Lord haue once giuen vs his word to the contrary, we must not presume on the liberty of dooing that which is commonly vsed among others. And why? Sith God is so gratious vnto vs as to guide vs, let vs stay our selues on him.

But now he saith, *Ye shal not sow diuers seedes*. And why so (saith he) *so thou mightest sanctifie that which thou hast sowen and the fruit also which might come of thy vine*. Now this term of sanctifying or hallowing betokeneth as much as if it were said: thou shalt bereaue thy selfe of thy vine, and of the fruite which thou shouldest gather thereof. And GOD sheweth heereby, howe his will is that there should be true and plaine dealing among the people of Israell, and that if a man sowe corne, hee should make such lawfull marchandise thereof without any mingling, as that a man might say: see heere is Wheate, here is Barely, here are Beanes, heere are Pease, when euery graine is seueral by it selfe. For if the seede bee not pure, what shall come thereof, but that the people shall be deceiued? And besides that also there shall not be one simple and naturall maner of foode as ought to bee. Moreouer here is mention made of sowing the Vineyardes, because that in those countries the vines are very large: for they are bigger than ours, and in fashion like, but they be very large, and the grapes also very great, insomuch that there they must haue more roome or space for them. In effect we see now how our Lordes meaning was, that the ground should be so sowen, ỹ the victailes which were sold among his people, should be simple & all in their seueral kindes, and herein he compriseth that which we haue aboue touched, namely that men shoulde alter nothing but maintaine the order of nature.

But now if the corne be falsly mingled in the garner, is it not all one, yea and more too, than if the corne had bin mingled in the field? Therefore when that which ought to serue for ỹ nourishment of men, is so chaunged from his owne kinde, there is no true dealing therein. And yet for all that, we see how suttle men are in this behalfe and howe they will yet alwayes haue some new fashions, some for their lurre, & othersome for some other respect, or to feede some curious humor of theirs. It were much better we holde fast ỹ order which our Lord hath appointed. For ỹ is the very rule which we ought to follow. And although there were no great euill in dooing otherwise, yet we ought alwayes to hold vs hereunto. Seeing God hath deliuered vs this rule, ỹ there should be simplicitie or singlenes as I may terme it among vs: let vs followe it. But wee see farther, ỹ al these medlies which are made in things, proceede either frō some craftie wilines & deceit: or from a certaine curiositie & ambition: and secondly that they tend vnto a wicked gaine, namely when men haue no regard vnto ỹ losse of their neighbour, but euery man is giuen ouermuch to think on himself, as who wold say: O this will serue my turne very well, I shall haue the better vtterance of it, & the thing will not be so easily espied; or else it will passe well ynough with other ware, and it will be neuertheless esteemed; but I shall finde vppon my reckening that it was so much ỹ more to my gaine. Therefore sith we see that these medlies proceede frō so euill a roote, and tend to so wicked an end, are they not to bee doublie condemned? Yes verily. But yet herewithall let vs beare in minde, (as I haue tolde you before) that when GOD woulde not that the seedes should be mingled in the fielde, hee forbad alwell all other mixtures which are made of any wicked purpose. If wine bee newe brewed in the Hogsheade, is it not as yll or rather woorse then if one vsed this

to mens bodies, let vs haue much greater regard of their soules.

And moreouer, let vs marke what is sayde heere concerning euery mans house. For if a man giue euill example to his household: he not onely bringeth blame vpon his house, that is to say, he not onely defileth the house wherein he dwelleth, but also he bringeth much worse vpon it, that is to say, all manner of cursednesse, and hee prouoketh Gods wrath. There is a man which is a despiser of all Religion, hee passeth not to haue GOD dishonoured in his house, nay hee neuer openeth his mouth, but to the spewing out of some blasphemie or diuelishnesse: againe on the other side his wife is a harlot, or a drunkard, or a feend of hell, vtterly voyde of the feare of GOD, voyde of courtesie, voyde of modestie: and besides all this, there are a great sorte of other euill examples to bee seene there in diuers maners: and is not the dooing of all these thinges a wilfull defiling of his owne house? And what can come thereof? When a man hath goods, and a great household, if in the meane while hee defile the place that was giuen him and wherein hee dwelleth, so as all is full of filth, as for example, his children are ill nurtured, his seruauntes are vntruly, and in stead of giuing themselues to the seruice of God, there is nothing but loosenesse and cause of offence: what other can come of it than is sayde in this text, namely that his house is defiled? And therefore let vs marke, that after our Lorde had declared in this text, that all those are counted for murderers before him, which are not careful to preserue all mans house hee addeth likewise, that euery man must prouide for his owne household, as no offence may bee committed there, and that the poore soules bee not destroyed: [as for example,] that the young children be not corrupted and marred by wicked bringing vp, nor the seruants and household folk see any thing that may offend them: but that the Maysters and Mistresses do so behaue themselues that GOD be honored and serued, to the intent their houses be not defiled and infected with the common filth of the worlde, but that wee may shewe that God raigneth there, so as his blessinges may be powred out vpon it in all respectes, as well of body as of soule.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs so to feele them more and more, as we may resorte to him as to the Phisition that can heale vs of all our diseases: Praying him also, so to call vs home to himselfe, that with all soberneſſe and modestie we may cast aforehand to keepe ourselues cleane and vndefiled for his seruice: and that therewithal we may euerichone of vs haue a care and regarde of our neighbours, being ready to helpe one another, & (as much as is possible) eschewe all anoyaunce and harme dooing: and that by this meane wee may with one common accorde shewe our selues to bee true children vnto him, and bee able to call vppon him with full trust. And for the bringing hereto &c. it may please him to rayse vp true and faithfull Ministers of his woorde, &c.

On Wednesday the viij. of Ianuarie. 1556.

The Cxxvij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the two & twentith Chapter.

9 Thou shalt not sowe thy Vineyard with diuers kindes of seedes, least thou defile the increase of the seede which thou hast sowen and the fruite of the Vineyarde.

10 Thou shalt not plowe with an Oxe and an Asse together.

11 Thou shalt not cloath thy selfe with cloth of diuers sortes, as of woollen and linnen together.

12 Thou shalt make thee fringes vpon the foure quarters of thy vesture wherewith thou coueresst thy selfe.

THere is no doubt but God in forbidding the Iewes to sowe their Vineyardes with diuerse seedes, to clothe themselues with woouen garments of diuers stuffes, to plowe their grounde with an Oxe and an Asse, minded to bridle the multitude of inuentions which men forge vnto themselues, to alter the plaine simplicitie which we ought to hold vs vnto, and which nature it selfe hath taught vs. For the minde of man is a wonderfull storehouse alwayes to deuise some one thing or other. And (as a man by dayly experience may see) it keepeth therein neyther meane nor measure. Nowe all this vaine superfluities in all thinges encrease dayly: For men giue themselues ouer only to delights and pleasures, to their gorgeous pompes and braueries, and I knowe not what trimmelle (as they terme it,) so as they haue cleane forgotten to liue after

vse.

common order, and according to that vse and fashion wherewith men ought to content themselues, if they had any stayednesse or sobrietie in them. Wee see (I say) howe men giue the bridle to their lustes, and take to themselues such lowlesse libertie, that there is nothing but a meere mangle in the whole order of nature. Nowe our Lorde minding to holde his people in some modestie, hath spoken in this place more grossely, and vnder certaine particular things, meant to shewe them, howe he liketh of plaine simplicitie, to the intent hee might restraine such straunge deuises as dayly arise, and that men although their lustes bee so tickish, should not be ouercurious, but liue and hold themselues in such contentation, as to say: Well, that which the Lord hath giuen vs ought to suffice vs if any reason might content vs. And therefore let vs not bee set vppon such wandering fancies as alwayes to deuise some thing or other without any ende, neither let euerie man bring his peece of deuise, and trauayle vainely in querying themselues to satisfie their inordinate desires: but let vs enioye the benefites which GOD hath bestowed vppon vs, howbeit in such wise as that wee remember howe his minde is that wee shoulde vse them soberlie. Yet let vs see what the meaning of God is which we haue to beare in minde touching this place.

Nowe a man might treat very largely of euery sentence, & yet we in the meane while should reape small profite therby: because wee should not vnderstand the true marke which God heere meeteth. We must therefore begin at this point; I say, to know why God forbad the Iewes to sowe in this sorte diuers seedes in one vineyard, to cloath themselues with garmentes of diuers things, and to plowe their ground with an oxe and an asse. But let vs nowe returne to euery of these lawes. It is said *Thou a man shalt not mingle seede together*: as it is spoken heereof likewise in the 19. Chapter of Leuiticus: For God there vseth a preface saying, Yee shall keepe my statutes. And hee doeth it because wee alwaies alledge examples to cloake our faultes withall, and lean our selues in hande, that if others doe any thing, all ought to bee lawfull for vs. But God beateth his people of all such excuses by saying, Know yee that I am your gouernour: follow me, and hold your selues to my will. And this word is well worth the noting, to the intent we bethinke our selues well that if the Lord haue once giuen vs his word to the contrary, we must not presume on the liberty of dooing that which is commonly vsed among others. And why? Sith God is so gratious vnto vs as to guide vs, let vs stay our selues on him.

But now he saith, *Ye shal not sow diuers seedes*. And why so (saith he)? *so shoulde the seede sanctified & which should come of thy seede, and the fruite also which might come of thy vine*. Now this terme of sanctifying or hallowing betokeneth as much as if it were said: thou shalt bereaue thy selfe of thy vine, and of the fruite which thou shouldest gather thereof. And GOD meaneth heereby, howe his will is that there should be true and plaine dealing among the people of Israell, and that if a man sowe corne, hee should make such lawefull marchandise thereof without any mingling, as that a man might say: see heere is Wheate, here is Barely, here are Beanes, heere are Pease, when euery graine is seueral by it selfe. For if the seede bee not pure, what shall come thereof, but that the people shall be deceiued? And besides that also there shall not be one simple and naturall maner of foode as ought to bee. Moreouer here is mention made of sowing the Vineyardes, because that in those countries the vines are very large: for they are bigger than ours, and in fashion like, but they be very large, and the grapes also very great, insomuch that there they must haue more roome or space for them. In effect we see now how our Lordes meaning was, that the ground should be so sowen, ỹ the victailes which were sold among his people, should be simple & all in their seueral kindes, and herein he compriseth that which we haue aboue touched, namely that men shoulde alter nothing but maintaine the order of nature.

But now if the corne be falsly mingled in the garner, is it not all one, yea and more too, than if the corne had bin mingled in the field? Therefore when that which ought to serue for ỹ nourishment of men, is so chaunged from his owne kinde, there is no true dealing therein. And yet for all that, we see how suttle men are in this behalfe and howe they will yet alwayes haue some new fashions, some for their lucre, & othersome for some other respect, or to feede some curious humor of theirs. It were much better we helde fast ỹ order which our Lord hath appointed. For ỹ is the very rule which we ought to follow. And although there were no great euill in dooing otherwise, yet we ought alwayes to hold vs hereunto. Seeing God hath deliuered vs this rule, ỹ there should be simplicitie or singlenes as I may terme it among vs: let vs followe it. But wee see farther, ỹ all these medlies which are made in things, proceede either frō some craftie wilines & deceit: or from a certaine curiositie & ambition: and secondly that they tend vnto a wicked gaine, namely when men haue no regard vnto ỹ losse of their neighbour, but euery man is giuen ouermuch to think on himselfe, as who would say: O this will serue my turne very well, I shall haue the better vtterance of it, & the thing will not be so easily espied: or else it will passe well ynough with other ware, and it will be neuerthelesse esteemed, but I shall finde vppon my reckening, that it was so much ỹ more to my gaine. Therefore sith we see that these medlies proceede frō so euill a roote, and tend to so wicked an end, are they not to bee doublie condemned? Yes verily. But yet herewithall let vs beare in minde, (as I haue tolde you before) ỹ when GOD woulde not that the seedes should be mingled in the fielde, hee forbad alwell all other mixtures which are made of any wicked purpose. If wine bee newe brewed in the Hogsheade, is it not as yll or rather woorse then if one vsed this

this mingling in the Vineyarde? So then let vs haue an eye to the meaning of GOD. Let vs content our selues with single simplicitie, and at a woorde, let vs maintaine the order of nature.

Now he addeth: *Ye shall not plowe your ground with an Oxe and an Asse.* Here may be had a double respect, the first is touching the beastes, who if they bee not alike coupled, haue the more painefull trauaile. The second is touching the earing of the ground, which cannot bee doone so orderly by this meanes: nay it cannot bee done at al. And here he purposely maketh mention of Asses. For they had other maner of Asses in that countrie thā we haue here. For they serued to beare great burthens, as able there unto as Moyles, which are foure fold stronger & mightier than the Mules of our countrie. And therfore if one should couple an Oxe and an Asse together, there would bee such inequalitie, that the Oxe would bee much more grieued then if hee were matched with his like, and the Asse in like manner. And why? For they are not in nature matched well together. Nowe albeit God ordaine not like Lawes for all other beastes: yet (as wee haue seene before) his will is that men should vse them so farre foorth with gentlenesse, that they shoulde pitie the beastes which they employ to their vse and seruice. For he that will shewe himselfe cruell towardes his horse or his Oxe, will be the same towards his neighbour. And men truely become hard hearted when they deale so cruelly with the beastes which God hath giuen into their handes to doe them seruice. For if they shew their cruelnie vpon the poore beastes which trauaile to their profit, it is a sure signe that they are of a crabbed nature, & that they would haue no more compassion vpon reasonable creatures. Yee see then what regard God had in making this Lawe. Againe (as I haue alreadie touched) the ground cannot be so well plowed, if the beastes be not matches: for when there is not obserued a iust and equal proportion betweene them, the labour can neuer proceede orderly. But wee must returne backe alwaies to that which we haue touched; namely that Gods will was y his people should not giue themselues vnto straunge inuentions, as we may see howe men alwayes runne this way and are greatly enclined thereunto. By forbidding all manner of mingling, he meant to traine vs vnto this point, that is to wit, that whereas God hath ordayned all thinges in this worlde to our vse and profit, that wee shoulde looke to our selues to keepe such a measure therein, that wee shoulde not mingle heauen and earth together, nor make an hodgpodge of all thinges when wee employ Gods creatures to our vse. And in very deede whereas he sayeth ye shall keepe my statutes, it is to teach vs that he will haue vs to represse all such loose libertie of ours. And although hee bound the Iewes more straitely by this commaundement than vs at these dayes; yet this doctrine belongeth also vnto vs, as shall bee heere anon more largely declared. Let vs come nowe vnto the thirde Lawe which is set downe heere. God forbiddeth the Iewes to clothe themselues with *garmentes woouen of Linnen and Woollen.* Heere wee may better vnderstande that which wee haue alreadie touched: namely, that men ought to keepe an order in things, and to contente vs with that playne simplicitie which God alloweth of, so as wee take not ouer boldely leaue to confounde all thinges, but consider to what ende euerie thing is ordayned. We haue flaxe and hemp and such like thinges: and we must apply euery of these thinges vnto our vse. Againe we haue woolle to make vs garmentes and diuers other things. When men vse superfluitie in these thinges, their clothing of diuersitie with them putteth them in minde of Gods prouidence, in that he hath more than a fatherly care of them. For haue we neede to be apparelled? We haue a shert, we haue a coate, we haue shoes. We see it: beholde, we haue leather to couer vs, we haue cloth to couer vs: and further ouer ouerplus, wee haue a shirt. And Lord how hast wel prouided for all! Hereof are wee put in minde. Nowe if men make a needle of things, surely they be come beastes in so doing: and Satan endeuoureth nothing more, than to blinde our eyes, to the intent wee shoulde make no account of this orderly difference, which God hath set in all partes of the world, that wee might beholde therein his infinite wisedome which shineth in all things, and his sourraigne goodnesse whereby he sheweth and declareth himselfe our father. Satans whole desire therefore, is that all should be confused, and that men should blindely waste things here belowe, without any consideration that God hath forgotte nothing which might serue for their vses and necessities. Let vs therefore marke diligently, that when God forbad the Iewes to apparell themselues with woouen garmentes of diuers stuffes, it was meant they should apply all things to their proper vse, and haue this regard of things to say: Why hath God giuen this into our handes? To what purpose must it serue vs? So that men shoulde not be led with any excessiue curiositie, but be contented to haue the naturall vse of things, in such sort as God offereth them. I haue told you heretofore that the bondage which is nowadayes, is not such as was vnder the Lawe: for wee haue greater libertie than the people which lined vnder it, whom God held as little children, as Saint Paul sayth. Nowe wee know that it is needefull that little children shoulde bee ordered with a more straite, and as it were slauish gouernment. And why? Bicause their age will not yet suffer such libertie to bee yeelded vnto them as vnto others. Yet neuerthelater, that which men teach little children, is to the intent they shoulde obserue and doe it when they come to mans state. Their increasing in age deliuereth them indeede from the rodde and such other strictnesse; but yet must they keepe still that honestie and those vertues also wherein they were trayned vp when they were but children. Euen so although our Lorde Iesus Christ haue deliuered vs from so strayte a bonde as were the ceremonies of the lawe: yet the substance thereof remaineth

teacheth alwayes vnto vs (and to be short) we shall beare in minde that God hath spoke those things vnto vs as well as vnto the Iewes, although in his after an other manner: for wee are now to gather, that al confusions & medlies are hatefull vnto him. And why? Because his wil is that we should vse those benefites which he bestoweth on vs, soberly, that wee shoulde not wallow in our delightes, nor maintaine any beastlinesse among vs. And therefore let vs not take our headen with deuising of new inuentions for all playes dealing aside, to haue no other refuge but to lay baytes for monie, as in very deede all those fine deuises tend to none other end but to picke mens purses. Oh see here a notable inuention (saith one,) & by & by fooles come flocking vnto it: and empties their purses by it. If men would content themselues with plaine simplicitie, euery man should spend lesse, and bee serued also with lesse. But when men goe so farre astray, there is no bo with them. For hee that beginneth to be talking of this new thing, and by such thing he must needes be corrupted in other things. And this is an occasion of the enhaunsing of wares, and to make them more sleight-able then they would be, if euery man walked soberly and soundly in that behalfe. And so ye see what we haue at this day to gather vpon this

Truely the desires of men are so infinite, and so endlesse and horrible pittes: that it should be a long matter to gather all that might be said vpon this place: neuertheless it behoueth vs to haue a minde thereof. And againe, when wee shall haue heard the thinges in generall which God meant to teach vs here: euery of vs must addresse himself to the putting thereof in practise, and examine the same particularly in our deedes, according to the obiects (that is to say occasions) which are offered vs. We haue already sayd that our Lorde meant to restraine vs vnto a sober & moderate vse of his benefites. And therefore seeing that whē men be ouerlauish and mingle thinges together to satisfie their lustes, it is a defiling of the benefits of God. It is sayd: *Thou hast defiled*, that is to say, thou defileſt. *The first fruits of thy seede*, that is to say, the thinges which thou shouldest gather. For the Hebrewes take sometime this word Holy for cursed. Yea and the name also hence which they vse is deriued hence, as a cursed thing which we ought not to touch. For a holy thing and that which is dedicated vnto God ought not to be touched. After the same maner, that which is defiled and cursed is called sanctified, (that is to say such a thing as a man must not touch) although it bee in an other respect. And so it is said that we sanctifie the fulnes or increase of the benefites which God giueth vs, when we apply thē vnto an ill vse. Let vs therefore note, that we vnhallow the pure and naturall vse of Gods benefites, when we for our lustes sake doe make any great mingling of them. Now we are not to seeke for this vice onely in the fields, where wheate is mingled with otes or with some other graines: but we must also cast our eye vpon our tables, where there is vsed such varietie, as would make a man to wonder. Whereby it is to be seene how men are giuen ouer vnto this vice: so as they labour to disguise all thinges, and they seeme to haue conspired to alter and chaunge whatsoeuer is in nature. I pray you is it not a defiling of thinges, when men doe so disguise the order of God? Is it not euen a spring of him? And are we worthie to enioy the benefits which he bestoweth on vs, when we know not how to keepe any meane in them? If a man perceiue a childe to cramme himselfe without measure; to take away that vice he will cut his morsels smaller. And if he perceiue that he is ouer lickerous and giuen to his lusts, he will giue him the cleane contrarie to that which he desireth. And why? Because that otherwise hee marreth him cleane. And if he should bee suffred still in his delightes, hee should bee vndone when he is olde. Seeing it is so, If when wee come to mans estate, wee so abuse the benefites which GOD hath distributed vnto vs in so good order, and we mingle them together, so as no varietie can please vs; must not our Lorde needes see to it, and vse a forcible remedie, when hee perceiueth that by our good will wee can not keepe any stay? If one demaund of mee, and say; yea sir, but are all minglinges, sinne? No. I will not speake so strictly. Yet neuertheleſſe the beginning of them proceeded from a wicked desire. They which inuented so many varieties to feede the foule appetites of men, did questionlesse offend God, and wee ought to detest them, notwithstanding that they haue bin lyked of in their time, and that men haue said: Oh here is an excellent cookerie here is a good Steward. Although they haue gayned glory by making so many delicates, and by their compounding of so many thinges to make their fine and new sauces, and I know not what other conceites to feede the humors of such as desire to bee entertained ouerdelicately like: yet must wee detest such thinges: and it were to bee wished that such men had had their mothers wombe for their graue. But now what haue wee to doe, but to represse al superfluitie, and all that euer maketh vnto vice? Ought wee not to indeuour this with all our might? Yea verily. But what? Euery of vs is so farre from mending of one, that it seemeth rather that wee intend to pleade prescription against God. Whatsoeuer is told vs, wee fare not the better by it one whit. And why? Because we haue taken it vp of custome. Yea, but God wil in the end shewe, that there is no lawfull possession, but such as is ruled by his lawe, and according vnto his will. Nay doubt wee not but GOD will punishe such superfluities, by cutting our commons shorter. In deede our nature is inclined to this wickednesse of reachlesse confounding of thinges, which God had distinguished: but yet must wee therefore feele the tokens of his anger, when he sheweth not himselfe so liberall a father towardes vs as hee was woont to doe. And if wee were wise or but well aduised, wee would not waite for the declaration hereof. That which is said

here woulde suffice vs, namely that we ought not to mingle the creatures of God, but alwayes to holde vs vnto a plaine simplicitie in our maner of liuing. Ye see then what wee are to note touching our meate and drinke, namelie, that men ought so to content themselues with that which they haue, that being nourished of God they may reknowledge it in this sorte: Behold, our God hath a care to feede vs, and wee may well see that he is a father towardes vs, in that hee sheweth himselfe to haue so great a care of our lyfe: Let men therefore take heede that they be not drunken with their delicacies, and besotted in their varieties, but ꝙ they haue an eye alwayes vnto God. Now the lyke ought also to be obserued in our apparaile. It is said in effect that a man shall not clothe himselfe with diuers sortes. This serueth to teach vs, that we ought to keepe as great sobrietie as wee can possiblie, aswel in our apparaile as in our meates and drinkes. For if men decke themselues with diuers sortes, and vse in their attire many fond disguisings, whereof procedeth it? surely nature teacheth them no such thing. For the heathen men had skill to say, that if euery man would so loue nature herein, there needed not such varieties of meats or diuersities of apparaile. Men of themselues doe martyr themselues. Lo what our lustes doe leade vs to! For they busie vs in taking paynes about this and that, and make vs also to trouble others: and so all ꝙ world is disquieted. And why is that? If we could be content, wee shoulde liue much more quietly. But we are still giuen vnto superfluities; and that is the cause why wee can haue no end of our trauailes: we are become lyke the damned soules. And where is ꝙ fault thereof, but in our selues? So then let vs note (as I haue touched already) that these diuers sorts of varieties which men long after, serue for so many warrants to prooue, that we cannot stay within the true contentation of nature. I graunt it were but a meere follie to hold vs to the rigor and extreme precisenesse of liuing which some fantasticall and brainsicke men haue vsed: that wee should be contented with nature, ꝙ we must haue neither glasse nor goblet, but our bare hand only to drink out of: these be follies in deed. Nay, whē our Lord vseth liberalitie towards vs, let vs consider of it. It is sayd in ꝙ 104. psalme, ꝙ God hath bestowed on men, not only bread and water for the necessitie of their lyfe, but also wine to comfort their harts and to make them merrie. Whē we see ꝙ God of his exceeding grace giueth vs beyond our very necessitie that which we neded not, well: let vs accept of his liberalitie, & know that he giueth vs leaue to vse it in good conscience with giuing of thankes. He could wel bring forth corn for our sustenance although no bloome came before it, and hee could wel enough cause fruite of the trees to encreace wour either leafe or blossome. But wee see how our Lord intended to delight all our sences, and meant to present vs with his blessinges in all sortes, and in all the creatures which he offereth vnto vs to reioyce in. So then this barbarous rigor, that men should bee debarred of that which God hath bestowed vppon them, is not to bee spoken of, or admitted. Let vs but onely restreine our contagious desires: & let vs consider well of that which God graunteth vnto vs, to goe so farre forth, and no further whē we once perceiue that the thing is not lawful before God.

Psal. 104. 14 & 15.

Now our Lord commaundeth vs to keepe our selues vnto plaine simplicitie. It followeth then, that all needelesse minglinges and disguisings of thinges, are alwayes euill. For they are so many vices which God reproueth. And if this wickednesse bee euidently seene in meates and drinkes, it is yet more apparantly knowen in apparaile. I pray you to what excesse are wee growen herein nowadayes? In deede this wickednesse raigned in men long agoe: and it was for naught that the scripture speaketh thereof, but yet it is much more nowadayes than euer it was. The Prophet Esay speaking of the state of women because they were so curious in trimming vp themselues, and had such a sorte of petie trinkets, deciphereth them particularly as if he had had some inuentorie of their Chistes, euen from ꝙ crowne of their head vnto the sole of their feete; as their ouches and broches and such lyke knackes: And hee tels them that God can well skill to make a violent reformation seeing they were so set vppon their brauerie and toke no care of amending that wickednesse. So we may see nowadayes more of this than euer was heretofore, and no varietie can please men. They are as it were beginning still a fresh deuise some new thing or other, and are neuer at an ende. And what is the cause hereof, but that we shew in deed, how we haue no care at all of our soules, when we are so busied about our bodies, that we let our soules to ruft, when through our foolish desires we seeke so many beautifull deckings & such strange inuentions to make a shew of our selues to the worldward? Let vs therefore note that all these curiosities doe bewray that men and women despise God: because they cannot hold themselues within the order of nature which is the true rule to liue by, and so consequently they defile the vse of his creatures. So then we must not stand so much on the threedes where ꝙ our garments are wouen, as who would say, God hath forbidden vs to weare Linsey-wolsey: but wee must vnderstande that our Lordes meaning is, we should obserue a simple & natural fashiō in our apparail, & not vse such gorgious slimflams to disguise things nor to seek after such superfluous deckings. For when we doe so, it is al one as if a matt would come & disorder an whole house. For example sake, there is an household well ordered: now if one would come and ouerturne the pottes and platters, and mingle the sheetes with the handtowels and table-napkins, and so tumble all thinges together, what a thing woulde that bee? The lyke is done when we cannot keepe such measure as to apply vnto our vse that which God hath giuen, yea which hee hath giuen vs (as I haue told you) on condition that wee should eschewe all excesse, and not mingle thinges togeather after

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our owne fantasies. Now if this were well noted, we would by effect shewe that wee are a people chosen out for God, and that we haue his word which withholdeth vs from intermingling our selues with the defilementes of this world. But if a man would lay forth all the vices which are committed in this behalfe, one sermon woulde not serue. For we see to what a maze this wickednesse is growen at this day. And that is a great shame. But yet for al that, euery man looketh to his owne profite. When we see that mens fond desires tickle them, then beginne wee to reare vp some new deuice in our braine: and this will be trimme (saith one,) I must needes haue another new deuice and yet an other, & yet a third to that. There is no talke of the necessitie, nor of the vse of thinges: but first of pleasing the eies of men, and secondly alwayes of making our gayne. And is mony spent vpon those superfluities? Wee must finde out more. And in the meane while there is nothing else but wickednesse, and naughtinesse, wilynesse, and vnfaithfulnesse among men. And I would to God this were not to be found. But wee ought to thinke better hereon than wee haue done. Ye see how we are to practise this doctrine, where God hauing spoken of food, commeth to speake of apparrell, and sayth, there shall be no such varietie as might serue to paint out men and to peruert al the simplicitie which is in nature. And in deed if our sight were not ouerdimme, we should easily discerne this matter, and say: this and this is inconuenient. But what? wicked custome hath so put vs out of the right way, that we be as blind beasts as Beetles. Why can we not iudge, that there is nothing but confusion in our lyfe? Because we are so drunken with the filthie dregges of our superfluities, that wee haue lost all sense and are become more than blockish. But if wee would take vnto vs such as haue liued in playne simplicitie, and bring them aside a little to behold how men leade their lyfe, and to see how they haue to day one thing, to morrow another, and how they are euery day to beginne againe, and how they are alwayes forging of some new deuices, to put that out of vse which was in fashion but three dayes agoe, and all to gaine mony afresh: and to see how others spend to maintaine their shewes and their braueries, if (I say) some of these good meaning men which haue bin brought vp in playnesse should see this: they would spit at such follies. But yet for all that we are not to be excused. Although our vices blinde vs, yet the Lawe of God shall alwayes remaine. It shall remaine (I say) to our vtter confusion, if we aduise not our selues better to reclaime our selues, and to reforme vs to that stayednesse which God hath commaunded vs.

Now it is sayd moreouer, *That the Iewes should make at the vtmost parts of their garmentes, fringes, or borders* that is to say, their garmentes shoulde haue a large border, and be plaighted in the edges: as mention is made hereof in the fifteenth Chap. of the booke of Nombers. For there it is sayd that they shall haue fine cordes or laces of silke to folde together the borders of their garments. And why? The reason is there expressed. For otherwise this place would be obscure. It is sayd here: thou shalt make thee fringes, or borders vpon the foure neathel partes, or quarters of thy garment. If there were no mo wordes than so, a man might demaund why, and not be answered. But God in that place sayth that that fashion should serue them for a monument: Thou shalt thinke thereby that thou art a people dedicated vnto God, who hath chosen thee to himselfe to be thy protectour. In so small a thing then God meant to admonish his people to say: see, Wee are not as the Paynims who walke after their owne fancies: for God hath deliuered vnto vs his lawe, to the end to holde vs fast, to the keeping thereof. And we haue seene the lyke to this before in the fourth Chapter. For when God sayd there, that the Iewes ought to exercise themselues alwayes in thinking vpon his Lawe, he sayd: you shall haue some sentence of my Law written vpon the postes of the dores: whē you are at ỹ table you shal haue something thereof: yea, you shall beare my Law about you, and decke your selues therewith. Whereas others haue their bracelets and images of golde, you shall haue some parcell of my Lawe to put you in minde that your God speaketh vnto you, and will not that you forget his doctrine: yea he will haue you to make fringes and other ornamentes thereof. And so whereas others haue their guildinges which serue to no other end but to pride and worldlie vanitie, you shal haue your garmentes decked with some sentence or other of my Lawe: to the intent you may bee put in minde to say: Behold, it is my Gods wil that I shoulde delight my selfe with his Lawe, that I should take my whole pleasure therein, and that I should adorne and deck my selfe therewithall. As touching my life, I will shew that I haue bin brought vp in his schoole. For seeing he hath so vnited himselfe vnto me, his praise and glorie ought to shine in me before men that they may knowe I haue not bin circumcised in vaine, not receiued the signe of his couenant for naught, to be coupled vnto the Church of God. According hereunto it is now sayd, that the Iewes must make them fringes on the foure quarters of their garments, and put laces thereon. Now I tolde you that in so small a thing, God meant to deliuer a good and profitable lesson. For when the Iewes closed vp in this sorte the endes and borders of their garments, which were otherwise made than ours are, they were admonished thereby, that God ruled them as if they had bin tyed by the heele. As who should say: When thou walkest thou must keepe thy selfe in the way of thy GOD, and bee so hedged in for thy whole lyfe time, ỹ thou passe not measure. I graunt this might serue well for honestie to ty their clothes so with small cordes, or laces, ỹ they might couer their whole bodies. For being opē & vnsowed on both sides, it wold haue bin an vnsightlie thing if they shoulde not haue bin tyed. This might then serue wel for honest comlines. But there is in it a higher reason than so, as is expressed in ỹ same place of Num-

ber: that is to wit, that God meant to betoken thereby, some such admonition as this: see if a man haue his legges vnbound and at will, hee is gadding by and by & leaping: but thy God will haue thee to haue these lases tyed in this maner to teache thee so to mea sure all thy paces, ỹ the law of thy God may euer rule thee, & that thou maist obserue it in all pointes, and neuer turn aside from it. Ye see then in effect what we haue to beare in mind vpon this place. Now this Ceremonie is no longer in vse, these fringes and these laces are compriſed vnder those shadowes which were done away at the comming of Christ. But yet at this day let vs note, that Gods will is that we should exercise vs in his Law in all respectes. And seeing we are out of this bõdage which serued for yong children, let vs know we ought to be so much the more earnest in minding the law of God: so as we be warned and admonished by these fringes and lases and other like things, that our Lordes will is that his lawe should serue vs for a restraint, to teach vs that wee haue not yet the libertie to doe what we list, but that our handes and feete, soules and senses, and all the parts of our bodies and affections of our mindes, bee held restrained by his biddings and forbiddings. And so much the more heedefully ought we to note this, because we see how mẽ haue alwayes dalyed with God and peruerted all sounde doctrine. For the Iewes bare themselues in hand, that they had discharged their whole dutie, whẽ they made faire large fringes and had written on them goodly sentences of the scripture in great capitall letters. This was all their holynes, as our Matt. 23. 5. Lord Iesus vpbraideth the Scribes, ỹ Pharisees, & Priests: who because they would haue a more speciall holyneſse than the common sorte; had great large gardes, & vppon them sentences of ỹ lawe written which might bee seene afarre off. After which maner when the Monks haue their Frockes, & their Coules and all the rest of their baggage vpon them, O they are no lesse than halfangels: & yet in the meane time, vnder these holy vestimentes, they shrowde vile and wicked desires, yea and such outragious enormities, as shew them to be monsters made contrarie to all nature. And so was it at ỹ time. And why? for the world thinketh to pay God with hypocrisie. We ought therefore so much ỹ more heedefully to note ỹ meaning & the trueth of the Law, that is to wit, that our Lorde maketh no account of this smaller trash, ỹ men should haue either fringes, or lases on ỹ skirtes of their garmentes, but his wil is that men should exercise themselues in his doctrine, & apply it to the proper vse. Seeing then it is so, let vs aduise our selues well, and not abuse the libertie which is giuen vs in ỹ Gospell, but let vs be ashamed, if being come to ỹ age of men, we haue no wit in comparison of the fathers which liued vnder the Lawe, to frame our selues vnto the wil of God. In deede in respect of our selues wee are but little children; but yet in cõparison of the people of olde time, we should be olde ones, & full & ripe in yeeres. Let vs then be ashamed if ỹ Law of God which should serue vs for a bond cannot holde vs backe, but we are carryed headlong into all wickednesse. Let vs bethinke vs of keeping our selues in such an estate, as we may shew that God hath not without good cause shooled vs out vnto his seruice, that we will not take such lawles libertie, as the ignorant and vnbeleeuing do, who haue no guide nor direction.

Now let vs kneele downe before the face of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him ỹ being touched with lively repẽtance, we may runne vnto him who hath the remedie in his hand to helpe vs: And pray we him that of his goodnesse and fatherlie compassion he will beare with vs vntil he hath clothed vs with that fulnes of righteousnesse and holynesse whereunto we tend. And let vs notwithstanding not cease to bewaile our selues before him, vntil he haue fully deliuered vs from all those euils which are in vs. And so let vs say, Almighty God and heauenly Father, &c.

On Tewsday the xiiii. of Ianuarie. 1556.

The Cxxviij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the two and twentith Chapter.

13 If a man take a wife, and when he hath lyen with her, hate her,

14 And laye slaunderous things vnto her, and bring vp an euil reporte of her, and say: I toke this wife, and when I came to her I found her not a maide:

15 Then shall the father and the mother of the maide take the signes of her virginitie and bring them forth before the elders vnto the gate.

16 And the maids father shall say vnto the elders: I gaue my daughter vnto this man to wife, and hee hateth her:

17 And lo he layeth slaunderous things to her charge: saying, I founde not thy daughter a mayde: notwithstanding beholde the tokens of my daughters virginitie. And they shal spreade the vestures before the elders of the Citie.

18 Then the elders of the Citie shall take that man and chastice him.

19 And shall condemne him in an hundred pieces of siluer, and giue them vnto the father of the maide: because he hath brought vp an euil report vpon a maide of Israell, and she shalbe his wife, and he may not put her away as long as he shall lyue.

20 But

20 But if this thing be true that the young woman be not founde a maide:
21 Then shal they bring forth the maide to the doore of her fathers house, & the men of the Citie shall stone her with stones, and she shall die: because she hath doone leawdly in Israell, by playing the whore in her fathers house, and so thou shalt put away the euill from among you.

22 If a man be founde lying with a woman married vnto an husband: they shall die euen both twaine: namely the man which lay with the wife, and the wife her selfe. And so thou shalt take away the euill out of Israel.

23 If a mayde be betrothed vnto a husband, and a man finde her in the Citie and lye with her:

24 Then shal yee bring them both vnto the gate of the Citie, and stone them with stones that they die: the mayde because she cried not out being in the citie, and the man because he hath humbled his neighbours wife, and so shalt thou take away this euil from among you.

ALl this which we haue here recited serueth to declare what speciall care God hath, that chastitie should be maintained among his people. And hereof wee may gather this; that if whoredomes haue their full skope among vs, it is such an abomination in the sight of God, that it prouoketh his wrath and vengeance. And that people must needes be accursed, among whom there is a lawles libertie to goe a whorehunting, and where this vile filthinesse is not cleansed. Ye see in effect whereunto we must apply this whole doctrine. But yet for all that, we must note the things as they are set down here, to the intent we may apply euery point vnto his vse. First of all therefore our Lord sheweth, that by great reason he ought to be chastised, which bringeth vp a slanderous report vpon any body: for euery mans estimation ought to bee maintained. Moreouer, that if a man or woman complayne that he is wrongfully accused, when notwithstanding he is found faultie, his punishment ought to be doubled. And from this Lawe we may gather a good lesson. We know how it is sayd, y a mans good name is better and more precious then either golde or siluer. And if a man bee once past shame, it is a sure token that he is wedded to all wickednesse. It is natural therefore to euery man, to maintayne his credite. In deede we must not be ambitiously giuen, as they which seeke naught else but to bee esteemed of men. Wo woorth vs if we goe that way to worke. But we ought (as Saint Paul sayth) to procure that which is good, not onely in conscience before God, but also in the sight of men; to the intent that we be not a stumbling blocke of offence, and that men take vs not for a buckler, when they will doe amisse, and alledge, and did not such a one doe so? For what a thing were it if men should take occasion by vs, to offend God? Ye see then to what end we ought to maintayne our credit as much as lyeth in vs.

And for this cause it is sayd here, that if any after that he hath taken a woman to wife, accuseth her that she behaued herself lewdlie before he tooke her, then the father and the mother shall come and maintaine the honestie of their daughter: and the man which shall bee found to haue wrongfullie charged her whome hee had espoused, shall bee punished both in his bodie and in his purse: and their daughter shall so remaine with him, that he may neuer bee diuorced from her. Wee see now how God would not suffer the husband to accuse the wife wrongfully. and therefore by greater reason it may bee concluded, that it is not lawfull for a straunger to slaunder one in respect of chastitie which is found innocent. For the husband might alledge that he hath more libertie to doe so, because hee is her head and superiour. But in any wise God wil not that a woman bee falsely accused, and hee commaundeth that the husband should bee punished for so doing, yea, and that in his very person. For besides that monie which is here set downe, there was a further appointed correction by the Iudges. And let vs note that this was done, not onely to maintaine the womans good name, but also to moue women the more to liue chaste, when God declareth himselfe the protectour of their honestie. When we see that God hath this care that they which liue honestly and woorthy reproofe haue their good name also maintained, and that the husband shal be chastised if he slaunder his wife: when God (I say) abaseth himselfe to execute this office, should women be so beastly and wicked as to giue themselues ouer to vnchaste villanie? No for surelie this priuiledge cannot be so highly esteemed, & yet they make a skorne of it. Ye see then what the end is which God aimed at, and what wee haue to beare in minde in this Lawe.

Now wshall let vs note, that when Iudges and Magistrates are warned of their office, euery one in particular ought to gather an instruction hereby. As how? If a false reporte be raised on one which is innocent, the office of them which beare the sword, is to maintaine the good name of euery one. That is it which God commaundeth them. As for vs on our side, let vs not waite for our punishment at the handes of Iudges and Magistrates for false accusing of any: But let vs keepe our selues from all slaundering, sith it is a thing which so highly displeaseth GOD. Let vs therefore take heede how wee open our mouth to stayne

any mans credit. And why? because that howsoeuer men beare with vs for it, yet it displeaseth God. In deed he hath cõmaunded that it should bee punished. But whether men punnish it or winke at it, yet God will alwayes shewe that he wil not suffer the person of any man to be wrõgfully greeued. Ye see then, how the thing which we haue to beare in minde, is that wee must liue vprightly together and take heede that none be falsly charged or slaundered, and that if there be any wickednesse, we must doe our best to take it away. But to deale vppon hatred and ill will or to be so maliciously bent to slaundering as to backbite our neighbors, or to be venemous tounged, and to diffame one another: is such an outragious fault as God can in no wise suffer.

But on the otherside let vs note, that as Gods will is that such as be innocent should be maintained in their good reputation: so contrariwise if any man complaine that he hath wrong done him and yet be found faultie and is conuicted of the cryme of which he sayd he was cleare; hee deserueth to be dubblie punished, as wee haue thereof here an example. If a mans daughter make complaint against her husband, & her father and mother take her part: well, reason is they shal be heard to speake. But if the young woman be found faultie, and haue behaued her selfe amisse, although it were before shee was marryed, before shee was bounde to her husbande, before shee was betrothed: yet for all this it is Gods will that shee bee stoned. And why? for it is a kinde of theft, if one knowing himselfe faultie, will for all that be so shameleese, as to chalenge vnto himselfe the honor which appertaineth not vnto him. If a man haue offended, he must cast his eyes to the ground: If one accuse vs, we must be sory and desire God to burie our faults. Now contrarywise if we be so shameleese and bolde to wrye our mouth, and to say, tush wee did no such thing: what a presumptuousnesse is that? And yet notwithstanding nothing is more common nowadays than that. For they which are the leawdest of all other, if a man giue them a nippe for their vices, yea though it be afarre off, wil make greatest outcryes, and if their credit be not maintained, O how they thunder? Who are they which nowadayes doe beare the countenance of honest men? Euen a sort of rascalles which are nothing worth, and in whom is nothing but vtter naughtines. He that is an honest man in deede, is almost ashamed to be called an honest man, because the title of honestie which should haue bin holy, is so defiled. For euery man vnhalloweth it, because euery man chalengeth it, & the veryest naughtipackes and the leawdest persons (as I sayd afore) doe clayme it most boldly. For not onely euery man with full mouth, vaunteth himselfe to bee an honest, sound, and truedealing man: but also if ye blame him, although he be neuer so faultie, he will threaten you with an action of slaunder. And if such be an hundred times conuicted they make none account of it. But our Lorde speaketh otherwise thereof: his will is that whosoeuer chalengeth vnto himselfe that credite which is not his due, should bee double punished: so as if hee deserued to be whipped, hee should bee put to death, because hee abuseth Iustice in such sorte, and maketh a skorne of it; and would that men should iudge him for an honest and good man, when there is apparãt wickednes in him. Ye see then heere a point which is well woorth the noting, namely that as Iudges & Magistrates are bound to mainteine the good name of them which are faultles: so also on ỹ contrarie side, if they see men shameles which would be maintained vnder colour of Iustice, and enioy the priuiledge of good men & of such as haue lued honestly and without reproofe, they should vse the greater rigor and seueritie towards them. And why? Because if they had stolẽ but fiue shillings, they should haue beene punished: but now they haue stolen ỹ which is much more worth, that is to wit, the name of vertue. And from whõ steale they it? Euen from al good men. For they would put themselues in the aray of such as haue walked in the feare of God and in al honest conuersation before men: they would be esteemed for good men, whom they defile with their filthines and corruptiõs by mingling themselues in amõgest them. So then forasmuch as they make such a confusion, they deserue to bee ỹ more grieuously punished. If one play the theefe, and will for al that iustifie himselfe, & bee quitted from the crime which is laid against him: if afterward hee bee conuicted thereof, whereas an other which shal haue committed but single theft deserueth to be whipped; the former ought to be led to the gallowes. For it is robberie committed against God, when he would be so quitted & cleared vnder the colour of Iustice, as who would say, I wil bee accounted guiltles [whosoeuer sayes nay to it.] Such manner of dealing is a defiling of the throne of Iustice, and a spoiling of mens estimation, which haue lived wel (as I haue said afore) and the next way to confound al things, so as no man may know any longer how to discerne betweene good and euil. And all this would come to passe if this wickednes should be admitted & suffered to haue his sway. This is the thing which we haue to beare in minde.

But now when we know that Gods wil is that men should proceed according to Iustice, there is comprised herein a warning for vs all namely that we should haue an eie vnto our conscience that it be pure, so as if men accuse vs, God may answere for vs, and be as it were our warrãt. The thing (say I) which is shewed vs in this place, & which we may gather hereupon, is, that if we be accused, we may say it is wrongfully. And before whom? Before God. For it wil not boote vs at al to bee iustified before men. Our wickednesse may wel bee hidden, wee may borrowe some cloke for it, but yet for all that GOD alloweth not of vs. And what steede then shall all the rest stande vs in? Nay and if we bee so shameleese, (as we see nowadayes many are,) that albeit their wickednesse be knowen euen to little children, yet they care not, so they be not conuicted by two or three witnesses: what a thing is that? Therefore if wee haue a care of

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our good name, let vs first of all walke in such vprightnesse before God, that if we be charged wrongfully with any thing, wee may call God to cleare vs, and haue our recourse vnto him to say, Lord thou knowest that I finde my selfe guiltlesse, vouchsafe therefore to stretch foorth thy hande, as thou hast promised, to defende mine innocēcie, as the scripture saith ‡ God wil make ‡ righteousnesse of his seruants to shine forth as the breake of the day. Nowe therefore when wee bee falsely diffamed, let vs waite vntill GOD redresse it, and let vs knowe that in the ende, when wee haue beene humbled for a time, hee will make manifest the iniuric that men haue done vs. But let vs alwayes haue our recourse vnto him: which thing cannot bee, except we be well assured of our owne innocency. And moreouer let vs take heede that we liue so with men, that if wee bee accused they may bee constrained to say: It is wrongfully: or at the least they may bee astonished & say, What meaneth this? This man hath liued so honestly, that he neuer deserued any euil report. So let our life answere for vs, notwithstanding that men report euill of vs. Yee see in what sort we are here to proceede.

And because heere is expresse mention made of women, let them which will haue the good report of chastitie, take heede to walke in such sort as no suspition may be raised on them, nor any occasion bee giuen of speaking euil of them. But what? We see nowadayes many slie dames which play the harlottes closely; who because the worlde doeth not charge them with it, will make be counted for honest women. And what maketh shewe they thereof? Yee see then howe the thing which wee haue to gather vppon this which God hath set downe here, is, That if a father or a mother complaine, and the daughter be founde voide of all crime, that she shall haue her estimation maincained: and on the other side, that if shee bee found guiltie, she shalbe the more grieuously punished, euen by stoning to death, albeit shee haue not played the harlot before time, because she hath cōplained wrongfully, and hath commenced her action in forme of Lawe, and vniustly claimed vnto her self that honourable title, which shee through her owne fault hath lost. And hereby we may perceiue, that wee must not forbeare to punish offences, for feare of false accusation. For nowadayes if a man woulde beleeue many men, there shoulde be no lawes to punish faultes and offences. And they alleage that it is done to shunne other inconueniences: yea, but shall wee in the meane while giue way to all lawlesse behauiour, and shake off all yoke and all correction from vs? What then woulde come therof in the ende, but beastly confusion in all places? And therefore although sometime there may bee feare of false accusations and slaunders, yet must wee not leaue the vse of chastisements and corrections, so far forth as reason and indifferencie require, but remedies ought to bee prouided against the, as we see howe our Lord doth heere, in that hee willeth that the case be tried, if an husband raise a false report vppon his wife. Now then there must bee an orderly and lawfull manner of proceeding on both sides; so as the wickednes may not remaine vnpunished, and also that such as are innocent bee maintained, and that meane obserued which our Lord sheweth vs. Ye see in effect what we haue to note vppon this place.

Let vs now returne vnto that generall point which we touched afore: namely, that God in al these lawes, declareth what a pleasāt thing chastitie it in his eyes: and contrariwise howe hee cannot suffer the filthinesse of whoredome to raigne among his people. For by ‡ punishments which are set downe here, wee may gather how grieuous and intollerable a wickednesse it is. And why? because wee knowe that God exceedeth not measure, when hee punisheth sinnes, but that he doeth it with discretion. Let vs therfore conclude, that if the punishment bee rigorous, it is because the sinne also is great and excessiue. It is verie true that God doth not alwayes punish sinnes as they deserue; Insomuch that hee permitteth a kinde of diuorcement among the Israelites, and also when a man played the fornicatour, hee was discharged so hee promised marriage vnto the maide and tooke her vnto wife. But albeit our Lorde in respect of the hardnesse of that peoples heart, ordeyned not alwayes such precise lawes as to punish them according vnto their deserues: yet wee shall not erre at all, if wee make this conclusion, namely, that if God haue punished any fault of theirs, it is to declare vnto vs that the thing displeased him, and that it is not to be borne withal, and that wee prouoke his anger: and therefore that wee must stoope vnto him, sith wee see that hee hath appointed certaine punishmentes, & that it shall cost vs deare if we become not the better by them.

And this is the cause why S. Paul declareth that the punishmentes which God hath executed, are as lookingglasses & liuely pictures, because we may gather thereby, that God will bee alwayes a iust Iudge to execute the like vengeance vpon them which restraine not themselues willingly from the like wickednesse, by beholding the warning which hee hath giuen them. As how? He alledgeth that God punished those which were rebellious amōg his people, so grieuously that the earth opened and swallowed them vp which did set vp themselues against Moses and Aaron. Againe wee see howe their lustes were punished in that GOD thundered downe from heauen vppon them. Indeede hee sent them the meate which they desired: but it had beene much better for them to haue starued for hunger, than to haue payed so deare for their shotte, as to swallowe vp the vengeance of God together with their meate, which they vnlawfully desired. As for whoredome, there was so grieuous a punishment for it, and the wrath of God was so kindled against his people that they were like to haue beene vtterly rooted out. Seeing then that we haue such warninges (saith S. Paul) let vs learne to feare and take heede, that we tempt not God wittingly. For this is alone

1. Cor. 10. 6.

as if wee woulde defie him, if when wee see him set vs such a barre and to threaten vs by other mens harmes, yet wee cease not to followe the same wickednesse. This is al one (say I) as if we woulde defie him, and proclaime open warre against him. So then let vs learne, that when God ordayneth any execution of punishment, it is not only to the intent that he which hath offended shoulde bee chastised: but also that wee shoulde take it for a rule to learne howe to behaue our selues as we ought, and not be so senselesse as to cast our selues headlong into wickednesse, seeing our lesson so written before our eies. And so to bee short, let all the corrections which are contained in the Lawe serue vs for so manie bridles to restraine vs withal; and let them teach vs to walke in the feare of God, or at least let vs take them for preseruatiue medicines, and let vs not tarie till the mischiefe light on vs, but prouide for our selues before hande and pray God that hee so guide vs as we taste not of his anger. And let vs put that in practise also which S. Paul saieth speaking of adulteries and such like things that no man deceiue vs with vaine words. Take heede saieth hee yee bee not deceiued: for the worlde dispenseth easilie with it selfe euen so far as to dallie w God, & to set his iustice at nought: but bee not you deceiued in that behalfe (saieth hee) for the wrath of God commeth vppon the children of disobedience for those things. Nowe if God by punishing of sinnes sheweth howe hee detesteth them, in that hee setteth downe a law in writing, and appointeth Iudges and Magistrates to execute that which he commaundeth, I pray you is it not a most certaine warning, and such a one as ought to touch vs more neare the quicke? And if for all this we will be stubborne and hardhearted in our wickednesse, is it not a rushing with our hornes against God, as I haue saide alreadie? [Yes surely]. And therefore let vs note that seeing God hath punished aduowtries so grieuously, it is to shewe vnto vs, that it is so great a filthinesse as cannot but nourishe his wrath and vengeance. Therefore his will is that aboue all thinges faithfulnesse should bee kept in marriage.

Eph. 5. 6.

Now here the speciall case is of adulteries. Without doubt all kinde of whoredome displeaseth God. For we must euer returne backe to this principle or grounde, that sith God blessed man and woman, when he ioyned them in marriage, he curseth all whoredome, accordingly as the Apostle also saieth, That marriage is holy & honourable: insomuch that when the bedde is dedicated vnto the name of God, that is to say, when the parties are ioyned together in his name, and do liue honorable, it is as it were an halowed estate: but adulterers and fornicatours God will iudge. He speaketh not onely of adulterers, that is to say of such as haue broken their owne marriage and the marriage of others, but also hee speaketh generally and without exception of all them which giue ouer themselues vnto any manner of whoredome, in respect wherof S. Paul saieth also that not onely adulterers are shut out & banished from ỹ kingdome of God,

Heb. 13. 4.

1 Cor. 6. 9.

but fornicatours also. And againe we see that when hee speaketh of such as liue a wicked and loose life, and therfore ought to be excommunicated and cast out of the Church; hee speaketh not alonely of adulterers, but of fornicators also. And the reason why, is most worthie noting. For what are our bodies and soules, but the temples of the holy Ghost? Seeing God vouchsafeth vs this honour to dwell in our soules and bodies, is it not great reason that they shoulde bee kept holy and vndefiled? And if a man soyle himselfe by coupling himselfe with an harlot, is it not all one as if he woulde teare in pieces the bodie of our Lord Iesus Christ? Let vs therfore note that generally God detesteth all kindes of whoredome.

But hee speaketh in this place of adulteries, because in them there is the greater villanie. And why? because if a maide promise marriage and falsifie the faith she hath plighted, she defileth not onely her owne bodie, and so consequently violateth the temple of God, but she also dishonoreth her husbande with whome she was coupled, so that she robbeth another of his good, yea of such good as cannot bee recompensed with golde or siluer. For she setteth him forth vnto open shame, for whom (if neede required) shee should spend her life. Is it meete then that it should be suffered? Therfore let vs note that whereas our Lordes will is, that the maides which haue promised marriage should be stoned if they commit whoredome: it is because they haue committed villany against their husbandes in not keeping their faith to whome they were betrothed. And therefore he will that such a fornicatour bee likewise punished. And why? Because hee robbeth an other man of his good name, and breaketh an holy and sacred promise. Men punish falsifiers and forgers. As for example: if a man steale a publike Records [as an indenture, deede, bonde, or such like] or falsifie it, he shalbe grieuously punished. & is not marriage a greater thing than a counsel of an hundred crownes, or a bargaine of an house or of land? This case concerneth the fellowship of two reasonable creatures, yea and their fellowship for life and death; the case concerneth an holy bande which God himselfe hath stablished among vs, yea and that to this intent that al confusion should be taken out of the world, so as we should not be like vnto brute beastes which couple together wout any difference, but that y man shoulde haue his wife & the wife her husbande. And if this be violated and taken away, al order of nature is corrupted. If we play the blinde buffards and winke at such geare, & so let it slip: let vs not deceiue our selues for all this; for God will require it with horrible reuenge. And we see it is not without cause that God hath so grieuously punished the fornications of such as had promised or betrothed themselues vnto husbands.

And if this bee so with them, what shall bee saide of the wife which is alreadie married? For shee is giuen to an husbande to helpe him so gouerne his house in the name of god, & if she

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giue her selfe ouer so villainously vnto whoredome, shee not onely robbeth her husbande of his good name, and worketh him a great outrage, but she spoileth also the name of the whole familie: For shee playeth the whore with another man, and the children which she beareth, through that whoredome, doe beare the name of her husband. And againe the goods and substance of the man are taken from the lawfull children, and be giuen to bastardes which haue no title thereunto. And is not ỳ a more wicked villanie, than if one had broken vp an house, rifled all the coffers, spoyled and taken away all things, and committed the greatest robberies in the worlde? Yes verily, and it ought lesse to bee borne withall: and that knewe the heathen men well ynough. If we had no more but the Lawe of Moses, yet ought we to be more ashamed to see whoredome nowadayes so easily pardoned, and so small account to be made of it. But when the heathen men teach vs our lesson, and vse better order by a great deale than those which at this day call themselues Christians, I pray you what a witnesse will that be against vs at the last day? Blind men haue beene of more clearer sight than we. Wee Christians say continually, that Iesus Christ hath brought a true declaration of the Lawe, to the intent we shoulde knowe that that is our perfect holinesse which is there commaned. Indeede hee added nothing thereto. But yet neuertheless wee ought to bee better learned than the fathers which liued before the Gospel. But how profite we? There is no account made nowadaies of whoredome. Wedlock is broken, faith is falsified; & yet men make no reckning of it, it passeth scotfree. In what case then thinke yee are wee? If men will shifte the matter by saying, Oh sir yee must beare with our weakenesse; thinke wee it shalbee taken for payment before God? Is not his worde alwayes vnrecuocable? Is it not all one as if he shoulde say: Haue yee no care of that which I commaunde you? And what are yee? Are yee wowe yee wiser than I? Well, I will make you to knowe that I am your Iudge. And let vs note well that the sinne and wickednesse is doubled, when men cannot finde in their hearts to yeelde vnto that which God hath once spoken, but will needes choppe Logike with him. So then let vs knowe that there is a double woe threatened vs when wee see God on the one side speaketh vnto vs and telleth vs that whoredome is such a pestilent infection as hee can in no wise suffer it, and that hee declareth when marriage which hee hath dedicated in his name is corrupted, that it must needes bee punished. When wee heare that God proceedeth vnto such seuerite, and also see, that euen onely by nature hee hath inspired the heathen to knowe that there coulde bee no order among men, except whoredome shoulde be seuerely punished, what are wee able to say? Nowe then first of all whereas it is saide heere, that a maide which hath betrothed her selfe vnto an husbande shal bee stoned with the fornicator, if shee suffer herselfe to bee defiled: wee must vnderstande that seeing shee was so leawde as to falsifie her faith, yea and that in so holy and sacred a thing as is marriage, our Lord esteemed her as one giuen ouer to all vice and sinne. For a woman which playeth the harlot, is alreadie worse than a thief, because shee hath done much worse in working her husbande such wrong and villanie, than if she had robbed him of his monie. Moreouer wee must returne to this point, namely to consider of the promise that is made in marriage of howe great importance it is. For we knowe to what ende marriage was ordained, namelie, to the intent that men shoulde liue honestlie together, and that there should be no such beastlie looseneſse of coupling themselues together like dogges and bitches, or like bulles and kyne, but that they shoulde shewe that they beare not the likeneſse of God in vaine. Seeing then that marriage is ordained vnto this ende; if men will walk cleane contrarie, is it not an open defiance of God? Is it not a plucking of him out of his throne, and such a wyping out of his image as men can no more know themselues: but become as bulles and dogges? Therfore when men fall to such extremitie, must not God shew forth his anger?

But let vs alwayes returne vnto that point which wee named before, that as this commandement is giuen vnto Iudges and Magistrates touching ciuill order, so ought euerie of vs to bee admonished of his dueele; that wee walke more carefully in our vocatiō. If such as beare ỳ scepter of iustice in their hands, do suffer whoredom to raigne and wedlocke to bee broken, so as neither faith nor promise be kept any longer: they shall yeeld an account hereof vnto God. But yet for all that, let vs looke vnto our selues, and let euerie man so walke, as ỳ he haue not God for his iudge. For what shall we winne by scaping ỳ hands of men so as our offence is not perceiued, or else we bee by some wicked shifts & practises quit from punishment, and no man sayes a word vnto vs. Yet for al that, we must come to our reckening before God, who will not lose one iot of his right. Although men be negligent or play the blinde men, yet will God in the end shew that he forgate no peece of our doings, but registred the euerie one in his book. Let vs therfore take heed we walke in such sort, as wee esteeme highly of marriage. And forasmuch as wee see ỳ God beareth rule ouer it and accurseth al adulterers and fornicatours, let that moue vs to be holde in the greater feare and carefulneſse. We see howe the Paynims for al their superstitions and ydolatries, had yet I knowe not what a blind motion, whereby they were perswaded for the better maintaining of marriages that their gods or rather ydolles were the protectours thereof. And why thought they so? It was euen of a meere follie. I graunt it: but yet this folly of theirs proceeded from a good grounde. They were corrupted with superstitions and had imbrewed it with their inuentions and errors. But yet neuertheless, this alwayes remained, & was so engrauen in their mindes as it coulde not bee wiped out, that God meant there should be such

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a marke in marriage and that men ſhould know that hee had a care of it. Seeing it is ſo, let vs take good heede that wee make not God our enimie and aduerſarie partie, which doubtleſſe we ſhall doe, if wee falſifie the faith of marriage. If a man lay waite for an other mans wife, if a woman giue her ſelfe ouer to a whoremonger, bee ſhee married or be ſhe betrothed, if they falſifie the promiſe which they plighted, and breake ỹ faith which they gaue; it is all one as if they waged battle with God, and they ſhall feele that they deale with too hard a match. Let vs therefore walke in ſuch ſtayednesſe, as our Lord may accept of vs, and that we may finde fauour in his ſight: Let euerie of vs reſiſt his wicked luſts, and not giue our ſelues the bridle to ouer leape our bounds ſo farre as to venter to corrupt ſo holy an order.

Nowe if the puniſhment be ſo grieuous when a maide which is but betrothed committeth fornication: much more reaſon is it that it ſhould bee ſo in a married woman, as I ſaide afore. And why? Becauſe ſhee wrongeth her husband, ſhee ſetteth him out into open ſhame, ſhee ſpoileth alſo the name of his houſe, ſhee robbeth the children which are yet vnborne, ſhee robbeth thoſe which are alreadie begotten in lawfull wedlocke. When a woman is become ſuch a diuell, what other remedie can there bee, than to roote out the whole miſchiefe? And this is the cauſe why it is expreſſly ſaide, *Thou ſhalt put away the euill from thee.* Heereby our Lorde ment to giue vs to vnderſtande, that if men ſuffer a woman vnpuniſhed whē ſhe is growen to ſuch wickednesſe as not to pitie her owne children, they ſuffer a monſter to liue. For what may one think that woman to be but a monſter, which hath no regarde of her children, and which maketh no account to haue baſtardes mingled with lawfull children? And that is a thing contrarie to al nature. So then (as I haue tolde you) the fault muſt needes be extreme, when the puniſhment is ſo grieuous, that God will haue it ſerue vs for an example, and that they which haue been offenſiue by their life, ſhoulde ſerue for an inſtruction vnto others by their death, that they may learne to keepe themſelues chaſt. Thus yee ſee what we haue to beare in minde.

Nowe touching whooremaſters, they are guiltie of the like. Indeede the woman ſhall not be ſpared, becauſe ſhe hath falſified her faith towardes her husbande, and hath committed an vnpardonable crime. If a man riſe his neighbours coffer, hee ſhalbe puniſhed, & that not as a ſingle thiefe, but as a robber. But the whorehunter commeth to defile ỹ whole houſe, hee commeth to infect it with whoredome, hee commeth to robbe his neighbor of his honour, credite, and good name, and in ſteed of the right ſeede, hee through curſed and villanous falſenesſe, deliuereth a ſtraunge and baſtarde ſeede. Therefore if a man commit ſuch a robberie, I pray you is it a ſinne to bee puniſhed with eight dayes impriſonment onely; and peraduenture by being put to breade and water, that is to ſay, to be feaſted at the tauerne? For wee ſee that the puniſhmentes which are vſed nowadayes againſt adulterers and fornicatours are but a meere mockerie both of God, and of Iuſtice, and of Lawes, and of all ciuil order. For when a man is put in priſon for committing adulterie, or for playing of ỹ fornicator, it is al one as if he were put there for men to bring him euerie man his glaſſe of wine and to ſay, Taſte which is the beſt. If he were in his owne houſe, he would be contented with ordinarie: but there hee ſhal haue a greater choyce than if he were in a common tauerne. Euerie man will come to viſite him, yea forſooth, the poore priſoner muſt be pitied. Yee ſee what is ordinarily done in this behalfe. And as for my ſelfe, I haue prayed God that whoredome might rather goe vnpuniſhed, than proceede in that order as we ſee it doth nowadayes. For it is a ſetting of Iuſtice forth to open ſhame, and ſkorning of God and of all his commandementes. And therefore wee neede not to maruaile if whoredoms be ſo riſe, ſeeing they which offende are ſent ſo to the tauerne. But let vs put the caſe that the Lawe were obſerued, and that adulterers and fornicatours were locked vp in cloſe warde, there to faſt with breade and water. What is al that? O, ſaies one, they ſhal faſt three dayes or (as ſome ſay) nine dayes. Yea but a thiefe be taken and accuſed, he ſhal be indited, he ſhalbe clapt vp by the heeles in the ſtocke, he ſhalbe manacled and tyed with an halter, and in the ende ſent to the gallowes: or when hee ſeeketh beſt for ſome petrie filching, hee ſhal bee whipt. And why? Oh he is a thiefe, he hath robbed a man, hee hath cut a purſe in the open market place. And what hath the whoremonger done? Queſtionleſſe hee hath done euil in entering into the bedde which God had hallowed in his owne name, than if he had committed all the theeueries in the worlde. Hee hath mached himſelfe in whoredome like a beaſt: and is not this an intollerable offence, and ſuch a one as ought to bee puniſhed to the full? If wee open not our eyes to beholde it, yet the Lawe of Moſes muſt needes condemne vs. But beſides this, the Painims (who haue obſerued a better order than wee, and haue had lawes to puniſh whoremongers and to cauſe wedlocke to be kept vndefiled) euen they ſhal riſe vp againſt vs in the latter day, and ſhall proue that we offended not of ignorance, or for lacke of warning, but of wilfull malice, becauſe wee woulde ſoffer ſuch vnkindnesſe.

True it is indeede that this wicked cuſtome is come from great antiquitie, as the Papiſtes will ſay that wee are not vnder the Lawe but vnder grace, and therefore we muſt not puniſh whoredome. But it is a mocking of God when we take the Law of grace for a Lawleſſe libertie to commit all wickednesſe. And albeit our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt puniſhed not the woman which was taken in adulterie; wee may not ſay therefore, that he hath giuen vs leaue to commit adultery. For why? Hee refuſed alſo to bee Iudge: and being deſired to part the inheritance betweene two brethren, he woulde not doe it. Muſt wee therefore ſay that ſuch partings are not lawfull?

No.

No. But this was to shewe that hee came not to bee an arbiter and a Iudge. Against let vs note that he saith, No man accuseth thee, therefore I condemne thee not: But withall let vs knowe, that he came not to take away the law of his father or to breake al order, or to make his church a beggers fiye as it is nowadayes, by graunting men liberte to doe all manner of euill: No, No; Be it farre from vs to impute such a crime vnto our Lorde Iesus Christ: for that were a blasphemy of him aboue measure. But let vs know that whereas we haue here this law, it ought to serue vs for an instruction vnto the end of the worlde; that we may walke in such chastitie, that when we haue kept mariages vndefiled among vs, wee may looke for the blessing of God which shall cause vs to prosper.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, and that we may be so cleane ridde of all our wicked desires, that renouncing all our vices, wee may dedicate both our soules and bodies vnto our good God, in such sort as he may be glorified in all things, and we keepe such faithfulnes and trustines one towardes another, as wee may thereby shewe that we are true brethren, and hee may receiue vs for his children: and that this may encourage vs to call vppon him, & to lift vp our harts vnto him, to approch more neare & neare vnto him & to cleaue vnto his righteousnes in all puretes of heart. That it may please him to graut this grace not only vnto vs but also to all people and Nations &c.

On Wednesday the xv. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The CLxxix. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the two and twentith Chapter.

25 But if a man find a betrothed mayd in the field and force her, and lye with her: then the man which lay with her shall dye alone.

26 But vnto the mayd thou shalt doe nothing, because there is in the mayde no sin of death: for like as when a man riseth against his neighbour and woundeth him to death, so is it in this case.

27 For hee founde her in the fielde: and the betrothed mayde cried out and there was no man to reskewe her,

28 If a man finde a mayd which is not betrothed, and take her and lye with her, and they bee found:

29 Then the man that lay with her shal giue vnto the maydes father fiftie peeces of siluer, and she shalbe his wife, because he hath humbled her, and hee may not forsake her as long as he liueth.

30 No man shall take his fathers wife, nor vncouer the skyrte of his fathers garment.

ACcording to that which was handled yesterday, we see how GOD meant that wedlocke should be faithfully obserued. And it is good reason it be so, otherwise the whole order of nature must needes be ouerthrowne: For there is nothing which among men ought to bee more straitly kept and obserued than this. Other couenants are faithfully to be kept in deede, but because this exceedeth in holines, it ought to haue the greater reuerence. And therefore it is not without cause, that God hath decreed that he which meeteth with a betrothed mayde and deflower her, shoulde dye without remission. For why? Hee hath broken the couenaunt which ought to bee kept holy among all men: in making whereof Gods will is that his name shoulde be called vpon, to the intent that the parties might know that they are ioyned together with an indissoluble bond. Seeing then there is such a rebellion committed against God, it behoueth that the chastisemēt be like & answerable therunto. And so we are yet better confirmed in this doctrine, that is to wit, that except we will nourish the vengeance of God vpon vs, wee must obserue wedlocke holylie. And we must not regarde what the common opinion is herein: For if wee will be wiser than God, he knoweth wel ynough howe to punish our diuelish pride; and wee shall be alwayes rewarded as we deserue, if we will not vse the remedie which God hath appointed vs in his Lawe. Indeede we are not bound vnto it precisely in all points, (as hath beene alreadie noted, and shalbe yet further declared hereafter,) but yet for all that, God warneth vs that if we suffer wedlocks to be broken, and graunt such libertie that adulterers remaine vnpunished, we must needes (as I haue told you) fall into horrible confusion & extreme beastlinesse.

Nowe by the way we must note further, that he which rauisheth a maide is heere likened to a thiefe which meeting with his neighbor sleeeth him. He compareth him not w one y beateth his neighbor. This cōparison therfore doth euidently declare y the act of it self is beyond measure outragious & intollerable. For like as y life

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of man is precious vnto God, so is the chastitie and the faith which is plighted in marriage. For the wife is linked vnto her husband to liue and to die with him. So then when this faith is once falsified, what honestie can there bee any longer amongst men? Therefore God to shewe the grieuousnesse of the fault, saieth it is a kinde of open theeuerie and murther if a man meete with a maide & deflower her specially by force. This is an vnpardonable offence. Moreouer, God doeth vs to vnderstande that maides ought to make as great account of their chastitie, as of their life. For (as hath beene tolde you) if a maid fight not for her honestie, and her virginitie, doubtlesse shee is not worthie to liue in ỹ worlde: For if she crie not, but suffer her selfe to be defiled, shee must die without any pardon. Therefore our Lorde in this place againe declareth, that maides ought to behaue themselues honestly: so as if they meete with any misaduenture or finde any naughtipack which would entise them to naughtines, they must haue les regard of their life than of their good name, and rather suffer their throates to be cut, than their bodies to bee defiled, and to liue in such shame. Yee see then in few words, what we haue to beare in mind vpon this place: because the matter was handled so largely yesterday, it may suffice to gather things briefly as neede shall require for ỹ words of Moses. And here we see how it is not for vs to stand either vppon custome or vpon mens fancies. For nowadayes if men alledge that adulterers are not punished, they beare themselues in hande ỹ it is a sufficient buckler for their defence, and if they say, who complaineth of it? Ye see how god is shut out. Many men therfore beare themselues in hand ỹ it is a reasonable defence if they may say that all men vse to doe so, it is the common custome, it is the opinion of al men. But contrariwise we see here how God reserueth alwaies his authority. Albeit that men corrupt themselues through abuse, although they flatter themselues in their vices although they be of opinion that al is lawfull for them, yet notwithstanding this excuseth them not, neither impeacheth it Gods authoritie any whit at all. Nowe then, let not men lean vnto ỹ which is in cõmon vse, neither yet let them therupon harden themselues, but let them haue an eye vnto ỹ which God hath once cõmãded. For that must needs alwaies keep his course. And indeed, we may see what corruptions haue risen in the worlde, when men haue so swarued from the word of God after ỹ fantie of this man or that man. From thence haue all superstitions proceeded, Ye see how the Papists nowadays being besotted in their follies, cannot bee brought back into ỹ right way of saluatiõ. For they beare themselues in hand, ỹ they are sufficiently armed with this shift of theirs ỹ of long time men haue liued as they doe, & that themselues are not the inuenters of the religion which they holde. But (as I haue tolde you) this can serue them to no purpose, no more than it can serue for ỹ defence of adultery, to alledge ỹ it is not punished nowadayes nor any account made of it. Noebut God who is the heauenly Iudge, will in the end shewe that these are such enormities as he cannot in wise suffer. Now ỹ which Moses addeth proueth ỹ same thing which we touched yesterday, namely, ỹ God did not always punish offenders in such sort as by good right he might, I meane of punishing according to ỹ law which he gaue for ỹ ordering of the people of Israel. For he bare wt many things because of the hardnes of that people, as our Lord Iesus sheweth them when he speaketh of diuorcements which were done against all reason & indifferencie. For hee saith here that if a man finde a maide, and ỹ she without forcing yeelde herselfe, that hee shalbe quit by giuing of money for the martiage of ỹ maide, & by taking of her to wife, and by being debarred of ỹ common liberty, that he may neuer forsake her. Now I grant that this was a chastisement vnto ỹ man which had played the fornicator. But was it so grieuous as the fault required? Nay verily. What shall we say then? Did God permit whoredome, or meane he to lay ỹ bridle on their neck, or giue he to vnderstand therby, ỹ the sin should be pardoned? No, none of all this. For we haue shewed afore, that when God deliuered his lawe which consisteth in ten words, hee declared therin his will, and prescribed men a certaine rule whereby they should liue. Now that lawe is it which shall iudge vs at ỹ latter day, & is not onely serueth to condemne offenders vnto temporal punishment, but also doth vs to vnderstand that we must answere thereunto before the iudgement seate of God, to perish for euer. Therfore when we shall haue escaped ỹ hands of men, yea and ỹ god shall haue winked at our faults, yet must we in such sort come to our accoũt before him. Ye see then that the law of God is to iudge vs. As for this it serueth for an earthly policie. And God (as I haue said) respected not such perfection as is required in a faithfull; but rather bare with the hardnes of people, which was so sturdy & so hard to be ruled. And albeit he punished not those disorderments which were made against all indifferency, yet is it not to be said therefore, that he permitted thẽ. For we heare how our Lord Iesus Christ proceeth therof, That whosoeuer forsaketh his wife & taketh another (except it be for aduoutrie, so that he can proue the harlot played ỹ whore) is an aduulterer: and that whoso taketh her to wife that is forsaken, committeth adultery also, and his mariage is not lawful, but detested of God. Euen so stãdeth ỹ case in that which we see in this place. For although God punisheth him not seuerely which cõmitteth fornication wt a maide, it is not because that whoredome is any way at all to bee pardoned. If it be not punished by me, yet god alwaies hath his right reserued. But this is done because ỹ commonly in ỹ estate of gouernement, men wil sooner punish those faults whereby their own cõmodities are hindered, than whereby God is offended. Indeed ỹ Iudges & magistrats ought not to giue the bridle so far, that God should be mocked, ỹ his name should be dishonoured, or that al religion should be trampled vnder foote, as wee haue seene heretofore that blasphemies were more grieuously punished thã murders. But when there is some by offence cõmitted, wherin

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there is no manifest despising of God to be seen, men will not pursue it so fiercly, as when a matter toucheth themselues. So then, as touching ỹ fornicatiõ which Moses speaketh of in this place, inasmuch as it concerneth the losse & discredit which is done vnto a man because his daughter is kept back from preferment in marriage: the that hath maryed her must assigne her a dowry: & because it may be that she shall not find another match: therefore he must take her to wife if her father will. And if he should cast her off againe within a while after, she should be new to prouide a mate. Therfore he must keepe her still, and be so debarred of that common right which belonged to others, ỹ he may neuer forsake her. Ye see then how God prouideth for the commoditie of the parte. But yet for all this God is still offended if a man defile the temple of the holy ghost which is his bodie, and giue ouer the members of our Lord Iesus Christ to such wickednes. For we are all members of his bodie. And farther, when he goeth about to defile a maide which is ỹ temple of God and a member of the bodie of our Lorde Iesus Christ, I say that the doing thereof is an ouer great confusion. And yet for all that shee is not punished, no, not by ciuill order. But yet the law of God remaineth alwayes in his estate, ỹ is to say, it is the rule which he hath giue vs to liue by, which shall not bend at our pleasure. To be short, God by giuing his Law, meant to frame vs vnto his obedience: and to shew vs our dutie towards him. And therfore ỹ law goeth roundly to work, & sheweth vs not vt wherunto we are bound. Moreouer touching ciuil order, god had an eye vnto ỹ which ỹ weaknes of ỹ world might beare, & conformed himself thereunto: & therfore there were many things which were not punished by the law of Moses. Neuertheles we are taught ỹ albeit our faults be not iudged by men, wee must not therfore fal asleepe in our sins. For we shall not escape, though earthly iudges let vs alone, & we escape without punishment before them, if in ỹ meane time ỹ wrath of God encrease vpon vs: inasmuch as he hath patiently waited our amendment, it grow more & more against vs, & we put him in vre which S. Paul saith, ỹ is to wit, that we heap vp to our selues a treasure of ỹ greater condemnation. Let vs therefore learne not to haue such respect vnto men, that we think so our faults be not vpbraided vs by them, or so they accuse vs not, or frame no inditement against vs, we be therfore quited. Nay let vs know, that it should be good for vs sometimes to be awakened by men. For whē we be chastised, then doth God ỹ which S. Paul saith in an other place, to wit, heat punish vs according to ỹ flesh in this worlde, that we might not perish euerlastingly. Now therfore let vs lift vp our eyes alwayes vnto ỹ iudgement seate before which we must come & appeare. Although we haue bin borne withall in this world, and ỹ we beare our selues in hand ỹ our sins shal remaine vnpunished, yet must we be doublie punished at ỹ hand of God, because we haue bin stubborn & hardhearted euen vnto the vttermost, and haue so abused his patience. Sith he waited so long for our amendment, & sought by al gentlenes to win vs vnto himself, if we for all ỹ haue bin rebellious, and haue as it were laughed at his louing kindnes which he vsed towards vs, must hee not call all this to minde to our greater cost?

And let vs note farther ỹ it is too vaine an excuse which many make, saying; And who haue I wronged? Nowadaies if a man charge these blasphemers ỹ this wickednes, they will wry their mouth & come with I know not what shamefastnes, and say: & who complaineth of me? to whom is it ỹ I haue done any iniury? If we were al such as we ought to be, doubtlesse we would crie an alarme when ỹ name of God is blasphemed, and we would al be prouoked in ỹ case, seeing ỹ God vouchsafeth vs this honour, to haue vs to maintaine his maiesty & his own cause. Yet for al this, we make no account therof. If our selues haue any iniury done vnto vs, wee will crie at it. But if God be euill spoken of, so that his name be put to open shame, we let it passe, we take no care of it. They which haue so shamefully offended may say: who is he ỹ accuseth vs? But yet for all that, this is such a shift, as shall smile them but a little (as we haue said.) For shall God forget himself? Shall he suffer himself to be so disposed & make no accoũt therof? Hath not he sworne by his owne name, that he will maintaine his glory vnto the vtmost? Now seeing it is so, what wil come of it if wee replie against him and say, that none can complain of any iniurie done vnto him, whē wee shall haue so offended the maiestie of God? Alas, is it not more than if wee had bidden battaile vnto al creatures? Yea verily. Now the case is like in fornication. I graunt that a man which playeth the fornicatour may say: no man complaineth of me. For both ỹ parties were agreed together. But what? Yee see that the temple of God (as I told you) is vnhallowed. And is that treacherie so small a thing? If a man had robbed, he should haue beene punished, as he well deserueth. But here is a farre greater fault than theft. For when the temple of God is defiled, it exceedeth all the extortions and pollings which can be done vnto men touching their goods. Ye see howe two temples of God are defiled at once through fornication. Yee see also how our Lord Iesus Christ is therein shamefully abused. For he vouchsafeth vs this honor that we bee members of his body, he hath vnited vs vnto himself: and shall we for all this goe and abandon our selues to such a shamefull villany? Is not ỹ a tearing of the bodie of the sonne of God in peeces asmuch as lyeth in vs? Let men then delight themselues as much as they list, and let others sooth them in their fickleties and make but a laughing game thereof: Surely they shall fare neuer the better at Gods hand for al that. So then let vs learne (as I haue told you) to lift vp our eyes vnto ỹ heauenly throne, and to walke in such wise, as wee may alwayes haue a warrant within vs that wee haue proceeded in all vprightnesse with God. And let vs not be so foolish as to rest our selues vpon that which men command, but let vs holde that rule which cannot deceiue vs, that is, the lawe which God hath deliuered vnto vs, and whereunto he wil haue vs to frame our whole life.

But Alas, this is euill practised nowadayes. How many are there who if there were no laws, nor threatnings, would euer come to Church to heare one word of ỹ doctrine of god? And yet we see manifestly ỹ such men doe it but for fashions sake. Well: they will come. But when? On such dayes as are cõmanded. But if there should be no expresse commandemẽt, they are of opiniõ that they are not otherwise bound thereto: and so it were much better that they came not vnto the Church at all. For they do nought else but defile the temple God. And they shew that they neuer tasted one whit of doctrine, they come thither so like dogs & swine. And so we see ỹ many in this worlde haue a care of nothing but of ỹ which is commanded and forbidden them, for feare they shoulde bee pinched by ỹ purses, or haue some other punishment, according vnto ciuill order. Otherwise they shew ỹ they haue no religion, but are very beasts. But as for vs, sith we see that God is so gracious vnto vs, as to declare vnto vs his will that we might followe it, let vs bethinke our selues to draw neerer vnto him, and to make his righteousnesse shine in vs. For this is his true ymage. And therby we declare that we be his children, and it is our warrant that hee hath adopted vs, and ỹ he will execute the office of a father towards vs. But there are very few which consider this. Yet notwithstanding, it behoueth vs to be attentiue to that which I haue said: namely, that because God hath called vs vnto himselfe, and hath vouchsafed to teach vs howe wee ought to liue: we also ought to profite in his schoole, and so come willingly of our owne minde vnto him, and also to accomplish that which is said in the Psalme, to wit, that to be good souldiours of our Lord Iesus Christ, we must come of our owne accord without forcing, and without threatening, we must come with a franke and free heart, as if we would say: Lorde, behold I offer my selfe vnto thee: therefore if we wil suffer the Lord so to gouerne vs, that looke what way so euer he turneth the bridle we wil go & be wealded by him, & not bee stubborne in any wise, nor fling against him like wild & sauage beastes: that is it (say I) which we haue to beare in minde. But as long as we are led with a slauish feare, doubles God will not accepte any thing of ỹ which we do. And I say, not onely ỹ our doing of ỹ things which are cõmanded vs, & our abstaining from ỹ things which are forbidden vs, be but for feare of men & of earthly iudges; but also ỹ if our obseruing of gods law be but because we feare to be damned: he vtterly misliketh such a seruice, & wil make no account therof. And what is ỹ reason? Forsooth because he wilbe honored of vs as a father is honored of his children. For I pray you, if a child grind his teeth against his father, & it grieue him to obey him: but because he hath noway to escape his hands, he wil doe what he commandeth him: and yet if it were possible he would get him out of ỹ house, and not obey his father: shall this seruice please him? Surely no. And wil God haue lesse graunted vnto him than mortall men require, which are but rottenness? Of a very truth, they which serue God so by constraint could find in their harts to haue him plucked out of heauen if they could possibly doe it. And therefore let vs bethinke our selues to yeeld vnto God such sacrifice as he liketh of. Let vs sacrifice vnto him our selues, our thoughts, our wils & affections, and all ỹ is in vs let vs dedicate al vnto him with a syncere affection, & with an vpright free hartednes (as we haue said afore.) True it is that we ought to be sore afraide of Gods punishments, because we are like an Asse which must euer be spurred, & laid vpon with a staffe. Therefore let vs humble our selues whē we see ỹ threats which are made against vs in the holy scripture. But withall let vs yet passe farther, to know ỹ God is our father; and knowing him to bee such a one, let vs come vnto him like true children: as he requireth vs by his Prophet: If I bee your father (saith he) where is mine honour? He saith not onely, If I bee your master, wher is ỹ feare which you ow me? But he putteth both down together. If I be your master, where is my [illegible]? And if I be your father, wher is ỹ honour which you owe vnto me? God therfore wilbe honored of vs: but withal he wilbe serued of vs, and that of a frank & free goodwill, and of a syncere affection, as we haue before declared, when we treated of ỹ short abridgement of ỹ law in the seuenth chapter: what doth thy God O Israel require more of thee, but ỹ thou shouldest fast vnto him by louing him? This (say I) is in effect all ỹ seruice which God requireth of vs. And so when we are warned, ỹ we must not bee so ouerpassed by the threats ỹ are made against vs, and with ỹ punishments which are contained in the law, but ỹ we shold also ourgo ỹ same & be redy to offer vp our selues a willing sacrifice vnto God, & to call vpon him as our father, accordingly as he hath adopted vs for his children.

Psal. 40. 8. & 116. 3.

In the ende Moses declareth, ỹ men must obserue such an honesty of nature in marriage, that the sonne in law must not couple himself with his stepmother. Indeed here hee setteth downe but one kind: But in the twentith of Leuiticus, there are mo degrees spoken of. But this serueth to put them in mind of ỹ which was said before. For Moses in this book maketh a rehearsal of the law which hee had already written. And I haue told you ỹ this is not more than needeth; because mens memories are so short, and they forget so soone that which God hath taught them. It was therfore expedient ỹ Moses for ỹ better warranting of his doctrine, should repeate it again in this booke. And therfore he doth touch this but by ỹ way concerning marriages: that men ought to keep such an order, as to hold incests for accursed. For ỹ Paynims themselues knew, ỹ if marriages were made wout all difference, there shoulde be incests (as they called them) committed, so as mariage shold be defiled before God, & become worse than whoredome. They had this conceite imprinted in them by nature: & albeit they had not bin taught ỹ will of God purely, yet had they some sparke of it. God would not that mankinde shold become so beastly, but ỹ they shold alwayes haue a kind of light, to make them vnexcusable, and to encrease their condemnacion the more, as S. Paul also treateth hereof in ỹ second Chap-

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ter of the Epistle to the Romans. Now to treate of all those degrees which are spoken of in Leuiticus, were needeles at this time. It shall suffice hastily to beare in mind ỳ effect of all, namely ỳ we ought to haue a difference and honestie obserued in mariage: that degrees of kinred be not mingled and confounded together: that a father take not his daughter to wife, nor a brother his sister, nor an vncle his neece: that a father in law take not his daughter in lawe, and ỳ a mother in law take not her son in law. For if we obserue not this order, what differ we from ỳ brute beastes? But a man wil say, why so? It is by mariage. Yea, but like as mariage is an holy thing, so must it be kept with the greater reuerence. So that it is a double condemnation, if I will go vnder the colour of mariage, and defile my selfe like a brute beast. It is as if a man shold rob his neighbor vnder the colour of iustice. He commenceth a false action against him, & when hee hath cast him he will alledge: Oh I haue gotten ỳ suite, I haue nothing but by way of iustice. Yea, but thy wickednes is greater than if thou haddest cut a mans purse. That offence of the twaine had been the lesse. For thy theeuery indureth stil: and (which worse is) thou hast falsly abused ỳ name of God, & defiled ỳ seat of Iustice. Seest thou not what a machery thou hast wrought herein? Then like as ỳ man is a double thiefe which by pleading a wrong cause and through ouerthwart meanes hath raised vnto himselfe an other mans goods: so doubles those which violate the order of nature, as a father which marieth his daughter, an vncle which companieth with his neece, a brother which taketh his sister, do worse than if they committed whoredome. And why? Because first the thing it selfis beastly, and can neuer be lawful. Secondly ỳ land is as it were defiled and infected where such wickednes raigneth. Briefly mẽ ought to detest & abhor it. And yet notwithstanding, if men will yet venter to cõfound marriage together, which is so holy a thing, which is ỳ liuely image of that spirituall vnion which wee haue with our Lord Iesus Christ, which God (as we know) ordained at the beginning & blessed: if mẽ will intermingle it with such filthines, if they will make but a sport of it, to whom offer they iniury? Offer they it not vnto God who is ỳ author of mariage, & commandeth ỳ it be maintained in all purenes? Ye see then what we haue to leare in mind concerning this place.

But now hath God prouided a lawe for it, and not without great cause. For in those countries there was more corruption touching incestes, then hath euer bin in al other countries besides. I say then neither in Greece nor in Italy men euer vsed such lawles and vilanous liberty in this kind of wickednes, as they of Asia and of all the East countrie did. For there it was counted nothing for the brother to couple with the sister. It was therefore needfull ỳ God in this case should reine his people with a shorter bridle. And hereby wee may see ỳ custome shall not serue vs for an excuse. If a thing displease God, although it be vsed among men, it serueth not to lessen the fault. For God wil alwayes remaine iudge. And why? Gods will is that we should do him this honor to hold our selues vnto his simple wil, although mẽ draw cleane backward. Let vs therfore learn to yeeld our selues vnto the Lawe of God touching this point. And if a man reply, that we are not to bee held thrall to ỳ order of Moses, I grant it. But yet ought we at leastwise to admit ỳ warnings which God giueth vs, and to vse his counsel. Although we be freed from this bondage of the ciuill Law of Moses, yet will he haue vs to beare alwayes in mind this ground, to wit, that we bethinke vs for what cause God hath forbidden this thing. For it is because the thing is intollerable. We must therfore frame our selues vnto that thing which we know to bee acceptable vnto God, and withhold vs from that which he forbiddeth.

But yet there is a double condemnation to fall vpon them which wil go cleane contrary against it, as S. Paul saith speaking of him which had taken his mother in Law to wife in Corinth. How now? (saith he) Are ye not ashamed ỳ such fornicatiõ shoulde be among you, and that so villanous an act shold be committed, as ỳ Painims could not abide to heare the like spoken of? Indeede sometimes such like things were to be seen among thẽ but yet neuertheless they did abhor such wickednes. Seeing then ỳ the vnbeleeuing wretches haue bin taught, by such a motion as themselues knewe not, wout either scripture or preaching, albeit God draue thẽ therunto, to keepe this honestie in the degrees of mariage: what ought we to doe? Verily we see ỳ the very Paynims are yet more to our cõdemnation. For there was a certaine Emperour of Rome, who because he wold cõmit the same incest himselfe, made a law ỳ the vncle might mary with his niece. And this libertie which was so graunted by ỳ law was neuer followed of any but of his own band. Although he had all countries at cõmandement, yet could he neuer make ỳ law of sufficient authoritie ỳ any man besides himselfe & one bande of his woulde be perswaded ỳ the vncle might marry with the niece. Now what shall we say of this, but ỳ our Lorde had a secret bridle for men, as if he should say: I will ỳ there remaine some honestie in nature in despite of all those which beare rule in ỳ world, & would make such a confusion that men shold be as brute beasts, yea euẽ as dogs & swine? Do what they can yet wil I be aboue thẽ, & cause my law to be so printed in ỳ hearts of men, ỳ for all their wickednes & blindnes they shall yet retaine some honestie in ỳ which I haue principally cõmanded thẽ. Behold (I say) how God hath borne sway in such sort ỳ men (how vnbeleeuing soeuer they were) haue yet had some remorse, ỳ they would not altogether go against that which was forbidden them in this lawe. In deede men might haue alledged: This thing is lawful for vs. The Law is made, the sentence is proclaimed, libertie is granted vnto al mẽ to do so: & yet we see how God ouerruleth al & sheweth ỳ he himselfe wil so waken mẽ & summon thẽ to appeare before him, ỳ they shal not fall into such confusion. And therefore let vs humble ourselues vnder him and be so far frõ wayting vntil he cal vs vnto our account & draw vs vnto this honesty by force, that

we alwayes prudent his iudgement, towalke in such feare and carefulnes, that wee make it our pleasure to serue and honor him so as there may be such an honest conuersation among vs as not onely the order of nature may bee obserued, but also that we may shewe how it is not for nought that hee hath shouled vs out from among the vnbeleeuing wrenches, and would that we should be an holy people vnto him and dedicated vnto his seruice.

But now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more & more, and to draw vs away from them, & so rid vs of them, as we may encrease from day to day, & be reformed vnto his righteousnes: & that he wil in the meane time beare with vs in our infirmities, & not increase vs seuerely, but pardon vs our faultes, vntill he hath cleansed vs altogether from them. And so let vs all say: Almighty &c.

On Thursday the xvj. of Ianuarie, 1555

The Cxxx. Sermon which is the first vpon the three and twentith Chapter.

NOne that is hurte by bursting, or that is gelded shall enter into the congregation of the Lorde.

2 A Bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lorde, neither shall the tenth generation of him enter in.

3 The Ammonites & Moabites shal not enter into ỹ congregation of the Lord, neither shall their tenth generation for euer enter into the cõgregation of the Lord.

IT might seeme straunge ỹ God in this place shutteth out of his congregation such as are maymed in their bodies. For men can hardly bee perswaded ỹ this hindereth any to come neare vnto God. Nay rather when there is any weakenes in them, it maketh them more worthy of pitie and compassion. And we are assured on the other side, ỹ God requireth a spiritual purenes, & maketh no great account of this outward appearance: as it is expresly written in the fifteenth Chapter of ỹ first booke of Samuel, that he respecteth not those things which appeare to the eyeward, as men do. But wee are to note, that when God in the old time vnder the law required any outward purenes, it was to bring the Iewes more forward to consider, that they could not present themselues vnto the temple, except they were throughly purified, specially touching their soules. The like is meant in that which we see here. For wheras God in this place condemneth ỹ maime which is in the body, it is to betoken, that they which will serue him & desire to approch neare vnto him, ought to be sound both in their bodies and in their soules. For whatsoeuer was figured in ỹ law, was referred vnto that spiritual and heauenly patron which Moses saw in the mount: as it is written in the 25. Chapter of Leuiticus. And this is wel obserued both by S. Steuen, and by the Apostle to the Hebrewes. So then let vs note ỹ when God barreth those from entring into the sanctuary, which had any mayme in their bodies: he ment to betoken therby that he woulde haue his seruants sound & pure. Yea and that men should not in ỹ behalfe rest on that which is seen with the eye of man, but rather seeke after the true soundnesse, which God respecteth, which is in our hearties and in our mindes.

Act. 7. 44. Hebr. 8. 5.

The like is to bee saide of that which Moses addeth touching bastards. God meane hereby to shewe, first what a priuiledge he had graunted vnto the stocke of Abraham. And this was done to the intent that his fauour shoulde be the better knowen. Beholde howe God chose out of all the world one certaine people. And why? We haue before shewed that there was no worthines at all in them, but this proceeded of his own freebestowed loue. Nowe because men do willingly darken the fauour of God or cleane forget it, or happily not knowe it in such sort as they should; God would that the children of Abraham before they entred into the sanctuary, should learne to reason thus with themselues: What is ỹ cause ỹ we haue accesse & entrie vnto our god? What is the cause why hee sheweth himselfe so familiar vnto vs, and receiueth vs when we come vnto him? It is because he hath chosen the seed of Abraham, howbeit such as are ỹ true seed of Abraham. We see thē how god meant to make thē which were descended from ỹ stock of Abraham, to perceiue ỹ without any desert of theirs, he had chosen them to be the inheritors of euerlasting God. I say he shewed this vnto thē, & exercised thē in the remembrance of ỹ benefite, to ỹ intent it might be ỹ better acknowledged among thē. That (say I) is ỹ thing which we haue to note first of all. Secondly God by this meanes held the Iewes shorter ỹ they might keepe themselues pure & chast, and ỹ there might be no fornication among them, nor any such confusion as men might not know which were right begotten and which were bastarde children, when no difference might bee had in that behalfe. Therefore GOD by ordayning this Lawe, gaue the Iewes an occasion to liue more chastly, to the ende their stocke might bee holie and not prophane, and that he which

...ould be medled
...ith, he hath declared that hee
...ll be my seruant, euen to a thousand generati-
...on: he accepteth my offspring, hauing dedi-
...cated it vnto himself, although we be all cursed
...by nature, yet this grace of adoption exceedeth
...many floches. And shall I goe now and draw vp a
...dissolute company, which shall not be of the people
...of God, which shall not be of the body of his con-
...gregation, which shall haue no entrance into the
...sanctuary? Were not this a renouncing of the be-
...nefit of my God? Is it not to shut him far off from
...me, to giue him no entertainment, or to shew
...him no countenance, when he calleth mee so
...louingly? This (say I) ought to holde backe the
...Iewes els they were more than blockish. And
...they had become too leawd an vse of idolatrie and
...vnthankfulnes of the benefit which God had gra-
...ciously shewed them.

Therefore that we may nowe apply these two
...things to our instruction, let vs note, that although
...God regard not nowadayes whether there be a
...blemish in a mans body or no, ne respecteth
...our personages: yet notwithstanding his will is
...that we should serue him purely, and that we should apply
...the vse thereof to our vttermost power, that when
...we come vnto him, we must bring with vs an vp-
...right soundnes. And wherein? Surely not in our
...bodily members, for we know that his seruice is spi-
...rituall. Therefore let vs purifie our soules. I graunt
...our bodies ought to be purified also (as S. Paul
...teacheth vs) but chiefly it is not in such wise as there
...is no maner of spot or fault of sickenes in them, but it is
...meant, that we must not defile them with vile and
...filthie things, as he speaketh of Idolatry & fornica-
...tion, & also as the scripture speaketh of briberies & extortions. He which falleth downe be-
...fore idols, so much as in him lieth defileth his
...body, which ought to be dedicated vnto the ser-
...uice of God. The like is to be said of fornicators,
...which giue themselues ouer vnto such wickednes
...as God detesteth. They which spoile & rob ano-
...ther man of his goods, haue bloudy hands as the
...Prophet Esay vpbraideth them. Thus ye se how
...we ought to indeuor our selues to purifie our bo-
...dies. But the chiefe point is, that we haue this sound-
...nes in our soules, that they be not seasoned with any
...such maner, as may hinder vs from being quicke
...and ready to obey our God. We must note (say I)
...heere also, that we must haue an inuincible co-
...rage to make battaile against Satan & against all
...temptations, shewing our selues to be men indeed.
...Likewise we must not be weake in faith, but we
...must proceede alwayes forward, and endeuor our
...selues to come vnto the state whereof S. Paul
...speaketh to the Ephesians, that we waxe not with
...euery word but hold vs fast to that which is good, & be
...stedfast, & stable in the truth which we haue
...learned. We must not be wauering & wauering
...in our profession, we must resist all temptations so as
...nothing may hinder vs to keepe on that course
...whereunto God hath called vs. Let vs therefore
...strengthen again the weake knees, & let vs fortifie
...our trembling hands by the power of the holy Ghost.

Thus ye see whereof we are expressly warned in
this place: to occasion vs to cling vnto our God,
when we be to withstand any operations which
hinder vs from seruing him.

And moreouer let vs note, that seeing God hath
sanctified vs, (yea & that together with our whole
offspring) we ought to continue in true chastitie
when we heare his voice at the mouth of our God:
I will be thine vnto both of you & of your children
also after you. Whē God is so gracious as to giue
vs children, we ought to prouide diligently that
they be pure & vndefiled. And let the faithfull
take good heed that they intermingle not them-
selues with fornications or such other like defile-
ments. And why? Because it is a renouncing of
excellent priuiledge which God giueth them,
when he chuseth them in such sort vnto himself
and therewithal chooseth their children also al-
though they be not yet begotten. But the chiefe
point is, that we must learne to be the true chil-
dren of Abraham. Seeing we be grafted into his
stocke through faith let vs take heede that we be
not cut off from this body by our vnbeliefe. For
the Prophets who were true expounders of the
law, do wel declare what the thing is which God
meaneth as in this place, when they say: Come you
of the stocke of Abraham? No ye are the children
of an harlot euery chone of you. Get ye hence ye
harlots brats, appeare here in your kindes, come
foorth and let vs see who know you, yet children of a
strumpet (saith the Prophet Esay). And the Prophets
Ieremy & Ezechiel speak in like sort. What haue
you like vnto Abraham whose name yet beare?
Was not your father an Amorite, & your mother
a whore? To who speake they then? Speake they
to children of harlots & vnto bastards concer-
ning the flesh? No. But vnto lawful heires children.
And why then calleth hee them strumpets chil-
dren, as if they were begotten in some brothel-
house? Because they were corrupted & followed
not the faith of Abraham. For true parentage is
spirituall (as S. Paul saith). They which descended
from the stock of Abraham concerning the flesh, are
not therefore accounted the lineage of Abraham. And
what is the reason? Forsooth because they are grow-
en out of kind. So then let vs note that whē Mo-
ses forbade bastards should enter into the temple,
it was not onely for this shamefull cause which is
in respect of the world, when children are not be-
gotten in lawful wedlocke: it was rather to shew
that Iewes were not worthy to haue any accesse
vnto God, to call vpon his name, or to company
with his congregation, except they held fast this
spirituall kinred of Abraham, that is to say, except
they followed his faith, & except they continued
in the pure consent of god. Now this could not be
done except they alwayes bare in mind, that god
had chosen them to bee an holy people, to bee a
royall priesthood. Let vs now for our part note
albeit wee were altogether strangers vnto God,
although we had no accesse into his temple, & al-
though (as S. Paul saith) we had no consent with
him because the promises were not made vnto vs;
yet notwithstanding we are made houshold ser-
uants with the holy fathers, citizens of the king-
dome of heauen, through faith, forasmuch as
God hath communicated vnto vs this freedome

which was giuen only vnto ỹ stock of Abrahám.

Seeing it is so ỹ we which were wild & barren trees, haue bin beside nature graffed into ỹ good Olife, let vs take heed ỹ we vse well so excellent a benefite: and let vs sticke with a stedfast faith vnto Abraham our father, and as often as we come vnto the church, let vs take warning to examine our selues and to say: Behold God hath appointed this order, that we should come together vnto the intent he may be among vs, & we haue familiar accesse vnto him: and that is on condition ỹ we become true children of Abraham. And in what sort? Let vs consider of that which is said in the first Chapt. of S. Iohn: for this kinred is there expounded, such as God requireth nowadays and alloweth of. It commeth (saith he) neither of the will of man, nor of the wil of the flesh, nor of bloude: but the cause therof is that we haue beleeued in the onely sonne of God. Seeing then it is so, that when we beléeue in our Lorde Iesus Christ, & be graffed into his body, we are admitted for the sonnes of God, although wee on our part are not worthy of that honour. Let vs take heede that we hold our selues there, and that we grow not out of kinde through vnthankfulnes, & so cut our selues off from that body wherunto we were ioyned through the grace of God and his infinite mercy by ỹ meane of faith. Yee see then what we haue to beare in mind vpon this place, when it is saide expresly, that bastards shall not enter into the congregation of God, euen vnto the tenth generation.

But let vs come now to ỹ which is spoken of ỹ Moabites & the Ammonites. These people were descended from Lot, and so ought to bee ỹ kinsmen of ỹ Iewes. Yet neuertheles God banisheth them out of his Church, and will not ỹ they haue any entrance therinto, vnto the tenth generation, albeit they yeelded themselues vnder ỹ obedience of ỹ law. He addeth: *They met you not by the way when you came out of Egypt with bread & water*, that is to say, they entertained you not as kinsmé and friends should haue done. Now albeit ỹ Ammonites and ỹ Moabites were seuered from the stock of Abraham, as Lot was already gone vnto Sodome, and so had not the promise: yet neuertheles they ought to haue called to minde their kindred, and ỹ Abraham had brought Lot into ỹ land of promise, & had taken him for his son. The remembrance hereof ought so to haue endured, that ỹ Moabites & Ammonites (if they had had any good nature) shold haue granted passage vnto them which were of their owne bloud. And againe we see how God spared them. For we haue seene heretofore, how the Israelits were expresly commanded to abstaine from al iniury and violence, whé they passed through their land. Take heede yee vse not any force of armes, take nothing but what you pay for: keep ỹ high and beaten common way as ye passe: buy ỹ water which thou drinkest, and vse no extortion. And why? For they be thy brethren. And indeed although god chose not Lot as he did Abraham, yet ceased he not to pity him, & to haue som care of sparing his successours & those which issued from him, albeit those people were begotté by his incestuous coupling w his two daughters. The two fathers which were ỹ first rooters of this race vnto Ammon & Moab, ỹ is to say, such as were begotten by incest & by shamefull and vnnaturall communication. Yet neuertheles God hath respected them. But they are so wicked & vnthankfull, ỹ they defie both God and man. God hath compassion of them, and therwithall chargeth ỹ Iewes to haue a care of them. Yee see what humanitie ỹ Iewes did. They praied them to let thé passe through their country as friends, protesting ỹ they would not molest nor annoy them in any maner of thing. They desired them to graunt them passage for their money, that they might come vnto ỹ land wherunto God called thé. But these cursed creatures wold needs hinder ỹ calling of god, & bring to passe, that ỹ people should not enter into the land of promise to take possession therof. And hereupon they hyred Balaam the són of Beor ỹ false Prophet. And why? Because they distrusted their owne power, and thought by the meanes of a false Prophet to coniure God, & that by vsing such a kind of bewitching, they might curse the people of his. Now because they were so froward, and vouchsafed not to vse ỹ benefite which God offered vnto them, it was good reason that they should be punished therfore. For albeit the vengeance of God was not by and by executed, yet God registred it in his booke & we see here how their punishmé for this wickednes was referred.

Now hereupon we haue to note, that if we intend to be accepted of God in the number and companie of the faithfull, wee must procure the welfare of the whole Church as much as lieth in vs. For those which make any trouble in ỹ church of God, or be any way offensiue, are here banished the Church vnder the person of ỹ Moabites and Ammonites, as if God declared that they are not worthy to come neare vnto him, or to company with any of them which are dedicated vnto him. And nowadayes how many are to be seene of this sort? So ỹ we ought not to meruaile if ỹ curse of god lie vpon so many men. And why? Because ỹ for one which is found to aduance the weale of ỹ church, & to edifie ỹ people of God, a man may find a douzen which indeauour nothing els, but to bring vtter confusion & destruction vpon it. How many turmoiles see we nowadays in ỹ world to hinder ỹ course of the gospel, & to bring to passe ỹ the Church might fal vnto ỹ ground, or be confused & disordered? Now from whence proceedeth this, but from ỹ wickednes of men? The like as God sparred ỹ doore against ỹ Ammonites and Moabites at ỹ time, because they refused to giue way vnto his people whé they should enter into the lande of promise: so let vs note ỹ all such as lay stumblingblocks nowadays to turne them aside, and to driue them into wickednesse which were in a good way, & al such as breede troubles in ỹ Church of God, are euery chone rejected of God. And verily we see that there are nowadays many Ammonites and Moabites in the worlde. For, who are they which seeke to peruert all things, and which giue so many offences & make such great confusions throughout Gods church? They are such as name themselues ỹ faithfull, such as are of our company & haue one common baptisme w vs: so that they ought to aide vnto

ought

ought to bring vs fayth bread & water? I answere, they ought to lend vs their hand, that we might follow our calling to come vnto that place to the which God calleth vs: those (I say) which ought to receiue vs and open the way vnto vs, euen those are they which barre vs of entrance, those are they which pull the bridle to backward, & which make these burlibut eyes among vs: Hereby we see vncircil, that seeing the people of God was so vexed by their owne kindred, we ought now adayes to beare it patiently, if the like befall vs. And withall let vs be warned (as I haue told you) to behaue our selues in such sort as none of vs may be condemned of hauing thus set the way against them which endeuored to come vnto God. But let vs ayde them as farre as we shall be able, euen vnto the vttmost of our power: If we doe otherwise, the vengeance of God is at hand, and shall light vpon vs. For God who once condemned the Moabites, will not faile to be our Iudge at this day. Although the ceremonie be not obserued, yet (as I tolde you) all they which indeuor not to set forward the course of the Gospell, must needes be banished his kingdome. And in very deede wee haue the threates which are made by the Prophets against all those which are enemies of the Church, and which trouble it: and that was not for the time of the lawe onely: but they foretold vs of the kingdom of our Lord Iesus Christ. Wheresoeuer they be that seeke not to ayde and succour Ierusalem (saith the Prophet Esay) the Lord will arme himselfe against them, and they shall feele his strong hand and be destroyed. All they which deuise any mischiefe against thee, or enforce thy enemies to strengthen them, shal feele the hand of God contrarie & enemie vnto thē. As much to y same purpose is said in Zacharie. And these prophecies and threatnings (as I haue touched alreadie) serued not for the time of the lawe, but for the state of Christianitie. Let vs therefore comfort our selues when wee vnderstand that God hath such a care of our saluatiō, that he protesteth he will be an aduersarie vnto all them which seeke to hinder vs frō comming into his kingdome, and into that inheritance which he hath promised vs, and telleth them that his hand shall bee against them, and that his curse shall fall vppon their heades. Hereby we see how deare our saluation is vnto him, and what care he hath of it. Moreouer let vs be afraid (as I tolde you) to giue occasions of trouble and offence. Let vs not be of the number of those naughtipackes, which when they see y Church florish, seeke nothing more busilie than to disorder al things therein. The diuel hath drenched them with such a poyson, that they cannot abide the weale of the Church, therefore they seeke al the meanes they possiblie can, to breede confusion and disorder therin: let vs take heede (I say) y we intangle not our selues among them, knowing that if we doe, we shall neuer escape the curse which is here threatned vnto the Moabites and the Ammonites.

But we haue yet one point more to note. And y is, y although God at y first punish not thē which molest his people: yet hee faileth not to keepe vp his rod for some punishment for them in store, notwithstanding that he delayeth it. And therefore let vs not be so hardie as to beare our selues in hand that if God beare with vs and do not at our [illegible] we shall still remaine vnpunished, & so shew our selues in this case with his people. No doubt but they bare themselues in hand, that it was a matter of nothing when they molested the people of God. And why? Because God vsed not to execute his vengeance vpon them out of hand. Now in deede they were ouerthrowen. But what for that? They did but wagge their head therat, because they bare themselues in hand that the Iewes would not put them to any farther trouble. But God for all y remained their Iudge. And so although y Ammonites & Moabites were spared for a time, & God would not that they should be rooted out as those people which he had alreadie before condemned: yet notwithstanding they made neuer the better match for all that, for ye see how like a sort of vnhallowed people, they are put besides all entrance into y temple of God, they are receiued with this note of shame, y they are declared enemies vnto y people of God. Let vs therfore stand in feare sith we see this. And although we be not punished out of hand, yet let vs know y we shall not escape the vengeance of God, when wee haue sought to molest his Church, and haue set a battle against our neighbours that they may not enter in as they ought to doo. And why? Because although God lingreth, yet will he not forget y wickednes of them which shal haue sought to molest his Church, or to bring any maner of trouble vpon it. Ye see whereof wee ought to be aduertised. And if this were printed well in our hearts, we would haue another maner of care than we haue to edifie the Church of God, and we would withall more abhorre and detest all offences. But what? We see how headlong men runne into this wickednesse, euen with a madde & brainsicke disposition. And why? Because God is not ready at hand to take vēgeance, they bare themselues in hand y the matter commeth al to one end, whether they worke y Churches weale or woe, & thereupon they weker in their wickednes. But for al y let vs looke vnto our selues.

And moreouer although God vtter not his vengeance at the first against them which seeke to trouble and to ouerthrowe the building of our faith: yet let vs assure our selues, that God (notwithstanding that he winke at things for a time) yet sleepeth not in heauen for all that. And therfore let vs patiently wayte vntill hee put to his hand. He suffereth the wicked sometime to wander at will, and to triumph among vs, & we are of opinion that the earth will sinke vnder them; we are astonished & euen beside our selues: we think there is no remedie, we suppose there is no way to succor vs, we are of opinion y god is laid down to sleepe. But in y end he putteth to his hād. And although he chastise some of them lightly, yet others settle in their lees. As for exāple, a mā shal see y when God punisheth some wicked persons which haue been the occasions and authors of many troubles and offences, yet others shall remaine

remaine vnpunished, by reason whereof they thinke their owne wickednesse to be nothing, & so they followe it on farther, because God beareth with them. But is it sayd that the Ammonites and Moabites shal beare this curse throughout ten generations. Therefore sith we see that God will punishe them which molest vs, and which haue bin occasions of falling among vs; howsoeuer the case go, let vs waite góds leasure, hauing an eye to ỳ which is set downe here, & beholding ỳ which hath happened vnder ỳ Law, vntill he wreke his vengeance on the wicked.

For wee may vnder this figure which is here giuen vnto vs beholde the loue and fatherlike care which God hath for his Church in that it is his pleasure that thinges should bee well ordred therein, and that none should hinder his childrẽ whom he hath adopted, from cõming vnto that inheritance which he hath promised them. And therefore let vs alwayes constantly goe on, and ouerleape those stumbling blockes which are layd in our way. When we see that the wicked addounce themselues against vs, and inuent & deuise all that they are able, to destroy vs; let vs be armed with strong and inuincible constancie to fight against such temptations; let vs not slacke our courage, but let vs assure our selues that God will looke to these thinges in such sorte, that by his reaching forth of his hand we shal ouercome all ỳ difficulties and incombersaunces which men on their part set against vs. This being done we shall knowe that God hath reserued an horrible iudgement for our enemies, although they perswade themselues ỳ all is forgotten, & that there is no remembraunce of their misdeedes. And when they be in full possession of their wickednesse, God wil euen then prouide a remedie suddainly & beside ỳ expectation of all men & of the whole world. Ye see then in effect what we haue to beare in minde vppon this place.

Now by ỳ way, a man might demaund what the cause is why God ordayned that the Iewes should in no wise seeke the peace nor the prosperitie of the Ammonites and Moabites. For it seemeth that he giueth here the Iewes an occasion to reuenge themselues, the which notwithstanding was neuer lawful. Let vs note in a word that God appointed them to execute his iudgement. And so hit will is that they should punish the Ammonites and Moabites, howbeit with a pure and vpright zeale. When God ordayneth iustice, and puteth the sword into the hand of them whom he hath called vnto that estate, hee commaundeth them to put such to death as deserue it, and willeth them to punish offences. And that vndoubtedly is a kinde of reuenge: but yet that reuenging is lawful; yea it is requisite & necessarie. And if he which is armed with the sworde of Iustice punish not offences, hee shall render an account thereof vnto God. Now it is very true ỳ magistrates ought to take pitie and compassion of thẽ whom they cause to be executed. When they put an euill doer to death, they must haue pitie on him because hee is a man & a reasonable creature. But howsoeuer the case stãd they must execute ỳ vẽgeance of God, howbeit without spitefulnesse, and without bitternesse, so was is with the Iewes touching ỳ Moabites and the Ammonites, God ordayned that to execute his iudgements. And for this cause hee saith vnto them, Ye shal not seeke neither their prosperitie nor their peace: that is to say, let them be as they are. For God will not haue you either to entermarie with them, or to relieue them. How shal it be lawfull to helpe an euill doer, & so louingly (That were to ouerthrowe Iustice, and the order which God hath appointed, & to haue a part & fellowship with him in ỳ same offence. If a man finde ỳ wicked, & he helpe & ayde thẽ, he becommeth guiltie of the same crime, & intangleth himselfe in their wickednesse. And therefore God forbad ỳ Iewes to beare any such affection towarde ỳ Moabites or Ammonites to help thẽ. And now wee see how reuenging was not onely graunted vnto ỳ Iewes, but also commaunded them: this reuenging was not such as should procede from a venemous minde or which should be wrought after the lust of ỳ flesh. (for whẽ we haue any suit to the death, our affectiõs are alwayes troubled & we are neuer well ordered) but gods meaning was, ỳ the Iewes should worke this reuenge of a good zeale, as being taught thus to say: Behold wee are appointed by God to execute his vengeance vppon ỳ Moabites. Such it is ỳ vengeance of God which we ought to execute, we must not make it ours, ỳ is, we must not be ruled after our own lustes, we must bridle our own wils. Now this let vs after ỳ example of ỳ Iewes (which were executors of ỳ vengeance of God vppon ỳ Ammonites & Moabites) learn to submit our selues whilst vnto ỳ obedience of God. For surely it is an acceptable sacrifice to him, whẽ we suffer our selues to be guided by his word, and will not attempt any thing beyond ỳ which he biddeth or forbiddeth.

Now hereby we be warned, first of all not to giue ỳ bridle to our owne reuengefulnesse: and ỳ when we be wronged or iniured, we must not be pricked foreward through our carnal affections, to enterprise more than God permitteth vs. For it is written: Vengeance is mine & I will pay it home, as we shal see in the two & thirtith chapter of this booke. Now thẽ, haue we bridled our selues in that behalfe? haue we not desired reuenge against thẽ which haue prouoked vs, & wrought vs any despyte? Let vs therewithall ioyne our Lordes leasure for the redresse of it, yea and let vs haue pitie on our enemies and seeke by all meanes possible to bring them backe into ỳ way of saluation. And if we see that God also taketh reuenge vppon the wicked, let vs acknowledge his louing kindenesse towardes vs, and let it be a warrant vnto vs that he hath a great care of vs, & that he watcheth while we sleepe. Let vs therefore learne to fare the better by all the chastisementes which God layeth vppon the enemies of his Church, knowing ỳ therby he declareth that hee loueth vs with a fatherly affection, and is mindefull of vs and of our sauegard, albeit we thinke not so. This is a thing which ought to make the godly to reioyce, and to confirme thẽ so to trust so much the more stedfastly in God, and

to

to runne vnto him, when the wicked vexe them, and when men seeke to turne them aside out of the way of their saluation. But as for those which are appointed to execute ỹ vengeance of God, let them doe it constantlie, & yet without spitefulnesse, & without bitternesse. For if wee intermeddle our affections with that which God cõmaundeth, the vengeance is no longer his: but it proceedeth from our flesh, that is to say, from our vainly passions. Let them therefore which haue the charge of Iustice, take diligent heede that they proceede therein withall vprightnesse and indifferencie: without being caryed away in any manner whatsoeuer with any wicked desire.

And moreouer let vs be seuered generally frõ the wicked: and not ioyne our selues with them; specially when they separate themselues frõ the Church of God; for if we haue any familiaritie with them, is it not a conspiring against God & his people as much as lyeth in vs? Shal we not by that meanes be confederates with them? Yes, & therefore we must in this behalfe forget all kinred: we may not say, he is my friend, he is my gossip, I haue vsed his companie this long time. We must lay all these thinges aside and say: this man hath shewed himselfe to bee Gods open enemie because he is a let that the faithful agree not as they ought, and because hee hath layd a stumbling block to stop the increase of the Church. When we behold such thinges, let vs not be led with our dolish affections: for although ỹ Iewes were the Moabites kinsemen, yet must they reiect them. And why? Because the Moabites were estranged from the people of God, yea & were become their enemies. Ye see then what we are to beare in minde. But wee put it ill in practise. For who is he which nowadayes preferreth not hatred and I know not what else before God and his Church? We neede nothing to procure our selues fauour. If a man bee in office and haue a neighbour, he will be his friend. If he haue a gossip or a kinsemã, he wil be his friend, much more. But though we be in no authoritie, yet we wil fauour one or other. And why? for euery smal wandring friendship is enough to win our heart. But in the mean while God is forgotten. We can see his Church destroyed before our faces, wee can see men indeuour nothing but to worke destruction and confusion in all thinges, & yet we will be touched therewith neuer a whit. Are we worthie that God should accept vs for his children? We heare the curse which is pronounced in the Psal. 4 Psalme against al those which make not Ierusalẽ the cheefe of their ioye: that is to say, which esteeme not more of the common welfare of the Church, than of al the prosperities of this world. Lyke as the faithful ought to endeuour that the Church of God may prosper, that it may bee aduaunced, that it may encrease: so when the same commeth to passe, they ought to bee farre gladder thereof than of all other benefites, commodities, and whatsoeuer else they enioy in this world.

And contrariwise when they see any affliction in the Church, they ought to be more sorie for it, than if they suffred al maner of afflictions in their owne persons. If they doe not thus, they are accursed. But now we can see ỹ Church of God troubled by the wicked, and we can go and ioyne our selues with them. We are not contented to let them alone, such as they are: but we will needes fauour them, wee will needes support and ayde them. And is not this a confederating of our selues with Satan, as I haue sayd afore? Is it not asmuch as to make open war both against God & against his people? Yes verily. And therefore let vs learn to haue such a regard vnto the welfare of the Church of God, as to holde all those for our enemies which lift themselues vp against it: and let vs wage battaile against them to the vttermost of our power, to resist their wicked practises: except wee will be guiltie of confederacie with them to ouerthrow all that which God hath builded.

Moreouer, whereas it is said, That they came not out to meete the people; let vs note diligently that GOD thinkes it not enough for vs not to bee offensiue vnto his Church, but his will is that wee should also employ our selues faithfully, alwaies to further the saluation of the faithfull, according whereunto it is said: That all they which succor not the Church shall bee cursed. After that GOD hath threatened them which made warre against the citie of Ierusalem, hee turneth his threateninges against them also which holpe it not when it was in necessitie. For there must bee no venterishippe in this behalfe. We must be either friendes or enemies. Therefore if we minde to escape the vengeance of God, whensoeuer wee see the Church stand in neede of our helpe, let euery of vs employ himselfe faithfully, and let vs endeuour to aduaunce that which is belonging vnto GOD, and to ayde them which seeke him, and labor to come vnto vnto him. Let vs endeuour (I say) to assist them and to quicken them vp to goe on alwayes more forewarder. If wee doe not so, doubtlesse wee shall be guiltie of hauing bin too retchlesse and negligent in the Churches behalfe. But (as I sayd afore) if we help and fauour men when they lay their heades together to destroy all, surely wee not onely bewray our selues to bee open enemies of God and of his Church, but also wee shewe our selues to bee double enemies, and so it must needes bee that double vengeance shall fall vppon our heades, as it is in this place declared vnto vs.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God w acknowlegement of our faults, praying him to vouchsafe to make vs feele them better than we haue done, so as wee may bee alwaies quickened vp more & more to resorte vnto him, & he so strengthen vs to resist these temptations which are bent against vs in this worlde, as we may withstand al the enimies which cease not to molest vs: and all the vnderlinges of Sathan which rayse troubles and offences among vs; This good GOD of ours graunt vs grace not to bee discouraged with such thinges, but that wee may continually pro-

proceede in the way whereunto God hath called vs, vntill he haue put vs in possession of that saluatiō which he hath promised vs in the kingdome of heauen. That it may pleasē him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the xvij. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxxj. Sermon, which is the second vpon the three and twentith Chapter.

3 The Ammonites &c.

4 Becausē they met you not with bread and water in the way when ye came out of Egypt: and becausē they hyred against you Balaam the sonne of Beor of Pethor in Mesopotamia, to curse you.

5 Howbeit that ỹ Lord thy God would not hearkē vnto Balaā, but the Lord thy God turned his curse into a blessing vnto thee: becausē ỹ Lord thy god loued thee.

6 Thou shalt not seeke their friendship nor their welfare at any time for euer.

WE saw yesterday howe that although God did not punish ỹ spitefulnesse and cruelte of the Ammonites and Moabites at the first; yet notwithstanding hee did beare it still in minde. Lykewise when as he winketh at faultes, it is not becausē he hath forgotten them, but that euery thing shall be reckoned for in his due time. Whereupon I tolde you, that they which haue offended must not flatter themselues, if GOD beare with them and lay not his hand vppon them at the first: but that they must consider ỹ he allureth them vnto repentance when he is so patient, yea, and that he stayeth to see if men wil perceiue their owne wickednesse and be sory for it. We declared with all, why God commaunded the Israelites to execute his vengeance, and in what sorte they should doe it. It remaineth now that we see the reason which is contained here, which is that the Ammonites & Moabites (though they issued out of the stock of ỹ Iewes) did notwithstanding shewe themselues their mortal enimies by stopping of them from comming into the land of Canaan. It is true that this poynt hath bin cōsidered of as concerning those which rayse offences to turne Gods children frō comming vnto the inheritance which is promised them, who are by good reason condemned in the person of the Moabites and Ammonites.

Rom. 2. 4.

But now we must consider that which Moses toucheth concerning the curse. He sayth, That the Moabites hyred Balaam the son of Beor to curse the people. Marke here the meane which the Moabites vsed to roote out thē whome God had chosen, and to sparre the doore against them, that they might not take possession of the land of Canaan which was promised them. The Moabites sawe full well that they could not be the better men if they came to handy strokes, and therefore they hired a false Propher to curse them. And in what sorte? forsooth in the name of God. Now in the first place we see, that they which had no true &pure religion, had yet some seede thereof: yea and that they had this printed in their hart, that God gouerneth the world, ỹ all thinges are ordered according to his will, ỹ they whom he fauoreth do alwaies prosper, that they to whom he is contrary are vnhappy & vterly confounded. That is ỹ cause why the Moabites hired Balaam in this sort to curse the Israelites in the name of God. For although all this which they did be disallowed, & that they falsly pretēded ỹ name of God like trecherous cuninges as they were, so as this deede of theirs was in deed a cursed defilement, yet notwithstanding al this proceeded frō a good grounde, namely: ỹ they yeelded vnto God all power of ruling ỹ worlde, howbeit ỹ they abused it afterward. Now when we see this, if we think to cōpasse ỹ things which we take in hand, wout calling on ỹ name of God, so as one putteth his trust in his owne paines taking, an other in his wisedome, a thirde in his strength: we are worse than these blinde wretches which neuer knew one word of the lawe and there needes no other witnesses to condemne vs before God. This therefore is a point wel worth the noting. Seeing God would ỹ such light should remaine among ỹ vnbeleeuing, as ỹ they should knowe ỹ he gouerneth the life of men heere belowe, and ỹ all thinges are in his hande: [much more] ought wee to yeelde ỹ honour vnto him, vnlesse wee will be worse than those which were without all true religion.

Numb. 22.

But let vs also take heede that when we haue some good seede, we corrupt it not. For ỹ matter consisteth not altogether in imagining this or ỹ of God: but we must haue a sound & pure knowlege of him. For there is nothing more easie than to snarle ourselues, becausē wee are so enclined vnto vanitie, & the deuill also forgeth vs many deceits to intangle our mindes withal, so as truth is by and by turned into a lie, except we stande heedefully vpon our gard. And therefore let vs learne to call vpon God, to the intent ỹ he ope himselfe vnto vs, we may not swarue neither to the right hand nor to ỹ left: and ỹ the knowledge which wee haue receiued, be not peruerted nor abused. For heere wee see what happened vnto thē which hired Balaam. They tooke him as a Prophet: & in very deed Balac the king of Moab sayth vnto him: I know ỹ they whom thou curseſt shalbe cursed, & those whom thou blessest shalbe blessed. What is ỹ cause why Balac speketh thus? He saw ỹ Balaā had receiued from God ỹ gift of prophecying, and of foretelling many things to come. He was therfore of opinion ỹ seeing God had made him such an excellent mā, he should be heard. So his intent and purpose was, to bring to passe that God might bee fauorable vnto him.

Numb. 23.

And

if this was good (as I tolde you) that he thought thus: Beholde, if God be on our side all shall goe well with vs, we shall remaine safe & sound: but if his hand be against vs, we must needes perish. Ye see one good thing in Balac and in al the Moabites which were his subiects, for they acknowledged that if God were their aduersarie partie, they could not withstand him, & thereupon they humbled themselues before him, and desired to obteyn fauor at his hand. Who wil not highlie esteeme of this? yea, but in the meane while they went not the right way to worke. As I tolde you afore, it is not enough for men to haue some good meaning in generality, but they must come vnto God in such sorte as he commaundeth, and they must not seek any bypathes. For this is not the way to come vnto him, nay rather it keepeth vs aloofe from him, & maketh vs but to recoyle. Therefore albeit the Moabites knew that ỹ true happinesse of men is to be in the fauour of God, and that they sought to come thereuntoyet notwithstanding they cease not to offend him grieuously. And why so? For they take a cleane contrarie way, when they beare themselues in hand that they shall buy the fauour of God for mony. And in what maner deale they? Although ỹ people of Israell was chosen of God, and the land of Canaan was promised vnto them; yet the Moabites perswaded themselues that they might cõpound God in such wise as he woulde not accomplishe his promise, but shape and vnshape himselfe according vnto their lustes and pleasure. Let vs therefore note first of all, that to finde the fauour of God, we must not hardẽ our selues in our vices, but bee sory for them: and secondly hope for nothing against his promises. Here bee two speciall pointes. And it is all one as if it were said, that to please God, we must be truely repẽtant. For vntil we know our faultes, and be ashamed of them, doubtlesse God will alwayes remaine our enemie. And therewithal let vs grõud our selues vppon his promises. For it were a folie to thinke to obtaine any thing in such sort as God in the meane while should bee faine to eate his worde, and be chaunged according vnto our fancie. Now the Moabites were of this minde. For they cõtinued spiteful stil. And how thought they to winne Gods fauour? They went about to buy it of Balaam for mony. Lykewise nowadayes among the Papists it is to be seene how they intangle themselues in their sinnes, and had leuer to rote in their owne filth, than receiue the medicine which God offereth them. But in ỹ meane time they thinke to ransome themselues by their Masses, and by other such meanes as they haue. But they shall gaine asmuch as the Moabites did. And what meane they by these ransomes which they bring, but that they woulde faine make God partaker of their wickednesse? When a man shall haue pilled & robbed others, he will bring part of that bootie for an offering. A fornicatour thinkes to cleare himselfe by giuing of almes. Now this is all one as if they would set God in their owne aray, and make him also guiltie of the faultes as well as themselues: & therefore they doe but prouoke his vengeance farther vppon them, as the Moabites did. So thẽ (as I haue tolde you afore) if wee will haue accesse vnto God, let vs learne to feele his anger: and in feeling of it, condemne our selues for our sinnes, and so come and offer our selues purely vnto his seruice, praying him to change vs into new creatures, ỹ we may be acceptable vnto him.

And herewithall let vs come and seeke after that ransome by the which we are recõciled vnto God, & redeemed frõ all cursing: which is bicause our Lord Iesus Christ hath shed his pretious bloud for our saluation. And thus ye see how we ioyne the promises of God with repentance. For it is not enough for sinners to feele and acknowledge their faultes, & to be ashamed of thẽ: But faith must be ioyned therewithall. For what doe the Moabites in this place? They tel Balaam that those whome he blesseth shall bee blessed. What proofes haue they of this? Was God pinned on Balaams sleeue? Was he bound to him? Ye see then howe fondly Balac dele. But the despisers of God deserue well to be so blinded. For they perswade themselues that God will come downe from heauen, and transforme himself for their pleasure, yea after what maner soeuer they seeke him. For (as I haue told you) there is a rule and manner of seeking God which wil neuer deceiue vs. And assoone as men turne there, from that, they doe but wander from him. Howsoeuer the case standeth then, if wee desire in deede to finde fauour at the hand of God, let vs haue our eye fixed on his promises. Let vs know how and by what meanes it commeth to passe, that he fauoreth vs; and hying our selues thither, let vs wholy stay our selues on that which he telleth vs. To be short, let faith be our guide, & shewe vs ỹ way. After that maner God wil accept of vs, whẽ we come vnto him; by that meanes the gate shall be opened vnto vs. And so in the example of Balac and ỹ Moabites, we haue as it were a lookingglasse, wherein to behold al ỹ byscapes & all the vagaries which ỹ world maketh, when they pretend to seeke God and yet keepe aloofe from him. For whatsoeuer they pretend, there is no alteration of minde in them, neither haue they any beliefe in the promises of God. On the cõtrary side, we haue also to gather how God will become fauorable vnto vs. And that is if we imagine not to bind him vnto vs, as though he ought to allow of our vices, and would intermeddle him with our filthinesse: but seeke to bee cleansed from it, and to yeelde our selues vnto him, and to cleaue vnto his righteousnesse. Secondly when we conceiue nothing in our braine after our owne lyking, to say that wee must serue God, but how? after this manner: we must winne his fauour in this sorte, after the manner of the lawlesse libertie which reigneth nowadayes among ỹ Papists. But if we would aske any thing at the mouth of God: alas, wee are not worthie to come neare him. And againe when wee thinke on his maiestie, wee must needes bee confounded for feare, because there is nothing in vs but all manner of corruption, and wee must needes bee his enemies, euen of good right. Yea but wee haue those promises which can-

cannot deceiue vs, if so bee wee doubt nothing at all. Surely God so warranteth that which he hath spoken, ỳ if we set our mindes throughly vppon his promises and vnderprop our selues with them, we may goe on with a courage and not doubt but that he will receiue vs.

Now moreouer whereas it is sayd that the Moabites hired Balaam, and meant that hee should serue their turne to curse the people: we haue hereby to note, that if we beare our selues in hand, that God wil helpe vs with his fauour against those whom he loueth, the ishew will be such as we see the Moabites had thereof. And yet this is in common vse, that the wicked think ỳ God ought to be on their side, notwithstãding ỳ they persecute & destroy folk with neuer so euil conscience. Albeit ỳ they vse neuer so much spitefulnesse and crueltie, yet are they of opinion that God will helpe them. As for example nowadayes, when princes make warre vpon couetousnesse and ambition: they proclayme many solemne processions. But what for that? Surely all that euer they do, is detestable before God. For what stirreth thẽ thereto, but that they are blinded with pride, couetousnesse and such lyke thinges: so that they spare no mans bloud, ne make any account of confounding heauen and earth together: & yet notwithstanding they call vpon the name of God. I alledge onely this one example, howbeit that euery particular person is at the same point. Euery of vs in ỳ trade which he vseth, would faine haue God on his side. But yet for all that we continue stil our deceit & malicious wilinesse, our crueltie & extorsions, our periuries and trecherous dealinges, & wee giue our selues vnto all wickednesse: and is it possible that God should be matched with our filthie infections? Should he renounce himself & turne his glory into shame? yet are mẽ so blockish that they dally thus with God, yea & ỳ with such presumptuous bouldnes, as it is an horrible thing to behold. Sith we see that this sickneſſe is ouer rife, let vs learne (as I haue told you) that when we wil cal vpon God to defend vs & to be aduersary vnto our enimies, we must take heede that we haue a good cause, & that we be warranted in conscience ỳ we attempt nothing but according to his will, that they which persecute vs do it wrongfully, that we be desirous as farre as lieth in vs to be at peace with our enemies, & that wee haue not prouoked them with any iniurie, nor giuen them any cause to molest vs. Whẽ we can protest this in conscience before God, then we may wel call vpon him, & feare we not but he wil be our defẽder. But if our cause be euil & that they which persecute vs may truely alledge ỳ we haue prouoked them so to do, & haue giuen thẽ the cause thereof; let vs not then looke for any fauour at Gods hand. For when we abuse his name so falsly, our payment shal not be long after. And how shal we be rewarded? Verily not onely our labor shal be lost, but God wil also laugh vs to skorne for taking part against his children. Therefore if wee wage battaile with good men, and vse extortiõs, & wrongings, & other wicked practises, and increase the same with this further, of committing such outrage against God as to intermeddle his name with our wickednes; questionlesse hee will wreke his wrath vpon vs for it. Wee see what is said in this place: For God pronouncing here ỳ sentence of condemnation vpon the Moabites, saith ỳ they abused his name in hiring Balaã to curse his people. Let vs therfore learn (as I haue tolde you) not to trouble thẽ which serue God, nor to maintaine any quarell against them, vnlesse we will haue God for our aduersarie. And in so doing let vs not think to gaine any thing by calling vpon him, but rather perswade our selues that in so doing we shall kindle his vengeance so much the more against vs.

Let vs come now vnto that which Moses addeth: *God would not heare Balaã, but turned his curse into a blessing: because the Lord thy God loued thee.* This historie is handled more largelie from the 22. Chap. of Num. vnto the 24. But without making here the whole rehearsal thereof in full office to haue the effect of that which is touched here as by the way. It is said that God would not heare Balaam, but there was yet more than so, as Moses in that place rehearseth. For God hindered him, and declared vnto him his will. Whẽ Balaam desired leaue to goe at ỳ request of Balac and of the Moabites: he made the messengers tarie a night, because he would repaire also vnto God. Thereupon it was told him: Thou shalt not goe. But yet for al that, he burgained, yea & the desire of gaine prouoked him to inrage God so long vntill he saith: Goe thy way; I harden in displeasure, insomuch that God shewed him his rebellion & his own asse taught him, as who say more clearer than he. He could not perceiue ỳ Angel of the Lord, and yet the brute beast perceiued him. Ye see then Balaã condemned, insomuch that God giueth more reason & discretion to ỳ Asse whereon he sate, than vnto him who was a Prophet: yea contrary to all nature ỳ Asse speaketh. When we see all this, is it not as much as if God had expressly set himselfe on the cõtrarie side, to shew ỳ he garded ỳ people of Israel vnder his protectiõ? And after this when Balaam is come, what saith he? He telleth Balac ỳ king thus. I can doe nothing. Truely I haue enforced my self to doe somewhat, but I see ỳ God withstandeth me: and I cannot open my mouth to speake, but he turneth my words cleane contrary from my purpose. Hereupõ they make many cõuratiõs to hinder God, & make him beholden to thẽ: they reare vp seuẽ altars on one side, & seuẽ on another. And whereunto tẽdeth al this, but to ỳ which I told you, ỳ the wicked would faine bring God to their part? But they goe not ỳ right way to seeke him. They fetch their vagaries and go by ỳ wayes. And they doe nothing but turne tayle to him. And if happilie they cast an eye towardes him, it is but to prouoke his anger and to kindle it so much ỳ more. Ye see then in what sort Balaam and Balac go forward. Now in the end whẽ God had opened Balaams mouth, hee prophecied of the good which should come vnto the people of Israell vnto the reigne of Dauid: Saying, That a starre should come out of Iacob, the brightnesse where of shoulde reche

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vnto Israel, and Moab shoulde bee subiect vnto them, and humble himselfe vnder their feete. And vndoutedly in the reigne of Dauid there was a figure of the kingdome of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Yee see then how Balaam was constrayned to speake in this sort mauger his heard, and againe, when Balac reproued him saying, What meanest thou? Thou art come hither at my charges, and commest thou to deceiue mee? for thou doest cleane contrary to that which thou didst promise mee. And what can I do saith Balaam? Is God like vnto men, that hee shoulde change his purpose? If he haue once decreed a thing, it must needs be done, it abideth for euer. For hee altereth not, ne changeth according to the lust of men. Beholde how the false prophet speaketh in as excellent a style and manner of speech as can be, of Gods vnchangeable truth.

Now because the Israelites should not think that Gods doing hereof, was either because thy had deserued something, or because they were better than the Moabites: Moses sayeth afterwarde: *That this was because God loued the Iewes.* To the intent therefore that he might be magnified for his freebestowed goodnes, and that ỹ Iewes might humble them selues knowing that they had obtayned fauour at his hand by reason hee had chosen & elected them of his owne good will, he saith: *Thy God hath now declared how he loueth thee.* Here we haue to note first of all that Balaam was such a false prophet, as notwithstanding had some particular gift of prophecying from God: and these be no contrary things that a man should haue the gift of prophecying, and yet for all that abuse the gift of the holy ghost, and turne it to a wicked purpose. Wee see that also which S. Paul sayth in his Epistle to the Corinthians; namely, that they which had the gift of tongues, of interpreting, and such like things which were excellent in the Church, had notwithstanding no regarde of edifying of the Church: and that many of them were not renewed in such sort by the spirit of God, ỹ they sought to serue him. It may wel be therfore that men shal haue receiued excellent gifts to bee endewed, & that they shall beare the markes of the spirit of God, & yet not haue the chiefe and principal thing of all, ỹ is to wit, the spirit of regeneration, nor be so confirmed, that they shall giue themselues ouer wholy vnto the seruice of God; & endeuour to make that auailable vnto them which they haue receiued, by applying it vnto a good & lawful vse, wayting for the salvation which God setteth before them. This may wel be. And if this fall out in the Church, that is to say, to them which are of the household of faith: what shal we think of Balaam & the like? & so we see there is no inconuenience, ỹ Balaam had the gift of prophecie, & yet for all that had many corruptions therewithal, insomuch that he was an idolater, & vsed sorceries. But what is the cause that God gaue him the knowledge of foretelling things to come? for it might seeme ỹ by this meanes he setteth forth his name vnto open reproche. It is true in deede that Balaam & such like, when they thus abuse the gifts of God, do vnhallow ỹ which is holy, & that which they haue receiued of God. Yet notwithstanding there was this respect, ỹ God ment to leaue some witnesse of himself euen among the Infidels, to the intent they might haue so much ỹ lesse excuse, & be so much the more conuicted, if they would make ignorance their buckler. As for example, the Moabites forasmuch as they had not ỹ law, therefore they had neuer knowen any thing of God, except their fathers had left thē some smal remnant therof. For Lot was not ignorant of it, but beeing brought vp in his vncle Abrahams house, he knew what religion meant. As for the Moabites, they were altogether estranged from it. Howbeit there remained some small print therof, ỹ they might be conuicted at the latter day: ỹ if they had sought after God, they might haue attained vnto him, but because they were snarled in the multitude of superstitions which they themselues had deuised, & were growen cleane out of kinde, they can seeke after no starting holes: for they shal always be condemned for hauing a malicious wickednes in them, and for turning aside from God, so as they deserued to be blinded in ỹ fashion by ỹ deceits of Satan. And thus yee se what is to be noted in the first place touching Balaam.

Now in ỹ Balac beleeued, ỹ if Balaam once cursed ỹ people, al should passe on his side; wee see therby how men can neuer hold the mean, but euen do swarue aside to some extremitie or other. It is true in deede ỹ when wee are blessed of ỹ prophets of God, the same is a warrant vnto vs of his blessing. But yet we must always haue an eye vnto God. For if we tease him in pieces, what shal we win therby? But when men think to coniure God, it is al one as if they would dismember him. For they intend to seuer his iustice & vprightnes from his truth, & his gratious goodnes, from his mightie power. God saieth ỹ when we be blessed of his prophets, we ought to assure our selues that he ratifieth ỹ same in heauen. When Abraham blessed Isaac, when Isaac blessed Iacob, when Iacob blessed his children, it was no vaine blessing, because it had his certaine force & effect: And why? Because God had giuen vnto them this office. And what is ỹ reason ỹ we are blessed at his hand, when mē blesse vs with their mouth? His wil is that men should beare this reuerence vnto his word, by ỹ which he declareth him self here below vnto vs, he cōmeth not downe alwayes from heauen in visible maner, he sendeth not his angels at our pleasure: but those whoome he hath ordeined his messengers, are to declare his wil vnto vs. He wilbe serued by them as by instruments, to the intent he may make his blessings which he sendeth vnto men to profit them. And therefore if we say that being blessed by the Prophets or by the priests, we are assured ỹ God ratifieth the same in heauen: we shal speake truly. Yea verily, if so be wee haue an eye vnto God, & be conformable vnto his wil. But if we dally with God, & wil haue him transforme himself at our beck; let vs note ỹ he wil curse vs, yea, ỹ he will curse vs double when we vse him in that order. For when God ordei-

Num. 24.

Gen. 27.

ned that the prieſtes ſhould bleſſe the people, it was to good effect & purpoſe. For it is expreſſely ſaid in the ſixth Chapter of Numbers: Ye ſhall bleſſe my people in my name, & they ſhalbee bleſſed. There is a promiſe made. The prieſtes then when they opened their mouth in ỹ name of God, had this trueth warranted from heauẽ, ỹ they might promiſe the fauor of God, and the people were certaine ỹ they ſhould proſper whẽ they once had this warrant which was offered vnto them. But yet for all that it behoued them to haue an eye vnto God. For if ỹ wicked ſhould come to ſeeke for a bleſſing at the prieſts hãds, & the prieſts on the one ſide ſhould defie God & make their gaine of him; & they on the other ſide which come vnto them, haue hyred them to bleſſe: what might be thought of it? It were a diueliſh ſuperſtition, & a peruerting of ỹ order of God. And yet notwithſtanding they do it daily in the popedom. For ye ſee what our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſaid vnto his diſciples. If you forgiue ſins vpon earth, they ſhalbe forgiuen in heauen: and whatſoeuer yee vnbinde vpon earth, ſhalbe vnbound in heauen. Ye ſee then how our Lord Ieſus Chriſts will is, ỹ his bleſſing ſhould be vttered vnto vs in his name. But what do the papiſts? Their prelacie forſooth on ỹ one ſide vſurp the office of God, & by their charmes & ſorceries they would ſo bleare ỹ eyes of the whole world, ỹ men ſhould not ſeeke after God. It is ynough (ſay they) to haue a croſſe on ỹ back, or a ſprinkling of holy water, & I know not what. And the world on ỹ other ſide is ſoone entreated to receiue theſe dotages. For men fal aſleep in their vices, & beare themſelues in hande it is ynough for them to haue diſcharged al their ſinnes once a yere into a prieſtes boſome, & then to haue a Maſſe or two ſung, & other like ſolemnities vſed. After this maner haue men purchaced bleſſings not at Gods, but at Balaams hand. What is then to be done? Because we ſee men ſwarue thus aſide vnto theſe ſinful extremities; let vs know, ỹ when Gods wil is ỹ his bleſſing be declared vnto vs by ỹ mouth of men, it is to the intent wee ſhould look vp vnto him, & receiue the bleſſing at his hand, yea, & ỹ in ſuch ſort as wee ſeuer it not from his trueth or righteouſnes. On what condition is it ỹ he bleſſeth vs? It is to the intent firſt ỹ we ſhould know, ỹ there is in vs nothing but curſednes, & ſecondly ỹ we ſhould haue recourſe vnto his maieſtie, & hold our ſelues in ỹ right way which hee hath ſhewed vnto vs, and therefore let vs not diſioyne ỹ which is ioyned togither by God leaſt we become guiltie of this crueltie of tearing God as it were in peeces, as the Papiſts do nowadayes, & the Moabites did in time paſt. Now then we ſee wherin Balac offended, & how we are warned by his fault, which is, that he thought Balaam had this priuilege to bleſſe at his pleaſure, & that God had layed the bridle on his neck, & that he had reſigned ouer vnto him his own office. Let vs take heede of ſo vaine & fooliſh thoughts. And let vs vnderſtand ỹ when God ſendeth vs men to declare vnto vs his word, it is not becauſe himſelfe would bee at reſt & ſleepe in heauen, & in the mean time forſake his church here below, & ſuffer men to beſtow at their pleaſure ỹ treaſure which he hath committed vnto them; but it is to the intent ỹ we ſhould be guyded vnto him according vnto our weakneſs. If we haue men to ſpeake vnto vs in his name, it is not to the end ỹ we ſhould ſticke vnto them, but to the intent they might be our ayders & helpers. And yet notwithſtanding if we wil come vnto God, we muſt be bleſſed in his name; yea, & receiue w faith & true repentance the good which he offereth vs. And when we be ſo bleſſed, let vs knowe ỹ that which men ſhall haue done, is no vaine or fruitles thing: becauſe God warranteth & ratifieth it in heauen: but yet for al ỹ, he himſelf muſt gouerne vs, he muſt alwayes haue the chiefe preheminence, & we muſt not leane to creatures, but reſort vnto him and ſay: Lord it is of thee that I deſire to be bleſſed. And how? not by forging ſuch imaginations as ſhal ſeeme good vnto vs: but thou Lord haſt appointed ỹ we ſhould come vnto thee, & ſith we haue thy word, it is ynough to aſſure vs that our labor ſhal not be loſt: but that the thing which thou haſt pronounced & decreed by thy word & by the doctrine of ỹ Goſpel, ſhalbe fulfilled: & that although it be done on earth, yet notwithſtanding ỹ effect therof ſhalbe ſhewed in heauẽ. Wherfore whenſoeuer we heare the warrant of our ſaluation preached vnto vs; it is all one as if we had ſeene an angel from heauen, or as if god himſelf had taught vs in his own perſon: and we muſt do God this honor to receiue his word reuerently without making any reply againſt it, at leaſtwiſe if we wilbe holden & accounted for his people. Now herewithal we are alſo warned ỹ God by withholding the mouth of Balaam, hath declared therby the power of his promiſe which he had made vnto Abraham. Truely he might haue vſed other meanes: but his intent was to certifie the Iewes more fully of their adoption. Sometimes God giueth the bridle to the wicked to blaſpheme with open & ful mouth, & to peruert al truth, whereupon they take ſo vnruly & lawleſſe leaue, as none cã be greater, & do nothing elſe but pluck forward the vengeance of God vpon their heads. To be ſhort, all the world goeth out of kind by their abuſes. God ſometimes permitteth this. And why ſo? becauſe mẽ are worthie ſomtimes of ſuch ſcourges. Secondly, God meaneth to humble vs. And thirdly, he will vſe ỹ ſtedfaſtnes of our faith. But in Balaam he vſed another manner of order, ỹ is to wit, he bridled his tongue ſo as he could not do what he would, & what he purpoſed: for god withſtood him. And why did hee ſo? Becauſe ỹ people were ouer tender & nyce harted: they had neede of helpe, and therefore God meant to giue them this aduantage. So then let vs note, ỹ he ſuffereth deceiuers ſometimes to darken the trueth, yea, & to caſt forth their lyes at ful, & in the meane while notwithſtanding diſappointeth them of their purpoſe: or if his wil be that they preuaile, it is becauſe of mens vnthãkfulnes: for (as S. Paul ſaith) they haue wel deſerued that God ſhould forſake them. But ſomtimes he wil bridle the tongs of ỹ wicked, ſo as the enimies of the worde of God cannot

Matt. 16, 19. Iohn. 20. 21.

2. Theſſa.

cabet speake that which full faine they would & wee see nowadayes many experiences hereof. In deede a man may see on the one side these lyeing villaines, these hypocrites & flatterers [I meane] which write nowadays as their knowledge serueth them, & as men grease them in the fist: like common strumpets of the stewes. It is nothing with them to speake euil of God, and to abhorre themselues against his word. We may see many such Balaams nowadayes, which are in the Popes pay, & ate of his stalling clergie, & be of the number of these hee-rad beasts. But yet we see also how God bridleth them, & locketh them vp in such close ward, that they speake somewhat else contrarie to that they purposed, & so they profit vs more by that meane, than if they had set themselues purposely to serue God: seeing that the throne of Popedom is cut by his owne rudelings, & by all these Balaams which endeuour to bring al to vtter destruction, & the things which are done by them, doe serue vs to good purpose, as if the seruants of God had spoken & written. Therefore when we see this, let vs acknowledge the goodnes of God, and be confirmed more & more therin. And moreouer sith sometimes giue such great libertie vnto the wicked, they disguise al things, & falsifie the truth by turning of it into a lie: Let vs pray him to strengthen vs against such temptations, and not suffer the weaklings to quayle altogether by these meanes. Now it is to be noted also, that God heard not Balaam, but held him backe, notwithstanding that he declared his wil vnto him, & in the end did suffer him to goe. Hereby wee are taught not to come with hypocrisie as Balaam did when we desire leaue for any thing at Gods hand. For wee see what leaue he had. The like was said vnto king Achab. Yea thou shalt haue thine horie. But God mocked him, because he would needes haue leaue of him, whether he would or no. Wel, God gaue him leaue, but it was to doe him to vnderstand, that he was prouoked thereby to further displeasure: so hapned it vnto Balaam. But how euer it be, let vs thus conclude: that for asmuch as Balaã was so stubbornly bent: therefore his couetuines so blinded him, as he sought only after gaine. For as a swyne when he hath once winded his meat, runnes on to swash him-selfe in it, though he see men readie to stick him, because his lust carieth him on headlóg though it be to his death: so doe the wicked which despise God. And why? For their desires blind them, & carry them away headlong, & yet will they needes haue God leaue with them.

But wee see what befell of it: namely that God commaudeth him to curse his people, & to curse the Moabites. For asmuch as wee see this, let vs know that sith God did put the words of his truth in the mouth of a false prophet, [we must assure our selues that] when he sheweth vs so great fauour as to speak vnto vs by those whom he hath appointed shepheards in his church, & by whō he will be serued, it is an infallible warrant of his gracious goodnes towards vs. And seeing that a false prophet was constrayned to say, God is not like vnto mortal men, what ought we to do? Seeing a false prophet speaketh thus, we ought to be ashamed to call the trueth of God in question, specially when he declareth it vnto vs by such as represent his person. And therfore let euery man answere Amen in his heart. Sith wee heare euery day, that God alloureth vs vnto himself, that he renewes in the remembrance of his adoption which he hath made vs, that he layeth before vs the benefites of the death & passion of our Lord Iesus Christ, declaring vnto vs that we are cleansed by that meanes, & that we are reconciled vnto him: let these things cause vs to answere Amen, & let vs rightly seale vp the same, to shew that when God speaketh we are content with that which he saith, nothing douting but that he will fulfil the same in his time. Num. 23. 19

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgements of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them more & more, yea, & knowing how there is nothing in vs but al maner of miserie & wretchednes, & that vntil he accept of vs through his mercie, wee must needes be his enemies; it may please him to grant vs the grace to feele him, not with faintednes & hypocrisie, but in plain truth, ridding vs of all our wicked affections, & of whatsoeuer we haue besides which may hinder vs from coming vnto him purely & in such simplicitie as he requireth. Let vs therfore go vnto him with repentance & faith, submitting our selues wholy vnto his word, & embracing his promises which he maketh vs to feele with their power & effect. And that albeit we heare them not but of mortal men which speake vnto vs, yet wee may not fayle to sticke wholly vnto that doctrine which is of God, & to that order which he hath appointed, knowing that our Lord Iesus Christ wil shew howe it was not for nought that he ordeined his church should be so ordered. That it may please him to graunt this grace not only vnto vs, but also, &c.

On Wednesday the xxij. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxxvij. Sermon which is the third vpon the three and twentith Chapter.

7 Thou shalt not abhorre an Edomite, because he is thy brother. Thou shalt not abhorre an Egyptian, because thou wast a stranger in his land.

8 The children which are borne to them in the third generation, shal enter into the congregation of the Lord.

9 When thou goest out with an host against thine enemies, then keepe thy selfe from euery wicked thing.

10 If any among you be vncleane by that which cometh vnto him by night, he shall go out of the host & not come into the host againe.

11 But at euening he shall wash himselfe with water, and when the Sunne is downe, he shal come into the host againe.

WE haue already declared whereunto this which Moses treateth of here doth tend. Namely to this, that for asmuch as God had seuered the people of Israel from al other nations of the world, that priuilege might be obserued: and that was to the intent that those whom he of his free fauour had chosen, might the better vnderstand, how deepely they were bound vnto his freebestowed goodnes. For as we haue before seene, he preferred them not in this manner before all the world, either for any worthines or nobilitie which was in their persons. Ye see then how the children of Abraham were then adopted, when God gathered them vnto himself, to be taken for his children. And therefore they are exhorted not to mingle themselues with the defilements of ỹ Infidels, but to continue in al holines, because God hath so dedicated them vnto himselfe, knowing ỹ they ought not to match themselues with such as were remoued from God, for that had bin an infecting of themselues to peruert the grace of God. Likewise nowadays being assured ỹ God hath giuen vs his word, it is to the end we should walke not as blinde men in darknes but as folke ỹ are enlightened & haue the sunne of righteousnes, our Lord Iesus Christ. Yee see then in effect what Moses treateth of in this place, to wit, that ỹ people of Israel being elected of God, should keepe possession of that grace which was granted vnto them.

Now if a man had seene ỹ estate of ỹ children of Israel at ỹ time, he would haue scorned ỹ forbidding which is set down here. For alas poore men they had wandered alreadie in the wildernes fortie yeres, they had not one foote of land of their own, they were hunted out of al places, & yet for all ỹ, as if they had bin of some great nobilitie, & in some high dignitie, God saith vnto them: make much of the benefit which I haue bestowed vpon you, receiue not the Moabites, for they are your open enimies; but receiue the Egyptians & Edomits in ỹ third generatiõ. Yea, but what should ỹ Edomites haue gained by cõming to such a wandring & vagabond people? & again, as for ỹ Edomites, they were in peaceable possession of their inheritance, no man troubled them, & therfore this might seeme superfluous. But let vs note ỹ God valueth more the fauour which hee bestoweth on men when hee calleth them into his church, than if they had all ỹ riches & honors, & all ỹ delicate pleasures in the world. Ye see then ỹ reason why God forbiddeth ỹ Iewes to receiue them whom he had cursed & reiected. For ỹ question is not whether ỹ Moabites & Egyptians should aduantage themselues the more as touching earthly commodities, by ioyning with ỹ people of God: that cõmeth not into account: but whether it would not benefice them to come vnto ỹ inheritance of saluation if they were mebers of the church of God, if they were partakers of ỹ adoption which God made in the person of Abraham. There is the thing which was to be considered. Therefore when we be now despised of the world, yea & scorned also as we see how the vnthankful kind of men are full of pride, & make such a triumphe of ỹ world, ỹ they will scarse vouchsafe vs stalle wasshes from shooles to trade a poore old trough (say I) there with our beasts: be ought inough (I say) notwithstanding al vnknowledge of God, to haue stowed so hastie a blessed reproch vpon vs, as to looke mercifully vpon vs, & to draw vs to him, & so chuse vs for his people, & to aduance vs aboue al the enemies of ỹ world. For ỹ which is said by ỹ Prophet shal alwayes hold: Namely, that we are more esteemed before him, than are all ỹ great kingdoms of ỹ world. So then let vs learne to content our selues with the fauour which God hath bestowed vpon vs, in ỹ it hath pleased him to gather vs into his house as his own children, and let vs beare patiently ỹ want of all other things, & not be ouerpensiue or grieued, though ỹ world make no account of vs. For it ought well to content vs ỹ our Lord sheweth himselfe our father, & ỹ he hauing adopted vs, calleth vs to an heauenly inheritance, although in this world we be most miserable, & (as it should seeme) vnder worse estate & condition than we. Let vs come now vnto ỹ which is said of the Edomites. God willeth, *That in the third generation they should be counted yea, men to be accounted of the church, if they offer themselues thereunto.* And he addeth, *That they are brethren*, that is to say kinsmen, *of the children of Israel.* For we know ỹ Esau from whome the Edomites came, was the eldest sonne of Isaac so ỹ by nature he should haue bin preferred before Iacob, if God of his freebestowed goodnes had not made a change therin. Now ỹ Moabites also were kinsmen of the children of Israel by reason of Lot. But we haue seene why God did cut them off, to wit, because they enforced themselues to ỹ vtmost of their power, to hinder the children of Israel from cõming to their inheritance. Those then which should haue bin neere by blood, estranged themselues wholly from the people of God. For they troubled the gracious fauour which God had bestowed on his people, or at least wise it was not long of them, that it was not troubled. For they hyred Balaam, & endeuoured to annihilate the blessing of God, & to abolish his promise. Yee see then in them an vnpardonable offence. But as touching the Edomites, there was no such reason. And so, God remembred still, that hauing made the promise to his seruaunt Abraham, hee extended his fauour to his whole flocke. Yea, albeit that Esau was for a tyme deprined of it; yet notwithstanding he would not haue him

so farre remoued from it, as other nations were. In deede if wee consider both these people, as they are either in his estate, wee shal see that to be true which is saide by the Prophet Malachie, for God vpbraideth the children of Israel with their vnthankfulnes in this behalf, y they considered not what a priuiledge he had giuen them. What (saith he) haue you forgotten y loue which I haue shewed you? And wherin? There he bringeth in the children of Israel as wicked folke & such as had cast vnder foote y which they had receiued. I pray you (saith he) was not Esau Iacobs brother? and yet I loued Iacob your father and hated Esau. My will was he should bee shut vp as it were in the deserts & hilles, & I haue giuen you all this countrey in possession. Yee see héere how God magnifieth his goodnes towards y stock of Iacob, in comparison of Esau. But heere Moses saith y if the Edomites wold yeeld themselues into the church of God, they might bee receiued in the third generation, yea & bee incorporated thereinto altogither. For he which offered himselfe to be circumcised, was alwayes receiued, but he was not yet accounted of y bodie of the people, vntil the third generation. Let vs therfore diligently note, that here the children of Esau be not made equall vnto the stock of Iacob. But it is said that if any of them would renounce his own kinred, he should be accounted in the number of this blessed stocke which God had chosen out to serue him, and be receiued among them.

Now we are here to call to minde, that when God made his promise, it was vnto the whole stock of Abraham; not that al were partakers of the promise of saluation, but that God had a certaine regard & bare a special fauour vnto al that house, & vnto them which were to issue from it, accordingly also as we see how he saith: As concerning Ismael, I haue heard thee. And in very deede, it was not for nought y God cómaunded y Ismael should be circumcised. We know what circumcision importeth: it is a signe of the fauor of God. Now seeing it was giuen vnto Ismael, it is great reason y he should approch more neere vnto God than the Paynims which were altogither defiled, & which had no signe that God loued them, I say no particular signe. For in as much as he maketh his sunne to shine vpon the good & vpon the wicked, & in that he nourisheth the whole world, therby he proueth himselfe a father towards all. But here the case is of hauing some warrant of adoption. Now Ismael had it. But in the end it is saide that he shall not be the inheritour of the house. Behold he is cut off. And S. Paul also alleageth the same example, to shew that there are many which are called in the church of God, which in the ende are driuen out againe & banished, as not worthy to enioy so great a benefit. And so was it with Esau: for he was the sonne Isaac, yea he and his brother Iacob were twinnes: by reason whereof it might seeme there should haue been two nations of like condition & estate altogither. Esau was the elder, & for that cause should haue been preferred before his brother, but he was bereued of his right: God chaunged the order of nature, to the intent we might haue a looking glasse (as the holy scripture sheweth it to bee) that it is of meere fauour, when we are elected of God: y we must not seeke y cause therof in our selues, as if we had preuented him, or as if we had deserued any thing, & y he had found vs more worthy than others. There is none of al this. But if wee bee frail & contemptible, yea & as it were things borne out of time; God will magnifie his goodnes so much the more, by choosing vs. Yee see how Esau is driuen out of his fathers house. And in what maner? Is it that he should be put beside all y commodities of this world? No. For he was rich & wealthie. Yea, it seemed y he was an hundredfold more happie than his brother Iacob. For whiles Iacob remained a stranger stil in the land, Esau was wel harbored, & his offspring was settled in peace. Yea, he had then the lordship & gouernment in y countrey of Edom, which euen vnto this day carieth his name. And al this whyles poore Iacob is a fugitiue in a farre countrie. And when hee returneth hee falleth on his knees before him, & desireth mercie, so as his life seemed to hang by a slender thread, & that Esau should deuour him like as when a Wolfe holdeth a fillie sheepe in his chawes. Euen so stoode y case with him. And in the end when Iacob was com home againe, wee see he did nothing but wander here & there, so as hee had scarce any corner to liue in, yea, & y was at the curtesie of another: he had no water so drink, but it cost him dearely; he was hardly entreated & many quarels were picked vnto him for al the things y he had; lastly hee was driuen from his owne house into Egypt by reason of famine, & there to dye. But as for the Edomites, they pyned not away after that maner. And so we see (as I told you) y God meant in this behalf to shew the fauour which he bestoweth on men when he vouchsafeth to choose them vnto himselfe. And herewithal we see how his goodnes was extended to al the stock of Abraham, although they which were children only after y flesh, were not accounted nor aduowed to be of the church: yet neuertheles there alwayes remained some remnant of grace amóg them. Likewise at this day we be farre neerer neighbors vnto the Papists, than vnto y Turkes or other Paynims. And the reason is, because y albeit they are estranged from the grace of god, & haue corrupted al religion, & are so intangled in their abuses & corruptions as it is horrible to behold, yet notwithstanding there remayneth among them some foote step of y calling of God. For they haue baptisme which is a visible signe wherby we see y God held thē of his house & of his fold. Ye see then how y papists are as it were the Edomites. For they were first called, and shoulde haue beene partakers of the saluation which was preached vnto vs by the gospel; they beare yet the mark therof as touching baptisme. But because they haue peruerted the seruice of God, yea & as it were taken faith clean away, by the which they should haue bin called vnto the mercie which hath bin brought vnto vs by our Lord Iesus Christ, it is great reason y they shold

Deut. 23. 4.

be held for Edomites. But on the other side, we ought notwithstanding to call to mynd the brotherhood which they had with vs. And therfore let vs endeuor as much as is possible for vs, to bring them back againe, that we may be knit togither againe. And how knit togither againe? I meane not, that we should turne aside from the pure trueth of God, to be at agreement with the Papists, but that they should enter, that is to say, that they should approch neare vnto God, & so we be reconciled al of vs, yeelding obedience vnto our heauenly father. so as we may haue al one head Iesus Christ who will defende vs vnder his wings. When the Papistes come & order themselues thus, we are to receiue them with all gentlenes, by reaſō of the brotherhood which God hath set betweene them & vs. And we must not only do so, but also must seeke them as much as is possible for vs to do.

As touching the Egyptians, it is saide ỹ they also shalbe receiued into the Church. And why? *For thou wast a stranger* (saith he) *in the land of Egypt*. Now in deede, true it is that the children of Israel were oppressed with cruel bondage by reason of the cruel tyrannie which the Egyptians exercised ouer them. But yet Gods will is that their benefits should be acknowledged. Albeit they so vniustly oppressed the childrē of Israel, yet because ỹ children of God had their refuge thither in the time of famine, & were there relieued. God wil not haue that benefit forgotten. And ỹ is the cause also why God by the Prophet Esay, comparing the captiuitie of Egypt with ỹ captiuitie of Assyria, saith: In deede my people went to soiorne in Egypt, & necessitie constrained them therto: & wheras the Egyptians oppressed them, in so doing they did them wrong: but yet they had some colour thereof, in ỹ they might say, These men yeelded themselues vnto vs. But as for the Assyrians, they came & vexed them of their own accord, sayth he. Now then we see ỹ although the children of Israel might iustly complaine of their euil intreatonce in Egypt, & of ỹ manifold injuries which they had indured there; yet neuertheles God cōmandeth them to think ỹ they were bound vnto the Egyptians for something. For ye were harboured in their countrie (saith he). Hereby we are warned to be mindeful of ỹ good which we shal haue receiued at any bodies handin so much that if we be afterward harmed or ouermuch oppressed by him in any thing; yet we must beare it patiently & alwayes beare in minde to say: wel, yet for all this, we be stil bound vnto such a man. In deede I graunt we shall haue occasion to be grieued against such: but yet seeing ỹ God hath ayded & releeued vs by their meane, ỹ must alwaye prētaile with vs & we must remaine their friends as farre as lieth in vs. And that is a good lesson for vs to beare in mind vpon this place.

Esa. 52. 4.

But yet further let vs thinke also of ỹ which I told you, namely, that when God gaue an entrance vnto ỹ Egyptians, to be receiued into the congregation in the third generation: it was not to the intent ỹ the people of Israel should defile themselues with the abominations of Egypt, or meddle any whit at al with them: but rather that the Egyptians should not remaine in so desperate a case as they were in, but be brought to worship ỹ liuing God & to dedicate themselues wholly vnto him. For if our Lord had not opened the gate both vnto the people of Egypt & of Edom, they would haue bin so much the further off to comming vnto true religion. But if when ỹ gate is opened vnto them, they accept not the benefit as God offereth, they are to be the more grieuously condemned. And so we see the intent & meaning of this law. It was not Gods meaning ỹ his people should gratifie the Egyptians by making a mingled & corrupted religion, that euery man might put to his patch & his peece: but ỹ the Egyptians would forsake all their owne corruptiōs, they might be grafted as an imp is on a tree, they might (I say) be vnited vnto ỹ church of God. And we see how in ỹ 45. Psalme mention is made of the wife of Salomon, & albeit she was a kinges daughter, it is saide vnto her: Hearken O daughter, thou must forget thy fathers house & al thy people, & cleaue wholly vnto thy husband, & then he will loue thee. Now we know ỹ the holy ghost in that place hath giuen vs not a generall rule, that all they which before time haue bin strangers to the word of God, & haue not knowen what the doctrine of saluation meaneth, must vpon their calling first of all forget their kinred & their birth, & al their former trade of liuing, & then submit themselues wholly vnto him, which is made their head, & in whose name & person God marryeth vs. For we know that our Lorde Iesus Christ maketh a spirituall marriage with vs, to the intent we should be members of his bodie. Let vs therfore note, ỹ Gods opening of the gate into his Church, both to Edomits & the Egyptiās, was not to haue them bring in their infections to peruert his seruice, or to make any medly, but rather ỹ Edomites & Egyptians should come & agree in al points vnto his law, & yeeld their consent vnto ỹ pointes of doctrine which is therein contained. And therfore nowadayes, seeing ỹ God hath shewed himself so gracious vnto vs, as to make vs his church, let vs learne so to keepe vs vnder his wings, as we may not be drawen aside one way nor other: let vs take heede (I say) ỹ we stray not at mens pleasures: but let vs hold our selues vnto ỹ pure doctrine which we haue receiued. Let vs be readie to receiue them which wilbe reclaimed thervnto, yea let vs haue our armes stretched out, not only to them which are the children of God, but also to such as are our kinsfolke a farre off, endeuoring for al ỹ to winne & to gain them, howbeit alwayes with this condition, that they remoue not vs from God, but that they rather be knit againe vnto him with vs.

Now this fauour which God had graunted both to ỹ Edomites & the Egyptians, & this benefit which he had bestowed on them, was afterward againe taken from them by reason of their own wilful malice. And that is ỹ cause why it is laid in the Psalm, Lord remember the children of Edom. For they said in the day of Ierusalem, Sacke it, sacke it, raze it downe to the grounde. Psal. 137.

Yet

Ye se how the holy Ghost pronounceth a newe curse vpon the Edomites. And yet notwithstanding they were brethren together with the children of Iacob: yea they came of the stocke of Abraham, who (as we know) was the father of the Church. Yea and we haue seene likewise, ỳ God had such a regarde of the Moabites, ỳ he woulde not haue the Israelites to make warre against thẽ, but rather to call to minde the auncient brotherhood or kinred which was betweene thẽ. Neuertheles when the Moabites had altogether reiected the grace of God, & were so sore poysoned as to hire a false prophet, & to indeuor with al their might to annihilate the promise of God, and ỳ they conspired against ỳ people of God with deuilish rebellion; then was it behouefull ỳ they shold be dubly punished for their churlishnes. As much is to be sayd of the Edomites. For we se how God had a regard vnto this promise which he had made vnto Abraham (I wilbe thy God euen to a thousande generations) & which was continued towardes Isaac. But when ỳ Edomites abused this goodnes of his, and not onely made no account of it, but would also faine haue the people of God rooted out: see ye not how it was a kinde of bidding battaile vnto God, & a defying of him openly? For they ought to haue called to minde ỳ Esau was put backe, ỳ he had lost his birthright, and ỳ this came not to passe but by the decree & appointment of God, as was declared vnto Rebecca when she was great with child. The Edomits shold haue cõsidered these things. But seing they were so enuenomed against God, whom he notwithstanding with long pacience suffred them, it was needefull ỳ he should curse them againe (as we haue before alleadged.)

As much is to be sayde of the Egyptians. For there are great threatninges vttered against thẽ in the holy scripture: they are holden for ỳ cursed people of all natiõs in the world. And why? because they endeuoured with might and maine vtterly to abolish the seruice of God, they turned ỳ people frõ it as much as lay in thẽ to do. Therefore they not only lost ỳ priuilege which was giuen vnto thẽ: but also prouoked the vengeance of God vpõ them: so ỳ they payed ful deerely for the fauour which he had offered vnto them: And hereby we are warned, ỳ if God take pitie vpon vs, & draw neere any way vnto vs, we on our side must not behaue ourselues like deafe folkes, but receiue the fauour which he bestoweth on vs, & learne in dewe time to fare the better by it. For if we be founde wilde and vntamed, so as we will not vouchsafe to come neere him, but rather fling with our heeles against him when he would keepe vs vnder his yoke: his fauour must needs be turned into a curse against vs. And therefore let vs learne so to profit by the fauor of God, that alwise as it is offered vnto vs, it may bring forth fruite in vs, ỳ he may be glorified thereby, and ỳ we perceiuing how far wee are bound vnto him, may studie to apply our selues wholely vnto his seruice. Thus yee see in effect what we haue to beare in minde touching that which is sayde of the Egyptians in this place.

Nowe Moses addeth, *Thou when the people goe out vnto battaile, thou shalt keepe thy selfe from euery euill thing.* And he addeth certaine examples, to shewe what is meant thereby. And heere wee must marke first of al, ỳ Moses speaketh purposely of warres: because ỳ men beare themselues in hand that then all thinges are lawfull. When we are in peace and euery man keepeth his house, it may well seeme that then it is a more easie thing to keepe good order, & to maintaine ciuill gouernment: for then lawes are of force. But when warre is once begonne, there is much vnrulines which men can not remedy, and there is no longer any meanes to bridle folke: insomuch that although neuer so much extortiõ & violence be vsed, a man may well lie downe & cry, but he can not let it. To be at a word, there is no longer any order among men. For this cause Moses theweth, ỳ although men goe out to battaile, yet for all that they must take heede of al euill thinges, and not graunt thẽselues a lawles leaue to be caried headlong into any wickednesse. Albeit men haue many allurements and many occasions offered, yet must they holde themselues in such subiection, that God may be serued & honored. And in very deed if men were in their right wits, they would walke in greater feare & carefulnesse in the time of warre, than of peace. For when we are at deathes doore, when wee are threatned with perils on all sides, ought we not to haue an eye so much the more vnto God? Ought not this to humble vs, & to make vs to stoope? Ought we not to haue our whole recourse vnto him, and to pray him to be our guide? Yes verily, if wee be not ouer blockish. And therefore when we are in warres, we should holde vs to so much the straiter rule, and remaine most peaceable vnder the obedience of our God, because of the necessitie which presseth vs, & of the dangers also which threaten vs on all partes. But what? As I tolde you afore, we see the cleane contrarie by experience: namely, that men graunt themselues pardon for all thinges, the drumme no sooner soundeth, but lawes must keepe silence, so as there may be no longer any rule of order, no longer any meane or measure, no lodger any lessoning or warnings to be hearkened vnto. Nowe because men be so ill disposed, heere God putteth them in minde of their dutie, and sayth: although this wicked custome raigne through out the worlde, that they which are souldiours are of opinion that all thinges are lawefull for them to doe: yet notwithstanding doe not you so: but rather abstaine from all wicked thinges. When you come into the fielde, & stande there against your enemies, thinke not that yee shall be pardoned any more, than if ye were at home in your own houses. For the case standeth so, ỳ ye must fight vnder my banner, yea, and yee must take mee for your captaine. And therefore I must not bee so dishonored, as to be accused of hauing leaude ruffians & dissolute persons in my bande. For if it be so, how can my name be called vppon ouer them, and they named after my name? Now we see in effect what is contained heere.

And hereupon we haue to gather, first that cõmon abuses can not serue to iustifie vs, but that

when our account is to bee giuen vp to God it shalbe a vaine excuse to say: euery man doth so: the thing is so cõmon as may be among men. If we say so, God wil reply readily ynough vpon vs. For is there any thing more customably vsed, than this lawles leaue which souldiours take and vse? It is growen in maner euen to a law, ỳ without controlment all may do so. But our Lord for all ỳ, will not be barred of his right. Therfore he saith, *Let men take heede of euerie euill thing*. Nowe thẽ albeit we see a bottomles sea as it were & an vniuersall flud of all vices in the world: so as euery man is wilfully bent to do euill, & men haue taken such possessiõ of sinning, ỳ a man dares not so much as mutter when he beholdeth such outragious things as none can be more out of order: let vs not beare our selues in hand for all ỳ, that we shalbe excused before God, but let vs alwaies haue an eie vnto his word. Mẽ do thus and thus: yea but God faileth not to be of a cõtrary iudgement. And this is the thing which we haue to beare in mind in the first place.

Moreouer if wee be forbidden to do euill although we be prouoked thereto by many occasions, notwithstanding to ỳ worldwarde it seemeth ỳ we may be suffered to do it: what shalbe thought if we offend when we haue no such temptations nor so great? Doutles we are in double fault. For if it be said ỳ in time of war when the doore seemeth to be set opẽ to all wickednes, yet notwithstanding euen then we must stande on our gard: what is to be thought if when we may solow the good rule of cõuersation, & things be not so far out of order, nor the deuill hath such meanes to drawe vs into wickednes: yet notwithstanding euery of vs rusheth forth into all varulines, wout remẽbering our God any whit at all? I pray you doth not ỳ fault deserue greater punishment? So then let vs note ỳ in all estates we must alwayes take occasion to serue God. Notwithstanding ỳ the world do alwayes seeke to turne aside, & to withdraw it selfe frõ his seruice, insomuch that if men be in peace, they become so dronken with their pleasure & delites, ỳ they can not be holde frõ wandring & from giuing thẽselues ouer vnto many corruptions: & if they be in war, they behaue themselues much wors. But we on our part, what ought we to do? when we are in griefe and trouble, let vs know ỳ God by ỳ means calleth vs vnto himself, & wil haue vs to be so much ỳ more carefull to serue him, forasmuch as wee want his succor and ỳ he must hide vs vnder his winges. If we haue time of peace, let vs know ỳ he giueth vs leasure to bethink vs what we haue to doe, & to call vpon him in quietnes & to consider ỳ better of our duetie a great while aforehande, while we haue faire & calme wether. For if the wether become troubled & stormes & clouds, we see not a stones cast (as they say) from vs; but when ỳ sun shineth faire & cleare, then we can ken a far off. Euen so our Lord, when he granteth vs peace & quietnes, would haue vs vse it in such sort as euery man shold dispose & order his life vnto his obedience, ỳ he may enioy vs, & we be farre from confusion & disorder, & not drawe back when he alureth vs vnto him by gentlenes, nor shake off his yoke as though we wold not suffer him to gouerne vs any longer. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to gather vpon this place.

As touching ỳ exãple which is set down here, whereas Moses would *That he which is defiled in the body, should be seuered frõ the company of others*: Let vs briefly for a conclusion note two things therin. The one is ỳ God by such ceremonies would haue his people to keepe themselues altogether pure both of body & soul. True it is ỳ before god the man which hath offended, shall not be absolued for his washing of himselfe in water. That auaileth nothing. For none of these corruptible elements pertaine any thing to ỳ saluation of our soules. Neuertheles because God ordaineth thẽ therefore they stand vs in steede. As ỳ water of baptism is not like other cõmon water, & doeth so ỳ, because God hath hallowed it vnto a special vse, to ỳ intent it shold be a warrãt vnto vs, ỳ we are washed by ỳ bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ. Now when we haue this we must also make our profit of the aide which God hath giuen vnto vs because of our weaknes. The people of olde time had many mo, because they were holden like little children as S. Paul sayth, & in comparison of them we are come vnto mens estate. Therfore when God ordained ỳ men shold wash thẽselues with water for any bodily defilement; it was to the intent ỳ euery man should know (as he himselfe declareth) ỳ to be dedicated vnto God we must walke in all purenes, & when there is any corruption amõg vs, it must be purged. To the end whereunto this law serueth vs, & in what sort we must apply it vnto our instructiõ. I grant we haue not now ỳ old ceremonies of ỳ law, we are not precisely bound to wash ourselues when we are defiled or haue any sporte in our bodies; but yet we must hold still ỳ truth & substance therof: which is, ỳ seeing God hath sanctified vs, we must continue in his seruice, purging vs from all corruptions both of body & of minde, as S. Paul also exhorteth vs in the second of ỹ Corinthians, where he sheweth ỳ euill must not be nourished among vs. For when it is suffered to encrease & to infect the whole flocke, what wil come of it in the end, but ỳ it will growe remediles when the infection hath taken hold throughout. And ỳ is the cause why excõmunication was ordained in ỳ church if there were any which behaued themselues amisse, by leading an vnruly & leaud kinde of life, our Lord Iesus cõmanded to separate them for a time frõ the church, to the intent to make them ashamed, ỳ they might humble thẽselues, & therupon returne vnto ỳ flocke, & liue better than they had done afore, and that others also might thereby be warned, so as wickednes should not haue lawles libertie as though all things were lawfull & permitted. We see then that although nowadaies this figure be no longer in vse, yet notwithstãding we may gather a good & profitable instruction from ỳ which was cõmanded to the antiẽt people. First of al, we must be fully resolued to offer ourselues vnto God in such sort as our bodies & minds be kept vndefiled, knowing ỳ we haue ỳ like promises ỳ the auncient fathers had, yea & far larger: & therfore we ought to endeuor

to

so much the more to attaine vnto that purenes which I told you of. And therewithall if we see any which corrupt the flock with their infections, let them be removed according vnto ỹ order which our Lord Iesus hath comanded vs. & let them be removed ỹ knowing their wickednes & repenting themselues of it. in the end it may serue them for a medicine to purge them, so as ỹ infection grow no further: but ỹ the Church of God be alwaies maintained in such order as we may know ỹ God hath not for nought drawen vs out & removed vs from the rest of the world which is defiled, but to the end ỹ he might governe vs by his holy spirit, and we be so wholy his, that we may be members vnto him both in life & in death.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of

On Munday the xxvij of Ianuary. 1556.

The Cxxxiij. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the three and twentith Chapter.

11 Thou shalt haue a place without the camp, whereunto thou shalt goe forth.

13 And thou shalt haue a paddle among the rest of thy tooles: and when thou sittest to sitte downe without, thou shalt digge therewith: and when thou hast eased thee, thou shalt couer that which is come from thee.

14 For the lord thy God walketh in the middest of thy camp to deliuer thee, & to give thee thine enimies before thee. Therefore let thine host be holy that he see no filthy thing in thee and turne away from thee.

15 Thou shalt not deliuer the seruant vnto his master: which is escaped to thee from his master.

16 He shall dwell with thee euen among you, in what place soeuer he shall chuse in one of thy cities where it liketh him best: thou shalt not vexe him.

17 There shalbe no whoore among the daughters of Israell, nor anie whoremonger among the sonnes of Israel.

WE haue already seene heeretofore, how God meant to traine vp the people of old time vnder the lawe, in all purenes, euen in the smallest thinges: intending thereby to accustome them to keepe themselues holy without any maner of staine or defilement. And this is ỹ principall end whereunto wee ought to referre the first sentence of ỹ which we haue now read. A man might think it strange at first sight, ỹ God should speake of such a thing as is mentioned here: namely that when men will ease themselues, they must couer their ordure. A man would thinke ỹ this ought not to be put in ỹ law of God. For these are such things as are not honestly named. But as we haue already touched, it behoued the people to be alwaies led by the things which concerne the body, vnto the keeping of themselues in al holines in the seruice of God: as for example, whereas in the lawe mention is made of washings: it was not for ỹ the cleansing of the soule cõsisted in taking a little water to wash ones hands or to wet his body withal but the people was warned thereby, ỹ they must purifie themselues before God, or otherwise they were defiled. If a mã happened but to touch the body of one ỹ was dead, he was become vnclean. And why? Thereby God gaue vs to vnderstand, that wee can scarcely in all our life moove either hande or foote, but we drawe vpon vs some staine or other. For this worlde is full of occasions vnto euill: and we for our part do no soonest take any thing in hand but we offend therein: so as we ought alwaies to consider & acknowledge, that if God take vs for such as wee are, hee must needes abhorre vs. And why? Because wee are filthy and vncleane. What remaineth then for vs to doe? Let vs seeke the remedy of our vncleanesse. Can the water enter as farre as the soule to purge vs? No. It is but a signe, to betoken that men haue needs to be washed, and to be made cleane: and they ought to bee guided thereby vnto that which is represented vnto them by the water. The like is to be sayde of all other thinges. Let vs therefore note well, that whereas Moses sayth here, that if men auoyde their excrementes, and any stinke insue therof, or if there be any disorder among them: God is offended at it: not ỹ he stayeth on those thinges: for we know that all is one vnto him, so our harts be pure and clean, & our bodies answerable thereunto, so as we be not stirred vp to defile ourselues

with

with our wicked lustes and affections.

But yet for all that because men pardon themselues so lightly for many faultes, and by giuing themselues the bridle are led from one euil vnto another: this law (say I) was giuen to this intent, that men should accustome themselues, euen in the smallest thinges, to take heede of all vnclennes. If a man be of vnhoneste behauiour in his life, doubles he will become so hard hearted, yt he wil make no account of filthy things, as we see how beastly some are become in that behalfe: when they haue once forgotte God & al honesty, they cast off al shame, so as a man may say they haue no longer any discretion to knowe what is good & what is euil: and this cõmeth of euill accustoming of thẽselues. And therefore our Lord (not without good cause) ment to bridle his people in all these things which pertaine vnto ỹ body. For it was not lawfull for thẽ to make water, (I know not how much lesse to ease themselues) but in secret. And why? For if they had bin a filthy & vncleane people, this filthines of theirs might haue bin to their further discredit. As much may bee said of vs. If we be not ashamed hereof, we giue ourselues by & by the bridle in things also cõcerning God. It is needeful therfore ỹ we be restrained & gouerned with such honestie, as men may say we walke in the presence of our God. And indeed, whe we are to receiue any honorable gests our house shalbe swept & we will take good heed ỹ no sluts corner be left, nor any thing else which may offend thẽ. What reuerence then ought we to beare vnto our God, who alwaies beholdeth vs, & we can not stir a finger but he eieth whatsoeuer we do in our whole life? Ought we not so to walke before him, as to be well ware euery one of vs least we should displease him? True it is in deede (as I haue already touched) ỹ God is not offended w these corruptible things: for he is not subiect to our passiõs, nor to be moued with thẽ. But because of our rawnes, & for ỹ we are grosse and earthly minded, there is great need ỹ by the things which concerne ỹ body, we shold be warned to come vnto ỹ which is spirituall. So then we haue now ỹ meaning of this law, wherin God forbad his people, to lay their filth abroad to be seen.

And he addeth also the reason thereof: *For I am in the middest of you* (sayth he) *and I will moue away from you if you do otherwise*. Heereby he declareth ỹ neither the health of the people nor any such like thing was the matter ỹ he respected in making this law, neither was it any ciuill policie, as for exãple it may bee well cõmanded & it is a very good order, ỹ men shal make cleane ỹ streets and such other thinges, for it is for the healsh of men: & when such things are not obserued, it is a filthy thing, & if a man see heapes of filth & mire in a citie, he wil say, there is no good order seene vnto: God had no respect hereunto whẽ he forbade such filthinesse: but hee aimed at an higher thing, to wit, ỹ the children of Israel shold be put in minde to say: wel, God is so gracious vnto vs, as to dwell among vs, let vs therefore learne to walke in such purenes of soule & body, ỹ principally our souls be purified frõ al wicked thoughts and affections: and secondly ỹ our bodies also be kept in such honesty, ỹ we be not hardned to admit any filthy things before men, & grow past all shame: for ỹ were ỹ next way to make vs forget the duetie which we owe vnto God. We also on our side must take heede of these things, not in ỹ manner as the Iewes did, which fondely obserued this law & other such like touching the ceremony: but we must keepe ourselues vnto ỹ truth and substance therof, which they so much despised, according to the cõmon custom of ỹ world, which is euer wont to busie it selfe about the formalitie or shew of things, & to make no account of the substance. Let vs therefore learn to know, ỹ whereas the Iewes obserued this ceremony without any minding at all of ỹ which God required of them, they did but dally & play with God, and their whole obseruation thereof was but hypocrisie, so as they did nothing else but prouoke ỹ anger of God. For when men wrest & pervert his word in such sort, it is such a trecherie as he can not suffer. But it is no wonder to see this abuse among men. For they would faine content God with such outward things, it is ynough for thẽ so they set a good face on ỹ matter. And being thẽselues carnall, they measure God by their owne ell. But contrariwise let vs note ỹ when God cõmãdeth vs smal things, it is to lead vs to a further matter; & therefore let vs alwayes aime at this mark, & not stay our selues on things which are of no gret importãce, according to ỹ rule which our Lord Iesus hath deliuered vnto vs in this behalf. Ye ought in deede (saith hee) to doe these small things whe they are cõmanded by ỹ law: but yet ye must alwaies come vnto ỹ chiefe & principall point. And we know what God sayth: namely, ỹ he requireth mercy & not sacrifice: his will is ỹ there shoul be faithfulnes, & iudgement and vprightnes among men. And as for sacrifices & washings & such like thinges, his meaning was ỹ by thẽ men shold be trained to put the assurance of their saluatiõ in ỹ fauor which he hath promised vnto thẽ, ỹ they be sory for their sins when they see them before their eyes, & ỹ they should serue thẽ for witnesses to endite themselues, to ỹ intent ỹ when they offer themselues to God being in such displeasure with their sinnes, they might attaine pardon and mercie of him. Thus ye las what we haue to beare in minde.

Mat. 23.23

And now seeing the figure is passed & done away, we haue no needе to busie ourselues in the outward obseruatiõ of this law. What remaineth then? Is this law needeles nowadaies in respect of vs? Ought not we to reade it? Yes: for ye see that God ment it should be an instruction for his church euen vnto ỹ end of ỹ world. It remaineth then, ỹ letting the figure passe, we gather ỹ which is taught both to the Israelites & to vs: namely ỹ in all things we must take heede of staining and defiling our selues. Nowe we are not ignorant what the things are which defile a man. It is not ỹ which entereth into a man (as our Lorde Iesus Christ speaking of meats sayth) but it is ỹ which cõmeth out of a mã. Look how many wicked affectiõs we haue, so many stainings of vs haue we before god. For frõ whence cõmeth fornication? Proceedeth it not out of the heart of man? From

Mat. 15.19

whence

whence cõmeth ambition? From whence come other wicked desires, as couetousnesse, enuie, pride, and all the rest? Now when ỳ soule of man is so full of such foule staines, ỳ it is infected before God: it draweth the body by & by vnto thẽ, and if we put wicked thoughtes in practise, beholde, howe our bodies also are wrapped in the same filthines with our soule, & we become altogether defiled. Let vs therefore learne so to dedicate ourselues vnto God, as our infectious filth be not a cause to driue him away from vs. And therewithall let vs beare in minde that which S. Poule sayth: namely that seeing God will dwell within vs we must purifie both our minds & bodies. And this is the reason which Moses alleadgeth, when he sayth *That God alwayes dwelt in the middes of the campe of Israel, to deliuer thẽ, & to giue vp their enemies into their handes*.

And afterwarde he addeth, *Take heede that the Lorde thy God depart not from thee, when he shall find any vncleanesse in thee*. At this day this fauour is bestowed in more ample maner vpon vs, than it was then vpon the auntient people. For we know howe God is ioyned vnto vs in the person of his only sonne. Now seeing ỳ the fulnes of the godhead doth dwell in our Lord Iesus Christ, & that not vnder a shadowe as in the arke of the couenant where ỳ lawe was enclosed, but is assuredly our God being manifested in the flesh: & seeing also ỳ we are members of Iesus Christ, & that he hath vouchsafed vs so great a benefite, as by coming downe from heauen to ioyne himselfe vnto vs: let vs note ỳ at this day God is more neere vnto vs than he was vnto ỳ people, yea & he will make vs to haue more feeling of his vertue and power. For we are alwaies in such sort vnder his protection, ỳ we neede not to feare but that his power is still stretched out to maintaine & preserue vs. When our Lord Iesus sayd vnto his disciples, I am with you euen vnto the ende of the worlde, surely he ment to strengthen them in all the conflictes which they were to suffer in preaching of the Gospel, and it serued likewise to declare vnto vs also ỳ he will neuer forsake vs as in respect of his power. Seeing it is so then that we are vnder the gouernment of the sonne of God, and ỳ although he be ascended vp into heauẽ, he filleth not to fill all, & ỳ he is also our shepheard to the intent ỳ none of them whó his heauenly father hath giuen vnto him should be lost: & that we are bone of his bone & flesh of his flesh (as S. Paul sayth) and ỳ there is no greater coniunctiõ betweene ỳ husband & the wife than is betwene the sonne of God & vs. Seeing it is so I say, let such a gracious fauour as this, prouoke vs to withdraw ourselues frõ al filthines, & let vs keepe this holy vnitie which we ought to haue with our God.

And moreouer let vs also diligẽtly note, how precious a thing it is ỳ God dwelleth with vs, to giue vp our enemies into our hands, & to deliuer vs frõ all euill. For hereby we are warned ỳ were it not for his fauour, we are set open to ten thousande deathes. And in very deede let euery of vs cõsider his own infirmities throughly, & we shall finde ỳ if our Lord had not a care of vs & fought not mightily for our defence, we should perish euery minute of an houre. How is it then ỳ we are assured of our saluation? Surely because our Lord who watcheth ouer vs, is strong ynough, & therfore albeit ỳ all the armies of hell were banded against vs, yet shall they not preuaile any thing at all, if God be on our side: insomuch ỳ we shall not only be preserued from the hand of our enemies, but also haue ỳ victorie ouer them & bring them vnder our feete, because God dwelleth among vs. Ye see then on the one side, howe men ought to feele what need they haue ỳ God shold help them, seeing they are thẽselues ouer weake and haue no helpe to defende thẽselues: & also how for all ỳ, they may boldly bost. And why? because God hath receiued them vnto himselfe, & will preserue them & be their safegarde. Behold (I say) what ỳ glory of the faithful is, which notwithstanding proceedeth of humblenes. For we can neuer be safegarded by our God vntil we haue learned to distrust our selues, and feele ourselues forlorne considering ỳ weaknes which is in vs.

But let vs also note the threat. *Take heede* (saith he) *lest thy God, whẽ he shal see any filthy thing in thee, depart from thee*. Now the filthy things among vs which may offend God, consist not in our bodily sluttishnesse. For where doeth God oftener dwel thẽ in poore cottages, which through great neede and penury somtimes there is vermine & sometimes stinch? There are poore Lazars who haue not wherwith to serue their neede, & much lesse wherewith to serue their pleasures: a lamẽtable case to beholde. Surely none of all these things, which may seeme sluttish vnto most men do offend God: but ỳ filth which maketh him to depart from vs, is the defiling which commeth from the heart, & afterwards (as I tolde you) defileth our bodies. And therfore let vs not think ỳ God is like vnto mortall men, or ỳ he is led with such passions, but let vs know ỳ being a spirit, his will is ỳ we also should haue a spirituall purenes in vs: that is, ỳ we should put away farre from vs the thinges which may infect vs (as I haue sayd afore) namely fornication, enuy, hatred, treason, excessiue desire of hauing riches, ambition, and pride. Al these things are filthy & displease God, and when our bodies are defiled with them, the wickednes is double. Let vs therefore learne to purge ourselues frõ all such infections, if we will haue God to be resident among vs. For as hee is come neere vnto vs, so will he also withdraw himselfe frõ vs, if we be not pure temples. For vpon none other condition than ỳ, will he dwell amõg vs. Therefore this threat may set our hayres on end on our head where it is sayd: *Take heede that thy Lord depart not from thee*. For seeing ỳ our lord hath vouchsafed vs this honor to come neere vnto vs, and ỳ he declareth ỳ he will haue the chief roome in our cõpany, it is good reason ỳ euery of vs should take heede ỳ we giue him no repulse, & ỳ there be such publike order takẽ as our infections cause vs not to want ỳ presence of our God: wherefore let euery of vs particularly looke vnto himselfe & afterward let vs al vniuersally do our indeuor ỳ al honesty may be maintained, so as we may be a people hallowed vnto god. For if euery of vs giue ouer himselfe to filthy demeanours, so

as one taketh leaue to be an adulterer, an other dispenseth with himselfe to play the theefe, and to vse deceites and extortion, respecting onlie howe hee may enriche himselfe by vnlawfull meanes, and a thirde giueth himselfe to wicked practises, to vndermine and to ouerthrowe his neighbour: and a fourth is full of arrogancie and ambition, & so blasphemousnes reigneth at wil: is it not all one as if euery of vs for his part had conspired to banish God out of our companie, and to driue him away? Seeing then that vices doe so reigne, and there is so horrible confusion among vs: Lette vs looke well to ourselues and let this warning serue vs for a bridle to restraine the mischiefe, or otherwise we shall bee guiltie of driuing GOD away that he might no more dwell among vs to blesse vs. Thus ye see what we haue to beare in minde concerning this place.

Now Moses addeth: *That if a seruant*, (that is to say a slaue as we haue expounded it heretofore) *which is of the heathen, doe runne away and desire refuge among the people of Israell, they must suffer him to dwell there, and not deliuer him into the hande of his maister.* This lawe may seeme euill at the first sight, if we consider not well what God meant thereby. For seruauntes were at that time in the same plight and state that a mannes oxe or horse is now. Men imployed them to maruelous painefull and burthensome thinges, and their maisters had power ouer them both of life and death: so as among the Paynims a maister went not to make his complaint vnto the Iustice when he would put his seruant in prison or set him on the racke, yea or put him to death. Euerie man might hange and drawe in his owne house, and that was a verie harde case. And moreouer (as I haue tolde you heretofore) a mans seruantes were counted among his moueable goods in like sorte as an horse or an oxe. So then if it had not beene lawfull to withholde from a man any part of his goods, but it had bin verie ill dealing to haue done so: why was it lawfull to keepe backe his seruant? It might seeme that a man doeth him wrong and iniurie to defraude him in this wise of that which is his right, and men might persuade themselues ỹ God dispensed here with his people to play the theeues after some indirect maner. But the meaning of the Lawe is that it was Gods will ỹ there should be some priuiledge for such seruauntes as were willing to yeelde themselues vnto his seruice: and that because, as long as they liued vnder the Paynims, they were not their own men nor had such libertie: and therefore when they turned into the better way, God granted them this exemption by way of priuiledge. Moreouer let vs note, that because of the excessiue cruelty of the maisters, the Lawes themselues were to graunt some release vnto seruants. For ỹ maisters most cruelly abused the authority which was granted vnto thẽ ouer their seruants, insomuch ỹ for euery smal trifle (as ỹ breaking of a glasse [or such other like]) a maister would hamper his seruaunt to beate him without pitie or mercy. These examples caused men to let thẽ haue some refuge. And the heathen themselues permitted ỹ if the seruants could escape vnto any tẽple, they were in safetie from their maisters, not ỹ they were altogether freed, but that they were solde vnto some other who peraduenture would handle them more gently. Also if they could get holde of the image of an Emperour, they had as it were a suretie for their safegarde. Our Lorde likewise had the same regarde in the lawe which is set downe heere, that is to say, because the Paynims hauing no feare of God, did torment their seruauntes with more than tyrannicall cruelties: he would that those poore wretches should haue some place of refuge, that being pressed with anguish and affliction, they might haue a meane to be brought vnto true religion. For we knowe that when men are daunted after that manner, then they seeke vnto God. It is a good preparatiue to bring vs vnto the obedience of God, when we are afflicted and can no longer tell what to doe. For we see that when we are at heartes ease and haue our delightes, we are so dronken with them, that God is no bodie with vs. That is the very thing whereat this lawe aimeth.

Now let vs note, that when God giueth forth speciall lawes, he gainesayeth not him selfe: but we must alwayes referre them vnto the generall doctrine. As howe? If a seruant should runne away vpon deceite, or vpon malice, or vppon any other such cause, it were a sinne in him; and that theeuerie were not good nor alowed of GOD. Therefore when this speciall law and priuiledge was giuen foorth, that a seruant should be sheltered in the Lande of Iuda, it repealeth not that which our Lorde had deliuered concerning seruants afore. And againe whereas he sayth Thou shalt not couet thy neighbours seruaunt, nor his maide; ỹ commaundement standeth still in full force; so that it was not lawefull for the Iewes to holde backe an other mans seruãt, for their own profits sake; neither was it lawfull for seruauntes deceiue their maisters. But when a seruant escaped vnto them, & desired to dwell among ỹ people of God; this leaue was graunted vnto him howbeit vpon this condition, ỹ he was oppressed, and ỹ he had iust & reasonable cause of running from his maister, for being too leaudly & cruelly handled. That was to be presupposed afore. For (as I haue tolde you) the law which is conteined in the tenne cõmandements is an infallible rule. When we haue that abridgement, we haue them in the will of God fully warranted vnto vs. And we ought to measure euery particular lawe by these ten cõmandements, That is ỹ true touchstone whereby we must examine how euery speciall lawe is to be taken and expounded. For we shall neuer vnderstande thinges to any purpose, except we referre them all hither. And why? for perfect righteousnesse is contained in these ten commandements which God hath deliuered in the two tables. Seeing it is so, we can neuer be deceiued if we examin things after this maner. Go to: here is the law. Pertaineth the thing vnto the seruice of God, or to the second table? that is to that table wherin God hath prescribed how

we ought to liue with men? It is of the second table. Well then, let vs see nowe whether it pertaine vnto the first commaundement of honouring father and mother: or to the second, Thou shalt doe no murder: or to the third, Thou shalt not commit adulterie: or to the fourth, Thou shalt not steale: or to ỹ fifth, Thou shalt not beare false witnesse: or lastly to ỹ sixt, Thou shalt not couet. When we shall haue thus considered of the thing, (so as we may say) this belongeth vnto such a commaundement: then shall wee haue a keye which will open vs the dore vnto the right vnderstanding of the thing. If a lawe concerne the seruice of God, be it of the first cõmaundement, or of the second, or of the third, or of the fourth, we may haue the better assurance how this Law ought to be vnderstoode. And why? For we shall consider of the end whereunto it tendeth. If the lie be betweene both (as we say) let it be referred vnto the first and to the second table, let it be mingled of both, and then we may also iudge easily of it. But to return to ỹ present matter: when ỹ Lord graunted a place of refuge in the lande of Iury vnto poore slaues, there is no doubt but he ment nonetheles to leaue his lawe still in his full force. Let vs therefore conclude, that he meant in this place to remedie the excessiue and outragious crueltie which maisters vsed, & would that poore afflicted wretches (who as touching the worlde could finde no ease of their greefes) being destitute of all succour, might haue libertie to come into the Countrey of Iurie and there to dwel for ease.

Now we are warned hereby to help to ỹ vttermost of our power such as are vniustly & wrongfully afflicted. In deede wee must not maynteine wicked quarelles; wee must not cloake that which is ill. For they which shall vse such meanes, shall not bee able to iustifie their cause thereby before God. There are many which would be content that all leawd faultes might be hushed, and they will oftentimes willingly foster wickednesse through a fond pitie or deuotion as they call it. But let vs note ỹ Gods will is not to lead vs vnto that kind of dealing: but ỹ when wee see any poore soules tormented, he would haue vs moued with pitie to releeue them as much as is in vs. We heare what is sayd vnto Moab. Moab thou wast the harbour of my people, and thou diddest hew & cry after those which came to shelter themselues vnder thy shadow. Although the people of Israell were iustly punished for their euill deedes, yet as in respect of the world, they had not prouoked the infidels to be so cruell vnto them. For the Infidels came and made warre against them like tyrantes as they were, they came like wolues to spoile and deuour all. And well, the poore Iewes flie into the lande of Moab, and our Lord sayeth that he had appointed that Countrie, as a place of harbour for them. And why? Was there any Prophet which volde them so? No. For humanitie perswadeth this of it selfe, that if wee see any poore people which are driuen out of their owne Countries by warres or by any other violent oppressions, it is all one as if God sent vs a message both to receiue them and to entertayne them as curteouslie as wee are able to doe. And so let vs beare in minde, that where there are any poore wretches with vs whome men haue persecuted, and tormented, we are too too vnkind if we deliuer them into their enemies pawes, which seeke nothing else but to vse all violence and all maner of cruelty against them. That is it which wee haue to beare in mind vpon this place.

Now seeing it is so that we ought to shew such gentlenes, and to vse such compassion towardes all that are vniustly oppressed, and whom men torment beyond measure without any cause, how ought we to behaue our selues toward those poore soules which are afflicted for the worde of God? By much more reason is it that wee should giue them refuge, and succour them in their afflictions: and if we doe not relieue them, let vs also feare that which is said by the Prophet vnto the Moabites. For he addeth that God will haue them out of their secretest lurking corners. And why? Bicause they discouered the people which fled vnto them, and set them foorth for a pray. Therefore if we cause the children of God to be persecuted by tyrantes, and ioyne with tyrantes in such wickednes, by driuing Gods children out from among vs, doubtlesse the Lorde will not faile to punish such crueltie. But when our turne commeth to bee visited after the same maniner, (as it must needes come) men shall hunt vs also out of our corners, and we shall finde no harbouring place for our selues in the whole world, bicause wee haue laboured to cast them away whom God deliuered into our handes. Yee see then in fewe wordes what wee haue to beare in minde. Esa. 16.

And moreouer as touching the maner which I haue treated of alreadie, wee must vnderstand that our Lorde commandeth vs to straine our selues to the vttermost, to bring them vnto the knowledge of the trueth, which haue strayed heeretofore in superstition. The seruants which offered themselues out of strange Countries were in the ende framed vnto the seruice of God. For albeit they were at the first rude and rawe, yet was it behouefull that they should accustome themselues vnto the Lawe, and that in the ende they should frame themselues wholly vnto it. Seeing then it is so, let vs gather vppon this place, that God meaneth to stirre vs vp to seeke after the poore wandering sheepe, to bring them into the way of saluatiõ, and to gather them into his flock. And so ye see what we haue to beare in minde as touching this customе.

Moses in the third place sayth: *Let there be no whore in Israell, nor any filthie & infamous fornicator.* And whereas he speaketh heere, of fornicators; it is not meant of common fornication, but of that outrageous filthynesse which is contrary to all nature. And verily it is a dreadfull thing to consider that the people which was dedicated vnto GOD, should bee forbidden such wickednesse: and especially that they should at that time so exceede in villainous behauiour, that they had not onely stewes for strumpets,

where women abandoned themselues vnto filthie lustes, but also that men with men were giuen to such filthynesse. Is not this a thing which ought to make euery hayre of our head to stande on ende? But heereby wee are warned what men of themselues are, except GOD holde them backe and gouerne them by his holy spirite. Wee must not thinke that these corruptions neuer came into the worlde before this day. They haue beene in it from all time. For since the time that Adam estraunged himselfe from GOD, it was of necessitie, that hee shoulde beare the punishment of his sinne, and that all his posteritie should bee abandoned vnto wickednesse. For the roote of all vices, yea of all outragious crimes doeth then budde foorth when man is forsaken of GOD, and hath the bridle layd loose on his necke as it is to bee seene heere. For wee see that naturall fornications suffice not, but more than beastly enormities are committed. Common filching theueries suffice not, but there are robberies and piracies: there are inuentions and practises more wicked than all the theueries in the world. Men are growen so farre out of kinde, that they are dayly inuenting of strange fashions, they thinke it not ynough to haue put their enemies to death, except they extend their cruelnie yet farther. To bee shorte, if wee consider well of all that is in man vntill GOD gouerne him, we shal find within him euen a sinke and gulfe of hell. And as euery man nourisheth in himselfe much wickednesse, so must it needes be that the mischiefe thereof shall increase, except GOD prouide a remedie for it. And whereas among the Paynims themselues there was alwayes kept some honestie; it came so to passe through the wonderfull prouidence of GOD, who meant still to reserue some honestie among mankinde. In deede the Paynims had neuer this intent of seruing GOD, as was reason they should, but yet although none of their workes were accounted pure before GOD, he notwithstanding so ruled them, as thinges might not bee vtterly confounded. Sith wee see this, let vs learne that when God sheweth vs any signes of his prouidence by restraining men in some order and honestie, it is to make vs perceyue thereby, that he watcheth ouer mankinde. And on the other side let vs knowe also, that if hee holde not out his hande to keepe men vnder some order; wee should see such villainous and detestable things, that euen the brute beastes should behaue themselues more honestly than men. See (I say) what wee are to consider of; to the ende we may pray God to receiue vs, and not to suffer vs to fall into any such enormities as euen our selues should bee constrayned to abhorre them. And for as much as wee see y examples of these things haue beene giuen so long time since; and perceiue by experience that the worlde ceaseth not to growe worse and worse: what woulde come of it if God shoulde not redresse it? What would bee the ende of it? Questionlesse were it not for Gods wonderfull prouidence in this behalfe, it must needes come to passe that all honestie among men should be cleane wiped out. Thus yee see what wee haue to consider vpon the forewarning which GOD maketh in this place. And moreouer let vs note that this iudge of GOD himselfe coulde not vtterly dispatch the raigning of such abhomination euen in the people which named themselues holy and elected aboue all the rest of the world. Insomuch that sometimes the holy Scripture speaking of Kinges which were not ouer diligent in doing their dueties, saith that there were Stewes, yea euen against nature, not onely of harlots which were there at hire, but also of other shamefull filthynesse not to bee named: and that this wickednesse raygned. And where? In Iuda. Therefore when wee heare this rehearsed vnto vs, wee ought to tremble and walke in feare and warinesse, praying GOD to hide vs vnder his wings, and not to suffer such corruptions to happen vnto vs. And let vs note that from the one wee steppe to the other. For when loose behauiours in case permitted, men beare themselues in hande that euery thing is lawfull. When such infamous thinges are suffered, and lawlesse libertie of vsing them is graunted in any countrey; men not onely giue themselues to lechery lyke dogges, but also in the ende doe fall into greater and more outragious filthynesse. Therefore seeing it is so, let vs learne ingenerall to haue such a care among vs, as all infections of whoredome may be remoued, and wee cleane purged from them. For that is the very thing which GOD aimeth at. Now indeed it is true that this is a ciuill law: but yet for all that, it belongeth vnto the third commaundement of the second table: where it is sayde: Thou shalt not commit adulterie. Why are the people of GOD forbidden to haue a stewes among them? Because fornication is a detestable thing in his sight: for his will is that wee shoulde bee wholly dedicated vnto him both in our soules, and in our bodyes. So then whereas God detesteth whoredome, what shall we thinke when open stewes are suffered, and no punishment or chastisement appointed for adulterers? What shall wee thinke thereof, but that men in the ende will desire God and perswade themselues that whoredome is nothing? Wee see then whereunto God meant to lead vs, namely, that we should knowe how profitable a thing it is for vs to thinke on the wretchednesse of some men, that is to wit, that they fall into so outragious thinges, that they forget all honestie of nature; and that there would bee nothing but beastlinesse in them, except they were withheld by y hand of God. Let this put vs in feare, and quicken vs vp to pray God to withdrawe vs from these corruptions whereunto we are ouermuch enclined, or rather wholly giuen ouer. And let vs yeeld our selues fully vnto him, & not behaue our selues as lusses which are broken loose. Let vs take heede of seeking occasions of wickednesse, or of graunting vnto our selues leaue of lawlesse libertie to

the wickedly, either in adulterie or otherwise: and let vs keepe our selues in such purenesse, as euery of vs may be ready to frame himselfe vnto the righteousnesse of God, and to keepe and maintaine our selues in all innocencie before him.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to feele them more and more. And because it hath pleased him to call vs vnto himselfe, yea and to declare ofmaines that he is our God, and to make vs also to perceiue the power of his helpe, not onely touching our bodyes, but also touching our soules: let vs beseech him that we may be prouoked hereby to yeelde our selues wholly vnto him, & that all of vs examining our selues more narowly, and perceiuing our owne defilements, may resort vnto the holines and purenes of our Lord Iesus Christ, praying him so to purge vs by his holy spirit, that our onely seeking may be to offer our selues vp vnto our God both soule and body, and that therewithall wee may learne to liue one with another in all vprightnes and honestie, so as it may alwayes serue vs to mortifie our wicked affections, and not hinder vs frō enioying those benefits which he daily bestoweth vpon his Church: And that it may please him to impart these things not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the xxviij. of Ianuarie. 1556.

The Cxxxiiij. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the three and twentith Chapter.

18 Thou shalt neither bring the hire of a whore nor the price of a dogge into the house of the Lord thy God for any vow: for both these thinges are alike abhominable before the Lorde thy God.

19 Thou shalt not giue vpon vsury to thy brother, whether it bee vsury of monie or vsury of vittayles, or vsury of any thing which men giue to vsurie.

20 Thou mayst giue vpon vsurie to a stranger, but thou shalt not giue vpon vsurie to thy brother: that the Lorde thy God may blesse thee in al that thou settest thy hand vnto, in the Land whither thou goest to possesse it.

WEe knowe it was not lawfull by the Lawe to make any offering or sacrifice of vncleane things. Insomuch that the beastes which GOD had declared to bee vncleane, might not bee mingled with the holy offeringes. The reason was that GOD meant thereby to holde his people in all pureneſſe. The effect then of all this is, that when wee come before GOD, whatsoeuer wee offer must be cleane and pure, and without any spotte. And now Moses addeth that if a man brought the price of a dogge, GOD abhorred that likewise, for a dogge of himselfe and in his owne nature was an vncleane beast (as they say). Nowe then if one should say he woulde not offer a dogge, because it was not lawfull so to doe, but that hee might offer the price which hee had receiued for selling of him: Moses declareth that this in like manner was reiected of God as an abhominable thing. Whoredome of it selfe is a wicked thing, and detested of God. Now if one thought likewise to bring the price of whoredome, to agree with God and to bee cleared of his fault, it was an abuse. For God will not haue his name which is holy, to bee mingled with any such filthines and vncleanes. So this place containeth in effect a declaration of the lawe which I tolde you of, that we may not offer any thing vnto God which is not pure and holy. Now to the intent men might knowe that God admitteth not any Sophistrie or suttleties, as men doe when they fetche their byleapes, and beare themselues in hand that they can so countenaunce their wickednesse, as it shall not bee condemned before God: Moses telleth them that it is nothing woorthe, and that they must come to that vprightnesse and soundnesse whereby if a thing bee euill of it selfe, then all that euer commeth thereof is likewyse abhominable before God.

Now then wee see what doctrine wee haue to gather in this place. The first poynt is, that al the offerings which wee make vnto GOD, must bee pure and cleane. If this was required in the time of the Lawe: wee ought well to practise the same at this day, according vnto that which the prophet Malachie sayth. For after that GOD had reproued the sacrifices which the Iewes made vnto him, because there was much vncleanesse in them: hee sayth, The time shall come when my name shall bee called vppon through out the whole worlde, yea, when I shall bee called the great GOD, when I shall bee worshipped of all men, and when men shall offer vnto me a pure and cleane sacrifice. Now because the prophet in that place treateth of the estate of the Christian Church, and sheweth that GOD should bee exalted throughout the whole world at the comming of that Redeemer which was promised; therefore this appertayneth vnto vs. Not that we must now offer sacrifices of Oxen and Sheepe or of other brute

Mal. 1. 11.

beastes: for wee knowe that such shadowes are done away: but wee must offer that reasonable sacrifice (as saint Paule termeth it in the twelfth
Rom.12.1. to the Romanes:) which God liketh of, that is, that euery man dedicate himselfe vnto GOD by becomming newe both in heart and minde. Therefore whereas wee see that God nowadayes requireth spirituall sacrifices, bidding vs to offer vnto him our soules and our bodyes; it is necessarie before all thinges that wee should be purified. For it is too great an abuse, if we thinke in this sacrifice to bring our owne defilements. As much is to be said of all ỹ offerings which God requireth which are ioyned vnto this solemne sacrifice of our owne persons. For when wee pray, it is a kinde of sacrifice which GOD
Psal. 50.23. nowadayes liketh, as it is sayde in the fiftith
Hebr.13.96 Psalme. Our almes likewise are sacrifices, as it is sayde in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. Forget not to helpe the poore straungers, and them which are in neede and necessitie: for they are the true sacrifices which God requireth. But nowe what remaineth for vs to doe? Verily wee must be pure if we will haue God to receiue such sacrifices at our handes. For otherwise hee disaloweth of all: as it is said in the Prophet Aggee:
Agge.2.13. That ỹ which we touch shall be defiled with our vncleannes. For there ỹ Iewes were condemned w all their pompes & ceremonies. And why? For one was giuẽ to robbery, another to whoredome, another to some other wicked dealing, and another was full of crueltie, enuie & rancor, and yet for all that they came to make a faire shew in the temple, pretending to be wondrous deuout men. But what? God saieth vnto them, when a man is vncleane in his owne person, is not al that which euer he coucheth defyled also? Yes verily. Nowe then your sacrifices are full of vncleanneſse, for your handes are defyled, and yet yee come to handle those thinges which are holy. Therefore you doe nought elſe but prouoke mee vnto farther anger. So then let vs learne (as I haue alreadie declared) that if we will offer our selues vnto GOD, wee must first of all bee pure and cleane, that is to say, wee must bee ridde of all our wicked thoughtes and affections. For if wee bee intangled in them, GOD liketh not of vs, and howe fairely so euer wee protest that wee doe all thinges to please him and to apply vs vnto his seruice, doubtlesse hee will disallowe all. And againe if wee desire that our prayers, supplications, and almes shoulde bee acceptable vnto God; let vs take heede that all proceede from a syncere and willing affection. And so yee see what wee haue to beare in minde in the first place.

Now if one demaunde howe it is possible for a man to be so clensed, that there should remaine no blemish in him: we aunswere hereunto, That it is most certaine wee cannot come vnto such perfection, but yet we must tend thereunto: for we are not excused, so as we should alwaies abide and settle in our filthines. Therefore euery one of vs knowing that he is full of vncleanesse, must enforce himselfe by the power of Gods spirite to clense himselfe, and labour to come vnto a perfect pureneſse. When wee are so affected, and haue this desire in vs, then God ceaseth not to accept our sacrifices although they bee not worthy to be accepted. And why? for our Lord Iesus Christ supplieth that which is wanting in vs, as it is sayde in an other place to the Hebrewes: Hebr.13.15
That it is through him that wee offer prayers and thankes giuing and sacrifices of praise vnto God. Yee see then in what sorte the pureneſse of our sacrifices shal be esteemed, to wit, if they bee watered with the blood of our Lorde Iesus Christ, to clense them from all their staynes. But in any wise he which endeuoureth to serue GOD, must examine himselfe, and knowing his owne filthyneſse and vncleaneſse, hee must enforce himselfe to bee drawen from it. For if wee double with GOD, hee will dislike of all thinges that wee take in hande. And although men are of opinion, that wee doe more than our duetie; yet questionleſse in the sight of God, all shalbee holden for abhominable. And herewithall also let vs note, that God reproueth all suttle dealing, when wee thinke to paint foorth our case in such sort, as to bleare the eyes of God, and that by so dooing wee doe but double our fault, as is declared vnto vs by this text. Therefore, if wee bring vnto God any sacrifice, and yet our protesting that wee will not offer vnto him any vncleane sacrifices, is but a setting of some faire colour on the matter; our Lorde sayeth still, *The price of the dogge, and the dogge is all one. The hyre of an whoore, and the whoredome is alike vncleane*, as if hee sayde, that wee must take away all the appurtenances of euil. For if we retaine any thing of it, we shalbe alwayes condemned. What must wee do then? wee must walke vprightly. There is nothing which God hateth so much as a double heart, as the scripture sayth. Sith it is so, let Psal.24.
euery man enter into himselfe, & let vs make good tryall of our selues, to the intent wee flatter not, ne harden not our selues in our vayne pretences and imaginations. But when wee finde, that there is any stayne of wickednes in vs which displeaseth God, let euery of vs bee in displeasure with himselfe for it, and let vs offer vnto God the sacrifice of mortifying our selues, and say: Alas Lorde, I see full well that there are many wicked defilementes in mee, so that when I approch vnto thy maiestie, I am vtterly confounded. But Lorde I come and offer vnto thee my heart in sacrifice, which thou knowest to bee heauie because I see my self besported with such a vice. When God shal once perceiue ỹ wish vnfained repentance we desire to bee ridde of our vices, hee will receiue vs, for this repentance is the sacrifice which wee owe vnto him, and this anguish of heart which wee haue for beeing inclyned vnto any wickednesse, and for offending of God, is the true sworde wherwith the sacrifices bee offered vnto God, I meane the reasonable sacrifices. Rom.12.1

Nowe if it be not lawfull to bring vnto God any fayned thing: what will come of it if we intermeddle him with our iniquities? As there are many which giue almes. But whereof? Of their

spoyles

spoiles: when they haue pilled and robbed, they perswade themselues that God will be appeased, if they bestow some part of the booty vpon him. But there is no such beastly mocking of God as is this. When one hath played the whoremonger, he will make his accoumpt to redeeme himself before God with some price, and yt with a price ful of filthynes. And therfore let vs diligently note yt which Moses saith in this place, namely, That all these things are abhominable in yt sight of god. It is too much that we haue so offended already, though wee added not a seconde fault. If one through extortion & wrong dealing scratch vnto himselfe another mans goods: he is already in no too great a fault. But if he thinke to dally in such sorte with God, as to thinke to ransome himselfe by paying I knowe not what part thereof, or by way of almes, or (as men doo in Popery) by offering to a block, or by causing of masses to be sung, or by appointing som yearly dirige, or by building of some chappell: if I say men thinke to content God so with mony or monies worth: they double their fault, and do but prouoke God vnto further anger. For that is such a treachery, as we know not how to do God a greater iniury, than soo entermeddle him with our filthines, as if he were a confederate with vs in the same wickednesse. Ye see then in effect how we ought to abhorre from al maner of defilements, if we will present our selues before God with any offering at all on our behalfe.

And nowe Moses hauing thus spoken, addeth, *That the Iewes shall not lyre their brethren by vsurie, nether of siluer, nor of corne, nor of Wine, nor of any other things*, and yet notwithstanding wherein among themselues he will haue them to abhorre from vsurie, he permitteth them to vse it towardes the Paynims. Nowe we haue to note in this place, that albeit this bee a ciuill lawe, yet hath a respect in part vnto conscience, as wee haue aboue touched that we must examine all yt lawes which are contained in Moses by the lawe of the ten commandements. For that is the perfection of all, and that is yt rule of our life. Therfore when we meete with any law, we must consider vnto what commandement it ought to be referred: and thereupon conclude, that if it be a ciuill lawe, wch touching the order of policie, was properly belonging vnto the Iewes, but yt substance and ground thereof, remaineth vnto vs, that is to say, yt equitie and the vprightnes of it. Now this equitie of it (say I) lasteth for euer, & not for a time onely. And wherehence proceedeth all vprightnes, but from the righteousnes of God as from his fountaine? But that righteousnes is euerlasting & changeth not: therefore it followeth that all equitie and vprightnes is inuiolable. And although men abuse it, yet in very deede they are sufficiently conuicted, yt whatsoeuer God hath shewed vnto them is rightfull, & must remaine in force for euer. But let vs nowe come & wey the texte. Moses forbiddeth yt Iewes to exercise vsurie amongest themselues. And why? Because they were the people of God. He giueth them leaue to exercise vsurie vpon the Paynims, with whom they had not acquaintaunce. But yet nevertheless they were men, & therfore they had no leaue granted vnto them, to spoile them of their goods. Some to answere this question, alleage this excuse, that God had giuen them the goods of al the people of the land of Chanaan, as of the Amorrhites, yt Pherezites, the Hethites and such like, that God (I say) had giuen their goods vnto the Iewes for pillage: so that they had leaue to spoile them of all, yea and were commaunded to put al of them to death: and for that they did not so, they committed a great fault, for which God reproued them, and they were likewise punished for it. But in this place there is no mention made neither of Hethites, nor of Amorrhites, nor of Iebusites, nor of Chananites, nor of any other people of that lande, but in generall of all nations in the world. Egypt is herein comprised, and Syria, & all the Iles of the sea, and all they who had entercourse of merchandise with the Iewes. Therfore this answere is not so proper to this place. But let vs note that God permitted the Iewes many thinges for policies sake, which were not therefore good, as we haue already seene: and howe did he permit them? Forsooth he appointed no punishment for them. And so in this place when it is sayd, Thou maist gnaw such as are strangers with vsury: God maketh not the thing lawfull, but he leaueth it vnpunished. And yet for al that, that law abideth alwaies in his full force: Thou shalt not steale. Vnder this word we are forbidden to exercise any wicked practise, whereby our neighbours may be grieued, we are forbidden to make our gaine by the losse of an other. To speake in fewe wordes: I graunt that before men this shall not bee condemned for theft, but yet we must be accountable for it before God. For as for ciuill Lawes they haue respect vnto earthly Iudges which punish not all offences, nor cannot if they would. In deede they ought to enforce themselues thereto: but when they haue done all, yet must they let passe much wickednes which shalbe iudged in that great day. And therefore let vs note, yt when God suffered the Iewes to exercise vsurie, and to handle the Paynims in such sort as it is saide in this place; he ment not therefore to preiudice yt commaundement wherein he had forbidden men to steale. I grant yt this thecuerie which was committed in vsurie was not punished by men, but yet for all yt we must alwaies return vnto this point, yt the righteousnes which is contained in yt ten commandements is euerlasting, and yt men cannot change it. Seeing it is so, we must therfore conclude, that whatsoeuer bringeth with it any harme, was forbidden yt Iewes aswell as vs. And yet nowadaies when they beare themselues in hand, yt they haue free leaue for the practising of this wickednesse, so yt among themselues there be no extortion nor other such euil done; they shall perceiue yt they are so farre from being excused hereby, that rather they are in double wise condemned. For they should be ioyned with vs, bicause God hath opened vnto vs the doore into his Church. But they haue lost their roome, they are shut out, and banished from the kingdome of God, and we in the meane while are accounted for the children

Gal.3.7. of Abraham, although touching the flesh wee come not from that stocke. Therefore albeit in olde time the Iewes had that priuiledge, that they might lend vpon vsurie vnto the Paynims: yet is it not therefore to be said that they should nowadayes grieue and molest the children of God, especially when themselues are come off from his Church, and are taken for bastardes, bicause of their rebellion and disobedience.

But the chiefe and principall point is, that we apply this place vnto our profite. It was sayde vnto the Iewes, *Ye shall not practise vsurie vpon your brethren.* And I pray you who are our brethren nowadayes? Wee knowe that our Lorde Eph.2.13. Iesus came to be our peace, to the intent to reconcile vnto God both such as were nigh, and such as were afarre off. There hath beene a common brotherhood among all, since the time that our Lorde Iesus declared that wee are all adopted, and there is no longer nowe either Iewe or Gal.3.28 Gentile, as the scripture speaketh. Therefore whereas it is said that we are brethren, and that without any difference; let vs conclude, that that equitie which the Iewes were commanded to keepe betweene themselues, wee ought nowadayes to keepe betweene vs. So then it is not lawfull for vs to bite any creature liuing with vsurie. Let that be marked for one point.

Nowe let vs note, that this worde *vsurie* commeth of the verbe which is here placed, and signifieth, *To bite.* It is said, *Thou shalt not gnawe with gnawing* (if we would translate it word for word) or rather, *Thou shalt not bite with biting.* And so the worde of Gnawing or of Byting, by a borrowed speach is taken for vsurie. And why? Bicause it byteth and wasteth a poore man which is charged with it. Neuertheleſſe this is the whole effect, that we muſt not harme our neighbours by taking any profite of them, such profite I meane, as is gotten by their losse. And to the intent that no man rest precisely vpon these wordes, let vs note that when Ezechiel in the 18. Chapter condemneth vsuries, he placeth not there onely this worde, Nesech, which is here put, and signifieth byting: but he vseth another worde which signifieth encrease: as if he sayde, all that which is beside the principall. Nowe for all this God forbiddeth not all maner of gaine, so as a man may not make any profite at al. For were it so, we must lay aside all Marchandise, and wee might not lawfully buy and sell one with another. But hee forbiddeth the profite or encrease which a man getteth by deliuering out his owne goods without his owne losse, and yet notwithstanding will sucke another mans substance: and careth not whether he harme his neighbour or no, so that he may enriche himselfe. This is the encrease which is condemned by the Prophet Ezechiel.

Against wee must diligently note the other wordes which Moses vseth in this place. For he sayth not, Profite of money by vsurie, but he saith of corne, of wine, and of all thinges. Then is it but a meere mockage: if I shal say: as for mee, I haue not taken any profite for my money by vsurie, but I haue taken for my corne, or for my wine, and that was giuen vnto mee for a recompence. Wee would gladly deale so subtilly, that when we offend, God should not see our wickednesse. But wee knowe that when Adam couered himselfe with figge leaues, it profited him little. And thinke wee that any of these rotten cloaks which wee take to colour our wicked practises with all will stand vs in better stead than Adams figge leaues did him? Shall wee be able to blere the eyes of God, when men themselues, yea euen such as are starke staring blinde can pope our wickednesse? And therefore men are euer fondly beſotted, if they say that vsurie is not but in money: for wee see how God hath extended it to all kindes of profite: so that if wee take encrease for corne or for wine, wee are alwayes vsurers. Moreouer wee must not rest precisely on the terme, but consider what is signified thereby. Nowe that which is heere called Byting, is verie manifest. And why? For wee see what Gods meaning is, and the worde also it selfe ought to serue vs for an expositiue. Seeing God meaneth here of that which biteth poore men and gnaweth them, he meant to giue vs a proufe, that we shoulde not gnawe any man by any vnlawful meanes, nor take vnto our selues other mennes goods. This is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde. But if a man will precisely rest a worde, and not regard what is signified thereby, he playeth but the suttle Sophister with God. If a man thinke to excuse himselfe by saying, he calleth not a bargaine vsurie: it is but a mere mockerie. I speake this bicause there are some which stand onely vpon the terme of vsurie, and would hereby escape and cleare their cafe: but God for all that quiteth them not, although they be so suttle and so wilie: nay rather he pronounceth that they are as rauening Wolues, to deuour other mens goods. But yet in the meane while all is one to them, so they may haue any colour to disguise their matters withall. And that is the very cause why men haue found out such diuers contractes in the world, to the intent they might set some colour vpon their wicked practises. I haue tolde you howe that some, so they take no money, make account to scape scotfree. And why? One maketh this foolish reason, That money doeth not beget money. And therefore that it is not lawfull to receiue any thing for it. Now as for mee I will take no money, but a man shall giue me so much Corne vppon a summe of money which I shall lend him. And is not cruell that whereby a poore man is sustained? And shal I goe rob him of that wherewith he should be nourished and sustained? He hath not any thing to eate by reason that I haue vsed such cruelty towardes him: and for all that, shall I say that I am no vsurer? It had bin better that I had taken the money out of his purse, than so to bereaue him of that which shoulde sustaine him. And therefore let vs not deceiue our selues by the word, as men will say in Fraunce, this is no vsurie, or as they call it here in Geneua, this is no renewing. And why? They bring a skinne of Parchment and say: see how wee couenanted together. But if the sunne giue so much light vn-

wo'ld men may see it, shal not the eyes of God see as farre? And thinke we to dimme Gods eies with the shadowe of a sheete of Paper, or of a sheepes skinne, so as hee shall not see one whyt? Men may well vse such manner of dealing, as they shall haue (as I tolde you) some faire colour to say: O I haue made such and such a contract, and hee shall not bee taken for an vsurer. And why? Because thinges are disguised. But God will condemne vs with all our formalities. For (as I haue tolde you) wee must come to the verie point of the matter. Let vs hearken vnto the lawe of God, for that is the rule which cannot deceiue vs: Whatsoeuer wee doe let vs examine it thereby: let vs consider to what commaundement it is to be referred: namely to this, Thou shalt not steale. But nowe what is theft in this commaundement? Forsooth all those meanes whereby wee vse to rake vnto vs other mens goods, whether it be by deceyte or by violence. Therefore if we wil make our profit by ye losse of another, if some will scratch as much as they can get, if they will abuse their credite; if they will set their foote on the throates of poore men; if they will play the tyrantes ouer them: Fishers will faune and flatter, and yet in the meane while haue their nettes layde, and sometimes runne to an fro, sometimes lie lurking, & so vse al the meanes they may to pil their neighbours; if we (I say) doe behaue our selues thus, we are theeues before God. Let vs therefore conclude, that vsurie is an vnlawfull gaine which we take either for the loane of corne or of monie, or of any thing besides. As for example, if a man lend corne and not monie; yet fayleth he not to be an vsurer: for we see that the reason which some nowe and then alleadge is childish; Monie begetteth not monie. For if I make a loane of corne, and when the corne is worth fiue shillinges I say vnto a man: Well I wil haue three pounde: why doe I so? Because I deliuered vnto him my corne which would haue yelded mee so much monie: yea but I haue twentie shillinges more than it is worth, am I not an vsurer before God? And yet men beare themselues in hande that this may bee lawfull. But such gainetaking is theeuerie. And as I told you, all the sutteties which men vse shall not bleare the eyes of God, but hee will alwayes condemne all them which vse this dealing for theeues and vsurers. So then let vs take good heede vnto our selues, and whereas it is saide, That wee ought not to gnawe our neighbour by vsurie: Let vs knowe that our Lorde meant in effect to commaunde vs by these wordes, to vse equitie and vprightnesse in all our doinges, and then especially, when wee are to lende vnto our neighbours: for loanes which are willingly made are for the necessitie of him which boroweth, he hath neede of monie. Well then, if a man which is thus in neede come vnto mee and I feele his disease, and knowing howe hee standeth in neede of readie monie, will pinche him and seeke some wicked gaine by him, it is vsurie, howe euer my colouring of it make it to bee otherwise taken before men. And what though men haue sought diligently, and could find no cause of blame in me? What if they haue sifted the matter neerelie, & not found me faultie? Yet notwithstanding God wil not fayle to condemne mee. And why? For in disguising my couenaunte, I haue sought to make my profite by the losse of an other; and that vnder this colour that the man which desireth succour at my handes is in neede. Ye see then howe there needeth no long scanning to find, what the vsurie is which God condemneth.

And herein we may see the hypocrisie of men: for oftentimes they will come to aske counsell of this and that, when their owne consciences might satisfie them well enough. It were needfull oftentimes that the Preachers shoulde bee marchaunces and skilfull in all the trades of the worlde, that they might bee able to answere them which aske counsell in this thing in particular. They then which knowe themselues so well what is to bee doone in such affayres; why come they to aske counsell of him who is not trayned vp in those dealinges? For wee can say well in generall what the thing is. But there are many which haue great store of sutteties & shifting policies, which none besides them that are of the same trade doe knowe: and these wil goe and beguile men, and then beare themselues on hande that they are cleared before God, if it may bee saide vnto them: I finde no euill in so doing. No, but hee which saith so is not acquainted with the wickednesse which is hidden, because that as then hee handled the doctrine but in generall. Let vs therefore marke that in effect the point whereunto wee must returne, is, that when we lende we must not abuse the necessitie of our neighbor and say: wel, here haue I a fitte occasion, I may nowe profite my selfe.

But nowe some man will demaunde, whether all manner of profite bee forbidden by lending. And it were a thing worth the discussing. For put the case that a man dealeth plainely, & deliuereth his ware at a price and for a time. If the other breake day with him and delaye him of his monie, doubtles he deserueth to pay the forfeture or the profite which hee withholdeth from him who made the loane. And when the interest or gaine thereof is set by Iustice, surely he needeth not to make anie conscience to take it. There is a man which hath taken my commoditie whereby I must liue: for when I haue solde to day I buy againe to morrow: and therefore hee that hindereth mee, by withholding from mee the gaine of my commoditie, from maintaining the trade of my shoppe, hee doeth no better than cut my throate. For beholde, I grounded my selfe vppon him, hee promised to pay mee at such a day, that time is passed, and I can get nothing of him, hee cares not though I and my familie starue for hunger. Therefore in such case, iustice ought to prouide for a man: although that nowadayes it dischargeth his dutie but slenderly herein. For it seemeth that iustice nowadayes fauoreth the case of cousiners, and that when they haue snatched what they

can, and hee that is bitten commeth to recouer that which is reason by way of iustice; it seemeth that he commeth into the court to haue a newe fine set vpon his heade. Verilie it is too too wicked a mockerie, when a man shall bee so deceiued, and yet can haue no remedie for it. So then if a man bee in this wise deceiued, it is a cleare case hee may take interest and gayne, and not be accused therefore either before God or before men. Wee may not therefore stand (as I tolde you) on the terme of the word.

And moreouer let vs beare in minde that which hath bin alreadie declared, namely that to be excused by lawe, is not all that wee ought to seeke: for there is a lawe of fiue in ℈ hundred. And this is a generall lawe because Magistrates cannot set a certaine rate for euerie case: but they appoint that a man may take fiue in the hundred. And why? For traffickes sake, and because this ſtint might not be passed. Nowe, may I say therefore that it is lawfull to take alwaies fiue in the hundred? No. For if a man which is in neede come vnto mee: and I take gaine of him, what excuse soeuer I bring, I shall bee accounted a theefe and an vsurer before God. For he is in neede: my part is to helpe him, and I do not. Ye see then what wt haue likewise to beare in minde.

Nowe withall also let vs note on the contrarie side, that whenwe thinke to auoide the worde of vsurie or interest, we must beware that we fall not into a greater and more outragious fault in the sight of God. For it may so be, that I will lend my monie without such interest as the law permitteth me, I wil take nothing for it but I will put vnto it a tayle which shall marre all. A man cõmeth & desireth me to lend him an hundred crownes, well hee shall pawne vnto mee a peece of lande which is worth two hundred. It falleth out that the bonde is forfaited. I will take no more than lawe awardeth mee for the profite of my monie, or I will take nothing at all. But I will force a sale thereof, and hee shall withall surrender me his title. And a man will make himselfe beleeue, that hee may washe his handes as an innocent, when hee hath done all this. What (saith he)? I lent my monie, and when it was not paide me againe, I bought such a peece of lande. And if you will inquire further of the matter, Why it was surrendred vnto me. Yea, but was it done of the parties owne free accorde? When I helde the poore man by the throate, and kept him in my pawes, till I made him say that worde, That he wouldesell it vnto mee: and shall not God in the meane while bee Iudge betweene vs? So then (as I haue tolde you) it is not for vs to stande altogether on the wordes, but wee must rather haue an eye vnto the thing, that is to wit, that before God, wee bee not guiltie of anie extortion, that we haue not more than was lawfull for vs, nor raked vnto our selues other mens goods. For oftentimes men wil take euen the most honest titles that be in the world, so as yee would thinke there were nothing but holinesse in them, and yet will those pinch a man much more than the gayne would which a man might lawfully take. And we see howe manie inuentions are framed in this behalfe: and which wee cannot at this time handle to the full. And I wouldo to God that the practise of them were not so wel knowen as it is. But what? All they which knowe howe to make their gaine, are great clarks herein: Yea to dally with God, and to find out for themselues shrowding sheetes, whereas they will neuer haue an eye vnto the cheefe and principall point. Yee see then what wee haue to beare in minde, namelie that when it is demaunded whether all vsuries bee lawfull, wee must not sticke simplie vnto this word Vsurie, but wee must consider what the intent and meaning of God is.

But to knowe this the better, wee must resort vnto that equitie which is shewed vnto vs in his lawe. Yea and wee heare what our Lorde Iesus Christ telleth vs, namely, that wee must Mat. 7. 12. nor doe vnto others, but what wee would haue them to doe vnto vs. This saieth hee is the whole lawe and the Prophetes. No doubt then, but that this forbidding of vsurie is comprised also in these wordes, That we doe not vnto others but what wee woulde haue them to doe vnto vs. Nowe then insteede of asking counsell howe to excuse our selues before God, let euerie man examine the matter thus: Goe to, if I were in this mans case, woulde I haue a man pinche mee thus with vsurie? Nay verilie woulde I not: I wouldé say a man did me wrong. And if I durst not say it, yet I woulde thinke so in my heart. Nowe if a man thus condemne himselfe in his owne proper fact, is it not enough? What neede we then aske either this or that? And moreouer if we obserue this equitie and sprightnesse of not doeing vnto an other, ỹ which wee would not haue a man to doe vnto vs, wee shall bee absolued before God: yea and so absolued, that this lawe shall not trouble our wittes about the scanning of the forme of the woordes thereof, but wee will stande stedfastly vpon this grounde, that God meaneth that euery man shoulde haue his due, and that wee should not robbe, spoyle, and deuour other mens goods.

And let vs note further that it is not enough for vs, not to haue raked our neighbours goods vnto vs by guyle: but wee must knowe that wee are bounde to helpe and succour him. Therefore so little leaue haue wee to spoyle our neighbour of his goods, that if wee helpe him not in his neede, we are guiltie of theft before God. If I say, Oh I haue deceiued no man, it shal bee replyed against mee before GOD, that I haue. For if I haue wherewith to helpe a man and I will not disburse one pennie, but leaue my Neighbour in extreeme neede when I haue the meane to succour him, doubtles I am taken for a theefe before God.

And againe let vs note, that vsuries sometime are more to bee condemned in a smal profite, than in a great. This I say to the intent that men shoulde not seeke foolishe cloakinges of their faultes. For that which I say might seeme straunge at the first blushe. What? And shall a man

man thinke better of a strong theefe, than of a small pelting theefe? I woulde haue no contention about the worde: but I say there is greater wickednes shewed sometimes in the reaping of smal profit, thā in a great gaine. And why? For there may be a rich man which is no necessitie, but yet notwithstanding he standeth in need of readie monie, as there are manie which haue wheron to liue, but they would always encrease their stocke. Such a man woulde buy a certaine peece of Lande, which woulde stande him in good steade: not that necessitie constrayneth him, but for a desire hee hath to growe still richer and richer. Nowe one lendeth him a Thousande crownes, the profite of this summe will bee much greater, than the profite of foure Florens, which a man lendeth vnto an other. Yes but to whome is this latter monie lent? To a poore man which hath smal children, & hath not a morsel of bread to put into their mouthes. Nowe if for the loane of these foure Florens, a man will haue one, and the poore man must make readie ỹ monie at the end of one moneth or twayne, this vsurie or Returne is is worse thā ỹ other. For he returneth his mony ouer soone. I graunt it is a leauing of the olde skinne still behinde: but where shall a man finde a newe in the meane time? Yee see then howe this smal gaine is more dammageable than some great gaine. For why? It pincheth the poore man much more than if hee shoulde take a verie great gaine of an other which is able to beare it, and is not pinched in deede so to the quicke by it.

Nowe for conclusion, let vs knowe that God forbiddeth vs in this place to rake vnto our selues other mens goods by anie vnlawefull meanes, by vniust dealing or by crueltie. And we must not here bring our suttleties to excuse our vsuries and our snatching. For our Lord resteth alwayes on the substaunce in that hee commandeth that none shoulde bee pinched, and that the profites which wee take shoulde not be taxes and impostes to sucke the bloude of poore men, and to gnawe their substaunce euen to the bones of them. And it is expressely sayde; To the intent that the Lorde thy God may blesse thee, and that thou maist prosper in the Lande whither thou goest to possesse it. Hereby our Lorde meant to withdrawe vs from all vnlawfull meanes of heaping vp of riches. As if hee should say ỹ his blessing shal auaile vs more than all the prouision which wee can make; and that all the payne which wee take to inrich ourselues, shall not serue vs to so great purpose, as if wee were blessed of him. For hee will make vs to prosper, and hee is riche enough to giue vnto vs wherewithall to maintaine vs. Let vs therefore learne; that our Lorde meant here to reproue the vnbeleefe of men, in that they so distrust him, and thinke that the earth shall fayle them. And thereuppon euerie man concludeth thus: I must vse such a meane, I must practise such a feate, I must looke vnto such a businesse; or otherwise I shall bee behinde hand in all thinges, I shall but pine away, I shall not get halfe my liuing, if I proceede not in this manner. Therefore when wee haue such a distrust, that is the verie cause why wee vse such wicked trades. Wee must therefore vtterly forsake al such things. If wee will haue GOD to blesse vs, let vs attempt nothing, but what is agreeable vnto his will, and what hee permitteth vs. If wee doe so; let vs assure our selues that God will make vs to prosper, and that his blessing shall stande vs in better steade than all that euer wee are able to get by vnlawefull meanes. As wee see likewise howe his curse is vppon all those which giue themselues ouer vnto spoyling, and vsurie, and other such wicked trades. Wee see into what an horrible confusion they are brought, when they graunt vnto themselues such lawlesse libertie, as shalbe farther declared hereafter.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to grant vs the grace to be so dedicated vnto him by his holy spirite, that when wee come to present our selues vnto his seruice, wee may offer vnto him pure sacrifices & such as he may accept of. And although there be always many spottes & staines in them, that he notwithstanding wil not impute them vnto vs: and that in the meane time hee will so correct them, as wee may tend vnto that perfection to the which he calleth vs, and whether we open our mouth to call vppon him, or bestowe of our goods in way of almes, that we may do it without any sinister affection, & endeuour so to dispose that which he hath put into our handes, ỹ we may be found faithful stewards when we shal come at the later day to giue vp our account vnto him, & generaly that we may so liue one with another, as that there may bee an vpright brotherly dealing among vs, that euery one endeuour so to liue, & so seeke after his own profit, as he grieue not his neighbors, but rather ỹ euery man may be holpen & succoured by vs as much as is possible: & that thereby wee may learne to shewe that we are the children of God, & that he is our father when wee shall seeke in this sort to maintaine the brotherhood wherein he hath ioyned vs togither. That it may please him to grant this grace, not onely vnto vs, but also vnto all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On

On Wednesday the xxix. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxxv. Sermon, which is the sixth vpon the three & twentith Chapter.

20 Thou maiest, &c.

21 When thou vowest a vowe vnto the Lorde thy God, thou shalt not slacke to performe it: for the Lorde thy God will require it of thee, and so there shall be sinne in thee.

22 But if thou abstaynest from vowing, it shall not bee anie sinne vnto thee.

23 Thou shalt keepe and performe that which is gone out of thy lippes, as thou hast vowed it willinglie vnto the Lorde thy God, and as thou hast spoken it with thy mouth.

IT was declared briefly yesterday, that if the promise which is here contayned were printed well in our hearts, men would be contented to get their liuing otherwise than by such meanes as God condemneth. For it is nothing else but our vnbeleefe which prouoketh vs to vse deceite and other harme doing. And that is the cause also why God meaning to bridle vs, maketh mention of this promise: Feare not that I will cast thee off, or that I will forsake thee. And this is it whereunto the Apostle likewise leadeth vs in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, where hee intendeth to correct all manner of couetousnesse. And therefore let vs beare well in minde, that if wee will liue with our neighbours in all vprightnesse and equitie, wee must alwayes set before our eyes this blessing of God, to wit, that because hee claimeth vnto him selfe the Charge of sustayning vs in this worlde, euerie of vs ought to haue an eye vnto him, and to depende vppon his prouidence. And therefore when wee trauell for our liuing, let vs vse such meanes as God hath graunted vnto vs. And if we thinke to inrich our selues any way wee care not how, whether it bee by hooke or by crooke; let vs consider on the contrary side, that if God bereaue vs of his blessing, we may well do what we can; but what will bee the issue thereof? Verily all must needes slippe away like water, and we must goe backewarde. And albeit God suffer a man for a time to increase his wealth beyonde measure, yet shall that bee turned in the end into a woe, both for him and for his children. And therefore let vs not be intised by such bayts. When wee see that manie through pilling and polling of others, doe profit themselues greatly and heape together much wealth; let not that moone vs to enuie them. And why? Because the blessing of God is much more worth than all the riches in the worlde. And that is promised to none but vnto them which holde themselues within their bounds, and abstayne from all wicked dealings. And in verie deede if we woulde but open our eyes, wee shoulde bee sufficiently warned of that which is here tolde vs. But what? Euerie man is caried away so headlong, that wee consider not of those thinges which might teach vs plainly euerie day. Beholde there is one which thinketh hee hath swallowed vp a great part of the worlde, and it woulde shame any man to see how soudenly hee is confused & brought to nothing. God in so doing doth shew vs as it were with his finger, howe hee curseth mens couetousnesse, extortion, and such like thinges, and yet wee haue no regarde of them. Manie complaine and say: Oh beholde we had thought to haue aduanced our selues, and in the meane time wee bee falne behinde hande, yea, and that is because they considered not whether they depended still on the goodnesse of God, or whether they proceeded not any further than hee gaue them leaue.

Leuit. 5. Hebr. 13. 5.

Therefore let vs learne to fare the better by all those teachinges which God bestoweth vpon vs. When wee see that he curseth such as snatch so to themselues on all sides, which play the rauening wolues, which haue nothing in them but craft and wilinesse to circumuent, and to snare the simpler sorte: when wee see how God vndermineth them and consumeth them again: when wee behold on the other side that he blesseth those which walke soundly and vprightlie, and that although they haue no great aboundance, yet he fayleth not to nourish them and to haue a care of their familie: when wee see this, let vs desire much rather to bee blessed in this sort of our God, than to haue all the meanes in the worlde which are so accursed of him. And in deede, the grace and fauour of God shineth forth much clearer when a man hath not much to liue vppon, than when hee hath great reuenewes and a rich trade of Marchandise, and monie in his purse and prouision of his owne, both in his garners and in his sellars? Why? For

For if a man be so well furnished of all thinges, hee maketh this reckening, that God hath no longer neede to helpe him. But when a man must liue from hande to mouth, or when hee hath not much to maintaine himselfe withall, & that at least he might consume al that he hath in the compasse of one yeare: and that yet for all that hee goeth on without diminishing, and yet knoweth not whéce his wealth proceedeth, but that hee is certainelie perswaded that God hath pitie of him; when hee thus driueth away the time, and at the ende of the yeare acknowledgeth that it was God onely which susteyned him and his; therein (say I) there is a much more manifest declaration of the goodnesse of God, and GOD by effect sheweth vnto vs howe he blesseth his, and howe much his blessing auaileth.

Nowe withall let vs beare in minde howe his sayde here, That God will blesse them which vse no wicked trades, as vsuries, extortions, bryberies: yea, that he will blesse them in all things which they put their handes vnto. God in this place sheweth, that hee wil not blesse idlenesse, but that hee will haue men to doe their indeuor by such meanes as shall bee admitted vnto them. Let vs therefore employ our selues to do whatsoeuer our Lorde hath inabled vs; and then may wee looke for his blessing. But if we will bee vnprofitable blockes, wee may not thinke it strainge if hee forsake vs. Why so? for we see the condition which hee addeth when hee promiseth that hee will make vs to prosper: that is, ỹ euerie of vs should offer him selfe vnto him, and that hee requireth vs to doe nothing but what wee can. Nowe I graunt that the meanes are not alwayes in mans hande; but yet wee on our part according to our power must seeke to employe our selues to doe well, and not priuiledge our selues from all carefulnesse.

As touching the conclusiō of this whole matter, it hath beene declared that when God forbade the Iewes all manner of vsurie among thémselues, it was to the end that men at these daies should abstaine from it, because hee hath knit together the whole worlde in one selfesame bonde. And sith wee haue beene reconciled by our Lorde Iesus Christ, wee must lay aside all vsuries and such other wicked trades, and not doe otherwise vnto anie in the world than we would that other men shoulde doe vnto vs. For why? We are all neighbours, whether we bee of the same countrie or farther off: and of what condition soeuer wee be, wee fayle not to bee of that neighbourhood which God hath estáblished betweene vs. And therefore let vs come to that which is saide in the fifteenth Psalme, that to be citizens of the Church of GOD, our trading must not be by vsurie, or such vnlawful dealings whereby wee spoile others of their goods, and pinne them whom we ought rather to releeue. Briefly, let that teach vs, not to doe any thing vnto others, which we woulde not haue doone vnto our selues. For that is in verie deede the effect of all, to the intent that men shoulde not vse anie sutletie with GOD by cloking any wicked contractes which might be to the damage and losse of other men. And let vs further note diligently that wherof our Lord Iesus warneth vs; ỹ if we haue not true perfectnes which is required in all the children of God, wee must lend & that without hoping for any thing, that is Luk. 6. 35. to say, we must not onely abstaine from all gaine and increase, but if there be a poore man which can neuer be able to quite the good turne we do him with the like, there must our liberalitie bee shewed. For why? If we looke for recompence, ỹ heathen men do asmuch. But if we wil haue our seruice accepted of god, we must hope after no recōpéce in this world. Thus ye see how mē ought to liue together. First they must abstaine from al maner of harmedoing, whether it be by deceite or by extortion: and then they must endeuor to helpe such as are in neede. And so euerie man must consider of his owne abilitie, & as he hath the meanes wherby he may do it, so he must relieue them which be in necessitie and require his helpe. Truely such is the wickednes of men that it requireth this matter to bee treated of euery day, and that men should vse exhortations to ỹ same end, yea & that men should represse ỹ crueltie which is in many: but if we were as ready to learn ỹ which our Lord teacheth vs as we shold, we needed not many sermons & huge volumes to instruct vs in this doctrine. For (as I haue tolde you) nature it selfe sheweth what euerie mans duetie is, but because we be deafe of hearing, and are moreouer forepossessed with such vnbeleefe, that we are of opinion we shall neuer haue enough, and that the earth wil stil fayle vs it standeth vs in hande to be exhorted and quickened vp continually. But we must not waite vntill men speake vnto vs, euerie man must stirre vp himselfe in his owne behalfe, hauing alwayes recourse to that short lesson which I haue tolde you.

Now Moses addeth, That when a man hath vowed any thing vnto God, he must performe it, or else it shall bee imputed vnto him for sinne. But therewithall he saith, how that if a man abstaine from vowing and vow not at all, he committeth no euill; so as God will not binde men thereto, but it is enough if they accomplishe their vowes: and that if they wil vowe nothing, he will not charge them for it. Nowe let vs note that whereas mention is made heere of vowes, it is not meant indifferently of any thing which a man shall list to promise at random and without discretion. For it is saide, When thou vowest a vowe vnto the Lorde thy GOD. We must therefore haue an eye vnto the partie with whom wee haue to deale in making a vow, that is, vnto God. So then let vs note that all vowes are to be made with such reuerence, that men must iudge wisely what is good and what is ill. As in very deed if I promise any thing vnto a man, I wil haue this consideratiō with my self, to thinke whether he wil accept of it or no. Will I promise vnto a man by way of mockerie that which shall not please him, and without knowing how he will take it? No, I will beare him so much

much reuerence as to knowe his will whether hee liketh of such a thing or no. Therefore if we shoulde enterprise to vowe vnto God whatsoeuer wee thinke good, without making a further enquirie what hee liketh of: were it not a diminishing of his authoritie? Yes verilie. For wee make lighter account of him than of a mortall creature. So then, that wee may fare the better by this doctrine of Moses, wee must lay this mayne grounde, namely that when hee speaketh of vowes, he meaneth not whatsoeuer mé shall fancie, but that which is good and lawefull to vowe, and that which God liketh of. And in verie deede vowes are a part of ỹ seruice of God. For when wee vowe anie thing vnto him, it is to honour him and to do him homage. We must haue an eye vnto the meaning of a vowe. Nowe the meaning thereof is nothing else, but to put vs in minde that wee owe all thinges vnto God. And although all of vs should inforce our selues to giue him more than is possible for vs to doe, yet we cannot yeeld vnto him the hundreth part of that which we owe: neuertheless when wee giue him any thing, we witnes thereby that wee are bound and beholding vnto him: and thereupon vowes are made whereby a man declareth this, that hee doeth offer vnto God all that which hee hath giuen him, as if hee shoulde say: Lorde I yeelde vppe all vnto thee. And this is a reknowledging of his benefites which I make vnto him, as when a man is to pay a yearely Rent, he acknowledgeth thereby that the Lande which hee holdeth is his Lords. Euen so when a man offereth a vowe vnto God, hee doeth it to acknowledge that all that euer hee hath hee holdeth of God, which thing hee also protesteth by a visible signe. But nowe let vs consider whether God will bee serued after the lust of men, or according vnto his owne will? Doubtelesse hee will bee serued in such wise as hee himselfe commaundeth. For hee sayth that it is as the fasne of witchcraft, when men of themselues attempt to doe anie thing, and will needes shroude themselues vnder the fayre title of Deuotion. It is no deuotion (saith hee) but it is all one as if you were witches and cõiurers, and did put your trust in your coniuringes and in your charmes, and therefore I like of nothing which you doe, but I condemne it. Therefore seeing wee heare that God will not bee serued of vs, but in such manner as hee by his worde teacheth vs. And sith hee sayth in expresse tearmes, That obedience is better than sacrifice: Let vs keep vs within our bounds, that wee vowe not vnto him whatsoeuer commeth into our brayne. For why? That is disalowed of him. Therefore this worde is well to be weighed, When thou vowest vnto the Lord thy God.

1.Sa.15.23.

1.Sa.15.22.

And secondly wee must consider of the end which wee haue named. For it is not enough that a thing bee good, but it must also bee doone to a good purpose and of an vpright and syncere meaning: and so wee must consider what the vowes are which God alloweth. The vowes which were made in the lawe, were as solemne thanksgiuinges. When a man was sicke, he vowed that if God woulde giue him his health, hee woulde come into the Temple and offer sacrifice. And why woulde hee doe so? Euen to confesse that he held his health of God, and that he acknowledged him for his father, because he had deliuered him from his sickenesse. When a man went out to warre hee made one vowe or other, and when he was to make anie dangerous voyage he did the like. We see the example of Iacob, howe he saith that hee vowed vnto GOD, that if he brought him backe into the countrie where he was borne, into the Lande which he had promised him for an inheritaunce, he would giue him the tenth part of all his goods, and would make him an offring thereof. What moued Iacob heereby, but to confirme vnto himselfe, that although he went as a poore fugitiue person which was chased out of his fathers house to go into a strange & vnknowen countrie and had death alwayes before his eyes, hee was notwithstanding inheritour of the Lande of Chanaan, and that God woulde bring him thither againe? His meaning was therfore to confirme himselfe in that thing, because he had alreadie the promise therof warranted vnto him by the blessing of his father Isaac. But to bee the more assured of it in his heart, he added this thanksgiuing, as if he had alreadie seene the thing accomplished and euen present before his eyes: saying God I hope ỹ thou wilt bring me home safe and sound. It seemeth in deede that I am now put from all thinges, and that I shall haue no hope in this countrie: Yet my God seeing thou hast made me a promise, I will hope that thou wilt so conduct me, that I shall returne againe into this land: and therefore I nowe acknowledge this benefite, and promise to offer vnto thee the tenth of all that euer thou shalt giue vnto me. Yee see how this example doeth sufficiently declare vnto vs the intent and meaning of those vowes which were made in the time of the Lawe: that is to wit, that they serued for prayers and thanksgiuings vnto God, and so by this meanes they were (as I tolde you) an acknowledging of his benefites, or a kinde of homage which was done vnto him.

Nowe hereby wee may gather, that those vowes which men make without iudgement, & without aduisement taken what pleaseth God, and what hee accepteth, are not only vaine, but also corruptinges of his seruice euen in deede of them. For men doe falsely abuse the name of God, when they vowe they knowe not howe or wherefore. And that it is so, experience teacheth vs by many examples. But wee must holde vs vnto that reason which hath beene alreadie alleadged, namely that because vowes pertayne vnto the seruice of God, if wee make them at random and without such sobrietie as to say we will obey GOD in them, we make a foule and filthie medlie of that which we ought to keepe pure and cleane. There is then a defiling of Gods seruice, and a kinde of robbing of him of his honour committed in so doing. And herein wee see howe blunt witted the

the Papistes are. For to proue their vowes, they take a text all to broken, as if a man woulde take a clause onely of an Indenture or such like writing, and cancell all the rest, and were not that a manifest falshoode? The Papistes doe no better. When they reade this word Vowe, Or followeth then that wee must performe vnto GOD all the vowes which wee haue made. Is that true? Nay wee must first knowe whether they be lawful or no? They which should haue murdered Saint Paul and had conspired together by a solemne agreement, did not they make a vowe? But who will say nowe that they are bounde by their vowe, and that God liketh of it? They make a solemne vowe not to eate nor drinke, vntill they haue put Saint Paul to death. Truely this is all one as if they would make God a companion of their murder. See what a diuelishe agreement is made, and they confirme it by and by with a solemne vow. Yea but if our wittes be settled, we will condemne all such vowes. Nowe then wee see when vowes are to bee performed. But Moses said not without cause, When thou doest vowe a vowe to the Lorde thy God, appointing God in this place for the parte which accepteth that which shall bee presented and offered vnto him: for without that, all shall bee of no value and of no effect.

But nowe what do the Papists in their vowes? Ioll they take vnto themselues some trifling toy or other, and thereuppon binde themselues vnto God: and they beare themselues in hande, that hee is much beholding vnto them, and that they deserued some recompence of euerie one at his handes. One voweth a pilgrimage to such a Saint, an other maketh a ninedayes vowe, an other voweth to eate no flesshe on such a day, or to fast such a feastes euen. Nowe let vs consider whether God liketh of anie of al these things. Doubtlesse hee doeth not. For as for going on pilgrimage, it is not onely a token of lewdnesse, but it is also a wicked corruption. And although vnder the lawe, it was Gods will to haue one Temple to the which men should resorte to worshippe him: yet it is now abolished. Nowe if the place which GOD had chosen, which was ordeyned by his owne mouth is no longer in force, but wee must call vpon God euerywhere throughout the whole earth, without going either vnto Mount Sion, or to any other place which men shall choose: I pray you howe may men of their owne brayne make such holy places? That is to say, howe may they according to their owne fancie build Rome, or Saint Iames of Compostella, or I knowe not what? And secondly for eating of flesh on such or such a day, we know it is mere superstition.

Seeing our Lorde hath ordeyned that men should feede on all meates soberlie without any questioning concerning this meate or that meate, as though one meate were vncleane in comparison of an other, and that whosoeuer doth otherwise, seeueth the diuell: a man may well alledge his deuotion, but out of all doubt the diuell setteth him a worke, and hee must pay him his wages. Asmuch may bee saide of all the other pelting baggage, which the Papistes vse when they fast. And so wee see that these things are not vowed vnto God, and that although his name bee therein pretended, yet hee will neuertheless disalowe of all. For why? None of it is ruled by his worde. Againe the Papistes vowe that which is not in them to performe, as the Monkes and the Priestes vowe perpetuall chastitie, as they say. Nowe I graunt indeede that all men owe chastitie vnto GOD: but this chastitie is not an abstayning from marriage: but the leading of an honest life by keeping himselfe vndefiled in the state wherein he is: but among the Papistes there is no other chastitie, but the abstayning from marriage. They vowe this vow vnto God, but is it in them to performe it? Nay it is a diuelishe arrogancie. But if a man haue the gift of continencie, hee must vse it with all humilitie, committing himselfe alwayes into the hande of GOD, knowing that whatsoeuer God hath giuen vnto him to day, he must be fayne to continue it vnto him to morrow, orelse al wil slip away like water in a minute of an hour. And further we know not how God will dispose of vs in this behalfe. Againe, it is not all one to abstaine from marriage, and to abstayne from a thing which God hath not permitted vnto vs. A man may haue excellent vertues, as if hee were an Angell of heauen, and yet marrie for all that. God calleth him thereunto, hee hath libertie to vse marriage for a remedie, therefore let him vse it. But howesoeuer the worlde goe, let vs beare in minde that which our Lorde Iesus Christ sayth: namely, that the gift of continencie is not giuen vnto all. Matt. 19. 11. And S. Paul as a faithful interpreter of that which his maister had saide, warneth euerie man to walke accordingly as hee is called. 1. Cor. 7. 17. Therefore it is a diuelishe arrogancie in a man, to presume that hee hath in him selfe and as it were in his owne sleeue the power of abstayning from marriage. And if hee make a vowe thereof, it is all one as if hee did openlie defie GOD, and say, hee passeth not for him. Wee ought to offer vnto GOD. But of what? Of the benefites which hee hath bestowed vppon vs (as I tolde you.) Nowe wee knowe not whether hee will graunt vnto vs the benefite of abstayning from marriage for all our life time, or no. And howe then can wee promise that vnto him, which wee haue not receyued? For wee must alwayes make account to say: Lorde I offer vnto thee that which thou hast giuen mee. Euerie man therefore must haue an eye vnto himselfe, and to his owne abilitie. Moreouer when a Fryer voweth pouertie, is it not a notable mockerie? Some of them vowe pouertie: but after what manner? Forsooth they will sticke to their bagge and wallet, they will haue a common gathering, they will be as bloud hounds to smell out the best collections, they will conuey other mens goods vnto themselues from all sides. Therefore they mock God euen to his face, when they vowe pouer-

tie, and that is to doe nothing but to waxe greasie and fat at all other mens costes. Others goe and lurke in a tie, as these monkes doe, who are wel landed and rented, and whereas they be readie to burst with eating & drinking, yet for all that they vowe powertie. And doth not this powerie please God well thinke yee? Nay, what is to dalie plainely with God if this bee not? Lastly they vowe obedience. And to whome? To an Abbot or to a Prior. But in the meane while they will be priuiledged from all obedience of God and men, I meane from that which appertayneth to anie rule of gouernment. Ye see how God hath put children in subiection vnder fathers and mothers: but they may shake off this yoke vnder shadowe of being in monkerie. God hath put men in subiection vnder Magistrates, and vnder such as haue the sword of iustice: and a Monke will exempt himselfe from all this. It must bee lawfull for him to breake all the bonds and listes which God hath set, vnder colour of forging in his owne shoppe a newe obedience whereof God in no respect liketh. Wee see then howe the papistes generally and particularlie mocke God with all vowes which they make, & not only mocke him, but defie him; and by going so cleane crosse against him, do pul his vengeance vppon their heades. Therefore it is too grosse a beastlinesse when a man will come and wrest these places of scripeure, to prooue that all vowes must bee performed without discretion. For first wee must knowe what wee are able to vowe vnto God, whether hee will accept our vowes, and whether they shall bee pleasing vnto him or no? And therewithall (as I told you) the intent and meaning must bee looked vnto. For if wee vowe a thing vnto GOD which in it selfe is good: yet if the intent bee wicked, the vowe is corrupt and naught. For example: Wee haue alreadie alleadged howe Iacob vowed an offering vnto GOD of the tenth part of his goods: a man may doe the like and yet doe it not as Iacob did: for hee is not ledde with the same spirite. Hee doeth it to merite or for I knowe not what other imagination which hee hath conceyued, and not of purpose to render thankes vnto God after the example of Iacob. The intent therefore and meaning must heere bee considered, and wee must aduise our selues well, for what purpose and howe wee vowe vnto GOD: to wit, that wee haue not anie of these foolishe imaginations of meriting and of binding God vnto vs by doeing this or that: but it must bee doone to mooue vs, to render homage vnto GOD, and to protest that wee are bounde vnto him for all the benefites which hee hath bestowed vppon vs: And that although wee cannot throughlie discharge our selues for them, yet at the least wee make such open protestation of them. Except these pointes bee purelie and simplie obserued, doubtlesse all our vowes shall bee reiected of God, although in outward appearaunce they haue no euill at all in them. Thus yee see then howe wee must vnderstand this place.

Nowe it is saide, *When thou vowest vnto GOD, acquite thy selfe and performe that which thou shalte haue pronounced with thyne owne mouth and of thyne owne good will. If thou doest not vowe at all, or forbeare to doe it, thou shalt not sinne.* Here wee see first of all howe God woulde not binde men; but left them at libertie, to the intent they shoulde serue him of a more franke and free good will. Saint Paul saith that GOD loueth him which giueth with a cheerefull affection, that is to say, with 2 Cor. 9
a minde voide of constraint, and of a pure deuotion as men call it. For if wee offer any thing vnto God of necessitie: as if wee doe an almes beeing constrayned thereto, or full sore against our willes: it is reiected of him, as a man shall see these miserable pinchpennies do, who when they giue an almes doe gnashe their teeth at it, and woulde if it were possible withholde themselues from bestowing of any, and when they open one hande, woulde hold fast in the other whatsoeuer escapeth them. May such offerings bee acceptable vnto GOD? Doubtles no. Yee see then the reason why wee say now that GOD woulde not tie men in any straite bonde, but rather leaue them free vnto themselues, to the intent hee might bee serued with a syncere and freehearted affection. And that is the cause why Moses saith here expressly. *If thou vowe not, it shall not be imputed vnto thee for sinne.*

Nowe if it was so in the time of the lawe, by greater reason ought we nowadayes to be freed therefrom. For vowes were then common among the people, and it behooued the people also to bee exercised in such ceremonies according to the weakenesse of that time, when our Lorde Iesus was not yet come into the worlde. And it was requisite that the faithfull shoulde followe those figures and shadowes which were in that time. And albeit God helde them in, as little children by appointing such ceremonies: Yet notwithstanding in this behalfe hee layde the bridle on their neckes as men say, & meant not to perswade them to vowe, or to exhorte them to binde themselues; but left the matter to their owne choyce and libertie. Nowadayes then seeing that wee are vnder the Gospell, where there is no longer anie such bondage as was in the time of the lawe; thinke wee that our Lorde taketh any great pleasure of it when men vowe, so as they thinke they be not deuout enough, except they vowe one thing or other and passe others therein? But our Lorde contrariwise had much rather that men shoulde keep themselues vnto that which he hath ordeined and followe the common rule in which is all our perfection. Moreouer let vs note, that if anie man thinke to adde any thing to the lawe of God by vowing, hee is to bee condemned for it, although it haue no other euill nor vice in it. For wee are forbidden to adde anie thing vnto that which God hath declared vnto vs. Therefore when we make any vowe, it must not bee as if wee woulde giue God something besides that which he hath required; but it must be to keepe

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ourselues vnto his seruice. When wee sende vnto this ende, we may say: wee belong vnto God, and all that hee hath giuen vnto vs is his: and it is good reason that we should make an acknowledging of it. In deede wee haue not any speciall rule to say: I will offer this thing or I will offer that: God leaueth it in our owne choice. But howsoeuer the worlde goeth we must attempte nothing beyonde that which hee hath permitted vnto vs; and what wee knowe hee requireth of vs by his worde. If men (I say) bee not holden with such a bridle, questionles whatsoeuer wee vowe is vncleane and diuelish, and God disalloweth al and condemneth it. So then it is a point worthie to bee obserued, when our Lorde sheweth that hee will not lay any great bonde or bondage vppon his, but leaueth them their choyce whether they will vowe or no. But yet for all that, his will is that vowes shoulde bee performed if they bee lawefull: For hee sheweth what is required in them. Nowe wee knowe whether God like of the vowe which wee make? Wee must in the first place consider whether it bee agreeable vnto his will or no; and secondly whether that which wee vowe bee in our power; and thirdlie whether our intent and meaning bee vpright and ruled by a good rule. If all these things meete together, Gods will is that we should discharge our vowes vnto him. Nowe if we doe consider well of things, wee shall finde that wee haue a generall vowe for our whole life, seeing wee are called of God to serue and offer our selues vnto him in sacrifice. Therefore if a man knowe what the end of his calling is, hee woulde certaynly bee perswaded that hee ought to vowe himselfe vnto God. For hee receiueth vs, hee intertaineth vs, he adopteth vs for his children, on this condition that we should serue him in innocencie of life. Seeing hee taketh vs on such condition, we ought of reason bee prepared to offer vp our selues vnto him. Nowe I graunt indeede that wee cannot doe it except wee be sanctified by his holy spirite, and the faithfull when they consecrate themselues vnto God, doe it not in any confidence of their owne power, they doe it rather of an assured trust and hope of the helpe of God, and a confidence to attayne thereby vnto anie holinesse, but they doe it, grounding them selues first of all vppon this, that God accepteth of their good will although it bee weake and imperfect. And why? Because they haue the forgiuenesse of their sinnes pointed out vnto them, and this is therein comprised, that God doth not impute vnto them those things which are faulty in their workes. Moreouer they haue promise that good will giuen vs them by the holy spirite. So then hereuppon euery faithfull man must vowe himselfe vnto God, and indeuour himselfe to frame our selues in the whole course of our life vnto that which wee vowe. For there is a three folde rule which we must obserue and keepe. It shall not be lawfull vnto vs for to make God iudge of our vowes, but we must onely consider what God requireth of vs. Truely if wee were all Papistes that neuer heard of any other seruice of God, but one onely kinde of worship, and that were the onely rule that we had to follow, we should be excused before God. But seeing wee haue the worde of the lawe, or of the Gospell, yea shoulde wee not be iustified therefore, if wee serued not our God. For hee hath placed vs in this worlde to the ende hee might bee glorified in vs. But as for them which are called of him, and which knowe that they ought to dedicate themselues wholy vnto his obedience, and which haue promised so to do, they ought to vnderstande that they are doubly bounde: and if they breake that bande, they are in so much greater faulte, and a great way lesse to bee excused. Therefore if we will applie this to our instruction, wee must knowe that the generall vowe which wee haue all made vnto GOD, is grounded vppon our baptisme. Seeing that he hath adopted vs for his children, let vs honour him as our father, and seeing hee hath chooste vs vnto him selfe, let vs bee giuen indeede vnto his seruice; let all our life bee subiect vnto his obedience; let vs (I say) thinke vppon this.

But nowe touching particular vowes; if a man demaunde whether it bee lawfull to make them among Christians, the answere is, that we cannot be too well aduised in that behalfe. And therefore the lesse wee vowe, the better it is alwayes for vs. Truely wee may not condemne al vowes: For seeing GOD hath left them at libertie, wee must alwayes remember this; that therefore it is lawfull. But howsoeuer the worlde gruddge vs bee sometyme an vnlawfull calling, his calling, and let vs not vse vowes, I meane, so as to binde our selues ouer much: for wee see our owne weakenesse, that when wee shoulde walke as God hath commaunded vs, albeit the way be shewed vs, yet we swarue aside so often, that it is pitifull to beholde, and wee are constrayned to crie out with Dauid: Who knoweth his faultes? For why? Wee neuer haue such diligence as were requisite, but it befalleth vs to wander and to runne aside one way or other, so that wee sinne many times vnwitting and without thinking on it. Therefore if it bee an hard thing for vs to keepe our selues in our accustomed way by reason of the weakenesse that is in vs, what should we nowe go to charge our selues yet further with an vnder thing, as if wee were well able to surmount them all? I see therefore how we ought to abstaine from al vowes, and to content vs with this plaine simplicitie, to say: I see what my God hath commaunded mee, I must holde my selfe thereto without stepping any further. But yet notwithstanding, if wee haue purposed to acknowledge any thing, because assuredly God requireth it, we must take heede that we performe it. For if any promise doe slippe from vs, it must be laide of before God when we call vpon the name of God, & desire that his name should bee made a partie in the matter, & therefore if we be lyers, in vaine vppon this place, that we must bee faithfull and true towardes our God. For lyes is such a sinne in his sight, and will neuer be hid, but his iudgement will alwayes be vpon it. Be ye therefore assured that hee shall bee deceyued in wayting for any thing from him. And therefore seeing hee hath called vs vnto him, and woulde that

we shoulde bee bounde vnto him, let euerie one of vs take heed that wee keepe our selues stedfastunto his seruice, and let vs not behaue our selues as wilde horses which are broken loose. And whereas it is declared vnto vs, that we are redeemed by the bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ: Let vs knowe that wee are no longer our owne, but his who hath redeemed vs with so deare a price. Therefore let vs liue and die vnto him, abstayning nothing, elles, but to yeelde vnto our GOD the obedience which wee owe vnto him, partly by nature it selfe, and that also which we haue promised vnto him, so that wee may purely call vppon his holy name and declare by this meanes that we are his people indeed.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to feele them more and more, and that feeling them we may be touched with such repentaunce, as to come and seeke the remedie of them in him alone, that is, that hee will pardon vs our faultes which are past, vntill hee hath wholy reformed vs & clothed vs with his owne righteousnesse. And so let vs say, Almightie GOD and heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xxx. of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxxvj. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the three and twentith Chapter, and the firſt vpon the xxiiij.

24 When thou commeſt into thy neighbours vineyarde, thou muſt eate grapes at thy pleasure vntill thou bee satisfied, but thou shalt put none into thy vessell.

25 When thou commeſt into thy neighbours corne, thou muſt plucke the eares with thy hande, but thou shalt not put a sickle into thy Neighbours corne.

The fiue and twentith Chapter.

1 WHen a man taketh a wife and marrieth her, if it come to passe that afterwarde, hee finde no fauour in his eyes, because he hath found some ill fauoured blemishe in her: hee shall write a bill of diuorcement, and put it in her hand, and send her out of his house.

2 And when she is departed out of his house, and being gone her waye doth marie with an other man:

3 If this other also hate her and write her a letter of diuorcement, and put it in her hand, or if this latter man which tooke her to wife die:

4 Then her first husbande which sent her away, may not take her againe to be his wife after that she is defiled, for that is an abhomination in the sight of the Lorde: and thou shalt not cause the lande to sinne which the Lorde thy God giueth thee to inherite.

Although the Lorde will haue that euerie man should possesse his owne, & deuoyde that none should doe wrong vnto another, yet hath he otherwise ordeyned this extremity of due right, to the ende that the poore should bee releeued by the riche. And although he suffer some to haue aboundance aboue others, that they which haue aboundance of their owne may vse it as their owne, yet must they not deuour all themselues, but bestowe part of it on such as are in neede: and euerie man according to his measure and abilitie, must put to his helping hande to releeue their neere. And that which wee haue nowe read tendeth to this purpose. For it is ordeyned that euerie man should reape his owne Lande, and gather in his owne grapes, and receiue the fruite thereof.

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Gods will is not that thinges shoulde bee set forth to open pray, as if they were made common: but that euerie man shoulde possesse that which hee hath, and enioye it without conteinent. And yet hee woulde not that there shoulde be such cruelties as that the poore should not bee any whit at all succoured by the rich. And that is the cause why hee suffereth them which are hyred to gather in the vintage, to eat of the grapes; and them which are hyred in harueſt worke, to gleane and to gather with their hand the eares of corne, as it were an hand full: and not to carie away their basket full of grapes, or to carie away the corne by whole measures. For that were a kinde of theft. When a workeman which is hyred for the profite of his maister, will pilfer away thinges in such maner vnto himselfe; what vpright dealing doeth he shewe therein? Let vs note then that where as it is said, he that commeth into the vineyard, may eate of the grapes; he that commeth into a fielde of corne, may gather of the eares with his handes; it is not meant ingeneral of all commers in, and passers by. For what a thing would it bee, if libertie were graunted to al passers by, to eate as many grapes as they woulde? The vintage woulde bee soone gathered in: there shoulde bee no needе of sixe weakes labour, euerie man woulde make such a speedie dispatch, but there woulde bee nothing left to gather in. But is here expressely meant of such as are hyred. And in deede it was not lawfull to enter into an other manes field or vineyeard to say: I will goe and eate grapes. I will goe and fill my belly at an other manes cost, and when I am wel filled I will not pay my shotte. For if this had been lawfull, it woulde haue bredde a barbarous confusion. But our Lorde (as I tolde you) speaketh here of the vintage and harueſt. For by this meanes no man sustained any losse. For after that this lawe was made, hee which had a vineyeard hyred men on condition, that they might eate grapes. And if any likewise hired harueſtmen, perceiued they might gleane, so that they take not euerie man his reaphooke to cut him withall. For this had been to take tith of the graine of the fielde, and he should haue sowen it another. And therefore there was no reason in such dealing. But when our Lorde permitteth a reaper to take an handfull of corne, know there in no extortion; there is no vnruly dealing vsed.

We see then howe in this lawe the poore & needy are taught their lesson. For as for the poore, although they see that one hath great abundance of corne, that an other hath great plentie of wine: yet ought they not withstanding to beare their penurie patiently, and not to runne and scratch for other mens goods, as if they were left at sixe and seuen. Yea and that when men giue them such accesse, they must not repyne at him which is wealthie, to pilfer away thing secretlie from him. As if a man being hired to sowe a grounde, haue a sacke of corne deliuered vnto him, and hee steale a bagfull of it: verily he committeth a double theft. It had beene better he had cut a purse or filched away some other thing, than so to haue deceyued one which put him in trust. Againe, if the threshers likewise, when a man openeth his barne vnto them, conuey away an other part: If a seruaunt which is of some house, steale a thing which hee founde cast aside in a corner: these filchinges are as bad almost as open robberies. For thefts which are committed by such as are householde seruauntes, deserue much greater punishment, than those which are committed by straungers. And why? For when a man trusteth one so farre as to bring him into his house, into his fielde, or into anie other place where his goods are; hee ought to shew himselfe twise or thrise as trustie and faythfull as hee woulde doe otherwise. And if a man do the contrarie, hee offendeth grieuously both in the sight of GOD and of men. So then let vs note, that the poore ought so to beholde other mens wealth so, that they bee not prouoked with anie couetous desire to pilfer away, or to steale any thing. For why? Seeing God hath bestowed on them no abundance of welth, they ought to content themselues with that litle which they haue, and to knowe that it is God which hath poynted out to euerie one his portion in this world, and that he hath not without cause ordeyned that euerie man shoulde possesse that which hee hath gotten, or that which is come vnto him by inheritance, or that which hath beene giuen him: in respect wherof his will is that there bee a certaine order, so as none bee deceyued of their right. Yee see then how the poore are taught, That they must not bee entised to doe that which is euil, although they stande in neede of the goods of this worlde. For it shall not serue them for an excuse before God, if they alleadge: Why? I sawe that that man was nothing vnder foote, and as for my selfe I was in extreeme neede. No: Our Lorde will not haue men to giue themselues the bridle so farre, but that euery man should keepe himselfe within his bonds.

Nowe by the way the richer sorte are warned to exercise gentlenesse, and not to be such holdefastes and so miserable, as to bee greeued if the poore bee releeued by their goods. As for themselues they liue still in abundance, they want nothing, yea they haue more than will serue their turne. And therefore they ought at leastwise to vse some small gentlenesse to the poore; according whereunto it is saide in an other place, That when a rich man gathered in his harueſt, hee shoulde not gleane afterwarde; but leaue it for the poore people to lease and to gather the scattered eares, like as if chickens shoulde picke vp crummes, after that a man hath eaten his fill. Yee see then howe the rich are taught by this lawe, so to vse their abundance, that they defraude not such as are in neede: but seeke rather to communicate part of their goods with them: not that they shoulde set out the mayne heape for him to take which hath neede: but that euerie man should consider his owne abilitie, and although Leuit. 23.22

there bee no certaine lawe, to say: Thou shalt giue so much in almes, yet notwithstanding, all men must knowe, that they are bounde by the worde of God, to releeue their neighbours, and to extende their liberalitie towardes them, as farre as they are able. Thus yee see in effect what wee haue to beare in minde vppon this place.

Nowe if this doctrine were well obserued, thinges woulde go better than they doe. But we see nowadayes poore folke giuen to such craft and malicious wilinesse, as woulde loath a man to see it: they are become little better than theeues. A man cannot haue fieldes and vineyardes in the countrie abroade, but they are alwayes deceiued of some parte of them, and that in such wise, as if they were in the Lande of their enemies. And why? Because the poore dispence with themselues, and beleeue that they haue some vantage aboue the rich to pilfer away and to take by stealth, whatsoeuer they can come by. And what say they? O it is of the goods of GOD which wee take. Well then seeing it is Gods, it ought to bee accounted holy. Therefore thou robbest GOD when thou pilferest away an other mans goods: thou goest to catch that out of Gods hande, which hee had kept in store for an other. Againe wee see what crueltie there is in riche men, howe they woulde faine swallowe vp the whole world, howe nothing can suffice them: And therefore their wealth oftentimes is not blessed of GOD, because it is not in his safegarde, nor kept vnder his protection. Wee see howe GOD teacheth vs, that wee must vse such gentlenesse towardes our neighbours, as that euerie man must employ himselfe to releeue those which are in neede and necessitie. If men woulde doe so, doubtlesse GOD woulde holde their goods vnder his protection, and himselfe would keepe them: but because rich men vse rather crueltie than bountifulnesse towardes their neighbours, it occasioneth poore men to pilfer away all that they can get: because the rich abuse their goods in such sorte, as men see. Nevertheless this is not here written in vayne. All ought to followe the lesson and the warning which is here vsed, to wit, that the poore bee somewhat releeued, and that they wrong not the riche, that they robbe them not of their goods, and that when they are hyred, they so employ themselues and bestowe their labour in such wise, that it may be to the profite of the maister which payeth them their hyre.

Let vs nowe come vnto that which Moses addeth touching diuorcements. Hee saith, *That if a man hath married a wife which afterwardes displeaseth him for some blemishe which shee hath, hee may cast her off, so that he giue her a bill of diuorcement. And hauing so cast her off hee may neuer take her againe, if shee marrie her selfe againe vnto an other.*

Nowe let vs note that this bill which the man gaue in this case, was to the credite of the wife, and to the discredite of the husbande. For it declared thus much: I haue married a wife and shee displeaseth mee. And why? For some blemishe which shee hath in her bodie, or for some qualitie which is in her. The husbande then declared hereby that hee was a fickle and forsworne man. For why? Hee tooke a wife on condition to haue her companie all the time of his life, and nowe hee casteth her off. See howe through his fault, such an holy bond as marriage is broken. Yea but there was some thing amisse in her. Oh, but thy selfe wouldest gladlie bee borne withall. And thy wife was committed vnto thee on that condition, that shee shoulde bee a part of thine owne person, and thou cuttest thy selfe as it were in the midst. If thine arme bee weake, wilt thou cause it to bee cut off at the first choppe? If there bee any contagious disease which might empoyson the whole bodie, surelie thou were better lose one member, than thy whole life. But when danger is ill fashioned, and a man seeth something which I knowe not howe, is not so fayre as he coulde wishe, must hee therefore mangle his bodie? Verilie it were against nature. Euen so an husbande was not to bee excused, when he deliuered in this sorte such a bill vnto his wife. The thing tended nothing to her discredit, but it serued rather to shewe that shee was innocent, and that men shoulde knowe that shee was not put away either for adulterie or for anie other lewde deede: but only for the vnpleasantnesse of the husbande being a crooked and froward fellowe, and such a one as desired to haue his lust satisfied. Nowe it is said in the text, *That when she husbande hath thus diuorced his wife, and shee bee maried vnto an other, her first husband may not take her againe, for this were an abomination before the Lorde.* In this lawe we haue first of all to note, that when GOD thus permitted diuorcements, it was not to dispence with the thing, to make it lawfull: but because hee meant not (as touching ciuill order of gouernment) to exercise any rigour against the lawe. For yet for all this, the lawe of marriage remayned in his full force, and (as it hath beene aboue handled) ciuill order of gouernment is not to preiudice the tenne commaundements or to chaunge anie thing in them. For in the two Tables GOD hath compriſed a perfect rule of life, and a certaine and infallible rule whereunto wee must order our selues. Howe may the rule of ciuill gouernment chaunge anie thing in these tenne commaundements? No. For yee see howe wee ought to liue. But the rule of ciuill gouernment is an ayde hereto, not to shewe vs any perfection, but to leade vs thereto, to the intent that men might be bridled from ouerflowing their bankes too farre, and that the wicked which by their good will woulde not obey, might bee forced by constraint.

Yee see then whereto the rule of ciuil gouernment serueth. But yet for all that, the lawe abideth in his full force. Agayne, in ciuil

ciall order there may wel be some expressing of these ten commandementes, but that is all: it sheweth no perfection. And this is a point which we ought alwaies diligently to note. For we see that as the world is shameleſſe, ſo many thinke whoe iuſtified if they can alleage: What? Men charge me with nothing. O they are pettie Angels as they thinke. And yet howeſoeuer the matter goe, they fayle not to bee duels. Nay ſome wicked varlet will ſay: What? I am in office, it may well beare mee out. Yea as though they which had neede to correct their euil vices, were iuſtified by puniſhing of others: and as if this might ſerue them for a couering ſheete to cloake their wickedneſſe withall, ſo as they might ſay they had offended in nothing. And they which ſpeake thus, vnder colour that men diſſemble their wickednes, if they punithe them, nor lead them to the gallowes, nor ſhutt them vp in dungeons: they take themſelues to bee innocent men. And what a fond blindneſſe is that? But what for that? The thing is as common as the high way. Againe if they which come like ſwine to the ſupper of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt alleaged to couer their vices what? I am receiued to the ſupper of the Lord, yet but there are many which come thither which yet are vnworthy. It is vnpoſſible to purge the Church of God ſo, but there ſhall ſtill remaine much chaffe among the good corne. How? a man be receiued to ỹ ſupper of ỹ Lord, becauſe he could not be condemned before men, ſhall he therefore be condemned before God, becauſe men vſe too great patience towards him: may this ſerue to leſſen his wickednes? contrary wiſe he encreaſeth his ſinne before God, becauſe he abuſeth his name ſo falſely, and defileth the table which was hallowed for the ſeruice of God. And ought they which are viler than dogges and ſwine, to come nigh to it? Then let vs learne that the order and rule of gouernment both concerning earthly iuſtice, and alſo of the church, is not to ſhew what ỹ perfection is which is required. But we muſt alwaies come to that ỹ all which is to be made by the law of God.

And this is it which our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath alſo declared vnto vs vpon this place, as wel in ỹ 5. chapter of S. Matthew, as alſo in ỹ nineteenth. For there he ſaith expreſſly: although a man was ſuffered to diuorce his wife, that it was no lawful thing notwithſtanding ſo to doe. But is God contrary to himſelfe? No. And heerein there is no diuerſitie as I haue told you. For in ỹ two tables of the law, God hath compriſed whatſoeuer is required in perfect holines and righteouſnes. Ye haue heard how men ought to gouerne themſelues, and they cannot be deceiued. Moreouer there is a rule of ciuil gouernment which ſerueth ſometime to beydle men, but not to leade them vnto perfection: but to prouide that all things be not brought to vtter confuſion among them. For the rule of ciuill order hath no ſuch regarde of perfection, as the lawe requireth. Yea and God in his law not onely forbiddeth vs ỹ outward act of wickednes, but euen the inward luſt and deſire thereof, which cannot be puniſhed by magiſtrats nor earthly iudges. For it is not knowen. God in his law forbiddeth not onely ỹ very act of fornication or to luſt after another mans wife, and to entiſe him: but he forbiddeth vs alſo to haue any bylufting, although there be no conſent, or the will framed thereunto. So that if a man haue but a wanton eye, he is already condemned for a fornicator. If there bee in a man any hatred, any rancor, any euill will, it is condemned for murther before God. Ye ſee then how the Lawe of God is ſpirituall, & that it requireth ſuch a true & perfect obedience, that all the ſenſes, all the affections, all the thoughts of a man muſt bee agreeable vnto the will of God: and we muſt be ſo reformed, ỹ being rid of al the corruption of our own nature, we may yeeld our ſelues altogether ſubiect vnto ỹ which God commandeth vs and which he liketh of. Ye ſee what ỹ righteouſnes of the law is. But there is no notice of this inward wickednes vnto men, it cannot be iudged by the men ſhall not accuſe them, men ſhall not indite them for it, there are no witneſſes in this behalfe but ỹ guiltie conſcience of him which ſinneth, which ſhal prick him and reproue him ſufficiently. And this is as much as all the reſt; nay this is all in all, when a man is thus conuicted in himſelfe. We ſee then how ciuill order and rule of gouernement is diuerſe indeede from the law of God, but yet for al that, there is no contrariety. And therfore this is no excuſe for a man to bring; nay rather it is an abſurd thing for a man to ſay: What? God puniſhed not diuorcements, it followeth then that he gaue his conſent they ſhould ſo be doone. No: the thing fareth otherwiſe. For marriage muſt hold alwaies in his full force both as touching the law of nature, and as touching the will of God, who ordained it, and declared that it ought to remaine inuiolable. But yet for all that, diuorcement is permitted: I meane as touching common order, which is but to brydle men heere belowe, and not to reforme them as the children of God ought to be, which are gouerned by his holy ſpirit. Ye ſee then as touching ỹ firſt point, that albeit God puniſhed not thoſe diuorcements which were made without any reaſonable and lawfull cauſe, yet notwithſtanding he alwaies condemned this vnfaithfulneſſe, and meant that marriage ſhould remaine alwayes inuiolable.

And ſowe are warned by this example, not to ſleepe in our ſinnes. Although men reprehend vs not, although we come not in place of iuſtice to yeeld account of our doings: yet let vs not thinke that we haue eſcaped the hand of God. For wee ſhall haue another reckoning, & a more ſtraitter to make before him. When wee ſhall be ſummoned to his ſeate, we ſhal not be tried guilty by the verdit of men, but the bookes of regiſter ſhall be opened, as it is ſaid in Daniel, and ỹ ſecrets of our hearts (as S. Paul ſaith) ſhal thē be bewrayed, all ſhall be layde foorth before vs. So then let vs learne to haue alwayes an eye vnto this iudgement of God: let vs learne to fit our ſelues according vnto his law, when we wold know whether our life be well ordered or no: and let vs not be abuſed with ỹ which men thinke or iudge of vs.

Dan. 7. 10.
1. Cor. 4. 5.

In deede we muſt obey common order, but this is not all: it is but one part. If a man bee a tranſgreſſour of ciuill lawes, and ſo become puniſhable before earthly Iudges, hee deſerueth double puniſhment at the hand of God. For firſt there is an euill thought, ſecondly there is a wicked act, and for the third there is an offence and euill example giuen. Behold three wicked things in him which is puniſhable by the ciuill Lawes. For firſt hee hath offended God in his heart, becauſe there is the roote of euill, and againe hee hath doone and committed the act it ſelfe for the ſecond, and for the third there is giuen a publike offence. Thoſe therefore which offende againſt the lawes, are greeuous tranſgreſſours againſt God. But although we walke in ſuch ſorte, as men can finde nothing wherefore to blame vs, yet we are not quited as guiltleſſe for all that, except euery one of vs entring into himſelfe haue there the witneſſe of his own conſcience, that he hath walked ſoundly and vprightly, and finde that as hee hath committed no euill, ſo he hath had no will thereto, yea and that hee was in no ſorte prouoked vnto it. And albeit a man haue withſtoode his wicked concupiſcences and luſtes: Yet neuertheleſſe hee muſt alwayes condemne himſelfe before GOD, and confeſſe with humilitie that hee ſhould bee culpable, except God vſed mercie towards him. For it is not alonely ſayde: Thou ſhalt not commit adulterie, nor theft, nor murder, but: Thou ſhalt haue no wicked deſire. Nowe this ſurmounteth all the abilities which are in vs. It followeth then, that wee haue no other remedie, but to humble our ſelues before GOD, and although hee graunt vs grace to fight againſt our wicked affections, yet to confeſſe that they proceede from the weakeneſſe of our owne nature, and that it is through his goodneſſe that wee are abſolued, and not through our owne merites. Thus yee ſee what is to bee borne in minde touching this point.

But nowe let vs treate of the matter of diuorcement. As touching ciuill order, a man was permitted to put away his wife, but ſo, as hee gaue her a bill for a witneſſe of her honeſtie, to the intent that the wife through the crueltie or waywardneſſe of her husband, might not bee diffamed: but that men ſhould be giuen to vnderſtand, that ſhee for her parte ordered her ſelfe honeſtly, and that ſhee was not put away for any fault of hers. Yee ſee what is to bee noted in reſpect of ciuill order. Nowe if a man demaunde whether ſuch maner of diuorcementes bee noweadayes permitted? Let vs conſider of that which our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſayeth concerning this matter. Was it not forbidden you (ſayeth hee,) becauſe of the heardneſſe of your heartes? Nowe then although ſuch a permiſſion were graunted vnto the Iewes, yet notwithſtanding, the lyke is not giuen vs nowadayes. For the hauing of moe wiues than one was permitted them likewiſe, as wee haue ſeene heeretofore, becauſe it was not puniſhed: and ſhould wee therefore looke nowadayes to haue the like libertie in that behalfe? No. For wee ſee that becauſe God hath reueiled his will more fully vnto vs, than vnto the Iewes, it is good reaſon that wee haue a ſtrayter brydle than they had: yea and the libertie which is giuen vnto vs, ought to binde vs ſo much the more in this behalfe, than were the Iewes. For as concerning ceremonies, and other ſuch like thinges, the Iewes were vnder as ſtraite bondage as none might bee greater. They were loaden with ſuch a burden, as made them to bende and to figh vnder it. And for this cauſe it is ſayde, that the lawe bringeth nought elſe but feare. Nowe we are freed from this ſo heauie yoke, I meane in reſpect of the ceremonies; but as for the reſt, wee are a great deale more bounde to walke according vnto the will of our GOD. So that all theſe diuorcementes and this hauing of moe wiues than one, ought nowadays to be abhorred among Chriſtians, although among the Iewes there was libertie graunted for theſe things, and they remained vnpuniſhed. Let this bee noted touching the rule of ciuill order.

But the principall point is for vs to vnderſtand what is lawfull for vs, and from thence euerie one may gather what his office and dutie is towardes his wife. And the wiues alſo are to bee exhorted to diſchardge themſelues the more faithfully towards their husbandes, when they ſhall knowe vpon what condition they are ioyned together. Nowe as touching the husbandes, our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſayeth, that if any man forſake his wife, except it bee for fornication, hee is an adulterer, and hee maketh his wife an adultreſſe alſo: he excepteth fornication. Nowe when hee ſayeth that the man is an adulterer, it is becauſe hee hath broken wedlocke. For if hee ſeparate himſelfe from his wife although hee play not the adulterer otherwiſe, yet ſeeing hee hath falſified the faith which he once plighted, he is conuicted of adultery. The reaſon is, becauſe it is the law of mariage that when a man ioyneth himſelfe vnto a wife, hee taketh her for his companion to liue & to dy withall. If the nature of wedlocke be ſuch that the man and the wife be contracted together to the end to liue & to die together, it ſhal ſ̄ man ſhould be the head, & the woman ſ̄ body: the man hath now but the halfe part of his own perſon, and can no more ſeparate himſelfe from his wife, than cut himſelf into two peeces. And ſ̄ were (as I told you) againſt nature. Now he maketh his wife alſo an adultreſſe: for although the wife haue liberty to take vnto hir a newe parte according vnto ciuil order, yet as touching God, ſhe ought to take no other, but to remaine a widow. For if ſhe go and marry hir ſelfe againe, ſhe is an adultreſſe: and that is ſ̄ cauſe why S. Paule alſo ſaith expreſſe: that if a woman be ſeparated from hir husband, not for adultery (for he meaneth not ſo:) but becauſe the husband cannot brooke his wife, ſhee ſhall remaine a widowe, or reconcile her ſelfe (ſayth hee) vnto her husbande. Yee ſee what the remedy is which Saint Paule giueth. And it is no new remedie which appertayneth to Chriſtians as touching

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conſcience,

conscience it hath euer beene. For S. Paul addeth nothing vnto the law of God, not to that rule which is common vnto all the children of God. But although the Iewes had that custome because of y hardnes of their hearts; yet neuerthelesse if a woman bee put away from hir husband, she ought rather to remaine a wydowe, or to reconcile hirselfe vnto hir husband, than to marie againe. For otherwise shee sayleth not to be defyled, as wee see by this place. And this were an abhomination before GOD. And if she had patiently wayted to enter into fauour, and to bee coupled againe to hir first husband, she had not beene an adultresse. Nowe as touching the man, he committeth double adulterie by dooing his wyfe in this order. For, for his owne part, seeing hee hath broken wedlocke he is an adulterer: and againe he casteth off his wife as if hee woulde put her into the hewe, hee maketh hir an harlot by giuing of hir leaue to take a newe make: for that is against GODS institution, it is against the order of marriage which ought to be kept without any gayning.

Nowe hereby wee are taught, that men ought to beare with their Wiues, and although they haue some vices and some staines in them, notwithstanding when they seeke to correct them, they ought to vse all gentlenesse. For why? it is not ynough for a man to keepe his wife in his house and say: Well, I cannot driue her out, tarie here therefore, and in the meane time hee groyne at hir, he spurne hir, he beate hir, hee vexeth hir, and hee vouchsafeth not doe the office and duetie of an husband towards hir. If a man keepe his wyfe by him in such order, it were much better he were diuorced from hir, and that shee liued in peace in some little corner or other, where she should not so languish and pine away in sorrowe all the dayes of hir lyfe. And wee see in what sort our Lorde speaketh hereof by his Prophet Malachie, when he treateth of the matter of hauing mo wiues than one. If thy wife please thee not, put hir away rather, than ioyne thy selfe with many. Not that hee gaue a man leaue to put away his wyfe, but hee sayeth it were better for a man to put away his wife, than to keepe hir so, with griefe and sorrowe. And he maketh a comparison betwixt two euilles, of which a man ought to shunne the worst. Yee, shall some man keepe his poore wife, but shall bee for no other ende but to brawle with hir, and to molest and vexe hir with all the displeasures in the world. Nowe there is no creature in the coppartie, but that a poore creature should at the least haue peace and quietnesse. Then (as I haue told you) in the place of this Prophet serue to shewe vs wherevnto wee are bound, that is, that a man put not away his wife by diuorcing of hir. But when wee are commanded euerie man to keepe his wife (except it bee for adulterie) it is all one as if it were saide, that a man must bee gentle towardes his wife, and loue hir as his owne flesh, as Saint Paule warneth vs in another place in the fifth to the Ephesians: and if there bee vices in hir, hee must beare with them in such sort, as there may bee peace and concord maintayned in the household. If men vnderstoode that they are such debters vnto their wiues, that is to say, that marriage requireth a peaceable kinde of life betweene man and wife, so as if there bee any thing amisse, yet they ought not to bee ouer frowarde therefore; but quiet and patient: wee shoulde see another manner of blessing in al houses and families than we doe now see. But nowadayes the most part of husbandes and wiues are like Dogges and Cattes. For they haue no such regard of their duetie, that if a man bee vexed of his wife, hee will call vpon God and desire his holy spirit to represse his affections, but he falleth rather into worse and worse. If a man espie any spot of wickednesse, he defieth his wife by and by thereupon, and casteth hir off. The Diuell is a stickler betweene both, and lyke a wylie Pye in this behalfe, hee knoweth well ynough howe to finde occasions and meanes to seuer that asunder, which God hath coupled togethers but nevertheless wee see what a lesson is giuen vs by our Lord Iesus Christ, to wit, that because the husband is not at libertie to put away his wife for any cause, but for fornication, he must moderate himselfe. And that albeit his wife be not altogether perfect, but haue her infirmities, yet he must seeke to amend them by gentlenes. and howsoeuer hee fare, he must take heede that hee shewe himselfe gentle, and nourish peace and concord with his wife.

And hereupon let women on their parte bethinke themselues to acknowledge the fauour which GOD sheweth them, and to magnifie him for it. Seeing GOD hath vouchsafed them such honour, as to ioyne them to their husbandes who are their heades, let them not perke vp aboue them: but let them enforce themselues so much the more to take paynes in the thinges which are appointed them to serue their husbandes in; and let them haue this consideration to say, We hold the husband is as it were the head of mankinde, and women are as it were the body. Now sith God hath ioyned me vnto an husbande to bee his mate and companion, I must endeuour to please my husbande in such wise, that he haue no cause to be grieued by me. He is to beare with me as God hath ordeined him: and seeing God hath such a care of me, ought I not to haue the more heede still to serue my husband, so I be not a furtherer and assistor vnto my husband? And if there bee in me any euill qualitie, let mee bee the first my selfe to correct it, and to fight so against it, that I bee not forced and constrayned otherwise to reforme my selfe: but let me of my owne good will seeke to please my husband, that there may be peace and quietnesse among vs, and not brawling & fighting as there betweene diuels. Ye see by what sort euery man ought to hate an eye vnto his duetie when our GOD (speaking of the sure coniunction which ought to be in marriage) sheweth how he is preaching

ching men, it is by no meanes to be broken.

But nowe let vs passe farther in this matter, pursuing that which our Lorde Iesus Christ saith when hee was asked: And why then did Moses permit that bill of diuorcement? Hee did it saith hee because of the hardnesse of your hearts: but it was not so in the beginning. This is rehearsed in the nineteenth Chapter of saint Matthew. Nowe note for one point that our Lorde vpbraideth the Iewes with the hardnesse of their hearts: and that is to the intent wee should learne to condemne our selues, if ciuill order bee not so perfect among vs as it ought to bee. When wee see that the Church of God may be founde faulty in many thinges; when wee are not reformed according to the order and practise of the Apostles, when we keepe not that puritie which was in the primatiue Church, when wee see howe wee offend in these pointes, let euery one of vs sigh for sorrowe, and examining our selues say: Alas we ought to haue this thing, wee ought to haue that, but we are farre from hauing of them. Wee see what order hath beene heeretofore. First as touching the almes of the Church, there were Deacons in that behalfe. We see how liberall euery man shewed himselfe, so as there was no necessitie: there was but one minde and one affection, so as the faithfull were but one. Wee see also touching the supper of our Lorde Iesus Christ, that it was administred in such wise, that if there were any man of a loose and dissolute life he was put from it. And excommunication was of an other force than it is, & men vsed it after an other fashion than they do nowadaies. And likewise as touching Baptisme, it was ministred with such reuerence, that euery man was attentiue vnto it, the congregation was assembled together, as if one were to receiue an holy freedomship, as in very deede it is. But among vs none of these things are so, as they should be. After the state of ciuill gouernment; faults are not halfe punished therein. And if there be any punishments, they are but playes and pastimes as a man may say. What ought wee to call to minde heereupon, when we see that both generally and particularly, things are not so well ordered as they ought to bee? Surely euery man ought to consider and to say: alas it is because of the hardnesse of our hearts, that we can haue no such order as ought to be among the children of God, that things are so wasted, and that no remedie can be had in this behalfe. What is the cause heereof? To whom must the fault heereof be imputed? To all of vs. For wee haue an hard heart. Whereas if we were so pliable to be taught, as that we could suffer our selues to be gouerned according to that which God commaundeth vs, Lawes should bee better obserued, Magistrates should not bee so hindered, nor finde it such an hardnesse to do their duetie: we should see especially the Church of God (wherein nowe many filthinesses are) better ordered. And therefore to the end of this, that hypocrits cloake themselues with this shrouding sheete to say: What? Men finde no fault with me, and doe any thinge

Matt. 19. 8.

that I am culpable before God? In place of this (say I) let vs learne to confesse, that our selues are the cause why thinges are not so well ordered as they should bee, it proceedeth from the hardnesse of our heart, which can bee made pliable by no meanes.

Nowe wee must farther note how our Lorde Iesus Christ leadeth vs to the first institution of GOD, to shew what is the true nature and condition of marriage. It was not so (saith hee) in the beginning. Heereby hee declareth that as GOD created man and woman and was himselfe the author of marriage, so hee deliuered a Lawe wherein nothing must be chaunged: and as soone as men swarue from it, what excuse soeuer they take, what colour soeuer they haue as touching men, yet saith they not to forge a thing contrary vnto the institution of GOD, which ought to suffice vs. And therefore if husbandes and wiues will discharge themselues of their dewtie, they must looke farther than that which is before their eyes. For things are too confusedly disordered in this worlde. Therefore if men bring altogether vppon examples, euery man will draw his neighbour vnto vtter destruction. But let them haue an eye vnto that which GOD hath ordayned. Hee sayde: It is not good for man to bee alone, let vs make him an helpe like vnto himselfe. Seeing it is so, let vs note that all those, which are called vnto marriage, that is to say, such as are not priuiledged to bee without it, and which feele that God hath not giuen them the gifte of continency to abstayne from marriage, let all those, I say, that of a truth GOD calleth them vnto it were, leadeth them by the hande vnto this estate. And if they bee well persuaded of this, doubtlesse they will go with a louing and free goodwill: euery husband will endeuour to discharge himselfe of his dewtie with all diligence, when hee shall know howe hee is bound, not onely vnto his wife, but also vnto GOD. The wife also on her parte will consider, that seeing she ought to bee an ayde vnto her husbande, shee must not bee as a diuell to hinder and to trouble him. For that were a peruerting of the order of nature. But shee will thus bethinke her selfe: Behold, GOD with his owne holy mouth pronounced, when hee spake of creating the woman: Let vs make an helpe for man: Hee sayde not, Let vs make a woman for him; but an helpe. Nowe seeing that the woman ought to bee an helpe and ayde vnto her husbande, it is greate reason that shee employ her selfe so doe her dewtie therein: yea and that of a franke and free goodwill; knowing that it is not vnto her husbande that shee is bounde but vnto God who ordayned such a condition in the beginning. Thus yee see what we haue to obserue.

And agayne note wee that when it is sayd, That a man shall forsake father and mother and cleaue vnto his wife; it is to magnifie so much the more that holy band which was ordayned

dayned by GOD. For can a man renounce his father and mother? Doubdeſſe no. Nowe much leſſe may hee renounce his wife. If it bee not lawfull for a childe to renounce his father and mother, an husband ſhall bee leſſe to bee excuſed for ſeparating himſelfe from his wyfe. For why? God hath ſo pronounced that albeit a childe bee ſpecially bound to his father and mother: yet there is a ſtraiter bonde of the husband towardes the wife. Therefore if an husband bethinke himſelfe of this, he ſhall not be ſo eaſily tempted to forſake his wife, as a childe to exempt himſelf from ỹ ſubiection of his father. And the wife likewiſe on her part ſhall know to ſay: behold my husband is my head, he hath authoritie ouer me, & God hath bound me to him, and ſhall I then ſeparate my ſelfe from, either through an headie will, or affection, or through ſome other frowardneſſe? Ye ſee how a wife ſhal be kept in the obedience of her husband when ſhe ſhall thinke thus: ſeeing God hath allotted vnto me ſuch a condition that I muſt be ſubiect vnto my husband, I muſt not hoyſt vp my head like a wilde beaſt and ſhake off the yoke. For I ſhal not obey a mortal man, I ſhal not offende him ſo much in as much as I breake the faith wherein I am bound to be ſubiect and obedient vnto him, and do altogether the cleane contrary: but I ſhall offend him which hath put me in ſubiection vnder him, to wit God, who gaue me into ỹ handes of my husband, and wil that I be more ſubiect vnto him than vnto father and mother. Ye ſee how this ordinance ought to be as a brydle to holde vs backe, that wee preſume not to chaunge any thing in the inſtitution and order of God. And finally let vs extend this vnto al other things: knowing that the Lawe of God is not as mans law is. Where bee an olde lawe, it may be forgotten and buried, men will not thinke on it, and a man ſhall not bee condemned for hauing tranſgreſſed ſuch a lawe. If a man ſay it was three hundred yeeres ſince it was publiſhed, there is no remembraunce of it nowe: if a man offend againſt it, it skils not, the lawe is no longer in force. But the matter is otherwiſe in the lawe of God. For wee can make no preſcription of time againſt him, wee cannot lie and ſape our ſelues in our vices, and ſay: I haue not beene warned, I remember the lawe of God no longer, the worlde tranſgreſſeth beyond all meaſure againſt it: men make but a game of it: wee may not (I ſay) couer our faultes with any of theſe excuſes: for they are vayne and of no value. But wee cannot handle this whole matter at this time: wee will keepe it in ſtore therefore for to morrowe, with that exception of fornication.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea in ſuch ſort, that being caſt downe in our ſelues, wee may lament and bee ſorie that wee haue ſo greatly offended him. And ſeeing it hath pleaſed him to remedie our faultes, and to declare vnto vs that they are forgiuen in the name, and by the meane of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, pray wee him, that he will likewiſe hereafter giue vs the grace by the power of his holy ſpirit, to ouercome all the temptations againſt which wee are dayly to fight, vntill he hath giuen vs victorie in all our conflictes, when bee ſhall haue withdrawen vs to himſelfe, to make vs partakers of his glorie in the kingdome of heauen. That it will pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs but alſo vnto all peoples and nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the laſt of Ianuarie, 1556.

The Cxxxvij. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the foure and twentith Chapter.

1.2.3.4 When a man taketh a wife, &c.

1 When a man taketh a newe wife, he ſhall not goe to warre, neither ſhall hee be charged with any buſines, but ſhalbe free at home one yeere, and reioyce with his wife which he hath taken.

6 No man ſhall take the neather nor the vpper milſtone for a pledge: for this is his liuing.

I Haue declared already at large, how men ought to liue in agreement with their wiues, and how the bonde of marige is ſuch as cannot bee broken. It remayneth nowe, that we come to the exception which our Lord Ieſus Chriſt maketh; to wit, that for the cauſe of adulterie, it ſhall bee lawfull for a man to put away his wife. The reaſon is, for that the man on his parte breaketh not the faith which he plighted, but the wife hauing played the harlot doth aſmuch as in her is, vndoe Matt. 19. 9.

vndoe the marriage altogether, and so defileth it, as there remayneth no longer any holynesse in it. For on what other condition is the husband ioyned vnto the wife, but that they should liue chastly one with another? But the partie which committeth adulterie, breaketh this condition, and therefore the bond of mariage is then vntyed. So then if a man knowing his wife to be a whore, and hauing likewise prooued her such a one, for sake her: he violateth not the institution of God, neither transgresseth he this law, They Matt. 19.5 shall be two in one flesh: but he is quitte, and set freee, because the wife hath swarued aside from the order of God and of nature. Let vs therefore note well, that when our Lorde Iesus Christ alloweth the diuorcement which is made for the cause of adultery, it is not to graunt a man leaue to chaunge any thing in the institution of God. For it must euer holde true, That man may in no wise sunder those whom God hath ioyned together. But because the woman hath broken the condition of mariage, the husband is freed from it. The thing then which wee haue to beare in mind is that the exception which we heere haue rehearsed, serueth not in any way to lessen the force of the law of God. That coniunction which God hath ordayned must alwaies remaine firme and steadfast. But she that playeth the harlot, is no longer a wife, she is no longer to be taken & deemed for such a one. Now if a man demaund on the other side, whether ỹ woman for her part hath like libertie, we heare what Saint Paul saith, 1. Cor. 7.4 ỹ like as ỹ husband is not maister of his owne body, no more also is the wife of hirs. Ye see what an equalitie of like right ỹ holy ghost setteth downe: ỹ like as ỹ woman when she is maried, is not mystris of her owne body, so on the contrary side a man after ỹ he hath plighted his faith to his wife is bound in such wise, ỹ if he abandon himself otherwise vnto lust, his fault is alike with ỹ adulterie which ỹ wife committeth. So then if wee will hold our selues vnto ỹ which God hath commãded, we see ỹ the rule is most euident and cleare, namely, ỹ the man must not only content himselfe w the wife which he hath taken, ỹ is to say, he must not only keepe hir for a companion, but also beare with hir: bicause ỹ marriage importeth a true and perfect vnion of two persons, and that as hartie as any may be. Which vnion is not possible to be maintained, except ỹ husband doe beare with his wife & with those frailties which are in hir: & the wife also for hir part endeuor to please hir husband, & to bee obedient vnto him. This we see (I say) on the one side: & againe wee see that if the wife be so loose in life, as to giue ouer her selfe to fornication, shee breaketh wedlock, wherby she doth as it were warre with God, perverting all honesty, which ought to be holy & inuiolable. Now if when the woman offendeth so on hir part, the husband likewise step a side in his dewty, and ouershoote himselfe so farre as to breake the faith which he hath plighted vnto his wife, he is condemned of God. For why? The bond (as I told you) which passeth betwixt them, is mutuall and of like force touching them both.

And in this case there is no doubt, but that a man may marry a gaine, if he in this sorte put away his wife because of adulteries: and men shew an ouer grosse abuse when they weigh not the words of our Lord Iesus Christ: That if a man Matt. 5.32 forsake his wife, except it be for adulterie, & marry an other, he is an adulterer, & that he causeth her whom he hath forsaken to commit adulterie also. Now when Christ excepteth ỹ cause of adulterie, it is to set the man in ỹ case as free choice & libertie to mary agayne. For what a thing were it to bar a man from a newe mariage, if he haue obserued his promise faithfully, & liued in the feare of God, and not beene vnfaithfull towardes his wife? If he be constrained to put her away, must he be punished for the offence of an other? What reason were in that? Should he not haue open wrong doone him? Especially considering that our Lord Iesus Christ in that text addeth, That Matt. 19.11. all haue not the gift of continencie, and that 1. Cor. 7. such as haue not receiued it, haue the remedie of marriage, and that they ought to vse it. When our Lorde Iesus Christ pronounceth this, thinke we that his meaning was that the poore wretched man, who hath liued blamelesse with an harlot, should bee left in dispayre? Nay: that see filthynesse in his house, he must, whether he will yea or no, cast foorth such vncleannesse, except he will infect himselfe therewith and be accounted a partie in such wickednesse. Now if a man discharge his dewtie in this behalfe, thinke we that God barreth him of all right, and that he leaueth him in such trouble and anguish, that he may not know where to become, but must remaine vnprouided of all remedie? It were therefore an ouer grosse folly in men not to perceiue that our Lord Iesus Christ leaueth a man free libertie to marrie agayne, when his spouse hath violated the faith of marriage. As much is to be sayde in the behalfe of the woman, seeing the right in this case is equall and mutuall, as I haue shewed afore. And so yee see what we haue to this day to obserue: namely, that euery man ought to consider, that the vocation which hee hath of God, is such a yoke as he may not seeke to shake off. For it is the cheefe and principall seruice which wee can render vnto God all our whole lifetime, to haue an eye vnto that which he requireth of vs: and when hee hath set vs in some estate and calling; to doe that which belongeth vnto our dewtie: and that euery one yeelde himselfe obedient in all humblenesse, to say: hath God called me vnto this ende? I must frame my selfe thereunto without any reply or gainsaying. Therefore when we bee of a milde and gentle disposition, submitting our selues vnto ỹ will of our God; therein (say I) consisteth the principall seruice which he liketh and desireth. And without this al our vertues are nought else in his sight but doung and filthynesse. Now seeing it is so, let vs consider, as touching mariage, what the calling of God is, and what manner of Law, or what yoke he layeth on the neck of man: to wit, that he liue quietly with his wife, bearing with those infirmities which are in her, & be a companion to liue and to die with hir: and

that

that the wife lykewise submit herselfe with all humblenes vnto her husband, so as they nourish and maintaine peace one with the other. Thus we see how God may bee honoured and howe his grace also and his blessing may dwell and abide in a familie. And if a woman bee so wicked as to prostitute hir selfe, the husband according vnto the will of God, may not onely put hir away, but is in perfect and full libertie to leaue hir, and to marrie himselfe vnto another. As for the woman, there is in deede another respect touching hir than for the man. For the wife shall not bee so dishonored by the adulterie of hir husband, nor bee put to so great shame, as the husband shall bee by the wyues. But yet if the husbande bee an whooremonger, and wasteth his goods and substaunce vppon harlots, so as his wife is shutte out of doores, or bee kept in with all manner of cruelrie like a wretched slaue; if this mischiefe holde on still: then to leaue a wretched woman in such bondage, were against all reason and right: especially considering that which was yesterday alleaged out of the Prophet Malachie, That it were better that a man shoulde put away his wife, than to haue more than one. And what shall bee sayde then in this case, when a man shall keepe an ordinarie stewes, and that no man is able to correct this vice of his: is not the wife then set at greater libertie? This is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde vpon this place.

Nowe sith our Lordes will is that marriage should bee so indissoluble and inuiolable, yea, and that through the vertue of this sentence which our Lorde hath pronounced with his owne mouth, That there shall bee two in one flesh: let vs note that it is much greater reason that the spirituall vnion which wee haue with our Lorde Iesu Christ, ought to bee diligently kept and mayntained: For his will is to contract marriage with vs, and dayly he doeth so, or at leastwise ratifyeth it by the preaching of the Gospell. And on what condition is it? It is (as Saint Paule sayeth) to the ende wee should bee as chast women, not turning our mindes aside vnto false doctrines. For he compareth all errours and all corruptions of the pure simplicitie of fayth, to fornications. As if a wife hearken vnto a bawde, beholde shee is already wonne, and begynneth foorthwith to breake the fayth of Marriage. Euen so is it with vs, if wee abide not in the obedience of our Lorde Iesus Christ, holding our selues wholly vnto his doctrine, wee are like vnto aduowoutrous women. And therefore sith that GOD hath ioyned vs vnto his only sonne, and that our whole felicitie and glory consisteth therein, let vs learne not to decline from it in any manner of wise.

Nowe it is sayde, *That the man which shall haue put away his Wife, shall not, (if she marrie otherwise) ouer take hir agayne, because she is abhominable.* Hereby GOD meant for to shewe that albeit hee did not punish such diuorcements as were made without any good ground; yet he leaueth not to condemne them: for there was heerein a remedie, that a man being grieued with his wife, myght in continuaunce of time beyng better aduised take hir againe: and if the wife were married againe, because hee had set her foorth vnto fornication, and because that (asmuch as in him lay) hee had broken all order of nature, he might not take her againe. Now in that God ordayned such punishement, although hee permitted diuorcementes, I meane as in respect of humaine policie: it shewed sufficiently that hee allowed not of them. And so the Iewes excused themselues but in vaine, as if they had put away their wiues by the authoritie of the Lawe. For this text sufficiently declareth, that this manner of putting of them away was wicked, and that it coulde bring nothing else but all manner of euill and mischiefe; yea and farther, that it was not possible for the man to amend the fault which hee had committed, after that the wife had taken a new husband. When the Lawe declareth thus much, is it not a condemning of the Iewes? How can this serue them for a shrowding sheete to say: The law permitted vs this thing, our Lorde woulde not punishe such a sinne by any earthly iudgement? Yea but for all this, hath hee declared that he alloweth of it? Hath hee sayd that such a fact is lawfull? Nay but all the contrarie. For the thinges which of themselues are good haue alway a good end and issue, but when there followeth any wretched mishap in any thing, especially such a one as can be by no meanes recouered, it is a signe that the thing displeaseth God So then let vs diligently note that God meant in this place to discouer the reason of his counsaile, why hee punished not diuorcementes. In effect hee meant to giue the Iewes to vnderstand that it was for the hardnesse of their heart (as our Lorde Iesus Christ thereof speaketh) and that they must needes be conuicted to acknowlege that the cause why God established no perfectnesse of ciuil gouernment among the was, for that they were not capable of it. But they considered little of this. Nay they bare themselues in hand rather that all thinges were lawfull for them, seeing they were not punished by earthly iudgement, and they thought that by this meanes they were also preuiledged from the iudgement of God. Matt. 19. 8.

Hereby wee bee warned of that which was more fullie handled yesterday, to wit, not to runne at rouers, but to make a perfect tryall of those thinges which wee take in hand, by hauing our eye alwayes on the Lawe wherein our Lorde hath comprised the effect and abridgement of his wil, & that is also the true touchstone whereby we ought to try all our words, yea and all our thoughts. Seeing it is so, let vs returne thither, & although wee be not punished by men, yet let vs not cease to misliyke of our faults for our vices, knowing that they must elsewhere be accounted for, albeit GOD hath spared vs in this lyfe. And yet there are now and then some by punish-

mentes layde on vs in that respect, insomuch that although God call vs not solemnlie vnto the barre, ne frame an inditement precisely against vs: yet neuertheleſſe he vſeth ſome kinde of chaſtiſement, to admoniſh vs of our faultes, as wee ſee that this hauing of many wiues was not puniſhed, & yet our Lord ceaſed not to ſhewe that it was a deteſtable thing in his ſight, as whereby the order of marriage was broken and violated. Let vs therefore conſider of all the corrections which GOD ſendeth, to the intent we may preuent his anger, and not abuſe his patience although he for a long time beareth with vs.

Briefly, let vs take heede that we attempt not any thing againſt ỹ rule which is giuen vnto vs: let vs alwayes return back vnto this point; It was not ſo in the beginning: For if we aledge cuſtome, it ſhall not ſerue to exempt vs from condemnation: if we ſay: it hath bin in vſe this long time, we haue an infinite number of examples for it: all this ſhal litle auaile vs. For why? This one only word ſhall cut off all ſuch excuſes, where it is ſayde, that, what GOD hath once eſtabliſhed; it muſt be alwayes obſerued, although men bee changeable, although they be rebellious, and ſo through their venterouſneſſe, and their raſhnes, make a confuſion of all thinges, and enterpriſe whatſoeuer their luſt fancieth, and thereupon carrie themſelues headlong into all wickedneſſe, yea and one folow an other; all this ſhall be nothing before God, but a more grieuous condemnation to aggrauate, and to encreaſe the haynouſneſſe of their wickedneſſe. And why ſo? For it ought to ſuffice vs ỹ god hath declared vnto vs his will which cannot varie, and from the which alſo it is not lawfull for vs to ſwarue. Now moreouer let vs note well ỹ which God addeth: *Leaſt they ſhoulde make the Lande to ſinne which hee had giuen the Iewes to inherite.* Moſes hath heretofore vſed the ſelfe ſame manner of ſpeaking: but ſeeing it is in this place rehearſed, we ought to call to minde ỹ which hath bin already aboue declared: that is to wit, that if a vice raigne, and men ſtill let it ſlip: they make the whole land to ſinne, ỹ it is to prouoke ỹ anger of God & to nouriſh it, & that all are made guiltie thereof. God ſayth not, that he which ſhall ſo take his wife againe ſhall ſinne before God and not abide vnpuniſhed, & that the woman lykewiſe committeth abhomination, but he ſaith, *The land ſhal ſin.* And how ỹ land? It may chaunce that there ſhall not be paſt a three or foure diuorcementes, and yet ỹ there may be a million of people in ỹ land: and why ſhal ỹ fault be ſo farre & ſo largely extended? It ſeemeth ỹ none beſides him which maketh the diuorce, ought to be accuſed. But God knoweth well how hee ought to iudge. And it is not for vs to teach him his leſſon. Let vs therfore holde vs vnto this decree of his which hee hath here pronoũced: & let vs know ỹ the whole land is defiled, when ſinnes raigne therein, without any bridle, and the cauſe is manifeſt. For there luſtice cannot be without blame, where is no bridle of reſtraint. Where men haue not this conſideration to ſay: Behold God is offended, this is a deteſtable thing, but are altogether carleſſ of it, there iuſtice is idle. And ſo forasmuch as ỹ magiſtrates execute not their office faithfully, ye ſee how the ſinne becommeth publique, and ſo the whole people is as it were cõſenting vnto it. And moreouer, when wickedneſſe is ſo permitted, euery man is of opinion ỹ all things are lawfull for of cuſtome men alwayes make a lawe. And a mans eye may bee witneſſe, how on the one ſide men put away all ſhame, & on ỹ other ſide liue in no feare. And doubtleſſe ỹ feare we haue of puniſhment, & the ſhame which we haue of doing euill, are two bridles to reſtraine vs. When theſe two thinges are layd aſide, ſo ỹ men ſet braſen faces on ỹ matter, & take leaue to do what they liſt, there is no remedie but that all miſchiefs muſt proceede thereof when ſinnes haue ſo full ſcope. And that is the cauſe why S. Paul vpbraideth the whole Church of Corinth, with the inceſt which was committed, although one man alone had taken to wife his mother in lawe. Yee boaſt your ſelues (ſaith he,) but what a ſhame is it ỹ you nouriſh ſuch villanie & filthineſſe among you? So that let vs wiſely conſider, ỹ as often as the ſcripture ſpeaketh in this wiſe, it is to admoniſh vs both publikely & particularlie of our duties: ỹ firſt of all ſuch as haue publike charge, diſſemble not ỹ wickednesſe which is cõmitted, but ſeeke to correct it; ỹ the Paſtours which haue ỹ charge of teaching doe open their mouthes wide w̃ all libertie, and that when they ſee ỹ miſchief encreaſeth and is augmented, they cry out at it, condemne it, & reproue, & repreſſe it aſmuch as lyeth in them: that ſo much ỹ more ſeuere punihment be vſed in ỹ Church: ỹ the magiſtrates who haue ỹ ſword in their hãd take heed, ỹ they employ diligẽce to doe for their part what God hath cõmanded them; & beſides, ỹ euery man priuately & particularly enforce himſelfe by exhortations & admonitions to purge his houſe from all filthines, & to eſchue & auoyde all wicked compaine: ỹ we may at the leaſtwiſe ſhew ỹ the wickednesſe diſpleaſeth vs, & that we will not at any hand be partakers thereof, folowing ỹ which S. Paul ſaith, That by not cõſenting vnto ỹ workes of darkeneſſe, we muſt reproue thẽ. Behold (I ſay) what ỹ thing is whereof we are admoniſhed, when God declareth ỹ the land is guiltie of ſinne, if an offence remain vnpuniſhed. And if we be not able to remedie the miſchiefe thereof, let vs humble our ſelues, knowing that if God wold deale rigorouſly w̃ vs, we were worthy to be plunged forthwith into ỹ deepeſt dungeon of hel. As for example, if blaſphemies & fornications, & other vnruly behauiours, lewd & wicked practiſes, wronges deſlinges, deceites & cruelties raigne in any place, & there be no end of them; let vs know ỹ when God giueth Satã ſuch libertie, as to cõmit ſuch an outragious diſorder in all things, it is a ſigne ỹ he is angrie w̃ vs, & that we want his kingdome. Knowing this let vs be ſorrie, & walk in ỹ greater heedefulneſſe, praying him to vſe mercie towardes vs, and with fatherly gentleneſſe to correct that wickednesſe of ours whereby wee deſerued to be raſed and rooted out of the land of the liuing, euen out of hand, if God wolde deale

Matt. 19. 8.

1 Cor. 5. 1.

dealt with vs according vnto our offences. Yee see in effect what wee haue to beare in minde concerning this place.

And now Moses addeth two Lawes, whereof the one tendeth to the fauoring of such as are new married: and the other serueth to barre them which lend monie, from being ouer cruel, and from beeing so greedy in taking of pawnes and gages, as to destroy their neighbors, and to take from them ỹ meanes whereby they might liue. Ye see in effect what the two poynts bee, which are contained here. Now as touching the first, there is no doubt, but Moses had an eye therein vnto the common profit of all. For at the first sight a man might finde it strange what the cause should be why he dispensed thus with new married folkes, that they shoulde keepe themselues at home, that they shoulde not bee compelled to goe vnto warre, that they should haue none of those charges layde vppon them which might turne them from their familie. For to what end and purpose was this, but that God in commanding such an order by his seruant Moses, had an eye vnto that which might folow by the contrarie? For when a man taketh a wife it is need and requisite that he forme & fashion her, that is to say, that he teach and accustome her so to liue as they may agree both together all the time of their life. Now if a man take a woman to wife, and at the end of three dayes leaue her while the wife knoweth not yet the maners and conditions of her husband, and while the husband likewise is vnacquainted with the disposition of his wife it may be a cause that they shall neuer agree together all their lyfe long. And again we know what yong housholders are, vntil they be by longer time inured to know by vse and exercise how to set their household in order. Now if a man bee led away the first day, and forsake his wife; the yong woman not knowing what belongeth to the ordering of an house, and remaining alone may fall into many inconueniences. And though there were none other than this which we haue alleged; yet were it enough and to much, namely that the husband returning after some time shall bee as one vtterly vnacquainted with his wife, and the wife in lyke sorte shall be as strange to him, which thing might be an occasion that they shoulde neuer agree one with another. God then had respect vnto this: And therefore let vs not imagine that this Lawe was made for pleasures sake, to say that a man should sporte himselfe with his wife which hee hath taken. I graunt that Moses vseth this word: but that is because he would therein comprise al the profite which commeth by this meanes of the husbandes ioyning and vniting of himselfe vnto his wife, wherby there groweth a conformitie of maners betweene them, so as the one is well knowen to the other, and they are brought to this point that they can beare each with other: but yet nevertheless God hath in this place an eye vnto the common profit and welfare of all.

Now it is very true that this law respecteth in such sort the policie and rule of gouernment among the Israelites, that we are not bound thereunto: but yet for all that (as I haue declared afore) wee must garher some doctrine from that which God had ordayned for the people of olde time. We must euer haue an eye vnto the ende which God aimeth at, and from thence gather ỹ substance of the law which appertaineth vnto vs, and is belonging as common vnto vs together with the Iewes. Now in effect it is heere declared vnto vs, that men ought to auoyde all occasions which serue to estranging of the frō their wiues, & to the disordring of their house. We are already of our selues ouer frail & weake, & though no farther occasion be offered, wee see how many swarue aside from their duelies, & are so tickliſhe ỹ they cannot holde themselues quiet & still in their vocation. But now if there bee some other temptation & ỹ men wander wilfullie & trust to their own cōstancie, & presume vpon maruelous things in themselues, & in the meane time keepe not themselues vnder ỹ bridle of God: what other thing may fal out in ỹ end, but extreme cōfusiō? Let vs therfore learne not to tempt God through ouer great boldnesse and presumption: but let euery one take heede he hold himselfe within his boundes, to ỹ end he may be the more inabled to discharge himself of his duetie. For euen whē we would vse all the meanes wee can possiblie to doe that well which God hath ordayned, yet our flesshe hath alwayes such whot boylings, that we are oftentimes as headstrong horses which are broken loose. We haue needē therfore to be held backe by diuers & sundry meanes. And therfore let vs looke vnto our selues as our Lord warneth vs. And againe on the other side we haue also to beare in minde that which Saint Paul declareth in the seuenth of the first to ỹ Corinthians, to wit, ỹ they which are married are intangled in many cares, the which according vnto rigour might be imputed for sinne, except God did vse such gentlenesse towardes vs, yea, and that such fatherlie gentlenesse, as to wink at our faults: & this ought to be wel considered. For whē a man entreth into mariage, if he think vpon ỹ multitude of troubles & incōmodities which it hath, it will breede such a feare in him, ỹ hee will wish to withdrawe himself farre from it. And besides ỹ, the diuil hath indeuored as much as is possible, to diffame mariage, to the intent men shoulde so become as brute beastes, in defiling themselues with fornication; yea & that vnder colour of auoiding ỹ bondage which in respect of marriage seemeth to be ouerhard & grieuous: as ỹ disciples also sayd: If it be so, it were good for a man not to touch a woman. Yea saith our Lord Iesus Christ, if so be hee were at his owne choyce. But now, least when we consider of ỹ incommodities & troubles which are in marriage, we should be wholy discouraged: let vs returne vnto ỹ which is declared vnto vs in this place. For it was a good thing ỹ the people of God, being set vpon, & assaulted, should go forth to warre to employ themselues in ỹ defence of the whole countrie & bodie of their people, and also furnish out such other charges an offices as serued to maintaine ỹ Church of God. Now when God giueth vnto thē which were new married, such a dispensatiō, as to beare with them in these

Matt. 19. 10.

thinges, hee sheweth in generall, that although they which are maried cannot escape free, but that they must needes bee giuen ouer to many cares and carkings, and be snarled in many & sundrie incommodities, yet notwithstanding he beareth with them, and that of especial fauour, and that this he doth in the fauour of mariage. Therefore let the faithful comfort themselues, seeing that GOD hath pytie on them, and that although marriage bringeth with it such a nũber of troubles, wherby men seeme as it were to be held bound in this world, yet notwstanding God for all this, doth not cast them off. And why? Because he hath ordayned mariage, and knowing ỹ troubles it hath, he voutsafeth to vse a remedie by forbearing and pardoning many faults which are in it.

But herewithall let vs also note, that this may not serue to rock vs asleepe, let not maried folkes, vnder colour that God dealeth so gently and pitifully with them, behaue themselues so loosely as if all thinges were permitted them: but let them haue the wit to say: Go to: Had wee neuer so small a care which might withhold vs from comming vnto God; yet should wee be to blame. But we see many ouer froward, wee see in others much impatiencie, and many other thinges: againe we see much vanitie committed, insomuch that some man louing his wife too wel, will exceede measure therein, & lykewise in his children, so vnrulie alwayes are our passions. If there be in vs but one smal vice, wee are already culpable before God: and if there be an infinite number, behold wee are then plunged as it were into a bottomlesse pit. And shall we then vnder ỹ couert & cloke of mariage, settle our selues in our dregs, & flatter our selues in our wicked doings? What reasõ were in ỹ? Nay rather let men quicken vp themselues, and know ỹ the goodnesse of God serueth not to lead & allure them vnto wickednes: but contrariwise to make them to feele their faultes, & hauing sek them to returne vnto God, and so pray him ỹ he wil more & more cut off ỹ superfluities which are in our affections. Ye see thẽ what we haue to beare in minde concerning this place, namely ỹ the faithful haue wherwith to comfort thẽselues, seeing ỹ God beareth with thẽ as long as they liue in this world, and ỹ albeit they cannot bee as angels to walke in all heauenly perfectnesse: they are not for all ỹ reiected of God. For in the fauour of marriage which he hath ordayned, he vseth patience and gentlenesse in bearing w̃ them. But on ỹ contrary side also, seeing the infections wherw̃ they are on all sides enclosed, they must not onely condemne thẽselues, but sigh continually, & endeuor to correct thẽselues, & to approch more nearer & nearer vnto God, & to vnfold themselues out of ỹ temptations, which are a let & hinderance vnto them. Ye see then what ỹ doctrine is which wee haue to gather from this lawe. Now it is certaine ỹ God meant in this place to shew as in a looking glasse, ỹ marriage, although it be in it selfe honorable, bringeth many incommodities with it, insomuch ỹ a man is made more vnapt to apply himselfe freely vnto ỹ which he ought, than he would be if he were not maried. Not ỹ this proceedeth frõ ỹ nature of mariage for if our father Adam had remained in ỹ integritie & perfection wherein he was first created, doubtlesse mariage, lyke as God gaue it for an ayde, had bin a perfect & angelical life. But because we are corrupted, & because we haue so many vices in vs as is pitie to behold, we turne ỹ which was good, into euill: & that which God had ordayned for our glorie, wee turne oftentimes to our reproch and shame. That is ỹ roote then, from whence all ỹ incommodities which are in marriage proceede. And therefore to ỹ intent wee accuse not God, who is the author thereof, and lay all ỹ fault vpon him, let vs know that whatsoeuer a man may complayne of in marriage, is as it were accidentall, ỹ is to say, proceedeth from elsewhere, than from marriage it selfe, to wit, from ỹ corruption of sinne. Neuertheless we may see (as I haue already told you) and we may in this place behold as if ỹ thing were paynted forth before our eyes, ỹ if a man enter into marriage he entangleth himselfe in many thinges, which shall stay him from doing of his duetie. And ỹ is the cause why Saint Paul also sayd, That if a man and woman could liue without it (considering how short a time we haue, at such time as our Lorde oppresseth his Church with so many afflictions, that we see nothing but miseries in the world) it were good to runne with all ỹ haste we might here below, & not bee stayed or hindered by any meanes whatsoeuer from finishing our course. So then when we enter into marriage, let vs know ỹ we are in such way so snarled, ỹ wee cannot make such quicke spede as we should, to discharge our duetie: and let this cause vs to cal on God so much the more, and to desire him to be mercifull vnto vs, and not to impute vnto vs any of all those offences which we dayly commit.

Moreouer let vs enter also into this generall confession, that seeing we are so sinful as to marre euery thing that is good, we ought to dread the sinne which dwelleth in vs, or rather which reigneth in vs, vntill our Lord haue transformed vs. For if we bee left in our first nature, what shall we be? Not only we shal be cleane cõtrary vnto ỹ will of God and his righteousnes; but also whatsoeuer is in it selfe good, holy, and honorable, and which God had ordayned for our welfare, we can not but turne and conuert it vnto our harme and hinderaunce. Whereof wee haue a notable example in this place.

But we are yet farther admonished ỹ although through the corruptiõ of sinne, we abuse ỹ which God had ordayned for our welfare, and turne it to euil, yet we may not for all ỹ forsake and take our leaue of the good ordinances and decrees of God. And not to seeke any farther, let vs take marriage for an example in this case. We see (as I haue already told you) how many troubles and incommodities it hath, and that not already in respect of the body, so that when a man is maryed hee hath many hinderances which turne him now to one thing, and then to an other, so as he is faine to carke and care how to nourish his children, and to watch for his profite when he

Hebr. 13. 4.

he should sleepe: but also mariage bringeth with it more than this. For a man shall not be so free and at such libertie to employ himselfe in the seruice of God: and yet all this must not stay him from this calling. For they truely which stand in neede of marriage, must submit themselues vnto this order of God, and vse no excuse as many doe, and as we see lykewise what is happened among the Papistes, how the diuell hath sharpened the venemous tongues of those hypocrites the Friars, and Monkes, and such lyke, who haue forbidden marriage vnder colour that there are these and these faultes in it. But all those things which are confused and disordered, let not but that marriage remaineth alwayes good and profitable for them which vse it well, although it drawe after it diuerse inconueniences, howbeeit not of it selfe, but by reason of the sins of men, bycause we cannot nowe vse vnto our welfare this order which God hath ordained, in such sort as is requisite, except wee reuerence mariage. And we see that the cause of these horrible confusiõs which are happened in the world is this, that men haue disposed mariages, and that the diuell hath wrought so farre as to make mẽ trample that holy institution vnder foote, insomuch that when euen the filthiest vnes of all haue presumed on their abilitie of abstayning from it, and of liuing here as chast a lyfe as the Angels of heauen: wee see such vnrulinesse in conuersation as ought to make euery hayre of our head stand an end. For if we would beholde nowadayes what the popish chastitie of the Priestes and Monkes, and of all the rest of this pestilent rowme is, wee shall finde it a bottomlesse pit and an infernal gulfe of al beastlynesse. But let vs on our side consider how to walke in the feare of God, and to keepe our selues vnder his bridle. For the doing whereof (as I haue alreadie told you) let vs haue our recourse vnto our calling and say: Whither vnto doth God call me? Thither must I follow him without making of any reply. There followeth in ỹ second place the other lawe which forbiddeth a man to take the vpper or the neather milstone for a gage. When mention is made here of two milstones and then of the vppermost, it is allone as if our Lord sayd, that a man shall not take both the milstones which serue to grinde, no nor one of them. For why? A man were as good take all, as one part. For there must be two Milstones to grinde: I will haue the lower, but he can doe nothing without a fellow. So then if I bereaue a man of the profit of his tooles, what greater harme may I worke him? For he can no longer gaine his liuing. Now in deede expresly God speaketh in this place of Millones: but vnder one kinde he hath comprised the whole. As it is a common thing in the Lawe so to doe, and we haue alreadie declared that this rule must be kept for a kaye to open vnto vs the sense and meaning of many places. And in verie deede the reason which Moses addeth, giueth a good and easie declaration of this place. For he saith, *Thou takest his life to pledge*: that is to say, thou cuttest a poore mans throate, when thou takest frõ him those necessarie tooles with which he getteth his liuing. Let vs therefore note in this place, that although it be here spoken of Milstones, yet we are generally warned ỹ if whẽ we lend monie we take a pawne for it, we must not bereaue a man of those meanes by the which he getteth his liuing. As ye see how the Farrour or locksmith hath an anuel, a hammer, a pare of pinsers, and other tooles: Now if a man take any of these thinges from him because he hath lent him mony; yee see how the poore man shall dy for hunger, and it had bin better that he had lent him nothing (for ỹ he had had some meanes to get his liuing by, & albeit he had pined away, yet he had gotten some small morsell of bread to eate though it could haue slaked but half his hunger) than so to bereaue him of ỹ meanes which he hath to liue by. Now although a man take not away all his instrumentes from him; but leaue him his Anduell, & in the meane while keepeth frõ him, his hammer and his pinsers, and such lyke thinges, it is all one. And if he excuse himselfe and say: I haue but a part of them. No, but the other part will stand him in small stead, except he had the rest. If a man doe the lyke vnto any handicraftes man and man of occupation, wee know that all their reuenewes consist in getting their liuing by ỹ labor of their handes, they haue neither landes, nor quarter rents comming in. Now seeing that God hath put their liuing in their hand, that is to say, in their labor, if a man bereaue thẽ of those necessarie meanes by ỹ which they get their liuing, it is al one as if he had cut their throate; I say that their liuing, consisteth in their labor, not ỹ man by his trauaile can win any thing but through ỹ blessing of God: For wee must returne backe alwayes vnto this poynt: That God giueth rest & quietnesse vnto them whom he loueth. Whiles others take great payne, goe late to bed, and rise early, eate browne bread, and drinke the water of tribulation, & yet profit nothing, but in stead of thriuing go backward; ỹ childrẽ of God prosper in all their dealings. It is then the only free-bestowed blessing of God which nourisheth mẽ, as we haue seene heretofore how Moses saith: Thou shalt not thinke in thine heart, that it is the trauel or labor of thine owne handes, which hath nourished and sustayned thee: but know thou that it is thy god which worketh with thee, & that except he looked vnto thee, thou shouldest be vnprouided of all thinges. Wee must (I say) resolue our selues throughly as touching this point. But withal, wee see how God hath an eye vnto the trauaile of men, in that when hee speaketh of their liuing, hee hath a respect vnto the order which he hath established: to wit, that when a man employeth himself vnto the trauell of his hands, he hath made this promise: I wil bless ỹ labour of thy hands, if thou do ỹ which belongeth vnto thy dutie. Therfore albeit ỹ we receiue our food and nourishment frõ the hand of God, yet hath he ordayned ỹ we should trauaile for it. Now is a mans trauail takẽ frõ him? No, for then his life falleth to ỹ ground: & therefore it is an ouerwicked cruelnie to constraine poore men to

Pſal. 127.2.

Deut. 8.17.

deliuer in pawne their tooles wherewith they ſhould ſerue their turne in their craft and occupation. So in effect our Lordes will is, that no man ſhould exerciſe any crueltie vnder color of lending: whereby to ſet his feete vppon poore folkes throates, but ỳ we ſhould rather aide and ſuccour them, knowing ỳ their borrowing is for neede & neceſſitie. Now if one bereaue a man of his lyfe vnder color of lending him a peece of mony, it were better that he ſhould leaue him in that neceſſitie in which he found him, than ſo to take from him thoſe meanes by the which he maintaineth his life. We ſee thẽ that God would not that loncs ſhoulde be lynes to ſnare poore men withall which are in neceſſitie; to which purpoſe men haue at all times vſed them, and nowadayes doe more than euer heretofore. For men haue no other deuiſes thã how to deceiue, to circumuent, to beguile, and to ſuck the bloud of poore men. They draw them dry not onely of their ſubſtance but of their bloud too, when they eſpy them to be in need and penurie. This (ſay I) is the faſhion of men nowadayes. But for all that, let vs conſider what the will of God is in this behalfe, to wit, that we muſt not onely vſe no crueltie towardes our neighbors vnder color of any lending vnto them: but alſo ſeeke to relieue the preſent neede of all thoſe which are in neceſſitie, to the intent that they may alwayes goe foreward and maintaine themſelues in their eſtate.

Now let vs kneele downe in the preſence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea in ſuch wiſe as we may return vnto him, ſeeking nothing els but to abide alwayes vnder his obedience, and to cleaue vnto his word without ſwaruing from it in any wiſe: and that wee may ſo walke euery man in his vocation, as wee may teſtify thereby that wee haue God for our maiſter and father, and that we are of his familie, liuing according to the order which he hath commaunded vs: and that wee may liue in ſuch wiſe one with another, as may be to the maintayning of loue and honeſtie among vs, and that ſuch vprightneſſe may raigne in vs, as we haue not an eye vnto that which men permit vs, but looke euer at this marke, how we may ſerue one anothers turne in vpright brotherhoode, to the end we may bee confirmed alwayes more and more that God is our father, and that we may call vpon him, as ſuch a one. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs, but alſo to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the j. of Februarie, 1556.

The Cxxxviii. Sermon, which is the third vpon the foure & twentith Chapter.

7 If a man be found which hath ſtolen any of his brethren of the children of Iſrael, and he hath miſuſed him or ſold him: this thiefe ſhall die: and thou ſhalt put euill away from among you.

8 Take heede of the plague of leproſie, that thou marke it diligently, and doe according vnto all that which the Prieſtes the Leuites ſhall teach you, take heed yee doe as I haue commaunded them.

9 Remember what the Lord thy God did vnto Marie by the way, after that ye were come out of Egypt.

THe firſt thing that God declareth in this place is, that if any ſtole away a man of Iſrael and ſolde him, the offence which he committed in this behalfe, was to be puniſhed by death. And heereby hee giueth vs to vnderſtand how dearelie hee loued that people which hee had choſen vnto himſelfe. For we knowe how God appointeth puniſhmentes accordinglie as he eſteemeth of the greatnes of the ſinne which is committed. So then whereas hee puniſheth that man by death which had ſtolen away his brother, thereby we ſee that the life of the children of Iſrael was pretious vnto him. And no maruaile. For if a father haue loſt one of his children, eſpecially if he be ſtolen from him, and he knoweth not what is become of him, wee know he would haue bin better contented to haue loſt his goods, than his childe. Now ſeeing that God had adopted the ſtock of Abraham, he accounted thoſe which deſcended from it, to be of his owne houſhold, and named himſelf their father, and in very deed circumciſion was a marke to ſeparate ỳ people frõ other nations. Therefore whoſoeuer ſold any one of the ſtocke of Abraham, he did wrong and miurie not onely vnto the perſon it ſelfe, but alſo vnto God. Againe a man being ſolde vnto another people, was in daunger of being conſtrained by force to commit idolatrie. In deed he were better ſuffer death, than doe ſo: but lyke as many are fraile & weake in this caſe, ſo might they alſo bee ſeduced, and turned aſide frõ ỳ law, & from ỳ ſeruice of God: & therefore by this means enſued not only ỳ deſtructiõ of a mans body, but alſo of his ſoule. We ſee thẽ now that this law was grounded on great reaſon. And moreouer we know likewiſe, ỳ God had ſo redeemed this people, that they were called a royall prieſthood. And therefore if this ho-

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nour shoulde be abolished, it were all one as if a man shold rent in pieces the priuiledge which a prince had giuen: and like as God is greater than mortall men, so such an outrage committed against his maiestie, were more heinous and intollerable. But we must nowe returne vnto our selues. For albeit there bee not nowadayes any certain people which God hath chosen, & shouled our from the rest of the worlde; yet are wee come by succession into the roome and place of the Iewes. For God hath receiued vs into his Church, and we are at this day in the same degree of honour which the children of Abraham were in. Seeing it is so, he which stealeth away a man nowadayes, to cut him off from the Church of God, is in as great fault as he who in old time sold any one of the Israelits. And although earthly iustice hath established no lawe against it, yet doth it not cease to be a grieuous sinne stil in the sight of God. Let vs therefore acknowledge the honor which God vouchsafeth vs, when he maketh vs of the number of his houshold, & taketh & alloweth vs for his childrē. Now forasmuch as this is an inestimable benefit, we must endeuour to the vtmost of our power to preserue and keep it: and ỹ not euery one for himselfe only; but for his neighbors also. Therfore when we see ỹ God hath assembled & gathered together any company of people to himselfe, let vs seeke to keepe them so together, as none of thē may go astray. And if we be a cause and occasion that ỹ congregation of God bee diminished, and ỹ hee which was sometime of it, be estraunged from it by our meanes; we see what punishment ỹ lawe hath ordained. As touching ỹ outward policie and ciuil order, it remaineth not, yet neuertheles God hath declared ỹ such lewdnes shall not abide vnpunished. For he wil at ỹ least haue as great regard vnto his house, as euery of vs wolde haue vnto our own houses. And therfore let vs learne by all meanes possible to keepe thē stil which are of Gods flock, and to stay men as much as we cā from departing from ỹ same. Yea and we knowe how we be commanded not only to nourish thē which are already begotten the children of god, but also to do our indeuor to win thē which are strangers: what wickednes then were it to turne thē out, which are alredy receiued vnto ỹ church of God? I meane those which in very deede doe shew & declare thēselues to be ỹ children of god. For we know ỹ there is a regard to be had, ỹ al tag & rag be not receiued into ỹ church. For there are many which seeke after Christ to haue their bodily ease, & there are many deceiuers: and if there be no discretion in receiuing thē in, it were altogether a mocking of god; as we haue too many examples in this case. Therfore we haue need of wisdom in this behalf. Neuertheles if we shoe a cruelty, or wickednes, doe diminish the church of god, we must render an accoūt therof, and ỹ not as for som smal fault, but for so weighty a crime as we see God accounteth it, and as the same which he ordained vnder the law of Moses declareth it to be.

Yet notwithstanding wee finde many who for their owne profites sake doe in this sort disseuer their neighbors & cut thē off from ỹ Church of God. We see what marchāndise of soules is made by them which seeke (as it seemeth) nothing els but to rent ỹ worldand many are not contented to steale their neighbours away, but they steale themselues too. For al they who for their tēporal & transitory profite, do turne aside and withdrawe themselues from ỹ seruice of God, commit they not I beseech you this theft wherof I now speak? There is one which belongeth vnto ỹ body of ỹ church, God hath vouchsafed him ỹ grace to cal him vnto ỹ knowledge of his truth, & what doth he? Because ỹ nowadayes he which is knowen to be a faithful mā is persecuted in ỹ world, it were better to shrowd himself in a corner, thā to make a shew & countenāce of any thing: he reasoneth thus with himself: what? Shal I take in hand so hard a thing? And is there any other likelihood but ỹ in ỹ end I shalbe put beside my laying & my life? O this were too heauy a burdē for me to beare. Now he beareth himself in hand ỹ he is so excused. And thus mē steale thēselues away, both frō god & from his church. They make marchāndise & sale of their own soules, as it were for a messe of porage, as it is said of Esau that is to say, for earthly foode they sel themselues & become the bondslaues of satan. And so we see ỹ this lawe is nowadays very ill kept: and therefore we ought so much ỹ more to note the intent & meaning of God, to the end ỹ euery man after that god hath vouchsafed him ỹ grace to gather him into the number of his people, may keep himself among them: and ỹ better to maintaine ỹ libertie which wee haue, let vs consider (as S. Paul saith) howe dearely it hath cost the son of God: let vs not enter againe into the bondage of satan and of sin, seeing we are freed thence by the bloude of the only sonne of God: but let vs walke according vnto that priuiledge which god hath giuen vnto vs, and hold fast the possession therof as long as we liue. And when euerie of vs shall haue had such a regarde of himselfe, let vs doe the like towardes all our brethren, that they whom God hath ioyned vnto vs depart not out of his house: but let vs so imploy our paines as euery of vs may keepe his estate, that none bee diminished, that none wander nor go astray. And farther let vs be afraid to make marchandise of those soules which haue beene redeemed by our Lord Iesus Christ with so deare a price, and let vs not seeke after our owne commoditie in that behalfe, as we see howe reckelesly many giue themselues ouer in this point, and so they may finde the fatter fare, they care not one whit whether they remaine in the Church of God or no. Euen in this citie without seeking any farther, we haue examples hereof, namely ỹ men haue bin sold for redy monyinsomuch ỹ for ỹ pleasure of a drunkard or I know not of whō, one hath bin sold as an open marchāndise, to ỹ same wickednes: such leaudnes hath bin seene heere at Geneua. But let vs not take this example for a two or three: but let vs know ỹ God meant in this place to giue a general rule and instruction, that wee ought asmuch as lieth in vs to seeke and procure, ỹ they which are of the body of the Church may remaine therein

Gen.25.32.

Rom.6.15. 1.Cor.7.23.

euen vnto ỹ end. Ye see in effect what we haue to beare in mind. And if the liberty of ỹ bodies was held so deare of God in ỹ time of ỹ lawe, let vs at this day make far greater account of ỹ freedome which our soules haue obtained, by the bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ.

Let vs come now vnto ỹ second law which is mẽtioned in this place. It is said: *Thus men shal diligẽtly iudge of the leprosie, and take heede thereof, obseruing all the things which were commanded in the lawe: & that the priests of the stock of Leuie shalbe Iudges, & that the people shall stand to the iudgement which they shal giue*: which they shall giue I say, not as they lust themselues, but as God had made a declaratiõ thereof, as we may see in Leuiticus from ỹ thirteenth chapter to ỹ fifteenth, where it is fully treted of. Moses in this place speaketh of it as by ỹ way, and saith that they shal keepe al ỹ order. And for more ample confirmatiõ he addeth: *Remember what GOD did vnto Marie by the way when ye came out of Egypt*. For because Marie & Aaron murmured against their brother Moses for his wiues sake who was an Aethiopian; they bare themselues in hand that they ought to bee aduanced in as high a degree as hee: insomuch that Mary became so arrogant & presumptuous: that shee would needs be a Prophetise in equall degree with Moses. But God punisheth her for such presumption: Aaron is borne withal although he had in like sort deserued to be chastised. Mary therfore was striken with the leprosie, and was shut vp by ỹ space of seuen dayes. And there she had bin like a rotten carrion all her life long but that Moses prayed for her, & her sin was pardoned. Neuertheless he addeth there: If her father had spit in her face, she ought to haue hidde her self for hauing offended him: & therefore she must depart (saith he) from among ỹ people, that men may know the offence which she hath committed, and at ỹ end of seuen days let her returne into ỹ campe. Now God declareth by this example, that such as were striken with this disease, were shut vp.

Numb. 12.

Now let vs first of al note, ỹ the leprosie whereof Moses speaketh in this place, and which ỹ law treateth of, is not ỹ which we cal ỹ leprosy nowa days: but a far diuerse thing from it. For this leprosie was not only in ỹ bodies of men & womẽ, but also in houses. And although we find ỹ other coũtries & nations were touched sometimes w^th this disease, as we see how Naaman ỹ Syrian was, yet was it neuertheles as a particular disease belonging only to ỹ Iewes: and ỹ was a notable vengeance of God vpon them, to declare his anger & wrath by sending foorth this leprosie as a visible signe & tokẽ therof. Ye see then what we haue to beare in mind in ỹ first place. And ỹ verily which among ỹ Papists men call ỹ disease of S. Mayn or ỹ scurfe, was a kind of this leprosie. There were in deed many sorts of this disease, as a man may see by ỹ place which I haue alledged. And I speak no more of them in this place, than is expedient for the vnderstanding of the text, and not to make therof any great lesson. But yet neuertheles it is needefull for vs to obserue ỹ which I haue touched as it shalbe anon more fully declared. Now then we see what the leprosie was: to wit, a certaine skurfe or sometimes a spot in the body which had no outward appearance of skurfe vpon it: but was a certaine hid and inward disease, as it were a certaine scab within the flesh, wherin appeared some whitenes. Seeing that ỹ leprosie was after ỹ sort, we see nowe that God had a regard of the instructing of his people, when hee would haue them which were touched with this disease, set apart from the rest. And why? Euen to ỹ end ỹ men should be in greater feare of ỹ punishment, which was knowen to procede from the hand of God. If this chastisement had slipt away without any account made thereof, it could not haue profited so much. God therefore to ỹ intent hee might make this chastisement more notorious, straitly commaunded ỹ hee which was striken with the leprosie, should be shut vp, and ỹ he should serue for a looking glasse for others to look in, ỹ they might bee afraide at ỹ sight of it & say, Alas, see ye this poore wretch which is striken w^th the leprosie? And what signe is it? It is god ỹ hath wrought it, his hãd hath done it; Alas, euery one of vs hath deserued asmuch, and therefore let vs not tempt ỹ patience of our God: if hee spare vs, let vs for our part cease to prouoke him to anger. Ye see then ỹ admonition & warning which was giuen vnto all mẽ whẽ they saw a man thus shut vp. And this order was obserued euen as farre as vnto ỹ king himself, as we haue an example therof in Ozias, who being not content with ỹ kingdome, would be a priest & vsurpe ỹ spirituall regiment of the Church, and therfore God strake him with ỹ leprosie, & deposed him from his roial dignity, and he was according vnto ỹ law shut vp all ỹ time of his life. There was yet a seconde reason of this shutting vp. For this disease might be contagious. And therfore Gods will was that ỹ infection therof should be remoued from ỹ people, to ỹ intent ỹ al should not be infected with it. But ỹ principall cause was, to the end ỹ people might be put in mind, ỹ they ought to be remoued from vncleanesse, and from all maner of defilements. And ỹ is the cause also why ỹ iudging of the leprosie was giuen vnto ỹ priests, who were of ỹ stocke of Leuy. God appointed not the phisitions nor surgeans iudges, but he would haue the priests take a notice of ỹ leprosie. And if any were spotted therew^th, they had authority to reiect them: & if any were healed thereof, he was likewise receiued by thẽ. For albeit ỹ this disease was hardly & seldom cured, yet was it not incurable. Therfore if so be ỹ any were healed, the priests were Iudges of it, & when they which were healed presented themselues, & had done certain solemnities which were required in ỹ behalfe, they came and offered their present in the temple, acknowledging what a singular benefite God had bestowed on them. For when a man was healed of that disease, it was very behouefull ỹ he shoulde make a solemne acknowledgment of so great a benefite, and say: Lorde thou hast raised mee as it were from the deade: for I was a wretched and miserable carrion; thou hadest thrust mee out of all companie, and nowe behold Lord thou hast made me whole and sound, thou hast restored mee vnto my former estate: therefore I acknowledge Lorde, that I haue

2. King. 5. 10

2. Chron. 26

haue receiued a kinde of resurrection, considering what weakenes & frailtie was in me. It was (I say) behouefull that such a solemne acknowledgement should be made. But (as I haue tolde you) the priestes were Iudges of this disease. And why? Because it appertained vnto the ceremonies of the lawe.

Now here we haue to gather a good instruction, that is, that first although this order of excluding those from our companie which are striken with any euil disease be not obserued nowadays, yet notwithstanding wee must not cease to haue an eye vnto the hand of God, that we may fare ỹ better by al ỹ chastisements which he layeth vpon men; neither must any of vs waite till he feele the blowes himself, but he must make his profite by ỹ corrections which our Lord sheweth vs afar off. And therfore when we see any of our neighbors afflicted, let vs take a view of our selues, and of our own faults, and let vs iudge our selues before ỹ God iudge vs. And thereupon being sorie for our sins, let vs hasten to draw our selues out of them, and not stay vntill God visite vs in the like maner. This is the thing which wee haue to note as touching ỹ first point. And for asmuch as we see that God ment to waken ỹ Iewes to ỹ intent they should the better know how to benefit themselues by this chastisement of ỹ leprosie, let vs nowadayes in all diseases, not onely in this or that sicknes, but in all afflictions which God sendeth vs, know ỹ it is all one as if he gaue vs a warning not to sleepe in our sins, and not to abuse his patience. Lo what we haue to beare in mind.

Now as touching ỹ ceremony it hath bin very sindly & foolishly abused in ỹ Popedome, & the abuse therof raigneth in ỹ synagogue yet stil to this day. First, for that hearing ỹ name of leprosie, they supposed it was ỹ scurfe, and so haue taken the one for the other. And thereupon what haue they done? Forsooth their officers must iudge of this disease, whether any be touched w it or no. And by what knowledge? They sende to the barbers and to the phisitians, and when they haue iudged therof, then they themselues afterward giue their verdit. And by what right? Because god ordained ỹ priests to be Iudges of ỹ leprosie. That is true. But ỹ priests, whom God ordained were of ỹ stocke of Leuie. Now since ỹ comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ, this Priesthoode hath beene transferred vnto him: as the Apostle saith in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. I know the Papists are so shameles ỹ they stick not to mock God openly, in saying that it came from Leuie vnto the Pope. But the Apostle expresly declareth, ỹ it belongeth vnto him, who by a solemne oth was appointed according vnto the order of Melchisedech. And because our lord Iesus Christ being now risen from the deade dieth no more; the priesthood likewise must remaine vnto him in his own person, & he hath no successour. The Papists therfore rob Christ of his dignity, when they snatch in such wise vnto themselues, that which is belonging vnto him. And moreouer let vs note (as I haue already touched) ỹ they play the beasts ouergrossly in this point: for god spake of the leprosie which was a disease which he sent vpon the people of Israel, and they transfer it to the scurfe, a thing far different from it. But for al this, they haue not left to reare vp an other tyranny: for they say ỹ this is a ceremonial lawe: I grant it. Therfore it importeth a figure. Al this is true. We must come then now vnto the trueth & substance which is correspondent therunto. They say that sinne is the leprosie. Well let all this be graunted vnto them. It must be purged therfore (say they) & the priests must be Iudges of it. Yea but let them enter into the place of Iesus Christ, and then shall they be taken for Iudges: but vntill that Iesus Christ be deposed from his priestly dignity, which God his father gaue him, it appertaineth not vnto any liuing creature in the whole worlde. Wee must therefore conclude, that the Papists are trecherous traitours in that they beare vs in hande that they are succeeded in the roome of Iesus Christ, to iudge the spirituall leprosie. And hereupon they haue ordained the law of Christ. That is the very ground of their confession or shrift. For there is not one worde for it in the holy scripture: but they vse this futile cauilling: Sinne is the leprosie, & the priestes must bee Iudges of it, but we are priests, therefore the iudging is ours. But wee haue alreadie shewed that by vsurping the priesthood, they are theeues and treacherous traitours, and that they lift themselues vp against the sonne of God. Take that for one note. But let vs proceede farther. A man cannot iudge (say they) without bee knowe the cause; and the cause cannot bee knowen, without there bee a confession of the sinne; and therefore it followeth that euery one is bound to confesse his sinnes once a yeare. For al are stained with this spiritual leprosie, because al are sinners. As touching that which they say, that no mã can iudge except he know the cause, it is true: but he must not iudge by coniectures & vpon vncertainty, as they doe. For I pray you, iudge they vpon knowledge, when they cannot skill to discerne whether they which confesse themselues in their eares dissemble, with them or speak the truth? Behold, a man commeth to confession, and who knoweth what his minde or will is? Who knoweth any of these thinges, whether he mocke the priest or no; whether he speaketh any thing by constraint, whether he keepe any thing close for shame that he hath of it? What knowe they of all these thinges? And therefore these Popish Priestes cannot iudge vpon knowledge of the cause. Againe it is well knowen how great clerks they be: insomuch that when a thing is told them; they can hardly discerne either the thing it selfe or the end or qualitie thereof. And though they coulde, yet were not that ynough: Men know what maner of Iudges & howe competent they be. And in very deede they say well, that in confession there must be some degree of knowledge: but a little after they say, that it skilleth not greatly whether there be any or no; for autority abideth still, albeit that knowledge bee wanting: they gainsay themselues manifestly, for first they say that there must bee a degree of knowledge, and afterwardes they say that it is

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not so necessarie, but that they may forbeare it. And a mans eye may bee witnesse, howe they discharge themselues heerein. It followeth then that they cannot haue knowledge of the cause, at leastwise such lawful knowledge, as may suffice them to giue their verdict and iudgement thereuppon. But to speake in a word, these abuses of theirs are ouer vaine and childish, when they seek after such sottish reasons as to say: We are Iudges: for wee are the successours of the priests of the law. But this succession (as I haue tolde you) appertaineth to none but vnto our Lord Iesus Christ. And in verie deed the priesthood of Leuie was ordayned to continue vntill his appearance in this world. And for that cause Abraham also who was the father of the church, payed tythes to him in the person of Melchisedech. For when he offered the tenthes to Melchisedech, hee offered them as it were vnto his superiour, But Leuy was yet in the loynes of Abraham (as the Apostle saieth): whereby we see that the priesthood of Leuie was inferiour vnto the priesthood of Iesus Christ, or rather, was nothing in comparison of it, & that the priesthood of Melchisedech must returne againe in truth.

Gen. 14. 20.

But now hauing declared this so grosse abuse which raigneth in the Popedome, let vs returne vnto the right and pure instruction which God ment to giue vnto vs in this lawe. Wee haue already briefly declared how hee meant to warne the faithfull, that they ought to purge away all manner of defilements from among them. Wee haue not at this day the outward ceremony: but the substance and trueth thereof remaineth in his full force. Let vs therefore looke diligently vnto our selues, and remoue from vs all vncleanesse, to the intent we be not stained with it. For thereunto had God respect in this Lawe. And to this ende serueth excommunication nowadays: for God wil haue some discipline in his Church. And this is not ordained by mé: but ỹ holy Ghost hath deliuered a rule for it. If wee haue this order, it is grounded on God, we haue the truth of the ceremoniall Lawe. And wee haue no neede to seek farther after the pelting trash of the Papistes, whereby they make themselues a laughingstocke to the worlde: but farther besides this order of excommunication, wee are warned in generall not to intermedle our selues with any filthie defilements: for we shall soone be stained by them. We see what frailtie is in vs, so that although euery of vs keepe good watch & warde, yet can we not liue in the worlde among so many defilementes and corruptions; but wee shall draw some spotting from them: and the iniquities which raigne, are as deadly poysons to infect vs, except we withdraw our selues far from such filthines, that wee be not stayned by them. And that is the cause why it is purposely repeated in this place, Take heede, looke narrowly vnto it, obserue it diligently. It seemeth that many words are bestowed vpon a thing of no great importance. But God tendeth vnto this ende which wee haue saide, that men should not throw their little heede taking, be as it were limed with the defilements of this worlde. And by this outward order, he ment to inure thé to a more diligent watching euery one ouer himselfe. Let vs therefore giue diligent heede heereunto, and when we perceiue that we are in daunger of being depraued and corrupted by any mans company, let vs flie farre from it: for albeit I goe not and welter in wickednesse with him; yet shall I haue ynough and too much too in my selfe. And what a thing were it for me to tempt God? I see well that I cannot be but the worse by this or by that mans company, and yet for all that, I will not shun them; but I will goe welter and wallow in the mire with them: and what a notable wickednesse were this? Am not I worthie to be infected with their filthines and vncleannesse? Yes verily. And therefore let vs in generall know, that all wicked examples, and all offences, are to be remoued and raked out of ỹ Church of God, & that ỹ discipline which God hath ordained, & which we see that the Apostles vsed, must be practised, that is, excommunication must raigne & beare rule. And moreouer let euery of vs in his owne behalfe, take heede, wee haunt no wicked company, but (as S. Paul warneth vs) obserue and note them which are stained with any euil blot, and withdraw our selues from them: that it may not onely put them to greater shame, but also, ỹ the infection breake not out vpón al, & that the mischiefe being of it selfe contagious, go not so far, as to infect them who before were pure and cleare, & so fall on the whole flocke of God. And this is it which we haue to beare in mind in this place.

1. Cor. 5.

2. Thes. 3.

And now Moses for a more ample confirmation (as wee haue already touched) alleageth in this place ỹ example of his sister. And hereby we are done to vnderstand, that he spareth not his own flocke & kindred. For it was to his owne infamy & reproch, that his sister had bin thus chastised of God. But what? Both in this & in al other things, we see, that he wold not couer ỹ shame & filthines of his own lynage. For why? Hee was a true and faithful seruant of god. And therfore he always condemneth wickednes with great liberty, although some shame redoûded therby both to himself, & also to his parentage. Therefore in this place he setteth forth his owne sister for an example. And hereby wee are warned, not to bee won to beare with wickednes in fauour either of bloud, or of kindred; as wee are accustomable wont to do. For we had rather haue the wickednes encrease, than to grieue any of our kinsmen or friends. And therof it commeth ỹ all right is peruerted, and ỹ the truth is turned into a lie, because ỹ wickednes is borne withall. But wee haue in this place an example to ỹ contrary, that is, ỹ Moses to serue God ỹ more faithfully, hath no respect of persons, he hath no eye to any worldly cõsiderations: insomuch that euen when his own sister might serue for ỹ instruction of ỹ people, he spareth her not. Let this be noted for one point.

Now by ỹ way we may behold in ỹ example of Aaron & of Marie, how God ment therby ỹ better to confirme ỹ calling of Moses. For Aaron enuieth him for it. That which before fell out in ỹ case of Core, Dathan, and Abiram, and ỹ rest of

Numb. 16.

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the tribes, when euery man sought to obtaine ỹ priesthood; was no such straunge or notorious a thing as is this, when his owne borne brother riseth against him on the one side, and his sister on the other, and murmure against him: whereby we may see that there was no compact made for the aduancing of the dignity of his owne house: and therfore it serued the better to authorise the calling of Moses. And in very deed God shewed that it was he who conducted and defended him. That is to be noted for one point.

Againe, what a mercifull dealing was it, that ỹ children of Aaron were suffered to succeede still in the priesthood? For although Moses was much more great and excellent than Aaron was (as it is declared in the 12. Chapt. of ỹ booke of numbers): yet his children were of the common order of ỹ Leuites which serued ỹ high priest, and were kept far from that dignity. And what was ỹ reason hereof? If Moses had promoted his owne children, it would haue bin saide by and by, that he had brought this to passe through his craftie wiles, & that he had pretended ỹ name of God onely for to aduance ỹ dignitie and honor of his owne house: but in ỹ his own children are in this wise displaced, and ỹ children of Aaron are preferred: wee see it is Gods worke, and that it proceedeth from his gouernment, so as the mouth of wicked mẽ must needs be stopped, and that all must confesse ỹ the law and whatsoeuer it contai-neth, is not forged nor counterfaited by men, or fondly deuised: but that God is the author therof. As touching Moses it is said in that place of Numbers: If I speake vnto my seruants the Prophets, I will speake vnto them by dreames or by visions: because that Aaron & Mary said: What? dwelleth not ỹ spirit of god in vs aswel as in Moses? And must he alonely beare rule? And are we nobodies? Well (saith God) if you were ỹ greatest Prophets that euer were, yet keep I one measure towards my Prophets. I speake vnto them by dreames & by visions. But I speake vnto Moses as vnto my familiar friend; I speake vnto him as a man would speak vnto his fellow & companion. And so Moses was aduaunced to an higher degree, and God ment to magnifie his grace & fauour in ỹ man. Therefore we see how he disgraced both Mary and Aarõ, because they murmured in that sorte: but yet for all that, yee see that ỹ children of Aaron succeeded in the priesthood, although their father was vnworthy of ỹ honor, and deserued rather to be degraded, than to enioy it. What befell to Core, Dathan & Abiram? The earth swallowed them vp al aliue. And why? Because of their murmuring. And had not Aarõ committed ỹ like fault? And yet notwithstãding God pardoneth him ỹ sinne. And when we heare that the children of Elie were deposed from the priesthood, and ỹ the dignitie therof was bestowed vpõ Samuel, because they behaued thẽselues so euilly in their office: ỹ is also a like example. And why then doth not God ỹ like vnto ỹ stocke of Aaron? Let vs (as I tolde you) acknowledge in this case a meruailous mercy of God. Yea, and agayne, when it seemeth good vnto him, he punisheth faults rigorously. If he will pardon them: it is at his choice. Therefore we must not binde God to any Law, to haue him to punish sins according vnto our lusting: he will doe it when hee shall find it good. And moreouer if it please him to vse mercy, such sins as are committed shalbe wiped out; at leastwise they shal not be so hardly nor so grieuously punished. That is to bee noted for one point. But let vs nowe returne to apply ỹ example of ỹ present matter which is treated, to ỹ end we may know ỹ intent & meaning of god. Remember (saith he) what was done vnto Mary by ỹ way when ye came out of Egypt, as if he had said, my minde is that who so is striken with the leprosie, shalbe separated and remoued from the people, to the intent hee may serue for a looking glasse for others, that they which see him may be put in mind to say: see here a plague which God hath sent, beholde a testimony ỹ God is Iudge. Seeing this is his appointment, let vs fare ỹ better by such examples. So we see ỹ which I declared more plainly afore, to wit, that God meant ỹ this withdrawing and reiecting of such as were leprous, shold serue for a common instruction & lesson vnto ỹ rest of ỹ people, to occasion them to walke in their dueties in all feare & heedfulnes. And here first of al Marie was taught to humble her selfe before God. For if she would not knowe her fault & be ashamed of it, & confes it, she deserued to be cleane cut off without any remission. And God had begun to work so violent a correction, that she seemed but a carrion & rottennes, and was changed in a moment in such sorte, that a man would think she could not but fall in pieces through such an infectious filth & rottennes. And therefore it stood her in hand to knowe her own case. And hereby we are warned, ỹ when any of vs are visited by ỹ hand of God, it is high time to humble our selues, and to know ỹ it is all one, as if God did spit in our face. When a father spitteth in his childs face, it is a signe (as it is saide there) ỹ he detesteth him. Now if so be we be afflicted by ỹ hand of God, we haue great occasion to looke vnto our selues, & to be beaten down & to feele our own filthines, & not to feele it onely in hart: but also frankly to confes it before men, to ỹ end ỹ God may be glorified. That is one thing which we haue to do according to ỹ exhortation which we haue in this place. And secondly let vs be willing to serue other for an example. If when we haue offended God, he chastise vs; let vs be an instruction vnto others, and let vs beare it patiently, and not be grieued with it, if so be that al may turne vnto the glorie of God and the welfare of our neighbors. Let vs be contented with it, as good reason is we shold be. For we may not be more priuiledged than the sister of Moses, & if we be rubbed on the gall (as we say) wee may not grine at it, seeing that Moses spared not his own sister. For when God taketh on him the office of a Iudge, and giueth men commission to denounce his wrath or other like thinges by his worde, it is good reason that they shoulde discharge their duties in that behalfe. As for them which think thus; We our selues shalbe hindered thereby, let them know ỹ it shal profite them nothing to seeke to auoid it in that wise: for if they

breake

breake the ordinance of God, they shal be confounded. Therfore sith we see so notable an example in the person of Marie, let vs knowe that God ment to warne vs, that we ought not to take it in euill part to be chastised at his hand: but rather to know our faults and to be sorie for them, and thereupon to endeuor that the punishment which we haue suffered, may serue all others for an example.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maiesty of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to feele them better than we haue done, & that we may endeuor w all our might, not only to keepe our selues in that holy vnion which he hath made with vs, but also to win them which are yet estranged, and to confirme those which are already called with vs into his Church: and that therwithal we may not suffer the name of our God to be vnhallowed, but endeuour to remoue our selues from all filthes and defilementes, that seeing it hath pleased him to sanctifie vs for himselfe, wee may remaine temples of his holy spirite, and sacred vessels to be applied vnto any vse wherunto he hath appointed vs, that is, that his righteousnes may shine in vs, so as wee may neuer desire any other thing than to frame our selues in all points vnto the obeying of his holy lawe. That it will please him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs but also vnto all people and Nations of it.

On Wednesday the v. of Februarie, 1556.

The Cxxxix. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the foure & twentith Chapter.

10 When thou lendest any thing vnto thy neighbour, thou shalt not enter into his house to take his pledge.

11 But thou shalt abide without, and the man which borroweth of thee, shall bring the pledge out of the doores vnto thee.

12 And if the man be poore, thou shalt not sleepe with his pledge:

12 But shalt restore him the pledge when the sunne goeth downe, that he may sleepe in his raiment and blesse thee, and it shalbe righteousnesse vnto thee before the Lord thy God.

WE must call to minde in this place, the sentence of the Prophet which our Lorde Iesus Christ also alleageth: Mercie is more worth than sacrifices. For if we think to pay God by offering him this or that which we haue spoyled from our neighbours, he will detest and abhorre both vs and our offerings also. For why? God will not chaunge his nature according vnto our lust: and there is nothing more properly belonging vnto him than kindnesse and goodnesse. For hee indeede is the very fountaine and roote of it. And therefore seeing it is so, must he not either transfigure himselfe, or detest vs, when hee shall see vs as cruell as wilde beastes, so as euery of vs endeuoureth nought else but to deuour the substance and goods of his brother? Yes verelie. For he cannot like of cruelty as long as he abideth like vnto himselfe. Let vs therefore diligently note, that except wee be pitifull, except wee haue compassion on them which stande in neede of our aide to succour them, except we vse gentlenes and humanity towards our brethren, we can haue no accesse vnto our God, but al the offerings we can present him withall, shal stinke in his sight, and he will refuse them. And that is the cause why the Prophet expresly saith: That mercie is better than all the sacrifices in the worlde. True it is indeede that God setteth more by his owne honour than hee doeth by the life of men: as reason good hee shoulde so. But here the case standeth, to know whether wee serue God truely or hypocritically. For if I loue God, doubtlesse I will declare this loue of mine towards them which beare his ymage: and wee must haue recourse vnto that which saieth Iohn saieth: That if when we dwel with men and liue together with them, wee beare them no loue, is it not plaine mockerie to protest that wee loue GOD, whome wee see not? Therfore all such as vaunt themselues, that they loue God, and yet are so ful of cruelnie that they wil spoile poore folkes of whatsoeuer they can possiblie catch from them, without all pitie or compassion; are no better than hypocrites & shamelesse lyers. And so we see the reason of this sentence, and why God, albeit hee prefeth his honour highly, hath saide notwithstanding that he will not esteeme so much of all the sacrifices which men make vnto him: as he will do of the mercie which men shewe one vnto an other. For indeede our almesdeedes are those sweete smelling sacrifices, which God accepteth: as the Apostle saieth in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. And heereuppon is that lawe of God which wee haue nowe hearde, grounded; where it is saide: *That if wee lende monie vnto a poore man, we must not goe and ransacke his house to finde out a pledge for our owne liking, but that he must bring that which hee hath.* And then we may keepe the pledge without doing of him any wrong. And why so? For God permitteth vs so to doe: If not, hee will haue them to carie backe againe the gage which

Ose. 6. 7. Matt. 9. 13.

Iohn 4. 20.

Hebr. 13. 16.

which the poore man brought, as for example: if it be his bed whereon hee sleepeth, or his coverlet, or his coate, or his gowne, so that hee remaineth naked & vnclothed, God wil not haue vs to keepe such a pledge. For when wee haue confessed that wee ought in deede to be pitifull, and that wee are farre from beeing of the number of the children of God if we vse no brotherly loue one towards another: when we haue said all this, yet wee know not what the thing meaneth, when we should come vnto the practise of it. For if any stande in neede of our helpe, wee haue forgotten this generall doctrine: Wee are alwayes good diuines to speake in the ayre. If a man set vs down a doctrine which presseth vs not, euery man is reddie to yeeld his consent thereunto, but the practise thereof sheweth that we bee verie loath to accorde vnto it. And although wee confesse that God hath wel spoken, yet wee will not put that in practise which is told vs, if it preiudice our gayne and commoditie; and therefore GOD is faine to specifie things vnto vs more particularly. When hee hath once declared that there is nothing more acceptable vnto him, than the pitie which wee haue on our neighbours to succour and relieue them, he must poinct foorth some speciall kindes thereof with his finger: and when he hath taught vs to bee mercifull, hee must shew vs how and in what maner, & so condemne our cruelties, which we (if it were possible) would excuse. As for example, if this so special a declaration should not be made, the sentence of the Prophet would be receiued without any gainsaying, That mercie is better than sacrifices: but none for all that will come to this poinct, & to this reason, that a man must not take such a pledge of a poore man, as he shall acroune necessarie for his owne vse. For men will say: Is this any cruelty? He commeth to borrow of mee, and I may deny him: if I lende him but if I doe him such a pleasure as to lend him my money: I wil haue some assurance for it. And so a mã wil not acknowledge it to be cruelty to take any mans coat or couering to gage. It will be alwayes sayde, Why? I may lawfully doe it. For I lende him my money, and it may bee painfull vnto him: I leaue him the whole profite of it, I desire but to saue my selfe harmlesse, and not to loose the principal. I deceiue him not of a farthing: I take no vsurie for my money, nor any thing at all: and why then should I be condemned? Thus men would excuse themselues. But what? God will bee the Iudge of our dealings. Yee see then the cause (as I haue told you) why God presseth vs to a speciall poinct: because the generall doctrine is ouer coldly taken of vs, and would not leade vs so farre as were requisite. Let vs therefore beare in minde that which is here declared. First it is sayde: *That a man shall not goe and ransacke his neighbours house to take a pledge from thence, when hee would lende him a peece of money.* Nowe the cause why this is spoken, is not onely (as some haue thought) for that it were a putting of poore men to shame, to goe and see howe naked their whole house is: God had no regarde of any such thing: but hee meant rather to bridle the couetous desires of the riche. For wee knowe howe couetous our eyes are to drawe thinges away, and euery man is verye sharpe sighted for his owne profite. If I enter into an house, I will haue an eye by and by on all the fayrest thinges: and when I haue requested to haue this and that corner shewed mee; if I see any thing which liketh mee, I beginne to say: This is good housholde stuffe: yea this will stande mee in steede. I will haue it (say I); and the poore man cannot tell what to answere: for hee is at my mercie. If hee denie it, O (say I) there is no dealing with you goe your wayes: it is no pitie to helpe you. And thus a poore man shall bee holde as it were vppon the racke. Yee see then the meaning of this lawe, when our Lorde forbad a man to enter into his neighbours house to ransacke it for a pledge. For why? He which entreth cannot iudge what the poore man, which desireth to bee succoured might best spare: but lucre (as I told you) blindeth vs; and when wee bee once forepossessed with such desire, wee iudge no longer what is rightfull, because euery of vs will conclude: O I must aske this. And why? Because it will bee good for mee. Wee see then now the reason of this first part.

But if a man bee at his owne free choyce to bring what pledge hee will, so as hee bee pressed: hee may then withdrawe himselfe aside & beware that hee bee not trodden vnder foote, nor pinched beyonde measure: hee may bethinke himselfe what is to bee done, hee may aduise himselfe by his owne counsayle, there is no man to control him, or to disturbe the stuffe of his house: and then a man may take the pledge to assure his money. Nowe because there may bee sometimes such vrgent necessitie, that a man will some time shift him selfe to his shirte to haue somewhat to eate: our Lorde prouideth farther in this case to remedie it, and therefore hee commaundeth the pledge to bee restored againe, when a man shall perceiue, that a poore man cannot misse it. For in such a case a man must bee touched with greater compassion, for two causes: the one is, because that when a man putteth himselfe beside his bedding and his clothing, it is easie to iudge and to gather, that hee is come to greate extremitie, and to the farthest degree of pouertie. That is one poynt to bee noted. The other is in considering of this poynt, what difference there is, whether a man dye for hunger or for colde. This is but to change his torment: this is not to succour him.

I lende a man money, and hee buyeth bread therewith to eate, and in the meane time, hee is frosen to death through mee, and doe I releeue him then? So then wee ought in such a case to bee mooued with compassion, or else there is no humanitie in vs. So then for this cause GOD will haue the pledge restored againe, when wee see that the thing wee take is necessarie for the preseruing of a mans life: as is his cote, his doublet, his bedde, his couering, or such like things.

I graunt that according vnto the rigour of ciuill iustice, this is not obserued: and God also hath not giuen it in this place for a ciuil order: but hee meant to prescribe a rule for euery man to followe of his owne free will. As many things are permitted vs before men, of which notwithstanding wee shal bee accountable before God, although wee escape the handes of earthly iudges. There is no man will let mee from vsing the vtmost rigour I can, towardes him which oweth mee any thing: and yet when I see hee is behinde hande with mee, and that there is no guile nor malice in him, if I for all that do cause him to bee cast into prison, if I rid him of al that he hath, if I leaue and forsake him, doubtles I do him wrong in the sight of God. Nowe ciuil iustice can set downe no other order, but that all must be done as I will haue it. Yea, but (as it hath beene declared heretofore) when we shal haue beene excused before men, it is not to be sayde therefore, that wee shall not bee culpable before God. For the lawe requireth a farre other perfection than earthly and common iustice doeth.

So then let vs note, that although it was lawfull for the Iewes as touching earthly iustice, to take any gage they listed; yet doeth God condemne it for intollerable crueltie. And if this were in the time of the lawe; how much greater reason is there for the practising of it nowadayes, when wee haue more occasion of exercising such humanitie and gentlenes one towards another? For we must returne vnto this principle & ground, that Gods will is that wee should resemble him, because hee hath adopted vs for his children, and shewed himselfe to bee our father. God hath in deede alwayes shewed himselfe such a one: but at this day in the person of our Lord Iesus Christ, he hath displayed and shewen foorth the bowels of his mercie, as the scripture speaketh: for it cannot sufficiently expresse the infinit bountie and goodnes, which God hath shewed vnto vs in our Lorde Iesus Christ. Sith it is so that God hath made vs to feele more than euer heretofore his inestimable loue, so much the more ought we to enforce our selues on our side, to followe him, & to conforme our selues vnto his example. Therefore if wee be so cruell as to let them dye for want & neede, which desire and seeke after our helpe: or if wee spoyle them of that which they cannot forbeare and liue; there is so much the lesse excuse for vs, and our sinne is double and farre more haynous nowadayes. And therefore let vs knowe that God spake not onely vnto the Iewes for the time of the lawe, but that this rule must abide in full force, vntill the ende of the worlde: and that as this sentence was alleaged by our Lorde Iesus Christ: That mercie is better than sacrifice: to shewe that it appertaineth vnto the Christian Church, so all the kindes of mercie which are dependant vppon it, are belonging vnto vs: and wee must exercise mercie, not according vnto our owne fancie, but as God sheweth vs, according to the declaration thereof which wee haue in this place. For what else is this lawe which Moses hath here set downe in writing, but an expoſition of that sentence which the Prophet hath more generally set downe? Yee see then in effect what we haue to beare in minde.

Luke. 1. 78.

And hereby wee are taught likewise not to ouer greeue such as for their needes doe come to seeke releefe at our handes. Euery man must haue an eye vnto his owne abilitie what hee may doe, and not trample his neighbour beeyonde measure vnder foote. The very thing wherein wee ought to holde our selues streight, is that euery of vs hauing an eye to his owne abilitie, must doe his indeuour to the vttermoſt without sparing of himselfe. For wee must exact of our selues that which our Lorde hath commaunded vs, and wee must straine our selues in that behalf to the vttermoſt of our power. Wee must succour those whome wee see in necessitie, and not tarrie vntill men constrayne vs thereunto. For (as I tolde you) God will peraduenture lay the brydle on our necke as touching ciuill order, howbeit that shalbee but to trye our charitie the better. If men restraine vs from beeing cruell, and from vsing such outragious libertie as otherwise we would vse: it is a signe that wee beare no reuerence vnto God, and that the seruice which we yeeld vnto him is not of good will, but of compulsion. But if men let vs alone, so as wee may doe the woorst wee can, in tormenting and vexing poore needie wretches, and yet wee are lead through a curteous and gentle affection, not onely not to vexe and harme them beyonde all measure, but to deale indifferently with them, and (in fewe wordes) not to deale otherwise with them than wee woulde haue others to deale with vs in the like case: our so dooing and our succouring of them, when no man drawes vs thereunto, is a signe that there is sounde charitie in vs, and y^t in louing God wee do also shew and prooue in deede that wee are his children, and that wee liue in good brotherhood, and mutuall agreement with our neighbours.

Nowe to the intent wee shoulde be the easier led heereunto, Moses alleageth in this place two reasons the better to persuade vs. First he sayeth: *That hee vnto whome wee shall restore and bring the pledge again, shall blesse vs.* And secondly hee addeth: *That it shalbee righteousnesse vnto vs before the Lorde our God.* Nowe these two reasons are not superfluous, considering what holdfastes we are, and how euery one wilfully prouide for himselfe. We think that the whole earth will fayle vs; and when wee lende, it is with an heauie heart: when the money is once scaped out of our handes, wee thinke our selues so much impayred, and wee fetch deepe sighes for it. God therefore seeing men so giuen vnto their owne lucre, and that they haue no freehearted liberalitie, or at least wise are not so much enclyned vnto it as were requisite, vseth first a perswasion and sayeth: *That the poore shall blesse vs*, that is to say, hee shall pray for vs.

Nowe I knowe, that the wealthie, and these greate deuowrers, and these seagulfes which seeke

seeke nought else but to swallowe vp all, will make none account of this blessing. Tushe (say they) he is but a poore beggarly knaue, and what care I whether he pray for mee or no. See I pray you what these despisers of God, & these heathenish folke say. But let vs note wel, that it is not without cause that God declareth in this place, that it is a singular benefit to haue a poore man pray for vs. For if a poore man crye (as it is sayde) hee shalbee heard. Hee needeth neither man of lawe, nor Proctour to handle his cause before God with any great Rhetorike. If a poore man bee vniustly borne downe by mee, and I haue wrought him any oppression or violence, or haue spoyled him of that which was his, or if I haue greeued and troubled him in any sorte, although hee vtter not a woorde, but onely sigheth to himselfe: yet may not I thinke that I shall escape the hande of GOD. There shall neede neither witnesses nor writings, nor great inquest to cast mee; for one alonely sigh of the poore man, shall kindle such a fire of Gods vengeance vppon mee, as shall neuer bee quenched. For the complayninges which the poore make against them which haue molested them, are heard of God; they pearce thorough the clowdes, and come into heauen.

Also on the contrarie side when a poore man hauing receiued releefe of any man, shall say: Blessed bee hee which tooke pitie on mee. This woorde is as if an Angell of heauen had made suite for him. Nowe seeing God sayeth it is so, let vs not thinke that it is in vayne, or by way of mockerie. And therefore let vs learne to esteeme more than wee are wont to doe, of the prayers which the poore make that are relieued and succoured by vs. For although we beare our selues in hand that they are nothing, yet hath God declared of what force they are, & commendeth them vnto vs in this place for a singular thing.

Nowe this ought to teache vs, not to despise the poore, nor to disdayne to heare them, or to giue them a good looke: for God sayeth that hee heareth them, and that they are such as haue readiest accesse vnto him. They are heard both in their complaintes and in their prayers and petitions. For God doeth more for them by an hundredth part than wee which are but wormes of the earth, will vouchsafe to doe. The thing then which wee haue to beare in mynde is, that if a poore man come and desire helpe of vs, and wee thinke wee shall but loose that which we bestowe vppon him, because hee is not of abilitie to recompence vs, & that although hee should liue an hundred yeres after his death, yet he should not requite vs the good turne and pleasure hee receiued of vs. We ought to bethinke our selues thus: Well! in deede as touching the worlde he cannot benefite mee, he can neither coole me nor heat me: but before God such a blessing as proceedeth from him, shalbee heard. If wee consider this, it is not the recompence which wee shal haue in the kingdome, better than all that which might be bestowed vppon vs in this frayle and transitory life? Yes verily, if wee haue any faith, if we haue any assurance of the heauenly life, and are not altogither beastly besotted with this present worlde.

And although a poore man become vnthankfull, yet shall not wee therefore faile to be blessed of God. For the beate which hee shall haue receiued by vs, when wee haue giuen him his coate or his couering, shall blesse vs. And if hee bee so wicked as to forget it, as many are, with whome it is growen as it were vnto a common custome, that when they are relieued they will not vouchsafe to acknowledge the good which is done vnto them: but rather there is nowadayes such pride in some of them that they wil thinke a man is the more bounde vnto them for that hee hath done them all the pleasure in the worlde; insomuch that some will say, what hath he done vnto mee, but hee was bounde to doe more? And what is this in respect of all that which hee oweth mee? Such is the vnthankfulnesse which yee shall see some poore folke to vse. But, as I haue sayde; although they bee dumbe and speake not a worde: yet the good turne which wee haue done them shall serue vs for a blessing before God. As on the contrarie side men are wont to saye: When a man shall holde his peace and suffer him selfe to pyne away in his miserie, and yet men will not vouchsafe to take pitie on him, let him remaine quiet and patient in his aduersitie as long as he will. (Though I say such exãples are wondrous rare: for wee shall heare nothing but complaints and murmuringes although there bee no greate cause why.) But let vs graunt that some man were so quyet, that hee will not vtter one word, though hee bee not releeued at his neede: Shall wee for all that bee quit before God, although there bee no crye made against vs, to endite vs? No, no: for wee see what is sayde concerning Abel. After hee was murdered, did hee crye for vengeance at Gods handes? No, but his bloude cryed. And therefore the necessitie which a poore man endureth, cryeth lowde & shrill ynough in Gods eares, so that hee needeth not to make any complaynt and to saye: one hath greeued mee in this or in that sorte: but if hee dye for colde because wee keepe his coate or his couering from him, there shall neede no other thing to condemne vs before God. So then let vs learne, that albeit the poore discharge their duetie verie ill, and that beeing succoured they blesse vs not; wee may not therefore ceasse to doe that which GOD commaundeth vs, knowing that the almes which proceedeth from vs, shall serue vs well ynough for a blessing, although they whome wee haue relieued holde their peace. As on the contrary side, wee must bee afrayde least the crueltie which wee vse may accuse vs before GOD, although no man doe open his mouth to speake. Gen. 4. 10.

There is also in this place an instruction for the poore: that because God hath made them subiect to that state that they must be fayne to

desire succour and helpe of their neighboures, they must bee so much the more humble, & lay aside the arrogancie and presumption which is in many of them. Some when they aske an almes, thinke they require nothing but their own: insomuch that to their seeming they haue wrong if they bee made to wayte for it, and that men preuent not their necessitie: they woulde that a man shoulde put off his cappe and desire them to receiue an almes: there are some which bee full of this presumption. But God contrarily declareth, that hee wil haue him which receiueth a good turne, to acknowledge it, and to blesse him by whome hee is releeued. And in verie deede, if a man bee holpen in his neede, and hee forget it, and seeketh not at leastwise to God to requite it, when himselfe according to the worlde hath no meanes to do it, hee is a theefe: and pretende hee neuer so fairely, that a man gaue him such a thing: yet because hee abuseth the liberalitie which was vsed towardes him, hee is a theefe. A man helpeth mee, and on what condition? God bindeth mee to pray for the prosperitie of him which hath in such wise succoured mee, and to protest at least, that I am bounde vnto him: and when I am able to recompence him I must do it. But if I cannot, I must haue God for my witnes, that I acknowledge my selfe bound vnto him for his curtesie: if I doe it not, verily it is theft, as I told you. So then as the rich are taught in this place, and as God sheweth them that they ought to be contented when they whome they haue holpen do blesse them: so on the other side, the poore are taught to knowe, that if they borrowe, or haue any thing giuen them, it is to the intent they shoulde bee moued to pray for their neighbors, for so much as they haue succoured and releeued them, that charitie may by that meanes bee maintained. For the true bond thereof is, that they which haue of themselues no abilitie shold knowe that God calleth them vnto himselfe, & that they ought to doe that which belongeth to them to doe, namely, resort vnto prayer, because they are able to doe no other thing. Yee see then in effect what wee haue to beare in minde. And so let vs note that when we can discharge our dueties towardes our neighbours no otherwise, wee must haue recourse vnto that remedie which is set downe here, that is, to prayer.

It followeth afterwarde: that it shalbee reputed vnto vs for righteousnesse before God, & this is according vnto that which I haue to note alreadie, namely, that mercie is better than sacrifice. For Moses meant to declare that if wee vse not such humanitie towards our neighbors, wee may well beare a countenaunce of serning God, wee may haue great appearance of vertue in the sight of men, wee may well bee honoured and esteemed of them: but yet neuertheless God will condemne vs for wicked men, when wee bee so cruell. Briefely Moses hath in this place declared, that there is no righteousnesse acceptable before God, except there bee such humanitie in vs, that wee liue so with our neighbours as euery of vs enforce himselfe to succour the poore and needie to the vtmost of his power. Yee see then the intent and meaning of Moses when hee sayeth, *That it shalbee reputed vnto vs for righteousnes before God*. And this is a worde which ought well to bee weyed. For wee see howe men thinke to discharge their duties notwithstanding that they bee set altogither on pilling and spoyling. And in what order trowe yee? Looke mee among the Papists if a man haue erected a chappell, if hee haue taken order that so many Masses shalbee sung, or if hee haue done some such like thinges, then hath hee his hands cleane; or at leastwise thinketh them to bee cleane: and yet in the meane while, extortion, deceite, and other lewde and wicked practises haue their full sway with him, and no pitie hath any place in his heart. Nowe, the man which shall shewe such a faire appearance shalbee accounted a iust and holy person. But yee see howe God in the meane while pronounceth the cleane contrarie, that all this is but doung and filthinesse in his sight, and that there is no righteousnesse where there is no humanitie and gentlenes. When a man hath no compassion on his neighbors, when he tormenteth them, when hee troubleth them, when he spoyleth them, when hee hath no pitie nor mercie with him, whatsoeuer hee is able to doe besides, is but abhominable before God: hee reiecteth all besides, and will none of it, except a man be so kindhearted as to take pitie of them which are in neede, and to releeue their necessitie. Beholde (I say) in what sort wee ought to fare the better by this place. For (as I haue said) men woulde alwayes thinke to discharge their duties towardes God and yet giue no almes.

Wee see also as touching almes giuing, that there is in many men much hypocrisie and no little rashnes: in so much that men neuer deale vprightly with God in that behalfe. What is the cause why our Lorde Iesus Christ forbiddeth men to blowe the trumpet, and to make such greate and open shewes when they giue their almes, but because many are ledde with ambition, and when they deale their deale, there must bee a greate pompe of it at their gate? Such as haue pilled and polled all their life long, and haue done nothing else but eaten and deuowred the poore, thinke to burie their sinnes and to wipe them cleane out, by bestowing a piece of money at their decease. For why? They bleare the eyes of men thereby: and they beare themselues in hande that they are able to deceiue God too. But they abuse themselues too grossely. So then it standeth vs in hande the more diligently to note this sentence, wherein wee are taught, that if without all vanitie of shewe, wee haue pitie on them which seeke for refuge at our handes, & & helpe them without grieuing them at all: it shalbee reckoned vnto vs for righteousnesse. And before whome? Before the Lorde our God. We are in this place summoned before his heauenly throne, to the intent we seeke not for our reward before men. For this also is an other thing where-

Mat. 6.2

our Lord Iesus leadeth vs when he saith that we must not blowe with the trumpet when we giue our almes; but that wee muste rather hide our selues, and not let our lefthand knowe what our right hand doeth; nor be desirous of many witnesses by whom wee may vaunt our selues: And in verie deede if it suffice vs not that God liketh of vs, and that hee accepteth the seruice which wee doe vnto him in bestowing of our almes, we seeke for our payment here below: and therefore we are then recompenced when men praise vs and say: O this man is a great giuer of almes: O he dischargeth his dutie faithfully in this behalfe. If we haue once gotten such a report, & that the same do please vs, verily wee haue our rewarde. Let vs not thinke that God will set it any more in his booke of account: for so should wee bee wise payed; I say if wee seeke through ambition to bee seene of all men. For although when wee giue our almes, wee may sometimes make it knowen: yet neuertheleſſe wee muste take heede that wee be not ledde away with a vayne desire, to bee esteemed of in this worlde: but whatsoeuer wee giue, let vs conueie it as it were into the bosome of God. And forasmuch as the good which wee haue done, shalbe receiued and esteemed of him: let vs seeke no other thing but that euery one bee edified thereby, & that euerie one for his parte enforce himselfe to relieue the necessitie of his neighbours. But howe euer the worlde go, seeing it is God vnto whome wee ought to lende the almes which we bestowe vppon a poore man, and that he receiueth in this consideration ought so to rauish vs, that wee shoulde not desire to leane vnto the worlde, nor to any of the faire praises which we may receiue, nor to the reputation which wee may get by it. God sayeth, that when wee giue vnto a poore man, wee lende vnto him himself. Behold heere a manner of speach which might seeme strange at the first sighte, to say, that wee lende vnto God. But yet neuertheleſſe he vseth this manner of speache, and that not without cause, and sayeth that hee is well able to pay vs vsure and gaine for our money, so as wee needed not feare that wee shall loose any thing by our long tarriance for it, for hee wil recompence vs in the ende. Seeing that God hath once declared that hee becommeth debter vnto vs, and that hee putteth all those items into his bookes of accounts, as though hee had borrowed them at our handes: I pray you are not wee ouer blockish if wee for all that seeke for prayse here below and hang wholly vppon it? Nowe therefore let vs learne to fare the better by that which is sayde here: namely, *That is shalbe accounted for righteousnesse vnto vs before God.* It is in effect all one as if Moses had sayde: Deceiue not your selues by thinking to please God after the common order and fashion of men, who make many faire shewes of diuers things: they will needes offer sacrifices, they will come vnto the temple, they will set a good countenance on all things, yea, they will make men beleeue that they haue all the vertues in the worlde, & that nothing is wanting in them: but you are deceiued if that you thinke to discharge your duetie towardes God by such meanes. For there is no righteousnesse in you which pleaseth God, and which hee liketh of, except you bee so gentle and kinde hearted as to haue pitie on the poore, and to releeue them in their neede: that is to bee noted for one poynt. Againe, for the other hee sayeth thus: Go to, you are of opinion that all is lost which you giue vnto a poore man; and that because hee hath not wherewith to recompence you, or because hee is vnthankfull, as wee see many are. But holde your selues contented with this, that before God it shalbee accounted vnto you for righteousnesse: feare you not seeing that God accepteth that which you offer vnto him. Ceasse to regarde men. This ought to suffice you: Yea, put the case that one render vnto you euil for the good which ye haue done, yet notwithstanding your God will not reiect your prayers and requestes; but will acknowledge that wherein you haue serued him. And because hee maketh a tryall of your charitie by this meanes, and will knowe howe you loue him by your helping of those which hee offereth vnto you in his owne name: if you receiue them which flye vnto you for succour. Let it suffice you that God accepteth both of you and of that which you haue bestowed on him which sought vnto you. That is in effect the thing which wee haue to beare in minde in this place.

But here a man may demaund a question, & aske what it meaneth that Moses sayeth a mans almes shalbee accounted vnto him for righteousnes? for it seemeth therefore that our selues obtayne righteousnesse before God, and that we deserue rewarde by our good workes. And this were against the chiefe and principall article of our saluation, where it is sayde, That wee are iustified by faith. And what else importeth this worde Faith, but that wee are accepted of God for his owne mercies sake, without bringing any merite or desert of our owne? If wee bee iustified by fayth, why doeth Moses say that wee are iustified by our woorkes, as by our almes deedes? Let vs note that when the scripture speaketh in this wise, it presupposeth that God hath alreadie receiued vs to his mercie, that hee pardoneth vs all our sinnes: yea, and that albeit there bee some imperfection in our workes, hee regardeth it not, but accepteth that which wee offer vnto him, as though it were worthie to bee accepted. But for asmuch as this matter cannot bee handled at large as nowe: therefore let vs note, that where as it is sayde that faith was reckoned vnto Abraham for righteousnesse: it is to giue vs to vnderstande, that men when they come before God, are all of them to bee condemned: yea, the most perfectest of them. For if a man will seeke for vertue and holinesse in the worlde, it may bee founde in the person of Abraham: for hee is as excellent a man as euer was: but yet if GOD woulde haue iudged him with rigour, he might haue condemned him with all the rest. For what is there in Abraham to make God to bee

beholding vnto him: So then wee are all confounded in our selues. And therefore there is no other remedie left vs, but to beleeue in the free promises which hee hath made vnto vs, embracing his mercie and fatherly loue, & hanging thereon the assurance of our saluation. The cause (say I) why we are iustified by faith, is that in our woorkes there is no righteousnesse which may answere for vs before God, but wee are alwayes to bee condemned. But nowe God hath so ordered vs with this condition that hee forgiueth vs all our sinnes, and that not onely for a day, but for all the time of our life: not that wee should sinne vnder colour that God will bee mercifull vnto vs (let vs take heede of that) but because we are fraile and weake, God will alwayes continue his goodnesse towarden vs. And farther when wee doe any good, there is yet some euill euen in that good which wee doe. For wee neuer giue any almes with such perfection as were requisite, but God may alwayes finde some fault or other in it. It is with our woorkes as men vse to say of wine, that there is still some faulte or other in it. It is good wine will one say, but it hath taken winde, it is too sharpe, it is mustie, or there is I know not what in it, it is turned: and so the wine is nothing woorth. Euen so is it with our woorkes, there is alwayes some spotte or other in them: so that God shall haue iust cause to reiect them. Seeing it is so, wee had neede to be borne withall at his hande, as a childe is borne withall by his father. And in verie deede hee hath made vs such an expresse promise by his Prophet Malachie. This hee will spare vs euen as a father spareth his childe, who perceiuing his childe to bee willing to doe that which hee commaundeth him, although hee doe not his worke so perfectly as were requisite hee should, will not deale rigorously with him, if so bee hee goe about it with a willing and cheerefull mynde. So then yee see why it is sayde that wee are iustified by faith.

Mal. 3.17. Psal. 103.13

But whereas it is sayde on the contrary side, that our woorkes shalbee reckoned vnto vs for righteousnesse; it is because God accepteth them. And why? Is it because they are worthie to bee accepted, or for that they haue any merite in them? No. But because of the couenaunte and agreement which hee hath made with vs: that seeing wee are members of our Lorde Iesus Christ, hee beareth with vs, hee pardoneth vs our sinnes, and accepteth that which wee offer vnto him: although it bee woorth nothing, yet is it ynough that hee accepteth of it. According vnto this reason, it is saide in this place, that the almesdeedes which wee doe for Gods sake, shalbee accepted at his hande for righteousnesse. And this letteth not but that wee bee iustified alonelie by faith: for when righteousnesse is referred vnto his fountaine, from whence proceedeth it? From the free mercie of God in that hee forgiueth vs our sinnes. Nowe, sith it is grounded vppon that; wee must not imagine that there is any contradiction in these places. And therefore let vs briefely note, that when our Lorde saith, that the almes which wee bestowe shalbee reckoned to vs for righteousnesse; it is to encourage vs the more, to the intent wee should not feare that either our payne or our money is lost, when wee haue relieued the necessitie of the poore. And when wee haue this lesson, we will not come and laye the foundation of our saluation vppon our woorkes: but wee will alwayes buylde the assurance of our saluation on the onely mercie of God, and vppon the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ, by whose sacrifice wee are reconciled, and through whose obedience all our sinnes and iniquities are done awaye. This (saye I) is the meanes to assure vs of our saluation. And thus when wee haue settled our trust and confidence in the onely mercie and goodnesse of God, wee will haue no mynde to standde vppon our woorkes: but it will suffice vs that beeing accepted by the free mercy of God without any merite or deserueble worthinesse of our woorkes, hee will giue vs will, strength, and power to serue him, to serue him I say, not after our owne fantasie, but accordingly as hee commaundeth vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to take them away, and therewithall so to reforme vs by his holy spirite, as our whole indeuour may bee to please him, and to obey his holy will, as hee hath declared it vnto vs in his lawe. And because we cannot come vnto such perfection as were requisite wee shoulde; pray wee him to reache vs out his hande alwayes to supplye our wantes, and to strengthen our infirmities, vntil hee hath cleane ridde vs of them. And so let vs saye, Almightie God & heauenly father, &c.

On

On Munday the x. of February, 1556.

The CXL. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the foure and twentith Chapter.

14 Thou shalt not defraude the hired seruaunt which is needie and poore, neither of thy brethren, nor of the straunger which is in thy lande within thy gates,

15 Thou shalt giue him his hyre for his day, before the sunne goeth downe: for he is poore, and therewith sustaineth he his life. Least he crie against thee vnto the Lorde, and it be sinne vnto thee.

16 The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but euery man shalbe put to death for his own sinne.

17 Thou shalt not wrest the right of the straunger, nor of the fatherlesse: neither shalt thou take the widowes rayment to pledge.

18 But thou shalt remember that thou wast a seruaunt in Egypt, and that the Lorde thy God deliuered thee thence. Therefore I commaunde thee to doe this thing.

IF there were not great wickednes and cruelties in men, it were needeles to set downe anie such law as is heere contained, to wit, *That we withholde nowe from a poore man the wages which he hath earned.* For we knowe that it is as it were his bloud, according as it is written: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eate thy breade. Therefore when a man bestoweth himselfe in our seruice, we ought at all wise to giue him that wherewithall he is sustained and nourished. And therefore I tolde you that if we had but one droppe of kindnes in vs, we needed not to be taught this doctrine. For nature teacheth vs what is right and indifferent. Let vs therefore conclude when we read of y which is written here, that we are accused before God, of beeing as brute beastes towardes our neighbours: For God would suffer vs to follow on our owne course, if he sawe that euery of vs did discharge himselfe of his duetie. But forasmuch as men are so peruerse and wicked, that the rich take nothing but to deceiue the poore, & to deuour their substaunce & the labor of their handes; it was needefull that he should prouide some remedie against them. And this is the way for vs to fare the better by that which appertaineth to the ordering of our life. Oftentimes when we reade of any admonition in the holy scripture, we are of opinion that it is superfluous. For why? We haue no consideration of the cause which moued God to command this or that, to wit, that forasmuch as he seeth y vices whiche are lurking in vs, he meaneth to correct them. We must therefore examine ourselues, and that will teach vs that God exhorteth vs not in vaine to do that which is our duetie. For albeit we know well y^t^ ought what men say vnto vs, and euery of vs can confesse that the things which are sayd are true; yet is it not ynough for vs to haue the reasonablenes and rightfulnesse of y thing proued vnto vs, vnlesse wee be also inforced to follow that which we knowe to be iust and acceptable vnto God.

Nowe whereas it is sayde that a man shall not withholde the hyre of a poore man, it is all one as if God in generall did shewe, that men ought to deale vprightly, & by all kinde of curtisie with those which are poore, and employ themselues to doe vs seruice. And hee speaketh expresly of the poore, because there is no pitie in this case towardes the rich man: for if we owe him anie thing, he may tarrie for it, he is not so hastie to haue his monney payde him from day to day, a man shal not be so soudainly pressed to giue him his payment. In deede we ought not to tarry til we be plucked by the eares, to pay that which we owe. That is alwaies to be condemned: and we excuse ourselues vainely, if we say: this man is aforehande, he hath no great neede: I may therefore withholde that which is his. But I speake of the precise houre of payment, when a man is contented that I shall deferre the payment of my dette from this day vntil to morow. If I offer to pay him, he will answere me, I shal haue it time ynough. And why? He knoweth that I am readie to paye him any day: and as for himselfe hee hath no such hast but hee can well staye. But a poore man hauing trauailed the whole day, hath nothing to eate but what he getteth by his labor: what cruelties then were it if I (when I haue had a mans sweat, and labour) will for all that withholde from him his dayes hyre? And therefore this reason is expresly added: *for he sustaineth his soule therewith*, or he easeth his soule thereby. For y word which Moses vseth

may be so expounded: that is, that a poore man hath an eye alwayes vnto his labour. Like as the rich man which is well furnished with al plentie, and hath his garners and his sellars full, resteth himselfe thereon: so a poore man which hath neither reuenewes nor inheritaunce turneth his soule, that is to say, his heart vnto that which he maketh reckening to get: and sayth, wel, I haue trauailed, I shall haue at leastwise asmuch as wil finde mee to day: to morrowe I will returne a-gaine to my labour, and I will get more towards my meate and drinke. The poore folke haue their mindes set vpon that: not that we must haue such an eye to our owne trauaile and labour, as if it were that alone whereby wee are sustained, and not rather the blessing of God: for we haue seene what God hath sayde to the contrarie in
Deut. 8. 17. the eight chapter of this booke: namely that we must take heede that wee darken not the grace and fauour of God by perswading ourselues that we haue done this or that. Men therefore must attribute nothing vnto themselues. Howbeit, Moses in this place hath meant no other thing, but this: the meanes whereby poore folke are sustained in their trauaile, all their goods, rents, and landes is the labour of their handes. Seeing it is so that they haue no farther abundance, and that God hath as it were locked them vp in such necessitie, is it reason that a man shoulde deprive them of the fruite of their labour. If one spoyle a mans corne fielde, if hee mowe downe the grasse of his medowe, or if hee make an hauocke of all the whole worlde will cry out vpon him for a murderer: And yet it is a more haynous crime to haue deceiued a poore man of the labour of his handes. For he hath (as I colde you) no other landes nor inheritaunce: and besides that, he spareth neither his labor, nor his blood, to get his liuing. This reason therefore ought to wey well with vs in this case of rendring hire vnto them which haue serued vs.

And let vs note by the way, that God meaneth here to commaund generally all maner of kindnesse towardes poore folke. For if I constraine a poore man to labour for me, and I will pay him but by halfes; doubtles I defraude him of his labour. If I couenaunt with one to serue me; well, I say he, you shall pay me thus much for my dayes worke: but in the ende I cutte his hyre shorte, that the poore man after he hath done all hee was able, shall not haue wherewith to feede himselfe. For why? I wil see: This man here must needes labour, he hath not else whereon to liue, and hee must needes passe through my handes; therefore I will haue him for what I list. After that maner do the rich behaue themselues oftentimes in this behalfe, they espie some occasions or other, to the intent they may cut off the one halfe of the poore mans wages, when he knoweth not what to set himselfe about. The poore folke offer themselues to labour, they desire but to get their liuing if they could tell where. Hereupon ye shall haue a rich man say: this fellowe is out of money and out of worke, I may hire him now for a morsell of bread. For he must yeelde vnto mee spyte of his teeth, I will giue him but halfe wages, and he shalbe glad and fain of that. Therefore when we vse such rigour, although we haue not withheld their hyre, yet is it a point of crueltie, and we haue defrauded the poore: and this cloke of paying the money the same day, wil stande vs in no steede before God. For it is to be knowen whether the poore man be constrained or no. When a rich man hath wares to sell and one comes vnto him for them, he will say, you shall not haue them for any lesse: And why? his wares diminish not in his shoppe. But if there be a poore man which saieth he is hard to seeke, and hath neither pennie nor halfe pennie in his purse, he shalbe forced to sel his ware for nought if one buy them at that price. And knowest thou what necessitie is? Is it not a kinde of violence? Is it not a manifest oppression? and we can well say in common prouerbe: It is the beating of the foote vpon a poore mans throate: in a kinde of robberie. We haue skill (I say) to speake fayre to them which buy such penie worthes of vs that are in neede, and are so farre pinched that they can be at no other choyce but to doe what we will haue them. Let vs note well that God in this place precisely commaundeth vs not to vse them without driuing off from day to day, which haue laboured or taken paines for vs: but also would haue vs to haue a dewe regarde of euery mans neede, and that when we set a poore man a worke about our businesse, wee should pay him his dayes hyre: yea and that euery one should set a price of his owne ware, so as if we come to driue a bargaine, the seller should not be constrained to say so vs, make what price you your selfe list: but against whom, when a poore man hath trauailed for vs, if we should not deale so vncourteously as to make no further account of him than to haue the fruit of his labour: but rather enter into iust tryal with ourselues, whether if we were in his case, which pineth away & hath no other meanes to sustain himselfe but this, we ourselues would be contented to be so handled. We would haue men to vse gentlenesse towardes vs and to beleeue and succour vs: let vs therefore do the like or else we shalbe accused before God. For it is sayde, *That in whatsoeuer sinne wee shall iudge our neighbour, we shall iudge our selues.* And yet for all this we heare euerie day the cries and clamours which the poore cease not in lamentable wise to make, and thinke we that God is deafe all this while, & that he heareth not their complaintes? I graunt that the poore in deede are sometimes vnthankfull and spitefull, so as there is no dealing with them: and they would as it were take vnto themselues other mens goods; and when they are requested to lend their handes to some worke, they would haue a double and treble recompence, & they will haue great wages. Ye shall see some so sloute and presumptuous, that they will not bestowe paines in any thing, except they be greatly intreated: and yet they are so lasie, that they will scarcely put foorth one hande to doe their worke aright: and for all this there is such a doing to please them, that they will haue their full payment, yea and double the price of their dayes worke. This is to be seene. But yet for all that,

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there are many (as I tolde you) which are pinched. And therefore their cries must needes ascende vp into heauen: and let vs not imagine that we shalbe founde guiltlesse before God. For whereas it is sayd that it shalbe sin vnto vs, it is to shew y albeit men sue vs not ne cõmence any action against vs for it in this world: yet notwithstanding we shall not faile to be culpable before God: yea although the poore should not crye at all, as is hath beene declared heeretofore. The thing then in effect which wee haue to beare in minde, is that we ought to haue an eye vnto euery mans neede, and not to oppresse him which is in necessitie, thinking that we haue an occasion of making our own profit by an other mans losse, when we see that he can not be without vs. Let vs beware that we be not so cruell. For although he make no complaint against vs in this world, yet before God we are culpable: and that ought to quicken vs vp so much the more in our duty, considering that God reproueth vs of crueltie in such wise.

Now Moses addeth a seconde lawe: *That the fathers should not be put to death for the children, nor the children for the fathers, but that euery man should beare the punishment of his owne sinne.* This Lawe was ordained because of a wicked & beastly custome which then raigned among the men of the East countrey, who made it a matter of no conscience to put the children to death for the fathers offences, and so to shed the bloud of the innocent. God therefore meant to withhold his people from following such barbarous dealing of the Paynims and Infidels. And it is a point which we must diligently note. For wee might muse why it is sayde, that the father shall not be killed for the childe, nor the child for the father. It seemeth that it is needeleſſe to forbid this thing, because we knowe that where sinne is founde, there the punishment ought to be layde without seeking any farther. Nowe therefore forasmuch as we are giuen to vnderstande, that men haue bin so blockish as to put him to death who was in no fault, so as the father hath sometimes beene drawen to death with the child: we perceiue thereby that God hath not without cause established this lawe. It is true in deede that this is spoken vnto Iudges and vnto such as bowe the sword in their hand: that the children should not be put to death for the sinne of the fathers, nor the fathers for the sinne of the children: but yet notwithstanding God in generall teacheth vs also, that wee ought not to hate the children for their fathers sakes. Whensoeuer we see a wicked man, forasmuch as he is a reasonable creature, we ought to pitie him, and not to hate him, although we must alwaies detest the vice, and punishe the person for his misdeedes. But if we hate the father for the sonnes sake, or the sonne because of the father, albeit wee haue not the sworde in our hande, yet nevertheleſſe this wicked affection which we haue, is al one as if we did put the father to death for the childe. And so let vs note well, that this lawe appertayneth vnto vs all. And although we be not armed with power and authoritie to punish whome we list. Yet notwithstanding God putteth vs in mind not without iust cause, that he which hath offended must beare his owne punishment, and not any other guiltlesse person besides.

Heere a man might demand a question: what is the cause then why God threatneth that hee wil punish the wickednesse of fathers vpon their children, and cast it as it were into their bosome? Ier. 32. 18. This is sayd, because that GOD is at libertie to curse not one man alone, but his whole race and posteritie also. For what are we, if it please not him to beholde vs with pitie? If he once turne his mercie from vs, we can not but goe into vtter destruction. And therefore let vs learne, that when God leaueth vs such as we are, it is a kind of punishment which he layeth vpon vs. Ye see then howe he punisheth the wickednesse of the fathers vpon the children, and yet doth wrong vnto none. Let vs mind that. And in very deede we ought to obserue what difference there is betweene God and men. An earthly Iudge punisheth the faultes which are knowen vnto him: but before God it is not so, for we are al of vs giltie. He which before men is faultlesse, and can be charged with nothing, let him come before God, and there he shall finde himselfe short. Againe we see not the cause why God punisheth young children, euen such as are yet in their mothers wombe: but he knoweth a reason why he doth so: and we must with al humblenes of mind reuerence his iudgementes, when a thing seemeth straunge vnto vs, and wee be tempted to reason against him; wee must submit our selues, and know that we are too raw & too weake to cõprehende the iudgementes of God, which are so high. And therefore let vs not measure God by men, to binde him to doe that which earthlie Iudges are commaunded to doe: for hee is not subiect vnto the same lawe, and the reason why we haue declared. And in deede he protesteth also by his prophet Ezechiel, that he wil not punish the children for the fathers sake. For it was nowe growen to a common prouerbe in Israell, that they which were troubled with warre, famine, and other calamities, would say, What? we are not so wicked that GOD should handle vs with such rigour, for wee haue serued him, wee haue done the best that we could. Therefore we must needes say that God punisheth vs now for the faultes which were committed an hundred yeeres agoe, and should nowe haue beene buried. Thus men complained of God. As in deed we see how men are too much enclined to iustifie themselues by condemning of God. Hereupon our Lorde aunswereth them: no no, this prouerbe shall be no longer vsed in Israel, That the fathers haue eaten sower grapes, & the childrens teeth are set on edge: for he which sinneth shall beare his owne burden, & the chastisement of his offence. We see then that God doeth so punish the sinnes of the fathers vppon the children, that notwithstanding all are culpable, and there is not one which hath a sufficient excuse to aske a reason why God punisheth him. And if any alleadge that he corrected Dauides fault by causing the childe to die which was begotten by Ezech. 18. 4.

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him, it is aunswered (as I haue already touched) that God will sometimes punish the children for the fault of their fathers, but this is after his own maner which is incomprehensible vnto vs, that is to say, that he doth nothing but iustly and vprightly. We shall not alwayes see the cause why hee doeth it, for we haue already declared that our wittes are ouer grosse and dull to enter into the bottomelesse gulfe of Gods iudgementes. But howsoeuer the case stande, we must vouchsafe him so much honor as to confesse, that when he punisheth the iniquitie of the fathers vppon the children, he doeth it on good right. And howe? Will we say: It is not for vs to enquire beyonde our measure: Let vs content ourselues with this, that Gods goodnesse is an vnblameable iustice, and in the meane while let vs walke as hee hath commaunded vs. Let vs not say: he doth this, and why may not wee doe the like? Yea: but what are we? For GOD knoweth his rule full well; but we for our parte hadde neede to be helde in awe and vnder subiection: and if wee woulde be at libertie to doe what seemed good to ourselues, there would be too too great confusion. Yee see then what we haue to beare in minde, when it is sayde in this place, that the father shall not be punished for the childes fault, nor the childe for the fathers: but that he which offendeth shall beare the punishment of his offence himselfe. Nowe wee are warned also by the way, not to intangle ourselues in the condemnation of those which haue offended. For many are of opinion that they discharge not their dewtie, except they maintaine an other mans wickednesse. Oh, [say they] he that hath doone this offence is my neighbour, or my cousen, or I knowe not what. If I holde him not vp by the chinne, if I seeke not to violate and corrupt iustice, I shall not be thought to haue dealt with him like a kinsman, like a friende or like a neighbour. But we see what is sayde to the contrarie: namely, that hee which hath offended, shall beare his owne sinne. Therefore when wee see any one to offend, let it grieue vs, let vs indeuour to the vtmost of our power to bring him into the way againe: but yet for all that, let vs beware that we wrap not our selues in his condemnation, seeing God hath exempted vs out of it. And that is a thing which wee haue to remember yet further vpon this place.

The thirde lawe which Moses addeth in this place is, *That they shall not peruert the Iudgement and right of the stranger, that they shall not wrong the fatherlesse vnder foote, that they shall not wring a pledge from the widowe.* And why? Remember (sayeth he) *that thou wast a seruaunt in the Lande of Egypt, and that the Lorde thy GOD hath deliuered thee out from thence, to the intent that thou shouldest pitie them which are afflicted, and that thou shouldest not grieue them.* We haue already seene heeretofore, that as men are of lesse credit and countenaunce touching the worlde, so are they more specially recommended vnto our care by God. For they which haue meanes to helpe themselues, seeke not willingly eyther to this or to that man for helpe. For why? They can helpe themselues well ynough. Hee that hath good friendes, and is of credit carrieth his pledge, to getre him fauour himselfe: a riche man likewise and he that hath policie and courage in his dealinges. For men are afrayde to deale with them, they dare not offer to wrong them vnder foote, because they see they are able to worke their owne reuenge. And that is the cause why God maketh no mention of such persons. It is true in deede that generally he alwaies appointeth vs this rule, Not to do vnto others otherwise than we would haue doone vnto ourselues; and *Mat. 7.12.* ȳ we must abstaine from al wrong, deceites, and violence. He sayth this in deede to all in generall, but he sayth not? Take heede of iniuring and oppressing a riche man and one which is in credit and authoritie. For why? We are withholde from offring of such a one any wrong, because wee are afrayde of the like. But God sayeth: Let not any man grieue the poore man, let none afflict the stranger, let none trouble the fatherlesse, let none molest the widowes. And why speaketh he thus of them? Because when we see that they are not defended by men, we thinke that they are set foorth vnto vs for an open pray. And ȳ is the cause why we be so venterous beyond all reason & conscience, to snatch from them whatsoeuer we can take holde of. Let vs therefore note well, that God in this place (as he hath done before) declareth, ȳ he is the protectour & defender of all such as are destitute of mans ayde, and are not vnder prouyded in this worlde. And herein there are two points which we ought to note: ȳ one is ȳ if we do good vnto a stranger, vnto a poore man which is forsaken of all men, or vnto ȳ fatherles, we shall not loose our labour. For why? God acknowledgeth and accepteth it for a seruice done vnto himself. If a man being acquainted with such as are rich and well friended, do for them; hee maketh alwaies this account, wel, he is able to requite me for my paines: & againe he hath good friends, & as he seeth ȳ a man doth for him, so will he seeke to shewe him the like curtesie. We will alwaies cõsider whether men be able to make vs recompence. But when a poore man cõmeth vnto vs, he shall hardly speake with vs or find any fauour at our hands. For why? we thinke ȳ we must doe him good for gramercy, because he is not able to recõpence vs. That is ȳ cause why God presenteth forth himselfe, & protesteth ȳ he is bounde vnto vs, and that if we thinke we profit ourselues nothing at al by helping thẽ which be in necessitie, we are deceiued: for he accepteth of the thing, as if it were done vnto himselfe. This is to be noted for one point. For the second let vs note ȳ he threateneth on the contrary side, ȳ if we molest a poore man, if we vexe & trouble the widows or the fatherles, if we be cruell towardes the stranger, although as touching ȳ world this wickednes of ours be not punished, yet shall we render an account of it before him. And why? For we haue set light by his protection. Like as princes and other greate states will giue priuiledges vnto them which are hated, and whome they see to

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be in daunger: so god giueth his protection vnto the fatherles, to the widowes, to the poore, and to the straungers. And why? Because they haue no meanes to the worldeward to defend themselues withall, he supplieth this want of theirs, and declareth that hee will not haue men to wreake those vnder foote whom hee hath receiued vnto himselfe, telling vs that hee is their protector. If one for all this, doe enterprise any thing against them, is it not as much as to doe him wrong, and as it were spitefully to despise him? So then let vs note well, that as often as mention is made vnto vs of the poore, of the straungers, and of the widowes; wee haue to deale with God, & wage battaile against him, if we vse not all equitie and right towardes them, and if we be not so gentle and kindharted as to relieue and to succour them. Ye see then now what the cause is, why it is sayde in this place, *Thou shalt not peruert the right of the straunger.*

Now to peruert the right is, to skorne a man when he hath a iust and good cause. And this is at all times to be seene. In deede in the courts of Iustice there will sometimes such regarde be hadde, that a straunger shall haue the more speedie dispatch of his matters: and men will say that they must proceede more quickely in giuing of sentence when a stranger commeth to demaunde iustice, and not suffer him to linger in his suite as those which are at home at their ease and may goe about their businesse: these may better bee delayed, but as touching a stranger which commeth from a farre place to require iustice, men by nature ought to be moued not to make him linger, but to make a quick dispatch with him. But this notwithstanding when the thing is to be practised in places of Iustice, ye shall see the cleane contrary. Let a straunger, whose case is as cleare as the sunne, come to demaunde his right, and he shalbe put off vntil eight dayes, and yet from that time he shall bee further delayed. And then in the ende, when he is wel wearied, he shalbe new to beginne againe: and if he will followe on his suite, it shall growe worse and worse. This is at al times to be seene, and men make but a sport and game of it. The poore straunger knoweth not to whome to make his mone: if he meete by chaunce with a lawyer he lamenteth and sayeth: what a thing is this? I thought to haue founde some iustice, but there is nothing but confusion: I see that all thinges are ruled by fauour. Such cryes (I say) and complaints a man shall heare euery day: and yet for all that, men care not for them, but passe on still: but yet these things must come to a reckening before God. And why? It is not sayd, Thou shalt not peruert the right of thine owne countreyman or Citizen. For why? It is sufficient ỹ there is this generall rule for it. Thou shalt not peruert any mans right. But let vs knowe that straungers are to be more specially maintained, and ỹ God taketh not on himselfe ỹ defence of them without iust cause: insomuch that whosoeuer offereth the any outrage or wrong, shalbe called to pleade his cause before him. When we heare this, let vs looke more narrowely vnto ourselues, and not think to dally with such a maister as God is. But let vs learne to vse such righteousnes towards men, ỹ if a stranger come before vs, he may haue as much right done for him, as if hee had all the fauour of the whole worlde, or as if he were well knowen vnto vs, and as if we did feare least some reproch should come vnto vs by the contrary, & as if he were able to seeke further to make vs punished for our euill dealing. Let vs on our part doe that which our Lorde cõmandeth vs: especially seeing that besides the promise which he maketh, he also threatneth vs. Oh the one side he seeketh to winne vs by mildenes and gentleues, saying: Hearken to mee: yee shall not loose your labour when you doe good vnto straungers and such as are vnknowen vnto you. And againe on the other side (as I told you) he threatneth vs, to the intent we should not thinke that we are escaped although men complaine not of vs. Yet notwithstanding there be many with whom this warning beareth no sway at all. The Lawe of God hath alwayes bin: and yet what iustice hath beene shewed vnto strangers? Men haue doone the worst they could vnto them, and the faulte is nothing accounted of. And why? For if I bee to doe iustice, and I see that in dooing the stranger right I shall offende him whom I knowe: O I will not doe it. And verily I knowe not through what madnesse it cõmeth to passe, that all folke although they knowe that it is ill doone, cease not for all that, to procure the bolstering and bearingout of their owne countreymen and citizens, and of such as are of the same place that they themselues be of. And why? O will one say, our acquaintance must not be iniured. That is the common speech. But in the meane while we pull the wrath of God vpon the whole towne and countrey, and yet we thinke not of it. If men be asked in this case, what? will ye be at defiance with God? They will say: No. We must doe Iustice, we must execute punishmentes. Againe if a man speake of the oppression which hath bin vsed towardes a straunger, euerie man will bee a Iudge in the case and say: there is no reason that one which is in credit and estimation should be borne withal, and a stranger troden vnder foote, but that hee to whome the right of the matter belongeth should haue it. And yet for all this, when the thing commeth to the proofe, there is nothing but fauour and corruption; The poore straungers are left and forsaken, and there is no Iustice to be had for them. Yee see howe this Lawe of GOD hath beene euill practised in all times. But this is no excuse for vs. Let vs therefore bethinke ourselues to pitie such as are despised of the worlde, knowing that if wee vexe and grieue them, we offer God the iniurie. And if we helpe them, God wil accept of such seruice. Asmuch is to be sayde concerning the widowes and fatherlesse. The fatherlesse are sometimes deuoured. And why? They seeme to be left for a pray. The case is like as touching widowes. But God opposeth himselfe against this wickednesse of men, and sheweth that he hath a care of them. Let vs therefore walke in such sort in the

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presence of God, that we respect not the worlde to say: O I feare that if I do not well I shal heare of it. But let vs alwayes mind this poynt, that nothing can be hidden from the sight of God: and although men beare with vs and we stand stil in their fauour, yet if the curse of God light vpon our heads, all the friendships in the world shall stand vs in no stead. Let vs mind this; and in minding thereof, let vs be moued thereby to abstaine from all wrong dooing, although wee be perswaded that in respect of men wee may well and lawefully doe it. Nowe God purposely alleadgeth: *That the people ought to remember how they were sometimes seruauntes in the Lande of Egypt, and that God brought them from thence vnto the intent that they should walke as he appointed them.* Willingly ought wee to haue compassion on an other mans miserie, when we for our part haue beene pinched with the like. For he which neuer knewe what miserie meant, hath no pitie on them which are distressed. But when we ourselues haue tasted of many miseries and afflictions, it ought to make vs the more pitifull to relieue those which are in the like estate, which are presently afflicted as well as we haue beene. And that is the cause why God in this place putteth the Iewes in minde, that they had beene seruauntes in the Lande of Egypt. For one which is borne in a rich house, which hath beene dainetily brought vp, which hath beene alwaies crouched vnto, which neuer had a crooked word giuen him to grieue him withall, such a one when he seeth a poore man thinketh that hee is one of an other kinde than himselfe is of, and hee vouchsafeth not to looke vppon him as on his neighbour. But if a man haue endured much trouble, when he seeth any one to be grieued and troden vnder foote, he bethinketh himselfe thus: Alas I my selfe was sometimes thus trampled on, and nowe albeit GOD hath exempted me from the like miserie, yet must I not forgette that which I haue tasted of heretofore. And hereupon he calleth to minde all the afflictions which he hath suffered. What? I was grieued at the verie heart when such wrong was done me; therefore I must nowe shewe that I pitie his case, who is presently so oppressed. This affection is in vs by nature. God therefore leadeth vs vnto this consideration. And heere we be warned howe greatly euery man is addicted to himselfe. For if our affections were so well ruled as they should be, there woulde bee greater kindenesse in vs to take pitie of them which endure afflictions. For there is not that man in the world, which ought not to bee a lookingglasse for vs, to behold our owne nature in him, because that God hath ioyned vs al together. So when one endureth griefe and miserie, we shoulde open our bowels (as I may say) vpon him, and suffer part of his griefe with him. But what? We are far ynough from doing of any such thing. For euery of vs is too well contented to be at his owne ease and rest, & if we see others in miserie, we leaue thē in the same case; nay we shut our eyes, and will not looke vppon them. Now for this cause it is needful that God should bring vs home to our selues, to teache vs to say: Looke on thy selfe: what if thou wert in the same state? It is a signe then that wee are too much wedded to our owne profite, when we haue so litle compassion on them which are in miserie; and that we are worse than the brute beastes, when wee are no otherwise moued in that behalfe. Yet neuertheless it is not for nought that God leadeth vs in this wise vnto the minding of our owne condition, to shewe what wickednesse and corruption is in our nature. And seeing wee knowe it, let vs learne to vse such prickes as these are, to quicken vs vp to the discharge of our duelies, that when wee see any man molested, we may endeuour to helpe him according vnto our abilitie. And why? because he is a creature made vnto the Image of God, because he is our brother, because the like miserie may betide vs, or hath alredie happened vnto vs, at which time we also desired to be relieued. Let euery man therefore quicken vppe himselfe by this meanes, as with a goade which we see God vseth to pricke vs forward: and when we foreslowe to do our duetie, let euery man accuse himself and say, What? It seemeth that thou art become a beast in that thou takest no pitie on him which endureth miserie: If thou wert in his place thou wouldest haue all the worlde runne to relieue thee: and canst thou any longer number thy selfe in the aray of men, when thou takest no greater care of a creature which is made vnto the Image and likenes of God? Thus a man ought to quicken himselfe vp in his duetie. Now if we be exhorted to haue such pitie on them which are in any kind of miserie, how much lesse may it be lawful for vs to come & lift vp our fistes against thē like wilde beastes, and to tread them vnder foote, which are destitute of all ayde and helpe? God cōmandeth vs to relieue & to succour them, and what wickednes were it then for vs to come to molest and trouble thē? So then let vs learne, first of all to abstaine from all iniury and harme doing: and yet let vs not beare our fistes in hande, ỹ we are so discharged, when we haue done no harme: but let vs further more endeuour to relieue ỹ oppressed, by helping them, and by bringing to passe ỹ they may find a way to be deliuered out of their miserie: let euery man employ himselfe hereunto. And if we thinke ỹ in respect of men our labour is but lost, let vs know ỹ such seruice of ours is acceptable vnto God, and that we shall not faile of his blessing: and let this stirre vs vp, accordingly as we are warned in this place.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good GOD with acknowledging of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than hitherunto wee haue doone: and that aboue all, (seeing hee hath ioyned vs together as brethren, adopting vs all into the number of his children) we may so serue and honour him, as we may therewall liue in brotherly loue one with an other, succouring one another in all our necessities, and abstayning from all malice, outrages, and deceites, in such sorte as our conuersation in this worlde bee a true re-

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simonie vnto vs that our God gouerneth vs by his spirite, and hath giuen vnto vs the marke of that inheritaunce whereunto wee labour to come. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely vnto vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the xj. of February, 1556.

The CXLI. Sermon which is the sixth vpon the foure and twentith Chapter.

19 When thou cuttest downe thine harueſt in thy feelde, and hast forgotten a sheafe in the feeld, thou shalt not returne backe againe to fetch it: but it shalbee for the stranger, for the fatherlesse, and for the widowe, that the Lorde thy God may blesse thee in all the workes of thy hands.

20 When thou gatherest thine Oliues, thou shalt not returne againe to seeke ouer the braunches, but it shalbee for the stranger, for the fatherlesse, and for the widowe.

21 VVhen thou gatherest thy vineyard, thou shalt not gather the grapes which thou happenest to leaue behinde thee: but they shalbe for the stranger, for the fatherlesse, and for the widowe.

22 Remember that thou wast a seruant in the lande of Egypt, therefore I commaund thee to do this thing.

WE haue seene heretofore howe God ordayned, that in gathering in of the harueſt, and of the grapes of the vineyarde, they which were hyred, might whyle they were reaping and gathering of the grapes, eate their fill. And this permission hee gaue vnto them, to shewe, that the rich must not so swallowe vp all thinges, but that they must alwayes bestowe some portion on the poore; euery man according vnto the plentie and aboundance which hee hath. For he beere with what condition God leaueth his goods in rich mens handes; namely, to the intent that hauing the abilitie, they shoulde also take occasion to relieue their neighbours which are in necessitie. And so this kindnesse and gentlenesse ought to bee amongest vs, that hee which hath wherewithall to bee liberal, shoulde bestowe some parte of his aboundance vppon his neighbours. And although none bee rated touching his liberalitie, by way of taxe or assessment, yet neuertheleſſe euery man ought to thinke that God hath giuen him plentie of corne and wine vppon condition, that he should bestowe some parte thereof on them which are in neede and necessitie. That which we haue nowe recited, tendeth to the same effect. For God ordayneth that when a man cutteth down his harueſt, gathereth his grapes; or beateth his Oliue trees, (as wee with vs doe our walnuttes) hee shoulde not bee so couetous as to rake in the vtmoſt eare of corne, to looke for the last grape, or to seeke after euery Oliue: but that hee which gathereth in the corne of his seelde, shoulde leaue somewhat after him for the poore to gleane, as for the fatherlesse, for the widowes, and for the straungers which haue no landes nor possessions of their owne. Yee see what a reasonable lawe God setteth vs downe in this place, to the intent wee should knowe, that if God hath giuen vs aboundance of goods beyonde our owne vse, wee ought not to bee ouer niggish of them: but that they which stande in neede, must bee some way releeued and succoured by vs. There is also a promise added to correct that distrust which is in men. For God sayeth that when men shall so doe, hee will encrease their wealth which haue beene liberall to helpe the poore and needie. And besides this, hee putteth the Iewes in minde, that it is hee by whome they were brought into that lande which they possessed, & that they helde it at his hande. As if the chiefe Lorde of the fee shoulde say vnto them which holde of his tenure: What? The lande you haue is mine, and I haue graunted it vnto you with condition that I shall receiue at leastwise the rentes and seruices. God therefore in token of a kinde of homage, reserueth vnto himselfe, the gleaning and other thinges for the poore that come after to gather the grapes and the olives which are left behinde. God sayeth that these are royalties which belong vnto him, and that hee giueth and bestoweth them on such as haue neede: and therefore, that the riche men ought not to bee grieued therewith, as if they had lost any thing, or as if their owne goods were taken from them: for God saith, all is mine. Ye see then in effect what is here conteined. Now let vs note

well, that God meaneth not y poore should be in such wise relieued, as that the rich should be spoyled of that which they possesse. For what a confusion and disorder would that breede? We must therfore note, that God leaueth vnto euery man whatsoeuer he possesseth, either by way of inheritance, or by buying, or by any other iust and lawfull title. And hereby the poore ar warned, not to ransack or make hauock of whatsoeuer commeth in their way, as many doe, which think they may snatch away any thing by good right, so they be not punished by law, nor haue any to witnesse against them. What? I haue great neede sayeth one. Yea, but what neede soeuer a man standeth in, yet God will not haue the ciuil order broken, and all right peruerted. If the rich discharge not their dueties, but be so cruell as to suffer the poore to dye in their neede, they shall render an account thereof, but that shalbe before the heauenly Iudge. But in the meane while the poore ought to take thinges patiently, they must abstaine from all malice, from al rauine, from all pilling and spoyling. This then ought to be diligently obserued in the first place. For our Lord sayth not in this place: he which hath need of corne in haruest time, let him take a reaphook, and go and cut his neighbors corne to carrie it to the mill: but he speaketh only of leasing after the haruest is in. But a man shall see perilous gleaners nowadayes. For if a man set not diligent watch ouer his possessions, euery body will take his share; men are growen to such vnrulinesse, that there is no vpright dealing vsed: men haue no regarde to thinke that God hath distributed the goods of this worlde according vnto his owne good pleasure, and that his will is, that hee which is richest should possesse that which hee holdeth, and that no man shoulde doe him any wrong for it: no not although hee bee one of the vnsatiable gulfes, which thinke they haue neuer ynough. Yet for all that God will not haue any man to touche their goods or to doe them any wrong. But this is little regarded. And so although God directes his talke in this place expressely to the riche; yet neuertheless hee giueth the poore a lesson also, and meaneth to brydle them from going into another mans feelde to conuey away secretely what they can catch, and from entring into their neighbours vineyarde to gather grapes at their pleasure. Nay, he will haue them to abstaine from other mens goods, vntill such tyme as they may gleane after the haruest, and gather the grapes which remaine after the vintage. For this leaue is granted them, so they come not to spoyle like theeues, but to take that which God hath reserued for them. And in verie deede wee suffer dogges to eate the crummes and other scrappes which fall vnder the tables: and shall wee not suffer our brethren, which are made to the image and likenesse of God? Ought not they to haue part of our aboundance, so as they might come and haue at least wise some little pittance to licke vp? What great matter is it to gather the grapes which are left when the vintage is gathered? What great matter is it to gleane after the harueste? Verilie it is but a small thing. And therfore it were too too excessiue cruelte in men, if they which haue lands & possessions, after they haue gathered in the fruite of them, will yet bee such niggards as not to permit y poore to haue that which they might gather after them. But because men are so distrustfull, that they thinke the whole earth will fayle them, God to make this doctrine more auailable sayeth: *I will make thee to prosper, thou shalt bee encreased and multiplyed through my blessing and fauour, when thou shalt so.* There is no doubt but God meant in this place to correct the vnbeleefe which raigneth ouermuch in vs, in that euery of vs thinketh that hee shall neuer haue ynough: O sayeth one, such misfortune may betyde mee. I must prouide for such a harde time. And this is the cause why men snatche and scratche to themselues on all sides and cannot bee satisfied, but the more they haue the more is their couetous desire inflamed, as hee which is sicke of the dropsie, the more hee drinketh the more hee thyrsteth. And what is the cause hereof? Euen our diuelish vnbeleefe and distrustfulnesse in that wee consider not that it is Gods owne office to nourish vs. And whereas wee aske of him euery day our dayly bread, there is not one among an hundred which vnderstandeth what is meant by that worde: for wee desire to be fedde at Gods handes. The riche vse this fourme of prayer aswell as the poore; and confesse thereby that they so possesse their goods, as if God gaue them a portion euery day for their nourishment, and that that whatsoeuer they haue in their garner, they doe receiue it at his hande. But none thinketh hereon. And that is the cause why men are so insatiable, and burne with such couetousnesse, that they are alwayes raking to themselues, and making vp huge heapes of wealth, and are neuer contented. Will wee then liue contentedly? Let vs haue our recourse vnto God, knowing that if hee blesse vs, wee shall haue sufficient wherewithall to bee sustayned and nourished. To this intent therefore is this promise set downe here, that God wil blesse them which are no such niggardes towardes the poore, but that they suffer and permit them to bee someway relieued by gleaning and gathering the small fruit which is left behinde. And so as often as wee are moued to doe any almes, let vs call this warning to mynde and correct our niggardlinesse thereby, which proceedeth (as I tolde you) from this distrust of ours, that wee consider not that it is God which must prouide for vs.

Nowe it is true in deede, that when we giue an almes wee are not constrayned to ridde our selues cleane of all that wee haue. For Saint Paul sheweth that God spareth vs heerein. I say not (sayeth hee) that the poore must take that which the riche haue, but that at leastwise of your aboundance, you must succour such as are in neede, and see them somewhat relieued by you, as who woulde saye: It is not ynough that I haue for mine owne vse, and that God hath 2. Cor. 8.

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himselfe so liberall towardes mee so as I want nothing; but forasmuch as I see my neighbours pyne away through neede, they must haue some portion of that which is mine, and they must at leastwise feele somewhat of the blessing of God, when I am at mine ease. This is the thing whereunto saint Paul leadeth vs. So then let vs professe our selues by this place where it is sayde: *Thou shalt gather in the fruits of thy vineyarde, thou shalt not doubt the fruitefulnes of thy fields, thou shalt heerebie tast sweet*, knowing that it is a speciall priuiledge which God giueth vnto men, and which we ought to esteeme well of, when euery man possesseth his owne without gainesaying, so as hee which hath a fielde, gathereth the corne to maintaine himselfe & his familie, and hee which hath a vineyarde, reapeth the commoditie of the wine. Seeing the Lord granteth this vnto vs, let vs acknowledge his fatherly goodnes towardes vs: and let it stirre vs vp to relieue and succour the which are in neede and distresse: and when wee see the poore languishing in their miseries, and oppressed with necessitie, let vs bee mooued with some pitie towardes them; let their case touch vs to the quicke: and albeit in respect of men wee may say: This is mine, yet notwithstanding, let vs haue an eye vnto GOD, who hath bestowed it on vs vnder condition that we should not keepe all of it in our owne handes, but distribute it in such wise as wee see agreeable on the one side to our owne abilitie, and on the other, to the neede and necessitie of our neighbours.

But let vs returne to the promise. For as I bidde you, a man might say: Well, I haue wherewith to finde mee this yeare: but what shall I haue for the yeare which followeth? A man must not assure himselfe of that which he hath: For the corne which hee hath in his garners may bee consumed: God can soone cause it to vanish: And it must not bee in way of hypocrisie that wee must saye, Giue vs this day our daily or ordinarie breade. For thereby wee confesse, that they which haue neuer so much, haue nothing at all, except God make it auaileable to their vse. So then let euery man haue consideration to say: What may this boote mee? Although I bee stored and furnished with all things; yet God may bereaue mee of all: he hath the heauens in his hande to shut them vp, and hee sayeth that hee will make the heauens as hard as yron, and the earth shalbee hardened like brasse, so that wee shall not wring out of it one droppe of sustenance for vs. Will wee then that the Lorde who hath hitherto fed vs, and beene our foster father, euen vnto this present time, shall continue to doe the like vnto the ende? Let vs take heede that wee distrust not his goodnes, and thereby bee hindered to bee kindhearted towardes them which haue neede of our helpe. Let vs therefore helpe them, yea, euen without staying vppon any other thing than this present promise, That the blessing of God shalbee vppon vs. Let vs be enclyned vnto pitie and compassion, to relieue them which stande in neede of our helpe, knowing that when God hath giuen vs one good yeare, if wee bee gentle and kindhearted to succour our neighbours, hee will alwayes encrease his benefites and blessings more and more vpon vs: as Saint Paul also sheweth in the second Epistle to the Corinthians, where hee handleth this matter at large. Let vs therefore haue this alwayes before our eyes: as a verie point whereunto the scripture leadeth vs: namely, that we must be fully assured, and thorowlie resolued, that our Lord will neuer forget vs. Whē we are once thorowly perswaded of this, doubtles we will esteeme more of the onlie blessing of God, than of all treasure we might haue gathered & heaped vp together. Though we haue all prouision in the world it would not suffice vs so well as this onlie contentment will doe, to say: I haue my God which hath promised not to forget me, but to continue his bountifulnes alwayes vnto me: I haue euer found him liberall towards me euen vnto this day, and hee will doe yet more for me, if I commit my selfe whollie vnto him and to his prouidence. Ye see then what we are to learne as touching this promise.

2. Cor. 8. & 9. Chapt.

Let vs come now vnto that which God addeth, that is: *That the Iewes were seruants in Egypt, and that he brought them out from thence* (as we saw yesterday.) But he repeateth the same thing againe, & that not without good cause. For as it was yesterday touched, if men be welthie, there is much crouching vnto them because of their riches, they separate themselues as it were from mankinde, and they beare themselues in hand that they are a degree aboue them, & the poore may not touche any thing of theirs. To be short, if God would haue beleeued them, he should haue made a seuerall world for them: for to their seeming, the poore are not woorthie to haue any dwelling with them. And that is because they are not touched with other mens afflictions, to saie: Alas behold he is my flesh, how wretched soeuer he be, as the prophet Esaie saith, who leadeth vs to the minding of this point, when hee woulde haue vs enclyned to pitie and compassion, so as our bowels shoulde yearne at the afflictions of our brethren, as the scripture speaketh. But there is not one which thinketh hereon. God therefore perceiuing that riches doe blinde men in such wise, and that their eyes are readie to burst, (for that is the similitude which Dauid vseth in the 73. Psalme) sayeth: *Remember that thou wast a seruant in the lande of Egypt.* And so whereas the Iewes are exhorted in this wise, it is to the intent they shoulde not bee puffed vp with pride through their aboundance, or that beeing fatte and well fed, they should not become like restie Iades as it is saide in the song: but that they shoulde alwayes bethinke themselues thus: Wee were sometimes in bondage, and that in such cruell bondage, as none could bee greater, wee were in thraldome like poore slaues, but God hath deliuered vs. The remembrance of this one thing ought to abate all the pryde of the Iewes, and moreouer to leade them to pitifull compassion to helpe

Esa. 58. 7. Col. 3. 12. 1. Iohn. 3. 17

those which were poore and needie among them.

As for example, if there were straungers which had neither vineyardes nor other possessions: if there were widowes and fatherlesse among them, they ought to think: Alas, when our fathers were cruelly afflicted in the lande of Egype, they woulde faine haue beene somewhat releeued: is it not reason then that wee nowe shoulde doe the like? This (say I) is the meaning of God, when hee speaketh of the bondage of Egypt. Moreouer, hee warneth the Iewes (as wee haue declared afore) that they possesse not the lande of Chanaan for their inheritaunce by any other title, than because it was giuen them by GOD. It is therefore all one as if the chiefe Lorde shoulde require his royalties, his homage, & his other right, which are due vnto him. For God seemeth thus to say: I haue giuen you the land of Chanaan: but I haue reserued the gleaning & such like things for my selfe. And therefore deceiue mee not of that which is mine. Beholde, I appoynt the poore in my behalfe to goe and gather vp these things.

Nowe as for vs, it is true in deede that wee dwell not in the land of Chanaan, as did the Iewes, wee haue no such order of gouernemente as they had, neither are we of the stocke of Abraham, there are no such portions of land allotted vs as are written of in Iosua, and yet neuertheleese this ought alwayes to bee in force amongest vs; that hee which is of wealth, is bounde according to his measure and aboundance, to releeue them which are in need. Saint 2.Cor.8.14. Paul speaketh not vnto the Iewes, he speaketh not for the time of the figures vnder the lawe, but hee setteth foorth this doctrine & this rule vnto all the faithfull in generall, and will haue men obserue it vntill the ende of the worlde. Therefore let vs note that whensoeuer through our niggardlineese wee withdrawe our selues from helping our neighbours as wee ought, we are reprooued by this worde: What? whatsoeuer thou hast, thou hast it from the hande of God. And vnder what condition? For see I pray you, how men discharge them selues with slightneese; What? sayeth one. Is not this mine? Yes, but yet oughtest thou to bee kindehearted towardes such as are in neede. For art thou riche? It is not because of thy faire eyes [as they say.] In deede God hath giuen more to thee than to many others: but for all that, hath hee reserued nothing for himselfe? Hath he giuen all ouer vnto thee to make hauock of it? Although euery man enioy his owne feelde, and his owne vineyarde, although euery man eate of his owne corne and drinke of his owne wine, must charitie therefore cease and bee layde aside? Must it bee diminished? Is it not in degree Col.3.14. aboue all the ciuil orders and lawes in the worlde? Is it not the bonde of perfection? So then they which are by nature such miserable pinchpennies and such niggardes, they which whyne so when they shoulde giue an almes, and are as willing to doe it as a Beare to goe to the stake: let them fight against that vice of theirs, in such wise as our Lorde sheweth vs in this place, and let them say: Howe nowe? That which thou hast is none of thine, seeing that thy God hath giuen it thee. Consider now what couenaunt hee hath made with thee. It is not that thou shouldest bee a gulfe to deuour and swallowe vp all: but to the intente that thy brethren shoulde bee somewhat relieued by thee, and hee vouchsafeth thee the honour to bee the disposer of his goods. If God giue mee no more than I needed, yea if I had not a crume of breade more than woulde feede mee: yet were that verie much: and coulde I euer discharge my selfe of my duetie to magnifie him sufficiently for that his bountifulneese & goodneese towardes mee? No verily. But when hee giueth a man more than hee needeth, hee appointeth him after a sorte to represente his owne person, as if hee shoulde saye, Whereas it is my propertie to doe good: for all good thinges proceede from mee: It is I which make the earth to yeelde fruite: It is I which do giue it strength to bring foorth her fruites: I doe as it were giue him mine owne office, and assigne him to bee as it were my lieutenaunte and howe greate an honour is that? All the riche therefore which haue wherewith to doe good, are doutlesse as it were the officers of God to exercise that which is properly belonging vnto him, to wit, to helpe their neighbours to liue. Therefore sith God vouchsafeth vs such honour; are not we too shamefully sacrilegious and more beastly than the beasts themselues, if wee bee not moued with pitie and compassion towardes the poore? So then let vs remember this worde when it is saide, that God gaue the land of Chanaan vnto his people on condition, that the rich shoulde pitie the poore: and at this daye let vs applye this doctrine vnto our selues, according vnto that forealleaged warning which Saint Paul giueth vs.

Nowe wee are likewise warned in generall, to acknowledge the miseries wherein wee were when God reached out his hande vnto vs, to the intent wee may bee so much the more fruitfull to serue and honour him, and to yeelde our selues wholly vnto his obedience. And this extendeth verie farre: for in generall when God meaneth to presse vs more neerely to discharge our dueties towardes him, and that euery one shoulde dedicate him selfe wholy vnto his seruice; hee putteth vs in minde that hee hath drawen vs from out of the deepest dungeon of death, and that wee were sometimes the bondslaues of Satan, that wee were holde fast bounde vnder eternall damnation, & (to be short) that we were as good as plunged in hell. Loe what inheritaunce wee haue by our birth, vntill GOD cast his eye vppon vs, and of his mercie drawe vs out of the horrible confusion wherein wee are and which wee bring with vs.

But

But nowe let vs looke vnto our firſt birth of all: Our Lorde created vs after his own image and likeneſſe. It is true: but that was wholly defaced and wiped out in vs by the ſinne of Adam: wee are accurſed, wee are by nature ſhut out from all hope of life: but behold our God hath redeemed vs by the bloud of his ſonne, & hath opened vnto vs the gate of heauen. Howe much therefore are wee bounde vnto him, if we conſider our firſt eſtate, and what wee were before hee aduaunced vs vnto this dignitie? And this is not yet all, wee were alſo wretched vnbeleeuers. For albeit that Ieſus Chriſt was the redeemer of the whole worlde, yet had wee as much as lay in vs, renounced that beneſite; nay wee had falſified our baptiſme, whereby God from our infancie had marked vs, to ſay that wee ſhould bee of his houſe and of his Church. And howe haue wee liued all the time that wee were Idolaters? Wee haue annihilated Gods grace, whereby he had called vs to him, at leaſt-wiſe as much as laye in vs: but the goodneſſe of God alwayes ſurmounted, and his truth was ſo ſtrong and ſure, that it hath ouercome all the wickednes of men: in ſo much that though they haue beene vnfaithfull, yet notwithſtanding GOD continueth ſtill to ſhewe himſelfe faithfull, ſo that the baptiſme which wee had defaced, remayneth ſtill in his full force: but it is not long of vs; for as I ſayde afore: wee were plunged in all vncleanneſſe and filthines: and were ſo defiled both in bodie and ſoule with all manner of defilementes, that wee coulde not bee but eſtraunged wholly from God. But yet hath hee plucked vs backe againe; and as nowe we bee become citizens of the kingdome of heauen, and are reconciled vnto him, and are adopted for his children, and yet wee are vnthankfull vnto him, yea, and we growe prowd againſt him; inſomuch that diuerſe preſume wonderouſly of themſelues, and yet knowe not that they are beholding vnto God for all the good which they haue. Yee ſee then how wee is moued to humble our ſelues, and that in acknowledging the beneſites and giftes which we haue receiued of God, wee ought to endeuour to vſe them ſo, as all may bee referred vnto his honour, that hee may bee ſerued of vs, and euery of vs apply himſelfe, firſt vnto his obediēce, and then to haue cōpaſſion of our neighbours.

When wee beholde the wretched vnbeleeuers in the Popedome, which are ſtill carryed away ſo headlōg in ignorance and in the damnable ſuperſtitions of Papiſtrie: alas wee ought to thinke that wee were like vnto them, vntill God deliuered vs from thence: and that wee are forgetfull heereof through contempt, as wee ſee that many diſdayne the Papiſtes and mocke them, and haue no pitie of them. And why? Becauſe they conſider not what they themſelues haue beene; ne magnifie the grace of God to ſaye: If God had not reached vs his hande, what had become of vs? Wee had remayned in our deſtruction, wherewith we had beene ouerwhelmed. Let vs therefore thinke hereupon when wee beholde them which are yet as it were reiected and forſaken of God: let vs knowe that our caſe and theirs was alike: and let it moone vs to humilitie, that all pryde may bee caſt downe, and wee endeuour to winne them, as much as lyeth in vs, which are yet wandering from the way of ſaluation? let vs acknowledge that wee had once neede of ſuch helpe and ſuccour, and that God was not nigardly towardes vs, to the intent that wee for our parte ſhoulde not bee negligent to employ our ſelues likewiſe for our neyghbour, & by that meanes ſhewe that wee are his children, ſeeing it hath pleaſed him to ſhewe himſelfe a father towardes vs. Nowe I graunt that there are many which are wonderfully greeued when a man putteth them in minde what they haue beene in time paſt.

If a man bee become riche and is aduaunced to honour, hee woulde haue no man to remember him what hee was afore: but hee is carryed away with ſuch an headleſſe ouerweening, that hee ſurely thinketh that hee is fallen from the clowdes, and woulde gladly ſo blinde the eyes of the whole worlde, that men ſhoulde conſider nothing but his preſent excellencie. But our Lorde, not without cauſe, bringeth vs backe againe. And why? For (as I tolde you) men are ſubiect to this forgetting of themſelues when God hath once exalted them, and thereupon they diſdayne their neighbours, and pride ingendreth cruelties: (as it is ſaid in the fifteenth Chapter of Ezechiell,) where Sodome is ſet downe for an example thereof. God ſayth that the pride which was founde in Sodome, prouoked his wrath and vengeance againſt that citie. For when they had once aboundaunce of all things, and were growen fatte, when they had meate and drinke at will: then began they (ſaith hee) to bee puffed vp in pryde, and afterwarde withdrewe their handes from the poore, and thought that it was ynough, ſo that they themſelues were furniſhed. Let vs therefore know, that our Lorde perceiuing the vice whereunto wee are ouermuch enclyned and giuen, meant to prouide ſuch remedie for it, as hee knewe to bee fit and conuenient for our ſaluation. So then if wee bethinke our ſelues well, wee ſhall alwayes finde iuſt reaſon to moue vs vnto kindneſſe towardes our neighbours. There is yet another thing which ought to induce vs heereunto, namely, if wee conſider thus with our ſelues: euen that I am a man, and that I am endued with ſome ſpeciall qualitie aboue others, it is of God; I am beholden to him for it, it is he that hath giuen mee that prerogatiue. But howſoeuer I fare, I cannot cut my ſelfe off from mankinde: I am deſcended from the ſtocke of Adam which is wholly accurſed: and as for that knowledge which I haue of Gods trueth, it is a ſpeciall gifte which hee hath giuen mee: I haue it not by nature: and farther I am ſubiect to all the miſeries and wretchednesſes in the worlde: if I bee to day in honour, to morrowe God may put mee to infamie and ſhame: if I be in health, God may caſt mee into ſickneſſe. Wee ſee how

Kings and Princes themselues haue beene eaten vp sometimes with vermine and with rottennesse, and haue beene so stinking, that they haue loathed euen themselues; whereby a man might perceiue the hande of God visibly vppon them. Therefore when wee see such examples, it ought to humble vs. And shall not this humilitie breede a brotherly kindheartednesse in vs to helpe our neighbours, or at least wise to bewayle and to pitie the miserie wherein they are, seeking as much as lyeth in vs to relieue and succour them? So then let vs alwayes thinke on this: *Thou wast a seruaunt in the lande of Egypt, and therefore I commaunde thee to doe thus.*

Nowe when our Lorde sayeth, I commaund thee to doe so, he taketh that as granted, which I haue alreadie touched, to wit, that because hee is the Redeemer of this people, therefore they are bounde vnto him. You owe all thinges vnto mee (sayeth hee): and seeing it is so, I will haue you pay such a tribute in way of reknowledging of those goods and lands, which you holde of mee: and I require nothing but that which is mine. Nowe when wee haue wel considered hereuppon, let vs take the exposition hereof as Saint Paul deliuereth it vnto vs in the fourteenth Chapter of his Epistle to the Romanes: and wee shall see howe profitable this doctrine is for vs. For, for this cause (sayth he) Iesus Christ dyed and rose againe, to the intent that wee should be his, both while wee liue and when wee dye. Beholde here a bond which wee cannot escape, and woe be vnto him which seeketh to exempt himselfe from it: to wit, to dedicate both our life and death vnto his seruice, who hath so loued vs and holde vs so deare, that hee hath not spared his owne life, to winne vs vnto himselfe and vnto God his father. Seeing then that hee hath so redeemed vs, that we are his inheritance, and that hee declareth that we are wholie his, & that wee belong properly vnto him, it is good reason that whensoeuer hee commaundeth vs any thing, wee should lay our hande on our mouth, and receiue without any gainsaying whatsoeuer he putteth vnto vs. For seeing hee is our Redeemer and that wee hold of him whatsoeuer wee haue, are wee not ouer blockish, if wee submit not our selues vnto him and rest altogither on his will? And that is the cause also why GOD vseth this preface in his lawe: I am the euerliuing thy God which haue brought thee out of the lande of Egypt. Before that God setteth downe any commaundements to rule the life of his people by, hee saith: Know yee that I haue alreadie purchased you to serue mee. I graunt wee haue not beene brought out of the lande of Egypt; but yet the redemption which hath beene wrought for vs is much more precious: for wee are deliuered from the bottomlesse pit of hell. For as much therefore as wee of our owne nature are so slowe to serue God, or rather so restie, that wee drawe cleane backewarde from his will: because wee receiue not the yoke quietly, but are as young vntamed and vnhandled heiffers, or rather as vnbroken buls. For we see how some are so headstrong and brainsicke, that a man can by no meanes rule them; and others are spitefull and frowarde, full of rebellion, and vnreclaymable. Sith we see it is so harde a matter to bring vs in subiection vnder GOD: let vs quicken vp our selues in this sort and saye: Howe nowe? Knowest thou not who it is that speaketh? Is it not hee who hath redeemed vs? And seeing that wee are his, must hee haue so much a doe to winne vs vnto himselfe? Shal wee so resist him? Must hee bee fayne to fight with vs when hee would frame vs to his wil? Doe not we shewe our selues masters in so dooing? And are we not to be holden for detestable persons? Verily if wee looke well to our selues, wee shall finde that this is not the onely cause whereby wee are bound vnto God, hee might vpbrayde vs with his creating of vs. And if wee bee his creatures, is it not good reason that hee shoulde quietly haue the mastrie of vs? And what creatures are wee? He shalbee serued of the Oxen and Asses, hee shalbee serued of the earth which is without all sense and feeling, and of corne and of wine and of all other senseleese thinges: for wee see howe God imployeth them as it seemeth good vnto him. But hee hath created vs after his owne image and likenesse. Was he bounde to make vs reasonable creatures, and to giue vs such excellencie and dignitie? Nay verily. Let vs knowe then that it ought to mooue vs to yeelde our selues wholly vnto his obedience, for asmuch as wee see that hee hath preferred vs before asses, horses, dogges, and other beastes, and before stones and other dead and senseleese creatures. But there is yet more (as I haue sayde) to vs, the redemption which God hath wrought for vs: which deserueth that wee shoulde suffer our selues to bee gouerned by him, and that whatsoeuer he speaketh, it is to be presupposed that he hath all authoritie ouer vs, and that hee borroweth it not any where elle, but hath it dewe vnto him, as vnto our soueraigne King.

But let vs farther note, that God meaneth not to wrest from vs any seruile or forcible subiection, but woulde haue vs of our owne good will quietly to yeelde vnto that which he saith. Why vseth hee these wordes: *Thou wilt serue mee, but I haue nowe set thee at liberte?* There is no dout but that hee meant to winne vs vnto himselfe by this myldnesse. As if hee had saide: Go to, I might in deede constrayn you to serue mee: but I will haue you to serue me with a free heart: I will haue you like a childe which taketh pleasure in obeying and pleasing of his father: I will not holde you as slaues and bondemen, but I woulde haue you offer your selues vp vnto mee as it were in sacrifice. Nowe wee knowe that the sacrifices which wee offer vnto God must bee offered with a free good wil & al? euer he requireth of vs, he calleth sacrifices. And therfore let vs note, that by his receiuing of vs vnto himselfe, after hee hath redeemed vs, he giueth vs to vnderstand that he meaneth not to hale vs

Act. 12. 23.

Exod. 20. 2.

to him by force, nor to hamper vs with cordes and chaines, nor to wrest I knowe not what from vs, neither cõmeth he like a sherife or bayliffe to levy any thing of vs; but exhorteth vs mieldely: and sheweth vs that sith he hath redeemed vs it is good reason that we should be his and also all that euer hee hath put into our handes: And that seeing wee holde all of him, and by those thinges hee testifieth his fatherlie goodnesse towardes vs: therefore wee ought to bee so much the more moued and enclined too doe whatsoeuer it shall please him to commaund vs. And that is the cause also why the holy scripeure vseth such amiable speeches as these? I exhorte you: I pray you. When Saint Paule spake, hee might haue vsed the authoritie of God: For when we bring the lawe, when we reprehende vices, which we exhort vnto that which is commaunded vs, surely it is God that speaketh: and we take it from him whatsoeuer wee vtter with our mouthes: But yet God in the person of saint Paul prayeth vs: and therefore wee ought to be ashamed, if wee yeelde not thereunto, ne be anchened therewith, what hardenesse soeuer be in vs. So then let euery of vs learne to quicken vp himselfe, when we see such loosenesse in ourselues, and that we are so slowe that wee rather recoyle backewarde than set ourselues forwarde to any good thing. Consider O wretched creature after what sort thy God directeth his speech vnto thee: hee commeth familiarly vnto thee: hee sayeth not, Beholde I am your king: I haue all rule and superioritie ouer you, and therefore I must handle you roughly: hee speaketh not after that manner: but he sayeth I am come nigh vnto you. And for what cause? but to be your sauiour? And this hee doeth not for his owne profite, but for our saluation: therefore sith wee see that our Lorde vseth such gentlenesse and mildenesse towardes vs, wee ought to fare the better by it euery one of vs, & to take occasion thereby to quicken vp ourselues the better in our duties.

And let vs note also howe God sayth: I commaunde thee to doe so. And why? To the intent we should listen vnto his mouth, & depende wholely thereupon: and not euery man order himselfe after his owne fancie and say: O I doe this in the honour of God, and is it not ynough? Euery man must not bring his owne opinion before God, to say: We must do this or that because we thinke it to be good: but God will haue men simply to hearken and to follow without any exception, whatsoeuer hee calleth them vnto. And whē he leadeth vs in this wise vnto his own will, it is all one as if he had cut off all those excuses to say: And when I doe thus, will it not do well if I vse such a meane? GOD (I say) will not haue vs to take such aduauntage of him, that euery one should order himselfe according to his owne pleasure: but hee will haue his worde hearkened vnto, and obeyed without any gainesaying. So then will wee haue a certaine rule? Wil we not wander in our life as wild and sauage beastes? Let vs heare God speake; and hauing heard him, let vs hold ourselues vnto that which he sayth: and let vs not presume to bring in our replyes and say: yea and this would do well, and that were not amisse. But let vs bethinke ourselues thus: Doth God commaund vs to doe so? It is not ynough to put y whole world to silence, and to bridle not onely our tongues, but also our heartes, so as we presume not to go against him, but yeelde him the honour which he requireth, and say: Lorde we are heere: And then if we wil speake, it must be but to say, Amen Lorde. And therefore when he commaundeth vs any thing, let vs knowe that we must yeelde our consentes vnto it, and that not by force or constraint, but willingly, and we must obey it, not by halfes, but fully and wholely, and not vsurpe any such libertie, as to doe whatsoeuer wee thinke good, but suffer him to gouerne vs and to beare rule ouer our thoughtes and workes, that we may altogether be his.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God, with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs to feele them more and more. And because he hath bestowed all thinges vpon vs, and sheweth himselfe so liberall a father towardes vs, let vs for our parte endeuour to shewe ourselues his children, enforcing ourselues to doe well, and to relieue and succour them which are in neede. And forasmuch as we feele ourselues so far indebted vnto our GOD, let vs be stirred vp the more to acknowledge this inestimable benefite that hee hath done for vs when it pleased him to draw vs out of the gulfe of hell, and hath called vs to the hope of euerlasting life, in the which he maintaineth and preserueth vs dayly by his worde: and pray we him to confirme vs therein better and better, vntill he hath brought vs into the full possession and enioying of that euerlasting inheritaunce which he hath promised vnto vs, and which hee hath purchased for vs by the bloude of our Lorde Iesus Christ. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely vnto vs, but also vnto all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xij of Februarie, 1556.

The CXLII. Sermon which is the first vpon the fiue and twentith Chapter.

WHen there is any strife betweene men, they shall come vnto Iudgement and they shall haue Iustice done them, by declaring him iust which is iust, and by pronouncing him wicked which is wicked.

2 And if the wicked be founde worthy of beating, the Iudge shall cause him to be layde down and to be beaten before his face, according to his trespasse, vnto a certaine number of stripes.

3 Fortie stripes shall he cause him to haue, and not aboue: least if hee shoulde be beaten aboue this number of stripes, thy brother should appeare despised in thy sight.

4 Thou shalt not muzzell the oxe his mouth which treadeth out the corne.

OVr Lorde in this place sheweth the which haue the charge of Iustice, what they ought to do when anie man hath wronged his neyghbour. For wee knowe that ciuill order is ordayned on earth, to the ende that euery man might liue quietly, so as the weaker bee not borne to the grounde by the stronger, but that right and equitie might beare rule. If this were not, men were better to be beastes to raunge in the wilde forrestes: for the beastes yet can maintaine and keepe themselues one with another. But wee knowe that men are of so peruerse and crooked a nature, that euery one woulde scratch out his neighbours eyes, if there were no bridle to hold them in. Seeing then it is so that God hath ordained magistrates to represse the leaude behauiours of men, and not to suffer any iniurious and wrongfull dealinges to escape vnpunished: it is not without cause that our Lorde commandeth heere, that if a man be vniustly molested, and complaine of it, he shall haue Iustice done him. And although it be here expressely spoken of such iniuries as men complaine of; yet meaneth he not, that if any wickednes be committed and not complained of, the magistrates should winke at it, and dissemble it. For when a man is offended and seeketh thereupon for iustice, he shall haue peraduenture some reasonable amendes. But in the meane time yee shall see God offended, ye shall see a crime committed not against one man onely, but against all, and yet no plaintife founde in this case, for wee knowe that such zeale is not to be founde in the worlde; nay we are falne nowe into those times of which the prophet Elias spake: That there is not one which standeth vppe to maintaine the quarell of God: and except we see that either we ourselues are like to sustaine losse, or may make the matter gainefull vnto vs, we withdraw ourselues, our mouthes are shutte vp. And therefore the magistrates may not thinke themselues excused, although they haue no alarmes rung in their eares, nor complaintes made vnto them: for they ought to bee watchfull to punish such faultes as are committed: they ought to enquire after them although they be not first made priuie vnto them. Neuertheless GOD will haue them to heare the cries of those which are oppressed, and to reach out their hands vnto them. And in very deede it is sayde that God will be on their side which are wrongfully intreated, & will defende them. The holy scripture pronounceth oftentimes that their cries are heard vppe into heauen. Nowe God hauing first declared that, appointeth such here belowe as shall execute Iustice in his name. Seeing hee heareth them which complaine vnto him, from the heauens; if earthly Iudges play the deafe men, shal they escape for it? Doubtlesse nay. The register bookes shall one day be opened, & God will shewe that there were these and these outrages and violences committed, & no redresse of the. Let vs therefore note well, that God meant in this place to declare, that he wil cal those which beare the sworde of Iustice to their account and reckening, if they wittingly permit any man to be iniured and troden vnder foote. And in verie deede nature hath taught vs that. The Paynims

2. Tim. 3.

2. Kin. 19.

Psal. 34.

ples which had not the lawe of Moses knowe full well that euery man ought to haue right, and that he which was oppressed, if he had desired it, ought to haue iustice doone him; or else that monstrous disorder and crueltie shoulde bee shewed. And yet for all that we see howe carelesse men are in this behalfe, and howe that if a man be but a little fauoured, his fault shalbe winked at; and hee which is beaten or otherwise ill entreated, shall be fayne away with some floute or taunte, and he which offered him the wrong shall escape. This is common to bee seene. And therefore our Lorde had needle to declare what account himselfe hath in this matter, to put magistrates in mind that if they discharge not their duties faythfully, they haue a soueraine Iudge, and that if there be no place of Iustice to appeale vnto in this worlde, hee will in the ende holde his Assises, and heare those causes handled, which haue beene cast aside and hunted. As we see that the Iudges are oftentimes deafe in a poore mans suite, so as if he come to demaunde Iustice, in deede there is not any that will bee so bolde as to say: Gette thee hence for thou shalt haue no Iustice heere: there is none that will speake so impudently. But some will say: well, put vppe your bill: and at eight dayes ende, yee shall haue one giue him a flirt with his finger to the him to wit thereby, that hee doeth but gnaw himselfe in vaine. For there shall be so many shifes, and so many delayes vsed, that hee shall be at his wittes ende, and not knowe what to doe: nay you shall haue one or other come and whisper in his eare and say: Alas poore fellow, why doest thou trouble thy selfe? Thou seest heere is no helpe for thee: Nay thou shalt be made beleeue that thou beganst the quarell and that thou were the authour of the riot, and so thou shalt be punished thy selfe. And therefore thou were best to put vp the blowes which thou hast without further pursuing of thy cause. The Iudges all this while will not say a worde, they will shewe some good countenaunce like Iudges, but yet notwithstanding they giue their consent vnto such wrongfull dealing, and they are partakers of such trecherie, that hee which is molested and afflicted, after he hath spent his money and taken great paines, goeth away and is mocked. Beholde in what estate we are. And this wickednes is ordinarily practised. And therefore we see that this lawe wherein our lord declareth that he will haue him which complaineth, heard, and his cause tried, is not superfluous.

And he addeth afterwardes: *That he which is iust, must be declared such a one, and he which hath offended must be condemned.* We see that God is not contented to haue the ceremonie only vsed, and that men should receiue the inditement, or bill or supplication which is put vp, but he will haue the Iudge to proceede to definitiue sentence. For this long differring of sentéce, serueth to no other ende, but to hinder all right and to wearie the parte whose cause is iust, & thereby to make him giue ouer his sute. That is the very ende of it, in deede this is ill dealing: but yet is it commonly vsed. So then for this cause God hauing first commaunded that mens complaintes should be heard, addeth that they must proceede vnto sentence. As if he had sayd; that the Iudges must deale simply and vprightly, and not thinke that they haue discharged their duetie, when they haue made men beleeue that they haue done somewhat: but they must make a riddance of such causes as come before them, they must condemne him which hath done wrong, & maintaine the iust man, they must declare themselues to be the protectours of good causes. Thus we see in effect what Gods meaning is in this place. And heereby we may gather howe farre we are from following the rule which is giuen vs. For a man may see oftentimes the clean contrarie. But yet for all that, this doctrine ought to be receiued, and although corruptions be ouer common in the worlde, yet seeing God hath vouchsafed to teach them with his owne mouth which sitte in the seate of Iustice, lette them thinke so much the better on their duetie, lette them take the bitte in their mouthes as we say, and suffer themselues to be ruled by GOD, and let them knowe that if they abuse their estate and calling, it is not for nought that GOD hath spoken. And therefore let them be the better instructed to their saluation. But if they make no accounte hereof, they shall perceiue that GOD dallyeth not in pronouncing his vengeaunce against them: but that he will speedily execute it, if they be so negligent in dooing that which hee commaundeth. And in verse deede men are too too blockishe, (I meane those which were placed in the seate of Iustice) in that the honour which GOD vouchsafeth them, moueth them not to doe their duelies. Is it a small thing to maynetaine right, and to condemne that which is euill? Nay verily: For it belongeth vnto God. It is GOD that is the fountaine of all Iustice, and of all trueth: it is hee which is the maintayner of it. Therefore when we see that God hath exalted mortall creatures so much and aduaunced them to so high degree, as to maintaine his owne cause to say: This is right, and this is wrong; when God (I say) hath giuen men such authoritie, is there not in them an ouer wicked or rather an ouer beastlie vnthankefulnesse, if they bee not moued heereby with some zeale to discharge their duetie?

But heere a man might demaunde, whether he which is wrongfully hurt may complayne or no. For we are commaunded to be patient: and we knowe the exhortation of our Lorde Iesus Christ: If one strike thee on the cheeke, receiue two blowes rather than seeke to reuendge thy selfe of him which did thee wrong. Nowe then, if wee must bee patient in iniuries as we are commaunded: howe is it lawefull to make our complaint before a Iudge? This matter shall be handled more at large anon. Neuerthelesse let vs note heere, first that when God ordaineth a forme of ciuill order, hee treateth not alwayes what is lawfull for euerie parte: but he sheweth what is the office of Magistrates.

Mat. 5. 39

That

that is to be noted for one point. Secondly let vs note, that God meant to arme the magistrate to defende euery mans right and to see that no man bee wronged either in his bodie or in his goods: and his so doing is to this intent, that we should vse this benefite of his: but yet not otherwise than according to his will. Now then albeit the magistrates ought to consider that they haue authoritie to punish euill doers, so as euerie man may liue in peace and not be oppressed by any other which is stronger than himselfe: yet notwithstanding, this letteth not but that we may suffer those injuries which are doone vnto vs, euen as God commaundeth vs, and not be ledde with any desire of reuenge. A man will inferre thereupon, that then it is not lawfull to complaine. Nay, that followeth not. For when our Lorde Iesus Christ forbiddeth all his to reuenge themselues, it is no let but that they may procure the punishment of outrages almuch as lyeth in them, so it be doone without all malice and heart burning. In deede I graunt that this is a rare case and verie harde to be founde. For assoone as a man is injured, he is kindled straitway, and thereupon he conceiueth rancour, heefretteth and fumeth, and when he commeth before the Iudge, he speweth foorth his poyson in such sort, that any man may easily perceiue his heart and minde is enuenomed. Ye see then where the whole mischiefe lyeth, to wit in this, that we are set vpon reuenge, wee maintaine our owne priuate quarell, so that in effect we desire nothing else but y he which hath done vs harme, may haue his payment, and we by that meanes be reuendged. But if a man desire to liue in peace, and when any wrong is doone vnto him, he is ready to procure y welfare of his enemie, then, so his heart bee stil cleere, let him not forbeare to complaine vnto some magistrate that the offender may be punished. And why? To the end that the euill may be repressed and practised no more; for it is a kind of graunting of libertie to doe euill, when euill doings be winked at and scape vnpunished. But yet for all this, let vs beware that wee shroude not our selues vainely vnder this pretence of saying that wee may haue recourse vnto the lawe, so we conceiue no wicked desire nor enmitie: let vs not (say I) make this our buckler, as though we were escaped from the hande of God. If there be any hypocrisie in vs, let euery man haue an eye vnto himselfe, and if we breede any rancour in vs, so as we desire his harme & losse which hath wronged vs; let vs condemne ourselues before God. Although Iustice be ordained to maintaine vs, yet we deceiue ourselues if we bring thither any vnruly passion of our owne, and followe not this rule of rendring good for euill, and of praying for them which curse vs, and of doing good vnto them which persecute vs. If wee followe not this rule, we shalbe alwayes condemned before GOD. We may well protest, I seeke not to reuenge my selfe with mine owne handes, I attempt nothing but that which I may doe: but yet for all that, we abuse Iustice, when we proceede not with such vprightnesse and simplicitie as GOD commaundeth vs. Let vs therefore note wel, that although it be sayde in this place, that the Iudges shall heare the plaintifes and iudge their cause: yet is it not lawfull for any man to accuse his neighbour, if he doe it of rough enmitie and euill will. And let vs learne not but that we ought alwayes to be patient for those iniuries which men doe vnto vs: For when death patience impeacheth: Not that wee should not onely not bee set vppon reuenge; but also that wee should seeke to doe them good which persecute vs, and that we should pray for them which curse vs. This is the thing which wee are commaunded, and therefore let vs follow it, and then it shall be lawfull for vs to flie for refuge vnto them, which are armed with authoritie to maintaine the good and to punish the lewd, and to represse all wrongful and outragious dealings: we may then I say haue our recourse vnto them.

Now it followeth: *Thus the wicked man shall be condemned according vnto his desert.* There is here no mention of such offences as were to be punished by death. For if there were murder committed, or adulterie, or such like things; they were punished by death. We haue seene how God commaunded that all such kindes of wickednesse should be vtterly rooted out: but here he speaketh but of such iniuries as deserue some other chastisement. And that is the cause why it is sayde, *Thus the malefactour shall be punished according to his desert, yet so that he shall receiue but forty stripes.* For they vsed a whippe made of an oxe hide, to chastise them which had wrongfully and outrageously with their neighbour, alwayes prouided that the offence deserued not death. It is sayde: *That they shall not passe the number of forty stripes.* And why? *Lest (saith he) that the man shoulde not be maymed or disgraced in his body,* but remaine whole and sounde. Ye see then in effect what is here declared, to wit, first that the sentence must not be giuen in vaine: and secondly that some moderation must be vsed, so as the rigour be not excessiue. First I say the sentence must not be in vaine, but it must be put in execution. For sometimes yee shall see Iudges make a countenance of thundring at a man: howebeit, that shalbe but for some policie. When they are minded to let an offender escape they will condemne him to doubble and trebble punishment. What (say they) This wicked fellowe is not worthy to liue. A man would marualle to heare them: but when the thing should be put in execution, it falleth out to a mockerie. But our Lorde sheweth that they may not dally so with him: and that seeing the magistrates beare not the sworde in vaine nor are armed with authoritie in way of dallyaunce; they must vse their power, and when they haue pronounced sentence, they must afterwardes doe Iustice in executing of it. And that is the very cause why they are called the soules of the Lawe. For a lawe without magistrates, is as a bodie which hath neither sense nor mouing. And when the bodie is idle and stirreth not, it is a signe that the soule is

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altogether blockish. And therefore when there are good lawes, and some outwarde forme of Iustice, and yet for all that there is no execution thereof, insomuch that it shalbe sayde: Thus it must be, and yet the Statutes shalbe disobeyed, yea and sentence shalbe giuen, and yet slippe away vnexecuted: Surely it is a token of too grosse blockishnesse in those which shold gitie strength to a lawe, if it might not be vnprofitable. That the thing which God declareth in the first place for speaking of the executing of sentence, hee saith: *Lette the iust be declared for such a one, and let him which hath doone wrong bee condemned, lette him bee punished according to his desert.* Nowe hereby he giueth vs to vnderstand that we must not lette any such faultes scape as ought to be punished; neither behoueth it vs already to shewe our zeale in punishing of greate enormities: but also to consider that smaller faultes drawe on the greater when they are let alone as buried. God therefore pronounceth expressely that the malefactour shall be punished. And when? Not onely when hee hath offended so grieuously that his fault is vnpardonable: but if the fault be litle, he will haue the punishment and correction answerable thereunto: hee will not haue men to say: O it is a small fault: lette it passe. Well, the matter is not great, he may escape the better cheape. Nay how small soeuer his offence be, hee will haue him smart for it, and be an example vnto others. Let vs therefore weigh this worde well, yea, let vs weigh it so much the better because wee see that the practise noweadayes runneth cleane contrarie: for men seeke nothing else but to lessen their faultes. In deede a man shall not bee altogether excused when he hath offended: but nevertheless hee which doeth the wrong shall finde alwayes some aduocate to pleade for him, yea euen without bearing the name of it. He ought to be as a Iudge in the case; and yet he will so mitigate the faulte as it shall not be punishable, faire glosses shall still be founde to colour the matter withall: O sir will one say: There is such a circumstaunce, there is this and that to be considered in the case: & so the tenth part of mens faults shal not bee punished. For why? They bee not found so grieuous and hainous as they be in deede. No, but yet for all that, if the fault bee small, God will haue the chastisement answerable thereunto; and if it be greate, he will haue the punishment the more seuere and greeuous. Thus yee see in effect what wee haue to marke in minde.

Nowe whereas GOD speaketh thus vnto earthly Iudges, let vs knowe that for his parte he might well punish vs by his Iustice, and that not for petie faultes, but for notorious transgressions. Who is so iust and innocent among vs, that he findeth not himselfe faultie before God, yea and that in many offences? Moreouer how many faults do we commit through vnaduisedenesse, when we thinke not on them? And therefore if God vsed not great mercie towardes vs, he should lift vp his hand against vs, and drowne vs in the pitte of destruction euerie minute of an houre. So then whereas wee liue still and are preserued; lette vs acknowledge that it is thorough the infinite goodnesse of our God. For if as touching earthly Iustice hee commandeth the least faultes to be punished, he might himselfe by greater reason lay his hande vpon vs, euen to roote vs out of the earth, especially considering the infinite number of faultes whereof we be guiltie before him. And if it be alleadged; Well then, seeing God is so mercifull, ought not men also to be mercifull, and so to followe him? It is easily answered: That GOD hath this libertie to forgiue, whome hee will: besides this, he hath also his latter iudgement which he reserueth vnto himselfe. We see in deede, that he beareth with the contemners of his maiesty, and with those which are most harde hearted, and vnamendeable, he winketh at them, he maketh no reckening to punish them: but the time which he giueth them shall cost the very deere. They may well vse that diuelishe prouerbe of theirs: That the time is woorth a mans monie: but it had beene better for them that they had beene reformed at first, than so to haue nourished the vengeaunce of God against themselues. For after that they haue defied him to the vtmost, they shall in the ende feele that they abused his goodnesse ouermuch, which waited their leasure so long and allured them vnto repentaunce. God then reserueth vnto himselfe a iudgement which appeareth not yet vnto men. But as for mortall men which are Iudges, they must doe their duetie, they haue their rule and their lesson deliuered vnto them, let them sticke to that, and discharge themselues. So then lette vs learne to vnderstande, that our Lorde sheweth himselfe very gentle and pitifull towardes vs, in that we liue still in this worlde and are nourished still at his handes, and in that he beareth so mercifully with vs. For why? Our faults towardes him are innumerable, and wee shoulde be killed with stripes if he vsed not this inestimable goodnesse which I haue spoken of.

Moreouer secondly in this place here is mention made of moderating the chastisementes which are vsed. For the Iudges ought alwayes to consider that they sitte in Iustice in the behalfe of GOD, and therefore into that seate which is holy and dedicated to the doeing of right, they may not bring their owne passions, to feede their owne choler, and to deale crossely and ouerthwartly as they themselues list. God therefore in saying, *that there shalbe a certaine number of stripes*, declareth expressely that there must be a reasonable measure vsed in punishing. Verily when a man is not to be cleane rooted out, but to liue still in the worlde, God will not haue him maimed that he should become vnprofitable as touching his body. For what a thing were it if a man should be so rigorously handled as to be made a cripple so as hee can no more helpe himselfe? It were better hee had beene put to death at the first, than to be left to pine away in this worlde, and to be as a blocke. Nowe therefore when a man is to bee left aliue still, GOD will haue the Iudges to

haue

haue a regarde that he be not beaten or scourged in such wise as he be disfigured or made vnable to helpe himselfe. That is the very thing which God will haue men to looke vnto. And for the same cause he setteth downe heere the number of stripes, to wit, *fortie stripes, and that as the most.* Nowe the Iewes being ful of Ceremonies tooke away one stripe: and it is the manner of men to adde alwayes somewhat to the lawe of God, as though all perfection were not contained in it. Truely GOD hadde sayde vnto them, Ye shall nor adde, nor diminish any thing from that which I haue spoken: but mennes affections are euer boyling, and men will alwayes bee wiser than it is lawefull for them to bee. And that is the very cause of the inuenting so many rules & obseruations; of the which sort there are a number of thinges in the Popedome. And why? it is good to doe so (say they): a man can not do too much. In deede a man can not do to much in conforming himselfe to the will of God. For howe great soeuer our care bee in that behalfe, yet our weakenesse will not suffer vs to be linked thereunto in such sorte as were requisite. But to adde any thing vnto that which GOD commaundeth, is alwayes an ouerweening and presumption worthie to bee condemned. Yet neuertheleſſe it was the manner of the Iewes to giue thirtie and nine stripes. And why? They thought thus with themselues: Oh it is to bee doubted least when a man hadde giuen fourtie stripes hee coulde not withholde himselfe from giuing one more, and so by that meanes he shold goe beyonde the Law. Ye say well: but our lord had no respect of such small tryfles. He ordained onely that there should be a moderation in all the chastisementes, which were made: I meane alwayes when the offence deserued not death, as we haue declared afore. But as touching this obseruation, it hath beene a long time among the Iewes it is yet in vse among them at this day. Saint Paule sheweth it where hee reporteth that he was fiue times whipped. For albeit that at that time the Iewes had no iniurisdiction nor rule in their owne handes, yet some kinde of chastisement was left vnto them in their Synagogues: so that when any offended among them, if the crime touched not the publike estate, they had authoritie to correct him after the manner of their countrey. And Saint Paule 2.Cor.11.24 sayth that he was beaten in this wise fiue times. And I receiued (sayth he) fortie stripes saue one. When he sayth saue one, he giueth vs to vnderstande, that the Iewes neuer tormented him but with extreeme rigour: I meane as farre as their power stretched. For if they coulde haue killed him and eaten him vppe, they would haue done it: they sought nothing else but to teare Saint Paule in peeces as farre as their rage and furie draue them. But because it was not lawefull for them to passe any farther, they scourged him vnto thirtie and nine stripes, according as it was sayde, that the punishment must be made according to the desert. But a man coulde finde no such desert in Saint Paule: for it was for the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ that he suffered such punishment. But we see the crueltie of the Iewes who coulde not be satisfied without they had vsed the vtmost extremitie that they coulde against Saint Paule. Beholde how hypocrites would obserue the lawe of God in vsing of some formalitie: but in the meane time they misse alwayes in the substaunce. So much the more therefore ought we to be warned to haue an eye vnto Gods meaning: and when wee see what it pleaseth him to commaunde vs, lette vs holde ourselues vnto it, let euerie man stay himselfe thereupon, let vs not turne aside from it neither vnto the right hande nor vnto the left, and in so doing we can not erre. And that is the thing in effect which we haue to beare in minde vpon this place. Nowe if such chastisementes must be vsed for the smaller iniurie, where a man can not complaine of any great matter, as that his arme is cut off, or such a wounde is giuen him as will sticke by him all the time of his life, but only that one hath hurte him either in his good name or in his bodie: if God (I say) will haue such a fault so punished, and that the malefactour shall not escape: what shall be done to those faultes which are more haynous? Shall the Iudges bee holde excused if they lette them scape? Doubtlesse nay. And therefore let vs conclude, that seeing God will haue the rigour of Iustice vsed, (howebeit with such moderation as it behoooueth,) euen where the violence that hath beene doone is not of any greate importaunce. Surely it is a much more likelihoode in reason, that if there be any greater trespasse committed, (as if a man be maimed in his mébers) the offender shall not in that behalfe bee spared, (as we haue seene in an other place) that an eye shall be giuen for an eye, an arme for an arme, a foote for a foote. Insomuch that if a man haue offended in such a case, it is not for men to shewe mercie; but the malefactour must passe vnder the edge of the sworde, and be made an example for all others, to the intent that euery man by that meanes may be occasioned to holde himselfe short from presuming to offer any such like outrage vnto his neighbors. Thus yee see in effect what wee haue to beare in minde.

And farther, if it bee expressely sayde: that no one man shall be suffered to haue wrong, but that hee which doeth it shall bee chastised and punished according to his desert, lette vs note that if anie man passe his boundes so farre, as to sette himselfe against a whole state, as it were in defiaunce both of God and the worlde, hee must bee the more grieuously punished: and that if the Iudges and Magistrates suffer such wickednesse vnpunished, there is no excuse for them. And why? For if there be a poore man, a man of no account, such a one as men might bobbe out his eyes, and hee complaine, God will haue him hearde, yea and hee wil haue right done vnto him. Howe much more then, if there be as it were a waterfludde, that ouerfloweth all, wherein euery man hath interest, and the whole state of a people standeth in hazarde by dissention? If that bee not repressed, we

wee must not looke that some one man alone will cry out vnto GOD, but the ayre must needes ring loude with outcryes: in so much that all the confusions and disorders which wee shall haue suffered will bee as outcryes and complaintes vnto GOD against them which haue not vsed the authoritie and power which was committed vnto them. This yee see in effect what wee haue to beare in minde vppon this place.

Nowe it is sayde by and by after: *That the Oxe which treadeth out the Corne shal not be muzzled*, and that wee must not binde his chappes together, so as he shoulde not open them to feede. No doubt but that in this place GOD meant to perswade men vnto gentlenes and humanitie: as before he forbad vs to keepe backe the wages of the hyreling, which hath bestowed his life in our seruice. And why? Bicause he sustaineth his life by his labour. It were therefore an ouergreat cruelrie to defraude him of his labour when hee hath doone his worke. And so in this place it is expressly spoken of the oxe which laboureth: as if our Lord had saide, that vprightnes and equitie ought to be ministred euen vnto the brute beastes. The Oxe cannot complaine though he bee defrauded of his foode when he hath doone his worke: but God taketh pitie of him, bicause he is his creature, and hee will not haue vs to abuse the beastes beyonde measure, but to nourish them and to haue care of them. And that is the cause why Salomon saieth in the 12. Chapter of his prouerbes; That the iust man hath a care of his beast. If a man spare neyther his horse, nor his Oxe, nor his Asse, therein hee bewrayeth the wickednesse of his nature. And if he say: Muh I care not, for it is but a brute beast: [I answer again]: Yea but it is a creature of God. It is said that the goodnesse and mercie of God extendeth to all the beastes of the earth. It is not said onely of men whom God hath made after his owne Image and likenesse: but the beastes also are compriſed therein as well as they. If God vouchsafe to consider of beastes, if he vouchsafe to haue a care of them; what ought wee to doe which are but poore wormes of the earth, which are nothing but rottennes? Wee thinke it were much against our honour to take care of beasts: but whē God gaue them vs in subiection for our vse, it was vnder no other condition, but y employing them to our labour, wee should also vse kindnes and gentlenes towardes them. And Salomon saith, not onely that the iust man hath a care of his beast, but he saith also that the bowels of the wicked man are cruell: as if he had said, a brutish and churlish man hath no pitie nor compassion in him, no not euen towardes his beast. He tormenteth his brethren, hee trampleth on one vnder his feete, he oppresseth another, he would suck the marrow out of a poore mans bones if he might possibly do it, he wold eat his flesh, he wold drink his bloud: to be short, there is nothing but cruelrie in him which is of a malicious nature. But if there be any equitie and vprightnes in vs, we wil shewe it not onely towards our neast neighbours & such as are of y same brotherhood with vs, but euen vnto y brute beastes also. bicause God hath formed & created them, and bicause he vouchsafeth to preserue them through his prouidence, and prouideth them of foode, and (at a word) careth for them: and lastly bicause that when he did put them in subiection vnto vs, he did it with condition y wee should handle them gently: that as we deale rightfully with men, so we should vse the like duetie euen towardes the brute beastes, which haue no reason, nor vnderstanding, nor cannot complaine of the iniuries which are done vnto them.

But yet neuertheleſſe God hath not in this place respected simply the brute beastes: as S. Paule also sheweth in the ninth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Hath God care of Oxen, (saith he?) S. Paul meaneth not by these wordes, y God careth not for the beastes which he hath created, as wee haue already declared: for then should hee gainsay all the holy scripture: and experience also sheweth vs that God must needes haue a care to prouide for the beasts. For the earth yeeldeth not fruit of it selfe; but as it hath vertue giuen vnto it from aboue. When we see herbs and such like things to grow, we are giuen to vnderstand thereby, that God is the purueiour for the whole world, euen for the beastes of the earth, and for the birdes, and for al things. He prouideth them of foode to nourish them withal. By this (I say) we see, that God hath a care of oxen: but S Paul meaneth y his principal care is not for them. He treateth purposely of the ministers maintenance, and sayth, that they ought to be fedde and susteined, and not skanted of their liuing: and he sheweth that seeing they are appointed of God to deliuer forth foode for mens soules, it were an ouergreat wickednesse & cruelrie to abridge them of such wages as is due vnto them. And heerewithall to make them the more ashamed which would play the niggardes in this behalfe, he saith vnto them: What? God hath not onely ordained that the man which laboreth should be fedde and maintained, but hee speaketh of oxen also. Is it bicause he hath a care of them? That is to say, is it bicause that oxen are in the highest and most soueraigne degree? No. For we know that the oxen were created for mēs sakes. Let vs cast our eye on all things whether they be aboue or beneath, in heauen or in earth; and we shall see that all is for our vse and profit. When God created the sunne, it was not to lighten himselfe, but to giue light vnto vs. As much is to be said of the Moone and of the starres: they are ordayned to serue vs, as it hath bin elsewhere already declared. Agayne, although the earth bring foorth herbes for the brute beastes, yet neuertheleſſe all is referred vnto men, and God woulde haue vs to acknowledge therein his fatherly goodnesse, and the great loue which he vseth towardes vs. Seeing then it is so that GOD hath neither created nor sustayned the brute beastes, but onely in respect of referring all vnto the vse of menne: Let vs knowe that when hee sayeth wee must not defraude the beastes which haue trauayled for vs, but nourishe and sustayne them: it is to

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the intent that wee shoulde learne to exercise all manner of kindnesse, and that when men haue spent both their sweate and bloud in our seruice, it standeth much more with reason that wee shoulde not deale niggardly with them by withholding from them their due wages, but rather that wee shoulde sustaine them, not onely by paying them their dayly wages and by giuing them sustenaunce and foode, but also by giuing them wherewith to maintayne them: for there are some which coulde bee contented at three dayes ende to haue a poore man killed, when he hath serued them; for all is one with them, so they may reape any profite by him. But contrariwise God sheweth vs that we ought to deale so friendly with those which labour for vs, that wee grieue them not beyond measure, but that they may continue and bee occasioned to giue GOD thankes in their trauayle. For there is no doubt but God ment in this place, to correct the crueltie which is in the riche who employ poore folke in their seruice, and yet recompence them not for their paynes.

On the other side hee sheweth also that hee which is ydle and vnprofitable deserueth not to be nourished or regarded. For we see that God hath commaunded euen the beastes to labour that they may be nourished. Seeing it is so, what shalbe saide of men who ought to consider for what ende they are created. A beast indeede hath his naturall inclination: but hee hath no discretion to say: There is a God which hath created mee. There is no such thing in a beast. And yet God putteth beastes in subiection vnto men, to the intent that they should not be vnprofitable. Therefore if a man who hath reason and ought to thinke thus: Gods will is that I should labour, and it is a general law for all of vs, that we must eate our bread in the sweate of our browes; if that man for all this, will be vnprofitable, and not vouchsafe to put his fingers to any worke; he is not worthy (as saint Paule saith) to be nourished and sustained. So then on the one side let vs note that God meant to perswade euery man to vse equitie and righteulnes towardes men, and not to tread them vnder our feete which serue vs, nor to defraude them of that which appertaineth vnto them: for that were crueltie. And on the other side let vs note, that those which haue not wherewith to finde themselues, must take heede that they labour diligently euery one in his vocation, so as they bee not condemned by the example of the oxen. For if they doe not, the brute beastes must rise vp in iudgement to condemne such as bee ydle and employ themselues to nothing, seeing God hath called them to serue their neighbours.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs seeke them better than we haue doone, in such sorte that returning vnto him, we may craue pardon and mercie at his hands: to the intent that being gouerned by his holy spirite, hee may guide vs in all things according to his holy will, vntill that hauing drawen vs vnto himselfe, and ridde vs of our infirmities and vices, hee cloth vs fully with his righteousnesse. And so let vs all say: Almightie God and heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xiij. of Februarie, 1556.

The CXLiij. Sermon, which is the second vpon the fiue and twentith Chapter.

5 If there be two brethren dwelling together, and the one of them die without children: the wife of the dead shall not marrie abroade to a straunger, but her brother in law shall come in to her, and take her to wife, and marrie himselfe with her.

6 And the first borne which shee shall beare, shall succeede in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israell.

7 And if the man will not take his sister in law, then his sister in lawe shall goe vp to the gate vnto the elders, and say, my husbandes brother refuseth to rayse vp vnto his brother a name in Israell, and hee will not marrie with mee.

8 Then the Elders of the Citie shall call him, and speake vnto him if hee stand in it and say: I will not take her:

9 Then shall his sister in lawe come vnto him, before the elders, and loose his shoe from his foote, and spit in his face, and aunswere and say: So shall it be done vnto the man that will not build vp his brothers house.

10 And

10 And his name shall bee called in Israell: The house of him, whose shoe is pluckt off.

11 When men striue together one against an other, if the wife of the one come neere to ridde her husband out of the hands of him that smiteth him, and put forth her hande and take him by the priuities,

12 Then shalt thou cutte off her hande: and thine eye shall not pittie her.

WEe haue heere a lawe which might seeme altogether superfluous among vs: for as it is at this day out of vse, so the reason also of it remayneth no longer. And therfore we must take it patiently, if all the thinges which are declared heere doe not wholly belong vnto vs, or else if they bee not so fully vnderstoode of vs, as were meete: and yet for all that wee will alway to gather some profitable doctrine out of it. For indeede, God hath left nothing in his lawe, but wee may fare the better by it, if hee giue vs the wisedome to knowe howe to vse it. First wee see howe Gods will was that the housholde bee maintayned in Israell. And this was not for any such respect as men haue commonly in the world; for noble men would be spoken of after their death, and therfore they would build vp a kinde of immortality heere on earth. God meant not to foode this follie among men. And verily if we were so wise as we should be, we woulde consider, that lyke as our lyfe passeth, and slydeth, and vanisheth away out of hand; so GOD would not haue our heartes settled here belowe, to desire to bee renoumed vpon earth: but that as our inheritance is in heauen, so wee should consider that it ought to suffice vs that wee haue our names written in the booke of lyfe. This is it wherein our reioysing ought to bee, as our Lorde Iesus Christ telleth his disciples. So then wee haue to note, that GOD meant not to rocke men asleepe in this foolishe ambition, whereunto they are ouermuch giuen, to wit, to bee of fame and renowne heere: hee had another respect than so. And that was, that because the parting of the land of Chanaan was made according to his will, hee would haue this order maintained and no chaunge made to the contrary, so as the inheritances shoulde returne alwayes to the same they were at the first, as we know they did in the yeere of Iubile. In respect whereof when a man deceased without children, to the intent there should be some stocke of him, and that the kindred should alwayes continue, and that the inheritaunces should not goe out of names: it is said, that one of the kinsmen should take the wydowe to wife: although in truth, before the people were come into the land of Chanaan, wee see that this law or custome was vsed through out the east country, to wit, that a woman whē she took an husband out of any house, bound her selfe, (in case that she had no childe, but her husband departed without issure) to take another husband of the same house: which thing we see to be true in the example of Thamar whē she maried Iudaes sonne: and we must not imagine that this serued but for one house only, but that it was rather a generall lawe growen vpon custome (as we say): It was therefore a straite bond or rather bondage for the women. For if a woman married in any familie, it was vnder this condition: Is my husband dead? I must take an other of the same house, yea if he offer himselfe I must take him, and he must haue children of me, and that to rayse vp a stocke vnto him, who is already dead. For the first childe that she brought foorth, bore not his name that begat it, but his who was already dead. Gen. 38.

Nowe when the Paynims brought vp this custome, no doubt but they were ledde thereunto through this worldly vanity wherof I spake. And heereby wee see, that there bee many thinges lyke, which notwithstanding are not of one selfsame qualitie. And why? Because their end is diuerse. There are which would haue a seede and stocke rayled vnto one which is dead: and why woulde they so? To the intent that their name should not perish, or be cleane put out. So yee see that pride driueth them vnto that thing. But I haue already told you that we must haste to finish the course of this life, knowing that God calleth vs vnto an euerduring estate, and therfore we ought to forget this world: and that if we be held backe by this vaine glory, of being heere in honour and estimation, it is a shutting of the gate of heauen against vs. Let vs therefore take heede howe wee wedde our selues vnto this foolish desire, that men should speake of vs after our death: and let vs knowe, that God will haue vs to bee of no account in this world, that wee may bee restored vnto our heauenly inheritaunce. But let vs note in the meane time that God hath a contrary respect: for when he gaue the land of Chanaan to his people to inherite, hee ordayned that if a man which had taken a wife and doone his parte to leaue issue behinde him, departed without issue, an other of his kinsmen shoulde supply that defaulte, that hee myght haue as it were an adoptiue childe after his death. And why did God this? To the intent that the order which hee had established by the hande of Iosua, shoulde not perishe, and that the partitions of the Lande shoulde continue as they were first made. We see then what the intent and meaning of this law is: the effect whereof was not to muzzle men in that foolishe desire which wee haue condemned. And moreouer God meant to shew the priuiledge which hee had giuen to the stocke of Abraham, euen for his sake who was the cheefe of it. For whē God chose Abraham he sanctified

all those which were to come of his race, he had chosen them for his Church: he would therfore haue the Iewes stirred vp to magnifie him for vouchsafing of them such honour as to choose them aboue all the worlde; hee woulde haue them to knowe howe much woorth this adoption of his was. Indeede it is true that they abused this goodnesse of his, as well as others. For they were puffed vp with exceeding pryde, as who woulde say: We are the holie stocke, wee are the royall priesthoode: but yet for all that, they minded not this point, that whatsoeuer they had, they enioyed it through the meere goodnesse and fauour of GOD: and therefore that they ought not to bee proude of it; but rather to acknowledge themselues so much the more bound vnto him. Yee see how the Iewes peruerted the grace and fauour of God which hee bestowed on them: and yet hee exercised them in as sundry sortes, as hee might, to cause them to acknowledge the priuiledge which he gaue them in chooling them for his Church, and as it were for his owne children. As if nowadayes we would onely make a buckler of baptisme, and of the Lords supper, and of the other giftes and benefites of God, and yet continue an heathnish kinde of people, dissolute in life, and giuen ouer to all wickednesse: it were a point of notable treachery in vs. For GOD meaneth not that those gifts which he bestoweth on vs shoulde bee but as vaine pictures: his will is, that they should bee profitable vnto vs. Therfore when we speake of baptisme, when we speake of the holy supper, when wee speake of the order of the church, it standeth vs in hand to haue an eye vnto the vse of those thinges, for which God hath ordained them among vs. Yet notwithstanding it behoueth vs to acknowledge it to be a singular yea and an inestimable benefite which God bestoweth vpon vs, in y we haue libertie to assemble our selues together in his name, to cal vpon him, to make confession of our faith, to be taught at his mouth, and to be more and more confirmed in the trueth of the lawe and of the Gospell: we ought (I say) to esteeme this treasure, and to exercise our selues therein. Nowe then for as much as God had chosen the stocke of Abraham, hee would haue the Iewes to acknowledge it for an excellent dignitie, that they were blessed in such wise aboue the rest of all the world. But let vs note that (as I haue told you) this was in fauour of their cheefe head. For it was not sayde, In thy seedes shall the blessing be; but, In thy seede. Now this seede betokeneth not all those which were descended from the stocke of Abraham: for Ismael was cut off from it, although hee was Abrahams sonne according to the flesh: and so was Esau also. Therefore when a stocke is named, wee must vnderstand a body, and a body presupposeth an head. So then let vs note, that this dignitie which was in the person of Abraham had his roote and foundation in our Lorde Iesus Christ. And therefore whereas it was GODS will that the families and kindreds should be maynteyned; it was not to the intent the Iewes shoulde place their whole nobilitie in this worlde, to build themselues there: but hee meant rather to turne their mindes vnto him who was promysed to bee their redeemer, and to make them knowe that bycause hee should come of their race and their lynage, they ought by great reason to be partakers of that benefite which hee brought vnto them. And so this Lawe serued to direct the Iewes vnto our Lorde Iesus Christ, and they were put in minde hereby, that GOD had a care to keepe them in the bonde of one body, because of the head which hee had ordayned. Thus wee see that albeit the order which was vsed in olde tyme vnder the Lawe, be no longer nowadayes in vse; yet notwithstanding we may gather some profite by it, because wee are giuen to vnderstand thereby, that before our Lorde Iesus Christ was manifested in the flesh, God ordayned that lawe in fauour of him. Let vs therefore acknowledge, that we in these dayes ought to be stirred vp by this place to maintayne our selues by rayling vp spirituall seede in Israell, not in the visible Israell, or that which is according to nature: for we knowe that the Church of God hath his reache throughout all the world: we knowe that nowadayes the children must not be borne of flesh and bloud, as it is sayde in the first chapter of S. John: but of the will of God and of his onely grace. Therefore let vs take paynes and endeuor our selues to the vtmost of our power, to raise vp this spirituall seede vnto God, that the Church may be preserued and encreased more & more. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to note in minde.

Iohn 1.13.

Nowe by the way wee see what vprightnesse ought to be vsed in bondes. For because the women for their parte were bounde in such wise, it was requisite that there should be a mutuall bond also on the mens sides. There is no reason that y one partie should be bound, and the other left in in full liberty. Ye see then how we be warned in this place, that if two parties doe contract or couenant togither, the one must not be greeued, & the other borne withall: for that were vniust and against al reason.

And we ought to apply this vnto al contracts, couenants and bargains which we be to deale in. Therfore if in bargaining with a man I stand altogither vpon mine own aduantage and be ouer straitely laced: in so doing I am wicked. And if I say: let him loke to his own profit if he will well, but yet should a man haue so much honestie in him, as not to pinch the party too much, though he be able to compasse him. We think all is lawful so a man yeeld to that which we would haue him. Oh (say we) seeing it was his owne will to bind himselfe so, what wrong do I to him? Yea, but his agreeing to al thy demaundes was by compulsion. And againe the poore man was so ouerpressed, that he perceiued not the damage which he ran into. Indeed he agreed to al that was demanded of him; howbeit, y was bicause he was in neede, & wist not how to scape otherwise. Let vs look to it therfore y we beare such an euē hand, as one mā be not troden vnder foot by another.

And

And when there passeth any bond betweene man and man; let it bee indifferent for both parties, so as either of them may seeke himselfe relieued. Thus ye see one point more which we haue to beare in minde vpon this place.

Nowe heere a man might demaunde howe it comes to passe that GOD would haue the brother whichsoeuer lined to take the wife of him that was dead, seeing that such marriage was not lawfull, as wee see in the eyghteenth chapter of Leuiticus. Seeing it was incest for one to take his brothers wyfe after his death, howe happeneth it that GOD not onely permitteth, but also inioyneth it? The Iewes confesse that this is not spoken of brethren in the first degree, that is, of borne brothers as wee call them, but rather of such as were further off of kin; and the verie woorde it selfe also doeth properly extend no further than to such as might contract marriage together. In deede in the example which wee haue afore alleaged, the brethren which were of the first degree tooke Thamar to wyfe, and GOD rooted them out for their filthinesse; but the Lawe was not yet made. And in the East Countrey they had no great regard of honestie, but behaued themselues lyke beastes in marrying, in so much that they made no conscience to couple the brother and sister together like dogges and bitches. There was (I say) such wickednesse vsed in that Countrie, yea euen among the kinges and Princes. In deede they be the persons which take vnto themselues greatest leaue and libertie in this behalfe; but the common sort (as I tolde you) did the like too. And according to this common custome Iuda (after the death of his eldest sonne) gaue his second sonne also vnto Thamar. And herein wee see the rather, what it is to be caryed away by custome. When wee haue no other consideration than to doe according to the custome which hath beene maintained a long time among men, we fal into horrible confusion: when one followes another fashion after I wote not what sorte, there is no rule. But whatsoeuer men do, let vs learne to behaue our selues according vnto the wil of God, and not turne either to this side or that side, but abide stable and constant in that which God liketh of. That is the thing which we must beare in mind, when we see that things haue bin so farre out of square through out the world, and that the fathers of old time haue bin blemished with them: for when wee dwell in a brutish Country where euery man hath the bridle laid on his neck and may do what him liketh, we be then as in a tempest or in a whirle winde, a man cannot stay himselfe but that the winde will driue him to and fro. The like force hath euil custome; and therfore we ought the more to take it were to imprison our selues vnder the obeisance of God.

Let vs nowe returne vnto this present law. It is sayde that the next brother shall take the wife of his brother deceased, without Children. When wee heare the woorde Brother, according as the Hebrewes also take it, wee may not restraine it vnto this first degree of borne brother: but of cousen both in the first and second degree, as wee cal thē which are brothers & sisters children. For the Iewes do vse this word Brother generally, and not as wee doe: and therefore one lawe must bee conferred with an other. For when it is sayde: *Let the brother take the wife of him which is dead*: it is to bee vnderstoode so farre forth, as it is lawfull and permitted, and so farre foorth as GOD hath established the degrees of marriage: so as incest bee neuer committed. Nowe wee haue the meaning of the law.

And it is sayde expreslly: *If the brethren dwell together*. For that a woman when shee taketh an husbande in an house, should binde her selfe in bondage generally vnto all the kindred, were against reason: and bondes as wel as al other lyke things, ought to bee bounded within some measure. Where thinges are set downe without limitation, there followeth confusion by and by. If a man should by his last will appoint so many heyres as could not be numbred; and therewithall would haue his will to endure vnto the ende of the worlde; what a confused thing were that? As much is to bee sayde of other like thinges. And therefore if a woman should be bounde to marrie in a house till the whole kindred had refused her: in what a straunge case were shee? But heere it is spoken of those kinsmen which are nigh at hande, euen of such as dwell together, that they may bee knowen. For if a woman shoulde bee bounde shee wotteth not vnto whome, and constrayned to take one which she neuer sawe: shee should be kept vnder too cruel bondage, and there were no reason in it. And therfore our Lord meaneth to limit this law within certaine bonds.

It followeth, *That the woman shall make her request to bee prouided for*. Not that shee was to beginne to seeke hir an husband; for it pertayned vnto the next of the kinne to come and demaunde hir for his wife. But in this place the case concerneth the setting of the woman at libertie. For if none of the kinne would haue hir, shee was to take hir leaue after this manner, by offering hir selfe to accept the condition which God had ordayned hir. For when a man is bounde vnto any condition, and is desirous to bee ridde of it, and to set himselfe free; he must offer himselfe to doe his duetie so as men may vnderstand that it was not long of him, that the former bond stoode not still in force. The thing then which God hath ordayned in this place is, *That the woman shall come vnto the Elders of the Citie*, that for as much as none of the kin would take hir, they myght see shee was ready to doe hir duetie, and that thereuppon shee myght prouide for hir selfe, where GOD would appoynt her. And therefore shee was to come before the Iudges and to cause the next of the kinne, (that is to say, him which might lawfully take hir to wife,) to bee called: and the Iudges were to doe what they coulde to perswade him.

For our Lorde meant not to compell men to take those women, although hee might iustly

ynough haue done it: But he had this consideration; That forced and constrayned marriages, neuer come to good end. In deede God might haue precisely set downe and commanded, that the next kinsman should haue beene bound to marrie the wife of him that was deceased without heires: God might haue so commaunded. Why doth he then permit that a man might to his shame refuse hir? Verily because that if the husband and the wife doe not agree and loue togither, it is an vnhallowing of marriage, or rather (to speake properly) no marriage at all. For the good will is the chiefe bond: in so much that it behooueth the husband to acknowledge his wyfe to bee as his owne body, and the one halfe of himselfe. Shee is bone of my bone (sayeth Adam) being inspired of God. Wherein hee giueth a common rule vnto all men: for it was not spoken in respect of Eue onely, but of that which must bee kept and obserued for a rule vnto the ende of the worlde. Seeing then that this mutuall agreement is required in marriage: let vs note that our Lorde meant not precisely to constrayne kinsmen to marrie those women which were wydowes and without children: but hee was contented to release them somewhat in this behalfe. And hereof wee are to gather this instruction; that when a man is to take a wife and to marrie hir, hee must take hir of his owne minde and good wil, knowing that where there is no true and sounde loue: there can bee nothing but confusion, and wee may not looke that GOD will prosper such marriages. For the issue of them can not bee but ill, when both parties seeke not first to loue together in the name of GOD; that they may liue together in quietnesse of conscience. And let fathers also haue this regard. For what a thing were it for mortall men to take more vppon them, than God himselfe woulde doe? And yet he is the chiefe and soueraigne father of all: neuertheleſſe hee will not force any to take such a one to wyfe as hee liketh not of. In deede GOD is grieued and angrie with him which will not take hir, and setteth on him a marke of reproche and shame. But yet for all this, he which hath infinite power, hee which hath all soueraignte ouer vs in all things without exception, euen hee (I say) doeth vse a measure, hee stoopeth vnto vs, and hee beareth with vs, that wee may see hee woulde presse and ouercharge no man. And what then shall we thinke of a man who is lesse than nothing, if hee will needes marrie his sonne or his daughter at his owne lust and pleasure? It is verily contrarie to the whole order of nature: nay it is a blasphemie against God for a mortall creature, and a worme of the earth, to presume so farre as to take more vppon him, than GOD himselfe hath taken vppon him. So then such as haue children, let them take diligent heede when they intende to marrie them, that they obserue this reasonablenesse and rightfulnesse, so as they doe not compell them to marrie.

Gen. 2. 23.

Nowe moreouer it is sayd in this place: *Thus*

the Iudges may perswade the man, and if they see him so stande stiffe in his opinion, then the woman shall plucke off his shoe from his foote, and spitte in his face, as by waye of reproche: and shee shall say, GOD doe so vnto all them which will not rayse vp a stocke in Israel. Nowe heere wee haue further to note, that God would haue the Iudges speake vnto the man to perswade him as farre as they were able. And if the man woulde not consent vnto them, they should content themselues with this kinde of punishment. Whereby wee see that the Magistrates and other officers ought to abstaine from vsing any force and violence in that thing which they cannot simply commaund. As for example: if there bee a thing which is good, and yet there is no lawe for it: and I being of power and authoritie would constraine a man to doe what I thinke good; were there any reason in it? For the lawe constrayneth him not to doe it, and I ought not to passe those boundes. Let vs therefore note wel, that such as are armed with the sword, must contayne themselues within their boundes and not challenge to themselues any lawlesse libertie to say: What? I commaunde nothing but that which is good, and therefore yee must doe it. No: For there is no constrainyng, where there is no Lawe. When there is a Lawe a man must holde himselfe to the rule thereof: but yet in the ende the power that must bee come vnto, is to presume to bring men into no further subiection than the Lawe byndeth them vnto. Ye see then what wee are farther to beare in minde vpon this place.

Now as touching the shame that was done in plucking off of their shoes, & in spitting in their faces, it serued to prouoke men to discharge their dueties the better. Yet neuertheleſſe if a man had rather sustaine this reproche, than to take wife against his wyll, hee was discharged thereof. And heerein wee see (as I haue alreadie tolde you) that GOD sheweth the authoritie of a Father in beyng grieued when the families was not maintayned in Israel: and yet was hee contented to beare with such as could not finde in their hearts to stoope to that yoke, bicause it was so hard. Therefore if any had rather to suffer such shame, than so take a wife after that maner, he came to declare likelikely.

But wee must nowe returne vnto that which I sayd in the beginning, namely that there is not now any carnall kinred priuileged as the race and linage of Abraham was. For God adopteth vs nowadayes vnder condition, that we bee ingraffed by faith into his Church: and so made the children of Abraham. For so much therfore as the kinred which we haue at this day is spirituall, the order of raising vp issue to succeede [in the inheritaunce of houses, landes, or wydowes, is no longer in force. And why? For it behoued that the stocke of Abraham should bee maintained vntil ỹ comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And ỹ was the cause why ỹ land of Canaã was giuen in possession vnto the people. Nowadayes ỹ whole earth is ỹ dwelling place of the

children

children of God: & although they be disperſed throughout the whole worlde, yet are they knit in one body by agreeing in one conſent of faith to call vppon GOD: and although they do it in diuerſe tongues, yet it skilleth not ſeeing that one ſelfe ſame ſpirit gouerneth them, and that they haue all one hope of the euerlaſting ſaluation which is promiſed vnto them. Thoſe are the things wherein they are all knit and conioyned together. Seeing it is ſo, let vs note that GOD will haue euerie of vs nowadayes for his owne part to do his indeuor, to multiplie the church. And the ſeed of Abraham is no longer begotten according to the fleſhe through carnall marriage, but it is begotten of the incorruptible ſeede of Gods worde, as Saint Peter ſaith. And when God vouchſafeth vs his grace to winne anie man, and to bring him into his flocke, then are we as ſpirituall Fathers. And that alſo is the verie cauſe why the Miniſters of the worde bee called Fathers: and likewiſe the Church hath generally name and title of Mother, becauſe ſhe cõceiueth the children of God. Nowe albeit that all haue not that office of Preaching the worde of God, yet a priuate perſon being a member of the Church, may begette ſpirituall children vnto God, if hee haue occaſion and abilitie to winne a poore ſoule & to inlighten him with the faith of the Goſpell. Let vs then beſtowe our paynes to this ende, knowing that if the carnall marriage was ſo pretious vnder the lawe in the ſight of God: Surely the meane whereby we be made members of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, is a thing now farre deerer and of greater eſtimation with him. And therefore let euerie man employe himſelfe that way to the vttermoſt of his poore: For here is no forcing of vs to marie againſt our wills, but of the winning of wiues vnto our lord Ieſus Chriſt, that by the multiplying of the Church, wee may alwayes bee the more firmely linked vnto him. Seeing then that our condition is more gentle and ſweet than that which was vnder the lawe, we ought to be ſtirred vp ſo much the more to the diſcharging of that dueti, and we ſhall haue ſo much the leſſe excuſe if we be careleſſe and negligent therein. Thus yee ſee what wee haue to beare in minde in effect as touching this Lawe. And nowe wee ſee that although it bee no longer in vſe, yet may we gather ſome profite from it to bee edified thereby. For of all the thinges which the holy Ghoſt hath vouchſafed to leaue vnto vs, there is none vnprofitable, if wee haue the wiſedome (as I told you) & the diſcretion to applie it wel vnto our vſe. It followeth, *That if two men be at ſtrife, and the wife of the one come to deliuer her husbande, and take his aduerſarie by the priuities, her hand ſhall be cut off.* This lawe betokeneth in effect that honeſtie is to bee kept continually: And that if a woman forgoe ſhamefaſtneſſe, it is a wicked and intollerable thing, and therefore ought to bee puniſhed to the intent honeſt ſobrietie and ſtayednes in conuerſation may be maintayned among the people of God, and no lawleſſe libertie of ſhamefull beaſtlineſſe ſuffered. That is the thing in effect whereat God aimed in this law. And ſo let vs note that vnder one example, he meant to giue vs a generall inſtruction as touching all thinges which wee ought to take heede of. Now as concerning the ſpeciall caſe which is ſet downe here, we ſee howe the woman might haue ſomewhat for her excuſe, when ſhe commeth to helpe her husbande; ſhe might alleadge, that ſhe tooke not great heede, and that ſhe was aſtoniſhed or amaſed: but God holdeth her not excuſed for all that. Nowe then if euen in trouble, in daunger, and amaſednesſe, God will haue honeſtie regarded, what ſhall wee ſay to it, if when no neceſſitie preſſeth vs, when nothing conſtraineth vs, when we are in no ſuch furie as that we alledge: I was affrighted, I knewe not what I did. Yet euen then if wee bee giuen ouer to leawdeneſſe and commit heatheniſh and diſſolute deedes, ought that to be tollerable among the people of God? No verilie. And therefore let vs not ſtande ſo much vpon the preſent example, as regarde the whole intent and meaning of our God: to wit, that he will haue vs honeſt in all our behauiours and in all our conuerſation, and not diſſolute and ſhameleſſe. For if it come once to that point, we by and by open the gappe vnto al wickednes, and one wickednetſe will drawe on an other. Therefore like as fornication is forbidden vs, euen ſo conſequently all that which may leade vs thereto is likewiſe forbidden vs. As for example, what elſe is filthie and leawde talke, than a kinde of baudrie? And therefore Saint Paul ſaith that they are able to infect good manners. 1.Cor.15.33
Nowe when one ſpeweth out as filthie ſpeaches as any may bee, yet will hee ſay that hee meant no harme, and that hee doth it innocently. For when folke ſing their vile and bawdie ſonges, their common ſaying is: I meant no harme. Such folke would make God a lyer. Nowe if they bee not in any wiſe to bee borne with when they commit euill through ouerſight: what is to bee ſaide to them, when they doe it of ſet purpoſe? Albeit they ſay: I meant it not: yet (as yee ſee) their ſpuing out of ſuch leawde ſpeaches breedeth corruption of manners and yet they ceaſe not to doe euill ſtil. What confuſion then muſt they breede when wee knowe that they do it of a ſet and wilfull malice? Therefore if there were a good and godlie reformation among vs, ſuch lewd ſpeaches ſhould not haue their ſwinge. And ſeeing that they ſerue but to infect all, ſo as nothing may remaine ſounde and holy in our conuerſation, are they to bee excuſed which corrupt good manners after that faſhion? Yee ſee what the thing is, whereunto God had an eye in this Lawe. And at this day this euill order might bee well obſerued. And whenſoeuer ſuch a caſe befell; although there bee no written law for it in anie certain place, yet ought we alwayes to conſider that wee can not elſewhere haue better counſell than at the mouth of God. Indeede we are not bounde vnto the order of the Iewes through any preciſe neceſſitie: Nettertheleſſe wee muſt in the ende reſolue our ſelues on this point, that God ordeyned nothing for his people, but that which is iuſt, and

that wee are bound at this day (in case that such a thing shoulde happen) not to suffer it or to leaue it vnpunished: and that to doe otherwise were not good, or to bee liked of. But the principall thing is that wee must receiue some generall instruction by it. And verily it were a foule and shamefull thing to see any woman so bolde as this example importeth. And to say the trueth, GOD meant not to punish that which was committed through some ouersight, or amasednesse: but hee considered that if a woman shoulde haue so small regarde of shame & honest reuerence as to come running vppon a man after that sorte, and touch that part of him from which she ought to flee backe; if she should bee suffered in such shamelesse dealing, it were a kinde of dispencing with all leawdnesse and looseneſse of behauiour, so as no honestie shoulde bee kept any more. What is then to be doone? Wee must note here briefly two points. The first is, that God requireth such modestie in women as that they must alwayes consider what their sexe will allowe them to doe, and that they become not like launceknightes, as wee see some are, which will handle an Harquebuse as boldely as anie man, and march with ensigne displayed as couragiously. It is so monstruous a sight to beholde such wicked women, that a man ought, not onelie to spitte at them, but also to take vp durt and cast at such impudent creatures, when they are so bolde to peruert the order of nature. Thus yee see what God requireth of womé in the first place, namelie such a modestie as may holde them within the bonds of honestie. For if a woman haue all the vertues in the worlde, yet if shee be such a Virago that shee wil counterfaite the man, all the rest is but doung and filthinesse. For we haue Deut. 22. 5. seene heretofore howe God did straitlie forbid women to disguise themselues: And that tended to this purpose. Let women therefore learne here their lesson, to bee modest, and to haue alwayes that vertue which is proper vnto them, to wit, shamefastnesse, that they attempt no such thinges as may shewe them to be past shame. In the second place wee haue a cõmon rule for vs all (as I tolde you) yt is, that wee must not onely abstaine from all fornication, but also bee honest in our whole conuersation, and behaue our selues according as God commandeth: so as neither in our deedes nor in our wordes there be any such thing as is contrarie vnto the honestie of nature, and that which God commandeth, or which may leade vs to euill. Thus ye see in effect what wee haue to beare in minde vpon this place. And therefore although this order was made for the people of olde time, yet the instruction and substance of the lawe abideth for euer, and wee may gather from it a profitable lesson for our selues. Let vs then applie this to our benefit which is conteined here, as we may shew that forasmuch as God hath adopted vs, and made vs holy as he himself is holy, & forasmuch as Iesus Christ also hath gathered vs into his body to the intent wee should liue in al holines, let ye same be declared indeed both in al our talke & in al our conuersation, so as there is not any part or member of our body, which is not answerable vnto that honestie.

Now let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs so to feele them, that acknowledging the wretchednes which is in vs and in our nature, wee may labour to drawe our selues out of it, by fighting against all our carnal affections, & by ridding our selues wholie of that which wee holde of our father Adam, vntill this good God hath cloathed vs with his owne righteousnes, and that we bee made newe creatures in our Lorde Iesus Christ, to come vnto that glorie which hee hath purchased for vs. And pray we him that while we be inclosed with our infirmities, it may please him to beare with vs, vntil he hath cleane deliuered vs from them, and to giue vs grace in the meane time, to doe our indeuour that his Church may bee maintained, so as we may enioye that blessing to set his name glorified throughout the worlde, and that when we haue company our minds may euer be the more stirred vp thereby to follow that holy vocation whereunto he hath called vs. For the doing whereof it may please him to raise vp true and faithfull ministers of his worde, &c.

On Fryday the xiiij. of February, 1556.

The CXLIIII. Sermon which is the third vpon the fiue and twentith Chapter.

13 Thou shalt not haue two manner of weightes in thy bagge, a great and a little.

14 Thou shalt not haue two manner of Ephas in thy house a great & a litle.

15 But thou shalt haue a iust and a right weight, thou shalt haue a perfect & a iust Epha, that thy dayes may be prolonged in the lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

16 For

16 For all they which doe such thinges, and all they which deale vnrighteously are an abhomination before the Lorde thy God.

17 Remember what Amalec did vnto thee by the way after your comming out of Egypt.

18 Howe hee came against thee in the way, and in the hindmost of thy traine strake all the weake which followed thee when thou wast fainte and wearie: and he feared not God.

19 Therefore when the Lord thy God shal haue giuen thee rest from al thine enemies which are round about thee in the lande which the Lord thy God giueth thee to possesse, then shalt thou put out the remembraunce of Amalec from vnder heauen: forget it not.

HEre are two thinges especiallie wherein wee offende our neighbours, to wit, deceyte and open violence. For some are giuen to deceite and malicious wilinesse, to deceiue and beguile men: others vse open wronging and iniuries. In priuie deceite the most mischeeuous meane of beguiling that any man can vse, is the falsifying of weightes and measures. For the vse of them is the onely way for men to buy and sell by, without strife or variaunce. If we holde not monie wherewith to buye thinges, what a disorder should wee haue? And wares allmost commonly solde by weight and measure. Howe then if there bee deceyte eyther in monie or in weightes or in measures, the bonde of that intercommoning which men haue together among themselues is broken: so as they become like dogges and Cattes, and there is no meanes for them to deale one with an other. And therefore no maruell though our Lorde doe greatly mislike the falsifying of weightes and measures, and tell vs that it is the vilest and detestableste robberie that can bee. If a theefe purpose with him selfe to take a boote, hee will set on a man, and from one hee will goe to an other. But wee are sure there is no theefe can passe his boundes so farre, as to spoyle and robbe the whole worlde. But he which vseth false weightes and false measures, hath no regarde at all, when hee robbeth, but doeth wrong vnto all ingenerall: and that is the next way to peruert all ciuill order, so as no humanitie or common honestie may remayne any longer among men. What shall Lawes doe? Or to what purpose shall Iustice serue, whē there is no more anie playne nor vpright dealing in those thinges which shoulde helpe men to mayntaine their estate? Wee haue therefore a verie necessarie law in this place, where mention is made of weightes and measures. It is sayde: *Thou shalt not haue diuerse stones in thy bag.* And that is because in olde time they were woont to make their weightes of stone. And this importeth asmuch as if it were sayde: *Thou shalt haue a iust weight and a iust measure.* Moreouer let vs beare in minde alwayes that which hath beene sayde before, namely that GOD oftentimes vnder one speciall kinde, giueth a generall doctrine. And so it is all one as if we were commaunded generallie in all buying and selling, to vse reasonable and vpright dealing without anie falsehoode. For when a man selleth one kinde of ware for an other, it is all one as if hee falsifyed his weightes or his measures. A simple man commeth to a shoppe and asketh for cloath: hee knoweth it not, but trusteth the Marchant, and the Marchant sayeth vnto him, here is cloath of such a place: and hee knoweth well that hee lyeth: now this is all one, as if he had giuen him halfe a yarde or three quarters of a yarde, for a whole yarde. So then wee see how GOD ordeyneth in generall that our trayding shoulde bee after such a sorte as that hee which buyeth doe bring lawfull monie, and that hee which selleth doe deliuer his wares at a reasonable price and vse no falsehoode, neither in weight nor in measure, at leastwise if it bee such wares as are woont to bee measured by the yarde or ell, or weyed in scales or balaunces, but that on either part there bee true and iust dealing vsed.

And sith wee see so manie lawes tending all to this end, that no man shoulde be deceyued, but that euerie man shoulde haue his right; let vs alwayes remember this saying, That GOD will haue mercie, iudgement and iustice. And therefore let vs haue compassion on them which are in necessitie, to releeue and succour them. And secondlie let vs not onelie yeeld to euerie man his right, but also when wee see anie man wrong his neighbour, let vs not suffer it, nor bee consenting vnto it in anie case. Loe wherein wee exercise our selues if wee will order our life according to the will of GOD. Matt. 23.23

For excepte wee doe so, what fayre countenaunce soeuer wee sette vppon thinges, yet all shall bee but detestable hypocrisie in the sighte of GOD, vntill wee haue learned to liue charitablie with our Neighbours

Matt.7.12. bours, and to obserue this vprightneſſe which nature hath taught vs, of not doeing otherwyſe vnto others than wee woulde haue doone vnto our ſelues. Heere withall alſo wee be made to knowe our owne naughtineſſe. For it were enough to haue warned vs in one word, if wee were diſpoſed to doe well, and had not ſuch a rebellioufneſſe within vs, that wee euer drawe backewarde from that which is good. Then if men were inclined of themſelues to do right and to exerciſe humankie: it were enough to make but a ſigne vnto them, and to ſay: Yee ſee what your duetie is: But nowe God is faine to make often repetitions, he is fayne to ſtrengthen the lawes which hee hath giuen, hee is fayne to expounde them, he is fayne to heape commaundement vppon commaundement. And what is the cauſe hereof, but that wee are ouerharde to bee ruled, and that our deſires are as fell and furious beaſtes: ſo that one bonde is not ſtrong enough to binde vs, but wee muſt be hampered with many cordes, nay wee muſt haue chaynes and fetters layde on vs? So then let vs know that our willes and minds are farre from beeing diſpoſed to obey God. And therefore let euerie man quicken vp and inforce himſelfe the more, conſidering how it is not without cauſe that God maketh ſo often rehearſall of that which ſerueth to bring vs to brotherlie faithfulneſſe and friendſhippe; for aſmuch as we drawe cleane backewarde from that which hee commaundeth as I haue tolde you before. Moreouer let vs beare in minde, that the more a thing maketh to the common benefite of al, the better is it alwayes to bee obſerued. Nowe I haue tolde you howe there woulde bee extreeme confuſion, if there were no weightes nor meaſures: and therefore if weightes and meaſures ſhould bee falſified, there woulde ſcarce remayne any ciuill order in the worlde. Therefore ſeeing the thing is ſo requiſite and neceſſarie, that without it wee coulde not liue together, but ſhoulde bee as wilde and ſauage beaſtes; let vs knowe that whoſo breaketh any part of this order, offendeth GOD moſt greeuouſly: and as the faulte is puniſhable by earthly Iuſtice: ſo let vs aſſure our ſelues, that ſuch offenders when they ſhall come to render an account before the heauenly Iudge, ſhal not eſcape the hande of God: For it was not long of them that all vprightneſſe was not cleane aboliſhed. Wherefore let vs ſtande in feare of that which is tolde vs here, and let euerie man deale vprightlie with his Neighbours; Let thoſe which vſe any trade of Marchandiſe haue a iuſt balaunce and a iuſt meaſure, and lawfull wares, and let them take heede that they vſe no deceyte. Let both the buyers and the ſellers vſe ſuch truſtie dealing, as it may appeare that they haue a Lawe which beareth rule in their hearts: and although wee had neither threates nor puniſhmentes; yet let it ſuffice vs that God hath declared his will vnto vs. Let that bee of force and power with vs, to guide and gouerne vs.

And moreouer whereas it is ſayde. *Thoſe all thoſe which doe ſuch things, are an abhomination vnto* GOD: it is ſpoken to the intent that men ſhoulde not deceyue themſelues by ſubtilties or Sophiſtrie: as wee are alwayes ſeeking for ſome ſtarting holes: Such as are deſirous to winde in their neighbours with craftineſſe, haue alwayes ſome colour to paint their eaſe withall. But although men holde vs excuſed, it is nothing ſeeing wee muſt come before the heauenly Iudge. For Moſes ſaith, *That ſuch a thing is an abhomination before* GOD. Therefore let not men beguyle themſelues anie more with any of the triſling excuſes wherewith manie men doe ſhroulde themſelues, but rather let them thinke thus: Beholde it is our GOD that ſpeaketh, it will not boote vs to diſguiſe our matters. For hee will not ſuffer himſelfe to bee mocked: and it is before him that wee muſt anſwere. And therefore let vs walke in ſuch wiſe as our owne conſcience may beare vs good witneſſe, and as wee may proteſt not oneli with our mouth but alſo within with our heart, that we haue liued vprightlie with our neighbours, that there is no ſecrete wickedneſſe within vs, and that wee haue not made our owne gayne by an other mans loſſe. Lo (I ſay) what we haue to beare in mind vpon this place.

And whereas Moſes addeth: *Whoſoeuer doth vnrighteouſly*: it is to confirme that which I ſaid in the beginning: that is, that albeit GOD expreſſeth here but two kindes, to wit, Weight and Meaſure: yet notwithſtanding, it ſerueth to put vs in minde generally, howe men ought to liue with their neighbours without hurting of them. For if GOD leaue no kinde of wickedneſſe vnpuniſhed, whether wee plucke other mens goods vnto vs by force or vſe deceite to beguile the ſimple; if GOD call all ſuch thinges to account: what will become of vs when wee ſhall haue committed more outragious crymes, ſo as wee ſhall haue peruerted all common order, by playing the robbers & theeues in raking to ourſelues whatſoeuer we coulde come by, as thoſe doe which vſe falſe weightes and falſe meaſures? For certaine it is, that vnder pretence of buying and ſelling, ſuch foolkes doe play the rancke theeues, and are worſe than thoſe which robbe in the woods. And therefore let vs knowe that whereas God pronounceth himſelfe a Iudge to puniſhe all manner of wickedneſſe, hee ſheweth that by greater reaſon, vengeaunce ſhall fall on them which make no conſcience or remorſe, to rake other mens goods vnto themſelues without diſcretion, or rather which haue giuen their luſtes ſo large ſcope, that they ruſhe forth into all euill, and all men both greate and ſmall are faine to paſſe their pawes. Thus yet ſee in effect what the thing is which Moſes meant to declare vnto vs in this place. Nowe if at that time it was behoouefull and neceſſarie, that GOD ſhoulde repreſſe ſuch deceytes as were committed in weightes and meaſures, howe much more needefull is it that hee ſhoulde doe the like nowe? For certainlie there is nowe no ſuch vpright dealing in the worlde as was at that time: but corruptions are ſtill increaſed

and

and therefore so much the more ought wee to exercise our selues in this lawe. And let vs not thinke that wee may excuse our selues by the great number of deceiuers and pollers which are nowadayes: but let vs knowe that the lawe of GOD is euerlasting: and that if wee will bee taken for the children of GOD, wee must keepe that vprightnesse whereof Moses here speaketh, notwithstanding all the wickednes that is cõmitted in the world. And that is the cause also why he thinkes it not enough to say: Those which doe such thinges are an abomination in the sight of the Creator: but he addeth also *Before thy God*. And therefore we must alwayes resorte vnto this point, That because GOD hath adopted vs for his children wee must not bee carried away with euill customes. Though this man misbehaue himselfe and that man bee offensiue through his euill life, yu must woe still abide constant in obeying our GOD, seeing that he hath chosen vs, and keepeth vs for his owne. Thus ye see what we haue rather to beare in minde concerning this place.

Nowe this lawe needeth not any long exposition. For there is no man which of himselfe knoweth not what confusion there woulde bee in the worlde, if the meane of buying and selling were taken away. Yet neuertheless yee see howe GOD doeth further open his mouth to teach vs. Haue wee then his lawe in three wordes? It ought to suffice vs: but yet the practise of it is verie rare. Yea verily: and therefore wee ought not to busye our selues so much in saying ouer the words, which are set downe here, as to minde them throughlie, and to bethinke of them earely and late, and to say, Goe to, GOD hath commaunded that we shoulde haue iust weightes and equall measures, that wee might deale vprightly one with an other. When wee shall haue refreshed our minds with the remembrance hereof, it wil serue to perswade vs to order our life in such wise as it beehoueth vs to do.

Moreouer let vs note that vnder false weights and deceitfull measures, all acceptinges of persons are condemned by GOD. For if it be not lawfull to falsifie a weight or balaunce, if it bee not lawfull to falsifie a measure or yarde; what shal we say of falsifying of iustice? If in a garner, if in a cellar, if in a shop, God wil haue men to vse vpright dealing among themselues: what is to be thought when it commeth to the iudging of a cause in Lawe? If a man shoulde swarue aside to the fauouring of any person, what a dealing were that? As I haue alreadie touched, we must returne vnto this generall commaundement of walking in vprightnesse with men, so as wee neuer swarue aside but holde on right foorth as God hath commaunded vs. And if in Marchandise which are transitorie thinges God will haue vs to obserue such vpright dealing: what ought wee to doe in the case where God is to be serued? Neuertheless wee see howe men shape and vnshape themselues, and make lawes after their owne fancies, nowe one way and now an other. But let vs note that GOD boweth not anie way at our pleasure, but when hee once giueth a lawe, which is vnchaungeable, euerie man must frame himselfe thereafter. And let vs not beare our selues in hande that wee shall bee our owne Iudges: for wee are not competent enough, but let vs alwayes abyde in that which God hath commaunded.

Nowe let vs come vnto that which Moses addeth concerning Amalec. A man might at first blushe, thinke it an harde case, that it shoulde bee lawfull for the Iewes to reuenge themselues vppon the Amalekites, and that when they were at rest from their enemies, they shoulde then roote them cleane out. *Remember Amalec also, because he woulde haue cutte thee off by the way, and made an assault on thy hindermost people, and soughte to make hauocke of thee. Forgette it not, but pursue it with fire and swoorde.* This is a verie seuere and sharpe condemnation. But wee haue to note that the Amalekites had prouoked the vengeaunce of God against themselues and were intangled in the condemnation which was alreadie giuen vpon the people of the lande of Chanaan, as vpon the Amorites, the Pherezites and such like. Wee haue before shewed that wee may not account this sentence of GOD anie way cruell, when he ordayned that all these people shoulde bee rooted out of the worlde. For hee had spared them nowe by the space of foure hundred yeares and more. And although they had then deserued to haue beene vtterlie ouerwhelmed with destruction, yet was it said that their wickednesse was not then come vnto full measure. But amended they in all that tyme wherein GOD wayted for their repentaunce with so great patience? No, but of badde they became worse. And therefore it behooued that cleane riddaunce shoulde bee made of them, seeing they were such a stubborn and vnamendable people. The like reason was of Amalec also. And hereby wee see what it is to bee intangled among the wicked, when they are altogether forsaken of GOD. It is all one as if a man woulde cast himselfe into the middest of an hoate burning fire, where hee must needes bee consumed with the wood. Let vs marke well then that vnder the example of the Amalekites, GOD hath warned vs in this place to take heede, that when wee see men giuen ouer vnto all wickednesse and hardened in their sinnes, wee come not neere them, nor haue any thing to doe with them. And why? For it is the next way to binde vp our selues in the same bundell with them, and then must wee needes perishe together. Wherefore let vs keepe our selues aloofe from foolke when wee see them so peruerse, and that they bee despisers of GOD, & are become as brutishe as beasts in their wickednesse. Let vs I say, flee farre from them, vnlesse wee will haue their condemnation to take holde of vs also, and bee carried awaye in the same tempest with them. And that is the cause also wherefore Esay the

Prophet

Esa.48.20. & 52.11. Prophete cryeth with a lowde voyce, Flie farre from them. Hee is not contented to to say: withdrawe your selues from them, but flie, flie. And yet hee repeateth the same again and saith: separate your selues farre from them. And why? Wee see howe he meant it of such as Moses speaketh of in this place. Let that therefore be noted for one point.

Nowe herewithall we must consider farther, that the Amalekites resisted GOD to the vttermost of their power, and woulde haue hindered the Iewes from comming into that inheritance which he had already appointed out for them. Indede they thought they had waged battell with men: but in verie deede GOD was their aduersary partie. For the Iewes came not thither through their owne power, but God had called them to possesse the Land of Chanaan for their inheritaunce. Therefore when the Amalekites banded themselues in multitudes against them, it was as if they had bidden battell vnto God. And therefore wee may not maruell that their condemnation was so greeuous, seeing they flang foorth into so great rage [euen against God himselfe.] I graunt they knewe not certeynly that the Iewes had any such promise made them: and yet for all that, they were not altogether ignocatint of it: It sufficed for their condemnation, that they ought to haue knowē by certaine signes that it was a power exceeding mans power, and thereupon shoulde haue beene feared from rushing so venterously and at randō against those which were gouerned by the hande of God. And therefore wee are warned, when wee take any thing in hande, to beware that wee haue not God our enemie and aduersarie partie. Nowe hee hath declared, that forasmuch as the Church is in his protection, if wee attempt anie thing against the faithfull, whether it bee generallie or particularlie, it is all one as if we came to warre against God. Deut.32.10 And what shall wee get by that? It is not for nought that he hath saide, That hee keepeth vs as the apple of his eye. And therefore let vs learne to abstaine from all doing of wrong, and consider well that if we prouoke the liuing God to anger, it must needes bee to our great confusion in the end.

Now as this doctrine ought to serue vs for a bridle, to make vs to abstaine from all outragious and wrongfull dealinges: So wee see on the other side what a comfort it is vnto the faithfull when they know that God hath such a care ouer them, ỹ he will take their part and be their defendour, and that if any man harme them he declareth that the iniurie is doone vnto himselfe. Therefore sith wee see that God setteth himselfe expressely on our part, ought wee not to take courage vnto vs, and to rest our selues wholy vppon his promises? Yet notwithstanding there are but fewe which can tast of this doctrine. For what is the cause that wee bee so kindled with desire of reuenge as soone as any man molesteth or troubleth vs? It is because we knowe not that God watcheth ouer vs, and hath his hande stretched out to maintaine vs, and that hee will not suffer anie outrage to bee doone vnto vs, but he will redresse it and send vs helpe and succour in time conuenient. Were we throughlie perswaded hereof, wee would be as meeke and quiet as lambes, wee woulde bee patient in our wronges, wee woulde surely still be redressed them. But what? Because we haue no trust in him, euerie of vs shifteth for himselfe by right or by wrong, wee regard not what is lawfull for vs to doe, nay wee thinke we should deceiue our selues if wee shoulde staye vppon the promises of God. And therefore let vs learne to consider more deepelie of this doctrine where it is saide: *Thou shalt not forget what Amalecke did vnto thee by the way.* For God meaneth that although we passe it ouer and make no matter of it when wee haue beene vilanlie vexed, but forget that anie such thing was doone vnto vs: yet will hee remember it. Wee are tender enough in our own iniuries, but yet God sheweth, that hee taketh them more to heart then wee doe, and that hee will punishe them which haue vexed vs and dealte ouerrigorously with vs, so as hee will call to remembraunce all the euill which they haue done vnto vs. Yee see then what wee haue to beare in minde as touching this place: to wit that wee must take heede of doing any violence to our neighbours; for God will take their cause in hande and we must needs haue him for our aduersarie party. That is the first point to bee noted. Secondly let vs walke in all simplicitie and gentlenesse, knowing that if wee will bee as sheepe, wee shall haue a good shepheard which wil keepe vs from the wolues, insomuch that although wee seeme to be vnarmed in our chappes and readie to be deuoured, yet God will prouide a remedie for all, if wee can put our trust in him and feede our soules with Luke 21. patience, as our Lorde Iesus Christ declareth.

But now we must also call to remembrance that which wee haue treated of before, to wit, Deut.33. that God is then speciallie mooued vnto anger, when his people are troubled and hindered of taking possession of their inheritance. And if hee haue declared such signe of anger against the Amalekites, because they would haue withholde the Iewes from entring into the Land of Chanaan: what will hee doe, if wee nowadayes doe turne away the faithfull from entring, (not into the Lande of Chanaan, but) into the kingdome of heauen? For nowadayes God calleth vs not to possesse the Lande of Chanaan: but to the immortall and incorruptible life. And therefore we must keepe on our way and labour to come thither. Nowe then, if anie come to trouble vs: they which shall haue cast such stumblingblockes in our waye, that is to say which shall haue holde vs backe from seruing our GOD, shall bee driuen to feele a double curse in comparison of the curse that lighted vppon Amalecke. Nowe let vs consider howe many there are nowadayes which seeke to turne the children of GOD out of their right waye, some by cruelnie and persecutions, others by leawde and wicked ex-

amples;

ples: to bee short, wee cannot set one foote forwarde in this waye, but wee are troubled, and Sathan deuiseth still I knowe not what to hinder vs; and euer hee findeth ministers fitte for the purpose. What is the cause that all Churches are not so well ordered, as that God may bee serued without common accorde, or that wee haue not such loue and agreement among vs as may shewe in verye deede that wee call vppon GOD as our Father? It is bycause wee are mingled among Amalekites. Wherefore let vs take heede that they hinder vs not: and let vs also on our partes beware that wee trouble not the children of GOD, but rather let euerye of vs take his companion by the hande as the Prophet Esay speaketh, and saye, Come, let vs goe and mounte vp into the hill of the Lorde, that hee may leare vs his wayes, and guide vs in his righteousnesse. Nowe then if wee will not bee coupled with them whom GOD hath heere ordayned to destruction, let euerie of vs take paynes to guide his neighbour and to further him in the good way, and let none of vs staye or hinder them which are already on their way to goe whither God hath called them.

Nowe it is sayde: *When GOD hath giuen thee rest from all thyne enemyes in the lande whither thou goest to possesse it, thou remember the Amalekites.* By these woordes wee are giuen to vnderstande, first of all, that the people to the ende they myght bee the more encouraged to execute that which Moses had in GODS name commanded them; are certified in this place, that in the ende they shoulde haue the victorie ouer all their enemyes. For it had beene a matter of laughter, if Moses had sayde, Remember Amalec, and when thou hast made a dispatch of all the rest, roote him out also. For the Iewes myght haue answered: What are wee to roote him out? Why? We are yet Wanderers; wee liue as it were at the courtesie of another man; wee knowe not what will betide vs. In deede God promised vnto vs the land of Chanaan, but hath hee not led vs vp and downe in the wildernesse, as if wee were worthy to bee altogether depriued and defeated of the possession of that land which he promised vs? Why? Wee are yet to enter into it. And what are we bid this to do vnto Amalec, seeing we haue so many and so strong enemies? For this cause Moses setteth downe this promise: *When the Lord thy God hath giuen thee rest from all thine enemyes,* (saith he.) Nowe hereby wee are warned, that when God commandeth vs any thing which seemeth harde, yea or altogether vnpossible, we ought to haue an eye vnto his power; for otherwise our courage cannot but fayle vs. And they which of themselues presume to execute whatsoeuer GOD teacheth by his woordes, doe but beate their neckes in the ende through their foolishe presumption. Seeing then it is so, let vs humbly and earnestly desire of GOD, so to strengthen vs as wee may bee able to obey him. For the doing whereof let vs haue an eye vnto his promyses. For when GOD saith vnto vs, Doe thus: he addeth, care not though men withstande you: if you cannot accomplish that which I commaunde you, I haue power sufficient in mee to supply your weakenesse: I will vpholde you: and when it shall seeme that you are fallen downe, I haue meanes wherewith to helpe you vp againe: and if the thing be more than you can doe, I will bring it to passe for you. Let vs therefore arme our selues with these promyses, and thereuppon take courage to marche forewarde in our waye; and what threates soeuer wee heare, or what stumbling blockes so euer are layde in our way; let vs yet keepe on our course still. And why? Bycause GOD will take care of all, and wee cannot bee deceyued by wayting for his helpe. In deede if wee haue not the woorde from his mouth, wee may not trust vppon our owne opinion and say: I hope GOD will helpe mee. Wee may not bee so presumptuous; but wee must assure our selues vppon the warrant which hee giueth vs; as wee see in this place: *The GOD will giue thee rest from all thine enemyes.* And therefore Moses sayde not simply, When thou hast conquered the Countrey, when thou hast the victorie ouer all thine enemyes; but hee referreth all vnto GOD. Whereby hee declareth (as I haue already touched) that men may not grounde themselues vppon their owne power and abilitie: but wee must haue our recourse alwayes vnto GOD, and acknowledge that it is in him onely to make vs inuincible against all our enemyes. And if it was needefull that GOD shoulde woorke in such wyse to make the children of Israel to ouerthrowe the Chananites, Pherezites, Iebusites and the lyke: it is much more needefull that hee shoulde woorke nowadayes with a greater power in vs, bycause wee are to encounter with more mightie enemyes. For (as Saint Paule sayeth) our combate is not against flesh and bloud, that is to say, mortall creatures onely, but also against the Princes of the ayre. In so much that if wee compare the power which wee our selues haue to resiste, with the aduauntage which Sathan hath ouer vs; alas, hee is the prince of the worlde, and besides that, hee is aboue our heades, so as hee myght ouerwhelme vs out of hande. And therefore GOD must put to his helping hande and fight for vs, or else wee shoulde bee a hundred thousande times vanquished. So then, whensoeuer wee are to aduenture vppon any thing, let vs learne to haue an eye alwayes vnto the power of GOD, assuring our selues that the same is mightie ynough to strengthen vs. And thereuppon taking courage, let vs boldly defye all the forces of our enemyes bee they neuer so dreadfull: and let vs knowe that they are nothing in comparison of the helpe and succour which God hath promised vnto vs, and which he is readie to shewe in verie deede. Thus yee see in effect what wee haue to beare in minde vppon this place. Ephes. 6. 12.

Nowe it is expreſſely ſayde: *That the Iewes ſhall bee reuenged vppon Amalec when they haue the lande in poſſeſſion, which was promiſed vnto them.* And it ſerueth to ſhewe that wee ought to bee as quiet as may bee in executing GODS vengeaunce. For when men reuenge themſelues of their enemyes, wee ſee they are altogether troubled with thoſe bickeringes which they haue with them, and they are ſet all on fire by their paſſions. And that is the cauſe why reuengynges are forbidden vs, when they proceede not from GOD, but that men thruſt themſelues ſo into them without any meaſure or diſcretion. Will wee then iuſtifie any reuenge of ours? Wee muſt bee at peace within our ſelues: that is to ſaye, wee muſt not haue an eye to our owne loſſe or gayne; wee muſt not bee mooued with any exceſſiue paſſion; to bee ſhorte, wee muſt haue a ſtayed and ſetled minde; and aboue all, the zeale of God muſt abide in vs and gouerne vs. Neuertheleſſe, we may not vnder this colour that GOD ſayde vnto his people, *Remember the Amalekites*, for I will haue them rooted out of the worlde; wee may not (I ſay) take occaſion thereupon to reuenge our ſelues after our owne luſt and liking. And why? For God layde not the bridle on his peoples necke, to ſay, Doe what you thinke good, you ſhall haue leaue to doe what you liſte: but hee woulde haue the reuenge to proceede from himſelfe: whereuppon wee haue to note two thinges. The one is that wee muſt bee appoynted of God, or otherwyſe it ſhall not be lawfull for vs to lift vp ſo much as a finger to puniſh any offences. The other is that although wee haue this calling, and that God putteth the ſworde in our handes, yet neuertheleſſe wee muſt not bring with vs our owne affections which alwayes driue vs on forewarde and ouermaſter vs: but wee muſt behaue our ſelues ſo ſimply and plainely in this vocation of ours, that the ſpirit of GOD may gouerne both our heartes and our handes. As touching the firſt poynt, I tolde you that hee which hath no expreſſe commaundement of God to that purpoſe, may not puniſh offences. If I ſee a man offend, although I ought to ſet my ſelfe againſt him to the vtmoſt of my power, and to withſtand his wickednеſſe: yet bycauſe I am a priuate perſon, I may not attempt to puniſh the offender any way. For GOD hath charged mee with no ſuch thing: and men may not on their owne heades, take vppon them any ſuch charge. For although at y firſt ſighte a man would take it for a great vertue if I ſhoulde fall vpon a wicked man and apprehend him: inſomuch that if he beate or abuſe a poore man, & I come and maintaine the good cauſe, it would be taken for a good deede: yet in verye deede I paſſe my boundes, and take more vppon mee than God hath commaunded mee; and this deede of mine may not be accounted for a vertue. Yee ſee then what ſtayednеſſe the faithfull ought to keepe in their liuing, to wit, that they attempte not any thing but what God hath giuen them in charge to doe. That is to be noted for one poynt. Nowe for the ſecond, wee muſt note that vnder colour that God hath armed them with authoritie to puniſh vices, men muſt not fall into beaſtes through their carnall affections and paſſions, to reuenge their owne quarels, but muſt doe that which they knowe GOD liketh of, and yet to no other ende or meaning than hee hath appoynted.

And herewithall let vs note, that they which are ordained and appointed of God to execute Iuſtice, ought to keepe themſelues in the high beaten way, wherein God willeth them to goe without taking vnto themſelues any new lawes. For it is not for earthly Iudges to make lawes at their pleaſure, and to ſay euery day: I will doe thus, and I will doe otherwiſe: but they muſt haue a carefull eye to their office and dutie. Beholde it is GOD which ſpeaketh, wee muſt execute that which hee commaundeth; and therefore let men holde themſelues thereunto, and not preſume to alter his commaundement in any wiſe: for otherwiſe a man may pretende goodly excuſes, but God liketh better of the obedience which men yeelde vnto him, than of al that euer they can alleage in reaſon, although it haue neuer ſo great likelyhood. Moreouer (as I haue alreadie touched) when wee heare concerning Amalec, that GOD woulde haue him cleane rooted out: a man might reply and ſay What if a man ſhould handle this people gently and ſpare them? Were it not a reaſonable thing? Should a man deale ſo extremely with them? Surely when the people of Iſrael left it vndone, their ſhewing of mercie was a kynde of deſpyſing GOD; and it is certayne that their ſo dooyng turned to their owne confuſion, according whereunto wee ſee howe it was ſayde, You haue not executed the vengeaunce of your GOD, and therefore thoſe whome you haue ſuffered to lyue muſt bee as thornes in your ſides to pricke and to punch you; or rather to put out your eyes: you ſhall ſurelye finde it ſo bycauſe yee haue not doone as GOD commaunded you. This ſerueth then to ſhewe vs that euerye man muſt followe that which is appointed him, and when hee once knoweth what his office and calling requireth, hee muſt ſimply obey God.

And moreouer let vs alwaies haue recourſe to this poinct, that ſeeing God ſheweth himſelfe a friend to our friends and an enemie to our enemies; we muſt put our whole truſt & confidence in him; & hiding our ſelues vnder his wings, we muſt not doubt but that he will ſhew in the ende what care hee hath had of our welfare. For hee ſayth, I am moued with iealouſie, I am inflamed with choler, bicauſe of y iniuries which my people hath ſuffered. In deede God is not ſubiect to any paſſions, he is not mooued after the maner of men: neuertheleſſe, to ſhewe howe deerelye hee accounteth of our welfare, and bycauſe wee conceiue it not excepte hee doe (as wee woulde ſay) tranſfigure himſelfe and vary himſelfe vnto vs in ſuch wyſe as wee maye con-

receyue some passions in him: that is the verie cause why hee sayeth that hee is moued with choler, and inflamed with a iealousie to defende his people. Let vs therefore settle our trust thereuppon: and although he doe not by and by lift vp his hand and thunder vppon our enemyes, let vs not thinke therefore that hee hath forgotten vs, but let vs bee patient and sorowfull, and let vs desire him to accomplish his promises. And if wee so doe, hee will raise vp such men as we thought to haue beene against vs; and they shall spend themselues in our defence, and wee shall bee armed in such wise against all our enemyes, that wee shall beare away the victorie: and as it is heere declared that hee was the defender of his people in olde time; so he will nowadayes doe much more for vs, because he is come nearer vnto vs in the person of his onely sonne.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the Maiestie of our good GOD, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, and to receyue vs vnto mercie although wee bee altogether vnworthie of it, and that in the meane tyme hee will so gouerne vs by his holy spirite, that wee may apply both our handes and our eyes, and our feete to his seruice, and not attempt any thing without his worde, but that whatsoeuer wee doe, wee may doe it with such a zeale, as hee may bee glorifyed and our lyfe may bee in all poyntes referred vnto his will, without turning of our selues aside eyther to the right hand or to the left, and that wee may learne to rest our selues wholly vpon him, and not bee tempted to iniurie any man, but that whatsoeuer wickednesse wee see in the worlde, wee may alwayes walke vprightly and soundly, to the intent that when wee bee vniustly and wrongfully tormented, he may shewe himselfe our defender. That it may please him to grant this grace not onely to vs but also to al people & Nations of the earth, bringing backe all poore ignoraunt people from the superstitions and idolatries wherein they are holde: that so hee may leade them to the knowledge of his trueth: And that for this purpose it woulde please him to raise vp true Ministers of his word, &c.

On Wednesday the xix. of Februarie, 1556.

The CXLV. Sermon which is the first vpon the sixe and twentith Chapter.

WHen thou commest into the lande which the Lorde thy GOD giueth thee for an inheritaunce, and possessest it and dwellest therein,

2 Then shalt thou take of the first of all the fruite of the earth, which the Lorde thy GOD giueth thee, and put these fruites which thou brinest out of thy land, in a basket, and goe vnto the place which the Lorde thy God shall choose, to place his name there.

3 And thou shalt come vnto the Priest which shall bee in those dayes, and shalt say vnto him; I acknowledge this day vnto the Lorde thy God, that I am come into the land which the Lord sware vnto our fathers for to giue vs.

4 Then the Priest shall take the Basket out of thy hand, and shall set it downe before the Aultar of the Lord thy God.

5 And thou shalt speake and say before the Lorde thy GOD: My father was a Syrian, a poore man, and hee went downe into Egypt, and soiourned there with a small companie, and grewe there vnto a Nation great, mighty, and full of people.

6 And the Egyptians vexed vs, and troubled vs, and loaded vs with harde bondage.

WEe haue in this place the Lawe of ỹ firſt fruits which was made for this ende, ỹ the Iewes ſhold thereby acknowledge vnto GOD, that they helde the lande of Chanaan of his mere and onely gifte: as when a Lorde graunteth any Lande in Fee, hee reſerueth ſome Rent and ſome kind of ſeruice to himſelfe to teſtifye that the Lande is helde of him. So likewiſe GOD meant to haue a certayne memoriall among the Iewes, whereby they ſhoulde bee put in minde to ſerue him, for ſo much as hee nouriſhed them, and that whatſoeuer they had in poſſeſſion, they helde it of his freebeſtowed goodneſſe. In deede GOD did it not after the manner of mortall men: for thoſe which are Lordes of any land, bee they neuer ſo riche, haue neede of Rentes and reuenewes: for the mayntenaunce of their eſtate. But GOD who ſtandeth in neede of nothing, ordayned this Lawe, onely for the profite and welfare of his people. For the firſt fruites were not brought vnto the Temple as though GOD were to receiue ſome commoditie of them to himſelfe: but the bringing of them was to this intent, that the people ſhoulde bee the better ſtirred vp by that meanes, to diſcharge themſelues of their duetie towardes GOD. For the firſt fruites went not for full payment, but they ſerued onelye for a ſolemne proteſtation, thereby to ſhewe that the people was much more bound vnto GOD.

And let vs note that GOD by appoynting this Lawe, meant to giue vs to vnderſtande what great vnthankefulneſſe there is in men, when there muſt bee ſuch meanes deuiſed to quicken them vp to acknowledge and confeſſe his goodneſſe. For if there were but one droppe of reaſon and vnderſtanding in vs, needed we any exhortation to magnifie and extoll our GOD, for enioying ſo great benefites as hee hath beſtowed vpon vs? Hee ſheweth himſelfe ſo liberall towardes vs that his bleſſinges doe euen (as yee woulde ſaye) ſtoppe our eyes. And is there not great reaſon then that this bountifulneſſe of his ſhoulde waken vs, to declare that wee haue not beene forgetfull of thoſe benefites, which hee hath beſtowed vppon vs? Yes verily. But what? Wee muſt bee ſpurred forewarde in this behalfe like Aſſes: whereby wee ſee what vnthankefulneſſe and vnfaythfulneſſe is in vs: for that is the cauſe why GOD ordayned this ceremonie among the Iewes, that they ſhoulde offer euerye yeere the firſtlinges of their fruites. Before they ſhoulde preſume to eate breade of newe Corne, or taſte anye other thing, they were enioyned to offer their firſt fruites vnto the Prieſt. And through this oblation all the fruites of the earth were as it were hallowed, I meane in ſuch wiſe, that then they myght lawfully vſe them.

In deede whatſoeuer the earth bringeth foorth, is of his owne nature pure and cleane, neuertheleſſe wee our ſelues are ſo defyled, that wee corrupt whatſoeuer wee touche, vntyll GOD ſende his bleſſing vppon his creatures, that by that meanes they maye bee ſanctifyed agayne to our vſe. And thus is the cauſe why Sayne Paule ſayeth, that thorough fayth and prayer, the meates which wee receyue are hallowed: not that there is any vncleanenеſſe eyther in the breade, or in any other meates themſelues, but bycauſe wee are not woorthie to bee partakers of them, vntill GOD gyue vs leaue to vſe them as to his Children. And this wee obtayne through fayth, and by calling vppon the name of GOD, bycauſe it pleaſeth him to ſhewe himſelfe our foſter-father. Yee ſee then howe the firſt fruites ſerued to make all the fruites of the yeere pure and cleane, that men myght lawefullye vſe them, and bee made partakers of them, receyuing them as it were from the hande of GOD. And whoſoeuer they bee which without makyng this confeſſion, and without yeelding this homage vnto GOD, doe glutte themſelues with meates, although they may ſaye it is of their owne goods and lyuing, yet notwithſtanding they playe the theeues with GOD: and they are not woorthie to keepe any longer thoſe thinges which hee beſtoweth on them: as hee which deceyueth his Lorde of his lande, and wyl yet receyue profite by it, is woorthie to bee thruſt out of all the lyuing which hee holdeth of him. So then wee ſee for what purpoſe this Lawe was ordayned.

But before wee proceede any further, it ſhall bee good firſt to conſider of that which is contayned in this texte, and then wee will gather vp altogether, and applye it vnto our inſtruction. It is ſayde, *Thou ſhalt take vnto yeare of the newe fruites which shou receyuest out of thy grounde, and bring them in a basket vnto the place which the Lorde thy GOD ſhall appoynt to place his name there.* In that it is ſpoken of euerie yeere, thereby we doe the better vnderſtande the thing which wee haue alreadye touched, to wit, that it is not ynoughe for menne to bee taught their duetie once for all, but GOD muſt pull them often by the eares, and put them often in minde of that which hee hath once tolde them. For that which wee ſhoulde beare awaye, wee forgette by and by: but if wee haue once learned any tryflyng toye, or I knowe not what thing elſe, which ſerueth for no other ende but to marte vs; that ſhall bee throughlye imprinted and ingrauen in our memorie. But

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when we haue knowen the wil of God and haue heard his promises, and he haue commaunded vs any thing, it slippeth soone out of our remembrance, except euery man for this part doe diligently minde the thing which he hath learned. To see then what the cause is why God thinkes it not ynough for men to make this acknowledgment once in their life tyme, or at the yeere of Iubile onely, bicause that their possessions were restored; and there was good opportunitie to vse this acknowledging in such a chaunge: GOD could haue contented himselfe with it, were it that men (as I tolde you) haue so short memories when the case concerneth their duetie towardes God.

And this may profit vs, not onely to teach vs to condemne that vice, which is ouer great and ouer too wicked in vs: but also to leade vs to the quickning vp of our selues. For in as much as we perceiue what slothfulnes is in vs, and that there is nothing more easie than to go so astray, as we shall neuer thinke on God; euery of vs ought vnto so much the more watchfull to say: What shall become of mee, if I withdraw not my selfe out of this way and call to minde the will of God which he hath already declared vnto mee? Surely I shall by and by become a very beast. Wee must therefore take occasion to quicken vp our selues seeing God for his part stirreth vs vp & waketh vs in such sorte, which thing hee doeth bicause he cannot otherwise compasse vs. Let this be marked for one poynt.

Now to the intent that the people shoulde haue haue nothing to pleade, nor seeke any starting holes to shift themselues from doing their dutie: Moyses expressely sayde, *When thou comest into the lande which the Lorde thy GOD giueth thee to inherite, and possesse it, and dwell therein.* For it is all one as if GOD did haue sworne his tytle, as when a syne is set, and any chiefage required, it is to bee sayde howe it is deuised, that hee which is to receiue the fine is the chiefe Lord, and owner thereof, & that his graunting of it at the first was with such condition. Such is the case heere. For God knoweth that the Iewes enioyed that lande, eyther by right of conquest as gotten by their owne force & power, or by inheritaunce, or by purchase, or by gift of man: to bee short he declareth that they can make no title vnto it by any inferiour meane, but that they must looke vp vnto GOD aboue, and say: Our Lorde hath vouchsafed to plant vs in this land which was none of ours: wee cannot say that it belonged vnto vs, our fathers had no right vnto it: whence then doe wee receyue this benefite but of the free gift of our GOD? It behoueth vs therefore at leastwyse to acknowledge this benefite, and to confesse howe greatly wee are bounde and indebted vnto God.

Men ought in deede of their owne mere motion to consider the goodnesse of GOD when it is vttered vnto them by effect: but yet wee haue neede to bee put in minde of it, and GOD must bee fayne to goe to lawe for his owne right and to defende it. And the reason is, bycause wee are too too wicked, and seeke by all meanes as much as wee can possibly, to darken the grace and fauour of GOD, except hee himselfe bee a witnesse thereof, and shew that hee wil not haue it misbestowed. Therefore albeit this bee spoken vnto the Iewes, yet notwithstanding let vs note, that GOD meant to vpbrayde all mankinde with the wickednesse which wee feele to bee in vs, that is, that hee himselfe is fayne to speake and shewe howe much wee are beholding vnto him. For except hee did so, there is not one of vs which would not priuiledge himselfe from the obedience and subiection which he oweth vnto him.

Nowe is is expressely sayde, *That they shall come vnto the place which GOD will chuse to put his name there.* This was expressely commaunded to the intent that the Iewes shoulde bee reyned the shorter, for in deede men must bee so vsed, or else there is no dealing with them. Wee see howe euery man draweth backe with might and maine, as if hee woulde exempt himselfe from the seruice which he oweth vnto GOD. True it is in deede, that when wee doe any thing beyng forced and constrayned thereunto, GOD will none of it but reiecteth and refuseth such seruice: neuertheless hee ceaseth not to giue vs the spurre, when hee seeth vs on our side to bee lasie, and that is to bring vs vnto willing obedience to make vs to goe to it with a free courage. But wee must needes bee driuen forewarde at the first, or else wee will neuer bee brought to yeelde our selues vnto him. But wee must also note that which hath beene declared afore, to wit, that GOD by ordayning a certayne place wherein hee woulde bee worshipped and haue sacryfyce doone vnto him, had an eye vnto the weakenesse and rawenesse of men. True it is that GOD passeth not for these outwarde thinges, neither doeth any holynesse consist therein: but ceremonies are ordayned for our sakes. If wee were Angels, wee shall needs no such helpes, but bycause wee bee intangled with our flesh and bee so lumpish and earthly as wee are, God is fayne to stoope vnto vs, that hee may lift vs vp vnto himselfe. God therefore vnder the Lawe chose a certaine place wherein he woulde bee worshipped. And why? bycause the people comming thither, and hauing the Sanctuarie there, had a witnesse of the presence of GOD, which was in the arke. Againe the Aultar for sacrifices was there, and all the rest, as it was seene in the heauenly patron whereof mention is made in Exodus. In the place therefore there was as it were a lookingglasse whereby a man might direct his eye higher. For like as when a man hath a weake & dimme sight, he must vse spectacles to helpe his sight: euen so bicause men are ouergrosse, and cannot see farre, it was requisite that GOD shoulde giue the Iewes a kynde of spectacles, whereby they might bee the

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better inabled to seeke him, yea euen in such manner as behoued them. And that is the cause why no mention is made heere but onely of the name of God. For there was daunger least the people would stande too much on the corruptible elements. For this cause God saith not, I will dwell in this temple, as the Iewes sometimes imagined that hee did: and therefore it was requisite that they shoulde bee vpbraided with that imagination by the Prophet, saying: Esa. 66.1. Act. 7.48. What house will ye builde mee? And in another place it is saide, that the euerliuing God dwelleth not in any temple made with mans hand. But he saith, *I will put my name there*: that is to say, I wil giue you a certaine signe and marke, that I am neere vnto you, if you worship me after a spirituall manner, and intangle not your selues in your superstitions, ne transforme mee at your owne pleasure, as men will needes be alwayes forging of ydoles: but knowe you that I come neare vnto you, to the intent that you might come the more familiarly vnto mee: and for the leading of you thereunto, you shall haue my worde preached and sacrifices offered among you. And hee saieth further, before the Lorde thy God, or *In the presence of thy Lorde thy God*. For why? The ceremonies must profite vs, or otherwise they shall bee no better vnto vs than childrens toyes. If in baptisme wee had nothing but the water, ne knewe what the vse and vertue thereof is; it were but a contemptible thing. But forasmuch as we knowe that the water is a certaine warrant that wee are washed with the bloude of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and that it liuely representeth vnto vs the spirite of God, by the which wee are regenerated and borne a newe: wee see that baptisme is a certaine warrant vnto vs, that wee are clothed with the righteousnesse of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and that by this meanes wee are reconciled vnto GOD as beeing cleansed and washed with his bloude, so as wee bee made newe creatures by his holy spirite. All this wee see there. In the supper of the Lorde, when wee 1.Cor.11.24 heare Iesus Christ say vnto vs, This is my bodie which is deliuered for you, wee knowe that it is not for nought that a morsell of breade is giuen vnto vs: wee knowe it is not for the nourishment of our bodies, but to leade vs to the foode of our soules. Yee see (I say) in what sort wee may seeke the presence of God, not (as I haue alreadie saide) that hee is enclosed in these corruptible elementes, and that wee must seeke him there: but that these visible signes must leade vs vp on high. Wee coulde not mounte so hye of our selues, were it not that God reacheth vs forth his hande. Hee reacheth vs his hande by those meanes which hee hath ordained, as himselfe knoweth most fitte and conuenient for our weakenesse and rawnesse. Let vs therefore beare in minde that where as God in this place commaundeth the Iewes to offer their first fruites in the Sanctuarie, hee did it to this ende, that men shoulde exercise themselues in such ceremonies as are conuenient for them, and that they shoulde knowe that they serue to drawe them vnto God, and that they stande in needs of them, euen because their nature is earthly. Moreouer, by this saying that God will put his name there, wee are warned to worshippe God spiritually, and that the hauing of ceremonies serueth not to tye religion and holinesse to them: but to make them goe further, and to mounte vp higher, namely to doe them to vnderstande that therefore GOD ought to bee worshipped in spirite and in trueth, as it is saide in the fourth of Iohn. Iohn 4.24

Also there is this saying; *That God will chuse the place*: And that serueth to bereaue the people of all libertie of inuenting any thing at their owne lust and pleasure. For wee knowe howe temerously men presume on such libertie, insomuch that when God is to bee serued, euery man forgeth some priuate deuotion to himselfe, saying it is better for mee to doe that, and then must I doe that: And why? For to my seeming it is good; I weene so. Euerie man grounded himselfe vppon his owne fancie. And by this meanes the worshipping of God is vtterly corrupted. And euen that also hath beene the verie cause of the bringing in of such confusion throughout all Christendome, as wee may yet perceiue to bee among the Papistes. What is it which they terme the seruice of God? Euen that which hath beene forged by men. For they cannot shewe one syllable in the holy Scripture to warrant that which they doe. And therefore God liketh not of it, but refuseth and refuseth it by good right. For hee will haue men to holde themselues altogether vnto his will without swarming aside one way or other. Yea, hee will haue them to waite for the worde from his mouth, and hee telleth vs that hee vtterly misliketh all that euer men doe bring of their owne, and that it is not only vaine but stinking and abhominable in his sight. Nouertheleese it is an ordinarie matter in Papistrie, to forge such pelting trifles and gewgawes without number. Yea, and it is a common prouerbe among them, That whatsoeuer is done of a good intent, is well done: yea but God saieth the cleane contrarie. So then let vs note that as the people is in this place warned that they haue no libertie graunted vnto them to choose what place euerie man lusteth, as who shoulde saye, wee will serue God in this place, and hee will accept well of it: but that they must come vnto the place which hee himselfe had appointed, and not attempt any thing vpon their owne heades, but onely follow the saide rule of reso rting to the place which God had marked foorth. Whereby we see that when the case concerneth the seruing of him, we may not attempte any thing of our selues, but holde vs vnto that which hee hath ordained. Now in deede it is true that at this day there is no such peculiar place appointed wherin God will be worshipped, or wherein he will haue sacrifices made as was the temple of Ierusalem: yet notwithstanding, vnder one particular we haue beene a generall instruction, that it is not lawfull for

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vnto doe what we thinke good to worship God withall, but that we must haue an eye vnto that which he requireth and lyketh of, and neuer passe beyond those boundes.

Let vs come now vnto this saying, *That the man shall offer himselfe vnto the Priest and say: Behold, I protest here that my father was a Syrian, a very beggar, and came into this land lyke a poore banished soule, and was afterward driuen into Egypt: from whence at length God brought him backe againe, and gaue vnto vs this Land, wherein we dwell now through his fauour.* Now by this maner of protestation, the Iewes were taught to vnderstand that they ought to come vnto GOD without compulsion, as if it were said, I looke not to be thrust forward, I looke not to bee called vp by processe, as one that should not doe his duetie but by force: but I present, that is to say, I offer my selfe here of mine owne good will, I come aforehand. In deede God had appointed this law, & (as I haue already tolde you) it was to reproue the people of their vnthankfulnesse: but yet for all that, his intent was that the people shoulde come of their owne good will: and that is the thing which I haue already touched. It might seeme at the first blush, that GOD constraineth vs, but yet hee meaneth not to stand vpon this point: it is but to inure vs to an vnfayned and hartie obedience. At the first wee be lyke the young Heiffers which cannot skill to beare the yoke. For when a man setteth a young Heiffer first to the plowe, he turneth away his head, he draweth, striueth, and chafeth, and in stead of going forwards, he draweth backward, vntil he be tamed. In lyke case is it with a horse: there is much a doe with him at the first before hee can be broken. God vseth vs in the same manner, howbeit but to make vs tractable, that whē we be once brought to subiection, then we may come with a free & franke wil to yeeld our selues dutifull vnto him. Let vs not therfore abide stil in this fault feare: but let vs know, that God is our father, and that we ought to take pleasure in framing our selues according to his will. Let euery man therefore enforce and set forward himselfe hereto, that we may truely say, Behold I protest that I am bound vnto my God.

Now it is sayd afterwardes: *My father was a Syrian.* No doubt but this is meant of Iacob: not that he was borne in Syria, for he was borne in the land of Chanaan; and his father was a stranger there, and had not one foote of ground to dwell on, he had onely a burying place which he bought for his monie: and they were faine to remoue often out of one place into an other, as men draue them out. They were lyke byrdes vpon a bough. Besides this, Iacob was banished out of his fathers house, and forced to get him away, because his brother Esau threatned to kill him. By reason whereof he abode a long time in the land of Syria: he dwelled there fourteene yeere to get him those wiues which hee had, namely, Lea and Rachel, and after that he serued his father in Law Laban for sheepe, because he would not depart home altogether naked. Ye see then how Iacob was first a poore wanderer; and had soone forgotten the land of Chanaan when he was gone out of it. In deede God alwayes kept him in sure trust of his promise which was made vnto him, concerning that land: and that was the cause why hee made that vowe of his, when he went out of the land which was giuen vnto him: yet neuertheleſſe he was olde before he went out of Syria. Behold, being a man broken with age, and striken farre in yeares, he entreth againe into the land of Chanaan, & that as a Syrian: for he is altogether new, he commeth thither as one that had neuer bin there before: and although he had then some wealth, yet were al his miseries there brought new again to his minde: My father, a Syrian, was in the very way of destructiō. For how was he afflicted when hee was constrained to leaue his fathers house? He hath the knife held as it were to his throate, for behold, Esau his brother seeketh to put him to death: Esau is possessed as it were with a diuelish spirite to persecute his brother Iacob. And when Iacob meant to returne into the land of Chanaan, behold, that cruel beast, namely Laban deuoureth him, not onely fleecing the wool from his back, but also oppressing him after a tyrannous maner. In the end he must yet appease his brother Esau: in which miserie of his he is as it were halfe dead, and maketh no other account, but to be vtterly cast away: he thinketh neuer to saue his familie: Neuertheleſſe he diuideth it into foure bandes, that if the one might not be saued, the other might escape. Beholde to what shift hee is put, and how hee deuiseth with himselfe; well, if there bee no remedie but that thou must dye, well, yet some one of thy children maye escape: and although I cannot saue all, yet God will keepe some one aliue to performe his promise in him. Such was the comming home of Iacob. So then it is not sayd without cause in this place that hee was at the poynt to be destroyed: yet did God succor him as it is sayd here. Neuertheleſſe, Iacob is yet farther constrained to fly into Egypt by reason of famine, wherewith he is so pinched, that he goeth to seeke foode in a strange countrie, and for a time forsaketh the inheritance which was promised him. Afterward hee remaineth there in cruel bondage, and his ofspring is after a sorte drowned in Egypt. They were not onely put to great taxes and tallages, but also oppressed as bondslaues: yea and in the end commaundement was giuen that all their male children should be destroyed, so as that people might neuer be spoken of any more. Thus ye see in what horrible bondage they were, and a man would thinke that the children of Abraham dwelt in Egypt as in a graue, so as all was now past hope of recouery. But it is sayd, wee cryed vnto the God of our Fathers and he heard vs, and hath giuen vs this land in possession. And therefore I protest this day that I held it of him. Here we see first of all, how men are led to acknowledge the state and condition wherein they were, when God first tooke pitie on them. For assoone as we are once at our ease, we beare our selues in hand

Gen. 28. 20.

Gen. 32. 11.

Gen. 32.

that it is a fit occasion for vs to runne astray: and thereupon followeth pride, & this pride is accõpanied with ỹ contempt of God. There is therfore no other way to humble vs, & to make vs to feele the goodnes of God, than to know ỹ before he reached vs his hand and helped vs, we were the most wretched & miserable of all creatures. And this is a very necessary poynt to be noted. For ye shall see men so blinde, or at leastwise so bleare eyed, that they will thinke we are of I wote not what abilitie, vntill our Lord bring vs vnto this poynt of knowing and acknowledging our selues to be the children of Adam, and consequently accursed, and that from our mothers wombe. Wee bring nothing with vs but sinne and destruction. If this were not declared vnto vs in the holy scripture, how wonderfully would men stand in their owne conceites? For euen yet for all this they cannot stay themselues from boasting, (such beastes are they) neither vnderstand they how it is a certeine kinde of drunkennesse that turneth them so away to vaunt thẽselues after that fashion, and to beare themselues so in haud, that they haue this and that [which they haue not.] Thus yee see how men presume marualously of themselues vntill their prating bee daunted: but when God once thundreth vpon all mankinde, and sheweth that we are all heires of death, that we are the bondslaues of Satan, that there is nothing in vs but cursednesse, that all our wisedome is starke foolishnesse, ỹ we cannot bring any thing vnto him which he shall not mislyke and condemne. Whẽ we see that the holy scripture painteth vs forth after that maner, so as there remaineth nothing to vs but vtter shamefulnes then wee beginne to hang downe ỹ heads. But vnlesse God vsed this maner of dealing with vs, it were vnpossible to win vs, but we would alwayes lift vp our hornes. Let vs therefore beare this lesson well in minde, as it is taught vs here, which is, to bethinke vs of our first originall, whence we are come, whence wee are sprong, what we were when God first tooke pitie of vs, and what we shoulde yet haue bin if hee had not preuented vs with his goodnesse. After that we haue once knowen this in generall, let euery man particularlie also haue an eye vnto himself. He which thinketh that he hath somwhat to glorie in as touching the world (as there are many which will say, I am borne of such a kinred, there is such a thing in me, and another will glory in his wisedome, and another in his vertue, and another in his riches, an other in his byrth) let him I say looke vpon himself and say, yea: but for all this, how many shamefull markes hath God imprinted in me, as well as in all others? And first of all, that how highly soeuer a man be exalted, yet assoone as God withdraweth his strength, behold he is no better thẽ a wretched carrion: and again, what is the soule but a bottomlesse gulfe of al wretchednes? And if any man haue a good vnderstãding: it is without doubt the especial gift of God. And moreouer they which are the most excellent of al others and best accounted of in the world, haue yet many spots and staines in them, so as they haue wherefore daily to lament. For although a man haue something in him which is worthie to be accounted of, yet shall hee finde so many wantes and defaultes in himselfe, as shall make him to cast downe his head. So thẽ let vs learne, not onely to haue an eye to that wretchednesse which is in vs, inasmuch as we are the soones of Adam; but also let euery man throughlie examine the faults, vices and infirmities which are in him, and therby learne to stoope, and enforce ourselues to yeeld vnto God the glorie which belongeth vnto him, referring nothing at all vnto our selues as in deed we haue nothing good of our owne. To be short, let euerie man exercise himself in the vewing of his owne miseries, and let vs not doe as some fooles doe, who take a glasse to behold their own beautie in: but let vs take it rather to see what blemishes wee haue. And that is the very thing wherein God also aimed, when he meant to haue the Iewes enf of purpose put in minde, that their father was a poore begger, & that he was as a creature halfe dead. For he was so despised a person in the eye of the world, that they had no cause to bee prowde of him, or to presume to attribute any thing vnto themselues in that behalfe.

Againe not only he speaketh of their father Iacob: but they also say: *Our kindred were downe into Egypt, and there were we trampled vnder foote about fourtie yeares*? which thing serued well to beate downe the pride of the Iewes, to the intent they should no more attribute any worthinesse to themselues, seeing they were so euill nourished in Egypt: Also it serued well to make them forget whatsoeuer moued them to pride, when they were there as bondslaues, and were so heauy burdened, as it would pitie a man to beholde: yea, and ỹ in the end they were condemned to haue their remembraunce rased from out of the earth. When they were so far oppressed, it was an occasion to make thẽ to forget all their hautines and ambition, and to confesse that they helde their lyfe of God. Now in the end it is sayd, *We called vpon the GOD of our fathers, and he heard vs, and hath placed vs in this lande which we doe nowe possesse*. True it is in deed that God turned not vntill he was called vpon, for he had already made a promise vnto Abraham, that at the end of foure hundred yeres, hee would take pitie of his seede when it had bin so oppressed: so that God would haue the Iewes to know that they had no other deliuerance, than that which had beene promised so long before. For had not that bin: they might haue borne themselues in hand that their deliuerance from that bondage had happened by mere chaunce. But when they were oppressed to the vttermost, thẽ it made them to bethinke thẽselues thus: What? Our fathers haue promised vs that God in the end will drawe vs out of this vnknowen countrie, and straunge bondage wherein wee are. This was then a preparatiue to make the Iewes to feele that fauour and grace which was promised vnto them: For nowe the fit time was come to bring it to passe.

Now whereas here is speaking *of the GOD of*

the

the fathers; it is to bee referred to the promises, least men might thinke themselues excused whe they call vpon such a GOD as hath bin taught them, as the Papists nowadayes do ground theselues vpō their fathers: O (say they) I haue bin so brought vp, I haue bin so taught from a child, mine ancestors haue liued after this sort. They beare themselues in hand that this is a sufficient warrant, & such a one as may not be gainsayd to make good whatsoeuer they doe: but in deede it is starke follie, because it is not for men to forge Gods vnto themselues at their owne pleasure: for what else are they than very Idols? But when as here is speaking of the God of the fathers, it is because of ỹ promise that was made vnto Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob. So then if we will call vpon the liuing God, let vs returne vnto this point and say: It is true in deed that there haue many men in the world before Abraham, Isac, and Iacob: but they neither ought nor deserue to be accounted for fathers. For why? They withdrewe themselues from God, of whome commeth all fatherhoode, and all kinred as sayth saint Paul. We must therefore followe the Patriarkes and bee their children: and secondly let the Apostles bee our fathers, and let vs followe them; and if wee frame our selues after their example, let vs not doubt but that we shall keepe the straite way vnto God, and that hee also will take vs vnto himselfe. Ye see then in what sense it is here sayd, that the Iewes called vppon the God of their fathers. And here wee are warned in fewe wordes, to gather together all the proofes and argumentes that can bee to assure vs the better, that all the good thinges which wee haue, doe come vnto vs from GOD. For why? Wee are not so sharpesighted as it were needfull; it is soone dazled (as I haue tolde you afore.) Yea, rather we bee as blinde men: wee must bee quickened vp to consider Gods benefites towardes vs, or else we shall neuer attaine thereunto. And therefore let vs take as much paynes as wee can to consider it and say, Go to, God sheweth mee here, how it is he that worketh, and he giueth me a token thereof. I must therefore apply it vnto mine instruction: & not say, this happened vnto mee by chaunce: I haue had good fortune: but I know that my God hath holpen me, that it is through his goodnesse that I prosper, that it was his hand which hath succoured mee in such an extremitie. Forasmuch then as wee are so rawe and weake of our selues, that wee consider not the benefites of GOD, except wee haue many helpes to guide vs thereunto: let vs take all the proofes that wee can get, to assure our selues the more throughly of them. And to this ende is it that the Iewes say, *We haue called vppon the God of our fathers*: whereby first they put themselues in minde of the promise, and secondly they see that God redeemed them by vertue of the same promise, whereby hee freely bound himselfe vnto Abraham, Isaack, and Iacob. And hereupon they might thus conclude: We are not come out of Egypt by the hand of man: that is to say, wee cannot attribute it either vnto our selues or to any creature liuing: but God must bee acknowledged for the onely author of our redemption and saluation. Now in effect wee see here, that whereas God deliuered vnto the Iewes such a sette forme of acknowledging his benefites, it was to conuict them, that in possessing of the land of Chanaan, they could not say: We haue conquered it by ỹ power of our owne arme, we haue got it by our owne labour, we haue bought it with our mony, or wee haue some other title vnto it in respect of men: No, it was nothing so: but we hold it of our God; we possesse it vnder his hand, the proprietie thereof is alwayes his. Yee see then whereunto this confession whereof mention is made here did serue. In deede all cannot bee handled at this time. Let vs therefore learne this one short lesson, that in this example God hath put vs in minde to acknowledge how much wee bee bound and beholden vnto him for all the benefits which he hath bestowed vppon vs. Wherefore considering our owne sloweneſse in this behalfe, let euery of vs quicken vp and pricke forward himselfe to confesse and acknowledge in deede, that wee holde all of the hand of God: and let vs shewe in deede, that we come to make such acknowledgement, not as forced thereunto, but of our owne voluntarie and free good will; and that we be not vnthankfull for the good which hee doth vs in this worlde: but doe attribute all vnto his free-bestowed goodnesse, waiting for the possession of that heauenly life whereunto he calleth vs.

Now let vs kneele downe before the Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to touch vs with such a feeling of them, as our whole seeking may bee to rid our selues of all our corruption from day to day, vntill wee bee renewed with his righteousnesse: and that wee may grow and increase more and more therein, in such sorte as wee may come in the ende into his heauenly glory, and bee wholy fashioned lyke to the glorious immortalitie, which hee hath already shewed vs in our Lorde Iesus Christ. And so let vs all say: Almighty God heauenly father, &c.

On

On Munday the xxiiij. of Februarie. 1556.

The CXLVI. Sermon, which is the ſecond vpon the fiue & twentith Chapter.

5. 6 And thou ſhalt ſpeake and ſay. &c.
7 Then wee cried vnto the Lord God of our Fathers, and the Lord heard our voyce, and looked vpon our affliction, our labour and our oppreſſion.
8 And the Lord brought vs out of Egypt with a mightie hand, and a ſtretched out arme, with great terror, and with ſignes and wonders.
9 And he hath brought vs into this place, and giuen vs this land, euen a land that floweth with milke and honie:
10 And nowe loe I haue brought the firſt fruites of the land, which thou O Lord haſt giuen me, and thou ſhalt ſet it before the Lord thy God, and thou ſhalt bow thy ſelfe before the Lord thy God.
11 And thou ſhalt reioyce in all the good things, which the Lord thy God hath giuen vnto thee, and to thy houſhould, both thou and the Leuite, and the ſtraunger that is among you.
12 When thou haſt made an end of tithing all the tithes of thyne encreaſe in the third yere which is the yere of tything, and haſt giuen it to the Leuite, to the ſtraunger, to the fatherleſſe, and to the widowe, that they may eate in thy gates and be ſufficed.

WE haue declared afore, whereunto the confeſſion which the Iewes made in offring of their firſt fruites, did tend: namely that on the one ſide they ſhould therby acknowledge the wretchednesse and miſerie from which God had deliuered and ſet them free: and againe on the other ſide, that they ſhould ſo much the more prayſe and magnifie the grace and fauour which God had beſtowed on thē, for we ſee how men forget themſelues in proſperitie: pride blindeth them, or at leaſtwiſe maketh them drunken, ſo as they thinke no longer eyther on themſelues, what they were, or on God. And therfore it is more than needefull for vs to haue an eye vnto our owne eſtate, to thinke how miſerable it were if God had not taken pitie of vs. For wee haue skill enough to proteſt and ſay, that God hath ſhewed vs fauor: neuertheleſſe, our doing therof is but frō the teeth outward vntil it be proued to our faces, that if GOD had not vſed mercie towardes vs, we ſhould haue bin in a curſed caſe, we ſhould haue bin vndone, there had bin no way to ſaue vs. If we be not touched with a liuely feeling of theſe thinges, all the proteſtations which we make of the benefites of God, will be nothing but fainednesse and hypocriſie. For we ſee commonly that men will readily ſay: It is God that hath done this for me, it is his worke; but yet for all that this goeth no farther than our mouth. Now as touching the wordes themſelues, I will note you ſomething by the way. Where as we reade, *My father a man of Syria was loſt or vndone*, others reade, The Syrian would haue deſtroyed my father, referring it vnto Laban. But (as I tolde you before) Iacob is called a Syrian, becauſe he was baniſhed a long time out of the land of Chanaan, and was ſo ſetled there, as if it ſhould haue bin his graue, I meane in the countrie of Syria. But yet the word ſignifyeth rather to be deſtroyed, and vndone, than to intend or to minde to deſtroy an other. It is moſt agreeing then with the ſenſe of the wordes, that the Iewes ſhoulde in this place proteſt that their father Iacob was driuen out of his owne houſe, and accounted as a Syrian, and that when he came vnto the Lande which God had giuen him, it was as if hee had newlie come thither, and as if he had neuer entred into it before. This betokeneth therefore a more full expreſſing of that which I tolde you of before; to wit, that men haue neede to be warned, that whatſoeuer they haue, they receiue it from the freebeſtowed goodneſſe of God, and that he ſaued them, yea euen when they were in a moſt miſerable caſe.

Now as touching the ſecond point, we ſee, how Moſes hath here declared their comming out of Egypt, in ſuch maner, as the Iewes muſt needes

moodes bee awakened to consider how mightily God had wrought for them. For hee sayth not simply that God deliuered them out of the land of Egypt, but hauing made a long rehearsall how the Egyptians had set their feete on the throate of this poore people, how they had afflicted and molested them, how they had exercised grieuous and cruel tyrannie vppon them, it is sayd: *Wee called on the GOD of our fathers, and hee hearde our voyce*, hee sawe our affliction and miserie and hee deliuered vs out of it. And how? *By strong hand and stretched out arme.* Neither yet is this all, *with terribleness, with signes, with wonders.* Loe in what sort our God succoured vs. We see then how Moses is not content to say in one simple worde, that GOD was the Redeemer of that people; but hee hath largely shewed, that the Iewes cannot attribute their deliuerance, neither to fortune, nor to their owne policie, nor to any other meanes in the whole worlde: but they were forced to knowe the wonderfull power of God, who so stretched forth his arme, as if hee had come after a visible maner to redeeme his people. Now then if wee will yeelde vnto GOD the honour which hee deserueth; let vs learne to consider of his power, not as it were at a glance or sleightly: but as diligent markers of the things which he sheweth vs, to the intent wee may bee the more throughly certified, that when it pleased him to shewe mercie on vs, hee meant not to leaue vs in doubt whether it were hee which wrought our deliuerance or no: but thus hee hath so playnely certifyed vs thereof, that the thing cannot bee but knowen and apparant vnto vs. Thus yee see what wee haue to keepe in minde concerning this place.

And let vs note by the way, that albeit God hard the cryes of his people, yet he shewed it not by his doinges at the first. Wee see how the people came to extreme miseries, ere they were succoured. And that is the cause why it is expresly sayd in Exodus, I haue seene, I haue seene the affliction of my people. God sayth not simply that he hath seene their affliction, but hee repeateth it againe; as if hee should say, Because I made no countenance of helping you assoone as you cryed, you thought that I was deafe at your requestes, or that I thought no longer vpon your miseries: but I tell you, that they were alwayes before mine eyes, and yet I haue delayed, and deferred to helpe you vntill now: howbeit, that was not because I had no care of you whom I had adopted for my children. So then let vs note well, that when we are of opinion that wee profit nothing by praying vnto God, wee must continue and not bee greeued as if our prayers were vaine and vnprofitable. For God considereth of vs although we perceiue it not, and in the ende he helpeth vs. But we are warned here to be patient, & not to be greeued at the matter, though God satisfie not our desires at the first. Loe what we haue to gather vpon the text, where the Iewes expresly confesse, *That GOD hearde their voyce*, although hee graunted not their requestes at the first.

Nowe remaineth that wee speake of the signes and wonders. But because this hath bin handled alreadie, it were needelesse to stand longer vpon it: it sufficeth to be put in minde, that the deliuerance which GOD brought at that time was such, as a man might perfectly perceiue that it was his hand which wrought it, and that it came not through any creature. GOD coulde well ynough haue subdewed Pharaoh and his subiects without shewing any miracle. But he would haue him stubborne. And why? It is said, I haue raised him vp for this end, that my name might bee the better known in the world. Pharao therefore resisted GOD to the vttermost of his power; but this was to the greater setting forth of the redemption, which he wrought. So then it is not without cause that mention is here made of terriblenes, of signes and of wonders, and how GOD astonished men, to the intent that feeling his power, they might submit themselues wholly vnto him.

But the conclusion ought to suffice vs where it is sayd, *I come therefore to offer the first fruites of the increase of my lande vnto the LORDE my GOD.* The Iewes in this place declare, that when they yeelded thankes vnto GOD, it was not by way of any outwarde ceremonie, but for that they felte it in their heart that they were bound vnto him, and that they owed all vnto him. Doe we then desire to haue God to accept of the praises which wee yeelde vnto him? We must first confesse the benefits which wee haue receiued of him, and acknowledge them with our mouth, wee must doe it from out heart, not for fashion sake as the hypocrites doe which speake readily of his prayses, but not with the heart nor with any affection. On the contrary side wee see how God especially requireth that we should be throughly perswaded that it is hee which hath begunne to doe vs good, and that hee also will continue and goe on in so dooing vnto the ende: And that euery of vs shoulde acknowledge the same, not onely secretly, but also openly before men, so as wee may edify our neighbours thereby, and that God may bee glorifyed of all men with one common accord. I graunt wee haue not nowadayes the ceremonie any longer as it was vnder the Lawe: but yet wee must come vnto that poynt which I tolde you of before; to wit, that the substaunce and trueth of the ceremonie remaineth vnto vs at this day; so as if wee bestowe any almes, or apply the benefites of GOD to such vses as hee commaundeth, wee offer vnto him of our first fruites. And so let vs note well that they which giue any thing of their goods which they possesse, must not bee pinching and nigardly as if they gaue any thing of their owne. For wee must alwayes beare in minde to say, I offer vnto my GOD. And whereof? Euen of that which I haue receiued at his hand. In deede I am the owner of it; but yet GOD hath

Exod. 3. 9.

hath reserued some chiefeage for himselfe, so as I may not ryotously waste that which he hath giuen me, but I must learne to vse it soberly, and to releeue my neighbours which are in necessitie. When we haue this consideration with vs, then shall we offer sacrifices of sweete sent, and such as shalbe acceptable vnto God (as saint Paul termeth them): for without this consideration we may wel rid our selues of al our goods, and yet doe nothing ỳ shalbe aught worth. For why? We want the principall thing, which is to feele how much we are bound vnto GOD, and that our offering vnto him some part of that which he hath giuen vs, be to shew that it is he of whom we hold all that we haue. Now hereby we see, ỳ they which haue no pitie on the poore, but hold fast and locke vp things without any kindnesse, are not only cruell towards men, but also vnthankfull towards God. For why? Were we throughly perswaded vpon knowledge ỳ God sheweth himself a liberal father towards vs, certainly we would not stick to spend ỳ goods which he hath cõmitted vnto vs, according to his wil, but euery of vs would discharge his dutie in that behalfe: and whereas we do the contrarie, it is a signe that wee would deceiue God and not mortal creatures.

Rom. 12. 1.

And it is by and by added: *Then shalt leaue thine offring before the Lorde thy God, and afterward thou shalt worshippe before the Lord thy God.* These two things do shew that we must not be the colder in doing our dutie, though there be no man to beare witnes thereof. And ỳ is a poynt which we ought to marke wel. For we are alwayes led with vaineglorie, and we cannot practise this doctrine of our Lord Iesus Christ where he saith, When thou giuest thine almes, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth. We would alwayes haue some or other to see vs and to praise vs. And although we cause not a trumpet to be sounded: yet are we desirous that men shoulde knowe what we doe. And what is the cause thereof, but that we haue not our eye so fastened on God as were requisite? Therfore this foolish vainglorie must needs beare rule in vs, by meanes whereof we seeke nothing but to please the world. And therefore wee may not looke that God should acknowledge that which we do for his seruice: for wee are turned aside from him. Let vs therefore learne to practise the doctrine which is set downe here, which is to leaue our offrings in the presence of our God, and to hold our selues contented that God auoweth himselfe to receiue that which we giue ỳ poore, and that which we bestowe according vnto his will, euen as though he were come downe, and receiued our gifts from our hands into his owne hand. And seeing it is so, let vs not feare ỳ any thing is lost, though ỳ worlde perceiue not what we do, and that we seeme to haue done nothing at all. Let it suffice vs as is shewed vs heere by this saying, that our Lorde GOD is come before, and accepteth of that which we haue doone, to obey him. Let this bee noted for one poynt.

Matt. 6. 3.

Now the other poynt is, that the Iewes were commaunded *To worshippe before the Lord God*. Whereby we may see, that men must not make themselues beleeue, that they haue deserued any thing when they haue accomplished that which God appointeth them to doe, as we are alwayes readie to swell with pride, to vaunt of our owne power, as if GOD were much beholding vnto vs. Let vs lay aside all such diueliish imaginations; and when we haue endeuored and taken paynes to doe that which God commaundeth vs; let vs worship before him in token that wee are much more bounde vnto him: as it is sayd in the seuenteenth Chapter of Saint Luke, When you haue done all things, yet you must confesse that you are vnprofitable seruauntes. And why? For let vs come to account: If God would require his due of vs, is there any of vs which coulde performe the hundreth parte thereof? Wee deceiue him of that which wee haue, if we giue him but a peece of it whereas hee demaundeth the whole. Nay, though wee gaue him the whole, yet were wee not discharged; for wee cannot doe it with such minde as were requisite: and therefore wee runne alwayes in arrearages with GOD, and hee can owe vs nothing. Wherefore let vs learne to worship before him, that is to say, to shrink downe our heades; and although wee haue laboured to the vtmost to offer him our sacrifices, and to present vnto him our owne persons, and to giue vnto him of our substance, and to doe all that we can possibly doe: when wee haue endeuoured to dedicate all vnto him, yet let vs say, Alas Lorde: In deede we would gladly doe our duetie, but wee can neuer doe it perfectly; wee are farre wide from it; may it please thee therefore to accept at our hands that which is vnperfect, and to beare with vs in our weakenesse; and although there be many staynes and blottes in the seruice which wee yeeld vnto thee, yet let the not hinder thee from receiuing and accepting of it at our hands. Behold with what modestie men ought to present themselues vnto God when they make their offeringes vnto him.

Labour.

Now let vs note by the way, that the presence of God is here put for the sanctuarie, or for the aultar both of sacrifices and of incense; and for the Arke of the couenant: not that God was therein enclosed, but because hee meant to drawe his people vnto him by that meanes. The shadowes of the Lawe then serued to guide the Iewes vnto God, because wee are not able to mounte vp into heauē excepte God reach vs forth his hand. To that vse doe ceremonies serue vs. In deede we haue not nowadayes any longer the Arke of the couenant, nor any thing of all that sort: but we may throughly assure our selues of ỳ presence of God, because he hath openly shewed himselfe vnto vs in ỳ person of his only sonne, and because we haue now this warraūt giuē vnto vs, that wheresoeuer two or three be gathered together in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ, hee Matt. sitteth in the middest of them. Wherefore let vs not doubt of the presence of our GOD, when we

we come to make confession of our faith vnto him: and especially seeing that our Lorde Iesus Christ dwelleth in vs, wee haue well wherewith to content vs, forasmuch as God sheweth himselfe there, not in figure, but in full force. Againe wee haue the two helpes which are most conuenient for vs, as Baptisme, and the supper of the Lorde: where GOD declareth that hee commeth neare vnto vs, and that we are cloathed with our Lord Iesus Christ, that wee are washed with his bloud, that wee are renewed with his holy spirite, that we liue in him and of his very substaunce, that wee are grafted into his body. Seeing wee haue such sure warrantes, wee needs not doubt any longer of the presence of GOD. Yet notwithstanding wee must alwayes mount vp higher: wee must not abuse those helpes which God hath giuen vs, as wee see men doe in Poperie: the wretched people there, are become as brute as beastes, and are of opinion that GOD is to be sought no farther, than in the visible and outward thinges. But contrarywise wee know that we must seeke GOD after a spirituall manner. And therefore let the Sacramentes guide vs higher, and rayse vp our faith aboue the world. And then let vs not doubt but that our GOD is mercifull enough vnto vs, so as wee may be bold to put our selues and all that euer we bring vnto him, into his handes. This is it in effect which wee haue to beare in minde.

Now as touching that which followeth, *Reioycing in the presence of the Lorde*, it is set downe to shewe vs that all the reioycings of men are accursed, except they haue an eye vnto God, and yeeld him thankes for them. This hath been touched afore: but yet is it not without cause that Moses repeateth it here againe. Wee see how men are wont to make themselues merrie, that is without any thinking vppon GOD. If we haue well dyned, when wee bee once full, wee are frolike. But what? Wee thinke not that it is GOD that hath feddē vs. If a man be enriched in wealth by his sparing, he reioyceth, but God is still set aside. Nay which more is, we thinke that wee cannot bee merrie, except we vse some scyle vnto God, and get vs away from him. It is not therefore without cause, that it is often tolde vs in the lawe, that we must reioyce in the presence of our GOD: that is, if so be as we haue any occasion of mirth, our minds must be called backe vnto God, and we must giue him thankes for all: and this being done, we must so vse his benefites as they carrie vs not away, and as wee be not blinded by the things of this world, as the wretched vnbeleeuing sorte are. Loe what wee are to beare in minde as touching this worlde. And it is meete to spirall the vnthankfulnesse of them which doe not examine themselues with the benefites that God sendeth them, without giuing him any thankes for them, which vice wee see is ouerrife. In this place then, God blameth the vnthankfulnesse of men, and sayth, What do you? For you gather the fruites of the earth and who hath giuen them vnto you, but I? And yet for all that, when euery of you hath locked vp his corne in his garner, you being it and other fruits also to your tables, and in the meane time I am no body with you: you thinke you may shut me out of your doores. Nay, but reioyce yee in my presence: or else, all that euer you doe shall be imputed vnto you for theft. For why? We knowe that God feedeth vs with condition, that his goodnesse should bee acknowledged among vs. Therefore when we barre the remembraunce thereof, wee steale from him all that we haue, and wee are not worthie to eate one morsell of bread. So much the more heedefully therefore ought we to marke these wordes, where it is sayd, *Reioyce in the presence of thy God*.

Now by and by it is added, *with the Leuites, with the widowes, the fatherlesse, and the forestangers*. Wherein wee are farther warned, that they which giue thankes vnto GOD, and haue their handes shut vp from releeuing the needie of their neighbours, are but counterfeites and hypocrites: as wee see many of this sorte, which bee ready to say, O, praysed bee God, and vse many other benedicites, when they haue scraped together on this and that side, and haue made vp an heape of riches. Oh say they, God hath blessed mee, hee hath prospered mee: but as for giuing of almes, and kinde dealing, they can no skil of them, they be strange newes to them. Such folke doe but mocke GOD, and anger him as often as they prayse him with their mouth. And why? For to reioyce in the presence of our God, and to haue the companie which hee hath appointed for vs, are thinges vnseparable. First of all hee commendeth vnto vs here such as were occupyed in his seruice, and had the charge to teach the people. Hee sayth therefore: *Thou shalt reioyce with the Leuites*. And secondly vnder the name of *strangers, of widowes, and of fatherlesse*, hee commendeth vnto our care, all such as are in necessitie, and haue need to be helped. Therefore when they reioice with vs and take their course: then will GOD blesse our ioye, and it shall bee acceptable vnto him. But without that, all that euer wee doe shall bee disliked of him, it shall be filthie and vncleane in his sight. And here is expresse mention of the housholde, to the intent that euery man shoulde bee exhorted to deale iustly with those that are of his housholde. For yee shall see some which couldē finde in their hearte to eate and drinke till they burst, and it greeueth them that others shoulde haue one morsell. So faine would they that all were thrust into their owne paunches. So they themselues fare well, they care not though their neighbours fast and starue for hunger. Yee shall see such greedinesse, or rather cruelnesse in some, that they couldē finde in their hearte to sucke the very bloud of those that serue them, and in the meane time take no care to susteyne them. For this cause our Lorde sayth that wee cannot reioyce in his presence, that is to say, in such wise as hee may lyke of our myrth, except wee reioyce with all our houshold, and that wee shewe our selues so kindhearted and pitifull, as wee may all

with one cõmon accord sing prayses vnto God. Ye see then how our mirth and melodie may agree very well together. Also we are exhorted to instruct them which are cõmitted to our charge to blesse the name of God: that whether we eate, or whether we drinke, God may be praysed both of great and small. This is the meaning of the doctrine which is conteyned here.

Now it followeth *That when the people haue payd their Tythes, in the third yeere, which is the yeere of geathering, euery man shall bring his tythes vnto the Leuites, for the poore, for the widowes, for the fatherlesse, & for the strangers.* For the vnderstanding of this place, we must note, that besides the ordinarie Tythes which serued to sustayne the tribe of Leui, and the Priestes, which serued in the temple, there was the tything of Tythes as they called it: & this was made from three yeere to three yeere, excepting euer the seuenth yeere whē their landes were not tilled: for it was expedient that the rest or Sabboth should be kept in that behalf also. They fallowed not their ground from yeere to yeere or euerie eche other yeere as wee doe in this countrie: for the fruitefulnesse of that land might well away to yeeld fruite sixe yeeres together. So then, twise in sixe yeeres they receiued ỹ second sort of Tythes. And these are they whereof Moses maketh mention in this place, which serued to susteine the poore of the countrie: to the intent that not onely the Leuites might receiue the offringes, but that the fruite of them might reach farther, and that none in all Israel might want or neede. As touching the Tythes which were payd vnto the tribe of Leui, I haue tolde you already, that there was a double reason thereof. First forasmuch as God reserued the Leuites for his own seruice, there was great reason why they should be sustayned. They which serue at the aultar ought to liue of ỹ aultar. That Deut. 14. 22. 1. Cor. 19. 13. is ỹ cause also why they had a certain portion in all the offringes, saue in the whole burnt offringes. But in the ordinarie sacrifices they receiue their part of them. Besides this, wee ought to note also, that because they were the children of Abraham, they ought to haue a part in ỹ land which was promised vnto him, for they were heires aswell as the other tribes of Iuda, Beniamin, Issachar, Dan, and all the rest: Leui (I say) was an heire of Abraham and of Iacob aswel as the other. And why is he bereaued of his inheritaunce, but because God recompenceth him after an other maner? Ye see then how they which come from Leui, haue no parte of the land, they haue onely their medowes in the suburbes of their cities to sustaine their cattaile, but yet doth he assigne them the Tythes of the whole countrie to finde them withall, and he will not haue them so bereft of their heritage: but that men should haue a regarde to maintaine them. And why? Because he occupyeth them in his seruice: they must teach the people, they must offer the sacrifices, they must doe that which was appointed in the temple. For this cause God will haue men to haue a care to sustaine them. And herewithall, when they made the second tything, thereby they were done to vnderstand, ỹ somewhat was to be taken as it were from their portion, to giue vnto the poore: whereby they were put in minde that they ought not to glut themselues with the offeringes no nor yet to enrich themselues with them. And why? For they were the goods of the poore. Yee see then where vnto God had an eye, when he appointed the second tything which was made euery third yeere. It behoued the priestes and Leuites to acknowledge and say: Well, Truely we haue enough, yea, and more than enough to susteine vs. And to what end hath God giuen vs this plentie? Is it that we shoulde make monie of it, and hoorde it vppe in our cofers? Is it that the people should be diminished, and we increased? Nay but he poynteth to vs with his finger, & telleth vs that they bee the goods of the poore, and that the poore must haue a portion out of it to susteine them withall, and that such as are in neede and necessitie must be relieued by that meanes. Thus ye see in effect what is conteyned in this place.

Now it is not without cause that God putteth his people againe in minde of that which he had already cõmaunded them: the simple law might haue bin sufficient for them, but our Lorde poynteth them in minde, that they must discharge themselues, aswell of the second Tythe, as of the ordinarie tenth. And the reason why he doth so is because the world is alwayes set on scraping, without caring how or in what maner: men consider not what is lawfull, so they may make their gaine. And wee see also the vprores which the Prophet Malachie maketh for the same thing. You haue defrauded me (saith the Lorde) and the people come shamelesse & say: Wherein? They woulde needes plede with God, and deny the matter flouting and flatly: For it is a very rare thing to haue men to confesse their debt at the first. They come here blasering out the tongue, and aske, whereof doeth God complayne? And wherein haue we defrauded him? In your Tythes (saith the Lord.) For whereas I haue reserued the right of tythes and offeringes to my selfe; you defraude me of my right. When you pay me your tythes, it is but by halfes, when you bring me your offringes, they are very leane and chinne, so as a man may see how your whole seeking is to cauch from me, and to withhold that which is due vnto me. Now this vnthankfulnes of men is the cause why God ratifyed his lawe in this place. Yet notwithstanding we see the shamelesnesse and wickednesse of the people in that which we haue rehearsed. Hereby wee are taught, that when God hath taught vs our duetie, it is not enough for vs to haue heard what we ought to doe, but we had also needs to be waked, we had needs to be frisked as it were with blowes of a Rattle, to haue it imprinted in our mindes which we haue not well borne away: we haue neede (say I) to haue one lesson often sung vnto vs, because our memorie is so short when the case concerneth our duetie towards god. But whatsoeuer God doth, & by how many exhortations soeuer he stirreth vs vp, yet we haue forgotten al in ỹ morning of an hand we thinke no longer vppon it, and continue still

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in our wonted trade. God cryeth out to vs, and putteth vs continually in mind of our duties: but our lustes and affections doe so trouble vs, that wee cannot lend him an eare to receiue that which hee sayth. So much the more then ought wee to take heede vnto our selues, knowing, that if the Iewes were dull vpon the spurre, and discharged not their duetie in the thinges that were commaunded them, the same vice also reigneth in vs: and therefore for this cause wee had needs to bee quickened vp. And let vs not thinke that the exhortations which men giue vs euery day, be superfluous. When wee haue heard a thing an hundred times, yet are wee as dulles still. God therefore must be faine to beginne againe with vs, and sometimes doe as he saith by his Prophet Esay, and say A, A: B, B: for so doth hee speake, and teacheth vs that we are like vnto a childe that is hardwitted & dul to learne. For a man must tel him A, A: and when hee seemeth to haue learned it, it is by and by forgotten. Then comes he to B, B: and yet for all that is it still newe to beginne. Euen so is it with vs also: for in the thing whereof God complaineth and saith: What? I haue plyed this people as a man would ply litle children; and yet for all my teaching of them, they be still in their principles, they remaine still in their A, B, C: And what a shame is that? Thus is the thing which we haue need, to the end that euery one of vs doe pray to bee guided by the spirit of God, as wee may bee more apt to be taught, and more quicke already to beare in minde that which he hath taught, and to receiue his worde in such humblenesse as we ought. And moreouer if we yet feele any dulnesse in vs, that God must be faine to vrge vs againe, and returne the second and third time, whe he hath taught vs once already: let vs hereby consider and confesse his goodnesse towardes vs, for bearing with vs: and let vs take heede, that when he hath spoken once vnto vs, we shew at leastwise, that hee hath not lost all his paines, nor bestowed it vnprofitably.

Furthermore for a conclusion, let vs note that in the time of the Lawe the things that were consecrated to the vse of the temple, and to the Leuites, was imployed to the behalfe of the poore, when the others had more than needed; and this same lawe remaineth still in force euen to this day. Truely the rule which S. Paul setteth downe ought to be obserued, namely that if in old time the Priestes were sustained because GOD had called them vnto that state: they which nowadays preach the Gospell and offer as pure offerings vnto God as those of the Lawe, ought to be fed and sustained. Yet notwithstanding it is not meant hereby that they should deuour all, as wee see is done in the Popedome. Where offerings are made there, it is but to haue them applied in pompes and heathenish vanities, or rather in other villanies: as the Byshops, and Abbots, and other, euery one in their degree, spend their reuenues not only in gaming & hunting and other vain pastimes: but also in whoredome, & in al other shamefull things: so as there was such corruption to infect the whole world, as the wealth which is in the Church, as they terme it, that is to say in the Synagogue and stocke of the clergie. Now when we see these Churchrobbers fall into such excesse that all goes to confusion: let vs for our part know that we must alwayes come back to that which God teacheth vs here, to wit, that if we will haue our offerings acceptable vnto God, when we haue fedde and sustained them vnto whome he hath bound vs, we must come vnto the poore, to the widowes, to the fatherlesse, to the straungers, and to such as are in need. Thus ye see how our almes ought to be bestowed. On the contrary side, we see that the dealing of thinges in the Popedome was but to fill the bellies of the Monks & Fryers, and of other such like of their Clergie. But God disalloweth of all such thinges. And why? It is not for this cause that he requireth offeringes of vs. We see wherevnto he calleth vs. But now we may perceiue also our lewdnesse. The wretched Papists spared for no cost, euery one was ready to open his purse to cast somewhat into the lawes of those greedie wolues: euerie man brought them somewhat & all this was no cost: they founded obites or yearemindes, they built chappels, they set vp gay and costly puppets, they caused many Masses to bee sung: there was continuall going to them: and these cormorants ceassed not in the meane time to deuour all, and yet the people ceased not to vse such deuotions still. And to what purpose? Surely the Papistes make their offeringes to the diuel, for it is certaine that God reiecteth them. But we on our side knowe that when wee giue our almes, when we distribute our goods accordingly as the Lord commaundeth, he liketh and accepteth of them all. Sith we know this, should wee not at leastwise doe asmuch as the Papistes, who worke as aladeuentures? In deede they thinke not to serue the diuel, but yet they haue no assurance to the contrarie. But as for vs, God auoweth that he wil receiue at our hands whatsoeuer we offer vnto him as he hath commaunded. Should we then bee slacke in this behalfe? Nay rather, let vs be the more heedfull to stirre vp our selues to doe our duetie the better, when we see that which is tolde vs in this place. Let vs be diligent in discharging our duties, that God bee not occasioned to blame vs for defrauding him of that which appertained vnto him, but let vs faithfully yeeld vnto him that which hee demaundeth of vs, or at leastwise let euery man streine himselfe thereunto, that we may truelie make that protestation, which to morrow God willing we shall see.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to feele the better than we haue done: and in the meane time to teach vs so to offer our selues vnto him, that being reformed in our mindes and affections, we may endeuor altogether to please him in all poynts, and therewithal we may also apply that which he hath put into our handes to such vse, as al may be dedted vnto him, and that we may offer vnto him the firstlinges of all our fruites, that is, that our life may be answerable to that which hee hath

ordayned, so as we abuse not his benefits to defile them, but turne them to his glory, and to the common benefite and commoditie of the whole Church. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs, but also to people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wedneſday the xxv. of Februarie, 1556.

The Cxlvij. Sermon, which is the third vpon the ſixe and twentith Chapter.

13 Then thou ſhalt ſay before the Lord thy GOD, I haue brought the hallowed thinges out of mine houſe, and alſo giuen it to the Leuite, to the ſtranger, to the fatherleſſe, and to the widowe, according vnto all thy commaundements which thou haſt commaunded me. I haue tranſgreſſed nons of thy commaundementes, neither haue I forgotten them.

14 I haue not eaten thereof in my mourning, nor held backe aught of it in vncleaneſſe, nor giuen aught thereof for the dead, but I haue obeyed the voyce of the Lorde my GOD, I haue done according vnto all that which thou haſt commaunded me.

15 Looke downe from thy holy dwelling place of heauen, and bleſſe thy people Iſrael, and the land which thou haſt giuen vs, as thou ſwareſt vnto our fathers, the land which floweth with Milke and Hony.

THere is not one among vs which deſireth not to be eſteemed of in the face of the world, euery man boaſteth himſelfe of the diſcharging of his duetie: and we are alſo enclyned by nature to ſet out our ſelues before men: for ambition driueth vs thereunto. But in the meane time there are very fewe which enter into their owne conſcience, to know howe they haue behaued themſelues before God, and which haue ſuch a regarde in ordering of their life, as to ſay: I walke in the ſight of the heauenly iudge, it is he vnto whome I muſt bee accountable: I muſt therefore reſt my ſelfe vppon him, and not ioy in the eſtimation of men, for that is but a vanitie: there are very few (I ſay) which enter into this conſideratiō. Now God ſeeing that vice to raigne in vs, ſeeketh to remedie it: as we may ſee in this place where it is ſayd that we muſt returne vnto him, to haue a good teſtimonie of our life. *Thou ſhalt ſay* (ſaith he.) And how? hee ſetteth vp here no ſcaffold for vs to make proteſtation before men, what we haue done: No; but he appointeth him ſelfe to be the iudge, and will haue vs to ſpeake as in his preſence. *Then ſhalt ſay before the Lorde thy God:* ſayth hee. And ſo wee are warned, that to order our life well, we muſt not haue our eyes faſtened on this world, nor take great care what men thinke of vs: but we muſt take eſpecial paynes to approue our whole life, with all our workes and all our thoughtes vnto him, before whom we muſt appeare at the latter day. I graūt we muſt diligently auoyde all offences, and put the doctrine of S. Paule in practiſe, to doe well 2.Cor.8.21. not onely in the ſight of God, but alſo before mē, to the intent we may edifie others, and winne others by our example to doe that which they ought. But yet neuertheleſſe wee muſt labor aboue all, to haue God to lyke of vs, and albeit the world ſpeake ill of vs and ſlaunder vs, and turne all into euil which is good: yet muſt not turne vs aſide from our duetie, but we muſt hold our ſelues vnto God. To be ſhorte, to ſum the better by this doctrine; let vs learne both euening and morning to ſummon our ſelues before God; let euery of vs enter into himſelfe, as if he were out of the ſight of mortall men, and ſay: Alas my god, I muſt liue as I were in thy preſence, and I cannot eſcape thy handes nor thine eyes: giue the grace therefore ſo to order my liues that I may referre it wholy vnto thee, and frame it vnto thy will. Behold what we haue to doe. And when we haue paſſed the day, let vs thinke: Alas my God, how haue I behaued my ſelfe towardes thee? When we haue ſuch a care, we ſhall not make any pompous ſhewes before men, as thoſe which would haue men flatter or reuerence them, and haue their prayſes preached, when in the meane time they fall aſleepe before God: neither can they conſider their owne blockiſhnes, but although they finde themſelues guiltie, yet they thinke all is well ſo men lyke of their doings here belowe. This is the thing which we haue to cōſider, in that God hauing ſpoke of the offering of the firſt fruits, addeth that wee may not thinke that wee haue gayned much when men accuſe vs not, nor vpbraide vs for defrauding GOD of that which is belonging vnto him. Therefore although men charge vs with nothing: yet wee may not ſleepe thereupon: but euery man muſt examine himſelfe, and conſider whether hee hath done that which was commaunded, and that not to the intent to bee commended of mortall creatures, but of the heauenly Iudge.

Now it is expreſſly ſayd: *I haue done all things which thou haſt commaunded me, and according vnto thy*

displeasure, and I haue nowe forgotten them. Wee see here, what is the rule of good lyfe: Namely to doe according as God hath commaunded vs; which suffereth vs not to dwell in doubt, as the ignorant wretches doe, who know not at what ende to beginne, because they are not instructed in the word of God. Ye see how in Poperie, when a man would liue as he ought to do, he listeneth to ỹ which one saith, & to ỹ whichan other saith, he is turned and returned with euery wind, and euery mã bringeth in his peece, so as they are alwaies to learne how to begin. To the intent therfore that wee be not wauering nor douting: let vs holde our selues vnto that, which is so often turned vs in the holy scripture, and whereof we haue a confirmation in this place: that is, that wee may be at defiance with all the worlde, if we keepe on in the way which God hath shewed vs. Now I graunt that men may finde things enough in vs wherefore to blame vs: as wee see what outcryes the Papistes make, and how they burne and say that we despise the traditions of our holy mother the Church, and the decrees of holy councels, that wee ouerthrow all order, that our lyfe is loose and licentious, and that our whole desire is to leade a bruish and beastly life. These be the thinges which they vpbraide vs withall. And why? Because wee forsake their tyrannie, because we will none of their pelting baggage which they haue deuised, because wee will not be hampered with their cordes, (for all their lawes and statutes which they haue forged are as cordes to strangle poore weake soules withall) and because wee cast aside all those things. Now hetupon they indite vs. But let vs appeale before God, and then we may defye them: yea, we shall haue sufficient for our defence, if we can make this protestation truely; God is my witnesse that I haue behaued my selfe according to his worde. Surely this is an inestimable comfort that all they haue, which swarue not from the pure and simple plainenesse of the worde of God, but followe this playne path, refusing nothing but howe to obey him which hath all soueraignetie, and authoritie ouer vs. When we haue done so, let vs be contented that God lyeth of our doinges, though men condemne vs for them. For their iudgements are no weightier than leaues, they are soone gone, and we lye here whereinto God calleth vs. But let vs note withall, that whereas it is sayd here; *I haue done according to al thy statutes and thy commaundements which thou hast ordeyned, and haue not forgotten the same*: wee are thereby put in minde to vse our selues throughly to the knowing of our duetie: for whatis it which maketh vs to transgresse so many wayes against the commaundements of our God; but our negligence in not thinking on our duetie? By meanes whereof, we are easilie taken tardy. For the diuell is crafty, and alwayes prying and watching how he may ouertrip vs: he lyeth for all that are careles to think vpon that which God hath commaunded vs. In deede we would not of purpose defie God, nor rebel against him: but howsoeuer the worlde goeth, we haue little care, we apply not our whole studie to consider of our dutie, and to say; Go to, what is it that God requireth of mee? And because we haue not an eye hereunto, wee stumble and fal, and go astray. We are therfore exhorted in this place, to looke more narrowly vnto our selues, & to bee more watchfull, that we forget not our duetie. For we haue a very short memorie, if God did not often refresh it. Let vs learne to consider whether we haue followed the good will of God or no in this behalfe: let vs continue therein, and keepe all one course still, and holde on in that trade all our whole lyfe. If this were well imprinted in our heartes, wee would be more diligẽt to heare and to reade the wordes of God than we are. We had neede to be put in minde of that which God hath cõmaunded vs, or else we wil soone forget it, euen in the turning of an hand: and yet we vouchsafe not, either to heare, or to reade any thing which should be for our instructiõ. God therfore is iustly prouoked to punish our negligence, & we must needs fal into many ouergrosse faultes. And why? Because we seeke not after that remedie which he hath put into our handes.

But here a man may demaund a question, how God wold haue men to protest before him ỹ they haue walked according vnto al his statutes & that they haue forgotten nothing of thẽ. Is it possible for vs (how much soeuer we inforce our selues,) to obey God in such wise, as there shal be nothing but perfectnesse in our lyfe? That were cõtrarie to all ỹ holy scripture. For it is sayd that none shall be found righteous in ỹ sight of God. Psal. 143. 2. If God would vse rigour, we should all perish before his face. And ỹ place is spoken euen of thẽ ỹ are ỹ righteousest. Verily, when S. Paul went about to proue ỹ we cãnot be iustified but by faith onely, and through ỹ mercie of God & the fauor of our Lord Iesus Christ: he alledgeth onely ỹ which is writtẽ in ỹ law: Cursed are they which performe not all those things. For he taketh this for a ground, ỹ it is not possible for any man liuing, to performe ỹ law, because it surmounteth all their power. It seemeth here then, that God meant to traine vp his people in hypocrisie, when he taught thẽ this lesson to say, *I haue obserued all thy statutes, I haue let passe none of them.* Now to answere this hard question, let vs note ỹ the holy scripture in speaking of ỹ faithfull, saith in deede ỹ they haue walked according to ỹ statutes & ordinances of God, as whẽ S. Luke speaketh of Zacharie, & Elizabeth his wife, he saith ỹ they walked vprightlie & perfectlie according to ỹ commaundementes & ordinances of God. And this manner of speach is often to bee found in holy scripture. And yet this proueth not, ỹ Zacharie was altogether perfect, ỹ he had an holynesse of Angels, ỹ he had no vice in him, & that his wife also was such another. No, but the scripture in so speaking presupposeth ỹ God of his goodnesse beareth with ỹ faithful, & that bee imputeth not their faultes vnto them, when they ouershoote not thẽselues too far, nor become rebels and despisers of God: but intend alonely to walke according to his wil, & submit thẽselues vnto him, and enforce themselues and take paynes ỹ way.

Deut. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10.

Luke. 1. 6.

Forasmuch then as the faithfull haue such affection and zeale to giue themselues ouer vnto God; although they trippe, although they stumble; although there be much amisse in them; and that God in rigour might condemne their whole life, and that there is nothing in them which is not stayned with some blot or other: yet doth GOD accept their doings, as if they were sound & perfect. And why? For when we are iustified through the grace of our Lorde Iesus Christ, then doth God receaue vs vnto mercie, not onely to accept of vs as of his children, but also to take in good worth whatsoeuer proceedeth from vs, although it be worth nothing, ne deserueth any such lyking. Seeing then that God sheweth himselfe so gratious and fauorable vnto vs; let vs endeuour to doe well. Although wee performe not that which is required of vs, and bee but in the midway: yet shall it be allowed vs in our account as if we had performed the lawe. Now according hereunto, the faithfull protest, that they haue walked according to Gods will, that they haue kept his statutes, that they haue forgotten nothing of them. And why? They meane that they haue had an vpright affection, that they haue not bin double minded, that they meant not to serue GOD by halfes as many do, but that in all respects they haue bin willing to bee subiect to the Lawe. Yet for all this, they are not so blinde, but they acknowledge their imperfections, and bewaile them, and knowe themselues to be miserable in that respect: but it sufficeth thē that God hath vouchsafed them such grace, as to walke vprightlie, and not to halt on both sides as hypocrites doe. Wee see that they which were the iustest in all the world, haue confessed their wretchednesse, and bin ashamed of their whole lyfe. Iob in deede sayth, Iob.29.15. that he was an eye vnto the blinde, a foote to the lame, a defendour of the fatherlesse, a father of the poore, the refuge of the widowe; that he deceiued no man, that he abused not his credit, and that his hand was not shut vnto thē which were in neede. And yet after he hath said all this, hee sayth, Alas; when I come before my iudge, I must haue my mouth shut vp. Wee see how the seruantes of GOD haue not bin so presumptuous, as to set forth their owne lyfe as perfect. Dauid had such a witnes of God, as wee Act.13.22. may wonder at: I haue found Dauid (sayth God) according to mine owne heart. Beholde how God speaketh and auoweth that Dauid was the holyest of all creatures, and yet for all this wee heare what he sayth; Alas Lord enter not into Psal.143.2. iudgement with thy seruant, for neither I nor any man liuing shall be founde righteous in thy Psal.130.3. sight. Lord if thou deale lyke a iudge, who shall stand before thee? Beholde we are all of vs grosse founded. If these men haue thus spoken, what shall be sayd of vs which are farre wide from such perfectnes as was found in their lyfe? And therfore we see how al the faithful y euer were, haue alwayes acknowledged their faultes, haue euer bin humble, haue euer bin beaten downe. Rom.7.24. Saint Paul also who was so excellent in al vertue, saith, Alas wretch that I am, who shal deliuer me from this bodie of death? And afterward in the end, although he was a prisoner, although he waited for nothing but death, and prepared himself to receiue it, and beheld euen then y crown of righteousnesse which was prepared for him; yet he saith, I am not yet come to my marke; but I must enforce my selfe yet farther. S. Paul Phil.3.12 herein confesseth his infirmities. So then let vs note that the Saintes neuer vaunted themselues before God to haue performed all that he commaunded them, and to haue discharged themselues of their dutie. But when they had taken holde of the free fauour which was promised vnto them, namely that GOD pardoned their sinnes, and that he would not call them to any precise account, that he forgate and buryed all the spottes and staynes which were in their workes; when they tooke holde (I say) of this promise, and hung wholy vppon it: then could they protest and say, Lord we haue done all that thou hast commaunded vs to doe, yet because they were grounded vppon the mere fauour of God, who will not examine their workes with rigour. After that manner ought this place to be vnderstoode. It is not that any man may say that he hath fully discharged his dutie, and that he hath obserued y whole lawe: for we are al accursed because it is vnpossible for vs to obserue it: but that God meant to stir vp men to enforce themselues to do well. And moreouer because we haue alwayes our recourse to the freebestowed goodnes of God, he hath giuē vs this leasure and libertie to say, Lord, I haue done that which thou commaundest, that is to say, I haue sought to do it. For when we tend to the seruice of God, it is all one as if we had serued him: whē we haue the affection, it is all one as if we had effectuē: whē we are in y way, it is all one as if we had ended our course: when we desire, it is all one as if we had put the thing in practise. And what is the cause hereof? Euē y infinite goodnes of our God, who sifteth vs not seuerely, but spareth vs & beareth with vs as with his children. We see now in effect what is sayd. And hereby we are warned to doe our indeuour to walke according vnto the commaundementes of GOD, that wee may vnfainedly say: Lorde, I haue doone all that thou commaundest me. And yet in the meane time let vs also acknowledge our vices, and craue pardon for them. But howsoeuer the worlde goeth, let vs not double with GOD but let vs endeuour willinglie and vnfainedlie to obey him. This is the thing which wee are taught in this place of Moses.

Now because the fruits of the earth are treated of here, it is saide, *I haue not eaten of the first fruites in the anguishe of my heart.* This saying may be expounded two manner of wayes: either that men haue not eaten with griefe that which they ought to offer vnto God: or that how great soeuer their neede were, yet it constrained them not to swarue from doing well, but that they alwayes discharged their offeringes. As touching the first, it is certaine that albeit men bee at defiance with GOD so as they harden themselues to offend: yet notwithstanding they haue alwayes some remorse within them.

In deede when men are come to the fulnesse of

of all wickednesse, they haue no longer any remorse of conscience (as S. Paul saith,) they make no conscience of doing any thing as we see these robbers which are altogether brutish, and not onely such as beset the high wayes, but those also which are giuen to pilling and polling; they are so seeled in cruelties, that they make no conscience of dooing any thing. The adulterers likewise, after the diuel hath once blinded them, are no longer ashamed of their owne filthinesse. As much is to be saide of all others, which are set to followe their carnall affections and desires. These seeme to haue no feeling nor remorse of conscience at leastwise as in respect of themselues. But yet in the meane time God presseth them in such wise, that spite of their teeth they are constrained to haue within their many blinde lightes, they are awaked when they would rest, and they haue secret stinges which torment and vexe them, as the Prophet Esay saieth, That the wicked man hath no peace, & that his thoughtes are as the waues of the sea which meete together, and beate themselues one against another. In this case are all such as offend God. So then it is not without cause that it shoulde bee saide, I haue not eaten of it with anguish of my heart: as if it were saide: Lord I haue not eaten my bread in such sort, that I haue bin touched with any remorse of hauing giuen any thing vnto thee fayndly, or of hauing kept backe y offerings which thou hast commaded me to make. Now hereby we are warned, so to content our selues with y which God giueth vs, as y no prick of conscience might grieue vs for keeping backe other mens goods. Yea but in y meane while wee must note also, that we must be diligent in cõsidering what we haue done: for they that flatter themselues may well protest y they haue no anguish in their hart; but in y end it must needs be stirred vp by God, and they must feele his anger in despite of their teeth, & know howe guiltie they are in his sight. Let vs therfore on our part take good heed, and consider whether we haue wronged any man: & let vs eate our bread in such sort as we may truly declare before God, that we haue neither remorse nor prick of conscience. But the true and natural meaning is that which we haue set down in the second place, that is, that God would haue euery man to protest, that he hath not ceassed to doe his duetie for anie necessitie or extremitie wherein he was. For we thinke we are dispensed withal when we cannot discharge our duetie but great paine & much adoe. For example, he that hath nothing to pay, thinketh he is quit of his debt. And it is commonly said in y prouerb, That neede hath no law. And so because men are wont to make necessitie a shield & buckler for all the euils which they commit, therefore it is sayd, I haue not withheld mine offeringes in the anguish of my heart. As if wee confessed, that although we haue bin so distressed, that we knewe not on which side to turne vs, that wee had no bread to eate, yet we haue not bin tempted therby to doe euill, but wee haue walked according to the will of God. Although wee haue beene in extreme neede, yet haue wee not ceassed alwayes to deale vprightly and indifferently, what neede so euer wee were in. This is it in effect which is meant by this place. And mention is purposely made of the anguish of the heart, to the intent we should know, y although there bee much weakenesse in vs, yet is it not a sufficient excuse to doe euill. There are many which when they haue vsed any deceyte, pilfering or extorsion, will alleage and saye: Oh consider I am weake, I haue no such constancie as others haue, the tentation ouercame mee. But GOD in this place alleageth, that his children may bee tempted (for the anguish of the heart is a signe that wee bee made neyther of steele nor stone,) that wee haue stinges in vs, to pricke vs and to holde vs in bondage; but yet y wee must fight against them whatsoeuer commeth of it. Therefore let vs learne that although pouertie be hard and grieuous; yet notwithstanding we ought to resist all the temptations which wee feele in our heart, and therewithall to walke vprightly. This is a fitte lesson for poore folke, to the intent they beare not themselues in hand, that in their need it is lawfull for them to catch what they can get, and to seeke their aduauntage as many doe, saying: Yee see there is none that pitieth mee, I must looke vnto my selfe: thereuppon they make no conscience eyther to sell counterfeite wares or otherwise to discharge themselues verie yll of their duetie. And it is purposely sayde (as wee see) that although wee bee distressed, yet wee must eate but of the bread which God giueth vs, and not whatsoeuer wee can catch by vnlawfull meanes.

There is afterwards mention made of *filth and vncleannesse, and of the deade*: And that is by cause of the ceremonyes of the Lawe. For wee knowe howe GOD meant to keepe the people of olde tyme occupyed in these figures, to the intent wee myght knowe that men are subiect vnto many defylementes, and that they become vncleane at euerie turning of a hande. And heere is mention made of the dead, by cause if one touched a dead man or entered into an house where hee was; he was defyled. Heereby the Iewes were warned, that in this present life wee are beset with so many defylementes, that wee cannot steppe a foote forewarde, nor turne a finger, but God shall espie somethyng woorthye of blame in vs: and for that cause were the washinges appoynted. And the Iewes had a looking glasse and a liuely picture thereof, when they sawe a deade bodye. For beholde, it is a carrion: and whence proceedeth this lothsomnesse which we see to bee in a man, when hee is deade? For the body of man is the house and temple of the holy Ghost, and the dwelling place of the liuely Image of GOD. Yet notwithstanding, the body of man beyng dead is more stinking than the carrion of a dog or of an Asse. Nowe then, the sight heereof serueth well to humble vs in beholding the fruites of sinne. For God sheweth as it were with his finger, that the spirituall filthinesse which dwelleth in vs, vttereth it selfe euen in the body,

And this was ỳ meaning of the figures which the auncient fathers had vnder ỳ law. Now it is true in deede ỳ the figures themselues are no longer in vse; but yet ỳ substance of them shall alwayes remayne, to do vs to vnderstand ỳ forasmuch as we be subiect to many defilementes bicause the world is so corrupted as is pitie to beholde, wee ought to keepe good watch, & that as oftẽ as we perceiue any staine in vs, or that we haue not followed Gods commandements roundly, or ỳ we haue bin allured by any wicked affection, or that wee haue not walked in the way of God with so feruent zeale as we should haue done, or ỳ wee haue bin held back & hindered with some worldly care: wee must bewaile it before God, and flee for refuge to ỳ bloud of our Lorde Iesus Christ: for there is no talke to be had of other washings. The holy water of the Papistes is but a charme, whereby they haue renounced ỳ benefite of the death & passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Vnto his death therefore must wee haue our recourse. And moreouer, although we feele not our faults, (as in very deede many escape vs, & wee knowe not ỳ hundredth part of them) yet must wee not ceasse to walke in carefulnes & humblenes, and to craue pardon of God. After that maner must we deale that we may be answerable vnto the figures which were vnder the lawe.

Now as touching this place, it is expresly said, *I haue held backe nothing of it in vncleanes, neyther haue I applyed any of it to the service of the deade*: to shew vnto vs ỳ we ought not to mingle ỳ seruice of God with the corruptions of ỳ diuell. As how? We shal see many, who hauing wel to spend, doe consume it ill: some of them in whoredome, and some in I knowe not what ryot and excesse. And when they haue to their seeming giuen some litle piece of it vnto God: they dispense with them selues to fall to ỳ working of all wickednesse. As for example; when the Papists cause some Masses to be sung, or whẽ they haue had some other priuate deuotions: they thinke ỳ God ought to be contented with that he hath had his morsell. Therefore when a man hath spent much money vpon an whoore, one Masse (as he thinketh) will set him free in respect of God. When a wicked varlet hath spoyled & robbed this man and that man, hee will come as it were in scorne to make some small offering vnto God, & he thinketh all is well. And euen here among vs a man shall see such as flatter themselues after the same maner. For they beare themselues in hand, ỳ they haue made amendes for their robberies, when they haue giuen a smal part of their booty vnto God. But the scripture telleth vs expresly, ỳ God abhorreth such sacrifices as are mingled with our filthes, & that we doe but vnhallow his name by them, & that we work him most horrible treacherie. So then let vs note, ỳ Moses meant to declare vnto vs, ỳ if we will offer such offeringes as God may accept, we must not mingle them with our owne defilements. In deede (as I haue alreadie tolde you) we cannot bee so pure and cleane, as that no fault may be found with vs: but yet wee may come and serue our God purely, and not be fraughted with such hypocrisie as to doe his commaundements by halues, but serue him with an vpright and pure affection. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to beare in mind concerning this place: where it is said, I haue taken none of it in filth and vncleanneſſe.

Psal. 50.16.

Now in the end Moses rehearseth that againe which he had alreadie touched, of obseruing the commaundements of God. But he expresseth it more fully than he had done before. Frõ whence proceedeth this obedience, & from what roote? Verily from hearkening vnto God whẽ he speaketh, and when he sheweth vs the way which we must keepe. *I haue hearkened vnto the voyce of the Lord my God, and haue followed that which he commanded me.* By these words all such as follow their owne likings are condemned. Wee see how peruersly the most part of men doe walke. Euerie man wil say & confesse that we must serue God but after what maner, and fashion? There is not that man which snarleth not himselfe in his own fansies. Well (saieth he) I must serue God. And how? I will doe the best I can. But no man regardeth what God commandeth, no man considereth what is pleasing vnto him: we goe & offer vnto him at random whatsoeuer our own braine conceiueth. But all such inuentions of our owne are heere in one woord condemned, where it is said that first we must hearken vnto the voyce of God: If wee will haue him to receiue our offerings and sacrifices, all our offering vnto him must be according vnto his word, which we cannot doe except we be taughe in his schoole. Will wee then walke as we ought? Let vs take paines to bee taughe in the woorde of God. And this is the thing wherein we shall differ from the Papists, to wit, if we profit in the Gospell. For those poore beastes goe astray, and knowe not in what case they are: for they neuer knew, ỳ the ground of all sacrifices is obedience. And therfore they do whatsoeuer commeth in their heads; and no wonder: for they neuer had the wil of God declared vnto thẽ, they are depriued of ỳ doctrine of saluation. But as for vs, seeing God hath vouchsafed to declare his will vnto vs, let vs hearke vnto ỳ which he commandeth, let his voyce ring in our eares, & while he speaketh, let vs not be deaf. Moreouer let vs not think our selues discharged by knowing what we ought to doe, but let vs also put it forthwith in practise. What are we? better for the hearing of our duetie at a Sermon, or for the reading sherof in the holy scripture, vnlesse we proceede to put the same in practise, knowing that Gods speaking vnto vs is to make vp all of our obedience?

Now hereupon it is sayd, *Looke downe from heauen O Lord from thine holy dwelling place, euen from thine throne, vpon thy people Israel, and blesse them in the land which thou hast promised and sworne to giue them, as the person of our fathers*. Heereby God meant not to say that the people should ground themselues vpon their owne merites: but he ment to stirre vp the faithfull to walke simply in his feare if they wouldе haue him for his part to continue his benefices and his blessings towardes them. This would bee darke if it should not bee layd foorth more plainely. In deede all that euer

God

God promiseth vnto vs, proceedeth from his owne free bestowed goodnesse. But yet for all that he will not haue vs to neglect our dutie, and so abuse his promises, as if we might binde him vnto vs, and wee in the meane time bee his enimies: he will not haue vs to spit in his face and to pinne him in the meane time to our sleeue & say, Thou must shewe thy selfe a father vnto vs, although we be not thy children: thou must bee at peace with vs, although we make warre against thee. No, we may not dally so with God. But will we haue him to continue beneficiall vnto vs? Let vs take heede then that we serue and honour him, let vs take heed if we walke according vnto that, wherevnto hee hath called vs: for wee must alwayes beare this saying of his in minde, Turne ye vnto me, and I will turne vnto you. God saith that he draweth himselfe from vs, when he leaueth vs alone and taketh his blessings from vs, and hath no pitie on vs, he heareth vs though we call vpon him, but giueth vs vp for a pray, both vnto the diuell and vnto all our enemies. For when we turne our backes vnto him, it is good reason that he should also forget vs. Neuertheless hee calleth vs to turne vnto him, and hee will turne vnto vs, that is to say, if we walke in his feare, hee will neuer forget vs, but we shall feele his hande ready to aide and helpe vs in all our needes and necessities. This is the common doctrine of the holy scripture. And according hereunto it is said in this place, *Lorde, seeing wee haue walked in thy commandementes, looke thou also mercifully vpon thy people, and blesse thine inheritance, and the lande which thou hast promised vnto our fathers.* True it is that the Iewes knewe verie well, and wee haue seene the same oftentimes heereafter, that this lande was not giuen vnto them in respect of the obedience which they had yelded vnto God: and that neither they, nor their fathers had any maner of way deserued it. But God was moued by his own only good pleasure, to giue it vnto them. The Iewes ought to haue beene throughly perswaded thereof. Euen so let vs looke well to our selues, and say: Lorde, true it is that whatsoeuer we haue, we holde it of thy meere goodnesse: for thou hast also bound vs vnto thee, and hast put this bridle vppon vs, that we be thy children, insomuch that thou hast preuented vs with thy mercy, and shewed thy selfe a father towards vs in adopting vs: And we Lord likewise haue followed the calling whereunto thou calledst vs; we haue indeuoured to shewe that thy bountiful liberalitie towards vs is not vainly misbestowed. Now therefore continue thou thy good doing towardes vs. To bee short, this case admitteth not any bragging or boasting (as I haue alreadie tolde you) but rather it requireth to stirre vp men to walke in the feare of God and to certifie them that although they haue not behaued themselues in all pointes as they ought, yet God will continue his goodnesse towardes them vnto the ende. And surely wee haue neede of such an assurance. Wee see howe distrustfull we be: insomuch that although God haue powred out his benefites vpon vs longtime together, & we haue felt his help oftentimes: yet are we alwayes in doubt, and we cannot tell whether God will continue his fauour vnto vs or no. For this cause he will haue vs most certainely assured, that when we walke in his obedience and depende wholly vpon him, he will not forsake vs, but will continue in doing vs good still, and not leaue vs in the middle way, but performe that which he hath promised, and as he hath said, so will he doe. We see nowe in effect whereunto Moses had an eye, and what doctrine we haue to gather out of this place. Will wee then abide in possession of Gods benefites, yea euen as touching this present life? Let vs sticke fast vnto our God, and neuer seuer our selues from him; let vs doe our indeuor to serue and honour him. If we so do, surely we shall neuer haue any mind to turne away after our owne vanities: but when we see that he is come so neare vnto vs to doe vs good, wee also shalbe readie to giue our selues wholly ouer vnto him, that hee may make vs to feele the performance of his promises, and to knowe that he will continue to doe vs good, and reach vs his hand to take vs to himselfe, not for a day or two onely, but for euer both in life and in death.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, and therewithall seeing it pleaseth him to vse such fatherly goodnes towardes vs as to vouchsafe to accepte the things which we offer vnto him, notwithstanding that there bee much amisse in them: Let vs pray him y this his so doing may encourage vs the better to yeeld our selues wholie vnto his seruice, and to imploy our selues therin, so as we may truely protest, that we haue not doubled with him, but that we haue endeuoured to frame our life vnto his holy commaundements: that hauing obtained such grace of him through our Lorde Iesus Christ by the benefite of his death and passion, we may bee so clothed with his perfect righteousnesse, that wee may appeare before God his father at the latter day, as if there were nothing in vs but all perfection. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

ON

On Wednesday the xxvj of Februarie, 1556.

The CXLVIII. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the five and twentith Chapter.

16 This day the Lorde thy GOD commaundeth thee to doe these ordinaunces and lawes, and to keepe them and doe them with all thy heart and with all thy soule.

17 Thou hast set vp this day the Lorde to bee thy GOD, and to walke in his wayes, and keepe his ordinaunces and his commaundementes, and his lawes, and to obey his voyce.

18 And the Lorde hath set thee vp this day, in that thou art vnto him a speciall people, as hee hath tolde thee, to the end that thou shouldest keepe all his commaundements.

19 That hee may make thee very hie in praise, and in name, and in glorie aboue all the nations which he hath made, and that thou maiest be an holie people vnto the Lorde thy God as he hath saide.

MOses in this place continueth the matter which was handled yesterday, to wit, in shewing vnto the Iewes for what ende GOD had chosen them to bee his people and his flock. It was not that they should liue as the Gentiles, which were in ignoraunce; but that seeing they had the lyght of lyfe and saluation, they should follow it. For there is no reason, that seeing GOD hath adopted vs for his children, wee shoulde bee as brute beastes, euery man wandering after the fantasies and lustes of his owne heart: wee must order our selues vnder the direction of him which taketh and admitteth vs for his owne. It is therefore sayde in this place, *This day the Lorde thy GOD commaundeth thee to keepe all his statutes, and his commaundementes: to doe them, and to obserue them, yea, and that with all thy heart, and with all thy soule.* This worde To day, betokeneth, that when wee are taught in the worde of GOD, wee are much more straiter bounde, than if hee had onely created vs and placed vs in this worlde, and in the meane time left vs to walke after our owne liking. It is true in deede, that the vnbeleeuing sort shall not bee excused, although GOD neuer vouchsafed to make them partakers of his woorde. Although they bee as poore blinde wretches in darkenesse, yet shall they not fayle to bee condemned in their ignoraunce. He that hath sinned without the Lawe, shall perish (sayeth Saint Paul.) And in deede [without the Lawe] there is not that man which hath not some witnesse ingraued in his owne heart, that there is but one GOD whome wee ought to serue, and whome wee ought to honour. They which knowe this by nature, deserue sufficiently to bee condemned: but when GOD commeth neere vnto vs, and vouchsafeth to vse the office of a teacher to declare vnto vs his will, there is the lesse excuse for vs. Then must double condemnation needes fall vpon all them which refuse not the yoke of GOD, when it pleaseth him to guide them, and to shewe them that hee will not leaue them to goe at random, as the wretched and vnbeleeuing Gentiles. Yee see then what Moses meant by this woorde, *To day the Lorde thy GOD commaundeth thee.* And that is the cause why this word also is put in the 95. Psalme. *To day if ye heare the voyce of the Lorde.* And the Apostle hath well weyed the same, in the Epistle to the Hebrewes saying, that this worde *To day*, betokeneth that when wee once haue the woorde of God preached vnto vs, wee must vse that occasion, and that if it escape vs, wee must needes bee iudged by them, which neuer knewe what good and euill meant to make any sure difference betweene them. And to this purpose also Saint Paule alleageth the place of Esay, Beholde, nowe are the acceptable dayes, loe nowe is the time of saluation, seeke the Lord whyle hee is neere at hande, call vpon him while hee sheweth himselfe. So then let vs learne, not to let slippe the opportunitie of time while the Lorde calleth vs, and alureth vs vnto himselfe, let vs not play the deafe men, let vs not bee slowe to come vnto him, but let vs be in an vnfayned readinesse, and say, Lorde, behold we are heere, what is it that thou commaundest vs? We are prest and ready euery of vs for himselfe to obey thee. Thus yee see what we haue to beare in minde out of this place.

Rom. 2, 12.

Psal. 95. 8.

Heb. 3. 7. & 4. 7.

2. Cor. 6. 2.

And moreouer in this place Moses setteth downe these woordes, *The commaundementes and statutes*, in the same sense which we haue heeretofore already touched: namely, to shewe that GOD teacheth vs not by halfes when wee haue his woorde, but that wee haue a perfect instruction, so as the knowledge of no good thing shall be wanting vnto vs, if wee be not stubborne vnto God, and of set purpose stoppe our eares: as there are many

many which are ready ynough to make a countenaunce of not knowing what it meaneth: although GOD haue taught them. If we therefore on our part bee tractable to bee taught, there is no doubt but that our lyfe shall bee in all poyntes well ruled, when we haue the word of God.

And if this was said of the time of the Lawe, which was much more darker than the Gospell is, doubtlesse wee haue nowe more plentie of doctrine and instruction. Let vs learne therefore to profite in the schoole of our GOD, while it pleaseth him to vse the office of a schoolemaster towards vs, and let vs not doubt that any thing shall bee wanting vnto vs, when we come to him to bee taught. And that is the cause why Saint Paule also sayeth, that in the Gospel there is such a fulnesse of wisedome, as a man can not wish any more. So then let vs not bee vnthankefull, but when our GOD speakes vnto vs, let vs inquire after his will, and order our lyfe according vnto that which hee telleth vs. But with all wee must bee diligent. For seeing GOD forgetteth nor any thing, ne leaueth any thing behinde which myght serue for the well ordering of our lyfe, shoulde wee on our part bee negligent? Or if we heard but one woorde of that which hee will tell vs, shoulde wee ouerpasse it without thinking vppon it? No: but for as much as wee see that GOD hath such a care of ordering our lyfe, let vs also on our side take paynes to profite in his woorde: let vs apply our whole studies thereunto, knowing that it is not losse time which is so spent: let vs occupie our selues in obseruing his statutes, his commaundements, and ordinances: and let vs set our mindes well vpon them. In deede GOD hath in ten wordes comprised whatsoeuer hee requireth of vs, but these tenne woordes haue in them great substance. Our knowing of the ten commaundements must not bee to prattle of them lyke a Pye in a Cage as they say: but wee must consider well of the meaning of them, and marke whereunto they tend. When our Lorde hath spoken the woorde, wee must first consider whereunto it tendeth: and secondly, what things depend thereon: and wee shall finde that wee haue needs to thinke vppon it, and to occupie and employ our selues in it, al the time of our lyfe.

Now heerewithall Moses sheweth after what sorte wee must keepe the commaundements of GOD, to wit, *With all our hearts and with all our soule.* It is not ynough then to employ our handes and our feete to doe well, but our hart must marche foremost. For if wee serue GOD through constraint, all is nothing worth. After which manner, Hypocrites fearing to bee punished make some fayre shewe of godlynesse, and in the sight of men, yee would thinke there were cause why they shoulde bee praysed: but their heart is full of wickednesse and rebellion, so as they defye GOD, and woulde haue him abolished if it were possible. The first thing therefore which wee haue to doe in framing our lyfe to the obedience of GOD, is to serue him with a pure and free good will, so as wee bee not forced to doe that which he commaundeth vs, ne grynd our teeth at him, as who shoulde say wee woulde scape his hand, in dooing the cleane contrarie, if it were possible. But wee must offer our hearts in sacrifice, that God may bee so serued of vs, as wee may shewe that his Lawe is not such as the ciuill orders and lawes of men are. For they ordayne what seemeth good vnto them, to the intent that men should bee bridled but from the outwarde actions: but it is not ynough to please GOD withall, not to haue doone euill, vnlesse our heart also bee answerable in all pureneſſe. And yet farther Moses speaketh not simply of the affections, but hee will haue the heart also to bee pure and vpright. *Thou shalt serue mee therefore with all thy heart, and with all thy soule:* that is to say, soundlye or vnfainedly, so as wee double not with GOD as wee see some doe; which make a fayre shewe for a time, but it soone vanisheth: and againe, they haue a backe shoppe so as they serue not GOD but agaynst their will. Wee must therefore laye open our heart before GOD, wee must offer our thoughtes and desires vnto him, wee must endeuour to submitte our selues wholly vnto him. Thus must hee bee serued and honored of vs, howbeit not after our manner, but according to his owne lawe.

But heere a man myght demaunde, howe it may bee possible for men to giue themselues to serue GOD with all their heart. For as long as wee remayne inclosed in this fleshe of ours, there will bee alwayes many infirmities and vices in vs which will holde vs backe and hinder vs. And verily wee heare how Saint Paule sayeth, I can not doe the good which I woulde. But if the heart were wholly giuen vnto GOD, the perfourmaunce of thinges woulde followe out of hande. It followeth then, that when wee bee so letted and hindered, wee obey GOD but in part. But as I haue alreadie declared, this letteth not, but that wee may serue GOD in singlenesse of heart: for hee imputeth not vnto vs those infirmities which hinder vs, when there is no faynednesse in vs, but that our chiefe desire and seeking is that hee shoulde quietlye possesse vs and gouerne vs by his holy spirite, and that our lyfe may bee conformable in all poyntes to his woorde. Therefore when we haue this desire in vs, although wee be holde backe and hindered with the infirmities of our fleshe, yet GOD imputeth not that euill vnto vs. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in mynde out of this place. But a man may yet farther demaunde, whether GOD chargeth a man with any thing which is aboue his power and abilitie? For it seemeth an inconuenient thing that GOD should require thinges impossible to bee doone. But this demaunde is easily answered: for when God published and set foorth his lawe, hee respected not what we coulde doe, or what our power or abilitie is, but what we owe vnto him.

Rom.7.23.

There-

Therefore when he saieth: *You shall serue mee by keeping my Statutes with all your heart and with all your soule:* hee speaketh not according to our ability: hee knoweth full well, that wee are not able to compasse it, wee are farre wyde from it: but yet for all that, wee ceasse not to bee bounde vnto him, and there is good right why hee shoulde require his due, although wee are not able to perfourme it. For whence commeth the faulte? Of the corruptnesse of our nature. Seeing it is so then, let vs conclude that GOD must not bee barred of his right. And therefore although men can not wholly discharge themselues, yet GOD ceasseth not to say, You owe mee this, and therefore doe it. Now whereas the Lawe was in such sort giuen vnto vs, wee are so farre vnable to perfourme it, that wee knowe not howe to haue one good thought onely to beginne, much lesse haue wee any ryght affection to stirre one finger to doe it. That is no newes: but wee must mourne, knowing that wee are altogether rebelles vnto GOD, and that there is nothing in our nature, which is not repugnaunt to his righteousnesse. Haue wee done so? Haue wee condemned our selues? Then let vs pray him to ayde vs with his holy spirite. And moreouer when hee shall haue ayded vs, let vs knowe that if there be any thing wanting in our duetie, yet shall it not come into account, but GOD will accept of the seruice which we yeelde vnto him, so it proceede from a free and syncere mynde, as I sayde afore. Wee see then that the thing which wee haue to gather vppon this place, is, that GOD will bee serued, not by piece meale nor by force or constraint, but of a pure and free hearted deuotion and with all our heart. Moreouer let vs note, that wee cannot discharge our selues of all that which wee owe him, and as in respect of our owne nature, wee can not any way beginne. But whereas hee hath published his Lawe by the mouth of menne, and hath caused it to bee set downe in wryting; hee must also write it in our heartes, as he promiseth to doe; both by Ezechiel and also Ieremie. And it is a common doctrine (as wee shall see heereafter) that hee promysed the Iewes to circumcise their heartes. After that manner doeth GOD speake vnto his elect, that is, that through his holy spirite, hee imprinteth his commaundementes in their heartes. Moreouer wee must knowe that although GOD haue touched our hearres by his holy spirite, yet wee are alwayes rebelles against him, and wee neuer come to the perfect and substantiall seruing of him which is sette downe heere. Wee must therefore alwayes bewayle our selues, craning forgiuenesse of the faultes which remayne in vs. But yet notwithstanding wee must inforce our selues to come vnto GOD, yea euen with willing seruice, that our heartes may bee so disposed, as wee may take a pleasure to bee obedient vnto him, for vntill wee bee come to that poynt, GOD will accept of no seruice which wee doe to him. Thus yee see in effect what wee haue to beare in minde concerning these woordes of Moses.

2. Cor. 3. 5.

Ier. 31. 33. Ezec. 11. 19. Hebr. 8. 10. Deut. 30. 6.

Nowe hee addeth; *The Lorde thy GOD hath made made thee to promise this daye, that thou shalt bee a people vnto him: and thou hast caused the Lorde thy GOD to say, that hee shall bee thy GOD.* This place heere is taken in two sortes. For the verbe which Moses vseth, signifyeth sometyme to exalt or to sette vppe on high: howbeeit not in his originall signification, but after a certayne manner: and sometime whereas yee woulde saye, according to the roote of the woorde, A man is exalted; it may also bee construed, hee hath made himselfe to saye: bycause it is to bee gathered, that bragging and boasting doe make a man to stir out and to aduaunce himselfe highly. Therefore commonly this place is taken as if it were sayde, the Lorde thy GOD hath chosen thee this day to bee his people, and thou also hast exalted or sette him vp to bee thy GOD. I graunt that this sense maye well bee borne with. But when all is more nearelie considered, the naturall meanyng of Moses is as wee haue turned it, to wit, this daye thou hast caused the Lorde thy GOD to say, that hee will by thy GOD; and hee hath made thee saye, that thou wilt bee his people. For in this place Moses meant to shewe the fauour which GOD had vttered towardes the Iewes, in making his couenaunt with them. And to proue this to bee so, wee see that the same thing is declared many tymes in the holye Scripture, both to the Iewes, and also vnto vs: that is, that GOD vseth inestimable goodnes towardes vs whē it pleaseth him to cal vs into his church, and to receiue vs as it were into his owne hande; for then he couenanteth with vs as if two persons should meete to passe bondes on eyther part. As for example; Some gift is to be made. Nowe hee that is the graunter speaketh first, and he that accepteth is there also. Then are conditions annexed; and the partie that maketh the gift saith This I except, This I reserue, or I will haue him to whom I giue it, to bee bounde vnto mee after such a maner. The graunter (as they terme him) accepteth of the gift, & bindeth himselfe on his part, and both of them make promises, I (saith one) doe renounce all my right, & giue all ouer into this mans hand. And I for my part (saith the other) doe accept it with condition to performe it which he requireth of me. So then like as Couenances doe passe betweene men, euen so dealeth God wt vs in that it pleaseth him to adopt vs for his people, & to take vs for his owne. Now let vs see what honor this is, whē he stoopeth so vnto vs wretched creatures. We are poore wormes of the earth: as touching our bodies we are vile carions & rottennes: & as for our soules there is yet farre greater wretchednes in them: and yet notwithstanding God entreth into couenant wt such as we are: & what equal match is there betweene vs? Would an earthly king or some great Prince vouchsafe to come vnto a swincherd or some other man of base degree, & say, we wil couenant one wt another, we will haue a Notary be-

twixt vs. A Prince (which yet is but a mortall creature) would think himself too much disgraced, if he should enter into couenãt with such an abiect as in respect of ỹ world is: and yet our God vouchsafeth to stoope as lowe vnto vs. And therefore we ought to magnifie so great a priuilege. When we heare the worde of God preached vnto vs, it is all one as if God came down hither vnto vs and saide; Come on. As for mee, I am readie to couenant with you, onely be you likewise disposed on your side. When wee haue such a neare accesse vnto God, and he acquaynteth himselfe so with vs, and woulde haue vs so ioyned vnto him: are wee not voyde of all sense and reason, if this doe not moue vs, yea and inflame our heartes to giue our selues wholly ouer vnto God, who vseth such & so incredible gentlenesse towardes vs? So then it is not without cause that Moses sayeth in this place: *This daye the Lorde thy God hath made thee to giue thy worde*, that is to saye, hee hath made thee to couenant with him, that thou wilt bee his people, and thou hast made him to couenant with thee, that hee will bee thy God. Thou hast this libertie, or rather this priuiledge to speake with thy God. Goe to then, let vs couenant together, let vs haue our mouthes open to demaunde and to aske, seeing our Lorde stoopeth so lowe vnto vs. It is verie true that hee can owe vs nothing, but yet neuertheless, of his meere liberalitie hee will haue vs to aske him, that wee may bee his; hee will haue vs to require him that hee may bee our God, and we his inheritance; hee our King, and we his people: wee his children, and hee our father. Seeing then that wee may come so farre; ought not the great pitifulnesse which our Lorde sheweth vnto vs, to make vs ashamed? What a shame were it if wee shoulde remaine so blockish as to bee nothing at all mooued, after that God hath so allured vs, and after that hee hath so preuented vs afore hande with his infinite goodnesse? Nowe then to the intent wee may profite our selues the better by this place, let vs note once againe this worde, *To day*. For Moses alwayes putteth the Iewes in minde, that when the law was published, God was present with them, and called them to enter into couenant with him as I will declare anon. But nowe as touching vs, wee haue the Gospel, wee see the time seasonable, we see the dayes of saluation, wee see the acceptable time of God: let vs therefore make haste, let vs enter in whyle the doore is open, while the way is readie let vs goe forward in it, let vs not stirre fro we it; for if God perceiue that we despise his grace, doubtlesse hee can well ynough skill howe to withdrawe it, as hee also threateneth to doe. Let vs not therefore delay the time vntill to morrowe, to followe whither God calleth vs; but whyle he speaketh let vs be attentiue to heare him. Thus yee see what wee haue to beare in mynde vppon this worde, *To day*.

Moreouer, it is true, that in substance God maketh no other couenant with vs nowadayes, than hee made in olde time with the Iewes: but yet hee speaketh much more familiarly vnto vs, hee sheweth himselfe to bee our God, and our father, and hath made vs a farre greater assurance thereof in our Lorde Iesus Christ, than the Iewes coulde haue vnder the shadowes and figures of the lawe. In deede the auncient fathers were saued by no other meanes, than by that which wee haue, to wit, that they were the people of God: for this betokeneth as much, as that God held them for his childrẽ: & they had their saluation grounded in Christ Iesus, as wee haue: but that was after an obscure manner, so as they beheelde the thing afarre off which was presented vnto them. As for vs, seeing God is come so neere vnto vs in the person of our lord Iesus Christ, that wee be vnited vnto him, and haue the trueth and substance of the ancient figures: wee bee so much the more surer ỹ God maketh vs to saye that wee are his people, and that we make him to say that he is our God. And how doth he make vs to say it? Truly altogether of his owne good will, without beeing tyed or bound vnto vs. For God hauing adopted vs for his children, certifieth vs that the inheritance of heauen is made readie for vs, and behold hee giueth his own sonne vnto vs for a pledge of his loue, & whatsoeuer our Lorde Iesus Christ hath is all ours, with all the fulnesse of riches which wee reade was giuen vnto him. And why? Euen vnto the ende that wee shoulde bee enriched by them. The obedience which hee yealded vnto his father is our righteousnes. To be short, hee hath nothing whereof he maketh not vs partakers. Seeing that he is ours, and that hee is giuen vnto vs, how shall not all the rest which hee hath be giuen vnto vs also with him, as S. Paul saith in the eighth to the Romanes? Seeing the that we haue this, and that wee may make our God say that he is our sauiour, and that nothing can be wanting to vs, after hee hath receiued vs into his fauour and loue: let it lift vs vp vnto heauẽ, so as euery of vs may forget & renounce himselfe. Let vs bid the world farewell, and let vs be ruished to giue our selues ouer altogether vnto him, who sheweth himself so liberall & fauourable vnto vs. And let vs note, that seeing we make God to speake so, that is to say, to graunt vs libertie to come vnto him, & to require him to accomplish his promises; we must at leastwise be mutually bound vnto him, & he take promise of vs, that we wil be his people, that is to say, that because hee hath redeemed vs by the bloud of his onely sonne, we will liue no longer after our own lusts & fleshly desires, but be ruled by him, & that as he is our father so we wil be his children, so as none of vs wil yeeld to do wickedly, but hold fast the seale of our adoption which is the holy spirite to be gouerned by him. There must (say I) at leastwise be this mutual bonde betwixe vs, that seeing God bindeth himselfe so vnto vs, we also must come and submit our selues wholly vnto him.

Rom. 8. 32.

Now herewithall we ought to wey well this worde which Moses addeth. He saith twise *At the Lorde hath said vnto thee*, whereby he sheweth, ỹ when we come vnto God, we must not come vnto him

with stoutnes & pride, as though he were beholden vnto vs; but we must know that we come because he calleth vs. What mortall man will presume to present himselfe before God & say, bind thy selfe vnto me, & let vs couenant here together, ỳ thou wilt be my God, & that I shalbe of ỳ number of thy people? Were not men stark mad if they shoulde presume to speake so vnto God? Now then let vs note, ỳ it is for him to open our mouthes, & to giue vs such warrant. And that is the cause why Moses sayeth (& that not once only, but with a dubble repetition) that it is God which hath spoken. Therefore if men should of their own mind come vnto God & say, bind thy selfe vnto vs; it were a diuelish rashnes: but let vs wait vntil our Lord cal vs. And when it pleaseth him to offer speech vnto vs, then let vs knowe ỳ it is no presumption worthy to bee condemned to say, wel Lord, seeing we know thy wil, we will vse the liberty which thou offerest vnto vs. That is the maner of proceeding which wee must obserue when we come vnto God. But herein wee see how the wretched world hath bin blinded w horrible abuses. When we speake of the certeintie of our saluation, the Papistes say it is a presumptuousnes: & that we must always stande in suspence & dout of it. Their beleefe is, that no man ought to assure himself of his saluation, but that he should only weene & suppose it. Neither is it ỳ ignorantest sort which speake thus; but it is the resolute determination of all their diuelish schooles. But in the meane while what do they? Euery of thẽ bindeth God at his own pleasure: and looke what they haue forged & deuised, ỳ wil they haue God to admit for good, although he neuer spake word of it. These are two extremities which are too excessiue. For on ỳ one side the Papists stand always in dout saying, I cannot tel in what case I am with God: in deed I thinke I stand in his favor, but I know not how ỳ matter goeth. And what is the cause [why they vse such maner of speaches?] Forsooth they are afrayde of presumptuousnes. Is it presumptuousnes to hang wholly vpon the goodnes of God; & to doe him the honor to beleeue his worde; and to answere Amen, as soone as he speaketh; and to account al these things vtterly vnfallible? Is that presumptuousnes? Nay, it is rather true obedience; & obedience importeth humblenes. In deede there is in this behalf a kind of boldnesse; and S. Paul also ioyneth those two togither in 3. Chap. to the Ephesians, saying. By faith which we haue in Christ Iesus, wee haue trust giuen vs with boldnes & hardines to come vnto God. Faith therfore engẽdreth boldnes: but this boldnes proceedeth not of pryde; but rather thereby we learn our humblenes, in that we receiue quietly that which God telleth vs, & accept it, as a thing wherof we ought not to dout. That is the first extremitie, which raigneth too too shamefully among the Papists. But what do they in the meane time? They haue their deuotions euery man after his own fancie. I wil do this, & I will do that. I must win heauen: I must make satisfaction for my sinnes in such wise & such. God is iust, & think we that seeing he is iust, he wil deny vs our hyre when wee shall haue serued him? And although we serue him not in full perfectnes, yet he will like of that which wee shal doe, or else he should be cruel & vniust, if he should not accept of our seruice: and if there be any default in it, we wil make an amends for it: for we haue meanes to satisfie him. Nay we wil do more than he hath cõmanded vs; wee wil take vppon vs to keepe his law, but yet wil wee haue some farther deuotion in store, & it cannot bee but ỳ all this must be taken into our accounts; for whatsoeuer is done vpon a good intent cannot be bad: neither ought God also to reiect it. See how the Papists plead with God, not onely as with their match, but also as with some little play fellow: & if he like not of al ỳ they do, & account it good, he shalbe condemned although he declare that he disliketh of it al & say, I wil not put it into my account; Deceiue not your selues, it is vtter abomination vnto me. No sir (say they) you will like of it welynough for al that; you cannot but accept of it, seeing we think it to be good. After that maner do the Papists talke. In deede they wil not vse those very woordes; but yet is it the very effect of their doctrine, without adding one syllable therunto. And surely it is a diuelish presumption, when men take so highly vpon them as to make God beleeue that whatsoeuer they haue deuised, is good, & that he must needes receiue it: & againe, when they wil binde him vnto them, as who would say, God will receiue me, I haue purchased ỳ kingdom of heauen, I must be receiued thereinto for my desert, & if God will not admit me for his pities sake, yet must he do it for his iustice sake: for it is not his simple mercie that I stande vnto, I will not bee saued by his mere grace, but I will haue him to take mine account, and as he shall find me worthy, so let him deale by me. See how the deuil bewrayeth himselfe, and lifteth vp his horns against God. But wee for our part are taught here an other lesson. For Moses saith it is the Lord which hath sayd it. And he doth expresly repete this kinde of speach to do vs to vnderstand, that it is not for vs to sue God or to make any couenãt with him: but he must first call vs and we must stand aloofe without preacing to come at him, vntill he of his owne good will do seeke vs. Notwithstanding ỳ we be thus shaken off, our God telleth vs that he will haue acquaintance with vs, and ỳ although we haue bin his mortal enimies, yet hereafter we shalbe of his household. And that wheras we haue bin bondslaues to satan & bolden captiue vnder the bondage of death; he will make vs his children & heires. Doth our Lorde once say so? O then there remaineth nothing for vs to doe but to come vnto him; for then haue wee leaue & libertie to set our selues forward. But here there is nothing of our owne: all is because we are called from aboue, yea, euen of his meere grace, so as wee bring nothing. It is not said, because thou hast done this or that, or because God hath founde in thee some cause why he should shew thee such fauour. No, but according as he hath spoken, according as the Lorde hath said it. The purpose of God there-

Ephes. 3. 12.

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sure must haue all the preheminence in this case. And when he hath decreede ỹ thing in himselfe, & openeth his holy mouth to declare his will vnto vs; then let vs accept of it, let vs take there our sure grounding, & let vs depend wholy thereupon; let vs not bring with vs our owne flickering fancies, but let vs onely walke as the Lorde hath directed vs by his hande, and as hee himselfe hath declared vnto vs. And when wee haue such humblenesse as to haue skill to confesse, ỹ vntil God drawe neare vnto vs, we are far off from the hope of saluation: then ought boldnes to follow, & to keepe his course & way; & we must come vnto that which is here declared by Moses: *This day thou hast made the Lorde thy God to speake.* Therfore when wee haue this warrant of the fatherly loue which god beareth vnto vs; thē may we make him to speak. For do we any thing else in al our prayers, than charge God with his promises? In deede wee come not to pray as the heathenish sort of mē do, & as al those do which are vnpatient, when they come vnto God: for if he grant them not their request at ỹ first chop they defy him. But wee come not to pray after ỹ maner: for we protest on the contrary, that his wil ought to be done. But yet notwithstanding we cannot pray vnto God, but we must say, Lord thou owest vs nothing, but that which thou hast promised vs. Neuerthelatter wheras thou diddest not owe vs any thing, thou hast bound thy selfe vnto vs of thine owne good will, wherein thou shewest thy selfe most liberal: and therefore our comming as now is vppon trust of thy promises to pray thee to perform them. Seeing then that in all our prayers we alleage vnto God the couenant & contract which he hath made with vs, by that meanes we make him [as it were] to speake, & to say that hee is our God. And vnder this speach (as I haue already told you) all the good things which wee can hope for, or wish for, are contained. For seeing ỹ God giueth himselfe so vnto vs, what can we farther desire? Is not he the fountaine of al wisedome, righteousnes, vertue, life, ioy, & glorie? Is there any good thing to bee desired, which we may not find in our God? Al ỹ euer he hath is ours: he communicateth himself so vnto vs, ỹ he will haue vs partakers of al those good things which are in himself; not ỹ we haue ỹ ful possession of them at the first, but that wee possesse them by hope, vntil ỹ day that the fruit of them shalbe layd open vnto vs. Now therfore let vs marke wel, ỹ when we are once taught in ỹ word of the gospel, thē we may make our God to speake, then wee may come familiarly vnto him, & require him to shew himself such an one as he hath always promised to be: and let vs assure our selues that we shal not be disappointed, when he hath once giuen vs the warrant of his loue, which is more than if we had al the deedes of record in the world. And in this case we need not to seeke for notaries or signets or mennes seales, we haue ỹ bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ, which is ỹ seale of this couenant that God hath made with vs, declaring ỹ he is our God. Also we haue the holy ghost, by whome the promise is better warranted vnto vs, yea, euen in our harts.

And so we see now, that it is not for nought, that Moses hath so magnified this greate goodnes which God vseth towardes vs, & this priuiledge which he giueth vs in drawing vs vnto himselfe, & in choosing vs to be of his house, and of his church. But we must alwayes haue an eye vnto ỹ end for which our Lord graunteth vs this liberty, to wit, that he also may be at a point with vs & haue vs for his people. For if we be not answerable on our part with out obedience: as there any reason that he should keep his promise, when we haue broken the league? In deede he must be faine alwayes to fight against our stubbornes & to ouercome it: for we are euery day vnfaithful vnto him, and hee continueth faithfull vnto vs; but howsoeuer the worlde goeth, yet when wee reiect his couenant, and set light by it thorough our wicked life, wee may not looke that hee shoulde bee any longer bounde vnto vs. For why? For hee is become our God vppon this condition, ỹ we also shoulde be his people. And how shall wee be his people? It is not by saying simply with our mouth, Wee are the people of God: for the veriest hypocrites will boast as much as that; yea, and they bee so farre past shame, that they will needs occupy the chiefest places and hyest roomes in the church: but wee must shewe by our deedes, that we are the people of God, in that we obey him, hearkening to the voyce of that shepeheard which he hath giuen vnto vs; When wee liue quietly vnder the guyding of our Lorde Iesus Christ, then do wee make certaine proofe that wee keepe the couenant of our God, without falsifying of the faith which wee promised vnto him. And in this sense hath Moses spoken it. So then forasmuch as the Gospel is preached vnto vs, let vs knowe that our Lorde draweth so nigh vnto vs, as hee desireth nothing but that wee shoulde bee as it were gathered vnder his winges. And here withall let vs consider the contentes or substance of this doctrine which wee haue touched, namely, that our Lorde hauing sought vs out giueth him selfe vnto vs, yea, and that in such wise, as that hee is after a sorte bounde as it were by solemne couenant; by reason whereof wee may freely come vnto him, and require him to perfourme his promises. And after that rule ought al our prayers to bee directed. But therewithal let vs also vnderstande, on what condition it is that hee is so bounde vnto vs. For when we be once bounde after that fashion; if wee make little reckoning of so inestimable a benefite, or if wee reiect it and disdayne it; thinke wee that such contempt of ours shall remayne vnpunished? Woe bee vnto them therefore which haue the knowledge of the Gospell, and vnto whome GOD hath so communicated him selfe, if they bee not answerable thereunto in true obedience, and humblenesse, and submit not themselues vnto him, and that in such sorte, as they may shewe by their deedes euen in their whole lyfe, that they holde him for their God, and bee also of his flocke, that is to say, ỹ they bee willing to giue them selues fully and wholly vnto him.

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And he doth expresly repeat this kinde of speach to do vs to vnderstand, that it is not for vs to sue God or to make any couenãt with him: but he must first call vs and we must stand aloofe without preacing to come at him, vntill he of his owne good will do seeke vs. Notwithstanding ỹ we be thus shaken off, our God telleth vs that he will haue acquaintance with vs, and ỹ although we haue bin his mortal enimies, yet hereafter we shalbe of his housholde. And that whereas we haue bin bondslaues to satan & holden captiue vnder the bondage of death, he will make vs his children & heires. Doth our Lorde once say so? O then there remaineth nothing for vs to doe but to come vnto him; for then haue wee leaue & libertie to set our selues forward. But here there is nothing of our owne: all is because we are called from aboue, yea, euen of his meere grace, so as wee bring nothing. 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Ephes. 3. 12.

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fore must haue all the preheminence in this case. And when he hath decreede ỳ thing in him selfe, & openeth his holy mouth to declare his will vnto vs; then let vs accept of it, let vs take there our sure grounding, & let vs depend wholy thereupon; let vs not bring with vs our owne flickering fancies, but let vs onely walke as the Lorde hath directed vs by his hande, and as hee himselfe hath declared vnto vs. And when wee haue such humblenesse as to haue skill to confesse, ỳ vntil God drawe neare vnto vs, we are far off from the hope of saluation: then ought boldnes to follow, & to keepe his course & ways: & we must come vnto that which is here declared by Moses: *This day thou hast made the Lorde thy God to speake.* Therfore when wee haue this warrant of the fatherly loue which god beareth vnto vs; thē may we make him to speak. For do we any thing else in al our prayers, than charge God with his promises? In deede wee come not to pray as the heathenish sort of mē do, & as al those do which are vnpatient, when they come vnto God: for if he grant them not their request at ỳ first chop they defy him. But wee come not to pray after ỳ maner: for we protest on the contrary, that his wil ought to be done. But yet notwithstanding we cannot pray vnto God, but we must say, Lord thou owest vs nothing, but that which thou hast promised vs. Neuerthelatter wheras thou didest not owe vs any thing, thou hast bound thy selfe vnto vs of thine owne good will, wherein thou shewest thy selfe most liberal: and therefore our comming as now is vppon trust of thy promises to pray thee to perform them. Seeing then that in all our prayers we alleage vnto God the couenant & contract which he hath made with vs, by that meanes we make him [as it were] to speake, it to say that hee is our God. And vnder this speach (as I haue already told you) all the good things which wee can hope for, or wish for, are contained. For seeing ỳ God giueth himselfe so vnto vs, what can we farther desire? Is not he the fountaine of al wisedome, righteousnes, vertue, life, ioy, & glorie? Is there any good thing to bee desired, which we may not find in our God? Al ỳ euer he hath is ours: he communicateth himself so vnto vs, ỳ he will haue vs partakers of al those good things which are in himself; not ỳ we haue ỳ ful possession of them at the first, but that wee possesse them by hope, vntil ỳ day that the fruit of them shalbe layd open vnto vs. Now therfore let vs marke wel, ỳ when we are once taught in ỳ word of the gospel, thē we may make our God to speake, then wee may come familiarly vnto him, & require him to shew himself such an one as he hath always promised to be: and let vs assure our selues that we shal not be disappointed, when he hath once giuen vs the warrant of his loue, which is more than if we had al the deedes of record in the world. And in this case we need not to seeke for notaries or signets or mennes seales, we haue ỳ bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ, which is ỳ seale of this couenant that God hath made with vs, declaring ỳ he is our God. Also we haue the holy ghost, by whome the promise is better warranted vnto vs, yea, euen in our harts.

And so we see now, that it is not for nought, that Moses hath so magnified this greate goodnes which God vseth towardes vs, & this priuiledge which he giueth vs in drawing vs vnto himselfe, & in choosing vs to be of his house, and of his church. But we must alwayes haue an eye vnto ỳ end for which our Lord graunteth vs this liberty, to wit, that he also may be at a point with vs, & haue vs for his people. For if we be not answerable on our part with our obedience: as there is any reason that he should keep his promise, when we haue broken the league? In deede he must be faine alwayes to fight against our stubbornnes & to ouercome it: for we are euery day vnfaithful vnto him, and hee continueth faithfull vnto vs; but howsoeuer the worlde goeth, yet when wee reiect his couenant, and set light by it thorough our wicked life, wee may not looke that hee shoulde bee any longer bounde vnto vs. For why? For hee is become our God vppon this condition, ỳ we also shoulde be his people. And how shall wee be his people? It is not by saying simply with our mouth, Wee are the people of God: for the veriest hypocrites will boast as much as that; yea, and they bee so farre past shame, that they will needs occupy the chiefest places and hyest roomes in the church: but wee must shewe by our deedes, that we are the people of God, in that we obey him, harkening to the voyce of that shepeheard which he hath giuen vnto vs; When wee liue quietly vnder the guyding of our Lorde Iesus Christ; then do wee make certaine proofe that wee keepe the couenant of our God, without falsifying of the faith which wee promised vnto him. And in this sense hath Moses spoken it. So then forasmuch as the Gospel is preached vnto vs, let vs knowe that our Lorde draweth so nigh vnto vs, as hee desireth nothing but that wee shoulde bee as it were gathered vnder his winges. And here withall let vs consider the contentes or substance of this doctrine which wee haue touched, namely, that our Lorde hauing sought vs out giueth him selfe vnto vs, yea, and that in such wise, as that hee is after a sorte bounde as it were by solemne couenant; by reason whereof wee may freely come vnto him, and require him to perfourme his promises. And after that rule ought al our prayers to bee directed. But therewithal let vs also vnderstande, on what condition it is that hee is so bounde vnto vs. For when we be once bounde after that fashion; if wee make little reckoning of so inestimable a benefite, or if wee reiect it and disdayne it; thinke wee that such contempt of ours shall remayne vnpunished?

Woe bee vnto them therefore which haue the knowledge of the Gospell, and vnto whome GOD hath so communicated him selfe, if they bee not answerable thereunto in true obedience, and humblenesse, and submit not themselues vnto him, and that in such sorte, as they may shewe by their deedes euen in their whole lyfe, that they holde him for their God, and bee also of his flocke, that is to say, ỳ they bee willing to giue them selues fully and wholly vnto him.

Now let vs kneele downe before the maiesty of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, and that in such wise, as that beeing beaten down in our selues, we may receiue that remedie which he offereth vnto vs: that is, to be renewed by his holy spirit. And moreouer to imprint in our hearts the certeintie of his promises which are contained in his worde, so as wee may not dout but that if we hang vpon him, hee wil shew himselfe our sauiour euen vnto ỹ ende, and that as hee hath once redeemed vs by the death and passion of his only son, so if we haue our trust settled on him, he wil neuer forsake vs, but haue a care of the gouerning of vs, in such sort that hee will not suffer the thinges to perish which he hath committed to the keeping of our Lord Iesus Christ, but preserue them all safe vntil the latter day. And so let vs say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xxvii. of Februarie, 1556.

The CXLIX. Sermon which is the first vpon the seuen and twentith Chapter.

18 19 And the Lord hath set thee:

The xxvii. Chapter.

THen Moses with the Elders of Israel charged the people saying, Keepe all the commaundementes, which I commaund you this day.

2 And when ye be passed ouer Iordan into the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee, thou shalt set thee vp great stones, and plaister thē with plaister,

3 And shalt write vpon them all the wordes of this lawe when thou art come ouer, that thou maist go into the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee: a land that floweth with milke and hony, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee.

4 Therefore when ye are passed ouer Iordan, ye shal set vp these stones which I command you this day in mount Ebal, & thou shalt plaister them with plaister,

5 And there shalt thou buyld an altar vnto the Lorde thy God, euen an altar of stones: vpon which stones thou shalt lift vp no yron toole.

6 Thou shalt make the altar of the Lord thy God, of whole stones, and offer burnt offrings thereon vnto the Lord thy God.

7 And thou shalt offer peace offrings, & eat there, & reioyce before the Lorde thy God.

8 And thou shalt write vpō the stones al the words of this law wel & plainly.

9 And Moses & the Priests ỹ Leuites spake vnto all Israel saying, take heede & heare O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God.

10 Thou shalt hearken therefore vnto the voyce of the Lord thy God, and do his commandements & his ordinances which I command thee this day.

IN yesterdayes Lecture Moses hauing exhorted ỹ people to serue God, declared ỹ the couenant which hee hadde made with them was to their great profite. For the more that God bestoweth on vs, the more particularly are we, (if wee bee not voyde of all sense and reason) bound to giue our selues ouer wholly vnto him. But yet for all that, though wee see that God is so liberall towardes vs, are wee mooued to offer our selues in obedience vnto him? (Noe verily). For this cause Moses sayde vnto the Iewes: *that they were chosen to bee in praise, in name, and in glorie, as people seuered out from the rest of the world vnto God.* Whereas some expound this, that they were in praise & glorie, to the end ỹ God might be glo-

be glorified: it is a harde & forced exposition. The thing they say is in deed true in it self, as it is said often times in ỹ holy scripture, that God had chosen this people for his own name, as the end wherunto he hath created al things. And ỹ church was builded specially to the intent that the name of God should be exalted, as it is sayd in the Prophet Esay: & as S. Paul also leadeth vs vnto the same consideratiõ in the first Chapter to the Ephesians, where he treateth of ỹ thing more at large. Therfore it is true in it self ỹ God adopted the Iewes to the intent ỹ they might know his exceeding fauour & goodnes, & that ỹ glorie which was due vnto him therefore might be yelded vnto him. But in this place Moses had an eye vnto ỹ which we haue alreadie touched, to wit, that ỹ people might be the more mouued & enflamed to discharge their duties, because God hath called them for none other reasõ, but to vtter foorth the infinite treasures of his mercies. And therfore he saith: *Thy God hath placed the this day in honor & in renoune, & in glorie*, according to this which hath bin said afore in the fourth Chapter, What nation is so noble and of such dignitie, which hath his God so neere vnto him, as thy God hath made himself familiar vnto thee, to goderne thee? This then was a dignitie which God had vouchsafed vppon ỹ Iewes aboue the rest of all the world. And it ought to haue bin a cause to stirre them vp so much the more to bee obedient vnto the will & worde of God. And in deede if all be wel considered, wee shal finde that God can hope for nothing at our hands, nor receiue any thing of vs, but that wee hold al things of him. I pray you, when we haue taken neuer so great paines to exalt the name of God, shall it bee any whit increased thereby? What is it that we do vnto him? Surely, wee of our owne nature cannot but blaspheme his name, and wee are the cause why it is blasphemed: and if hee will drawe any good out of vs, hee himselfe must first put it in vs. But when God hath once graunted vs the grace to glorifie him, doe wee bring any thing vnto him, or doth hee receiue any profite of vs? Doutles no. Yet in the meane time he powreth out his benefites, so as wee holde all of him, as I haue alreadie tolde you. So then not without cause doeth Moses declare vnto the Iewes, that they were called to glorie, to renoune, and to praise, to the ende hee might vpbrayd them with their vnthankefulnesse, if they enforced not themselues w all their power to serue God, who shewed him selfe so liberall towardes them. And this toucheth vs also nowe adayes. For seeing it pleaseth God to imprint his image in vs; is it not a preheminence which hee giueth vnto vs aboue all the creatures in the worlde, to be called vnto the company of the Angels, and to bee members of our Lord Iesus Christ? Forasmuch then as hee so preuenteth vs with his goodnes; what remaineth but that wee shoulde giue our selues wholly vnto him, and shewe, that seeing hee hath filled vs with his glorie, wee will not cause his name to bee set light by, nor the doctrine of salvation which hee hath giuen vs, to be reproched, that the vnfaithfull should make a scorne of it? Let vs therefore giue all diligẽce hereunto: as we see we be warned in this place. And that is the verie thing also whereat Moses aimeth when he addeth: *That when the people hauing passed Iordan shall come into the lande which God promised vnto them, and haue it in full possession, they shall then set vp great stones, and write vpon them an abridgement of the lawe.* And secondly, that they shal erect also an altar, to giue thanks vnto god, and to testifie that hee had fulfilled the promise which hee had made in former time vnto their fathers. This (I say) is the intent & meaning of Moses, namely that ỹ people should not only for one time giue thanks vnto God, but that they should do it afresh when they come into ỹ lande which was promised vnto them: and that they should ratifie that which they had before confessed, ỹ is, that they owed al homage vnto God for that land, because it was giuen vnto them of his free bestowed goodnes, & not gotte by their own power, nor befalne vnto them by any kind of chaunce, or by the gift or helpe of men.

But we haue to note the maner & fashion of ỹ speach which Moses vseth, he saith, *Thus he & the Elders of Israel commanded the people saying, Do that which I command thee.* I grant that this might be referred vnto Moses, because he was ỹ chiefe seruant of God in publishing of the law, but it is certaine ỹ both he & the Elders speak in ỹ name & as it were in the person of God. And yet it would seeme at the first blush that this sentence were not wel framed. Moses and the Elders say vnto the people, *Do that which I command thee*: but they are many, & yet here is mention made but of one alone. Yea, but (as I haue already told you) it was requisite that ỹ Iewes should be taught ỹ these things proceeded not from men but from God, who spake by their mouth. Wee see then ỹ Moses and the Elders come not heere in their owne persons as attributing any thing to their owne worthinesse, neither step they foorth vppon their owne heads, ne to charge the people with any lawes: but were the instrumentes of God to deale foorth faithfully whatsoeuer was committed vnto them. Nowe if Moses which was the excellenteſt of all Phophets (as we shall see hereafter) did neuertheleſſe restrayne himselfe with such modestie, that he vsurped not the authoritie to speake any thing in his owne name: what shall we say of them which gouern the Church nowadayes? Wil they say that they exceede Moses? Let vs note then that Pastors are not appointed to set foorth whatsoeuer doctrine shall seeme good vnto themselues, nor to bring mennes soules in subiection and bondage to them; nor to make lawes and articles of faith at their owne pleasure: but onely to bring to passe that God may beare rule, and that his worde may bee harkened vnto. Let that bee noted for one poynt. Wee see then that all the traditions of men which are nowe adayes in the Popedome in steede of the pure worde of God, are but vaine things: and that they must bee all beaten downe, and that the true gouernement which God liketh of, must be established againe

Deut. 34.10.

in his Church: that is, that men hearken vnto him, that they submit themselues vnto him, that both great and small receiue that which is deliuered in his name, & that men passe no farther. Let this be wel noted. But withal wee must also note, that when they which are appointed ministers of the word of God, do their office faithfully; then they may speake with masterly authoritie, as they say. And in deede we heare how Moses with the rest of the Elders sayeth, *I commaunde thee this day, keepe my statutes.* It is not for a mortal creature to aduance himself so hy: no, but because Moses bringeth nothing of his own, but is a faithful minister of God, & doth nothing but expound the law euen as it is giuen & committed vnto him, therefore hee sticketh not to speake as from an high, as one hauing all power & authoritie. Therefore when we bring nothing but the pure doctrine of God without fallifying of it, or without adding any thing thereunto of our owne: then may wee bring into captiuitie all the loftinesse of men as S. Paul sayth, so as no man may exempt himselfe from the doctrine which is put forth vnto him, but that euen they which are the greatest must submit themselues vnto it. The seruants of god then must so behaue themselues as they may not be of a fearful mind to yeeld to the world whē it rebelleth, & wil not be willingly subdued: but that they must holde their own with inuincible constancie, challenging to their master the honor of soueraintie, & the ouerruling of al the world. This is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde concerning this place.

2. Cor. 10. 4.

1. Tim. 1. 7.

But let vs come now vnto ỹ which is said. The Iewes are commanded, *To gather great stones, & to whitelime them ouer, & so to engraue the law of god vpon them, that the letters might be easily read,* & secondly they are commanded *To build an altar on the hil of Hebal, & there to sacrifice vnto God.* As touching ỹ altar we haue already said, ỹ it was a special witnes of ỹ peoples doing homage vnto god for ỹ land which they knewe they helde of him. For in deed ỹ law was there ingraued, to ỹ intēt ỹ the remembrance thereof should be renewed, & that ỹ doctrine therof shold be laid open and made cōmon vnto al men; & ỹ at their first entrance into ỹ land they might haue a marke to put them in mind, to say: This is a land dedicated vnto God. And like as princes set vp their armes & their ensignes in ỹ endes & borders of their seignories & kingdoms: euen so ỹ armes of God were set vp in ỹ place, that men might see not a puppet or some such other thing, but ỹ law of God written, to the intent ỹ men might say, Behold it is the liuing God that hath dedicated this people vnto himself, & chosen them for his seruice, ỹ he might be honored & called vpō of thē. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to beare in mind. But before we passe any farther, let vs consider why it is saide ỹ they shall not make or buyld ỹ altar of carued or pullished stones, and ỹ they must not lift vp an hammer or any other toole vpon it, but ỹ the stones must be taken as they come to hand, without any cutting of them, by reason wherof it shold be but as a rude heap.

This place hath without cause much troubled many men, neither could they in the ende finde out ỹ meaning of it without some allegory, saying, ỹ when God commanded to haue the altar made of rough & vnhewen stones, it was to shew ỹ he taketh no pleasure in any inuentions of mē, & that he will haue no curious workmanship in his altar, to the intent we should be warned, ỹ to serue him aright wee must make no mingling of our own deuises, as in deede we see it is not lawful for mē to forge at their own pleasure any seruice of God, for he liketh of obedience aboue al things. & so this sense of theirs is in it self true, but it is nothing to the meaning of the place. Moses hath an eye vnto another thing, to wit, that there shold be but one altar to sacrifice vnto God. And in verie deede wee see that when ỹ two trybes & the halfe were returned home after ỹ conquest of the land of Chanaan, & had erected an altar, they were in danger to haue bin vtterly destroyed & rooted out for it. For when newes therof came to the rest of ỹ Tribes, they sayd: What meaneth this making of a double altar vnto God? And therupon they went al forth to battel to destroy ỹ Tribes which dwelt beyōd Iordan, & to put them to horrible slaughter: and that was because God had cōmanded that they should make but one only altar. And the reason hereof was to maintaine the vnitie of faith & agreement among ỹ Iewes. We know ỹ although ỹ law containe the perfect doctrine of saluation: yet notwithstanding it faileth not to be darke, as we haue alreadie seene. Therefore it behoued ỹ Iewes to be as it were inured to ỹ doctrine, that they might not wander. For wee see how fickle mē are, so as they be easily turned aside to make diuerse sects, & euery man hath his deuotion a part by himself. God therefore minding to preuent that mischiefe, wherunto he saw men ouermuch giuen by nature, would there should be but one single altar. But now if they should haue made an altar of hewen & squared stones, it would haue lasted for euer. And what would mē haue said hereupon? This is the altar whereon they sacrificed vnto God. And thereuppon they would haue thought it to haue beene a seruing of God to haue sacrificed there still: and they which succeeded a long time after, would haue thought that the sacrifices which had been offred there, would haue been of the more worthines, and that had beene an ouerthrowing of the order which God had established among that people: it had bin the next way to bring in a generall confusion. We see what befel of the hil of Samaria, as the woman which spake to our Lord Iesus Christ declareth. What? (saith she) did not our fathers sacrifice on this mountaine? Because Abraham, Isaac, & Iacob had dwelt there, ỹ Samaritans bare themselues in hand ỹ their temple was more excellent & more holy than ỹ temple of Ierusalem. Yea: but it was built against ỹ will of God, it was an heathenish place, it was more ful of filthines & vncleanes than any brothelhouse. Not but ỹ the people had thought they did wel, but we must alwais consider whether god liketh of that which we do: if he do not, wo be vnto vs.

Iosua 22.

Iohn 4. 20.

So then because men will needes without reason followe the examples which they heare, it was requisite that there should be no altars made of polished stones, for they would haue remained in their estate, & there would haue bin sacrifices offered. Nowe ye see what abhominations proceeded therof in Israel, Ieroboam intending to maintain his estate, erected an altar in Bethel, & would haue God worshipped there, & sacrifices to be offred there vnto him. He sayth vnto thē, wel, behold, we sacrifice vnto God, which brought vs out of the land of Egypt. He protesteth ỹ he will serue no Idols, & yet notwithstanding he serueth thē. Yea verily: for it was Gods will to haue his temple built in Ierusalē where it was, & we haue seen heretofore ỹ he reserueth the authority vnto himself to say: Thou shalt call vpon me in that place which I haue chosē to haue my name called vpon there. For it is not for men to say, let vs worship God in this place; but they must keepe diligently vnto ỹ which he hath cōmāded in that behalfe. Ieroboā therfore in making a second temple brought the seruice of god wholy out of kind. He corrupted & falsified ỹ true religion. In deed he made a faire protestatiō (as I haue told you) ỹ he wold change nothing in the seruice of God: but we see what the meaning of God is; namely ỹ when they were come into ỹ lande of promise, they should sacrifice vnto him on the hill of Hebal, & there set vp an altar w̄ such stones as came next vnto their hands, wout vsing any workmanship, to the intent it might be abolished & that no mention should remaine of it, to drawe ỹ into an euerlasting rule which was done but for one time onely.

Now albeit that this Ceremonie serue not vs nowadaies: yet may we gather a very profitable doctrine of this place. And first of all let vs note that we must not ground ourselues vpon ỹ which God hath cōmanded for a certaine time, as if it ought to be obserued for euer. For vnder the law it was Gods wil ỹ men shold sacrifice bruit beasts vnto him, but nowadaies there is no such thing. He required ỹ there should be perfumes made, and lights set vp, & fire alwayes burning vpō the altar. These thinges are now done away, & if any man renew thē, they are but dung as we see how they are yet vsed in popery. When the Papistes cast perfume their idols noses, they beare thē selues in hand, ỹ it is an acceptable sacrifice vnto God. And when they haue cōsumed much waxe on their torches & tapers & candles, O here is a wonderous great deuotion thinke they. And yet it is but a meere mocking of God. For it was his will to be so serued vnder the law. But if we shold now go & inlighten the sun, ỹ is to say, if now after the cōming of our Lord Iesus Christ into the world, we should yet stil vse those lights as in the night & in the darke; it were a peruerting of the whole order of nature. The antient fathers walked vnder darke shadowes & therfore they stood in neede of those aydes. And when they had a light, it was to shewe them, ỹ they came not to worship God at all aduentures, or at random. but that they were guided & directed by the word of God, & by his holy spirit. And so they were held brideled, to the intent they should not presume vpon any thing on their own fancies. But as now we haue no need of al these things: for why? The vaile of ỹ temple is rent in sunder; & god sheweth vs his face in ỹ gospel, euen in ỹ persō of his son, so as we may now walk as at noone day. So then let vs consider what is euerlasting & what is but for a time; ỹ we make no fond & foolish confusiō ne do as the papists do. For ỹ is the fountain frō whence so many superstitions haue risen. When the Papistes baptise, they take spettle. And why? Forsooth because Iesus Christ did so. Yea but wold he haue it drawen into consequence & that men should make a rule of it, and ỹ his miracle should be mocked at in baptisme? Wil they make a young infant to speake, by their spitting vpon his lips? Againe, they haue the annealing of the sicke, and ỹ is a sacrament with them. And why? Forsooth the Apostles vsed oyle when they healed ỹ sicke. Yea, but ỹ gift serued but for ỹ beginning of the gospell, & now after ỹ we know ỹ miracles are seased, will we vse the signes still? Is not ỹ a mocking of God? By like then, the truth & substance of things must depart & the signe must remaine, ỹ were a goodly matter. Again, they haue retained other like things, as is lent. This is the fast ỹ is to be kept, say the Papistes. The reason forsooth is, because Iesus Christ fasted. Yea, but did he which is ỹ fountaine of all perfection, and the mirror of all holines fast euery yere? No: he fasted but once in his life. The Papists say ỹ wee must fast euery yeere, and ỹ there is great deuotion & holines therin. Yea, but therin they would exceed Iesus Christ. But in deed it is a diuilish superstition, to fast 40. dais after ỹ maner, vpō opiniō ỹ by this means we may make ourselues like to Christ. For we know ỹ our Lord Iesus ment to shew thereby, ỹ he was then exēpted frō al condition of man, as the same was done in Elias by miracle, & likewise in Moses, when hee published the law. And did ỹ Iewes follow Moses and Elias therein? Or did any of so many holy prophets euer fast ỹ fast? No: for they knewe wel it was not cōmanded thē of God, and ỹ he made no cōmon rule of it, nor would haue ỹ thing drawen into example which he had once ordained for ỹ authorising of his law. So then we see ỹ it is very profitable to consider what God hath for one onely time cōmanded, to the intent we peruert not al, nor desire without any difference to do what soeuer is contained in ỹ holy scripture, wout knowing first whether it concerne vs & be spoken vnto vs or no. This is one point to be noted.

Mat. 27. 51

Mar. 4. 2. 1. King 19. 8

A second point to be obserued is ỹ we ought, as much as we may possibly to maintaine vnitie & agreemēt among vs; as shal by & by be declared. It was Gods will there should be no mo temples but one. And why? To ỹ intent it shold be as a bond to hold the people together in ỹ purenes and soundnesse of faith. We haue one only God which is called vpon among vs, wee must come into one certaine place to sacrifice vnto him, all of vs must there gather ourselues together. It is true in deede ỹ we are not nowadaies tyed vnto any such bondage; but howsoeuer it be, yet ỹ substance is remaining still vnto vs. Let vs therfore

take heede vnto all those ayds which we haue to holde vs in this communion of faith, and in this vnitie which God requireth, let vs keepe them well, and let no man turne aside from them. And as touching the outwarde order, we know that our Lorde Iesus christ would haue men to assemble them selues together. I graunt wee are not bound to be al in one place, & mé also preach in diuers churches of one toune. And why? Bicause al the worlde can not heare one sermon: but yet for all that, because of our slowneſſe wee are so bounde that we must gather our selues together in the name of God. He that wil keepe him selfe in his howse, despising the cõmon order, and will say, I can reade at home & edifie my selfe sufficiétly there: ỳ man asmuch as in him lieth breaketh in sunder ỳ vnitie of faith & teareth in pieces the body of our Lord Iesus Christ. We know ỳ baptisme was ordained to ỳ intent it should be as a cõmon seale ỳ we are the church of God, & are gouerned with his spirit. Now if euery man wil haue his baptisme a part, what a wicked disorder were it? The holy supper of ỳ Lord also is distributed as a cõmon food to ỳ intent we should all cõmunicat of it. We are warned by it that we are one body. And as one loafe is made of many graines of corne, which are so mingled together ỳ they make but one substãce; euen so ought we to be knit together, if we will be accoũted for the children of God. Therefore if euery man should haue his priuate supper, were it not a withdrawing of ourselues frõ the agreement & brotherhoode which Iesus Christ would haue vs to keepe? In Popery euery mã must haue his altar & his chappell. Yea & they were of opinion, that God was much bound vnto thé for so doing. There should haue bin one cõmõ table (for I wil not say ỳ they haue turned ỳ cõmunion table into an altar to sacrifice vpõ, which thing in it selfis a diueliſh abhominatiõ) but in ỳ meane time although they retain the word, yet wil they not haue a cõmon table for all the church. For euery man thrusteth in himself to say, O I wil haue a chappel, & there I will haue my deuotion by my selfe. When men be come to ỳ point, it is an horrible wastin gof the Church of God; & the building of so manie seueral altars hath bin ỳ cause of the bringing in of so many sectes & diuisions. Although ỳ papists had placed no Idols in their churches, & although they had not such a nũber of superstitiõs & Idolatries as wee see they haue; yet in doing of this one thing they haue broken ỳ vnity which christ hath solemnly set betweene his mẽbers, & in the whole Church. What must we do then? Let vs indeuor to keepe ourselues in brotherly agreement and vnder the signes & tokens which God hath giuen vs, and let vs continue therein, and make al those meanes which he hath giuen vs, to serue vnto that ende. That is the doctrine which we haue to gather vpon this place.

But let vs returne now vnto ỳ which we sayde in the beginning; that is, ỳ God hath here required of his people a solemne acknowledgement, how much they were bound vnto him. We are therfore exhorted to acknowledge ỳ benefits of God, yea & to occupy ourselues therein, so as we neuer forget thé. The people in deed had alredy giuen thanks vnto God after they were come out of Egypt, in the wildernes, where they sacrificed continually vnto him, but yet after they are passed ouer Iordã, they must begin to giue thãks again. And why? Because mẽ would alwaies discharge their dutie towards God by halues: and they haue soone forgotten it, & thinke no longer what they owe vnto God. And ỳ is the cause why they must be occupied continually in ỳ selfsame thing. So then let vs note well, ỳ euen all ỳ time of our life we must apply our whole indeuour to magnifie & set foorth the name of God. For although we be not lodged in this land of Canaã: yet ỳ fauor of God ought to be asmuch, or more esteemed of vs, than ỳ earthly inheritace which was giuen to ỳ children of Israel. For god hauing plucked vs out of the dungeon of death, & out of ỳ bondage of Satan, declareth ỳ we are blessed of him, and ỳ we are a roial priesthood. And who is he ỳ can discharge himselfe in magnifying so great & so inestimable a goodnes of God? So thé because we are slow & slacke to giue ỳ glory vnto God which is belonging vnto him, and because ỳ when we haue once done it, we thinke it ynough & we are loth to do it again, let vs beare in mind this lesſõ which is taught vs here, that is, ỳ according as God increaseth his giftes in vs, & as he confirmeth & ratifieth them, so ought we on our part to be so much ỳ more moued & stirred vp to yeelde him praise, declaring thereby, how much we are bound vnto him, and protesting ỳ we are wholly his, and ỳ we will dedicate our whole life vnto him. This (say I) is ỳ thing which we haue to beare in minde as touching this place, where mention is made of sacrificing vnto God.

Now after that Moses hath named *The holie burnt offring*, he addeth, *Then shalt offer also the peace offerings vnto the Lord thy God*. Now before he shewed ỳ the peace offerings serued for thanks giuing, so as if God had deliuered his people, if he had giuen thé any victorie against their enemies, if he had deliuered thé frõ famine or any other calamitie; then they sacrificed, in token ỳ this benefit deserued, not to be forgotten. We see then ỳ Moses aimeth altogether at ỳ which wee haue alredy declared: namely, ỳ the people should make an acknowledgement of this benefit vnto God after ỳ they were come into the land of Canaan. And whereas Moses sayth ỳ it was a Land flowing with milke & hony (as we haue already seene afore) it is to ỳ intent ỳ the people shoulde be the more stirred vp to giue glory vnto God, when they see ỳ the land was so fertill, and that God had shewed himselfe so liberall towardes thé. We know ỳ at this day it is not so fruitfull a land, neither was it so fertill before their cõming thither, and ỳ is a wonderful thing. And yet notwithstanding ỳ wicked haue taken occasion here upon, to blaspheme, as ỳ wicked heritike which was punished here, mocked both Moses and the prophets saying, ỳ when they praised the land of Chanaan, they did but fable. Yea but he sheweth himselfe (as all despisers of God & such enraged folke whom Satan possesseth vse to do) to shutte Gods benefits which men may see w their eyes.

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Neither considered he, ỹ (as it was shewed vnto him, notwistanding ỹ he continued in his wilfull stubbernnes) God did expressly threaten to sowe salt vpon ỹ land, that is to say, to make it barren & at this day also men see it desolate & wast. So as it is a dreadfull thing to beholde, what ỹ state of ỹ countrey is at this day, in cõparison of ỹ it is knowen to haue bin heretofore. For our Lorde hath shewed by effect, ỹ which is said in the 107 Psalme, namely, ỹ when it pleaseth him to blesse a land with fruitfulnes, it shalbe fat & ful of al maner of fruits; and contrary wise ỹ when he listeth to make it barren, it shalbe cleane withered. We se this to be true in the lande of Chanaan. So then let vs note ỹ Moses meant to shewe heere more particularly the fauour which God shewed to his people, in nourishing thẽ in ỹ land for the which he made it as a man wold say to flow with milke & hony, shewing therby ỹ that was done euen by miracle. Now for our part it is true ỹ we shall not be fat fed as in respect of our bodies: but yet in feeling the spirituall benefites which God bestoweth largely vpõ vs, we ought to be moued & stirred vp to this consideration, that when we haue protested as solemnely as is possible, ỹ wee are his, and ỹ we owe all vnto him: yet we are not discharged of the hundredth part of our dutie.

And as touching ỹ which is added cõcerning the great stones, wheron God cõmanded his law to be written, according vnto ỹ which wee haue already touched, let vs note, ỹ God ment to hold his people vnder his obedience by al ỹ meanes he might. For men by reason of their infirmitie, had needle to be held in awe: and to be called backe vnto God, to the intẽt they swarue not aside frõ him. I haue already brought a cõparison from ỹ armes of Princes; in steed whereof God woulde haue his law to be writtẽ. And why? For his lawes are his true armes: & his worde the liuely image wherin we ought to behold him. And ỹ is ỹ cause why he sayth, ye shal come & present yourselues before my face, when they presented thẽselues before the arke, wherein ỹ law was enclosed. For God would not haue any other shape wherby to be represented vnto men, than only the cõtinuall instruction of his worde, according vnto that which we haue already seene in the fourth chap. where it is said, remẽber ỹ you sawe not ỹ shape of man, or of any creature whatsoeuer, but you heard the voice of your God. Take heed therfore how ye coũterfeit any thing in this behalf. Now forasmuch as we haue ỹ vnderstanding heereof, let vs note ỹ when our Lord vouchsafeth to haue his word preached in any place, and lodgeth vs quietly as it were with his owne hand: it is to the intent we should do him double homage. As many as liue in ỹ worlde & are fed and sustained by God, ought therefore to confesse ỹ he is worthie to haue all soueraintie ouer them. But seeing we haue such a speciall priuilege of God, as to be separated frõ the rest of the worlde, & to haue his word preached vnto vs, & to haue libertie to call vpon his name purely: ought wee not to enforce ourselues to do him double homage for it? Surely this ought now adaies to be throughly cõsidered of. For how great fauour doth God shewe vs, in that we may vse his sacraments with all liberty, and haue our eares euery day filled with the doctrine of saluation; so as he ceaseth not to call vs vnto himselfe? Wee see on the other side many wretched people which are held in bondage vnder the tyranny of ỹ Pope, & dare not once open their mouth or make ỹ least countenãce of worshipping God purely, they haue neither churches to resort vnto, nor any meanes to be taught: the world sees this. So then we ought in deede to haue the armes of God, wherby ỹ lawe should be presented. But we see the cleane contrary; for as sone as any man cõmeth neere vnto vs he shold perceiue a wonderful chãge in vs by our withdrawing of ourselues frõ the defilements of the vnbeleuing; but whereas men should see ỹ God raigneth & beareth rule among vs, & hath his seat & throne with vs; they may see vs as loose in liuing as the very ignorauntest in all the worlde, nay a man may see ỹ God is defied of some of thẽ, vnto whom the gospell is preached, & that there are worse diuels & more wicked among thẽ, than in the deepest dungeon of poperie. And this deserueth double woe. For it is not only to the Iewes that Moyses hath spoken, but it is to shew vnto all ingenerall, ỹ as God vouchsafeth vs the fauor to be his, euen so we ought to remoue al corruptions frõ among vs, ỹ men may know ỹ we are in deede his people. Yet notwithstanding, this importeth not ỹ they which liue in popery are to be excused. Although they be neuersomuch threatned, & can not make a free confession of their faith wout danger of death: yet they are alwaies guiltie of offending God, in ỹ they haue not honored him. Now if there be no excuse for them, how great shall our condemnation be? For there is nothing to hinder vs from seruing of God, saue only our owne wickednes & negligence. So then let vs be diligent to discharge our duetie, not as touching the outward ceremony of great stones which is cõmanded here: but as in respect of the thing which God had a special eye vnto; namely that euery of vs should not only yeeld ourselues vnto his obedience, & dedicate ourselues to follow his will; but also ỹ with one cõmon accorde, we should shewe ỹ he is our soueraigne king and that we are vnder his gouernmẽt; and ỹ because he hath plãted vs in such a place where his name is openly called vpon, & where there are Churches for vs to come together to make our cõmõ prayers, & to confesse our faith in; we also do indeuor to walk in such sort, as men may in deede know, ỹ those places are not defiled, but reserued vnto ỹ glory of him who hath chose thẽ to ỹ vse.

Now for the end & conclusion let vs note that our Lord will not haue his armes blased in such sort as men like of, but ỹ hee will haue his owne Image to be knowen in them: and ỹ is the cause why he speketh purposly of ỹ law. *The words* saith he, *of the lawe.* The Papistes haue chappels, they haue crosses, they haue gay paintings, & they bere thẽselues in hand ỹ God is represented by them: but he liketh none of all those thinges. What is to be done then? We must returne vnto ỹ word, which is the meane whereby God openeth himselfe vnto vs, & thereby will he be knowen. Let

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men therfore content thēselues simply therwith. Now as touching that which he saieth, *Let these wordes bee well engraued*: hereby we are taught, ỹ God gaue not his law for a few people, but ment ỹ it shold be a cōmon doctrin vnto al, both great & smal, euen to ỹ most Idiots: and ỹ all should be instructed by it. And if it were so in ỹ time of the law, by greater reasō ought it nowadaies to be in force among vs. For of the gospell it is said ỹ it Mar. 16. 15. should be preached vnto al creatures. God therfore will not haue his doctrin locked vp, and that none but the clergy should thrust their nose into it: but he will haue vs all to be his scholers, & the law so written, ỹ euery mā may read it. And why? To the intent ỹ all men should receiue instructiō by it. Let none therfore exempt himselfe frō the reading of it, as we see many do, which say, O I am no clerke, I neuer went to schooler it pertaineth not to my occupation. I grant in deed ỹ it is not euery mans occupation to be a teacher. But who may exempt himselfe frō being a scholer in ỹ word of God? It is all one for a man to renoūce christianity, & to say, ô as for me, I know neither A nor B, what can I tel what ỹ law of God or any holy scripture meaneth? Neuertheles, ỹ will of God which is declared to vs in his word, is written in letters big ynough, & albeit ỹ nowadaies there be not any heape of stones set vp for ỹ law of God to be written & engraued thereupon; yet notwithstanding our Lord ment to shew vnder this figure, ỹ whē he hath deliuered his word, it is to ỹ intent ỹ we should be taught, & ordered by it, & ỹ the doctrine therof should be cōmon vnto al. And truly we haue no lesse neede to nourish our soules with ỹ word of God, thā to sustaine our bodies with bread & other daily food. Seeing then it is so, let euery of vs labor ỹ way, & let vs be attentife to harken vnto our God whē he speaketh vnto vs by ỹ mouth of the minister, & whē we haue his holy scripture, let euery man endeuour to be taught by it: they then which haue no skil to reade thēselues, let them heare it read, ỹ we may shew, ỹ seeing our Lorde speaketh vnto vs, we on our side are ready to receiue ỹ which he shal say, & desire nothing else, but to profit vnder him: ỹ in such sort, ỹ his word be not only engraued in stone & chalke but also imprinted in our harts, so as in our whole life we seeke to follow it, and giue our selues wholely vnto it.

Nowe let vs kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of ỹ great nūber of faults & offences which we daily cōmit daily against his maiestie, praying him to make vs feele thē better thā we haue done: ỹ we may endeuor to amend thē more & more, vntil we be cleane rid of them, and ỹ forasmuch as we obtaine pardon for thē by the meane of our lord Iesus Christ, we may also increase & be cōfirmed in al righteousnes & holines, ỹ so we may in deed confirme our calling: and ỹ forasmuch as he hath chosen vs for his people, it may please him also to withdraw vs frō al the defilements of ỹ world, so as we may be vnto him an holy people in the name of our lord Iesus Christ. That it may please him to graunt this grace not only to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the xxviij. of Februarie, 1556.

The CL. Sermon, which is the seconde vpon the seuen and twentith Chapit.

11 In that day Moses commaunded the people, saying:

12 These shall stande vpon mount Garizim to blesse the people when ye passe ouer Iordan: Simeon, and Leuy, & Iudath, & Issachar, & Ioseph, & Beniamin.

13 And these shall stand vpon mount Eball to curse Ruben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulan, Dan, and Naphtaly.

14 And the Leuits shall speak & say vnto all ỹ men of Israel with a loud voice:

15 Cursed be the man that shall make any carued or molten Image, which is an abominatiō vnto the Lord, the worke of the hands of the craftesman, & putteth it in a secret place: and al the people shal aunswere and say: so be it.

WE saw yestarday how God mēt that the fauour which he shewed vnto ỹ people of Israel shold be reknowledged first by solēn sacrifice, & secondly by a monument set vp, to the ende ỹ it might be knowen, ỹ this land was not purchased by mās hand or by any power of man, but that it was giuen of God vnto ỹ people for an inheritance. But now we haue an other cōmandement whereby God ment to binde ỹ people vnto him after an other maner. In deede he had done it already; but because men are so harde to be rooted, and ỹ they can not be bound with too many bandes & cordes to hold thē vnder obedience, it is not without cause ỹ God would ad further that which is set downe here, to keepe thē the better vnder obedience. Wee haue alreadie treated that when God gaue his lawe, it was a mutuall couenaunt: and like as he bounde himselfe vnto the children of Israel to be their God, so also the people of Israell bound thēselues to be his people. But here is yet another confirmatiō added, to ratifie that first bonde the better; which is, that God ordained ỹ when they were passed ouer Iordan, ỹ people should part thēselues in twaine, and that sixe tribes should keepe thēselues vpon the mount of Garizim, and the other sixe tribes shoulde stande vppon the hill of Heball right against them, so as the Arke of the couenant and the priests should stand in the middest, and that they which were on the part of Garizim should blesse

ssde & those which were on the side of Hebal should curse. Now this cursing & blessing is referred vnto ỹ which we shall see hereafter, which shalbe anon touched in this chapter. For God to encourage his people the better, did not only declare vnto thẽ his wil, & say, You shal walke thus; but also added by & by, you shall not serue me in vaine, your paines shall not be lost: for I wil cause you to prosper, it is for your owne welfare that I would haue you to be subiect vnto me, I seeke after no profit or auantage therby, but it is for your owne benefit & cõmodity. ỹ you shold cleaue vnto me, in keeping of my cõmãdements. Lo what libertie God gaue, to ỹ intent the people should serue him w a willing mind & not through force or constraint. Again, because men are so stifnecked, ỹ they stoop not but with much ado, and become on ỹ other side their lusts cary thẽ so headlong away, that they quickly forget what it is to serue God, & play the wild horses which are broken lose, here are threatnings added: Take heed lest you offend mee, for vengeance is ready for them ỹ despise my lawe. Thus see you what the curses are which we shall see more fully in the xxviij. chap. but Moses toucheth thẽ here as it were by way of example. Now it were ynough if God had but pronounced & said, Whosoeuer serueth me in keeping my law, he shalbe blessed, & I will make his whole life prosperous vnto him. Seeing God hath once promised to recõpẽce thẽ which serue him, it ought wel to suffice vs. What neede men to speake in their owne behalfe? Likewise seeing God pronounceth sentence of cõdemnation vpon them ỹ transgresse his law, forasmuch as ỹ iudge himselfe hath spoken; no man ought to reply. What neede is there then ỹ we should reuoke ỹ which God hath said, as if his word were not of sufficient strength & authoritie in it selfe? True it is ỹ god deserueth wel to be harkned vnto, & ỹ thing which he saith is as an vnchãgeable decree: but yet he wil haue men by outward witnessing to allow ỹ which he willeth vs to followe, he will haue vs to acknowledge the fauor which he offred vnto vs, & to declare ỹ we are assured by faith, ỹ he will not deceiue vs in promising vs prosperitie when we indeuour to liue according vnto his word. God therefore will haue vs so agree with him, ỹ we also confesse in hũblenes & feare, ỹ there is great reason why hee should punish all those ỹ despise & ouerthrow his righteousnes, & cõmandements. And when he threatneth them, we may not thinke ỹ it is in vain, but ỹ in the end they shall feele the execution of ỹ sentence. God therfore in this respect wil haue vs to say Amen, both to the promises which he maketh vnto thẽ ỹ keepe his lawe, & vnto the threatnings which he denounceth against all thẽ ỹ are rebels & despisers of him. So then we haue now made a good entrance vnto the vnderstanding of this place. As touching the blessinges and cursings, we shall more fully treate of them in ỹ chapter following: and we shall do better to keep thẽ to be handled there, because the place is more fit for thẽ. It sufficeth to knowe in a worde, ỹ when God offereth his fauour vnto those ỹ obey him, it is to the end they should serue him, not through constraint, but of a free good will: knowing ỹ it is for their owne cõmoditie, & welfare, and againe ỹ on the other side such as are of their owne nature giuen ouer to their lustfull desires, & take to thẽselues a lawles libertie of liuing il, must be withheld by feare sith they see ỹ they shall not escape ỹ hand of God, but ỹ in the end they must come to their account. Thus ye see what we haue to beare in minde in a worde vntill wee come to handle the matter more at large.

Moreouer let vs note well ỹ which wee haue said, namely ỹ God thinks it not ynough to haue spoken himselfe, but he will haue vs also to agree as it were in one melodie with him. And ỹ is to shew the faith which we haue in his word, which consisteth in these two points: namely, ỹ we imbrace his promises & hang wholy vpon thẽ: and secondly ỹ we tremble, as oftẽ as he giueth vs any ny sine of his wrath, so as we be not blockish, nor drousie, nor so hardened that he must be faine to strike vpon vs with maine blowes, before we can feele his anger: but ỹ we preuẽt it by indeuoring to obey him, & eschew his vengeance as much as we can. Now then blessings in this place are conditional, to wit, blessed is hee which obserueth ỹ law of God, which maintaineth his seruice purely, which is not giuen to superstitions nor Idolatries, which abuseth not his holy name, which obserueth the day of rest, & al the other ceremonies, which honoreth his father & mother. This blessing (I say) is matched with condition, so ỹ if we serue God, he will shew himselfe liberall vnto vs, & we shall not loose our time: but yet doe all these blessinges depend hereupon, ỹ God of his free goodnes had chosen this people: so ỹ they might not rest on this point, to say, Blessed is he which serueth God. And who is ỹ? For none dischargeth himselfe of this duty (as we haue already declared) & shall see further in ỹ ende of this chap. Seeing then ỹ we are all sinners, yea euen the faithfull, insomuch ỹ when they indeuour to walk vprightly they make many false stepes, what shall become of vs then? It is certaine we should be all depriued of the hope of saluation, if we had nothing else to leane vnto thã our owne righteousnes. But (as I tolde you) ỹ promises which import a condition depende hereupon, ỹ God hath receiued vs for his people, & will haue vs to take him for our father. Now this thing is grounded on nothing else but vpon his mercie. So then we must be throughly perswaded, ỹ God will take pitie on vs, though wee bee wretched sinners, & deserue not to be pitied: he will receiue vs for righteous & accepte of vs, although we deserue to be reiected of him. And although we can hope for nothing but vtter cõfusion, yet notwithstanding we shalbe assured of the inheritance of saluation because we are his children. We must be throughly persuaded as touching this point. And secondly it remaineth ỹ seeing God hath chosen vs our, & set vs apart for his seruice, we may not take libertie to all maner of wickednes, but indeuor to obey him. For this cause we must be quickened vp and pricked forward by his promises to serue him. Thus yee see howe the conditional promises shall not be in vaine in respect of vs: namely,

namely, when they are referred vnto the freebestowed goodnesse of God, whereby he receiueth vs although wee be not worthy to be receiued: and secondly he imputeth not our vices vnto vs: but although there be many staines and corruptions in vs, yet he hydeth them and will not call them to account. And so we see now in what sort God incouraged the people of Israell to bee of good comfort. For if hee had begun thus with them and said: Serue me & you shal be well recompensed for your labour, if God should speak this simple worde vnto vs, alas what should wee do? For when we would thinke to serue him, we should be very farre frō the perfectnes which he cōmandeth vs: they which should run best would be but in ỳ midway, when they ought to be come to their waies end. We should therfore al be discoraged rather than haue any good hart. But we must ioyne both these things together, to wit, ỳ he will not deceiue vs in any thing, & secondly ỳ he bindeth vs to serue him, & declareth ỳ he wil beare with vs in our infirmities, & not deale seuerely with vs to pay vs as we haue deserued, but vse a fatherly goodnes. Now hereupon we may be of good cōfort to serue him, whē we may say, Surely it is true Lord, ỳ I discharge not my self of ỳ hundredth part of my dutie towardes thee, but howsoeuer ỳ world goeth, yet thou wilt not faile to accept me because thou respectest not what I doe, but takest a pleasure in me as in thine owne childe. Ye see then how God pardoneth vs, and regardeth not our faults & imperfections which are in the seruice ỳ we yeelde vnto him. So wee serue him not hypocritically, but of an vnfained good will, he liketh of all ỳ we do, and rewardeth vs for it. Sith we heare this, let vs bestowe our paines, let vs receiue the bridle into our mouths (as they say) and let vs go on: & although we be hindred by ỳ vices of our flesh, yet let vs inforce ourselues to go on further. And why? For we shal not loose our labour. Thus ye see what the meaning of God is; whereby we perceiue his inestimable goodnes, in ỳ of his owne good wil he offereth his promises so vnto vs, whereas he is nothing bound vnto vs, as we haue seene heeretofore: but his will is to win vs vnto himselfe by all the meanes that he may. Now he repeateth this point againe, and ỳ is done because of our sloth and negligence. For ỳ cause he addeth this aide, and all for our profit, for what is he aduantaged therby? Shall he gaine any thing by our seruice? Let vs dehe him to the vtmost, what shall ỳ hurt him? but he wil possesse vs for our owne welfare.

And herewithall hee sheweth vs also, what minde is requisite for the obseruing of his law in such sort as is required, to wit, if we come willingly and yeelde ourselues vnto him, and place our whole felicitie & ioye in the seruing of him, and put this sentence in vre, ỳ where our treasure is, there will our heart be also. Ye see what we haue to note as touching ỳ first point of the blessings. What is it the in effect, ỳ we haue to do? Although nowadaies we haue not the Ceremony whereof mention is made in this place, yet must the substance thereof be in force among vs, which is, ỳ in seeking to serue God, we must haue an eyeway vnto his promises. Behold, our God calleth & allureth vs vnto him. And how? He might commande vs in one word, and say: You owe al vnto me, see therefore ỳ ye discharge yourselues: but he beareth with vs, & vttereth a fatherly goodnes towards vs, in saying: My children, I will not haue your seruice vnrecōpensed. In deede I owe you nothing, but yet neuertheleſſe I will be so bountiful aboue ỳ I need, ỳ if you serue me, your life shalbe happy, you shal prosper in all things. And besides that, there is a soueraine blessing for vs as touching the life euerlasting. For all ỳ we can desire or looke for in this worlde, is nothing in comparison of that saluation which wee hope for through faith; and all the blessinges which God promiseth vs, & offereth vnto vs as touching the life to come. Therefore all this ought to make vs the readier & better disposed to submit ourselues vnto God. For what? Seeing our lord seketh nothing but our welfare in our obeying of him, & offereth vs a reward for our so doing; are we not too too wretched if wee enforce not ourselues to serue our god? Ye see thē how we ought with our good consent to ratifie all the promises which are contained in the holy scripture; that whereas others thinke it were but lost time to do well, wee may alwayes haue this imprinted in our heart, that there is nothing better than to cleaue vnto God. The heathenish sorte doe thinke themselues very happie in following of their owne lustes. When lecherous and couetous persons haue scraped together on all sides, they thinke all is well gained, and they triumphe in their doinges. If the fornicators who are brutish in their fleshly lustes, can enioy their pleasures, they welter in them, they are drunken with them, they are wholly bewitched by them. If a vaine glorious man be in any dignitie, and be aduaunced to any authoritie among men; he thinketh there is no other ioye nor happinesse, but to be in high estate. At the same point are all the despisers of God. And in the meane time the poore faithfull ones are mocked: they are poore persons, they are set at naught, they hang their winges, they doe nothing but droppe and pine away in this worlde. These wretched soules (say some) are not well aduised to take so much paines they knowe not why; for what profite haue they for all their trauaile? It seemeth therefore that they which seeke to serue God are greatly beguiled, and that the wicked beare the whole sway. But we must on the contrarie side be throughly resolued herein as it is sayde in the prophet Esay, Say ye, Yet there is fruit for the iust men, for they shall eat the fruits of their labours. The prophet Esay would haue vs to fight against this temptation. Insomuch ỳ although the worlde laugh the Godly to scorne, & the wicked triumph ouer them: yet for al that the faithfull should not be astonied, but cōclude with themselues, and say: No no, the righteous man shall not loose his labor, he shall not be deceiued of his expectatiō when he depēdeth wholy vpō the promises of God. The thing then which we haue to gather vpon this place is, that as often as we reade the promises in the scripture where

Matt. 6. 21.

Esay 3. 10.

himself: Blessed is the man which feareth ỹ lord, they which shall walke in the obedience of his word shal be blessed: blessed is he which walketh uprightlie, and soundlie with his neighbours: but specially they which renounce the worlde because they haue a better inheritance in heauē: as often (I say) as wee reade these thinges, wee must be confirmed in our faith, and aunswere with a good courage Amen, Lorde, it is so: wee replie not against that which thou hast saide, we imbrace thy promises in this place, and trust assuredly vnto them. Thus ye see howe euerie man ought to enforce himselfe to serue GOD, euen because hee beareth so gently with vs, & commaundeth vs not so precisely as hee might, hauing all authoritie ouer vs, but applyeth him selfe to our rawnesse to winne vs, and to enioye vs. And aboue all let vs bee mindefull of this generall promise, when God calleth vs vnto himselfe as his children, when hee spareth vs and beareth with vs, and entreth not into any extremitie of rigour with vs, but although there be many faultes in our workes, yet they hinder not him to accept of them, so as if wee offende we alwayes find pardon at his hande, and when we swarue aside, he bringeth vs into ỹ way, and none of al these thinges is imputed vnto vs. Se then what we haue to beare in minde as touching the first point.

Nowe as touching the seconde, let vs also note that the threatenings of God are verie necessarie for vs. For wee see howe great pride & rebellious nes is in al vs: insomuch that although we bee not rebellious of set purpose to set our God at nought, and to cast off his yoke: yet wee are so bleare eyed, that we thinke not on him, ỹ inticements of the worlde seduce vs in such wise, that we passe not for the receiuing of any warning that God giueth vs. If hee call vs by gentlenesse hee can get nothing at our handes: and therefore hee is fayne to vse threatninges. Hereby we see how he letteth passe nothing that is meete to hold vs in awe vnder his obedience. On the one side hee vseth mylde and louing maner of speach vnto vs, (as I haue told you) & saith, Come ye vnto me my childrē: Indeed I owe you nothing, but yet I wil bind my self vnto you: I promise you that if you serue me, it shall be for your profite. Thus our Lorde speaketh vnto vs, as a father that flattereth his childe to win him to be ruled by him & to employ himselfe in his seruice with a freehearted affectiō. Howbeit, God perceiuing that that is not enough to moue vs, vseth threatninges, and sayeth: Take heede, if yee thinke to cast away my worde, and yet to remaine vnpunished, yee deceiue your selues, I must cal you to accoūt for it, I wil not suffer my children so to mock mee: I must be their Iudge: it looke not for any pardon, when you haue abused my patience: I must double your punishment, and my vengeaunce must fall more horribly vpon you. Therefore when God declareth that our sinnes are vnpardonable, and yet wee continue in them, and make none account of submitting our selues vnto him, specially when hee applyeth himselfe euerie way vnto vs, to the intent wee shoulde remayne in his obedience, and not perish: Sith we see he hath such a care of our saluation; must it not needes bee that wee are too too stubborne, or rather verie beastes if wee be not mooued to fare the better, by the fatherly care which hee sheweth towardes vs? Yes: And therefore being stirred vp by the goodnesse and gentlenesse of God, whereof I speake euen nowe, let vs also quicken vp our selues with his threateninges. When we see that our flesshe is ouer wanton, and that it draweth vs vnto euill, let vs say, Alas: And shall wee shake off his yoke like wilde beastes? What hath God pronounced? Let vs tremble therefore when wee heare the threateninges of our God. For if the anger of an earthly king bee the messenger of death (as Salomon saith,) what ought wee to thinke of the anger of God, when it is denounced against vs? So then, let vs learne to tame our selues with feare, When the tentations of Satan might preuayle agaynst vs, and that our sinnes might bee as baytes to deceiue vs: let it come into our minde to say, What? Shal I vnder the presence of some pleasure which will soone vanishe, goe and prouoke the anger of my GOD, and so perishe for euer? After that manner (I say) ought wee to call Gods threateninges to our remembraunce; and then to aunswere thereunto Amen, and say, yea Lorde, it is euen so, it is no childrens game. When thou pronouncest condemnation vppon the wicked; thou arte readie to execute it: and when thou hast once pronounced the worde with thy mouth, it is all one as if wee sawe the fire alreadie kindled to consume vs. After that manner (I say) ought we to receyue all the threateninges which GOD denounceth against vs. For that is ỹ best meanes to teach vs to obserue the Lawe, I meane so farre as our weakenesse will suffer. For (as I haue tolde you) it is not possible for vs to come to perfectnesse indeede, as long as wee are inclosed in this flesshe of ours: but yet neuertheless wee may wel dedicate our selues vnto God, and bee holde in his feare, if on the one side his promises bee in force with vs, & againe if on ỹ other side we giue eare vnto his threatnings.

Prou. 16. 14.

But nowe let vs come vnto the order which is obserued is this place. *Moses with the Priestes of the Trybe of Leuie, commaunded the people saying, Sixe Trybes shall stande on the Hyll of Hebal, and sixe shall stande on the Hill of Garizim.* And afterwarde hee saith, *Keepe my Statutes and Commaundementes which I commaunde you this daye, for yee are made a people vnto your GOD.* This hath beene alreadie expounded: but it is good to beare that alwayes in minde which hath beene saide concerning it, to wit, that GOD speaketh by the mouth of his Priestes as if hee were there visibly in his own person. And that is to the intent his wordes shoulde bee receiued with the greater reuerence. For when wee see but mortall men as wee bee: wee are of opinion that what soeuer proceedeth from them, may verie well bee reiected, and if there bee no account made

of it, wee thinke the matter is not great. And thus wee see howe the worde of God is oftentimes little esteemed. For when wee see none speake but creatures like vnto our selues, wee thinke that ỹ which they pronounce is nothing but a sound of wordes. But God will haue the maiestie of his word to be knowen: & although men bring it, and be the messengers thereof, yet will hee not haue the worthines thereof to bee diminished, so as men should not giue audience vnto it: but he will haue euerie man to stoope to it and to receiue the yoke which hee putteth vpon them. God therefore speaketh in this place of Moses and by the Priestes: but yet in such a language and kinde of speach, that he will haue people to lift vp their mindes more higher, and to knowe that although they bee taught by the meane and ministerie of man, yet they ought to confesse that God is the authour of that worde which men preach vnto them, and that they ought to receyue it as from God himselfe & so be silent to heare it, and make no replie or gaynsaying against it: for such contempt is not done to a mortal creature, but God himself is dispised by it. And therefore let vs note well all the places whereby God authoriseth his worde, to the intent we may learne to holde our selues vnto it and to bee ordered thereby: so as euery of vs do bowe downe his heade, as often as men speake vnto vs in the name of God. And moreouer we see also the order which God hath appointed in his Church: he will haue all the worlde to aunswere Amen: for wee ought al to be partakers of ỹ doctrine. It must not bee kept in store onely for great men, but the smallest also must be instructed by it, to the edifying and profiting of them selues. But howsoeuer the case stande, there were alwayes Priestes to speake, who were ordeyned to teach the people according as it is

Mal. 2.7. saide in the Prophet Malachie; the law shall bee in the Priests mouth, and he shall be the messenger of the liuing God, and they shall seeke for knowledge at his lips. We see then that God in all times appointed some in the office of teaching the people, and of bearing abroade his worde. And so noweadayes wee stand in neede of such an order, and wee knowe what Sayncte

Rom. 12.6. 1. Cor. 12.28 Ephes. 4.11. Paul saith as touching this point, both in the 12. Chapter to the Romanes, and in the 12. of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and in the fourth to the Ephesians. And it is prooued vnto vs also throughout al the holy scripture, that God will haue certayne lawes established, and certaine men appointed to beare abroade his worde, and to bee teachers in his Church, to instruct the people in his name. Hereby wee gather, that when God hath appoynted such order; all those which can not suffer thẽselues to bee taught by this common order with the whole bodie of the Church, may well protest, that they bee Christians: but they come to the Church as holy as horses, bearing themselues in hande, that it is enough for them to haue graunted in a woorde, that the Gospell is the worde of God. But contrariwise we see here, that if we wil be of the bodie of the Church, and haue God to take vs for his children, we must heare the worde of God as it is ministred vnto vs, by the ministerie of men. But because this point hath beene handled largelie heretofore, I do nowe but as it were glance at it by the way.

Also there is this point: *To day thou art made the people of God, if thou keepe his commaundements.* Therefore like as our Lorde receyueth vs into his house, so must wee also wholy giue our selues vnto him, knowing that to this ende hee hath shooled vs out from the rest of the worlde, and will haue vs to bee his owne, and as it were his peculiar inheritance. It is true indeede that all men are bounde to serue him: but yet notwithstanding, when hee calleth vs vnto him, & sheweth himselfe our father, doth he not binde vs vnto him, with a double bonde? Yes verily. Are we not then without all sense and reason, & altogether bewitched, if we be not moued to yeelde our selues ouer to his will, so as hee may guide vs and beare rule ouer all our whole life? Then let vs wey well these woordes: *To day thou art made the people of the Lorde thy God, and therefore keepe his commaundements.* Howe are wee made the people of God, but by being his Church, and by hauing the vse of his sacramentes, and that is all one as if hee appeared among vs? For wee may not looke that GOD should come downe from heauen in his owne person, or sende his Angels vnto vs. But the true marke whereby he will bee knowen to bee among vs, is the preaching of his worde purely vnto vs: for no doubt but then he beareth rule in the middest of vs. So then let this thing profite vs, that we knowe that our Lorde receyueth vs vnto himselfe & will haue vs to be of his owne housholde. Seeing it is so, let vs take paines to obey him in all our life, and to keepe his commaundementes: let vs not wander like brute beastes as the wretched vnbeleeuers doe, because they neuer knewe what it was to bee of the house of God.

But nowe let vs come vnto the rehearsall which Moses maketh of the curses: he saith first of all, *Cursed bee hee which maketh anie Idol or anie molten Image, or anie carued Image: all this is abhomination vnto God: and cursed is hee which putteth it in anie secrete place. And all the people shall say Amen.* Let vs note that Moses doth not specifie in this place al the curses, euery one by himselfe, but he setteth downe certain examples, to shewe that all they which swarue aside from the law of God, seeke nothing else but to runne wilfully into vtter ruine and destruction. The effect therefore of all this is, that if we will prosper, we must drawe neere vnto God, seeing that hee is the fountaine of all happinesse, and prosperitie. Whereas on the other side all they which departe from him doe goe and cast themselues into vtter destruction: but al they which cast off the yoke of God, that is to say, which yeeld not themselues to followe his law and his word, all they departe from him, and doe as much as in them lyeth, to banishe themselues from his presence. And so it is all one as if they did cast them

themselues into the bottome of hell, and sought nothing else in this present life, but to prouoke the vengeance of God against them, & so to seek their owne woe. Behold what we haue to beare in minde. Now God beginneth with his owne seruice: and not without cause: for (as we haue declared afore,) the lawe is deuided into two tables to shewe vs that men ought first of all so to behaue themselues as God may be honoured: & this is the first and principall dutie which wee ought to performe, because we are his creatures, & because he hath fashioned vs vnto his glorie: let vs tend vnto that end, and let our life bee referred thereunto, seeing the first table sheweth vs so briefly howe wee ought to behaue our selues towardes our God. That is the cause why God saith now in these curses; *Cursed be he which maketh any Idol.* But I haue tolde you that Moses rehearseth only certaine sorts, and that is to comprehend the whole in one part, as we haue seene examples thereof. In effect therefore when it is said *Cursed be he which maketh any Idol*, it is al one as if Moses had ingenerall pronounced a curse vpō them, which falsifie and corrupt the seruice and worship of God, as if he he shoulde say: You knowe howe and after what manner our God will bee worshipped of vs; whosoeuer inuenteth any maner of Idolatrie, whosoeuer deuiseth any maner of superstition, he maketh Idols. And that is not to serue ỹ liuing God, but rather to follow their owne fancies and imaginations: and therefore they are all accursed. Ye see then howe wee ought to expound this place. And Moses meaning to set downe vnto vs in this place such a particular, as wherein we might most euidently see an intolerable corrupting of ỹ worship of God. For when God is so misshapen in any painting, or in any puppet, or in any other peece of wood or stone, that men wil there represent his Image & say, It is a resemblance of him: it is too grosse and outragious dealing. Indeede men think not so, we see in poperie, how they say, Lo yonder is God, and a remembrance of him. And are they not so brutishe that they thinke there is no diuine maiestie in heauen, vnles it be represented in the shape of an Idol? But they which haue any taste what GOD is, and haue hearde any scripture of his worde, where it is said ỹ God is a spirit, tall and infinite spirit, the fountaine of life: do know that hee hath too great iniurie done vnto him, to be represented by a dead thing and by a corruptible creature, and to haue his diuine power vnto a puppet as if hee were but a creature, & lesse than we. They therefore which haue but a small taste of this doctrine, do abhorre the leaning vpō an idol, and the imagination of seruing God by going thereto, & that any should pray to a dead thing, or looke for health from ỹ, which can doe nothing, neither good nor bad. Therefore if this were well marked, wee shoulde finde that Moses meant in this place to make Idolatrie more detestable, according to that rule which we haue had hetofore expounded. Yet notwithstanding we haue two things to note in this place: the one is, that God can not suffer his liuing maiestie to bee represented vnder stone, woode, painting or in any other creature in the worlde. What must we doe then when the case concerneth the worshippe of GOD? Wee must lifte vppe our mindes aboue the worlde, and knowe that wee may not sticke fast here belowe, nor make anie Idol or puppet vnto him: for he can not abide it. That is one point to bee noted. Secondly we haue also to note, that God will not be serued nor worshipped after our own maner, but he will haue vs to walke according to his word, without putting any thing thereunto, or taking any thing from it, so as all the inuentiōs which men haue forged, are al one as if they had set vp as many Idols. Indeede they make themselues beleeue that God wil like wel of that which they do: but it is but a bare gesse of them, while they haue not a eye vnto ỹ which hee liketh. Therfore they serue their own fācies, & not the liuing God, who hath giuen them such a rule as he wil haue obserued. And therefore at a word all the worshippings of God (as they terme thē) wherin men are so deuout after their owne fancies, and whereof they haue no warrant of the worde of God, to say, This he hath commaunded me: are nothing but Idols of their owne forging. Let this be well noted.

Now let vs consider howe God saith, *Cursed is he which forgeth Idols.* It is true that the Papistes when they take paynes to trudge from altar to altar, to mumble their prayers before their Images, to set them out with waxe candles, and to doe their other dotages: if a man tell them that God disliketh of all their doings, it spiteth thē to bee tolde so, and they fall to rayling against God himselfe. But yet for all that, whereas they thinke they win a score of heauens, euerie steppe which they set foorth, is a casting of themselues into the gulfe of hell. And why? Make they neuer so faire replies, yet ỹ Iudge giueth this sentence vpon them; *Cursed are all they which make Idols.* Let them goe seeke their wages at the diuils hande: our Lord hath already pronounced ỹ sentence which is here contayned, to wit, cursed are al Idolaters. If any say it is no such great harme for a man to do a thing of good intent, and to say I thinke it is good, I beleeue it is well done: Yet notwithstanding God detesteth euerie whit of it, because it is a forging of a newe God, when men turne themselues from the pure simplicitie of the worship of God, to deuise this or that. Although they thinke to doe well, yet notwithstanding they are accursed. And why? For God disliketh and condemneth that which they doe. And it is not for a mortall creature to promise this or that vnto himselfe, but God must promise, and we must answere Amen. And likewise when he threateneth, we must bee confounded, and euery mouth must be stopped before him: he must haue audience, and wee receiue his threates and confirme them, as I haue told you. And here is purposely mention made of a secrete place to shewe that although a man be not conuicted before the worlde, yet hee ceaseth not to be guiltie before God, and that the heauenly Iudge will finde him out well enough. Therefore let vs not beguile our selues,

and thinke we shal escape and remaine vnpunished, when men reproue vs not, ne conuict vs of the euil that we haue done. For we may wel seek startingholes, but yet will God finde vs out, seeing he saith: *Cursed is hee which maketh an Idol, and putteth it in a secrete place.* And againe hee saieth, *It is an abomination vnto the Lord*, to shew, that mē must not beguile thēselues, by standing vpō their own opinion, or vpon y iudgement of the world: It is ynough that God saith, such a thing displeaseth me. Although the world like of vs, yet gaine we nothing therby. So then let vs take heed that we frame ourselues so vnto the will of God, as y this world carie vs not away, and that wee serue not our owne nor other mens lustes, but submit ourselues always vnto our heauenly Iudge. Thus ye see what we haue to beare in mind. For when God is to be serued, we must not looke whether there be any witnesses of our doings here below; for although we may deceiue the whole worlde, yet God seeth vs, & wee cannot escape his sight. What lurking places then soeuer we haue, let vs knowe that our condemnation is ready at hand. And therepon let vs order our life so as GOD be serued and honoured, not only with our feet, our hands, and our eyes, but also with the seruice of our hearts, that is to say, with all our affections, and with al our thoughtes giuen ouer vnto him. And (to conclude) wee are taught that the seruice of God is not without cause called spirituall: whereby we may vnderstand, that it is not ynough for vs to do him reuerence before men, by kneeling downe, and by vsing of such other Ceremonies, or by abstaining from seruing of Idols in the sight of men; but also in secret when euery man is withdrawen into his secret places: euen then must we auowe him for our God, and all our affections must be held vnder his obedience, and wee must haue the pureneſſe which Saint Paul speaketh of, namely the obedience of faith, by the which euery of vs may dedicate and consecrate himselfe wholly vnto God. Rom. 1.5.

Iohn. 4.24.

Now let vs kneele downe before the Maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him that wee may bee touched more and more with true repentance, to be displeased with ourselues, that in applying our whole studie in the minding both his promisses and his threatenings, we may not bee so froward as to cast off his yoke, but rather bee holde backe alwayes by such meanes as are fitte and conuenient for vs: and that we may yeelde vnto him a willing seruice, to the intent that as hee of his free goodnesse hath called vs vnto him, so he also wil guide and gouerne vs by his holy spirit, that we may giue ourselues ouer vnto him, and serue him in humblenes and feare, embracing his promises, and trembling at his threatenings: and that in the meane time he wil make vs feele that if we be so giuen to his seruice, he will make vs to prosper, and wee shalbee most happy, and that especially, because he hath set before vs the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen, which he hath purchased vnto vs in the person of his onely sonne. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but also to al people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the iiii. of March, 1556.

The CLI. Sermon which is the third vpon the seuen and twentith Chapter.

16 Cursed be the man which curseth his father and his Mother: And al the people shall say, Amen.

17 Cursed be he which remoueth his neighbors boundes: And all the people shall say, Amen.

18 Cursed be he which maketh the blind goe out of the way: And all the people shal say, Amen.

19 Cursed be he which wresteth the right of the stranger, the fatherlesse, and the widowe: And all the people shall say, Amen.

20 Cursed be he which lyeth with his fathers wife, for he discouereth the skirt of his fathers garment: And all the people shall say, Amen.

21 Cursed be hee which lyeth with anie beast, And all the people shall say, Amen.

22 Cursed bee he which lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father or mother: And all the people shall say, Amen.

23 Cursed be he which lieth with his mother in lawe: And all the people shal say, Amen.

I haue seene already wherein God erred in appointing such solemnities, that the people should be meete together on Mount Ebal which is ouer against Garizim, to pronounce curses that are see downe here. For when God hath once vttered his will vnto vs, it is good reason that euerie of vs should conforme himselfe, and conforme that to sticke vnto his worde as a rule of all righteousnes. For the obedience which God requireth of vs as though it were a setting of our selues vnto it, is vtterly false, there is no perfect keeping or replying vnto it which he requireth, but that it is alwayes due and ought to be stucked vnto. Further we ought to marke also, that the condition of entring into the couenant of agreeing vnto Gods worde is such, that they doe the contrarie in their liues, they accurse themselues with their owne mouthes; for it is not enough for vs to professe, that what God saith is righteous and reasonable, but we must also shewe by our deedes, that his worde hath full force and authoritie among vs. So then, hee that yeeldeth such confession with his mouth, is his owne iudge without any further processe, if hee follow not that which is right him, and which hee knoweth to be good. Nowe we haue seene howe God forbiddeth idolatries and consequently of all superstition: and hereupon I haue told you, that it is enough for vs to haue here some examples touched, to know that God requireth the full obedience of his law at our handes, as shall bee declared for conclusion in the ende. See see then that he ratified his whole seruice. Nowe hee commeth to the second table, and beginneth with the honour and subiection that is due to the father and mother. *Cursed shall that man be* (saith he) *that curseth his father or his mother.* Now this worde importeth verie much. For it comprehendeth all that is repugnant to the honour, obedience, and helpe, which children owe to their fathers and mothers. Therefore whosoeuer yeeldeth not honour to his father and mother, is accursed of God. We haue well seene here before the punishment that was appointed for disobedience, inasmuch that if any man had disobedient children, being brought before the iudges, they were (vppon his single witnesse) to be stoned to death, and so such infection was to be taken away. For it is an vnkindly and accursed thing, that the children should set themselues against the parents which brought them into the world, and haue brought them vp, and haue taken so much paine and care for them. For wee knowe that a father occupieth as it were the roome of GOD towardes his owne children and offspring. It followeth then that hee that so lifteth vp himselfe against his father or his mother, doth manifestly dispise God, euen as if he were a contemner of all religion. Now hee re by the way, God telleth vs that although iudges and Magistrates do not their dutie, or if they haue done the wrong to his father and mother bee borne with, yet is he not therefore escaped. For many crimes lie buried in this world, which notwithstanding God reserueth, and early or late they must come to accompt.

Let vs marke well then, that heere is no more speaking of the execution of iustice which is to bee done by meane of law, for that hath beene spoken of afore, but God declareth y although they which haue offended through disobedience, be not punished here in this world, or that their faultes be not knowen, or that no such examination bee made of them as they deserue: yet they gayne nothing thereby, because there is a heauenly Iudge, which forgetteth not any thing, but keepeth all things registred before him, and he in the ende will surelie doe his office. Therefore let vs thinke well vppon this doctrine, and although men finde no fault with vs, nor any man vexe or trouble vs, let vs not thereuppon fall aslleepe, but rather euerie man summon himselfe, according to that which is tolde vs here, & consider that we must come before the iudgement seat of God. And therefore let vs learne to walke in such wise, as hee may accepte of vs when wee come there, and as wee may not stande in feare of the curse which is vttered here. Not that anie of vs canne performe the Lawe (as I haue declared more fullie heretofore) but that it behoueth vs to tende thereunto, and to put our indeuour to it. For although wee bee not altogether cleane before GOD, but contrariwise guiltie of manie of the faultes that are conteyned here: yet doeth not hee lay them to our charge, sobeit that wee mislike of them, and giue not our selues ouer to them, ne let the bridle slacke. Wherefore let vs learne to restrayne our selues, and to bee sory, seeing wee be not so perfect as were requisite. But yet therewithal (as I haue declared afreadie,) let vs striue our selues to please our Lord God and to obey him; and let vs haue such a recorde in our owne consciences, as wee may freely and with open mouth say; Cursed bee hee which hath not followed the doctrine of saluation in such sorte as it is shewed vnto vs. To make anie long discourse of the honour which euerie man oweth to his father and mother, it is not needefull as nowe, because the lawe hath beene expounded afreadie heretofore. It sufficeth as nowe [to know] that in this text GOD declareth that all disobedience, as well against fathers and mothers as against all superiours whome he hath set in authoritie in this worlde, is intollerable in his sight. For hee will not haue vs to liue here disordered like beastes, but hee will haue order and gouernment obserued among vs. And that canne not bee doone, except we stande in awe of such as beare anie office for the common gouernment of men. Whosoeuer then breaketh Gods order, let him looke to bee accursed, accordingly also as Saint Paul

Rom. 13. 4. telleth vs, that in so doing wee resist not creatures or men; but we make warre against God himselfe, when wee goe about to overthrowe the superioritie which hee hath ordeyned and commended vnto vs. Marke that for one point.

Now it is added afterward *Cursed shall bee hee which plucketh vp his neighbours buttelles.* [*Meetes, or Landmarkes.*] Wee must alwayes beare in minde that which I haue tolde you alreadie; namelie that here vnder one kinde, GOD comprehendeth all. And I expounded therewithal, that if the bounds of mens Landes bee not kept certayne, no man shall bee Maister of his owne possessions, but all shall goe to spoyle and hauocke. And surely the hauing of iust weightes and measures, the maintayning of lawfull monie, and the keeping of bounds and buttelles vnchaunged, are thinges that haue beene euer priuiledged. For howe might men buy and sel, or vse anie trade among them; if the coyne bee not lawfull? Againe, if weightes and measures be falsified, in what taking are we? To what purpose shall Iustice serue any more? To what end shall all the lawes in the worlde serue? As much is to bee saide for bounders, buttelles, meeres, & landmarkes. So then, vnder this saying God meant to shewe, that it behooueth vs to obserue equitie and vprightnes in dealing one with another. True it is that lewes are made for the punishing of such offences; insomuch that if any man doe shift or remooue his neighbours buttell, he shall not be discharged by setting it in the right place againe, and by making amendes for the harme that he hath done; but he shall be openly punished also as for a hainous crime. As much is to bee done for the falsifying of weightes, and for the hauing of wrong measures. As touching the counterfeiting of Coyne, if a man haue vsed it, it is not enough that hee pay backe that which hee hath wrongfully taken; but hee must also die for it; and good reason. For otherwise (as I sayde) all lawes were to be abolished. And it were better for vs to be wilde beastes, than to liue without those meanes which God hath ordeyned and nature also hath taught vs. But put the case that some man do defraude his neighbour, bee it by false measure or by some other wicked practise, and that he seeke to aduantage himself by an other mans losse, & the magistrate knoweth nothing thereof, by meanes whereof it scapeth vnpunished: yet is it shewed vs here, that in the ende it must needes come to account before the heauenly Iudge. If a poore man bee put from his right, or oppressed by authoritie, violence, or otherwise, and dare not say a word to it; ne findeth anie aduocate to tender his cause in this worlde: yet is God his warrant, and those which thinke themselues greatly benefited by inriching themselues by hooke or by crooke, shall at length finde that it were much better for them to haue had but one bitte of breade to eate, than to haue had neuersomuch to glut themselues withall, and in the meane time to abide the curse that is set downe here. For God hath no neede of mans helpe. Put the case that all men dealte amisse here, and that all thinges were confused and out of order: yet shal not this saying fal to the grounde, *That the man shall bee accursed which plucketh to his neighbours hurt*, but that God must needes [illegible]. True it is that hee will haue them to weare swordes, into whose hands hee hath put them, and hee hath ordeyned that they should [illegible] if they bee slacke and slowe in doing it, hee will shew them that he appointed them not in vaine to punishe crimes and offences. But yet cannot mortall men prejudice him. When an earthly Iudge dischargeth not his duetie, it followeth not that Gods power is weakened thereby, or that he is bereft of his meanes to execute his office, or y he is idle. For he is not like worldly Princes which trust to their officers, & are wel contented to play y blind persons, when things goe amisse. As for me [say they,] I vnderstand y all things go wel, & forasmuch as I haue mine officers, my will is that they should behaue themselues faithfully as I haue commaunded them. A Prince thinketh it enough for him to haue saide the worde: but God ouerlooketh them, and controlleth them. And although offenders & transgressors escape the handes of men: yet shall they bee punished at his hands in the end. So then, let not our eyes bee, least wee shoulde bee spyed, or least men shoulde take vs tardie in working any deceyte: but let vs bee mindefull of this saying, *Cursed shall bee hee which pulleth vp his Neighbours Landmarke.* Men perchaunce see it not a whit; but yet God beholdeth it, and wee can no more offewe his eyes, than his handes. Wherefore let vs beware of all fraudes and falsifying of our selues that our Lorde watcheth ouer vs, yea and that in such wise as hee will not suffer the poore to bee wounde in, nor the simple to bee outraged or eaten vp, and that those thinges shall abide vnpunished, but that he will shewe in the ende howe it is not without cause that hee claimeth to himselfe the title to be the Iudge of the world.

Now it is said further, *Cursed shall hee bee, which causeth the blinde to stray, out of liuing as is fitte in his way.* Here is yet a cruelkie cut against nature. For y more necessitie a man is in, y more ought other men to pitie him & to succour him. There is a poore blind man, mé see him readie to take a fall, & they withhold him not from it. They y take pleasure herein, must needs be altogether of a leawd and corrupt disposition, so as there is not one droppe of common kindnesse in them. To bee short, they must needes bee lowers of all cruelkie and mischeefe. For euen the Heathen did greatlie abhorre that thing, in so much that in some places, such a deede was as grieuously punished, as murder, Theefte, or such other like thinges. Howbeit, commonly men made not a lawe for it. And the reason that was yelded for it, was, y it seemed y euerie man ought to be sufficiently learned in y behalfe of himself, so as it had beene a superfluous thing to haue saide, If a man see a blinde man, let him sette him in his way. Neuertheless (as I haue declared afore) wee haue to note that God extendeth his matter and doctrine yet further. And

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is also his meaning is to say, Cursed shall he bee which suffereth his neighbour to goe astray, for want of good Counsell. For as a blinde man stumbleth against things, stumbleth, and goeth astray if he be not led, and guided in his way: so also when wee want Counsell and good aduice, surely we be in the same plight that blinde men are, vnlesse we be succoured. Yea and although a man haue eyes, yet if he be in a strange and vnknowen Country, and go quite and cleane from his way, and ronne wandering heere and there, and none let him alone: it is all one as if they had made a blind man to goe out of his way, and so did the heathen men themselues confesse it. It is not for vs to seeke excuses and to say, Why so God speaketh but of blinde men onely. Yea, but euen they which had neither the lawe nor the Gospell, could well skill to say so, and haue shewed vs our lesson; namely that whosoeuer sheweth not the way to a traueler when he sees him out of his way, is a very monster, and a detestable creature: and so is he also which is nigardly of light of his candle. I see a poore man whose candle is out, and he commeth to me to light it again. The dooing therof costeth me nothing, and yet I say vnto him, ye shall haue none of me: and are such folk worthy to liue vpon the earth? Now then let vs marke well Gods meaning, where he curseth all such as set the blinde out of the way, or cause them to stumble. And let vs gather that together which I haue touched heeretofore, which is, that heere God doeth vs to vnderstand, that if any of our neighbours haue need of our helpe, I must helpe him if I be of ability and haue opportunitie to doe it, specially if it be no cost or charge to me. Nay, though it should be some cost vnto vs, yet are we bound to help such as are in neede and distresse: and what ought we then to do, when we shall but open our mouth to do it? In that case we be not to disburse any thing, we bee not in daunger to loose either time or money, as they say; the thing is to be done of free cost. And shall we be so cruell, as to let a poore man sustaine harme through our naughtinesse? What a dealing were that? Do not such folke deserue to be confounded? But (as I said afore) this place treateth not of punishment to be executed by the earthly Iudges. God telleth vs that although such dealing bee borne with, and that it bee but laughed at; yet it shall come to account before him. Now sith it is so, let euery man looke to himself. And first let vs beware, that when our neighbours are in any extremity, we also be pitifull moued with compassion to succour them. Therefore looke as any man shall haue neede of our helpe; let vs be prest and ready to reach out our hand and to lende it him. And specially if our Lorde graunt vs the grace to bee able to serue our neighbours turnes, without troyning of our selues for the matter, or without cost: let vs vnderstand that hee doeth vs great honour. For whosoeuer releeueth him that is in neede, is the minister of GOD. Thus GOD imployeth vs in his seruice, and therewithall promiseth vs that our labour shall not be lost; and ought not wee then to bee the more prouoked thereunto? Marke this therefore for a special point, that such as are succourlesse, are here commended vnto vs by God. And moreouer let vs knowe, that if we be bound to guide the blinde, least they should stumble or stray out of the way: we ought to be much more forwarde and readie to aduise a man, when we see he hath neede of counsell, and is like to fall into some daunger for want of our aduise. But yet much more ought the way of saluation to bee priuiledged: in so much that if wee see a man ouershoote himselfe, and is going into destruction, wee must not disdayne to warne him, saying: Wretched creature, whither goest thou? What wilt thou doe? Wilt thou needes thus wilfully perish? And specially when he doeth it of ignorance: If wee then spare our tongues in that behalfe, so as they be not vsed as instruments of saluation to y poore ignorant soule, who would faine be taught: surely such reckelesnesse shal not abide vnpunished, nor be forgotten before God. Although neither Lawe nor Iustice proceede against it; yet shall this curse bee ratified vppon it. To bee short, let vs marke, that our Lorde meant by this threat, to induce vs to pitie and compassion, in succouring al such as haue neede of vs: And specially in employing our selues when wee see poore ignorant persons destitute of counsell, and that wee our selues are of abilitie to bring them backe agayne into the ryght way. This much concerning that point.

Nowe followeth immediatly concerning crueltie: *Cursed bee hee that wresteth the right of the Straunger, the widowe and the fatherlesse*. True it is that to the vttermoost of our power wee must maynteyne euery mans right. Neuertheless, our Lorde in this place as afore, speaketh of Wydowes, fatherlesse, and straungers, bycause they lie open to a great number of iniuries and outrages, and no man setteth himselfe in their defence; nay, fewe haue any care at all of them, bycause they be not able to make any recompence. Looke mee vppon a Straunger, see howe hee shall be fleeced, howe he shall bee vexed, howe hee shall be wronged, yea and that openly; and yet it shall be winked at. And why? For euery man will bee freendly to his owne neighbour, and as for that man, hee is not of the same country, he is not of the same Citie, he belongeth not vnto vs. Thus yee see howe the poore man shall be left destitute. In lyke case are Wydowes and Fatherlesse Children. For as for the fatherlesse childe, men looke not that hee should acknowledge what is doone for him to day or to morrowe. Sometimes he lies in his Cradle, and knowes not who dooes him good and who dooes him euill, bycause he hath no discretion: hee cannot requite the pleasure that is done vnto him: and therfore euery man letteth him alone. In the same case do wydowes stand, specially when they be poore, & are of no great countenaunce to the worldward: for then euery man shrinks from them; and so they bee left vp as it were to the spoile. Now bicause these things come commonly to passe, God doth purposely

posely take such folke into his protection, saying that if any man doe wrest or hinder the right of the straunger, the widow and the fatherlesse, he will be reuenged thereof: insomuch that although it be not accounted of before the world, but rather the doers of such outrages be well liked of; yet will he call them before him, and shew that he had a care of those whome he had taken into his safekeeping. And so vnder one kinde, God meant to shewe breefely, that if we tread vpon such as haue no credite, nor meane to defende themselues, nor any stud to leane vnto, as in respect of the world, hee reserueth to himselfe the punishing thereof. That is the thing which wee haue to gather vpon this text.

Now, *to wrest or hinder the right*, is nothing else but vniustly & without cause to oppresse y feeble and weake, and such as haue no body to support and maintain them. Truly that maner of speech is set downe in the holy scripture, which is al one with this which we be wont to say, *to doo a good turne*, but yet in generall it is as much to say, as, *to disappoint a man of his right*. Nowe therefore, when I pill a man, when I take to my selfe the things that belong to him, when I strip him out of his substance, when I thrust him out of al that euer he hath, when I ouermaster him, and I take more vpon mee than becommeth mee: then doe I hinder *his right*: And so we see (as I shide afore) that in this text God sheweth that he will bee the Iudge of al the outrages which are done to such as haue no meanes to reuenge themselues, and are forlaken & forgotten on y behalfe of men. But were we wel aduised, surely we wold be more afraid to haue God our aduersarie parte, than all the whole worlde togeather. And in deede therein we shew, y we giue small credit to Gods word: in so much that if a man be of great kinred & haue many friends, if a man be rich or highly fauoured of the world: we dare not meddle with him; & although he haue molested vs, yet wil we sweetely swallow it vp, & in any wise beware that we prouoke him not. Thus wil men beare w all such as haue wherwith to maintaine themselues to y worldward; when in the meane while they that are destitute shalbe pilled & eaten vp. Yet notwithstanding God is their defender, and saith, that in oppressing such folke, we make warre against him, and therefore that he also must be faine to lift vp his arme in the maintenance of those whom hee hath taken into his protection. But men care not for that: and doe we not thereby bewray our vnbeleefe? For had we a true and liuely feeling that God iesteth not heere, in telling vs that his curse shall light vpon those which shal so haue misintreated the feeble sort and such as haue no mainteyners: it is certaine that we would quake whensoeuer we were tempted to do euil to any poore creature y hath no stay, credite or authoritie in the world. I see this man hath no kinsfolke nor friendes, I see no man regardeth him, I see he is vndefended: now if I aduaunce my selfe against him, or if I trouble him, God setteth himselfe against me, he setteth his mark vpon the poore man, and he telleth me that if I meddle with such a person, he will take the cause to himselfe, and I shall haue inpeached his owne maiestie. If we did thinke on this, certaine it is, that we wold shrudde be much more restrained and held backe by his feare than we are by all the fauours and displeasures of this world whatsoeuer. Neuertheless, we see the cleane contrarie, we bee very dullheads in this behalfe. And therefore let vs beethinke our selues to bee more watchfull than we haue beene. And sith wee dare not attempte any thing against those which are armed with al defence, & haue wherwith to vpholde themselues in this world: let vs much lesse doe any outrage or iniurie to those whome God doeth vnder his mere broode vnder his winges, and of whome he declareth himselfe to bee the protector: and let vs also consider well, that though the world say not a word to vs, but rather allow of vs for it; Gods vengeance must light vpon vs double, specially when though such contempt we shal haue taken greater libertie to doe euil. For it is certayne that the cruelty which is committed against poore folke which haue no stay at least vnto, is a mingled contempt of GOD, and an vtter skorning of him, as who would say hee were vnable to execute the vengeance which he hath threatned. Now when GOD is so lightly esteemed, thinke we that hee will beare it? Yee see heere (sith how this kinde of outrage is euen against nature. For if wee were not forepossessed with our wicked affections, surely euery of vs would confesse, that it is much worse to haue hurt or annoyed a poore weake creature, than to haue doone harme to a rich man which is well armed, hath rescue and power to reuenge himselfe. All men will graunt that. Therefore is it one of the greatest and most outragious faultes that can bee among men. Agayne it is a skorning of GOD, which is a double wickednesse when wee bee not moued at his saying of GOD, I haue these folke in my handes, I will maynteyne them, and whosoeuer aduaunceth himselfe against them, must needes haue mee to bee his aduersarie parte. If wee make no account of this, as though GOD had neuer spoken it: is it not a token that we be too hearde harted? And therefore (as I haue sayde already) let vs learne to beethinke our selues better; and to haue a better regarde of him: and when wee bee conuersant among such folke as are despised to the worldwarde, without alyaunce, without frendes, without succours: let vs beware that we deale after such a sorte with them, as it may alwaies runne in our mindes that they bee Gods children; and that the heauenly Iudge will not forget the wrongs that are doone vnto them, specially seeing hee hath tolde vs heere, that those which haue bin so cruell to the feeble, shall not escape his curse.

Nowe Moses addeth further, *Cursed bee hee which lyeth with his fathers wife, Cursed bee hee which lyeth with a beast, with his owne Sister, or with his Mother in law.* This place treateth of all the infamous sortes of lecherie, yea euen of the loathsomest sortes of them; whether it bee incest or

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buggerie or such other infections. And it is not without cause that God chuseth out those kinds; for it is to the ende that wee shoulde bee touched with the more feare and terrour when we goe about any kinde of Lechery. God could haue sayde simply in one worde, Cursed shall he bee which committeth any lecheries: and in verie deede, that is the marke whereat this text aymeth. Neuertheless hee contenteth not himselfe so, but (as I sayde) hee chooseth the examples which are most outrageous. And why? To the intent wee should bee touched the more to the quicke. For we see how slowe we be in hearkening to the things which God telleth vs. We haue his woord, but what for that? It passeth away. We will not sticke to say, that it behoueth vs to keepe our selues from breaking his Lawe. But if vices be spoken of but in a word or twaine, shall they be esteemed as they ought to be, that is to say, as crymes before God which deserue eyllesse death? Wee see howe euery man dispenseth with himselfe, so as the priuie theefe maketh no conscience of filching, till of a petie theefe, he becommeth a robber; and then (to his seeming) all is nothing that he hath done afore, except hee become a murtherer and a cutter of mens throates. Thus doe men proceede in degree of Theeuerie: and as much doe they also in Lecherie. For they make accounte of it but as of a thing of nothing, vntill they fall into y greatest extremities. Forasmuch then as we bee dull also as we bee not touched with any such feare as were requisite, when God condemneth sinne and would plucke vs backe from it: therfore it is needefull that he should set before vs the examples that are most detestable, euen such as (spite of our teeth) must needes make y haire to stand vp end on our heads whē we heare them named; to the intent that no man should beguile himself with fond flatterie, but euery man be well ware & beholde himselfe vnder the obedience of God. Heere then we see two things: The one is, that GOD hath condemned all vnchastitie, and all maner of Lecherie: and secondly we see how hee hath purposely chosen the thinges that are most ougly, as Incestes, and vncleanesse against kinde, as the medling euen with brute beastes. And why is that? To the ende that men should haue occasion to bethinke themselues the better, and not to doe as they bee commonly woont, which is to hearken and to lay downe their eare to it and to say, All this is verie true, and yet to make no accounte of it: but to fare as folke amased, as though a man had knocked them on the head with a beetle. Thus much concerning the first point.

And wee see howe God standeth much vpon Incestes, when he sayeth, *Cursed shall he bee which hath with his mother in law, the wife of his Father, or with the daughter of his father, borne at home, or with his owne daughter in law*, and such other degrees. And why? Herein wee see how men haue in all ages ouershot themselues in this behalfe. For God could well skill to apply remedies according to mens diseases. Therefore it is not for nought that he standeth so much vpon those things. And why? For in as much as he saw that men had neede to bee held shorte, and that such kindes of wickednesse would haue raigned, if he had not set himselfe stoutly against thē, & cast barres in their wayes, as if he should haue sayd, stay there, and play not the loose colts if he had not so prouided afore hand, that men might not rush foorth into such vices: surely al had gone to confusion. And if this wickednesse were in those daies, certesse we be not exempted from it nowadaies. And therfore let vs vnderstand, that the more earnestnesse our Lorde hath vsed heerein this behalfe, the more doth he warne vs to occupy our selues in the minding of those things, so as we bethinke vs of them day and night, early and late, to the end we may walke in such chastitie and sobrietie, as our life may not breake forth into such beastly sinnes; but as we may be giuen to God to serue him purely. That (say I) is the thing which wee haue to gather vpon this place. And let vs not flatter our selues: for God knoweth well what is meete for vs; or else hee would not haue spoken heere of thinges that are so shamefull, that we may be ashamed euen to name them. And what then? Had not God a regard thereunto? Yes that had hee: but he knew that the heart of man is a dreadful dungeon, and that we must be restrayned as it were by force, or else he should neuer be able to compasse vs. Nowe then, let this prouoke vs the more to looke neerly to our selues, that we entershoote not our selues one way nor other, but that wee bee vigilant to dedicate our selues to the seruice of God with al puritie, as I saide afore.

And moreouer let vs vnderstand, that lecherie in it self is so loathsome a thing before God, that although men make no great accounte of y punishing thereof, yet shall wee not therefore make the better market, at least wise when wee come before the heauenly throne. For it is no small thing, y God banisheth all whoremongers and lechours out of his kingdome, as is sayde therof both in the first Epistle of Saint Paule to the Corinthians, (as we haue seene not long since,) and also in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. That is the thing in effect, which wee haue to beare in minde: namely that God will not haue men to exceede in their fleshly lustes, by companying together like brute beastes; but that euerie man should liue chastly in marriage, and haue such regard of honestie in that behalfe, as nature be not forgotten by the companying of the sonne in lawe with his stepmother, or of the father with his owne daughter, or with his daughter in lawe, or by the marrying of the brother with his owne sister, but that those degrees bee obserued. For without such order, what would come of it? Wherein should wee differ from Bulles and Asses? Thus yee see what wee haue to gather vpon the first poynt, in that our Lorde hath heere condemned all maner of vnchast dealings, and wil not haue men to behaue themselues as lawlesse in those cases, but to dedicate themselues vnto him, & consider that their bodyes

1. Cor. 6. 9. & Heb. 13. 4.

1. Cor. 6, 15. & 19. bodies are the Temples of the holy Ghost, and members of our Lorde Iesus Christ; and therefore that they must represse their wicked affections. Marke that for one point.

Secondly (as I haue noted already) God hath set downe such examples heere before our eyes, as ought to make vs afraide, in that he speaketh of such as against nature doe so company with their owne mothers, their stepmothers, or their Sisters. Hee speaketh of them expressly, to the intent that from the one we should come to the other, as we see hee doeth in all his Lawe. And this hath beene declared more at length heeretofore. When hee will condemne hatred, hee speaketh of murder. And why? If a man tell vs that no man ought to hate his brother; wee easily graunt it to be sinne; but yet wee make no conscience to doe it. But when God sayeth, 1. Iohn. 3. 15 that hee which hateth his brother is a murtherer: then are wee the more abashed and restrained. Likewise in this text, for as much as ỹ skorners doe but iest at whoredome; they doe also beare themselues in hand, that God ought not to call them to account for it. And this vice is not of this daies or of yesterdayes breeding: we see it hath beene in all ages, as Moses reporteth heere. And therefore God nameth the detestablest kindes of lecherie, to the intent that thereupon wee should conclude thus, that if wee liue not chastly, wee shall fall from one euill to another, vntill we bee fallen into such a bottomlesse gulfe, as shall bee horrible to thinke on. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vpon this text. But wee ought to make our benefice of this warning, considering the blockishnesse that is in vs. Wee thinke our selues to bee very sharpe witted and apt to conceiue: and yet wee vnderstande not any thing in the doctrine of God; wee bee so dulheaded, that hee is fayne to shewe things aforehande to vs, or else wee woulde not bee mooued with them. To bee shorte, wee haue lesse witte and reason than young babes haue. Let men commend themselues as much as they list, and let them glory vppon opinion that they bee very able; yet are they so dulheaded, that wee should play the very bruit beastes, if our Lorde did not shewe things rudely vnto vs. And what is the cause thereof? Forsooth that wee bee forepossessed with our fleshly affections, and none is so deafe as hee that will not heare, as they say. Sith wee see this, let vs bethinke our selues the better, and when men shewe things grossely vnto vs, let vs not thinke they doe vs wrong, as some doe, who bee so nice, that if a man vse a rough style to them, Oh, say they, I vnderstoode all this by a woord or twaine, by like I am a little babe. To bee shorte, they be weary if a man bring them not matter of great sharpenesse: for they fondly presume in their owne imagination, that euen at the first dashe they knowe all that is necessarie. But beholde, God speaketh heere in another style and language. Why doth he so? He seeth there is need. So then let vs suffer our selues to be taught accoo-

ding to our capacity; & seeing we be slow, if our Lorde waken vs, let vs receiue it meekely, and learne to doe our selues good by it. And so yee see what wee haue to gather vpon all these textes.

Now whereas heere is mention made of *striking [or smiting] one his neighbour secretly*: it is spoken against all hatred and rancour, and serueth for a conclusion. A man myght demaunde heere howe it comes to passe, that GOD doeth heere curse those whose offence is in thinges whereof no mention is made in his Lawe: for I haue tolde you heeretofore, that it is ynough for a man to haue obserued the thinges that are contayned in the ten commaundementes; and also that the full perfection of our lyfe is set down there. But no mention is made there concerning the blind. And how happeneth it then that God doeth heere denounce vengeaunce against the thing that is not forbidden in his Lawe? Verily heercin wee see (as it hath beene expounded alreadie) that our Lorde in his Lawe requireth all thinges that concerne charitie, as that wee should succour one another, and that there should bee such a common league among vs, as that euery man should spend himselfe in helping his neighbour. Whatsoeuer is contrary to this, is forbidden and condemned by the lawe of God. And therefore it is sayde heere now; *Cursed shall be he which striketh his neighbour secretly*. Vnder this saying, our Lord hath comprehended all the misusages that wee can offer to our neighbour: insomuch that if we giue him but a phillip, it is as a kinde of murthering before him. And we see howe that the man which doeth but grinde his teeth at his brother, is condemned to hel fire: Matt. 5. 22 what shal then become of him which shal haue lifted vp his fist? Surely, euen to stirre a mans tongue against his neighbour; is a sin worthy of greeuous punishement. If wee doe but grunt in way of skorne or disdayne; it is forbidden. Howe much more then shall wee bee blamed, if wee goe aboute to outrage them any manet of way? Let vs marke therefore, that here vnder one particular, God doeth generally comprehende all outrage, violence, and misdemeanors which wee can vse towardes our neighbours. And hee sayeth expressly; *in secret, or priuilie*; to the intent wee shoulde bee still put in minde of that which I haue tolde you heeretofore; namely that in this behalfe, the case standeth not vppon the yeelding of account vnto men. Put the case that wee haue offended in breaking all the commaundementes, and yet notwithstanding that no man chalendgeth vs for it, but rather that authoritie it selfe allowe of our doinges, and that when wee bee accused for it, wee bee acquit of it, or that no man dare complayne of the misorders which wee haue committed: let vs put the case it bee so: yet doeth GOD speake otherwise, saying, that if wee haue doone our neighbour any harme priuilie, his bloud shall crye out against vs for vengeance, euen when wee thinke our selues escaped.

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And we ſee what is ſayde of Abell: although no man gaue information againſt Cain, nor any proceſſe went out againſt him; yet did the bloud of him that was murdered, ſpeake. God ſaith not; I haue hard ſay; but, the bloud of thy brother crieth vnto me, againſt thee. Heere then wee ſee that God threateneth vs not with any puniſhement to bee ſuffered at mans hande: but rather calleth vs that wee muſt walke before him and in his preſence. And although wee feare not any earthly Iuſtice; yet wee ought not to forbeare to brydle our ſelues ſhort, for as much as hee doeth his office, and the vengeaunce which hee hath ſpoken of heere, muſt needes bee executed vppon all ſuch as haue eſcaped by fauour, or cloaked their crymes, yea or offended ſo cunningly as no man coulde come to the knowledge of it. Seeing it is ſo, let vs looke that wee enter into our owne conſciences, and that wee haue Gods Lawe written there, ſo as wee haue not an eye to men, as who woulde ſay, I haue not beene blamed or reprooued: but rather conſider that our GOD watcheth ouer vs, and vnderſtande the office of his word to bee ſuch as is written in the epiſtle to the Hebrewes: that is to wit, that when it is preached vnto vs; then all thinges muſt come to tryall, and it muſt enter in, euen to the ſecreteſt thoughtes of our hearte. Nowe if Gods woord haue ſuch power: let vs aſſure our ſelues that much more it hath the office which is attributed vnto it. Wherefore let vs bee reſtrayned by this meanes, and when wee haue ſerued God with our heartes; let our life bee ſo aunſwerable therunto, that when we ſhall come before our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, we may ſhew that wee were truly minded to ſerue him, and not to pleaſe mortall men.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchſafe to giue vs true repentaunce of them; and moreouer to beare with vs vntill hee haue ridde vs quite and cleane of all our ſinnes, and of all our ſpots; and to make vs ſo to profite by the things which wee heare, as we may learne more and more to renounce ourſelues, and to repreſſe our wicked luſtes, vntill he haue clothed vs agayne with the puritie of that righteouſneſſe whereunto he calleth vs. And ſo let vs all ſay; Almighty GOD heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the ix. of March, 1556.

The CLII. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the ſeuen and twentith Chapter.

24 Curſed bee hee which ſmiteth his neighbour priuily: And all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

25 Curſed be he which taketh gifts to ſmite the ſoule of guiltles bloud: And al the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

26 Curſed bee hee which confirmeth not all the words of this law by dooing them: And all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.

WE vnderſtande by this text, that the thing which hath beene ſayde afore is very true; namely that God meant to teache the people of olde tyme, that it was not ynough for them to diſcharge theſelues before men, or to ſcape blame and puniſhment here: but y they muſt looke vp higher, and conſider that there is a Iudgement ſeate in heauen, before the which wee muſt one day aunſwere and make our account. That is the place whereon we muſt thinke, if we will diſcharge our ſelues of our duetie. For wee may wel beguile men in making a faire countenance; and againe we may ſo order our liues, as no man may finde any fault in vs, as touching our outward deedes: and yet in the meane while, if our hearres bee full of wicked luſtes, if it greeue vs to be helde in awe, if we grate our teeth againſt GOD: what obedience is that? Therefore let vs note, that whereas in this text it is ſayde: *Curſed ſhall he be which ſmiteth his neighbour priuily:* God condemneth not only the faultes that come to knowledge before men; but alſo the crymes that lye hidden. And therefore if a man haue liued in ſuch wiſe, as he cannot be rebuked of the worlde, but rather is prayſed and commended: he muſt not thereupon fall aſleepe, but he muſt examine his heart, and conſider well whether there be any lurking hole or backe nooke there within. For if the thoughtes bee euill; although men perceiue them not; yet will God alwayes doe the office of a Iudge. And if our own hearts reproue vs (as ſaith ſaint Iohn:) God ſeeth much more clearely. 1. Ioh. 3. 20.

So then this text ſerueth wel to humble vs. And in deede, we ought to remember this other ſentence of Sainct Iohn where it is ſayde, that whoſoeuer

1.Iohn.3.15 whosoeuer hateth his neighbour priuilie, although hee cloake his hatred so as it be not perceiued, or rather make a shew of loue: that man sayleth not to be condemned before God. And so ye see in effect what we haue to beare in mind. Let vs not busie our heades about mens reports. Although a man bee well reported of heere in this world, yet let him not flatter himselfe therefore; but let him summon himselfe before God, and consider whether he bee faultie in his heart. Let not men bring hither their owne opinions and fancies; for all such things shall bee refused, they will serue to no purpose. And therfore let vs walke with vnfayned heart before God. For we know hee regardeth not the outward apparance, according as it is sade in the first booke of Samuel; but he requireth the heart & truth, as is
1.Sam.16.7. Ier.5.3. sayde in the fifth chapter of Ieremy. And looke what is said heere concerning murders and fightinges, the same must wee extende to all other crimes. For if God cal thé to accoũt which haue done any outrage to their neighbours; although the same be vnknowen to the world: thinke wee that robberies, and treasons, and fraudes, and raylings, and slaunderings, and such lyke things shall passe away vnspoken of? And therefore let vs learne that we cannot by any meanes eschew the hand of God, nor scape his vengeance, if we foster vices in our hearts, which be not apparant vnto men. And that we may the more benefite our selues by this doctrine, let euery of vs examine himselfe aright in his heart, when he commeth to heare the worde of God. For it behoueth vs to be reproued inwardly, as Saint Paul speaketh thereof in the foureteenth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Euery man
1.Cor.14.25 (I say) must search his own thoughts and affections to the very bottom. Also it is the peculiar office of Gods word to bee a sharpe sworde, and
Hebr.4.12. to deuide asunder our thoughts from all our affections and lykinges; and to enter euen into the marow of the bones, and to leaue nothing vndiscouered. Seeing it is so; let vs preuent GODS iudgement, and not tary till he curse vs, and ban vs for the guiltles bloud which crieth out against vs: but let euery of vs condemne himselfe as soone as hee hath offended, and let him be sory in his heart, and beseeche GOD of his infinite goodnesse and mercie, to deliuer vs from the curse which is denounced against all such as haue so misbehaued themselues in secret, and not beene conuicted thereof before men.

It followeth; *Cursed shall bee hee which shall haue taken giftes to doe any wrong to his neighbour, and specially to smite the soule of the innocent bloud*. For so doth Moses speake word for worde. Neuerthelesse, the word *Soule* meaneth life. And bicause the bloud is the proper seate of life: therefore is it sayde *the Soule of the Innocent blood*. Surely although a man be faultie, yet were it not lawfull to buy & sel his life. But I haue told you already, that God hath set before vs the crimes that are most detestable, to the intent to waken vs the better, bicause wee bee not sufficiently mooued when he speaketh of common faults. For those thinges slippe away, and wee beare our selues in hand, that it is no heard matter to get forgiuenesse of them. Now for as much as there is so great slacknesse in men: therefore in this place God hath chosen the offences which euen of nature we ought to abhorre. For if the life of an innocent person bee bought and solde: it is an horrible matter; euerie man will say, that such wicked conspiracie is not to bee suffered. Thus doe wee nowe see the meaning of God. But although this thing bee sufficiently condemned with full mouth: yet doe not men ceasse to put it too much in vre. And for proofe hereof, looke vpon the practises that are wrought continually to oppresse the poore and simple sort. True it is that they shall not alwayes bee in danger to haue their throtes cut: but yet for hurting of them, what in their persons, and what in their goods, men are still gilty of murder before God. And as for the seeking of bywaies to disappoint the right of the innocent, and the practising of deuices against such as seeke to liue in peace and concord, it is too common a thing and therfore this law is no more than needeth. True it is (as I haue sayde afore) that at the first pushe we can wellynough say, that there is no reason why we should continue in so great and so excessiue frowardnesse; euery man will say by and by, it is against nature: but yet the common vse and custome is cleane contrarie. And therefore let vs marke well the doctrine that is set downe heere; namely that God cannot abyde so great a crime vnpunished, as the disappointing of the right, whereby the partie that hath not offended shold bee oppressed against all right and reason. And truely God speaketh here, as well of Iudges that haue beene corrupted to oppresse a poore man, as of those that haue solde themselues or haue set themselues to hyre to murder, beate, or strike men; as these squaring Ruffians doe, which seeke to bee set a worke in beating men or in quarelling with them: all these kindes of offenders hath God vtterly condemned in this text. And vnder one particular he comprehendeth generally all, as I haue sayde afore. And so the thing in effect which wee haue to gather, is, that Couetousnesse must not leade vs to hurt any man at all. Wee see nowe that this doctrine extendeth it selfe verie farre. For what is the cause of the committing of so many cousinages, oppressions, outrages, and iniuries; but onely the seeking of selfe profite? I woulde faine pleasure a man that is in authoritie, bycause that to my seeming hee is able to requite mee againe: and hereupon I for his sake doe fall to oppressing one, and to tormenting another. And afterwarde that is not ynough; vnlesse I vse other manner of dealings, so as the matter groweth to bee endlesse & out of all measure. So much the more therefore doeth it stande vs in hande, to marke well this doctrine where it is sayd: *Cursed shall he be which taketh reward to doe men wrong*.

And hereunto answereth that which is sayde in the fifteenth Psalme: namely, that if wee will Psal.15.5
be Gods houshold folk, and dwel in his Church, wee must beware of taking rewardes to hurt the guiltlesse. If God banish all such out of his kingdome,

dome, and from the company of the faithfull, as haue gone about to misbehaue themselues, after that fashion, by setting themselues to sale and hire through their couetousnesse: what remaineth for them but vtter cursednesse? For when God once disclaymeth vs, & acknowledgeth vs no longer for any of his: needes must we be accursed. Wherein lyeth all our happinesse? It is sayde in the psalme, Right happie bee those folke whose God is the euerlasting. The way then for vs to bee happie, is to be taken of God into his flocke: And if hee cast vs out; needes must all mischeefe light vpon our heades. Sith it is so, let vs learne so much the more to refourme our selues, and let euery of vs bee contented with that which he hath, and let vs not seeke to aduaunce our selues by vnlawefull meanes; least the profite which wee haue gyped to our selues, become as Cudgels or rather as stabbes with a dagger to ỹ poore, whom wee shall haue wounded by raking so to our selues by hooke or by crooke. Therefore let vs learne to haue both our heartes and our handes cleane from all anoyance and misdealing, if wee will bee blessed of God, and taken to bee of the number of the faithfull. Thus yee see in effect what this sentence importeth.

Nowe for a conclusion it is sayd; *Cursed shall he bee which confirmeth not the wordes of this lawe by performing them*. Heere wee see yet better the thing which hath beene declared heeretofore: namely that GOD meant to authorise his whole Lawe ingenerall, without excepting any one poinct of it, notwithstanding that hee haue set downe but some particular examples thereof. The poinct then whereunto the solemnitie redoundeth which God caused to be made vpon Mount Eball, and likewise oueragainſt it on Mount Garizim; is, that the people should know that this Lawe is the Rule of all perfection, and that God who is the authour thereof is not to be dallyed with; but rather that it is to bee receaued with all reuerence, yea and that euery man ought to protest with his mouth, that it is good reason that GOD should be obeyed; and that all the transgressours of his will shoulde condemne themselues, without making any reply in their owne excuse; and willingly acknowledge themselues woorthie of death and of all mischeefe, vnlesse they submitted themselues obediently to the seruing of God. For this cause therefore it is sayde; *Cursed shall bee he which confirmeth not the woordes of this Lawe*. Hee speaketh not heere of some one commaundement or swayne, or of some parte of them: but of the whole Law, and of euery pure and parcell thereof, without any exception. And indeede, wee ought to bethinke vs howe Saint Iames sayeth, that hee which hath forbidden to steale, hath also forbidden to commit adulterie: and that hee which hath forbidden Murder, hath also forbidden falsewitnessing. Wee must not then rent Gods Iustice in peeces. After what sorte soeuer we offende, surely wee violate GODS Lawe, and dispyse his maiestie. But hee will bee acknowledged in his Lawe throughout in all poyntes, and not in part, as I haue tolde you afore. Seeing it is so, let vs marke that God hath knit his commaundementes together, to shewe vs that it is not for man to put them asunder, as wee see many doe, who will needes indent with GOD to abstayne from some one sinne, and doe beare themselues in hande that they bee discharged when they can say, Well, yet haue I not offended in all poyntes; Indeede I am blameworthy for such a sinne; but as for in all the rest, I haue obeyed God. The theefe will boast that hee is no whoremonger; the murderer will say hee is no swearer; the whorehunter will likewise haue his excuse, that hee ouershooteth not himselfe in other thinges, as that hee is not cruell, or such like. But what? As I sayde afore, God will not haue his lawe to be canteled after that fashion into peeces and gobbets: it is a righteousnesse which consisteth of ten commaundementes knitte together in one bonde. God therefore must be hearkened vnto, both in the first word and in the last, and as well in the fourth as in the second. Seeing it is so, let vs remember how it is sayd heere, that God will haue vs to confirme the wordes, that are conteyned in his Lawe: so as it is not ynough for a man to haue discharged himselfe of some peece; God will not content himselfe with that, neither will hee take such seruice for payment: but hee will haue men to giue themselues wholly vnto him. And with what condition? Lord, seeing that thy will is conteyned in thy Lawe: let our lyfe be conformable thereunto. For it belongeth not to vs to part them asunder, we haue no such libertie. Also (as I haue declared afore,) it is too grosse a folly to thinke that wee can beare God in hand that we haue a good will to honour him, and in the meane while despise him in one thing or other.

And it is sayde heere, *To confirme the woordes by performing them*. Heere Moses sheweth after what sort we accept the doctrine which is deliuered vs in the name of GOD. It is not in laying our eare to it, or in confessing with our mouth that it is true & rightfull: that is not ynough. For all is but hypocrisie if our lyfe bee repugnaunt thereunto: And it will fall out accordyng to this saying of Saint Paule, that whereas wee confesse with our mouthes that wee beleeue in GOD; wee denye him in our lyfe. Wherefore let vs marke well, that the true tryall of our fayth and obedience, is to haue our lyfe aunswerable thereunto, and to shewe by our dooinges, that wee haue not beene taught in vaine. That is the thing which wee haue to marke vpon this speach where Moses sayth, *That we must confirme the woordes of this Law by performing them*, yea verily, *by performing them*, not by onely protesting ỹ they bee good and rightfull, (for that were but a smal matter;) but by straining our selues to serue God, by applying our whole indeuor that way, & by fashioning all our woorkes according to his will. That is the good confirmation: that is the way for vs to protest that God is righteous, &

Tim. 1. 16.

that he hath giuen vs a good, sure, and infallible rule, such as wee ought to obserue. Nowe wee see in effect the contents of this sentence; wherby wee must vnderstand, that God hath not inioyned vs a peeced obedience; but will haue vs to receiue his law to the vttermost in all pointes without exception. Wee see likewise that it is not ynough for vs to say, that GOD hath not commaunded any thing which is not righteous, but that we also must shewe an accord and consent thereunto in our life, by framing it after all his commaundementes.

Moreouer it behoueth vs nowe to see in what taking wee should bee, if this Curse should take place vpon vs. Certaine it is that all men are heere denounced accursed. And this curse importeth as much as if it were sayde, that all are damned, all are lost, all are forlorne. Take the righteousest persons that euer were in the worlde; and by this sentence they deserue to be cast away. There is neither Abraham, nor any of the patriarkes: nor Dauid, nor all the Prophets, that can be exempted from this condemnation. God by his Prophet auoucheth Iob, Daniell, and Samuell for the righteousest, and for such as were in maner vnblamable: & yet must euen they also bee wrapped in this same curse.

Ezech.14.16

Psal.143.2. And as for Dauid, he confesseth it with his owne mouth, saying: Lorde, enter not into account with thy Seruaunt, for no man liuing shall bee iustified in thy sight. There Dauid speaketh not of the common people onely; but hee putteth himselfe also in the number. True it is that in other places hee declareth sufficiently, that it was his whole seeking to serue God; and that his desire tended that way: yet notwithstanding he acknowledged that he came far shors of discharging himselfe, or of hauing such perfection as were requisite. If he yeelded himselfe guiltie as well as other men: what shall we doe now? But heere is a dreadfull sentence, and such a one as ought to make the haires stand stiffe vppon our heads: *Cursed shall he be which performeth not all the words of this law.* And who is he that speaketh this? It is God. Then is it such a definitiue sentence, as admitteth no appeale from it. For he wil haue al men to confesse it to be so, yea he wil haue euery man to cõfesse it with his own mouth. And what remaineth then for vs to do? Where is the hope of saluation? Hereby wee see, that if we had but the ten commandements of the law: we should vtterly be vndone & perish, and ỹ it behoueth vs to haue recourse to his mercy, which ouergoeth his iustice, as saith S. Iames. Gods goodnes then must take place towards vs, to deliuer vs frõ the confusion wherin al of vs should haue bin, if the said sentence should stand, and ỹ there shold be no grace to outgo it. And truly S. Paule in the third to the Galathians proueth by this text, that wee cannot become righteous by our workes, but that it behoueth vs to bee made righteous by fayth onely, that is to say, by the meere grace of God, bicause we be cõdemned euerichone of vs, if God enter into account with vs. For why? Cursed shall hee bee which performeth not all the wordes of the lawe. If a man reply, yea, but if a man doe performe them, why should he not become righteous thereby? And why should hee not be payde his hire at Gods hande, according to his deserues? Saint Paule presupposeth that there was neuer yet any man found, nor any can possibly be found, which performeth al the words of the law, and all that euer God commaundeth. Indeede it hath beene a common saying, That GODS Lawe is not vnpossible. And at this day when the Papistes reason against vs, they thinke it an vnuincible argument to proue their freewill. Why should GOD haue commaunded vs to loue him with all our heart, if we bee not able to doe it? It were too repugnaunt, that GOD should exact more of men than they are able to doe: nay, [in so doing] hee shoulde bee vniust and cruell. After that maner doe the Papistes reason. But Saint Paule on the contrary part sayeth, Cursed shall he bee which performeth not all the Commaundementes. And he presupposeth (as I sayde afore) that no man performeth them, and that it is vnpossible for to finde any such man. Whereupon he inferreth his conclusion, Then is all mankinde vndoone, if they enter into examination of workes so as men must bee punished according to their deseruinges: GOD must needes cast them off and vtterly damne them. And so wee haue an excellent lesson in this text. For it is as much as if GOD strake downe all the Children of Adam with one blowe of a beetle, yea and thundred downe vpon them to fling them into such a dungeon of confusion, as they might perceiue that in themselues they are all damned and perished. But wee tary not there. For when God hath once humbled vs, he geueth vs the fitte meane of deliuerance from the condemnation, as shall bee shewed more plainely heereafter. But eare we proceed so fare, let vs consider howe the Papistes deceiue themselues. They see wellynough that no man performeth ỹ law of God: and although they forge the fantasticall argumentes which I spake of, saying that God commaundeth not any thing which is not in the power of men to doe: yet are they conuicted euen by their owne experience, that all men are sinners; that all men haue doone amisse, (as the holy scripture also telleth vs) that there is not any man liuing vpon the earth (as Salomon sayeth) which sinneth not; and that all men haue neede of the grace of God. The Papistes then although they well see this; yet do they wrangle still, saying that that is before we be regenerated againe by Gods spirite. Nevertheless, if they be pressed, they must needs confesse in the second place, that euen the holyest folke are still vnperfect, and ỹ there is some frailty in them. And though they would not confesse it, yet doth the holy scripture shew it, and euery man feeles it in himselfe. Now then, wherfore do the Papists so greatly maintaine the righteousnesse of works, & beare themselues in hand that we deserue well to be recompenced, and that we purchace or earne ỹ kingdome of heauen? How cõmeth it to passe that they be so brutish and so beastly? It is bicause they imagine that although we

Luk.2.13.

Gal.3.10.

we performe not the law: yet neuertheleſſe we faile not to merite or deſerue; & this they terme a righteouſneſſe in part. They ſay that all men doe miſſe in deede; that is true: and that in that reſpect they be faultie before God, and through rigour doe well deſerue to be condemned: Neuertheleſſe, when they haue the righteouſnes in part, that is to ſay, when they doe partly obey the law: that doing of theirs is worthie to be accepted, and to be put into the account and reckoning. And that is the thing wherein they glorie ſo much. After that maner then there are deſertings in men, though they performe not the whole law. That is for one point.

Againe they haue another diueliſh imagination, which is, that when they haue doone a miſſe, they can make amendes vnto GOD by their owne ſatisfactions, and can raunſome themſelues, ſo as they ſhall goe ſcotfree, at leaſtwyſe in their owne ſeeming. They will well confeſſe in one woorde, wee bee indaungered: but yet doeth it not followe that wee haue no meane to ſhifte it off, and to make GOD to accept in exchaunge, whatſoeuer we bring vnto him. Heereuppon haue they founded all their good deuotions as they terme them, as Pilgrimages, Maſſes, and Yereminds, with all their free will deuotions, as their faſtinges and diuerſe other thinges; in ſo much that euen their Shrift is put among their workes of ſatisfaction. Againe the prating of ſome Paternoſters, the babling before a Puppet, the chaunting of ſome Maſſe, the ſetting vp of ſome Tapers, and ſuch other things, are all of them ſuch recompences as GOD cannot finde any fault at all with them, howbeit, becauſe they ſee themſelues ouercharged with thoſe thinges: they forge a ſort of petie inuentions, wherewith to play with GOD. And therefore they haue deuiſed veniall ſinnes; in ſo much that if a man be tempted to wicked deſire, yet he ſhall not haue offended God, vntill he be willing and perfectly conſenting to ỹ performance therof. If a mã be tempted in himſelf, if a man bee mooued to doe euill; all this is no deadly ſinne, ſay the Papiſts; it is but veniall ſin, and one ſprinkle of holy water is ynough to waſh it cleane away. But contrariwiſe, wee knowe how it is ſayde; O Iſrael, what is it that thy GOD requireth of thee; but that thou ſhouldeſt loue him with all thy heart? Heere yee ſee howe the righteouſneſſe of the Lawe is, that a man loue GOD with all his heart. But hee that hath offended is accurſed. And all of vs offende; and are not all of vs then in danger of death? There is not that man vpon whome GOD pronounceth not this curſe. Nowe when men haue thought euill, ſo as they haue beene prouoked to doe naughtily: it is no ſinne (ſay the Papiſtes,) they bee righteous ſtill for all that. See how the Papiſtes do fully mocke God, in that they thinke ỹ by ſome fond ceremonie, or by a *Meacupa*, they be diſcharged of their ſins, & make account of thé as of a thing of nothing. Theſe are the ſtartingholes which they haue to mocke God withal as a yong babe; and that is a dreadfull thing. But yet is it put in vre in al their ſchooles. Neuertheleſſe, we muſt not goe to worke after that faſhion; but we muſt rather bethinke vs howe the Apoſtle ſayeth, That it is a dreadfull thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God. Therefore we muſt not in this caſe breake the bondes and yoke which hee hath layde vppon our neckes: we muſt not play the wilde beaſtes: we muſt not thinke to beguile him by ſome faire ſhow in making countenance to ſerue him, hauing in the meane while no good will to ſerue him indeede. For in the ende hee will ſhewe that his vengeance ſhall light vppon al ſuch as haue liued like hypocrites and dubble hearted diſſemblers before him. What is to be doone then? We muſt frankely refuſe this gloſe of righteouſneſſe in part, which the Papiſtes haue forged: for it is a deuice of Sathans, and euen they themſelues will well confeſſe, that wee cannot merite by any inwarde worthineſſe which is in our woorkes. They ſay that all the worthyneſſe of our woorkes commeth onely of this, that God is acquainted with vs; inſomuch that when men haue doone all that is poſſible, yet will there euer bee ſome fault to bee founde in their woorkes, when they come before GOD. Not that all Papiſtes are of that minde, there is not paſt one of a thouſande that thinketh ſo: but there is yet a farre finer and ſubtler doctrine of Poperie; which is, that woorkes are not worthy of themſelues, but by cauſe of the promiſe of the Lawe. But what maner a one is this promiſe? Let vs come to that point. Beholde, GOD offereth himſelfe to all men, and ſayeth that whoſoeuer performeth the Lawe ſhall bee bleſſed; and contrariwiſe that they ſhall bee curſed which ſtep away from it. Thus ye ſee that the perfect righteouſnes is the performing of ỹ law. But as I haue told you already, no man performeth it; and therefore God is quitte of his promiſe towardes vs. Seeing that wee on our ſide fayle in our condition; hee for his parte oweth vs nothing. After the ſame maner alſo ſpeaketh S. Paule thereof, ſaying: If righteouſneſſe depende vpon the workes of the lawe, then is the promiſe to no purpoſe. Saint Paule in that place toucheth the matter to the quicke. For why? Who performeth the Lawe of God, that he can ſay, I haue attained vnto perfect righteouſneſſe in my workes? There is no ſuch man to bee founde. Then is there no more certaintie in the promiſes ſaith he: & ſo conſequently we be all damned, if wee will needes ground our ſelues vppon our woorkes. After that maner ſpeaketh hee thereof, as well to the Romanes as to the Galathians. And ſo let vs marke, that God denounceth vs to bee all condemned by this ſentence, where he ſayth, Curſed ſhall be bee which performeth not all the thinges that are contayned in the booke of my Lawe. As for the peking traſhe which the Papiſtes call ſatisfactions, they bee but mockeries. For GOD will bee ſerued with obedience. Moreouer the releaſing of our ſinnes is free beeſtowed, as the holye Scripture ſheweth. And as for all the

Heb. 10. 31.

Rom. 4. 14.

Rom. 4. Gal. 3.

Satisfactions (as they terme them) which men haue forged; they serue to no purpose, neither doeth GOD accept any of them. When wee fall to breeding of our owne lykinges in our owne braynes, hee refuseth euerywhit of it. Therefore let vs holde vs to the grace of our Lorde Iesus Christ, knowing that wee bee washed and clensed by his bloude: and it is the onely remedie that GOD setteth foorth vnto vs.

Thus haue wee two thinges to marke: the one is, that if wee should bee iudged by the Law of God, there needed no more but this foresaide sentence to damne vs all, yea euen the holyest Saintes that euer were in the worlde. For no man hath satisfied GODS Lawe; and therefore are wee all condemned. For if the holy fathers which had an Angelicall holynesse in this worlde, were notwithstanding faultie before GOD: what shall become of vs? Let vs nowe make comparison betweene vs and them. Howe farre off are wee from the holynesse of Abraham, the pureneſſe of Dauid, the soundneſſe of Iob, and the perfectneſſe of Daniel? When these may bee condemned, what shall wee bee? And therefore let vs learne to shrinke in our hornes, and let euerie of vs keepe his mouth shutte, as sayeth Saint Paule when hee bringeth vs to the righteousneſſe of fayth, and to the mercie of God. The thing then which we haue to beare in mind is that God hath bereft vs of all righteousneſſe, to the intent to rid vs of al presumption & pride, and that we should no more pretend to come to account with him, to bind him vnto vs, but that we should willingly condemne our selues. Let that serue for one point. Nowe heereupon wee haue to consider the remedie which God hath left: which is that yet neuertheleſſe we be righteous by meanes of our Lord Iesus Christ. For hee hath deliuered vs from the curse which was due vnto vs: and for that cause was hee hanged vppon tree, as sayth S. Paule. We haue seene heeretofore in the one and twentith chapter, that as many as were hanged vpon tree were all accursed. Now when GOD made that Lawe, knewe hee not what hee had ordayned afore concerning his owne only sonne, who was to be hanged on tree? Surely it was an vnchaungeable decree, made euen before the creation of the worlde. Seeing it is so; wee bee redeemed from the curse by our Lorde Iesus Christ; and wee must nowe match this sentence with the other which wee haue seene in the one and twentyth Chapter. Whereas it is sayde heere, Cursed shall hee bee which performeth not all these sayinges: yee see well that for want of performing them, wee bee confounded and of ryght as good as damned. But yet heerewithall, wee must also imbrace our Lorde Iesus Christ, who was cursed for our sakes. And if that this Curse bee not in vaine, then must wee nowe bee needes sette free. What a thing were it, that the sonne of GOD should bee cursed without cause; and yet no fruite redounde thereof to vs? That hee which is the fountaine of all blessednesse, should bee accursed; and yet wee not knowe wherefore, but that it should bee vnprofitable? Nowe then seeing that the curse which Iesus Christ suffered in his owne person, is not vaine and to no purpose: let vs knowe that by the same meane wee bee deliuered before GOD. And so yee see howe wee ought to make those two textes to agree.

Furthermore wee knowe also that hee became subiect to the Lawe, to the intent to performe all maner of obedience to the full, as it were in our person. And the righteousneſſe which hee hath gotten in himselfe, is at this day allowed vnto vs, as if euery of vs had discharged our selues towardes God. The way then for vs to bee deliuered from our curſednesse, is this: After wee haue beene ashamed and as it were plunged in despaire; wee may take heart againe to vs to bee assured of our saluation, and offer our selues before the Maiestie of our God, with assured trust that hee will accept vs for his children, and also like well of vs and moreouer that seeing our Lorde Iesus Christ hath fulfilled the Lawe, and not failed in any one point or iote therof: now we be clothed againe with his righteousnes, and the same allowed vnto vs as our owne. And therefore let vs go boldly before God, and call vpon him as our father: yea verily, so wee put not our pureneſſe in our owne woorkes, nor imagine that GOD oweth vs any thing, nor pretende to bring any desert or merite of our owne: but that being vtterly emptie, wee call vpon GOD to vouchsafe, not onely to fill vp that which wanteth in our selues in parte, by the meanes of our Lorde Iesus Christ: but to giue vs the righteousneſſe wherof we be vtterly destitute and naymyed. And let vs marke further, that when we be once so receiued into fauour; then shall our workes also bee accepted. The way then for vs to serue God to his lyking, is that being iustified by faith, that is to say, that hauing obtayned forgiuenesse of our sinnes, yea and hauing obtained it euen that dayly yea and all the tyme of our life we haue needs thereof: and also hauing recourse to GODS attonement with vs of his owne free goodneſſe by meanes of the death, passion, and sacrifice of our Lorde Iesus Christ offered vp vnto him: wee hauing so doone, bee then also desirous to serue God; for then shall wee doe well, and then will hee accept the seruice which we yeelde vnto him; whereas without that, wee can haue no fayth in Iesus Christ. But when we indeuour to serue GOD; although there bee somewhat amisse, and our affections turne vs nowe one way nowe another: yet doeth not our God ceasse to allowe our life. And why? Byeause our sinnes are not imputed vnto vs. True it is that in very rigour, this saying, (Cursed shall hee bee which performeth not all these words,) will stand in force: but behold, Iesus Christ is our borow, and payeth for vs out of hand, deliuering vs from our curſednes, and making satisfaction to God his father. For we know y his death & passion are accepted for the

Rom. 3.25.

Gal. 3.13.

Gal. 4.4.

the price and raunsome of our saluation, that by that meanes we should be reconciled vnto God. Yee see then how that on the one side it behoo-eth vs to feele our own cursednes, that we may be afraide of Gods iudgements: and that on the other side we must take courage, not doubting but that seeing our Lord Iesus Christ answereth for vs, we shalbe receiued for his sake, and God will accept vs together with our works, notwithstanding that they bee not so exquisite as they should be, but haue some blottes and blemishes in them, so as they deserue to bee condemned & vtterly reiected. To be short, the faithfull being iustified by the grace of God, haue therewithall this benefit and priuiledge, that God accepteth their woorkes, and chargeth them not with this curse which they haue deserued. After that manner then ought we to put this text in practise.

But I haue tolde you that on the one side wee must mourne and bee afraid at the sight of our cursednesse before God: and that on the other side we must trust in ỹ grace which Iesus Christ offereth vs. For if we should sooth our selues because God forgiueth vs our sinnes; what a dealing were that? Wee shoulde still enter into the fayre parting of stakes which men weene to make, when they think to discharge themselues towardes God in part. Now then, it behoueth vs to be sorie for all our sinnes: and if wee perceyue any vice in vs, wee must not suffer it to raigne. True it is that wee come short, I say not in some one part onely, but in all. There is not any one poynt of the law, wherein we fayle not. As for him that thinkes himselfe cleare from couetousnesse, and to bee a despiser of worldly goods: surely he hath yet some other affection in his heart, which holdeth him backe in the world. He that is chast and honest of his body, hath yet some vanities that will cary him away. He that fostreth not any hatred or rancor in his heart, is not so vtterly cleere from all wicked affection, that he liueth so perfectly as he ought to do. To be short, we shalbe found guilty, not in one or two points onely, [but in all:] so as there is not any part or peece of the law, wherin God might not condemne vs. And therfore (as I said) seeing we perceiue such vnperfectnesse in vs, we must not stand in our own conceits, but mourne before God: and hauing mourned, we must indeuor to giue our selues ouer vnto him, prayng him to increase in vs the power and grace of his holy Spirit, that we may so manfully fight against our sinnes, as we may subdue them, ouercome them, and get the vpper hand of them, to triumph ouer them once when we be quite and cleane rid of them. Thus ye see how we ought to proceede in that behalfe.

And this ought to make the faithfull to reioyce, that although they perceiue their owne imperfections, yet must they not therfore ceasse to imbrace Gods promises with gladnesse, assuring themselues that they shal not be disappointed of them. And why? Bycause they haue the inioying of all good thinges in our Lorde Iesus Christ, by whom and by whose meanes the curse that was due to them is done away. Ye see then howe that on the one side it behoueth the faithfull to be vtterly cast downe: and againe that on the other side they bee lifted vp againe in our Lord Iesus Christ, forasmuch as they know that looke what they haue not in themselues, they shall finde it, if they seeke it there, whither God sendeth them. And therefore let vs not beguile our selues any more with the fansies of Sathan which raigne in the Popedome, of being desirous to offer our owne merites vnto God, and to indent with him as though wee had performed his lawe: assuring our selues that on our part, all the couenants which are made in the lawe, are vtterly vaine; and that al the promises which import any condition of well doing & of holy conuersation, shoulde bee vnauailable towardes vs, and neuer come to effect; vnlesse wee resorted to this free promise, Whosoeuer beleeueth that Iesus Christ dyed for our sinnes, and that God by his power hath raised him againe to make vs righteous, beleeuing the same in his heart and confessing it with his mouth, shal be saued. And thereunto also doth S. Paul bring vs backe in the tenth Chapter to the Romanes, which is the verie expositiõ that will giue vs the vnderstanding of this place. The righteousnesse of the law sheweth vs that we be all accursed, & that there is not any maner of way to saue vs, so long as we stay there. What are wee to doe then, that wee may haue accesse vnto God? Let vs with our heartes beleeue vnto righteousnesse, and with our mouthes confesse vnto saluation; that wee put our whole trust in him which hath acquitted vs towardes God his father; and let vs imbrace the righteous obedience which he hath yeelded vnto God, and likewise his sustaining of the curse which was due vnto vs, to the intent to set vs free from it. Rom. 10. 9.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, that we may be more & more touched with the true repentance which mortifieth all our fleshly affections: and to draw vs from the delightes of this world, and to lift vs vp into a true desire of giuing our selues wholly to his lawe, so as wee may dayly profite thereby, knowing that the true perfection of all faithfull folke, is to know how farre they be off from perfection; to the end that all mouthes may be stopped, and none acknowledged for righteous but onely God; and that when Christes righteousnesse once shineth vppon vs, we shall not bee bereft thereof, assuring our selues that therin lyeth all our perfection. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the x. of March, 1556.

The CLiij. Sermon, which is the first vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

IF thou obey the voyce of the Lorde thy God, in keeping and doeing all his commaundementes which I commaunde thee this day, then will the Lord thy God make thee head ouer al the nations of the earth.

2 And al these blessings shall come vpon thee, and inclose thee round about, if thou obey the voyce of the Lord thy God.

WE haue seen heretofore, howe God hath couenanted with his people, of purpose to bynde them: that euerye one shold know his duetie, and bee the better disposed to doe the same. Now he speaketh as a Iudge hauing all authoritie. It skilles not whether folke doe pleade guiltie or no, when they haue doone amisse: for God giueth heere his determinate sentence, though they consent not thereunto. Neyther doeth the case concerne altogether the condemning of those that offend the lawe, but he beginneth with another matter, to wit, with righte amiable promises: therby to allure and to win mens heartes vnto him. Thus therefore doeth he say: If ye hearken vnto my voyce to obey my commaundementes, and bee carefull to keepe them: you shalbe blessed all maner of wayes, and yee shall be enuironed through my fauour, with all maner of welfare and prosperitie. I haue already tolde you, that GOD sheweth great goodnesse towardes men, when hee goeth about by such meanes to winne them: for it were sufficient for him to to say, This is your duty: and al creatures should tremble at his speaking. Therefore when hee addeth any promises, hee forbeareth part of his right, and therein humbleth himselfe, that wee should bee the more inclyned and better disposed to serue him. If wee had doone all that wee can, yea and more than wee are able: is GOD bound to recompence vs? Surely no. Wee must alwaies resort to that which our Lorde Iesus alleageth in Saint Luke, namely: That if a man haue a bond seruant, and he send him to labour in the feelde all the day long, when the seruant commeth home at night, wil he say: Wel, nowe must I doe my turne; thou shalt sit downe at the Table, and I will prepare thy supper, and giue thee thy meate and drinke, bycause thou hast laboured for mee, and my course is nowe come to serue thee? Will the Maister say so? No truly. But when the seruant is come home, the Maister will say vnto him, Couer the table, dresse my supper, and giue me drinke. Euen so sayth Iesus Christ, When you haue doone all that is possible for you to do: thinke not in your selues, that God my father oweth you aught at all, or that hee is beholden vnto you: but proceede on still, and acknowledge, that all that euer yee can doe is but duetie towardes him. And indeede seeing that God hath made vs, what is hee that can do too much for the seruice of him? We see then y God might say playnly: Thus it it pleaseth me, & this is my will, follow you y way. And therefore whereas he telleth vs y we shalbe blessed & not loose our labour, but haue rewarde for our seruing of him: It is not to be doubted, but y in so dooing, hee forbeareth some part of his right. In the meane whyle, wee may see that he playeth the good and kinde hearted Father to win his Children. For although a father woteth well that his children are bounde to obey him to the vttermost; and that hee for his part, is not any way bounde to them: yet will hee not refuse to saye: Loe, I loue you, and I desire but your owne welfare: doe but so as I may haue lyking of you, and I will not forsake you. A father will be liberall of promyse, saying: Goe to, yee knowe that all that euer I haue is for you: for whome else doe I trauayle? And to what other ende? And if I see you take good wayes, I will vse you accordingly. Thus doeth the father that humbleth himselfe in his authoritie. And wherefore? Bycause hee woulde that his children shoulde serue him of free good will, rather than bee compelled thereunto by rigorous extremitie. Let vs marke therefore, that all the promises contayned in holy Scripture, be as it were so many testimonies of the fatherly loue of our GOD; shewing himselfe to haue a care of our health and welfare, in that hee vouchsafeth thus to apply and fashion himselfe vnto vs. By meanes whereof the Lawe of GOD becommeth the more amyable vnto vs; for as much as wee see that in keeping of the same wee bee not disappoynted of a good reward, yea farre greater than we can wish. For vnder this woorde Blessing, is comprehended all maner of prosperitie.

Luke.17.7.

More-

Moreouer whē God doeth make vs to prosper in this world: it is for none other purpose, but to giue vs a tast of his loue towards vs. Howbeit, this is not the cheefe point whereupon hee woulde haue vs to stay: but he leadeth vs euer further: Insomuch that when we feele his goodnesse in this present life, and that hee hath care of vs, & that hee reacheth foorth his hande to prouide for vs al thinges that are necessarie: wee ought thereuppon to conclude much more stronglie, that when hee hath taken vs out of this present worlde, hee will then powre vppon vs the Riches of his goodnesse, in other manner of sorte than wee be nowe able to comprehende. Indeede wee haue in this life some small shewe thereof, but the aboundant accomplishment of the same shall bee in the kingdome of heauen. Thus ye see what wee haue to consider, in that GOD deliuereth foorth his promises to winne vs the better to serue him of free good will.

Neuerthelatter, howsoeuer the worlde goe, let vs marke, that all the promises which God maketh vs vppon condition, stand vs in no steed (as it was told you yesterday) if wee stay there. For why? Truely, God is faithfull: and his speaking is not to deceyue vs: but yet let vs looke to our selues. What is hee that so dischargeth him of his duetie, that hee may hope to bee blessed of God? It is not saide: You shal bee blessed in keeping part of my law: but it is said in the text: *If you heare my voice, and be diligent in keeping all my commandements, and fulfill them all: then I will blesse you.* Nowe that men endeuour themselues in all that is possible to keepe the law of God, I speake not of their owne power or naturall motion. For so farre off are they which bee not regenerate by the holy Ghost, from meyning to serue God, that they canne not so much as to conceyue a good thought. What is the inclination of man, but a striuing against God, and all his righteousnesse? So long as men followe the leading of their owne sense, they doe nothing else but fight against God, as vtter rebelles to his whole wil. To bee short, we bee not apt (as Saint Paul sayeth) so much as to thinke to doe well. To thinke is a verie small thing: and yet Saint Paul cutteth vs off from that power, and sheweth that we bee so corrupted and frowardely bent, that in all thinges wee drawe contrarie to that which God commaundeth vs. Insomuch that euen when God hath reformed vs by his holy Spirite, and changed our malice and rebellion, whereunto wee bee wholie inclined: yet can it not bee saide that wee proceede to the obeying of him in all perfection: for there is alwayes some infirmitie to let vs: so that in steede of running wee doe but halt, and trayle our legges after vs: in steede of going right forwarde, wee reele from one side to an other: and it happeneth often to vs, to trippe and to stumble, as euerie man may well finde in himselfe. Howe then can wee hope to bee blessed of our GOD, seeing so farre wide from keeping of his lawe? That is the cause why I sayde, that all the promises which bee vppon condition are vtterlie vnauayliable, and shall neuer come to their effect, if God shoulde rest vppon that point. In deede this matter was expounded yesterday, and this place was expressly alleaged by Saint Paul, where it is sayde, that if saluation come by workes, and the inheritaunce proceede of the lawe: then shall there bee no performance of the promises. For wee doe faile on our part, and therefore the couenant is voide, that God hath made with vs: yet may it not hereby bee concluded that God mocketh vs, in setting downe these promises: as the Papistes doe at the first dash, starting out of their boundes, and playing the madde men. For when it is saide, that all the promises conteyned in wholy scriptures, bee not effectuall, otherwise than by meane of the forgiuenesse of our sinnes through the free goodnesse of God, and that wee are iustifyed by faith onely: What (say they?) Seeing it is saide, I wil blesse you, so you serue mee and honour mee: it seemeth that God vseth but hypocrisie, and maketh a daliaunce with men. To what purpose (saith he so?) Thus doe the Papistes accuse GOD of falsehoode, and blaspheme him, if they be not able to deserue the promises which hee hath made them. For otherwise [they thinke] it is but a mockerie, to make men beleeue that he woulde blesse them. But let vs beware of such maddenesse, and let vs rather vnderstande to what ende God hath giuen his promises vnto men: and wee shall see that it is not in vaine. I saide heretofore, that God hath shewed his great goodnesse, in humbling himselfe so louingly vnto vs. We perteyne wholy to him, wee are altogether his, and yet woulde hee not simplie commaund; but commaunde with promises, and gentlenesse to win vs. If a man doe hereupon replie and say, What doeth it profite vs? Truely it profiteth vs nothing at all, if wee stay there: but wee must goe further. When wee heare the promises that God hath offered vnto vs, & see that all his seeking is to winne vs through loue, and that hee meaneth not to enforce vs through necessitie, it condemneth vs of vnthankefulnesse, if we bend not ourselues wholy towardes him. But wee cannot doe it. Wherefore? Are wee then excused? No. For it is our owne naughtinesse that doth let vs. Euerie man shal condemne himselfe, saith Saint Iames, because there is nothing that prouoketh vs to euill, but the concupiscence of our owne flesh. Seeing then that the fault is in vs, wee must make no more allegations, and here yee see wee bee confounded before God. Thus then haue wee cause to bee twise the more lowely. First of all, for that wee bee so leawde, that Gods goodnesse mooueth vs not to come neere him, and to put our selues vnder his leading. And secondlie for that we search not out the bottome of the sinne that is in vs, after this manner: Alas, seeing I haue euerie day so innumerable thoughtes, so many desires and motions, such store of affections, which serue altogether to turne mee away from that good whereunto God doeth call

Rom. 4.14.

Iames. 1.14.

mee: by reason whereof I ceasse not to offende God in all thinges, so as nothing can bee drawen from mee, but vtter euill, all offence, and al iniquitie: alas in what taking am I? Men, when they see this, must needes feele themselues double confounded. And when they haue well examined themselues, [they must needes bee driuen to thinke thus,] Well, God hath layde before mee all the meanes that I can wish, for to attayne saluation, if I were not altogether corrupt and peruerse. And now cannot I pleade ignoraunce, seeing that the lawe is giuen vnto mee, and the way shewed mee, howe I ought to gouerne mee and howe to leade my life. And to the ende that I should bee the more willing thereunto; my God trayneth mee to it by gentlenesse, promising that I shalbee rewarded for seruing him. Is it so? What is then to be done? I must not in this case make any further protestation, nor stande pleading any more against GOD: for I am too much too blame already. Now when men finde themselues thus condemned, then are they forced to seeke their saluation out of themselues, and to resort to this second remedie; Alas Lord, if the case were so that I shoulde obteyne saluation by seruing of thee, thou hast giuen mee thy lawe, and also ioyned thereunto thy promises; howbeit these thinges auaile mee nothing: I must therefore forsake my selfe, acknowledging that I am quite shutte out of all hope of life, vnlesse I finde some other better helpe. See heere I say, how wee bee ledde to our Lorde Iesus Christ, and made to embrace the grace which is offered vnto vs in him: that by obteining forgiuenesse of our sinnes, wee may be sure to bee blessed of God. When wee haue once gotten that fauour, that God is at one with vs by meanes of our Lorde Iesus Christ; then doeth hee accept our vnperfect woorkes, as though we had accomplished all the lawe. Although the good which the faithfull doe, bee not woorthy to bee receiued of God: yet doeth hee accept it in good woorth. And wherefore? For he of his owne goodnesse wipeth away all the faultes that are in them. So then, when wee labour to doe well, notwithstanding that it lyeth not in our power to attayne to perfection, because of the ouermuch frailtie of our nature: yet wil God receiue our seruice as acceptable, as though hee had nothing to say against it: and so are wee made partakers of the blessinges that are heere mentioned. As howe? We haue not fulfilled all: It is true: but yet God passeth it in his accounts, as if al were performed, forsomuch as wee bee made cleane by the bloud of Iesus Christ. And like as wee bee cleansed, so be our workes also, and when they come before God, hee accepteth them, as though they were throughly good, righteous and perfect. Here therefore wee perceiue that the promises bee not giuen in vaine, but that they haue their effect in the faithfull: not at the first dash, but when we come thereunto by degrees, and circumstances, for then wee shall feele the effect and force of them. As concerning the misbeleeuers, the promises stande them in no steade; but to make them the more vnexcusable before God in the last day. For what shall they be able to pleade, seeing that God hath so familiarly offered himselfe vnto them, requiring nothing but to haue the fruition of their whole life: that they might obey him: and yet they continue hardhearted? See yee not howe they bee double confounded? And therefore the promises and threateninges of the lawe, bee alwayes good and righteous, neither shall they bee vnprofitable, if a man can skill to take them as it were meete they shoulde. But this shalbee better perceiued by the discourse which I shall make thereof particularly. Now let vs proceede to expound the wordes that Moses doeth vse. *If thou wilt heare the voyce of the Lorde thy God, and bee careful to fulfill all the commaundementes which I commaund thee this day: all these blessinges shall come vpon thee and compasse thee rounde about.* As touching the first point, Moses sheweth that which wee sawe before, namely, that the beginning to liue well, is to hearken vnto God. For men must not haue the rule ouer themselues, saying, I will gouerne my selfe after mine owne liking: wee must not take such libertie: For hee that taketh too much vppon himselfe, shall at the last bee reiected of GOD, for not yeelding him this obedience, which is the foundation whereon wee ought to builde. Let vs marke therefore, that all they which follow their owne fooliſh deuotions (as they cal them,) are misliked of God. For this text of the Prophet Esay must take place. *Who hath required these thinges at your handes?* Let vs acknowledge therefore, that it is an inestimable benefite when God sheweth vs his will, and that the state of the Papists is accursed: For when they intend to doe well, they knowe not which way to turne them, but euery one followeth his owne fancie with, I hope it wilbee well, for my meaning is good: and againe common custome alloweth it, and our holy mother the Church doth commaunde it: but in the meane while the lawe of God remaineth forgotten. Whereby we may learne that there is nothing but confusion in the life of man, in which is nought else but a mingling without order, vntill they bee taught of God, as wee shall see hereafter. This is the way, walke in it. It is said *that we must be carefull.* This word was set downe once afore by Moses, and not without cause is it here againe repeated. For we be warned by it, that vnlesse men bee very heedeful in obeying God, and inforce themselues thereunto, and set their whole studie thereon in good earnest, they shal neuer attaine to keepe the lawe. And we our selues see what weakenesse there is in vs, yea euen albeit that God doe gouerne vs, and although we be reformed by his holy Spirit. For as for the vnfaithfull, they bee so caried away and so furious in their wilfull stubbornesse, that a man woulde thinke they should runne madde against God. Yea and although that wee bee gouerned by the holy Ghost; yet are we so fraile as is pitie to see. God requireth a great perfection, when he willeth vs

Mich. 6. 8.

Deut. 5. 32.

to loue him with all our heart, to eschue all the vanities of this world, and all our fleshly lustes; and (to be shorte,) to forsake our selues, and to be altogether changed. This is a matter ouer high and difficult. Now let vs consider what Sathan doth deuise and practise to turne vs away from the seruice of God: how many sorts of temptations be there? They be infinite. Againe, how sure are the assaultes that Sathan prepareth against vs? When we haue considered of all this; wee may well conclude, that it is not without cause, that God sayth, *thou we must be carefull*, that euery one of vs must strengthen himselfe, and gather all our forces together; and not thinke to set foorth negligently to the seruice of our God. For when we suppose to march one step forward, we shall goe an hundred backward, if we bee not very stoute and couragious, holding our selues in awe and restreyning our selues, & gathering our wits to vs in such sort, as we bend our mindes wholly thereunto, and euen as yee would say) labour for breath in trauelling about it.

And moreouer seeing we be forlaide with ambushes on euery side, and shoulde bee soone surprised, so as we should fall into the snares of Satan ere we were aware: let vs take heede and be watchfull. That is the thing whereof we be warned. And would God we could well carry away this lesson. For then, whereas we now apply all our power, and all our endeuours to things not onely friuolous, but altogether hurtfull, tending to none other ende but to deceiue vs to our destruction: euery of vs woulde be vigilant to walke in the obedience of GOD, and addicte himselfe wholly thereunto. And seeing that wee bee warned thereof, there is no excuse. Will we then obey our God, and shewe that our affection is so bent without dissemblyng? Let euery one of vs incline to that which is giuen him in commaundement: namely to be carefull, vigilant and attentiue.

Nowe he addeth: *To keepe all the commaundements which I set before thee this day*, or which I enioyne for thee. Although Moses be the speaker hereof, yet taketh hee the authoritie and power to commaund, and to subdue men not to any thing of his owne forging, as who should say, it ought therefore to bee receiued without gainesaying: but to God, because GOD speaketh by his mouth, and for that hee himselfe doeth faithfully deliuer the doctrine that was to him committed. Therefore speaketh hee in such a high style, insomuch as he saith, that they should keepe his ordinaunces. It lieth not in the power of a mortal man to binde folks consciences. And yet is that ỹ thing which wholly corrupted the Church; in that men haue vsurped the office of God in making lawes and statutes, for spirituall gouernement of mens soules. And that is a point of high treason to Godward. For the creature vsurpeth to himselfe the thing which appertaineth to GOD onely, whom the Prophet Esay termeth the lawgiuer, and in likewise Saint Iames, to the ende that we should learne to hearken vnto him, and wholly to depend vpon his worde. Let vs marke wel then, that it is not lawful for men to inioine lawes vnto mens soules. But whereas Moses saith, *I ordaine vnto thee*, he presupposeth that he preferred not any thing of his owne, ne forged any law of his owne brayne, or added any thing to that which God had committed vnto him: but forasmuch as hee did his office faithfully, he might well say, *I ordayne for thee*. As when wee set forth the pure word of God, the same very worde is a soueregne commaundement. Now it is not meant heereby, that we should vsurp any dominion or soueraintie ouer mens soules. But that in dooing seruice to GOD, wee may commaund in his name and in his person. Thus wee see heere what the meaning of Moses was. And in deede, doth it lie in vs to promise men life euerlasting, or to denounce vnto them the vengeance of God? And yet wee doe it neuertheless. Yea verily, howbeit no further foorth than the worde of God is put into our mouth, and that wee haue the testimonie of him, being his witnesse bearers and his heraulds (his witnesses (I meane) to assure the faithfull of the grace and saluation which is promised vnto them; and his heralds to pronounce and to publish his sentence against al the vnbeleeuing sort and rebels. Therefore to be short, God meant to shew forth the maiestie of his word, when he appointed Moses to speake in that manner. And it was to the end that we should receiue the woorde of God with so much the more lowlinesse and reuerence, when it is preached vnto vs: not respecting the person, as who would say, hee is but a man that speaketh, he is like vnto vs, and as wee are, so is he: but as though we thought thus with our selues, It is God that speaketh by the mouth of this man: therefore let vs tremble at his presence, let vs stoope, and receiue that which hee saith: and seeing he calleth vs before him, let it serue to bring vs to such obedience, that we may doe him homage, thereby to shewe that we embrace that which proceedeth from his maiestie. This is the summe of that which wee haue to keepe in memorie touching this text.

Now here might a question be moued, why it is said: *When you haue kept al my commandements*: For it is impossible for vs to fulfil the law, so long as we stand cloathed with this mortall flesh. As I said afore, we shal euer be ful of vices and imperfections. It seemeth then, that it is to no purpose for God to require such a fulfilling of the lawe, seeing it is impossible. But here we must remember what hath bin spoken of afore: To wit, that God in his law respecteth not our might, power, or abilitie, but our dutie, & after what maner our life ought to be gouerned. And ỹ same ought to suffice vs, inasmuch as we say ỹ a man shal neuer attaine to ỹ perfect obedience of God, but ỹ we be euer farre from the end of our way: the cause whereof, is our corrupt nature, being so infected through original sinne, ỹ when we think on God, we be troubled with many euil fansies: & whē we haue any good motiō, we are by & by pluckt back from it, & we needē not any other thing to draw vs to the cleane contrarie. But nowe by the way,

doth

doth the impossibilitie of dooing it, discharge vs of our seruice which wee bee bound to doe vnto God? No. For the euil commeth of ourselues. It is no maruel then, that God in his lawe shoulde haue no regard to mãs abilitie or vnabilitie, but rather to the dutie which we owe him, or that he shoulde require the right that belongeth vnto him: for who is he ỹ can denie it him? Hee must not change his nature. If wee bee froward, what hath he to do to meddle with our steines & sylthines? But he setteth forth such a righteousnes, as we are not able to replie against. And in his law he setteth not down such a righteousnes as is in himself, he hath not respect to his own righteousnesse, but vnto the righteousnesse that ought to bee in his creatures, namely, such as is in his Angels. If wee had continued in our integritie, and not beene peruerted and corrupted through sinne, then should we haue beene able to haue discharged all that God requireth of vs in his lawe. That is certaine. Now then we see how it is not without cause that God will haue vs to keepe his whole law. And yet we be not able to performe it. It is true: but the default proceedeth of the sinne which dwelleth in vs, as I haue shewed heeretofore.

Now herewithal we haue to mark, that seeing God promiseth nothing but vnto thẽ that haue obeyed al ỹ law, it were too doltish follie to suppose that we can merit or deserue by doing this thing or that thing: we must first of all haue kept al the law, which is impossible. And whereas the Papists prate of their merits, enabling thẽselues to purchase the kingdome of heauen; they think that whẽ they haue done anie good to their own seeming, God is bound to them. Oh (say they) I haue beene deuourly at Masse. It is certaine that they prouoke the wrath of God by so dooing: for we know that it is a diueliish abhomination. Againe, I haue serued such a Saint my Patron (say they,) I haue builded such a Chappell: and they beare themselues in hand that in so dooing they earne heauen. Truely al these things are but a mocking of God: they bee diueliish superstitions, whereby the seruice of God is quite defaced. But put the case that the Papists did wel in their dalying so with such pelting stuffe: were God euer the more bound vnto them for it? It woulde behoue them to consider first before what notarie that euidence did passe. For it is not for vs to bridle him, or to tie him to ỹ stake, or to subdue him to our fantasies. It must proceed of his own good wil. Now then, what saith hee? When you shal haue kept al my cõmandements, thẽ shal these blessings come vpon you. Let euery of vs looke how he hath kept ỹ cõmandements of God. Let ỹ Papists brag as much as they list, can they say ỹ they haue accõplished ỹ hundreth part of thẽ? If they haue kept one of Gods cõmandements, they haue offended him in a hundred sins for it: & if there be but one fault cõmitted, though it be neuer so litle a one, they be faulty in al, according as S. Iames saith: he ỹ faileth in any one only point, is a breaker of ỹ whole law. Seeing then ỹ they bee offenders, they are depriued & banished from al the blessings ỹ God hath set forth, yea euen ỹ concerne but this present transitorie life: much lesse therefore are they able to win ỹ kingdome of heauen (as they imagin) being not able to deserue one morsel of breade to put into their mouth. Thus are they shut out of al. And why? For God hath not promised any thing but vnto them that keepe al his whole law. How shal we do then? We must heare God speake after an other fashion: to wit: we must harken vnto him speaking of the free promises which he offereth vnto vs in our Lord Iesus Christ. God in ỹ holy scripture vseth a double speach: And whẽ I speake of double speach, I meane not ỹ he doubleth on his part, or ỹ he is contrarie to himself, or ỹ one saying of his is repugnant to an other: for God keepeth alwaies at one stay, and (as I haue said afore) hee changeth not all ỹ speeches ỹ proceed from him do very wel agree together, without any contradictiõ. Neuertheles, as touching his law, there he hath spoken as a Iudge & not as a father. In his law he speaketh as a Iudge, saying: He ỹ liueth as he ought, shal not bee deceiued, he shal not leese his labor: for when you haue done me seruice, I wil cause you to prosper. After such maner doth God speake in the person of a Iudge. And when wee haue receiued this word, behold we are confounded, howsoeuer the case standeth. And wherefore? For that in stead of abilitie to obteine the grace ỹ is offered vnto vs, wee ceasse not to kindle Gods wrath against vs; and therefore we be all damned. What is to be done then? God commeth speaking as a father, and saith: Well then, I am contented to forbeare this rigour of mine, which I might exercise vpon you by my law, howbeit ỹ the same is not ouer great: for I haue applied my selfe to far vnto you, as to promise that which is not your due: I haue bin willing as it were to entice you by amiable meanes: but I haue wonne nothing therby, because of your frowardnes. What remedy then? I come now to tel you, ỹ if you wil beleeue in my Son, I wil release you of al your debts. If you will receiue him for your Shepheard, ỹ he may guide you quietly, you shall perceiue ỹ I desire not to win you otherwise thã by gentle & friendly dealing, as if I should say, Come vnto mee, & I will forgiue you al your sins, & accept you for mine. And albeit ỹ you are miserable creatures, deserning vtter damnatiõ: yet wil I quite forget & bury al your offences: when I haue so done, I promise to beget you anew, by my holy spirit: and this grace shalbee giuen vnto you by meanes of mine onely son, if you labour to come vnto him. And therupõ although you be driuen to striue against many temptatiõs, and ỹ at ỹ first encounter ye haue not ful victorie ouer them, but that ye be encompassed with many spottes and vices still: yet will I not lay any of al these things to your charge; I forgiue you your sinne: and the good ỹ you doe, shalbee acceptable to me therow my fauour, although it deserueth it not. Lo heere the second order of speeche that God vseth vnto vs in the holy Scripture.

Iames. 2. 10.

Let vs marke therefore, that when we heare the voyce of our GOD, and knowe what wee owe vnto him, and haue heard the promises that

that he hath made vs in his lawe: we must needes
melt there confounded and condemned, forsomuch as
of our selues all those things are vnable vs by
reason of our vnthankfulnes: whereupon we must
haue our refuge to the free mercie which is of-
fred vnto vs in our Lord Iesus Christ: & hearken
vnto God when he speaketh vnto vs, which thing
he doth both in the Law, in the Prophets, and in
the Gospell, saying, I of mine owne mere goodnes
am become your Sauiour: & you must seeke your
saluation frō somewhere else, than in your selues.
For the redeemer which God promised, was e-
uer had in mind, that men might rest thē vpō him.
And for that cause were the sacrifices ordeined in
time of the law. For although Christ was not yet
vttered openly to the worlde: yet did the Iewes
vnderstand that all the hope of their saluation de-
pended vpon their reconcilement to God by
meane of the sacrifice that was to be offered. They
brought brute beasts to the Temple: was that to
cleanse the vncleannes of their soules? No: for what
can corrupt bloud doe, what shal stinking greace
do, can those things purge the soule of her iniqui-
tie? No truely. But vnder those figures the Iewes
did know they should be deliuered from the curse
of God, & admitted into his fauor, and that all their
life should be acceptable vnto him. And nowe
haue wee a more sure testimonie thereof in the
Gospel, for there we see the thing it self fully ac-
complished vnto vs: namely that although we haue
not kept the commaundementes of God, yet Iesus
Christ hath kept them. And wherefore was it? Be-
cause hee was subiect to it? No. But hee became
subiect to the law: yea, but it was for our sakes. So
then let vs haue our recourse vnto our Lord Ie-
sus Christ, and let vs heare God speaking in such
a sorte, whereby he doth not only say, these be
the things that I commaund you, and if ye do them
the you shal prosper & be blessed: but also where
he saith, Beholde I am your father, come vnto
me, but come in the name of my only Son, who
I haue appointed to be your mediator: & acknow-
ledge that there is nought else in you but corruptiō
and must not in your own power, nor in your own
fondnes casting away all foolishe fantasies of
your presumption, come with lowlines to seek
parte of my spirit: and then ye shalbe sure that I wil
alwaies vphold you by my goodnes, & from day
to day confirme you in my feare, and make you
to walke in my waies, so as I wil not lay to your
charge the faultes of your works, they shal not hin-
der my blessing toward you, nor that you should not
receiue your transgressions, & alwaies acknow-
ledge before me that you are faultie, but that your
faultes shal not be laide to your charge, although
there be occasion why that they should bee cal-
led to remembrance, and to be reproued by me. Lo
there the second voice of God, to the which we
must hearken, if wee desire to become partakers
of the blessings that be here conteined. But by the
way we haue to note for a conclusion, that although
the faithful be exempted from the curse of God,
and that he wil not deale rigorously with them,
but rather vphold them and make them to inioy
the blessings which he hath promised in his law,
as though they had fully accomplished that same
yet cease they not to suffer many stripes of his
rodde, for our Lorde chastiseth them continually,
exercising some after one maner, and some after
an other, so that al are smitten. And al the chastise-
ments which God sendeth vs, but curses eue: yea
chiefe of the, I meane as to outward apparance.
If we be sicke, if we be hungrie or thirstie, if we be
tormented in this present world, if we be trou-
bled and persecuted: al these are the curses of God.
Our enemies scoffe at vs, we bee a reproche, in
pouertie, in vexation, & in many anguishes: one
is troubled in his house by his wife, an other by
his children, and an other by his neighbor: final-
ly, the faithful be many wales depriued of the bles-
sings of God. It is sure so. Howbeit this letteth
not but that we be euermore blessed of him, by rea-
son that we haue a continual taste of his goodnes, to
allure vs vnto him. Let vs therefore note well, that
when he cutteth off his blessings, and giueth the
not as we do wish, the same is for our profite: be-
cause he seeth we haue need of some quickening
vpto make vs to come vnto him. And forasmuch
as euery of vs do fal asleepe in our sinnes: God is
faine to waken vs, and to make vs feele, that so
soone as we withdraw vs from his seruice, he wil
in likewise absent himselfe from vs, and that his
grace shalbe taken away from vs, and wee stand
dispossessed of the same, howbeit neuer so vtter-
ly, but that the blessing of God shal alwais surmount,
so as we may ioy therein, acknowledging him to
be merciful, & wayting vpon his fatherly goodne-
nes, more amply to be shewed when he shal take
vs hence againe to himselfe. Thus ye see howe
we may possesse and enioy the blessings of God,
which are set forth for vs in his lawe, insomuch
that although our Lord doth entrelace the same
with many afflictions, and many corrections, as
though he had cursed vs: his so doing is but to
prouoke vs day by day to repentance, & to keep
vs from falling asleepe in this present worlde: as
we wel know that our delightes make vs drunken &
vnmindful of God, except hee constraine vs by
pricking and spurring vs forward. Thus yee see
how the thinges which at the first sight seemed
contraries, agree very wel. And so that respect doth
Moses say that these blessings shal light vpon vs, &
encompasse vs round about, as if hee had saide,
we shal alwaies be sure of Gods fauour, yea euen
so sure of it that it shal neuer faile vs, if wee serue
him. For the word *Encompasse*, or to light vpon vs,
doth impors that the grace of God is not fleeting,
as though it fel at al aduenture, & as though we
could not catch it soone ynough. No (saith hee)
You shalbe encompassed about with it. And therefore let
vs assure our selues of the goodnes of our God,
and that it shal neuer faile vs, so that we for our part
do come vnto him. But let vs note well, that wee
can neuer come there, vnlesse he drawe vs vnto
him. And that forsomuch as we bee subiect to so
many infirmities and vices, he by his bearing
with vs, sheweth vs that we must haue our recourse
to his free goodnesse, for the forgiuenesse of our
sinnes by the reconciliation that hee hath made
in our Lorde Iesus Christ: and that we in stre-
ning our selues to doe well, shall perceiue that
the goodnesse of God ceaseth not to bee free

vnto

vnto vs, without owing vs any thing at all.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue doone, that beeing beaten downe, yea and as it were drowned in despaire, wee may bee drawen to the faith in our Lord Iesus Christ; and knowing that wee bee altogether emptie and naked of al goodnesse, let vs beseech him to renue vs by his holy spirit, euen till wee to be fully chaunged, and that wee may bee more and more encreased in his graces, so that wee may haue testimonie that GOD regardeth vs, and is neere vnto vs, yea and dwelleth in vs: that we may bee so confirmed in his adoption, that wee may alwaies waite for the heauenly inheritaunce, and not be weary in this worlde to walke in his obedience: That it may please him to bestowe this grace not only vpon vs, but also vpon al people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xj. of March, 1556.

The CLIIII. Sermon which is the second vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

2 And they shall come vpon thee, &c.

3 Thou shalt be blessed in the Towne, and blessed in the fielde.

4 The fruite of thy wombe shalbe blessed, and the fruite of thy grounde, and the fruite of thy Cattell, and the encrease of thy kine, and of the flockes of thy Sheepe.

5 Thy basket shall bee blessed, and thy store.

6 Thou shalt bee blessed at thy comming in, and blessed at thy going foorth.

7 The Lorde will make thine enemies to fall before thee, which doe rise vp against thee: if they come forth against thee one way, they shall flee before thee seuen wayes.

8 The Lorde will commaund his blessing to bee with thee in thy Celler, and in all that thou puttest thy hande vnto: and he will blesse thee in the Land which the Lorde thy God giueth thee.

IT is to bee meruelled, that men cannot bee persuaded that they shall prosper by well dooing. But it proceedeth of vnbeleefe, because they doe not acknowledge their life to be in the power and direction of GOD, and that it is his peculiar office to gouerne vs. For if wee were well assured that all creatures bee in the hand of God, and also that hee hath care of vs: it is certeine that euery of vs woulde rest vppon him, wayting to receiue all goodnesse from him, which is the thing that shoulde encourage vs to serue him, and to direct ourselues after his will. But although euery man seeke and desire his owne ease, yet wee vnderstand not that GOD is hee from whom wee must looke for it. Wee can say it well ynough: but the thing it selfe sheweth that wee can not iudge nor conceiue it to bee so. Euery man woulde bee riche by leawde practises, euery man setteth his felicitie in offending God. Wee must needes therefore bee without sense and reason, seeing that this article, wherein wee should bee resolued, cannot bee imprinted in our mindes, to wit, that all welfare proceedeth from the hande of GOD, and that there is no meane to prosper, but by giuing ouer our selues vnto him, and vnto his seruice. Yet notwithstanding, GOD hath alwayes left this engrauen in the hearts of men, that the wretchednesse and miseries whereunto wee bee subiect, doe proceede of the corruption of mankinde, insomuch as the very Paynims haue had the same opinion common amongest them. It is certaine that they were not taught concerning the fall of Adam, they vnderstood not howe all mankind was accursed; for the diuel through his wilinesse had put that out of knowledge. Yet notwithstanding, it was vnderstoode among them, and written, and these thinges were common vnto them, namely that all the sicknesses and wretchednesse that men indure, all the famines, and plagues, and such like things, proceeded of this, that men will needes robbe GOD of more wisedome than is belonging vnto them. They knew not, this came from the tree of the knowledge of good & euill: they wist nothing of that.

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Neuertheleſſe God hath not permitted that knowledge ſo wholly to be buried, but that it remained amongſt the Heathen, and Infidels, ſo as they vnderſtoode, that becauſe man woulde haue vſurped vnto himſelfe more knowledge than was lawfull for him, that now all thinges are confounded in this worlde, and the life of man is become miſerable, and ſo ſubdued to ſo many aduerſities as is horrible. Now, this is ſufficient to make vs altogether vnexcuſable: but yet will God haue vs, (vs I meane whome God hath choſen to be of his houſholde) to bee more familiarly taught. This doth god ſpeak as it were mouth to mouth: and looke what the Infidels had but by imagination, the ſame doeth he tell and teſtifie vnto vs: I ſay, he telleth it vs, that we might know it familiarly: & he teſtifieth it vnto vs, that we ſhoulde be thereof aſſured. That is the cauſe why hee ſaith that he woulde make all maner of felicitie to reigne vpon vs, ſo we would hearken to his voyce. Wherby he ſheweth, that if it were not long of our ſelues, he were readie and forwarde to entreate vs as a father doth his children: and that hee delighteth not to vex vs with multitudes of euils, but that hee meaneth rather to make vs feele his goodneſſe in all reſpectes. Let vs therefore be aduiſed to walke in the obedience of our God, if wee meane that he ſhould powre vpon vs the treaſures of his grace, in ſuch wiſe as all our life may bee bleſſed. Neuertheleſſe, it is certaine that God oftentimes afflicteth his people for other cauſes, than their ſinnes: as we ſee it happened to Iob, which is a notable myrrour for vs. Wee ſee the like in the holy Patriarks, who although they did endeuour themſelues to ſerue God, yet were they in as great troubles and griefes as could be. The ſame is yet more manifeſt in the newe Teſtament. For ſeeing that God hath reuealed more fully, what is the perfect happineſſe of men: It behooueth the faithfull to bee exerciſed vnder many aduerſities in this tranſitorie life. But let vs make firſt of all, that if God doe not puniſh the ſinnes of the faithfull, hee doeth it to preſerue them, as the Phyſition that waiteth not alwayes till the ſickneſſe do appeare, but if hee perceiue any likelyhood that a man is in daunger, he will preuent it. God then, in not puniſhing the ſinnes that be preſently committed by his children, doth vſe chaſtiſements towardes them, as preſeruatiue medicines. It may euery day fall out, that a man hath not offended againſt God in ſome particular ſins. But what? If he were alwayes in proſperitie, he woulde forget himſelfe: God therefore doeth cure ſuch diſeaſes by withdrawing his bleſſings: hee will not ſuffer the fat to blinde mens eyes, or to hinder our comming vnto him, leaſt it ſhoulde ſtay vs too long in this worlde: he will not ſuffer vs to bee ſo intangled in our delightes, as to fall altogether on ſleepe in the ſame.

There is yet a ſeconde point, to wit: that when God forbeareth to puniſh vs for our ſins, it is not for that hee hath not alwayes iuſt cauſe ſo to doe if he lifted. Let the perfecteſt folke in the worlde bee choſen out, and yet if GOD woulde deale with them by rygour, he ſhoulde lay many harde knockes vppon their pates. But truely wee thinke it not ſo: for wee bee not ſo ſharpe ſighted, as to knowe the faultes which God doth marke. But yet muſt wee aſſure our ſelues, that GOD vttereth his patience and goodneſſe in that hee ſpareth men, and puniſheth them not, I meane, the moſt righteous that can bee founde. As for example, when Dauid was cruelly perſecuted of Saul and of all his enimies; when Abraham was ſtinged and vexed ſo many wayes; likewiſe when Iſaac and Iacob, and al the Prophets were afflicted by the wicked and by the deſpiſers of God, euen to the verie death: and finally when the Apoſtles and all the faithfull [were cruelly delt with,] it was not for their ſinnes. No verily. But had it pleaſed God to haue called them to account, hee might haue puniſhed them an hundred times more, and they ſhold haue had no cauſe to haue accuſed him of cruelrie. Hee ſpared them, and in ſo doeing hee did them the honour to ſuffer for his name: or rather hee tried their obedience, killed their carnall affections, and drew them neere vnto himſelf. As for example, whereas it pleaſed God to make Iob a myrrour of patience, yet neuertheleſſe he made him acquainted with his owne frailtie: but howſoeuer it were, yet was it his intent to make him to ſerue for an example to vs all. Wee perceiue then that God hath other meanings in afflicting his people, than onely to puniſh their ſinnes; neuertheleſſe he ceaſeth not to vpholde them, euen by his own meere grace. And yet muſt wee on our ſide reſort backe to this point, that the originall of all the miſeries that we ſuffer in this preſent world, doth proceede of ſinne. And why ſo? For were not this corruption in our nature, which God condemneth, and of the which alſo wee be conuicted: wee ſhoulde inioy heere a bleſſed life: all this whole worlde ſhould be vnto vs an earthly Paradiſe. For we muſt not thinke that Adam was cooped vp in a little corner for himſelfe alone, but that all the whole earth was bleſſed of God, and that we ſhould haue ſek the ſame to the end of the worlde. But where is the earthly paradiſe nowe? It is no where at all: For in verie deede, the earth is accurſed. It was the ſentence that God pronounced vpon Adam & vpon all his of- Gen. 3. 17.
ſpring. And therefore we muſt vnderſtand, that all the miſeries whereunto wee be ſubiect in this preſent worlde, doe growe from this roote, that we continue not in the perfection, wherein Adã was created. And that God reformeth vs, when wee haue done amiſſe, or rather beholdeth the vices wherof he intendeth to purge vs by fit medicines, & tarieth not til we haue offended him and prouoked his vengeance, but preuenteth vs and miniſtreth the remedie in ſuch ſeaſon as he knoweth beſt. And in very deede, when hee afflicteth vs for ſome other conſideration, than for our ſinnes; the ſame is a great honour, and a ſpeciall preeminence vnto vs: and wee haue cauſe to praiſe him in that hee vouchſafeth to marke vs, and to make his adoption apparant in vs by making vs to ſuffer for the Teſtimonie of

his trueth, and to receiue wrongfull persecution at mens handes, vnder any colour or occasion, whatsoeuer it be.

Moreouer let vs marke, that it is not in vaine that God promiseth that they which serue him shall leade a happie life euen in this worlde. Not that they shall bee exempted from all aduersitie, for that is impossible, yea and also against our saluation. But hee will so dispose our life as wee shall perceiue that hee meant not to feede vs with a vaine hope, when hee saide that he wil cause all them to prosper that harken vnto his voice. But by the way we must remember, that the blessings which bee heere contained, serue not to shewe what the soueraigne felicitie of men is: but to giue vs a tast of the heauenly life, to the ende wee shoulde seeke for the celestiall inheritance which is promised vs, there to set our rest. This must bee laide foorth more particularly, or else it will be darke. It is true, that there is difference betwixte vs and the fathers that liued vnder the Lawe: For God did there entreat them as little children: and it was meet so to bee. For they had not yet our Lorde Iesus, who hath nowe set open the gates of heauen to bring vs into the life and glorie of heauen. Indeede they had as good part therein as we, but they were faine to walke in shadowes and figures to vnderstande it; therefore they had neede of some aide, whereof we at this time haue no neede at all; neither may we thinke our state to bee therefore the worse; as many doe complaine at this day, because that God doeth not dandle them, and that they bee not (as seemeth to themselues) so much at their ease as the olde fathers were: surely they deceiue themselues in this comparison. For if any one of vs shoulde recken vp what he suffered all the dayes of his life, and therewithall looke vpon the state either of Abraham or of Dauid: doubtles he shal finde himselfe to be in better case than were the holy fathers: For they (as saieth the Apostle) did but see the thinges afarre of, which wee beholde before our eyes. God promised to be their Sauiour, he had chosen them, to be, as it were, of his housholde; But where was hee in the meane while that was promised to bee the redeemer? Where was the doctrine that is made so manifest vnto vs in the Gospell concerning the resurrection? They knewe the same a farre off: but nowe it is declared vnto vs in the Gospel, in such maner, as we may indeede say, as our Lord Iesus Christ gaue vs also to vnderstande, That blessed be the eares which heare the things that are tolde vs concerning him, and the eyes that see the things which we see: for the holy kinges and Prophetes haue longed for the same, and coulde not obtaine it. Wee therefore haue a much more excellent state, than they had which liued vnder the lawe. This is the difference whereof I speake, which had neede to bee supplied by God, for the imperfection that was in the doctrine concerning the reueiling of the heauenly life, which the fathers knewe but by outwarde tokens, albeit that they were deare vnto God. Nowe that Iesus Christ is come downe hither, and hath shewed vs howe wee ought to followe him, by suffering many afflictions, as it is tolde vs, and that we must be fashioned after his image in bearing pouertie and reproch, and all such like thinges, and to bee short, that our life must bee as a kinde of death: forasmuch as we knowe all this, and the infinite power of God is vttered in his raising vp Iesus Christ from death, and in his exalting of him to the glorie of heauen; shoulde not wee thereuppon take good courage? And ought it not to bee a sweetening to all the afflictions that we can suffer? Haue not we cause to reioyce in the middest of our sorrowes? Let vs note then that if the olde fathers were more blessed of God than wee bee, as touching this present life, wee ought not to wonder at it at all. For the reason thereof is apparant. But howsoeuer the worlde goe, yet is this saying of Saint Paul alwayes verified, That the feare of GOD hath the promises not onely of the life to come, but of this present life also. Let vs walke therefore in the obedience of God, and then shall we bee assured that hee will shewe himselfe a father vnto vs, yea euen in the maintenance of our bodies, at leastwise so farre forth as concerneth the keeping and preseruing of vs in peace, the deliuering of vs from all euils, and the succoring of vs in all our necessities. God (I say) will make vs to feele his blessing in all these things, so that we walke in his feare.

Yet notwithstanding wee must returne to this point, that God, in making vs to taste of his fauour heere, meaneth not that wee shoulde be so glutted therewith, that wee shoulde forget the euerlasting rest whereunto hee inuiteth vs. And so all the benefites of GOD which belong vnto this transitorie life, must serue vs for ladders to mount vpwarde, and not for Cushions to fall a sleepe vppon in this worlde. When God giueth a man wherewith to liue, indewing him with health, and suffering him not to bee vexed of his enemies; what else shoulde such a man doe but bee drawen by the grace of God, to endeuour to serue him so much the more, and not misbehaue himselfe in this worlde; but go on foreward, vsing that which is giuen him, as though he vsed it not at al, so as no thing stoppe him from keeping on his way still vnto God? But wee doe all things cleane contrarie, and therefore wee ought to bee wakefuller. When we heare the promises that be heere contained, let vs not thinke, that the meaning of God was to pamper the olde people in their transitorie pleasures: but rather that the same shoulde bee a meane, to drawe them vp on high as hee meaneth nowadayes towardes vs: For all the good that wee receiue of him, hath this end and intent, that our mindes shoulde alwayes bee raised vp to the heauenly life. Doth God giue vs breade to eate? Therein hee sheweth himselfe to bee our father. Yes, but yet for all that wee beeing his children, cease not to bee as wanderers in this worlde, hauing alwayes one foote lifted vp, and we haue here no rest. Therefore let vs haue an eye to the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen, and let the

Heb. 11. 13.

Mat. 13. 16.

Mat. 6. Rom. 8.

1. Tim. 4.

2. Cor. 5.

bread

breade which we eate to nourish vs, be a meane to direct vs thither. After the same manner is it with all other thinges. Nowe let vs come to that which is heere contained in the text of Moses, and then in the ende we shall the better vnderstande what hath beene saide. Moses saith heere, *That God will blesse his people both in the towne and in the fielde, he will blesse them in the seede of their bodie: he will blesse them in their cattle, hee will blesse them in the fruite of their lande, hee will blesse them in their baskets and in their stores and in their Graineries, he will blesse them in giuing them victorie against their enimies.* We knowe that the happinesse of this present life, that is to say, such happines as may be in this worlde, is for men to haue wherewith to maintaine themselues quietly, and to be preserued from their enemies. Here God setteth downe both the one, and the other: For touching the one he saith, *Thou shalt bee blessed as well in the towne as also in the field: and shalt be blessed in the fruite of thy wombe, and in the fruite of thy lande, and in the fruite of thy cattle.* It is certaine that the chiefe blessing which wee can desire of GOD, is in our owne persons: that hee prouide vs of such thinges as are requisite for this transitorie life. And that is the cause why hee beginneth at our persons, and then commeth to our children, and from thence descendeth to our cattle, to the fruit of the earth, and to all prouisions. It seemeth here at the first shew that God meant to pamper his people, as though he woulde set them vp in a stye, and there cram their bellies, as it were to lay them a sleepe at their ease, and to be short, that they shoulde be heere as in a Paradise. But I haue told you heretofore, that it behoued God to bestowe his benefites more largely vpon the fathers that liued vnder the Lawe, because they coulde not otherwise be drawen vnto him, seeing that the promises of the Eternall life, were yet obscure vnto them. Howbeit wee haue to note herewithall, that when God speaketh after this manner, hee meaneth not onely to giue men hope that they shal be blessed in al respects; but also to admonish vs, that nothing letteth vs from enioying a soueraigne and perfect felicitie in this world, whilst we waite for the life of heauen, but only that wee bee wrapped in vices and corruptions. And so did God thereby meane to traine the faithful, that they should thinke thus with themselues: Let vs serue God, and wee shall want no maner of thing: And if we bee vexed, and haue not all our desires, if the earth doe not yeelde such fruitefulnesse as may content vs, or if our cattle prosper not as wee woulde; let vs vnderstande that this commeth to passe, because we be wretched creatures, and cannot abide the blessing of God so perfect as it might be amongst vs, by meanes whereof he is faine to withdrawe his hande, and to giue vs but a portion of his blessings, because that if wee should haue so much, as he could finde in his heart to bestowe vpon vs, it shoulde glutte vs, and in the ende wee shoulde be choaked therewith. This is the cause then why God doth heere so greatly magnifie his blessinges; it is doone, not for that men haue euer beene blessed in all manner of respectes, without feeling of any euill to vex them: this (I say) neuer happened. And wherfore then doth God promise it? As wee haue saide afore, it is to make vs vnderstande, that whensoeuer our life is not so blessed as we couet, wee shoulde consider that God knoweth vs to be vnable to receiue the fulnesse of his benefits, and therefore is faine to distribute them vnto vs by peece meales, after the manner of sicke folkes or little children, which for want of discretion, are faine to bee gouerned by others. But we be lesse aduised than the infants, or sicke folkes: for we woulde deuour the blessings that God doeth sende, if hee helde vs not in order, for our lustes are miserablie corrupted. God bestoweth his blessings vppon vs sufficiently: but we like sicke folkes doe refuse good meate, and fall to foule feeding, which cannot but hurt vs: thus are wee caried away by our wicked affections, and are neuer able to direct the vse of Gods benefites, nor to gouerne them as behoueth; for wee woulde infect and defile all, if hee prouided not for it aforehande. Let vs marke therefore that God doeth heere warne vs to call our sinnes to remembrance, and to bewaile them as often as wee enioy not such fulnesse of his blessings, as is heere mentioned: Neuertheless hee woulde haue vs to hope, that by seruing of him wee shall prosper, and haue ynough for our contentment.

And indeede, wee see howe all the faithfull haue in that behalfe behaued themselues. It is sure (as wee haue saide) that Dauid was diuers wayes in perplexitie, and afflicted: no man more: but did hee in all that while murmure against God? No. True it is that hee vttered his griefes and passions: but that was with all meekenesse: and yet in the meane while hee omitted not to say, that the anger of GOD lasted but a little while, and that when hee afflicteth his people, he hath done in ỹ turning of a hand: but his goodnesse lasteth long, and continueth vnto life. As howe? If wee looke into the whole life of Dauid, what shall wee finde therein? Beholde, in his infancie hee was brought vp as a Shepheardes sonne of the countrie, and God saieth that hee tooke him from the flockes, as hee was among his cattle. When hee came to the court of Saul, it is certaine that, beyond all hope and opinion of the worlde, hee was aduanced to bee the kinges sonne in lawe: but it had beene better for him to haue continued still a shepeherd in the field, than to haue beene in such trauaile and miserie, so long time as we perceiue he was: they sought his death by al meanes, and his life did not onely hang as it were by a thred, but he was also had in reproch. In so much that they counted him the most wicked caitife in the worlde, a Traitor to his Prince, a disloyall man to his King. Yee see then that Dauid was as it were, abhomminable to euerie bodie. And when God had set him at peace [that way] then was hee vexed with forraine warre, insomuch as hee had no sooner done with one people, but hee was faine to turne him

Pſal. 30. 6.
1. Sam. 16. 11.
2. Sam. 17. 8.
1. Sam. 25. 10.
2. Sam. 16. 7.
2. Sam. 11.
2. Sam. 21. 15
2. Sam. 15.
2. Sam. 10. 5.

about to another; and to make vp the measure, his owne naturall sonne chased him out of his kingdome, meaning no lesse than to cut his throate: and we see what other conspiracies hee suffered, as the conspiracie of Semei. Yet did Dauid always confesse without fayning, that all the chastisements, miseries and afflictions that God sent him, were nothing vnto him, and that they lasted but the turning of a hand, or for a minute of an houre, whereas his blessings endured for euer. For why? Dauid had not in him such vnthankefulnesse as we haue. Wee imbace Gods gracious dealinges and make no account of them: of euery little harme wee make a great mountaine: when God chastiseth vs, wee shrinke away our shoulders, making great complaintes and outcries. But let vs learn to esteeme better of Gods goodnes towards vs, in such wise as we bee not founde vnthankfull for his grace. This is the cause (say I) why wee conceiue not the value of the blessings that are contained here: For why? If God sende vs any vexation, we shut our heartes against it, insomuch that there is none of vs which fretteth not against him. And though wee murmure not in speech, yet faile wee not to haue some bitternesse lurking in our heartes: there needes but one affliction in all our life, to put the grace of God quite out of cast with vs. And when he hath done vs all the good that can be deuised, yet doth it euer runne in our remembrance, we saying: yea but I haue susteined such a harme: and our minde is neuer off, of it.

Thus are Gods benefites vnsauerie to vs, so as we passe them ouer or let them slip. Contrariwise therefore, when our Lorde afflicteth vs, let vs receiue the comforts that he giueth vs to moderate our heauinesse: and then shall we continue to walke on our way. And albeit we be faine to endure many thinges, and that by reason of our frailtie and feeblenesse, wee be not able to ouercome the temptations at the first blow: yet notwithstanding through the grace of God wee may get the vpper hande. And when wee bee so oppressed with our miseries, then wil wee esteeme of Gods grace in such sort that euen in the middes of darkenesse wee shall perceiue what light God giueth vs, so as wee shall alwayes feele him to bee our father. Now when wee finde this, to wit, that God is our father; it is out of doubt that hee will sufficiently blesse vs, so farre foorth as is fit for our saluation. Thus yee see what wee haue to doe and to practise, if wee will rightly vnderstande, that GOD hath not saide in vaine, that hee will blesse his people, *So they harken to his voice.*

Moreouer wee bee warned heereby, not to seeke any thing that wee desire, but at the hande of GOD. And this also is another verie profitable admonition. For wee see howe men doe erre, when they desire to bee at their ease. It is the naturall inclination of all men, to couet to be this and that, but in that while, what course holde wee? No doubt, but wee turne our backes on God, and kicke against him. Hee that meaneth to bee rich, vseth ruin and crueltie, deceites and wicked practises: hee that desireth to attaine to credite and authoritie, practiseth treason, indirect wyles, and other sleightes. To bee short, Ambition ruleth him altogether: and finally hee that woulde compasse any other lustes of his, cannot but prouoke the anger of God. See at what point wee bee. And thus doeth our faithlesnesse discouer it selfe euery way, as I haue spoken heere before. Therefore haue wee neede to bee mindfull of this lesson, to wit, that if wee will prosper, yea euen in this present life, there is none other meane for it, but to put our selues vnder Gods guiding, who hath all goods in his power to bestowe on whome it pleaseth him: hoping also that hee will not be nigarly in distributing his gracious gifts vnto vs, at leastwise, so *we hearken vnto his voice.* For (as I saide euen nowe,) seeing that wee be his children, can we thinke that he taketh pleasure to vexe vs? Moreouer hee diminisheth not; bee hee neuer so liberall towards vs, yet hee feareth not that hee shall haue ought the lesse, or that hee shall feele any want. For hee is a fountaine that can neuer bee drawen drie.

Let vs therefore bee perswaded, that our life shall alwayes bee accursed, vnlesse wee returne to this point where to Moses leadeth vs, namely, to hearken to the voyce of our God, to be thereby mooued, and continually confirmed, that hee hath care of our saluation, yea not onely of the eternal saluation of our soules, but also to maintaine vs in the state of this earthly life, to make vs to tast presently of his loue and goodnesse, in such sorte as may content and suffice vs, waiting till wee may haue our fill thereof, and beholde the thing face to face which we be faine as now to looke vpon as it were through a glasse and in the darke. That is one thing more which wee haue to remember vppon this texte, where it is saide that wee shall bee blessed, if wee harken to the voice of the Lorde our God. 1.Cor.13.12

And this is to bee applied to all the partes of our life: as for example when a man woulde prosper in his owne person, so as hee is desirous to imploy himselfe in the seruice of God, and to obtaine some grace, to the ende hee may not bee vnprofitable heere, but that GOD may bee honoured by him: let him bethinke himselfe thus, Lorde I am thine, dispose thou of mee, beholde here I am readie to obey thee: for that is the point whereat wee must beginne, if wee desire that GOD shoulde take vs to his guiding, and dispose of vs to serue him, in such wise as his blessing may appeare and lighten vppon vs, and vppon our persons. So is it concerning euery mans household.

When a man is desirous to liue in peace and concorde with his wife, or to haue children by whom

whom to reioyce; let him vnderstande that all this is in the hand of God, and that it lyeth not in our owne power nor skill to order our housholde after our hearties desire. For they that thinke to compasse it by their owne power, deceiue themselues very much, and commit sacrilege in robbing God of the honour that hee hath reserued to himselfe. It is saide that the fruite of the wombe is a speciall gift of God, and so is euery thing els that pertaineth to housholde: According whereunto it is saide, to be but vaine for a man to build vnlesse God builde also with him. They therefore that will possesse a quiet state for themselues and their children, let them turne vnto God, and commit themselues wholy vnto him and to his guiding: knowing that there is none other meane, to attaine to the same, but by his blessing: so is it also, as concerning cattle, foode, and all other thinges. For wee see heere was nothing forgotten. And God meant to make vs to perceiue his infinite goodnesse, in that he declareth that hee will deale with our smallest businesse, which one of our own equals would be loath to meddle withal. If wee haue a friende, wee woulde be vexed hath, yea, and ashamed to vse his helpe, vnlesse it were in a matter of some importance. But heere, God goeth into our sheepefoldes and into the stalles of our Kyne and Oxen, and heepeth into our fieldes: yea hee hath care of all things else. For as much then as wee see him abase himselfe so farre, ought not we to bee rauished to honour him and to magnifie his bountie?

Moreouer let vs conclude, that whereas God saith, *that he will blesse vs in the fruite of the earth, that he will blesse vs in the fruite of our cattell*: it is a most sure argument that hee will not forget the principal. These thinges be contemptible and of small reputation, and many times mortall men doe dispise them, and yet wee see that God notwithstanding taketh care of them. Seeing that it is so, will hee forget our soules, the which he hath created after his owne ymage, the which also hee hath so dearely redeemed with the sacred bloude of his sonne? Surely no. First of all therefore let vs acknowledge Gods fauour towards vs, in abasing himselfe so farre as to dispose and to gouerne euery thing that belongeth vnto our life and sustenance; and from thence let vs mount vp higher, and vnderstande that hee will not faile vs in the thinges that surpasse this present life: but rather that in the chiefe things that belong to our life, yea euen in this worlde, God will stretch forth his hande to furnish vs alwayes with all things that are needefull.

There is the seconde point: which is; *that we shalbe vpholden against our enemies*. Wee haue said, y the first point is, that God prouideth for vs, so as we want not any thing that is requisite for the passing of our life in this worlde. But if our Grainers were neuer so full, our Cellers neuer so thorowly furnished, and our purse neuer so well stuffed, so as we want no manner of things: yet if in the meane while our enemies be able to scratch out our eyes, and we be as people set out to the spoyle, so as wee bee dayly assaulted, and haue no defence; what booteth vs our great aboundance? Therefore it was Gods will, shortly to shewe heere, that his blessings shoulde extende themselues so farre and wide in all cases and all respectes, that nothing should be missing to such as doe him honour and seruice. But let vs marke, that God hath not exempted vs quite from our enimies, neither did hee exempt the people of olde time. For why? It is impossible for vs to liue in this world without some vexation at other mens hands. True it is that as much as in vs lyeth wee ought to procure peace, for our part. But forasmuch as the diuell is Prince of this worlde, hee will not leaue Gods children in rest. And hee hath supporters ynowe to serue his turne: for al the dispisers of God, al the wicked, and all the hypocrites that be in this world, the number of whom is in maner infinite, are instant darts, swordes, and arrowes. Rom. 12. 18. Iohn. 16. 22.

Seeing then that wee must dwell amongst the contemners of God, and amongst the wicked; let vs make our reckoning that wee shall be troubled, and haue enemies, let vs endeuour to appease them so much as we can, and let vs giue them none occasion of hatred: but yet in the meane while let vs not be vnprouided, howsoeuer the matter standeth. Thus much concerning that one point. For God hath not saide, I will vtterly roote out your enemies, so as you shall haue the worlde by your selues, wherein to leade a happie and quiet life, and to haue all the felicitie that can bee wished: hee saieth not so: but hee saith, Albeit that you bee compassed rounde about with your enemies, yet will I not suffer them to haue the vpper hand ouer you.

Nowe hee saieth further, *that if our enemies come foorth by one way, they shall flee seuen wayes*. Whereby hee giueth vs to vnderstande, that our enemies may well conspire by great numbers, so as it may bee like that wee shoulde bee swallowed vp of them; but yet they shall bee filled with feare, as shalbe shewed more at large in another text. Heere wee haue to marke, that the susteining and maintaining of our life is in the hande of God, and that our rest and quietnesse depende also of him. And although that men doe continually deuise to hurt and annoy vs, yet is God euer strong ynough to disappoint them when hee hath once receiued vs into his protection, and to hinder them, so as they shalbe able to attempt nothing against vs, but the same shalbe ouerthrowen. That is a thing which we haue to beare in remembrance. Nowe when God permitteth vs to haue enemies, thereby he calleth vs vnto himselfe, & we ought to be the more prouoked to call vpon him when wee see our selues driuen thereto by necessitie. For if the worlde shoulde laugh on vs, and reioyce at vs on all partes: it woulde seeme vnto vs, that wee had no more neede of Gods protection. But when we be beset with perils and daungers, and see that men lye in waite for vs, seeking nothing else but to come in to vex vs; it standeth vs in hande to resort to

God, and to commit vs to his tuition, praying him to be our shielde and fortresse, and (finally) to be our defendour. Let vs marke therefore that God, in permitting vs to haue enemies, doeth thereby drawe vs vnto him, that wee should pray him alwayes to succour and defend vs.

But to conclude, we must remember that God is mightie ynough to maintaine vs. As howe? If our enemies came vpon vs with great fiercenesse, it were ynough to daunt vs and to put vs out of courage: but howsoeuer we fare, although hee suffer them to rise against vs, and to bee as furious as wilde beastes; yet shall they not know what to doe, but bee as folke amased. And although they haue neuer so greate aduauntage at the beginning, and bee neuer so full of craft and wilinesse; yet will God stoppe their eyes, so as they shall cast themselues wilfully into the snare, and there bee taken. Againe, euen when they bee armed with malice and boldenesse to set vppon vs, God will in the end confounde them, no man can tell howe: hee will destroy all their deuises and attemptes, yea and when they bande themselues against vs, & haue neuer so great multitudes on their sides, yet wil God scatter them. Like as when we see a cloude threatening raine, and it seemeth that all shoulde bee drowned; God scattereth it, and the tempest is gone; euen so will hee deale with our enemies. Thus yee see in effect what wee haue to remember concerning this text, where it is saide that wee shall bee defended against all such as set themselues against vs, and that our God will make them flee before our faces, if we doe him the honour to acknowledge him to bee the Lorde of hoastes, and that his power is infinite, and that therefore the whole worlde can nothing preuaile against him. Finally, what haue wee nowe to doe but to submit our selues vnder the obedience of our God? Also let vs vnderstande, that all the misbeleeuing, and all the despisers of Gods maiestie (albeit that for a time their life may seeme happie) are appointed to perdition, and that all the goods which they possesse, shal become a curse vnto thē, so as they must needs be in a forlorn state: according to this saying, ẏ their very Table shalbe turned into snares and gynnes wherewith to take them, Psal. 69. 23.

and all the benefits of God shall become deadly poyson vnto them. Lo what wee haue to carie in minde.

Moreouer so often as wee bee afflicted, let vs humble our selues, and acknowledge our sins, & bewaile them before God: and in the meane space let vs not omitte to qualifie our griefes, knowing that amidst the afflictions which he sendeth vs, there alwayes appeareth a certaine testimonie of his goodnesse, and that it is necessarie that he should so holde vs in awe. Yet notwithstanding, we must not be cast downe nor be discouraged, when we bee vexed and troubled though we be enuironed with neuer so many miseries. And why? Because God faileth not for all that, to shew himselfe a father towards vs. That is the thing whereon we must altogether rest, so as al the afflictions of this world may quicken vs vp to aspire to the heauenly heritage: and when we haue bewailed our sins, let vs not doubt, but God of his mercy will blesse vs, euen in Iesus Christ the fountaine of al goodnesse and blessednesse, by whom all curses are quite taken away. To proue that it is so: what may bee the chiefe curse that is laine vppon mankinde, but death? And yet wee see that the same is become an entrance into life. And wherefore? For that in the person of Iesus Christ it is nowe made blessed. Wherefore let vs learne to reioyce, sith wee see that God hath so prouided for our saluation, that although he make vs to feele our sins, and would haue vs touched with some sorrowe, thereby to bring vs to repentance, yet hee ceaseth not amidst all these to shewe himselfe a father euermore, & by al meanes to aduance our saluation.

Now let vs humble our selues before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of sinnes, praying him to touch vs to the quicke more and more, that we may mislike them and that acknowledging the euill which is in vs, wee may seeke his mercie: not onely to forgiue vs the sins that we haue alredie committed, but also to mortifie vs, and by the power of his spirit to giue vs grace so to forsake our selues, as wee may seeke his righteousnesse, and more and more profite therein, vntill it be perfect in vs: at such time as hee shall haue taken vs out of this world: And so let vs al say, Almightie God, heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xij. of March, 1556.

The CLV. Sermon which is the third vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

9 The Lorde thy God will make thee a holy people to himselfe, as hee hath sworne vnto thee, if thou keepe the commaundements of the Lord thy God and walke in his wayes.

10 And

10 And all the nations of the earth shall see that the name of the Lorde is called vppon ouer thee, and they shall bee afraide of thee.

11 And the Lord thy GOD will make thee to abound in substance, in the fruite of thy wombe, in the fruite of thy cattel, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord thy GOD hath sworne to thy fathers to giue thee.

12 The Lord thy GOD will open vnto thee his good treasure, euen the heauens, to send downe raine vpon thy land in due seasons and to blesse all the worke of thy handes, and thou shalt lende vnto many people and borrowe of none.

13 The Lorde God will make thee the head, and not the tayle: And thou shalt be onely aboue, and not beneath, if thou obey the commaundements of the Lord thy God, which I commaund thee this day to keepe and to doe them.

14 And that you swarue not, neither to the right hand nor to the left, from any of al the wordes which I commaund you this day, in walking after other gods to serue them.

MOses continuing the matter which was handled yesterday, sheweth vppon what condition GOD choseth vs, when hee taketh vs to bee of his Church: that is, that wee should bee separated, and set far off from the common curse of mankinde. True it is that Gods goodnesse extendeth ouer all the men of the worlde, wee see how all are fedde and maintayned by his liberalities: but in the meane while wee see to how many miseries men be subiect. For this cause it behoueth vs to bee sundered, and that God watch ouer vs, and beare vs a speciall loue, as to his owne children: for without that, all our lyfe is confused, as it is seene howe the wretched infidelles, albeeit that GOD bestowe neuer so many blessinges vppon them, yet can they not profite by them, but they stand alwayes in doubt; and not without cause. For wherevppon may they repose their hope, seeing they bee not certifyed of the loue of GOD? How can they holde him for their father? Therefore it is a worde well worth the marking, where Moses sayth that GOD hath separated vs from all other nations of the worlde. It is certaine that this worde holynesse doth importe, that the image of GOD shoulde shine forth in vs, and that wee should serue him purely in vertuous conuersation: but yet from thence hee proceedeth farther, as hee doth in this text; namely that God will giue vnto his people a certeine marke, to shewe that they bee priuiledged aboue all other folke. Therefore in beholding what the state of man is in this present lyfe, let vs learne to resorte alwayes to this promise, that God hath not onely created vs after the common course of the brood of all Adams children: but that hee hath also chosen vs to himselfe for his heritage. And let vs not doubt at all, but that he watcheth ouer vs, and wil make vs to perceiue that wee be of his housholde, and that he is nigh vnto vs to succour vs: let vs bee well resolued in this.

Moreouer Moses addeth, *Other people shall see that the name of the Lorde thy GOD is called vppon ouer thee, and they shall be afraide*. It is certaine that the Idolaters can vaunt themselues enough of the name of God: and we see howe they pretend it, euen in their fighting against him, when they cast off all doctrine: Insomuch that being as fierce as wilde beastes, yet they looke to bee counted of the Church. But Moses dooth here take the worde *call vppon*, for naming, or calling vpon: yea and that in trueth; meaning that the people were truely and in deed called after God his name; or named his People. If wee walke in the feare of our God, and frame our life after his calling, then shall it be seene how it is not in vaine that hee calleth himselfe our God, & auoweth vs to be his people. Now it is certain that this word dooth presuppose that wee haue our recourse to God, as being vnder his protection. For it is sayd that a man is called vppon or named after the name of a prince, when hee is become his subiect, and is vnder his tuition. Euen so it is sayd, that the faithfull haue GOD his name called vppon ouer them in protesting that they bee his, and that, there they bee all safe vnder his winges. And this cannot bee vnlesse we call vppon GOD, and haue our refuge vnto him in all our necessities. But whence commeth such boldnesse, that wee glory in this: that wee belong vnto God, more than any other? For wee know that the state of men is alyke by nature. Wherefore then be we preferred before them that are descended of the self same race? It commeth through Gods election: It may not begin of vs. For what is he ỳ can aduaunce himself to come nigher vnto God, thā others come? What desert can any man bring w̄ him? [None at all.] Thē must God make choice of vs through his own meere goodnes: & whē he

clared himselfe to be our God, then may wee also of our parte bee bolde, in all assurance and without doubt to call vppon his name. Nowe wee see what is the effect of this sentence. And Moses meaneth to declare, what preheminence GOD giueth vnto those whome hee hath adopted for his children: to wit, that albeit they be mingled amongest men, and encompassed with many miseries; yet be they preserued, as being vnder his hand and protection, euen because hee doth holde and auowe them to bee of his household: not for any other cause than onely his own good pleasure. Let vs therfore courageously defie Sathan, when wee see that hee practiseth all that hee possibly can against vs, and let vs count our selues assured against all the dangers of this world, seeing that God hath done vs such fauor, as not to leaue vs to fortune, as the vnbeleeuers doe imagine. And why? For wee bee vnto him a holy people. And from whence shall wee fetche this preeminence? Wee haue it because hee hath testified vnto vs that hee is our GOD. If wee had not gotten this worde of him, we should bee alwayes in perplexitie, wee shoulde still doubt, through questioning of this and that, and our lyfe should hang as it were by a threed; as wee shall see in this Chapter. But seeing that God hath vttered his fatherly loue vnto vs, and it hath pleased him to open his mouth, to make vs to vnderstand that hee hath giuen vs familiar accesse vnto him: seeing (I say) that wee haue such assurance: let vs call vppon him (that is to say) let vs not doubt to glorie in this: that hee is our Sauiour: and that seeing we are his, wee cannot perish. Howebeit let vs beware that wee call not vppon the name of God falsly, as all they doe which abuse it, and yet in the meane while doe make a mocke of him, and are despisers of his maiestie. If wee clayme the name of God, let it bee, because we be grounded vppon his promises, and haue receiued them through faith: and then let vs call vppon him, let him bee our refuge, and let vs not giue our selues to fond bragging as they doe which thinke it enough for them to beare the bare name of Christians. Nay, let vs followe the call of our GOD: as Moses sheweth here; saying: *If thou wilt keepe the commaundements of thy GOD, as I doe set them afore thee this day.* For it is good reason that seeing God hath so bound himselfe vnto vs, wee in lykewise for our parte should yeelde our selues to his direction. And that wee should not onely professe with our mouthes that wee bee his people, but also shewe it by framing our whole lyfe agreeable to the same, and by keeping his commaundementes, make it apparant that we haue receiued the grace which hee offered vs: For that is the true proofe thereof.

Now hee sayth moreouer, *That other people shall see how the name of God is called vppon ouer vs, and that they shall feare vs.* It is not enough for vs that GOD doe promise vs to make vs to feele that wee bee in his keeping: but he saith, that euen the Paynims our mortall enemies, and the despisers of his maiestie shall bee made to know the same. Now it is certaine that the Infidels knowe not the arme of GOD, in such wise, as it ought to bee knowen vnto vs: they come far short of it. For in seeing, they see not a whit: and how then should it be possible that they should perceiue that GOD hath blessed vs, that we liue of his fauor, and that we be nourished at his cost? For they bee blockish, and thinke not that any thing cōmeth vnto them from the hand of God. Wee see well how the Infidels be fedde and cloathed, they enioy the light of the Sunne, yea, and they haue aboundance of goods. But as for the worshipping and seeking of God, there is no tidinges at all among them thereof. And if besides their despising of the benefites of their God, they haue no vnderstanding whence they come vnto them: howe should they then knowe that the name of God is called vppon ouer vs? Their knowing of it is not through any perswasion of minde, or through any such true vnderstanding of it, as we ought to haue: but Moses sayth that they shall haue it proued to their faces: as for example, wee see the wicked grinde their teeth when they behold the faithfull to prosper, and see that God vpholdeth and keepeth them. And whence commeth that? Truely they shall be astonished at it: and they shal not be able to think otherwise, but that God fauoreth the contrarie parte: not that they doe settle vppon it, or bee rightly resolued thereof in their heartes: but for that they be confounded in their owne selues.

Hee sayth, *that they shall perceiue that God name is claymed [or called vppon] ouer vs: and that it shall put them in feare.* For albeit that they feare not God: yet doth he bridle them secretly, insomuch that when they would practise any thing against his people, they cannot, for they feele their courage broken. This is to be wondred at, that God sometimes doth giue the wicked the bridle so far as to cast out the fome of their rage against vs: they deuise what they can, and worke their spite. But haue they once done that: then shall it appeare that they are vnderlings to him, and cannot withstand him. And what is the cause thereof? If God should suffer the faythlesse to haue their owne will, it is certaine that the worlde should not last three dayes, but that they would beare downe all things before them. Therefore it is necessarie that hee shoulde restraine them with some secret bridle, and not suffer their headynesse to haue full scope. And we see it before our eyes. Whereof comes it that we haue not bin swallowed vp a hundred thowsand times within these twentie or thirtie yeeres last past? Onely of Gods defence, which consisteth not in signes that may be seene, but in his secret holding of the wicked as it were in prison, mauger all the mischieuousnesse that is in them. By reason whereof, when they haue deuised any thing, they wash away lyke water, & all their thoughtes doe vanish, and they ly as with their armes broken, and though they vndertake great thinges, yet can they not attaine to their purpose. And so yee see what Moses meant in saying, that the

wicked

wicked, (forsomuch as they bee our enemies) shall perceiue that the name of God is called vppon ouer vs, and thereby bee stricken in feare. Whereby wee see, that there is no such fortresse nor defence as to haue our recourse to God. So long as hee taketh the care vpon him to saue vs, let vs boldely trust that wee stand in safetie, yea albeit that the wicked conspire against vs, and lye in waite and watch for vs: yet shall we be as in an inuincible fortresse, so we can call vppon the name of our GOD, and be throughly assured in ourselues that he auoweth vs to be his people, whereof wee haue good warrant, so wee breake not our faith which on our part we haue plighted vnto him. But wee must feele the protection of GOD otherwise than the wicked doe; that is to say, in hearing his woorde, wee must embrace the grace which is presented vnto vs, and rest wholy vppon it. After that manner must we bee ascertayned that the name of God is called vppon ouer vs.

Now Moses doth repeate againe that which he had sayd concerning the fruite of the womb, of Cattell, and of the Earth. Truely it had bin sufficient, to haue promised at once, ỹ al bodily blessings proceede from God. But on the one side we see the mistrust that is in men, how that when God speaketh vnto them, they cease not to argue and to reply; Yea, but shall I be sure of it? And therefore to resolue vs the better, God confirmeth the matter which he had spoken of. Againe we see our vnthankfulnesse to be such, that we attribute the thinges to Fortune, and to our owne skill and trauel, which God hath done for vs. Therefore he calleth vs vnto him, and sheweth that it is he which doth it: and on the other side he would haue vs to vnderstand, that if we intend to prosper in all pointes, wee must hearken to him and obey him. For all men, yea euen the wickeddest in the world are desirous to haue issue of their owne bodies, increase of cattell, and great reuenewes. But what? In the meane while wee despise God the author of all goodnesse, and seeme as though wee laboured of purpose to thrust his hand far frō vs: which is much as if I should aske a man an almes, and giue him a whyrret on the eare: or as if hee should come to succour mee, and I should spit in his face: euen so deale wee with our God. God therefore perceiuing such a malice in vs, and that wee cannot be taught at the first, but doe stop our eares against that which he saith; repeateth the same thinges againe which he had spoken to vs before. Whereby hee warneth vs, that if wee want any thing, wee must lay the blame thereof vppon our owne sinne, and not vppon him. Why so? Because hee is ready for his part, to blesse vs as well in issue of our bodies, as in reuenue of land, and in cattell, and is liberall and rich enough for vs, neither will hee bee streite laced towards vs of the blessings that be in his possession. Let vs therefore acknowledge, that the fault is in vs, when hee withdraweth his benefites, and giueth them not vnto vs so largely as wee would.

Moreouer it is a notable manner of speach, when he sayth, *Thus God will open his good treasure, namely the heauen, to giue vs rayne, that the earth may bring forth foode.* Here Moses setteth forth the order of nature which wee see with our eyes, that wee might the better vnderstand how God is our father and our nourisher: and that although the sustenance whereon wee feed is gathered from the earth: yet is it onely God that sendeth all thinges. How so? The earth in deede hath nature giuen vnto it, to bring forth fruite; but if it should continue dry, what woulde come of it? Wee see that vnlesse there fall both rayne and dewe, the earth dooth open, as though it would cry out that it were a thirst, and it dryeth vp for want of moysture. And therefore Dauid intending to vtter his earnest desire of Gods grace, vseth this similitude, saying: Lorde I am vnto thee as a dry grounde. Psal.143.6. Wee see before our eyes how the earth becommeth barreine and parcheth for want of moysture, and finally hath neither strength nor substance. Had it so pleased God, coulde not hee haue giuen propertie to the earth, to haue of it selfe substance enough? For as wee reade in Genesis, there was not such raine in the beginning as wee haue in these dayes: but GOD caused a certaine vapor to rise vp to moysten the earth: and cannot hee doe the same now, or else that the earth shoulde haue some certaine moysture proceeding from vnderneath? Gen.2.6. And in deede, wherehence commeth the rayne? If yee aske the Philosophers, they will say that the rayne commeth of the vapors that ascend out of ỹ earth, which being drawen vp into the ayre, bee sent downe againe vppon the earth. Thus then, after ỹ opinion of the Philosophers, the vapors doe ascend: But now wherefore commeth it, that GOD cannot make the heauens to yeelde rayne except it come first out of the earth: or the earth to keepe still that moysture which it hath, so that it may alwayes haue strength and substance of it selfe? What is the cause of this rising vp of the vapors, that when the earth hath yeelded them forth, they bee held vp in the ayre as in Bottles: as is mentioned in the Psalme? What is the cause of all this? It is Psal.18.12. for that he seeth vs to be so blockish and grosse, that although hee shewe as with his fingar, that it is at his hand that wee receiue all goodnesse; yet is it his meaning to make vs to perceiue it in a more visible maner. And that is the cause also why hee sayth, That he will heare the heauens, Ose.2.21. and the heauens shall heare the earth, and the earth shall heare the corne, and all the seedes ỹ be committed vnto it. When the husbandman soweth his graine well, he layeth it vp as it were in prison: & it seemeth to be as at the mercie of the earth. The earth then must cōceiue ỹ corne, nourish it, & make it to spring, & in likewise giue it substance. But doth ỹ earth heare the Corne? It is deafe: that is to say, it hath no power to make it to prosper, except it be heard of others. And how is that? The earth as I haue sayd, looketh vp to heauen, and after a sort openeth her mouth, it cleaueth when it feeleth extreme heate, and is not watered as it woulde. The heauen then must bee faine to aunswere to the

to the earth. The heauen? What can that doe? Can the heauen giue water? It hath none except GOD drawe it vnto it by his secrete power. In very deede wee shall see hereafter how God threatneth to giue a brasen heauen: It is needefull then that God do heare the heauen, and that we repaire thither. So then, as often as it reineth, wee must vnderstand that God openeth his Treasures, which are else shut vp. God (as I haue sayd) could euen without rayne or deawe) cause the earth to bring forth fruite: but hee vseth such meane, as he knoweth to be conuenient for our dulnesse: and hee doth so, to the intent that we should haue the lesse excuse: that if we be vnthankfull vnto him, and close our eyes against so apparant a matter: wee should be so much the more blameworthie at the last day, and bee sure to yeelde account for our wilfulnesse in refusing to knowe the thing which ought to bee throughly knowen vnto vs. Thus yee see what wee haue to beare in minde.

Leui. 26. 19. Deut. 28. 23

Whereupon Saint Paul speaking of the ignorance which was in the olde world, before the Gospel was preached: sayth that all people went astray lyke brute beastes: And what was the reason? Because the doctrine was not yet taught, which is the true light to shewe vs the way of saiuing health: as we shall see in the thirtith Chapter. Notwithstanding he addeth, that God neuertheless leaft not himselfe without witnesse. And his vsing of this manner of speach *He left not himselfe without witnesse*, is as much as if hee sayd: Wherefore? For hee hath sene rayne vppon the earth in due time and season: hee hath lent faire weather also. These be Gods witnesses, which declare, that as hee hath created the world, euen so hee doth vpholde and preserue it: these bee the witnesses that speake with a lowde and cleare voyce, saying that wee must looke vnto GOD for all the nourishment that hee giueth vs. And that is the cause, why I sayd, that we should marke well this saying: *that God will open his Treasures*. For although wee see what great riches God hath set in this world, what sundry sortes of beastes, what hearbes, what trees, and what a number of all other thinges: yet should all these thinges go to decay, vnlesse God sent vs dayly from heauen the thinges that are requisite for the preseruation of this lyfe. Could wee abide three dayes without the light of the Sauiour? If God gaue not the naturall vertue to euery seede, what were it? Wee should quickly perishe. And if there were none other matter, but that whereof I spake euen nowe concerning the earth, it woulde soone dry vp, vnlesse God remedied it. These therefore be the good Treasures, which God bestoweth on vs. And when it is his will to shewe himselfe a father towardes vs: he layeth the heauens before vs, that wee might see it there. And it is asmuch as if God should list vs vp by the chin, and say; Poore creatures, when ye seeke to bee fedde; you looke whether you haue laide corne enough into the ground or no. Indeed that is a thing which you must looke vnto: but yet you must first of all goe higher, and lift vp your eyes to mee, and euen nature it selfe doeth compell you so to doe. For ye knowe that without rayne the earth cannot prosper. And therefore forget not the thinges which I shewe you day by day, and whereof you bee conuicted by experience. This is the good Treasure whereof Moses speaketh: & he expressely addeth, *The heauen*. For what cause? For if hee had sayde, GOD will vtter his bountifulnesse, both from aboue and from beneath, truely it ought well to haue contented vs: but yet bycause of our infirmitie, wee see howe God is fayne to expresse the matter more plainely: as hee also sheweth that wee must come vnto him, and looke vp to the heauens bycause hee calleth vs thither, and hath set such order that he will haue vs to thinke our selues to be as barraine and hungerstaruen folke, vntill hee hath powred his goodnesse vpon vs from aboue.

Act. 14. 16.

Deut. 30. 15

Act. 14. 17.

Nowe hauing spoken of this good Treasure, hee sayeth: *Hee will giue rayne in due time, and will blesse the woorke* [or labor] *of thy handes*. By speaking of due season, hee sheweth vnto vs that this Gods giuing of rayne vnto vs in due time, proceedeth of a speciall care. For sometimes rayne is verie hurtfull, as wee see before our eyes. Whereuppon wee must conclude, that if GOD had not the power and skill to stay the rayne, the fruites of the earth and also the bodyes of men shoulde rotte. What doeth the raine of it selfe? It engendereth but rottennesse. On the otherside wee see that the raine refresheth in season, & giueth strength vnto the grounde, whereby wee see that it is the Treasure of God for to giue vs sustenance. And why is that? Bycause God knoweth it is good for vs, that hee cause it to raine. Let vs therefore when wee see it rayne out of season, let vs marke how GOD sheweth vs that it is verie requisite for vs that he doe watch ouer vs, and that no drop of rayne fall without his commaundement, according to this which we haue heard before, namely: That he holdeth the waters aboue, as it were in bottles. The cloudes be dreadfull bottles. But the Prophet woulde haue vs to consider, that it must needes be a wonderful power whereby the rayne is shut vp there, or else wee shoulde bee drowned out of hand: at leastwise it would serue but to rotte vs, as I haue sayde alreadie. And here by the way wee be admonished, as shall be sayde hereafter, to consider our sinnes and trespasses: and to thinke that when God giueth vs extraordinarie raines, they be as punishmentes for our offences. Moreouer when the raine commeth in season, let vs acknowledge that there falleth not one drop but by Gods appointement, assuring our selues that it is necessarie for vs. That is the cause why Moses did expressly adde that saying.

Psal. 33.

Afterward he saith that *God will blesse the labor of our handes*: to doe vs to vnderstande (as hee hath shewed in another Text) that it is not our owne labour and trauell that feedeth vs, as wee haue seene in the eyght Chapter, where he saieth thus: When thou art come into the land which GOD giueth thee, remember that by

Psal. 127.

Deut. 8.

by the ſpace of fortie yeeres thou waſt fed with Manna that fell from heauen, to the end thou ſhouldeſt not ſay: It is mine owne labor that findeth me. Let vs therefore learne by theſe texts that when wee haue trauciled, and beſtowed our labour to till the earth, and conſideration is had of al that we ſee requiſite: yet neuertheles wee muſt lift vppe our eyes, and not ſtand in our owne conceit to ſay, I haue doone this, it is mine owne labor and policie: but acknowledge that it is Gods office to giue increaſe, and that without that, all our labor is in vaine: as we might wel enough breake our armes and our legges, and yet in ſteade of going foreward wee ſhould ſtill goe backewarde. The ſumme of the matter which God meant to ſhew vs, is that we ſhould labor in al lowelineſſe, and that when euery of vs hath trauailed for his liuing, wee ſhould vnderſtand, that it is not in vs to giue the ſucceſſe, but that GOD muſt wholly guide it, and giue it good iſſue: not onely to ỹ harbage of the earth, but to all things els in generall. So then, when a man applyeth him to any kinde of labor, let him not go about it preſumptuouſly; but let him call vpon GOD to helpe him, ſaying, Lorde it is thy pleaſure that I ſhoulde take paine: well, I goe about it; but I knowe that I ſhall not preuaile, vnleſſe thou guide me, & vnles thou giue me good ſucceſſe: Through thy meere grace and goodnes, let my labor proſper. That is the thing whereof wee bee admoniſhed in this text. Let vs not then thinke, that mans care & skill, or his trauell and endeuour can make the ground fertile: but that the bleſſing of GOD ruleth all. Yet notwithſtanding it putteth vs in mind of our dutie, to wit, that GOD will ſo helpe vs, as wee may not bee idle: for wee bee not made as logges of wood: men muſt (I ſay) imploye themſelues when GOD promiſeth them his bleſſing. For theſe two poyntes goe together, namely that the Lorde will bleſſe thee, and yet neuertheleſſe that he will haue thee alſo to labor. It is certaine that GOD canne feede vs, though our armes were broken, he coulde make vs to liue without any care, and without hauing regarde to maintaine our houſhold: GOD (I ſay) coulde giue vs foode of free coſt: but it is his pleaſure to exerciſe vs, with care and trauel, and that euery man according to his vocation, ſhould apply himſelf to that which he ſeeth meete for him. I ſay that Gods matching of his bleſſings with our trauell, is to ſhewe that hee will not haue vs to bee ſluggards, ſo as euery man ſhoulde ſitte on his taile, and neither deale with tilling of the ground nor with any other trade of occupying, & take the bridle in our teeth: but that we ſhould doe this honour vnto GOD, to ſay, Lorde, albeit we haue doone what we can, yet is it nothing, vnleſſe thy gratious goodneſſe rule it. But this is ill put in vre. For we ſee how men are giuen to darken the grace of God vnder colour that they doe ſome thing of themſelues: for ſo they beare themſelues in hande.

And this deuilliſh arrogancie is not onely in matters concerning the nourriſhment of our bodies, but alſo touching the ſaluatiõ of our ſoules. Whereupon is it, that freewil is grounded? Euen vppon this, that God requireth men to ſtudie and labour to doe good, to withſtand temptations, to haue ſuch a feruent zeale as to giue themſelues wholy vnto him, & to forſake themſelues. Foraſmuch as God requireth all theſe thinges, it ſeemeth that we can doe them. Yea but we conſider not, that God for all his commaunding, ſayth alſo that hee worketh by his holy ſpirite, ſo as he is faine to wrise his lawes in our harts, & to engraue them in our mindes, and to make vs walke according as he commaundeth. O it is true, but yet therewithall, we alſo muſt doe our endeuor. And whence commeth that endeuor? Theſe wretches doe not vnderſtand, that it is God that driueth vs foreward and ſtirreth vs vp, and that all the endeuoring wherewith men indeuor, is that they be inſtrumentes of the holy Ghoſt. Now then, foraſmuch as vnder this colour of working wee ſeeke nothing elſe but to darken the grace of God, ſo much the more diligently ought we to note this doctrine, whereby GOD doth ſtirre vs vp, and would haue vs to worke, and yet ſheweth vs therewithall that we cannot profit, vnleſſe he giue vs good ſucceſſe. Truely there is great difference betwixt ỹ handy worke, and that which the faithful do in indeuoring to liue well. For (as I haue ſayd) men are created to labour by nature: but wee be ſo wicked & froward, that in ſtead of obeying god, we be borne to nothing but to offend God, vntill he hath reformed vs, and made vs new creatures. So then God doth not onely bleſſe our labor, when we endeuor to ſerue him, through the grace of his holy ſpirit: but we labor alſo through his only vertue, according as he doth guide and gouerne vs. This is the ſumme of that which we haue to beare in minde concerning this text.

Ier. 31. 33. Ezech. 11. 19 & 36. 27.

Now it is alſo ſayd, *That God will make them the head and not the taile*, namely them that indeuour to ſerue him: hee will ſet them aboue, and not beneath. This is as it were the toppe of all proſperitie. Now ſurely it was more behouefull (as it was treated of yeſterday) that the olde fathers vnder the lawe, ſhould haue moe promiſes concerning the tranſitory lyfe, than we haue. For they had not ſuch opening of the heauenly lyfe as is giuen vs in the Goſpel. Therefore it was Gods will to drawe them after that faſhion lyke little children. For inaſmuch as an infant is not of capacitie to vnderſtand the goodneſſe of his father: therfore to encourage him, he will ſay vnto him; I will giue thee a trim cappe, and I will buy thee a gay newe coate: this is agreeable to the capacitie of the childe, and becauſe his heart is tender, ſuch talke is vſed vnto him: howbeit the father meaneth to lead him on farther. Euen ſo did God deale with the olde fathers: He did ſet forth his benefites which they ſhould enioy in this worlde: meaning to drawe them from thence to a higher hope, namely, to the hope of the heauenly heritage. And ſo the Iewes were made as a head when the kingdome floriſhed amongeſt them, when they ouercame

their

their enemies, and when God shewed himselfe to fight for them. As nowadayes wee must not loke to haue either kingdomes or principalities as they had; neither haue wee in lyke manner the temporall kingdome of Dauid: it is sufficient for vs that Iesus Christ is giuen vs, and that we reigne with him, and yhe being our king, causeth vs to florish vnder his conduction: I say it ought to suffice vs, that we bee a kingly Priesthood vnder our head; which is the sonne of God 1. Pet. 2. 9. Neuertheless, our Lorde hath made promise to all the faithfull, that if they walke in his obedience, they shall not be oppressed by the tyrannie of men, but bee mainteined in libertie, which is also a blessing as much to be defired as any can be in this world. Knowing therefore that this is a speciall gift of God, as it is here shewed, let vs learne to serue him and to giue him the whole authoritie ouer vs: that by his gouerning of vs, we may bee set free from bondage of men. Wee shall see hereafter in this present Deut. 28. 37 Chapter, how hee threateth them that will not feare him nor shrinke at his terribleneſſe, Psal. 105. 38 accordingly as is sayd in the psalme; God must needes lay the feare of men vppon all them that will not feare him, and be his willing subiectes. Let vs marke therefore, that if in case we yeeld to the reigning of God ouer vs, wee shall bee maintained by him, in such sorte, as men shall not bee able to oppresse vs. And if at any time the wicked haue their scope, and seeme to set their feete as it were vppon our throtes; let vs vnderstand that God doth bring vs lowe, because wee haue offended him, and because wee haue not rendred him the praise that belongeth vnto him; and that hee chastiseth vs according to our desertes. But yet must wee euer come backe to this point, that if we cast not off GOD, wee shall bee receiued of him, in such wise as hee will be vnto vs as an armie, and make vs able to walke with Psal. 3. 4. our heades vpright: as it is sayd in the third psalme. So then, this blessing serued not onely for the fathers that liued vnder the lawe, but it continueth also vnto the end of the world, and wee shall vnderstand that it is not vaine, so wee followe in lykewise that which is added here: *Keepe the commaundements which I sette before thee this day*, (sayth Moses) *that thou swarue not neither to the right hand nor to the left, to goe to seeke straunge Gods and to worship them.* Wee see how GOD doth euer put vs in minde of obedience to his worde: and that is to the end wee should serue him, not in hypocrisie, whereunto wee bee too much enclined. Let vs remember therefore this lesson, which is, that to worship our GOD syncerely, we must euermore begin at the hearkening to his voyce, and of giuing eare to that which he commaundeth vs; for if euery man goe after his owne way, wee shall wander, wee may well runne, but wee shall bee neuer a whit the neerer to the right way, but rather the further off from it. And God will not onely bee heard, but also obeyed of all men without exception, yea euen without adding any thing to his worde, or without taking any thing from it. And this is expresly sayd: For that men dare be so bold as to bring in their newe manner of seruing GOD, and to doe that which they suppose to bee good. Contrariwise let vs vnderstand that when GOD hath once shewed what he will haue vs to doe, wee must simply holde vs there, without presuming to adde thereunto or to diminish it by any meanes at all. But aboue all thinges hee would haue vs to acknowledge him to bee our GOD. For the very cause that maketh men to stray, and altogether to vanish in so many superstitions and idolatries, is that they knowe not what GOD they ought to worship. Wee haue therefore profited greatly in the Gospell, in the Lawe and in the Prophets, when we haue the skill to say, This is the GOD that shewed himselfe to Abraham, the GOD that shewed himselfe by Moses, the God that lastly shewed himselfe fully in the person of his onely sonne, and the same is hee that is our God. As it is also sayde in the Prophet Esay, where hee speaketh of the manifestation of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Loe, this is hee; Loe, Esay 25. 9 this is our GOD. Then let vs haue a setled faith, that wee be not rouers; let vs not bee like vnto little children, nor lyke wauering Reedes that are caryed euery way; but let our faith be well stayed, by taking roote in our Lorde Iesus Christ.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our finnes, beseeching him so to teach vs with true repentance, that we may bewaile them, and be heartily sory for our corruption, to the end to withdrawe vs more and more, and therein to reforme vs. And forasmuch as we bee not onely fraile but also altogether froward: it may please him to bring vs home againe vnto him, and to vnderproppe our weakeneſſe with his mightineſſe, so as we may ouercome all the hinderances that serue to turne vs from him; and that we may with perfect constancie go on to the marke whereunto he calleth vs, vntill we attaine to the perfection of all righteousneſſe. And that in the meane while, it may please him to vphold vs in such sorte, as that albeit we should faile, yet he ceaſe not to take vs still for his children, and make vs to vnderstand more and more, that he dooth confirme vs in the truſt of our saluation. That it may please him, to graunt this grace not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On

On Friday the xiij. of March, 1556.

The CLVI. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

15 But if thou wilt not obey the voyce of the Lorde thy God, in keeping and doing all his commaundementes and ordinances, which I commaund thee this day, then shall all these curses come vpon thee and take holde of thee.

16 Thou shalt bee cursed in the citie and likewise cursed in the feelde.

17 Thy basket shalbee cursed and thy store.

18 Cursed shalbee the fruite of thy wombe, and the fruite of thy lande, the increase of thy kyne, and of the flocks of thy sheepe.

19 Thou shalt bee cursed in thy comming in, and cursed in thy going out.

20 The Lorde will sende vppon thee cursednesse, trouble, and destruction in all that euer thou putteſt thine hande vnto, and in all that thou doest, vntill hee hath destroyed thee, and thou quickely perish, because of thy euil inuentions, through the which thou hast forsaken mee.

21 The Lorde will make the pestilence to cleaue vnto thee, till it hath consumed thee from the lande, which thou goest to possesse it.

22 The Lorde will strike thee with swellings and with the feuers, and with whote diseases, and with burning sickenesses, and with drought, and with sworde, and with blasting windes, and with the yellowe laundis, and hee will pursue thee vntill hee haue vtterly destroyed thee.

23 And the heauen which is ouer thy head, shalbee brasse, and the earth vnderneath thee shalbee yron.

24 In steede of rayning vppon the earth, the Lorde will giue thee dust and ashes: and hee will come downe from heauen vppon thee, vntill thou bee destroyed.

WE haue seen these other dayes past, howe God entreated his people by promises: nowe on the contrarie part hee addeth threatenings. And that is not without cause, for we see what slowenesse is in vs, when the case concerneth the submitting of our selues to the obeying of God. Our feete are swifte ynough to runne to euill, as the Prophet Esay sayeth, and as it is spoken in the Prouerbes, but God cannot make vs to set foorth one steppe, to behaue our selues as becommeth vs: and therefore wee must bee compelled to it, as of force. Neuertheleſſe, it is certaine that God beginneth with gentlenes and goodnesse. And that is the cause why hee keepeth this order of setting foorth his blessings vnto them that serue him. Hee mought very well haue begunne with threateninges, but hee did it not. And why? Hee tryeth to see whether wee bee apt to bee taught, by shewing himselfe fatherly towards vs, and by making it to bee seene, that hee seeketh nothing but our benefite and welfare, prosperitie, and quietnesse.

Thus wee see howe God doeth first make a tryall of vs: and if that preuaile not; then hee vseth threatenings; and it behoooueth those two to goe ioyntly togither. For to what purpose is it, if wee serue not God with a free will? Albeit that men cannot fynde any fault with vs: yet, if wee goe to it vnwillingly, all our life is detestable. For the cheefe poynt is that wee haue a pure and free good wil, to giue our selues ouer vnto God. For wee must not haue our eye to the reward: and therefore doth it much more followe in reason, that if we goe to it by constraynt, all our life is cursed. Yet notwithstanding, this desire of seruing God because it is not lost labour, is not all that wee haue to do. For when wee bee come to that poynt, wee are but at the halfe way. Although a man receiue

the promises which bee heere contayned, and offer himselfe to God to serue him: yet his so dooing is vnperfect, and deserueth to bee cast off. Wherefore? Because (as I haue sayde) wee may not bee hyrelings: but our yeelding of our selues vnto our God, must bee because wee bee his, and because hee is woorthie to haue our lyfe employed in his obedience, and specially for that hee is our father. Hee beginneth at the promises because of our infirmitie, to set vs the more forwarde. And when hee hath brought vs on so farre, then he manifesteth vnto vs a greater perfection,

But to be short, we haue to marke, that there are three sorts of people which keepe the law of God in outwarde shewe. One sort dooth it by compulsion, with gnashing their teeth at it, and they doe discharge it after a fashion. And wherefore? Because they knowe well that they cannot escape the hande of God, they feare his anger and his vengeance; and therefore doe they serue him; but that is by compulsion. But as I haue sayde, all this is reprooued. Another sort takes the middle way: for they knowe that God is faithfull, and that such as serue him shall not lose their labour: these harken to the promises which bee expressed in holy Scripture. And so a great many doe yeelde themselues to serue God, because hee allureth them thereunto by promising them reward, as we haue seene before. But, as I sayde, wee may not stay there; but wee must rather consider, that forasmuch as God hath made and fashioned vs, redeemed vs, and is our father, the same ought to suffice vs although we had no respect vnto that which hee promiseth vs: and forasmuch as hee hath preuented vs with his mercie: and sheweth him selfe so bountifull towards vs: his so doing ought to inflame vs with an ardent affection to serue him. This is one of the principall poyntes of our life. But (as I sayde afore) our Lorde in his lawe hath respect to our rawnesse: and therfore hee promiseth to rewarde vs, to the intent wee shoulde haue the better courage. And in deede though wee serue God with affection neuer so pure and freely imployed, yet must wee alwayes wayt for that which is promised vs, and staye thereupon. Wee must (I say) hope for his blessing, when we haue serued him with a good courage: but wee may not doe it to that end: wee must not bee drawne by this respect onely. For (as I haue sayde) wee must bee his children, and honour him as our father. And as it is hee that doeth vpholde vs: so must wee assure our selues that it is not for vs to imagine any merite in our selues, but that hee accepteth vs of his owne onely infinite goodnes; and therefore that wee for our parte, must seeke nothing but to vowe and dedicate our selues wholly vnto him. Howsoeuer the case stand, let vs learne, that when God hath set his promises before vs, hee must also bee sayne to spurre vs forwarde. Wherefore? Because our nature is full of rebellion against him: wee bee not onely slowe: but also there is in vs an inclination to drawe quite backewarde from that which GOD commaundeth vs. If there were no more but slouthfulnesse, yet were that such a vice as were woorthie to bee corrected, and therefore wee should haue neede of the threatenings that are mentioned heere. But seeing wee be so frowarde to bee ruled, that wee bee alwayes kicking, so as God cannot reclayme vs nor inure vs to his yoke: it appeareth that the menaces bee double necessarie. And heerein there is very iust cause to condemne vs, seeing that God cannot winne vs to loue, but is sayne to shewe himselfe dreadfull, to make vs afrayde, without the which wee woulde lye still asleepe. Seeing then that God deales so finely with vs, when hee traineth vs gently, seeking nothing but to make vs to followe him with a willing heart; let vs acknowledge our frowardnesse and condemne our selues: and therewithal let vs also confesse the fatherly care that God hath of our saluation, seeing he vseth all meanes which hee knoweth to be meete for vs. For it is all one, as if hee should (as yee woulde say) transfigure himselfe. His onely respect is to reclayme vs. One whyle hee smyleth on vs, and another whyle hee frowneth at vs. But yet all tendeth to this poynt, namely, that we may bee drawen vnto him, to giue ouer our selues to his seruice.

Now will some man say, Seeing that it is so, our life displeaseth God, & that he reproueth same when we serue him by compulsion: if the threatnings leaue vs there, what do they auale? It were better that God should forbeare them. But let vs marke that he trayneth vs by degrees according as he knoweth it necessary for vs. It is certaine, that if nothing but feare do bring vs to serue god, it is nought worth: howbeit it is a good preparatiue, that leadeth vs farther on, after hauing begun at it. As for example: before God hath meekened vs, we be ful of pryde, & our flesh is altogither rebellious: & to be short, we be as coltes that were neuer sadled nor bitted. God must be faine to prepare vs & to bring vs in order, which thing to do, he vseth threatnings. But this (as I haue said) were nothing at all, vnlesse he inured vs to a voluntarie obedience & subiection afterward. And when we tend thitherwarde, we haue greatly profited in that this pryde of ours is beaten down, & we be no more so wylfull, but that we know that there is a Iudge before whome we must make account; & that the same consideration restraineth vs from vsing such looseness any more, & from being so heady in doing euil, as we haue bin. This is a beginning, & in deede it is but a beginning, in so much that if we shold stay there, wee were not yet plucked out of the mire. But when we haue thus begun, then doth the Lord match his threatnings with a tast of his goodnes in such sort as we be drawn vnto him. And in so doing he sheweth himself to be our father. Now when we vnderstand that God in deede is ready to rewarde vs when wee haue serued him, albeit that wee bee not able to deserue any thing, but rather doe prouoke his wrath: thereupon wee must haue our refuge to his mere mercie, to obtayne remission of our sinnes, as it is offered

vnto

vnto vs in our Lorde Iesus Christ, and as hee hath purchased it for vs by his death & passion. When we be thus reformed, and rid of all trust in our owne woorkes, then ought wee to offer vp our selues willingly in sacrifice vnto GOD, as Saint Paul also doth exhort vs in the twelfth Chapter to the Romanes. Hee setteth vs forth no rewarde, but saith: I beseeche you brethren, by the mercie and compassion that God hath shewed towardes you, that euery one of you renounce this worlde, and also himselfe, that you become liuely sacrifices vnto GOD: for that is your reasonable seruice.

But yet some man will reply againe and saye: If threatenings make vs readie for the promises of God, it seemeth that they shoulde bee placed in the first ranke, and that the promises shoulde followe them. But the answere to this doubt is: that God will holde vs more conuicted before him, when hee beginneth with vs by his promises. For wee cannot say but that there is a shamefull thankelesnes in vs, seeing that wherein our Lorde seeketh onely to winne vs by loue, wee notwithstanding deale frowardly with him, and drawe backewarde, when hee commeth so louingly towardes vs. Yee see then howe the promises are set before vs in the first place, that we might bee the better repenented of our frowardnesse. But hath God shewed vs that his goodnesse would not auayle vs, except he threatened vs? then doeth he vse rigour, and ye same rigour doeth profite vs, forsomuch as wee bee touched therewith, and our hearts are daunted. I meane not all, for there be many that take the bytte in their teeth to stryue against God: but I meane the faithfull. Those are they that bee prepared for ye promises of God, through threatnings. Afterwarde God turneth yet agayne, and allureth them newe agayne with his goodnesse, as is sayde afore: in so much that when he hath stonned them with his threateninges, to tame the stubbornesse of their flesh: (as surely it is requisite that God shoulde shewe some signe of his wrath:) thereuppon hee setteth before vs his mercie, which is the accomplishment of al, to the ende (as I haue sayde) that wee shoulde learne to yeeld our selues wholly vnto him with a true disposed affection.

Nowe let vs come to the wordes that bee set downe heere. *If thou wilt not obey the voyce of the Lord thy God, to keepe his commandements & statutes which I set before thee this day: all these curses shall come vppon thee, and take holde of thee.* Heere Moses speaketh expressely to such as haue been trayned in the worde of God. True it is that they which offend without the lawe, shall perish nevertheless, as Saint Paul sayth in the second Chapter to the Romanes. And in verie deede we see that the ignorant and blynde escape not vnpunished at Gods hande. Albeit that they might pleade that they were not taught: yet are they faultie ynough. But let vs note, that heere our Lorde doeth double his curse vppon those vnto whome hee hath shewed such fauour, as to manifest his wil vnto them, and to shew them the waye of saluing health, had they obeyed him, and yeelded themselues vnto his doctrine. This then is not generall to all men. But God doeth first of all shewe, that when hee hath giuen his lawe, and published it abroade. The fault is in the people that they vnderstande it not. This is the cause why Moses doeth expressely say: the commaundementes and statutes, which I set before you this day. When hee sayeth, *Commandements and statutes*, it serueth to shewe that they conteyne a sufficient instruction, accordingly as wee haue tolde you heere before, that God hath not spoken by halues: but that hee hath so taught his people, as they cannot reply and say, Wee wote not what these things meane. Loe heere the *Statutes & commandements which I set before you*, sayeth Moses. If you applye your indeuour to them, you cannot doe amisse. And therefore let vs beare well in mynde, that according as God hath deliuered vs his worde, our vngodlinesse is doubled before him, and our punishment must bee so much the more grieuous, if wee bee not willing to doe good, yea, and also profite therein, and from day to day bee established in his obedience. That is the thing which wee haue to consider vppon that saying.

Moreouer when hee sayeth: *If thou wilt obey the voyce of the Lorde thy God*: it serueth to touch vs throughly to the quicke. For seeing that God vouchesafeth to speake vnto vs: is it not meete that wee shoulde at the least giue eare vnto him? And if wee play the deafe folkes, is it not a matter contrary to nature? For if wee woulde not heare our equall, hee woulde take it in disdayne, and much more woulde our superiour. And whereas God hath all soueraigne dominion ouer vs, and hath done vs the fauour to deliuer vs his worde, and acquainteth himselfe familiarly with vs, if hee synde vs stubborne against him, disdayning to heare him; is it not meete that hee shoulde auenge him of such a contempt? Specially when hee seeth such a villaynous statelynesse in vs, which bee but wormes of the earth. The thing then which wee haue to remember vppon this text, is that heere Moses intended to condemne the vngodlinesse of men that doe still continue hardhearted, notwithstanding that God giue them the meane to returne, by setting his woorde before them.

Nowe, when hee sayeth that these curses shall take holde of vs; it behoooueth vs to remember that which was spoken of here before. For in speaking of the blessings of GOD, hee sayde; Thou shalt bee compassed round about; and nowe hee doeth in like wise ioyne the curses in the same manner, so that wee may not thinke to escape the hande of God. Howe slye so euer wee bee, wee shalbee alwayes entrapped, it wil not boote vs to seeke starting holes, according to this saying of his by his Prophet, If thou goe into thy house, and shut thy doore and double barre it, yet shall the serpent come in and sting thee there. If thou goe into the feeld, & seek meanes to escape, thou shalt meet wt a lyon vppon ye way: if thou slip aside from ye lyon,

Deut. 28. 6.

Amos. 5. 19. & 9. 1. 2. 3. 4.

a Beare shall meete thee, and to bee short, whatsoeuer men doe, when God is against them, & is become, as it were, their enimie, they must needes fynde that they bee surprised, caught, and entrapped, and enuironed rounde about with these curses, without any hope to get out. Therefore, let vs not deceiue our selues in seeking worldly meanes to saue vs: for if the hand of God bee lifted vp against vs, (as wee shall see in the song heere at hande) Hee hath his storehouse full of roddes, and not of three or foure sortes onely, but of infinite: and if wee suppose that wee are escaped, when wee haue ouercome some one euill; then wee deceiue our selues: for God hath by and by an hundred moe. Let vs then looke for all manner of woe, if wee obey not Gods lawe. But it were a miserable appeale if wee shoulde come vnto God by compulsion, onely for feare of his punishments. What must wee then doe? Wee must submit our selues willingly vnto him, praying him to keepe vs from procuring his wrath, and from warring against him, and from inforcing him to come to defie vs. That were as if some petie lorde woulde attempt warre against a great Prince; hauing neither strong towne, nor munition, nor ought else: and yet woulde needes presume to defye one that is able to swallowe him vp, if hee did but lift vp his finger against him; and were not that a madnesse? Likewise, when wee prouoke our God, by setting our selues against him wittingly, hee must needes besette vs, and holde vs as in prison. Wherefore, let vs pray him not to suffer vs to bee so farre ouerseene, as to fall to defying of him: but that wee simply obey him, so as wee may bee crowned and encompassed with his blessings; according as it is sayde in the two and thirtith Psalme. Hee that putteth his trust in God, shalbee crowned with his benefites: that is to say, God will make him to possesse his blessings rounde about him, and hee shalbee so throughly fenced on all sides with his sauegarde, that hee shall not neede to feare. Albeit that wee bee layde open to neuer so many dangers, yet shall wee be preserued through his goodnes. Now as touching that which he addeth; we haue expounded here before.

Deut. 32. 23

Psal. 32. 10.

Concerning the curses, he sayth: *Thou shalt bee cursed in the towne, thou shalt bee cursed in the fielde, thy comming in shalbee cursed, thy going forth shalbee cursed, the fruite of thy woombe shalbee cursed, and the fruites of thy cattle and of all thy flockes.* Hereby are wee againe done to vnderstande, that all the euil which wee see in this worlde, proceedeth from the hande of God. By the worde *euil* I vnderstande all the punishmentes, and all the wretchednesse whereunto wee bee subiect, according also as he speaketh thereof by his Prophet Esay, saying: I am the Lorde which made both light and darkenesse, which haue in my power both life and death, and which doeth both the good and the euill. Hee vseth this kinde of speeche purposely: not that the euill, whereof wee bee faultie, doeth proceede from God, nor that it ought to bee imputed vnto him: it is not so. But hee meaneth that all the miseries and calamities which wee suffer in this worlde, be as it were so many chastisementes: wee may not attribute them to haphazarde, as shalbee more plainly touched hereafter; where God sayeth, If you will needes come against mee at all aduenture, I will in like wise come against you at all aduenture. Hee vseth the same verie worde. And wherefore? Because that men doe blinde their owne eyes, and saye; Loe, what misfortune is befallen me? When they be any wayes afflicted, they cast out spyteful speeches against God and ouershoote themselues, not considering that God is a Iudge, and gouerneth the worlde by his prouidence; they are not able to perceiue that, so dull and senselesse bee they. And that is the cause why Moses vseth this kind of declaration, and so large in this text. And it serueth to bring vs to that which I alleged euen nowe out of the Prophet Esaye; where GOD sheweth that hee made both light and darkenesse, and did both the good and the euill. Wee may not heere conceiue vayne thoughtes, saying, Whence commeth this vnto mee? It is a misfortune. Woulde God it were not so. But wee must acknowledge the hand that smyteth vs; for that is greate wisedome. And for the same cause doeth God complayne thus by his other Prophete: This people haue not regarded the hande that smote them. Yee see then howe wee must vnderstande that all the afflictions and miseries which wee endure in this worlde, bee verie strokes of Gods owne hande. And euen in that respect it is sayde by the Prophet Amos: Is there any euill in the city which God hath not done? That is to saye, can there happen either warre, or pestilence, or famine, or diseases, or pouertie, or any other calamitie whatsoeuer it bee, that commeth not to you from God? Wretched people, bee you so foolish and beastly, as to imagine, that God which created the worlde, doeth leaue it at randon, and hath no care to watche ouer his creatures, or to bestowe on them, that which hee thinketh meete for them, sometimes to shewe his goodnesse, and sometimes to make them feele that hee is a Iudge, and to punish mens sinnes, and to make them to knowe what his office is? Thinke you that hee dwelleth ydle in heauen, and that he vttereth not his vertue, or that the worlde is not guyded and gouerned by his prouidence? So then, like as heeretofore God hath shewed that wee cannot prosper, but through his grace and loue that hee beareth vs, in that hee hath chosen vs for his children, and wil also accept our seruice; so nowe hee sheweth in like wise, that if there bee any affliction, pouertie, or other miserie, they come not by happehazarde: but are very punishmentes of Gods sending: and therefore when thinges fall not out after our liking, wee must fall to considering & examining of our sinnes. If wee bee grieued with any manner of thing, so as one is troubled with his housholde, an other with the losse of his goods, another with some disease, another with some vexation of mynde, and an other with the forgoing of some thing that he loueth: but

Esa. 45. 7.

Lam. 3. 38.

Amos. 3. 6

Deut. 8. 18.

let vs acknowledge, saying; Loe, it is our God that hath lifted vp his hand, & holdeth it vp stil. And wherefore? Because that wee haue offended him. The first point then is, that men may not flatter them selues when God visiteth them: but they must know, that by this meanes they are made to vnderstande their offences, to the end to humble themselues, and to bewayle them. Thus much for one point.

The seconde poynt is, that wee must not thinke to escape the scourges of God, bee wee neuer so subtile; but that wee shall euer bee caught by the backe, if God bee against vs. And well may wee make vs sheeldes, and rampyres: but when wee haue practised what wee can: yet will not our Lorde misse to finde vs, he needs but to blowe vppon all our defences whereby wee thinke to garde our selues against him. It is not like as if wee shoulde haue to doe with creatures. Against them wee might fortifie our selues both behynde and before; but God will knocke vs on the pates from heauen. Wee can haue neither shielde nor rampaire against him, in hope thereby to stoppe his hande from touching vs, when it pleaseth him to punish vs.

Againe, to what ende shall all the fortifications serue that wee are able to buylde against him, but to ouerthrowe our selues? Let vs therefore vnderstande, that all that euer men can do against God, shall turne to their owne confusion, and vtter ouerthrowe. That is the thing which Moses meant, when hee sayde, *That wee shalbe cursed in the towne and in the fielde, that wee shalbe cursed in our going foorth, and in our comming in, if wee obey not the voyce of our God*. And as hee sayde afore, that God will open his good treasure from heauen, to giue vs rayne in due time; so nowe he sayth, That *God will make our heauen as braste, and our earth as Iron, and that in stede of rayne hee will sende vs droughts, he will sende vs dust and ashes, and there shalbee nothing but barrennesse amongest vs*. Here wee must cal againe to mynde the lesson that hath beene layde out breefely before: that is, that according as euery one of vs is visited by the hande of God, wee shoulde benefite our selues thereby and euery man applye that to his owne vse which is heere mentioned. For God vseth many wayes to chastice vs. One is punished in his owne person with diseases, reproche, and I wote not what else: an other hath some secrete heartbyting, so that although hee bee whole in bodye, yet hee ceaseth not to bee tormented in minde: another is plagued with his wife or with his children: and another is troubled with his substance. According therefore as euery one fyndeth him selfe afflicted, so let him resort to this that is tolde vs heare, saying: Alas, I see howe my God calleth mee vnto him, I may not nowe prouoke him: for what shall I winne by vsing many wyndlasses as the worldlinges doe, who desire to fall a sleepe in their miseries, and the onely comfort which they seeke, is to haue no regarde to God. Nowe if wee doe so; then must that which is spoken in the two & thirtith Psalme bee practised vppon vs, to wit, that God will deale with sturdie and hardharted folkes as with restiue horses, and maddie moyles. As hereafter wee shall see more at length. So then yet must wee come to the sayde poynt of feeling of Gods hande, according as euery one is afflicted, first in his owne behalfe, and then in common. When we see a drought, let vs not accuse the heauen nor yet the ayre, saying it was the disposition of them. Let vs not doe, as the fantasticall folke doe, which looke no higher than the starres; but let vs thinke vppon the hande of God: that as many afflictions as fall vppon vs, may bee vnto vs as visible signes and markes that God executeth the office of a Iudge towarde vs: and that although hee condemneth vs, as often as hee punisheth vs, yet the same is not a condemnation to the death, but a summoning of vs to appeare before him, there to frame newe processe against vs. This is a poynt which wee ought to marke well. Therefore when wee feele any euill or greefe, let vs vnderstande that we haue offended God; but let vs thinke therewithall, that God neuertheless meaneth not to execute a finall sentence vppon vs, when hee calleth vs againe vnto him. To what ende then is it? Is it to condemne vs without mercie? No: but hee doeth vs this fauour, that wee might bee our owne Iudges. When hee doeth summon vs, it is to the ende that euery one shoulde plead guilte of his owne good will, and thereupon aske him forgiuenesse, and flee for refuge to his mercie. Loe heere an inestimable priuilege. And so let vs benefite our selues both priuately and publikely by the things that are tolde vs heere: That when wee see the heauens burning hote, and wee aske rayne, and yet goe without it, so as the fruites doe fayle vppon the grounde, and the heate dryeth vp all thinges: let vs vnderstande that it is the hande of GOD which visiteth vs, and let vs confesse our sinnes with one common accorde. And if any man feele anye housholde vexation, let him confesse; Well, GOD doeth waken mee by this visitation, because I haue offended him. Thus the cheefe studie, wherein God woulde haue the faithfull to exercise themselues, is the examining of their sinnes, after this manner: whereby it will come to passe, that (as Salomon sayeth) Blessed is the man which doeth trouble and quicken vp himselfe, not that wee must so trouble our selues, as to fall into vnmeasurable despaire: but wee must quicken vp our selues with feare, because the diuell seeketh nothing else, but to make vs dull and blockish, to the ende wee shoulde offende God, and bleare out our tongues against him like as wee see these despisers doe, which set themselues against him, dashing at him with their hornes, and vomiting out their blasphemies. To the intent therefore that wee come not to that passe, wee must quicken vp our selues with feare and trembling: which can not bee done, vnlesse wee profite vnder the correction of our God, and consider, that when hee visiteth vs, it is to call vs vnto him.

Psal. 32.9.

Pro. 28.14.

It is to the ende that wee ſhould make our owne inditement, and not tarry the laſt laying of his hande vpon vs, but preuent him, that (as ſayeth Saint Paul) they which condemne themſelues, may not bee condemned of him. b Cor. 11. 31.

Nowe finally it is here declared vnto vs, that the courſe of nature, as we call it, is nothing but the diſpoſition of the will of God, and that hee beareth ſuch rule ouer both heauen and earth, and ouer raine and faire weather: that he changeth them at his owne pleaſure, and yet ſendeth them not without cauſe. If there were a permanent order in nature, it woulde ſeeme vnto vs that God medled not with it; wee woulde graunt that hee hath made the worlde, but yet woulde wee ſay that hee doeth not gouerne vs: wee woulde thinke thus: What? when the ſpring time commeth, wee ſee that the reſt of the yere goeth on in one egall courſe, as did the yeare laſt before paſt. It is always one. But we ſee one winter longer, and another winter later, and an other rather, and laſt longer: wee ſee one winter raynie, and another drye: we ſee abundance of ſnowe in one yeare, and another yeare none at all: one yeare whote, and another cold. Nowe, doeth not ſuch inequalitie make it manifeſt that God muſt needes woorke? For the Sunne doeth his office in one yeare aſwell as in another, and euer keepeth his iuſt compaſſe, better than the beſt ruled clocke in the worlde. And how then commeth ſuch a varietie? It is Gods dooing to call vs vnto him. Truely the Philoſophers doe ſeeke out the cauſes (as they terme them) there is ſuch a meeting of ſtarres (ſay they,) and this proceedeth of ſuch coniunctions. But whence commeth all this? Euen from the hand of God. Wee muſt euer reſort to the firſt cauſe. And in deede, they bee more than beaſtes, if they will not yeelde to that.

Yet is it not ſufficient to knowe that God guydeth all his creatures, and that hee holdeth them brydeled to make them to bowe, as a horſe man maketh his horſe to turne on this hande and on that hand, to ſtoppe, & to runne. All reſteth not in knowing that God looſeth & holdeth, and ſendeth ſuch changes as him liſteth: but we muſt vnderſtande further that God doth nothing without cauſe. For if wee ſay that God gouerneth the worlde, and know not wherfore hee doeth plague vs, wee ſhalbee quickely enclyned to murmure againſt him: and in the meane whyle wee ſhall not profite vnder his chaſticementes and corrections, but continue ſtill dulled in our ſinnes. So then let vs marke, that in ſhutting vp the heauen ſo as it yeeldeth no rayne, and in drying vp the earth, as it were Iron: thereby hee doeth ſhewe vs our ſinnes, & that hee is our Iudge. This is it that wee haue to beare in mynde as concerning the courſe of nature, according as it is heere declared vnto vs.

Neither is God contented to ſaye that the heauen ſhalbee as braſſe, but hee ſayeth alſo, *That hee will ſende vs aſhes and grauell or ſande in ſtedde of raine*. Like as wee ſee the Caterpillers that eate, marre, and deſtroy all that is on the earth: there needeth but one blaſting or mildewe to eate the corne and to conſume it within. And it is more than if God ſhoulde ſowe ſalt. And theſe blaſtings or mildewes come not but of the dewe or elſe of the rayne, at leaſtwiſe they bee none other ſubſtance. But God needeth not but to make a little change, and to ſende a little ſharpe colde, and the ſame colde will make cleane riddance of all. When wee ſee ſuch thinges, let vs euermore take warning by this doctrine, and let vs bee no more intangled in our follies, to ſaye: Ah euill fortune, euill fortune: but let vs vnderſtande that our Lorde doeth call vs backe vnto him, and hath his hande ſtretched out: and let vs knowe that it is hee that ſmyteth; as if hee ſhoulde ſaye: I haue gone about to drawe you vnto me by faire meanes, but you haue not humbled you before mee. Seeing then that you will not be brought to it willingly, I will now compel you, as though I drewe you by the hayre of the head. Let vs (I ſay) bee admoniſhed by this teaching, that is here mentioned, to preuent the wrath and vengeance of God, ſo often as hee giueth vs aduertiſement of the ſame.

Againe, when God maketh the earth fruitful, let vs acknowledge it to bee his worke, and that there ſpringeth not a blade of graſſe, but hee hath put thereunto his hande. Let vs then take our dayly foode of him: that is to ſaye, let vs not cramme our ſelues like bruite beaſtes, which fill their bellies, not knowing whether there bee a Creator that cauſeth the earth to bring them foorth foode: but let vs vnderſtande that God bleſſeth the earth, and cauſeth it to yeelde fruite for our nouriſhment and ſuſtenance; let vs beare it ſo in mynde, that aſwell in affliction as in proſperitie wee may turne our eyes euermore vnto God. And it is expreſſely ſayde further, *That God will make the peſtilence ſo cleaue vnto vs, and that hee will ſende other diſeaſes, and that they ſhall continue vpon vs, vntill we bee conſumed by them.* This ſhoulde yet a little better waken vs, ſeeing that God ſtriketh not (as it were) a blowe, and away; but that his curſes ſhal followe vs, and cleaue vnto vs, vnleſſe wee forſake our ſinnes and wickednes. Finally let vs learne, that they which indent with God, and fleete away againe from day to morrowe, doe deceiue themſelues. As for example, wee ſee many which when God doeth ſende them any affliction, will haue ſome regarde of it: but they haue doone with it by and by. They doe but ſhake their eares, and thinke they haue ouercome it. And like as a dogge that hath a yerke with a whippe, they turne their backe and runne away, bearing themſelues in hande that they may pacifie God by ſome ſhift. Thus dealeth the worlde. But let vs beware of ſuch blockiſhneſſe. For wee ſee what is ſayde expreſſely in this place. After that God hath ſpoken of his curſes, and added that they ſhal be hemmed in with thē, he cōcludeth, they ſhal cleaue vnto vs. And wherefore? If we cleaue to our iniquities, ſo as they raigne in our bones and in our marow, and be fixed in our beartes and mindes; then

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must the curses of God followe vs also. When a man will not doe away his euill affections, but is delighted in them and continueth saping in them, God for his part must needes shut him vp in it, and when we doe so; he must needes sende vs his curses to sticke fast vnto vs like a leprosie that it may consume vs vtterly; so that it shal be to no purpose to lay playsters thereunto, for the healing of that which is to deeply rooted within and is become in manner vncurable. Therefore lette vs bee afraide at the hearing of these thinges. And so we see nowe to what purpose Moses addeth that the curses of God shal cleaue vnto vs: namely to warne vs, that if the mischiefe haue taken roote, we must straine ourse lues the more in praying to God, to shewe to vs the fauour that his holy Spirite may cleanse vs, as to whom it belongeth to search the bottome of our secrete affections; that it may please him to reuiue vs, in such wise, as this feare may serue vs for a maruellous purgation, to expulse our sinnes from vs, and that we may no more be so wedded vnto them as we haue beene.

And therewithall let vs knowe, that when diseases beginne to reigne, or any other afflictions, it is not for vs to hope for any ende thereof, vnlesse we cease to offende our God. It is sayde in a common prouerbe, that diseases come on horsebacke, that is to say very quickely, and that they returne againe on foote; that is to say verie slowely. But we consider not the cause though it be neuer so apparant. And that is (as I haue sayde afore) because we looke not to the hande that smyteth vs; neither can God winne vs vnto him with the first stroke, when he punisheth vs. Surely wee will make him fayre protestations. When a man is sicke, hee will protest that his whole desire is to serue God, and that if he may recouer his health, the worlde shall see him a newe man. But all is quickely forgotten. Therfore it is no wonder though in steede of mitigating our punishmentes, God doe diuers times increase them, and suffer vs to languish in our aduersities. It is because he seeth that our diseases be deepe rooted, that he must come again oftener than once or twise to purge vs of them. And therefore let vs learne to pray vnto him, to vouchsafe to cure our faultes in such wise, as they may not proceede to the extremitie here expressed: but that so soone as wee feele a litle stroke of the rod of his hande, the same may be sufficient to bring vs againe vnto him: yea euen with such repentaunce, as may shewe that we deale not fainedly: but that it be done in simple trueth, and we also continue therein to the ende.

Now let vs fall down in the sight of our good God, accusing our whole life of the malice and rebellion that is therein: beseeching him to vouchsafe to chastice vs in suchwise with gentlenesse, and to spare vs in such sorte, as wee be not cast downe into dispaire; but that we may rather be brought home againe vnto him. And therewithall, forasmuch as wee cease not to offende him: and it is also necessarie that he should daily call vpon vs, and waken vs, that we may fare the better by his corrections; let vs continue to lament and mourne, vntill the time that he haue ridde vs from all the corruptions of our flesh, & haue brought vs to the perfect righteousnesse, wherein lyeth our true rest: to wit, the heauenly blessednesse which we hope and looke for. And forasmuch as we can not obtaine any such matter, but by the meanes of our Lord Iesus Christ: it may please him to reconcile vs to God his father, by his death and passion, and in the meane space so to mortifie our old Adam, that his owne Image may be restored in vs, and his glory shine forth in y same. That it may please him to grant this grace, not onely vnto vs, but also to all people and Nations vpon earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xviij. of March, 1556.

The Lvij. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

25 And the Lorde will cause thee to bee beaten downe before thine enemies: Thou shalt goe foorth one way against them, and flee before them seuen wayes, and thou shalt be carried away into al the kingdomes of the earth.

26 And thy carkesse shalbe meate vnto all the foules of the ayre, and to the beastes of the earth, and no man shall skarre them away.

27 And the Lorde shall smite thee with the Botch of Egypt, with the Emerodes, and with scabbes, and with itch, whereof thou canneſt not be healed.

28 The Lorde also will strike thee with madnesse, and with blindenesse, and with astonishment of heart.

29 And thou shalt goe groping at nooneday, as a blinde body gropeth in the darke, & he will not make thy life prosperous: and thou shalt but suffer wrong and pollinges all day long, and no man shall deliuer thee.

IF we were threatned by a mortall man, as God threatneth vs in his lawe: surely we would be moued, albeit that hee had no great power ouer vs: wherein our vngodlinesse is to be seene, insomuch that although we endeuor to cloke it, yet it bewrayeth it self, in that we attribute more power to mortall creatures, than we doe to the liuing God. But hereby God intended to tie the honour and obedience that we beare him: to wit, namely in this, y hee assureth vs of his loue, we should rest all wholely thereupon, and hold ourselues contented therewith. And in likewise on the contrary side, that when he giueth vs any certaine token of his anger, we should quake thereat. Let vs take good heede therefore of the thing that is heere mentioned: namely that we be not so blockish as to make a skorne of gods wrath. But let vs returne to that which hath beene sayde already, to wit, that his hande must needes be against vs, if we liue not according to his lawe. It is certaine that men will naturally giue libertie to their lustes, to doe whatsoeuer God hath forbidden thē, and that they will not sticke to make warre against him. In deede they will not say so, yet doeth the thing shewe it selfe to be so. For when wee on our part haue defied him and assaulted him; is it not reason that he should arme himselfe against vs? True it is, that so long as we liue in this present worlde, the infirmitie of our flesh is such, as wee are not able in all respectes to satisfie the lawe of God. Neuertheless when men passe their bounds so farre that good and euill is to them all one; and that they striue not at all against their lustes: they shew themselues open enimies vnto God. And to that end also is it that Moses speaketh. Albeit that wee doe our endeuour to resist the euill, and that the feare of God doth brydle vs, yet cease we not to deserue to be chastized of him: as wee see the faithfull be not exempted from many afflictions: and that God reclaimeth them much rather than he doth the despisers of his maiestie. For as they be his children, so hath hee thē greater care ouer them: and therefore doth he chastise them the more earnestly. Howbeit Moses in this place speaketh but of such as harden themselues in stubbornesse, flinging out of course in such wise, as they make no conscience at all to doe euill. They neuer thinke that there is a Iudge in heauen, vntill he make them to feele his hande. And therefore he saith not, God will chastise you as a father doeth his children: but God will strike you mainely, you shall feele his hande, so roughly and liuely, y you shall not be able to abide it: and that not for one day but continually til ye be consumed and perished. Seeing then that we heare such threatninges, let vs vnderstande that they be prepared for such as are hardened in euill, and be not restrained with any feare, to sigh when they feele any euil temptation in themselues: but goe on, taking the bridle in their teeth, and make a mocke of God. And what shall followe of that? Ouer and besides the thinges which we haue seene heere before; Moses addeth, that God will smite such despisers with diuerse plagues. First that he will sende them enemies; and giue them power, to destroy and to consume them, insomuch that they shall persecute them euen in their dead carcasses, so as when they be discomfited, hee will not do them the honour to suffer them to be buryed, but leaue them for meate for the crowes, and for the beastes of the earth: and moreouer that he hath diuers other meanes to plague them in their bodies, by sending them diuerse diseases, as cankers, and other botches and scabbes, whereby they shall be brought to such an afterdeale, that they shall not haue as it were any more vnderstāding, but be vtterly out of their right wits, so as they shall grope at nooneday, as the blind doe in the darke. And surely the soreest point of Gods vengeance, is when men be so ouerthrowen that they haue no more the heart to returne vnto him, ne be able to recouer themselues to acknowledge their faultes, and to perceiue that when the hande of God doeth visite them, there is no helpe, except they make their refuge to his mercie: but abide astonished as men beside themselues. By which meanes God sheweth himselfe to be mortall enemie vnto them.

Now as touching that which Moses speaketh here of enemies: we see againe howe God holdeth the heartes of men in his hande: so that if we be in peace and anon warre is made against vs, and we wote not wherfore: (as I haue already shewed) it is because God is angry with vs and that forasmuch as wee haue spited him, hee must also warre against vs. He hath soudeers ynowe. As soone as he maketh any signe (as saith the Prophete) all the earth is moued, yea euen though a litle while before, no man thought it haue stirred. Let vs therefore vnderstand, that when warres are rowarde in the worlde, God sheweth tokens of his wrath. It is certaine, (as we haue already sayde) that albeit we serue God faithfully, and stande in his protection: yet wee shall not cease to haue enemies. For it is his will to exercise vs by that meanes: and it is the state of the Church, as it hath also alwayes bin. But ahis good commeth thereof, that God will maintaine vs against our enemies. When they haue deuised wonders against vs, yet shall they not bring their purpose about. They shalbe disappointed. And though they be as fierce as lyons, and full of desperate rage: yet will GOD tame them at the last: and though they continue in purpose to deuour vs, yet they shall not haue the power so doe it: But (as hath beene sayde afore) if they come against vs one way, they shall flee seuen wayes. But nowe it is sayde contrariwise that although we be of power aboue our enemies, and doe set vpon them in neuer so good order: so as the victory may seeme to be already gotten on our side, (as we see howe the wicked be enflamed with pride and presumption) yet when wee thinke our selues to haue gotten the goale, God will touch vs with such a feare as wee shall not knowe which way to runne fast ynough, but euery of vs shall be at his wittes ende. Let vs vnderstande hereby, that when God stirreth vp warres

Deut. 28.

we chastise vs, though wee be neuer so well furnished, and haue all the meanes that may be to resist, yet must we needs perish if God be against vs. For victorie is not obtained by the force and valure of men, but by the power of GOD, who for that cause is called the Lorde of hostes. And there is none other helpe for vs, but to bee at peace with God, that he may broode vs vnder his winges: accordingly as he vseth the same similitude, that he wil play the part of a henne to murder her chickinges. For then shall we be safe though all the world conspired our destruction. And albeit that our enemies be neuer so mightie and strong, and fully minded in their malice to destroy vs vtterly: yet is it sufficient y God doth succor vs: and y albeit we haue no succour of mẽ, yet are we sufficiẽtly fortified by his only power. But if we proceede to offende him: and he seeth that when he hath spared vs to recouer vs vnto him, we haue leauer to be aduersaries vnto him and to continue in our rebellion: then after hee hath borne with vs long ynough, he must needs bring vs to this point of being consumed by the hands of our enemies. And although others seeme as wicked as we, & that God doe not prosecute them more than vs: let not that deceiue vs. For God will sometime giue victory to the wicked, which be no better than we, but paraduenture worse; yet will hee not faile to destroye vs by their handes; and yet they shall haue their turne as well as we. But in the meane while, we must not thinke that this threatning is deliuered in vaine. Therefore let vs not compare ourselues with others, saying, O, are not they offenders aswell as we? And hath not GOD good cause to punish them? Yes, hee hath for he knoweth the due time and season, and he can vse them as seemeth good to himselfe: but let vs prepare ourselues to abide his blowes, if we stoppe our eares against his threatninges, and sleepe when he would waken vs. For if we giue no credit to his threatninges, wee must looke by effect, that hee which pronounceth them, hath power to put them in execution, and that he speaketh not, as they say, to scarre litle children. It is certaine that GOD will threaten often, before he execute iudgement. But herein let vs consider his long patience in tarying for vs. And if we abuse the same, it will nought else but a heaping vppe and a doubling of Gods wrath towardes vs: insomuch that it had beene better for vs that hee had rooted vs out the first day, than so long to haue forborne vs. Let scoffers say, that respit is worth golde. But there is no respit so long which we would not redeeme with a hundred deathes, if it were possible, when wee haue beene so stubborne against our GOD, and so disobedient to his worde, that we haue made but a laughing matter of his giuing of some token of his anger. Let vs therefore consider, that whilest that GOD doeth spare vs, hee giueth vs leasure to returne vnto him: and that if our enemies haue forborne vs, it is of his fauour shewed vnto vs, that we might preuent his wrath. But if wee will not heare him when he speaketh, nor receiue his warninges: it behoueth vs to giue eare to these his threatninges heere denounced, and he must be faine to studie vs to an other schoole. It is the wonderful goodnesse of our God, that when we haue thus prouoked him, as we see, yet hee forbeareth vs, and all to recouer vs vnto him; not by forcing vs with mayne strokes, but by alluring vs after a louing maniere, beeing ready to receiue vs to mercie, as though hee were not a Iudge to vexe vs and to condemne vs. But what? When wee haue contemned all this, it must fall out in the ende (as I haue sayde afore) that our Lorde must stirre vs vppe other maisters, so as the wicked may rise vp against vs, and seeke to make a slaughter of vs by butcherly murthering of vs, beeing in verie deede the executours of Goddes vengeaunce, whereof wee were warned long afore hande, and made but a laughing game of it, continuing still in our sinnes and wickednesse. That is the cause why I sayde, that so long as GOD speaketh vnto vs, and wee condemne ourselues, and acknowledge our sinnes, and seeke atonement with our GOD: that wee may liue in peace in this worlde: although it be Gods will, that wee shoulde haue enemies and be kept occupied with warres, yet neuerthelesse beeing he holdeth vs still in his keeping, and wee be maintained with defended by his power and goodnesse.

Now at sending that which Moses addeth, *That we shall be solde vnto our enemies for seruants and handmaides, and that there shall be no man to buy them:* all this seemeth to be a vaine threatning; for it is no matter whether a man be so or no. If a man be buried when he is dead, what is he either the better or the worse for it? It seemeth then at the first blush, that this should not be greatly regarded. But GOD doth heere shewe that he will make his wrathfull ire euen in the bodies of them that be dead. And in verie deede buriall is a priuiledge that GOD hath giuen to mankinde for a warrant of the resurrection. Let vs not thinke that the vse of burying the dead is proceeded of a foolishe superstition, or that men deuised it. It is true that the heathen haue vsed it, and that was a witnesse against them. And at the last day they shall be conuicted by their vsing of this Ceremonie, which should haue taught them to looke for the last resurrection; and their not considering of it is vnexcusable. For our buriall ought to be vnto vs as a liuely glasse or portrayture, to shewe vnto vs, that wee bee not created to goe after such a sorte in corruption, as though there were not an other life; and that we shoulde not be restored vnto a newe state. And it serueth alwayes for a larger declaration, that mankinde perisheth but for a time, and that their bodyes shall be renewed: Nowe forasmuch as buriall is as a memoriall of the Resurrection as I sayde afore; therefore is it giuen to men as a prerogatiue, to be buried: in respect whereof there is vsed an honest comelinesse, as who shoulde say that wee which remaine are taught as it were by eye sight to looke continually for a

second

seconde life. For the dead also doeth beare a certaine marke in his body, that he is as it were layde vppe in safe keeping, vntill the day come that GOD will rayse the dead againe. Nowe on the contrarie side: whereas it is sayde that men shall not be buried, but that they shall be eaten of beastes and foules: it is as much as if God ment to deprive them of the common benefite, that he hadde graunted to all mankinde: and as if he had shewed openly that both in life and in death they were accursed of him. And that is the cause why it is sayde: Thou shalt be buried with the buriall of an Asse: which thing was spoken by the Prophet to a King, euen the King of Iudah. But yet, because he would not be corrected, and that whereas GOD hadde giuen him the honour to beare in his life time the figure of Iesus Christ: yet notwithstanding forasmuch as he had abused the same and giuen ouer himselfe to all vngodlinesse: thou shalt be buried with the buriall of an asse (sayeth the Prophete.) Wee be heereby warned to haue verie great regarde of all the corrections that GOD sendeth vs: yea euen of the verie least: that wee ought be alwayes stirred vp to feare. For what is the cause, that wee passe ouer so many chastisementes of GOD, without profiting by them? Because wee shutte our eyes wilfully, and vnlesse we be compelled by verie force and necessitie, we are conuicted to beare ourselues in hande, that it is not GOD that chastiseth vs: and (as we shall see heereafter) we fall to such blockishenesse, as to attribute all to fortune. Leste vs therefore be admonished to marke all the corrections which GOD sendeth vs, both vppon our selues, and vpon our neighbours, that we may receiue warning by them: for seeing it is but a fatherly matter, not to be buried: yea and yet will God haue it noted, and to be vnderstoode that it is his hande, and that he sheweth himselfe a Iudge against such as haue offended him. Seeing that GOD will haue his Iudgementes shewen in so small thinges: leste vs bee aduised to haue more witte and discretion. As often as GOD giueth vs (as yee would say) but a fillippe, let vs be moued to thinke on him and not tarrie vntill hee drawe his swoorde, or bende his bowe to hit vs with a mortall wounde: but let vs by all manner of meanes humble ourselues vnder his hande. Moreouer wee haue heere, a Testimonie of the life euerlasting. True it is that this point was not so plainlie declared in the lawe, as it is to vs in the Gospell, neither that we should rise againe to the heauenly glory, nor that we should liue with God after our death. But yet for all that, the olde fathers did not leade the life of beastes, neither did God leaue them in such ignorance, as to haue their faith closed vppe in this present worlde and in this transitorie life. For heere we haue a recorde, that when we haue finished the course of this life, there is yet a greater Iudgement prepared for all men. And if GOD doe forebeare vs heere, and notwithstanding that wee escape all the curses mentioned in the lawe, euen to the ende: yet must we come to a greater reckening. For it were a needelesse matter for GOD to speake of depriuing menne of their buriall, if (as I sayde euen nowe) he had not a farther meaning in it. Therefore lette vs so vse this doctrine, as we may be prouoked to haue an eye to the life that is yet hydden from vs, and which wee looke for by faith: and let vs not thinke it shall greatly auaile vs, when GOD punisheth vs not in this worlde. For it is farre better for vs to linger heere beneath, and to be alwayes in miseries: than to enioye our ease and delightes, and that in the meane whyle GOD should but tarrie for vs, to thunder vppon vs when he hath taken vs out of this worlde. Thus yee see whereto this Texte of Moses doeth serue vs, where he sayeth, *The fowles of the ayre and beastes shall eate our carcases, and there is none shall driue them away.*

Ier. 22. 19.

Nowe if God giue such tokens of his wrath on the bodyes that haue no feeling: what shall become of the soules, wherein is the verie seate of euill, and the kingdome of Sathan? For our handes, our feete, our eyes, and our eares, offende not of their owne proper moouing: but by the direction and prouocation of our wicked thoughtes and affections. And whereof all those things, or whence proceede they but from our soules? Seeing then that the bodyes which were but instrumentes, doe feele the wrath of GOD, and doe answere to the same as we see: lette vs not suppose that the soules goe quit. Lette vs therefore looke euermore higher than to this transitorie life for so much vs, and to make vs to walke in such obedience, that after we haue fought against sinne, and against Sathan, and haue beene exercised in patience, and in diuerse afflictions in this worlde, hauing doone our endeuour to serue GOD with all diligence, our soules may be taken vp to rest, and that our Lorde in likewise may shew the selfe same fauour vppon our dead bodyes. Notwithstanding, this fauour and blessednesse of hauing their bodyes buried, doth not alwayes happen to the faithfull, whereas it falleth out that many of the wicked are verie honourably buried; howbeit that the same is nothing to them, neither is their state any whit bettered thereby. We see what is sayde in the Psalme concerning them that haue faithfully serued GOD: namely, that their bodies were layde out for a praye to the foules, and the beastes: and yet were they the children of GOD. And albeit that this bee a testimonie of Gods wrath vppon the wicked: yet may it oftentimes come to passe, that our Lorde will vse the same manner of chastisementes vppon his owne people: And yet it shall bee nothing to their hurt.

Psal. 79.

True it is, that wee must euermore humble ourselues, when such a thing happeneth, and we must vnderstande that such thinges bee as it were markes of Adames sinne, and of the corruption that is in vs, and also of the offences which we haue committed: and yet for all that our

our Lorde in the meane space turneth this e-
uill to good, when he permitteth the faithfull
to be depriued of buriall. We see what is sayd
of the wicked riche man and of Lazarus. It is
sayde, that the riche man dyed and was buryed:
beholde howe the worldely pompe is bestowed
on the reprobate. It seemeth that his soule
should haue beene receiued into paradise when
his body was sumptuously caryed and vsed with
great ceremonies. And what of Lazarus? He
dyed too. But what mention is there of his bu-
riall? None at all. Whereby our Lorde Iesus
doeth vs to vnderstande, (for it is he that spea-
keth it) that we must not stay altogether vppon
these visible thinges. But yet this threate-
ning (howe so euer the case standeth) is not
in vaine. What is to be doone then? Lette vs
gather generally (as we haue sayde) that buri-
all serueth to leade vs to the hope of the hea-
uenly life, and of the resurrection which wee
must hope for. Thus much concerning that
point.

When we burie them that be dead before vs,
lette it serue alwayes to prouoke and to stirre vs
to vnderstande that wee bee not created to liue
onely in this worlde: but that there is an other
better life prepared for vs. And againe, when
when wee see that our Lorde depriueth any of
their buriall, let vs vnderstande that he therein
sheweth his wrath. Neuertheless it is better
sometimes for a man to bee deuoured of beastes
and birdes, and to bee chastised of GOD af-
ter that sorte in his bodie for the sparing of his
soule, and to haue a temporall condemnation,
than to perishe for euer more: It is better some-
times for a wicked man to bee hanged, than to
dye in his bedde. For howe manie doe we see
to gnashe their teeth against GOD, when he
hath patiently tarryed for them, and giuen
them so many playne and apparant tokens of
his wrath for their conuersion; and yet neuer-
theless they make a mocke of him, and still
continue obstinate in their rebellion? When a
wretched ill doer is condemned by men, hee is
ashamed of it and cast downe in himselfe, and
acknowledgeth and bewayleth his sinnes. This
condemnation then, which he beareth in his bo-
dy, albeit that it is an execution of that which is
heere spoken by Moses: doeth serue to his sal-
uation; and therefore let vs beare away these
thinges. Moreouer when the faithfull, euen
the very martyrs bee burned, and their bodyes
consumed to ashes, so as they haue not y which
should bee common to all mankinde: let vs vn-
derstande that GOD conuerteth the same to
their welfare, and that their glorie is thereby
doubled. As howe? It is certaine that this is
a threatning of God, as be also all diseases. But
when our Lorde sayeth so, hee meaneth that
they be the ordinarie meanes, which hee vseth
to correct our sinnes: but yet neuertheless hee
sayeth not to chastise those so with his owne
hande, which haue not offended him: or at
leastwise whome hee meaneth not to pursue
with rigour. This is in summe that which we
haue to beare in minde concerning this Text.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moses sayth
farther. *He sayeth that GOD will strike the des-
pisers of his lawe with many diseases.* He hath spo-
ken heeretofore of feuers, and of the whotte dis-
ease, and of the yelowe iaundis, and of such o-
thers: nowe hee speaketh of the Itch and can-
ker *and of other wormes and scabbes*. Where also
mention is made of the Emorodes, as some doe
expounde them; all these foresayde thinges be
the weapons of GOD, to punish the offenders
of the Lawe. To be short, they be his men of
warre to incounter with vs, when he seeth that
we take heart of grasse against him. And truely
when we fauour our owne lustes to violate his
righteousnesse, and to breake the order which
he hath established among vs: and when hee
seeth our lustes to bee so inordinate which are
theeues and robbers: he armeth his people and
substitutes which bee the diseases that are heere
spoken of, and other sortes. Lette vs therefore
learne, that whatsoeuer diseases we suffer in
our bodyes, the same be all messages of GOD
to make vs to feele his wrath, because wee haue
offended him: but specially the extraordinarie
diseases, as when GOD sendeth vppon vs
the sickenesses that are not vsuall amongst men,
for the curing whereof they can hardely finde
any meane, or else it is altogether impossible to
doe it, by reason of the straungenesse of the
thinges: then meaneth GOD to make vs to
feele his anger towarde vs double, and to shewe
vs that wee haue prouoked him too too much.
But we thinke verie slenderly of this. For con-
trariwise concerning the common diseases, the
ordinarie hauing of them maketh vs to thinke
that they proceede not from God. They saye:
there is a man that hath a feuer: and there is an
other that hath the murre & the poze, or some
such other disease. Wel, these be thinges where-
in we be hardened. As howe? By custome. And
must God in the mean while leese the possession
of his right? If he doe still shewe himselfe a Iudge
towards vs, in chastising vs: is that a reason why
wee should forget him, and haue no regarde of
his hande? But howsoeuer the case standeth, such
is our blockishnesse. I woulde God that the ex-
amples therof were not so notorious as they be.
But let euery one looke to himselfe, and see if
the customableness of sicknesses cause vs not
to turne our backe vpon God, & to haue the lesse
regarde of his iudgements and of our owne sins,
so as none of vs findeth any fault with himselfe.
Thus much touching the cõmon and vsual sick-
nesses. And as for the extraordinary diseases, we
see howe men are hardened by them also. I pray
you haue we not seene that God within these fif-
tie yeares hath brought vp new diseases, against
whoredome? Whence commeth the pockes and
all these other filthy diseases, which are not to
be reckened vp at this time? Whence come all
these thinges but from GOD, who vttereth
such vengeaunce as earst was neuer knowen?
The worlde wondered at it, and for a time, men
were greatly afrayde of it: but yet of all this
whyle they haue hadde no consideration of the
hande of God. And at this day it is become so

ordinarie

ordinarie a matter, that the despisers of GOD, I meane the lecherous sort and the whore hunters, which giue ouer themselues to all leaudenesse, doe but wring their groines at it. Though GOD smyte them with that kinde of leprosie (for it is a kinde of leprosie in very deede) so as they be eaten with the fretting thereof and with other filthynesse; yet they cease not to followe their trade still and to mocke at it: and truely it seemeth a verie straunge case, that such a punishment of GOD shoulde be so turned to a scoffe. What a iesting make they nowadayes of their baudry when they bee thus punished at the hande of God? How commeth it to passe, that they themselues doe make a iesting and scoffing at it, as it were in spite of God, and that whereas hee calleth them to humble themselues in sackecloth and ashes, they doe but blurt out their tongues at him, and are so farre from being ashamed of their doings, that euen as it were in spite, they make a sporte of their owne filthinesse and miseries. Wee see then howe frowarde men be, seeing that they can profite no better in Gods schoole. I meane not in the schoole of his doctrine, where hee speaketh vnto them, but when hee smyteth with heauy strokes, and also raiseth vppe warres and troubles, which ought to make menne besides themselues for feare: but yet in the meane whyle this is not written in vaine. Let vs therefore be better aduised: and when GOD sendeth vs any straunge diseases; lette vs vnderstande that our sinnes be multiplyed, and that GOD must therefore be more moued than euer he was. Wherefore let the same bring vs to repentaunce, and let vs not double our iniquities: for in the ende, wee shall finde the thing by experience, which we sawe euen nowe; namely, that when the euill shall sticke vnto vs, yea euen in our marrowe and in our bones, vntill we be vtterly consumed. Besides this God hath other manner of meanes to punish vs, and when he perceiueth that the vsuall meanes preuaile not, then hath he other roddes layde vp in his storehouses, as it is sayd in the Canticle. Yea and we shall see what it is to walke at all aduentures against him: namely that in the ende hee will ouertake those folke ouerthwartely with a crooked measure, which playe the ignoraunt fooles after that fashion, and doe nothing but scoffe and shake their eares, when he hath punished them one way or other. Lette vs not tarry therefore till GOD vse such extremitie towardes vs: but beeing warned afore hande by that which is mentioned heere, let vs looke to it, and consider that looke howe many sortes of diseases he sendeth vs, so many witnesses he sendeth to proue that we haue sinned against him: that we might thinke thereon and turne to him againe with all lowlinesse.

I sayde erewhiles, that the verie vttermost of all, is this which Moses addeth in the ende: to witte, *That GOD will smite vs with astonishment, and that we shall be blinde groping as full midde day, as the blinde in the darke, and that our heart shall be amazed*. Hitherto wee haue seene that God sheweth a singular fauour towardes men, in afflicting them in their bodyes, when they haue their mindes still in quiet, that they may be patient. For they feele their sinnes and bewaile them, and they cease not to call vpon him that chastiseth them. And in verie deede it is sometimes seene, that the grace of GOD is much more manifested towardes such people, than if they hadde no such great afflictions. As for example: If GOD spare a man, and he serue God: wee see that God blesseth him. When we see a sounde and holy life in one, we will say, heere is a man that serueth GOD, and God also sheweth himselfe gratious towardes him. Againe we see an other that is visited with great diseases, euerie man hath pitie and compassion on him; he pineth continually, and hath vehement paines, he is vexed with diuerse maladies, and the verie remedies that are giuen him be so greeuous that nothing can be more: yet notwithstanding this man ceaseth not to hold himselfe in quiet, confessing his sinnes and craueing pardon of GOD: wee see such a patience as mooueth vs to glorifie God; and the partie continueth still in prayers and supplications. When a man is thus mortified, and GOD holdeth his heart still in awe, so as the partie continueth in obedience vnder his hande; then perceiue we a great grace of GOD in the middest of those chastisementes. But when we be without reason in our sickenesse, and play the madde bedlems, and stande chawing vppon the bridle and wote not which way to turne vs; and of all the while neuer make any countenance of fleeing vnto God for reliefe, it is euen the full measure of all miserie.

Therefore it is not without cause, that Moses hauing spoken of the sickenesses and griefes that GOD sendeth vppon mennes bodies, and in likewise of extraordinarie chastisementes, which constraine men in spite of their beardes, to feele their sinnes, addeth heere, *God will smite thee with blindenesse, yea and hee will so smite thee, that thy wittes shall be amazed: thou shalt grope at noonedayes as in the darke: thou shalt haue no more sense or feeling in thy heart: but thou shalt be altogether blockishe*. And heere wee be warned againe, that the chastisements which happen to vs in our mindes shoulde be more dreadfull vnto vs, than all that we can suffer in our bodyes. It is true that our nature draweth vs cleane contrary; for wee be so tender and nice in our bodyes, that as soone as wee feele anie griefe, by and by we cry out, and leese our patience; and therein we see a part of our brutishnesse. For if we hadde any droppe of stayed vnderstanding, we would a hundreth times bee more afrayde of the chastisementes that God threateneth to our soules, than of all that euer we can endure in our bodies. In what case is a man, when he is forsaken of GOD, so as he seeketh him not any more, but indeuoreth by al meanes to hyde him from his presence? Surely when we come to that point, if we coulde plucke God out of his seate, we would gladly doe it. Hee that seeketh such hydingholes to conuey himselfe,

selfe from comming vnto God; doeth what hee can to robbe him of his maiestie, and hee is loath to come to present himselfe before such a Iudge.

And truely, although a man haue no further harme than this blockishnesse, so as hee feeleth not his owne miserie; is it not a token that God hath alreadie giuen him ouer to a reprobate mind? Yes: for there is not a more euident signe of reprobation, than to bee without remorse or scruple of conscience. Moreouer, when a man is frighted and out of his right wittes, in such sort as he woteth not which way to turne him, and hath no more taste or feeling of God, nor can any skill to lament for his sinnes, or to aske forgiuenesse of them, and to repent him of them: but gnasheth his teeth, and byteth the bridle like a Mule: is not that a dreadful thing? When wee beholde such giddie, our hayres stande vpright, and euen nature forceth vs to it. And yet for all that, if wee thinke not vpon it, that wee may stande in awe, and walke in feare and humilitie, is it not a tempting of God? Let vs learne therefore not to harden our selues in such wise as God shoulde bee forced to fall to this rigour, wherewith he doeth here threaten his people: namely, *that hee will make them gape as the blinde in the darke, and that they shall haue neither vnderstanding in them nor discretion:* that hee will make them to fall in such a feare, as they shall not knowe whether they be liuing creatures or no: not perceiue whether there bee a God that will receiue them to mercie, and whether they shall preuaile in calling vpon his name, or not. Let vs not tarrie till such euil doe come vppon vs. For it is a deepe pitte, out of the which verie fewe can get foorth. In deede God will some times bring his people to that point that they shall not knowe where they be, and they shalbee so greatly afrayd and so troubled therewith, that they shall become dull & blockish: this is well seene. But hee lifteth them vp againe after that hee hath brought them lowe. Howbeit for as much as this example is very rare, let vs not tempt our God; but when hee afflicteth vs in our bodyes, let vs vnderstande that hee spareth vs greatly, and that hee mitigateth the rigour of his wrath, and let vs bee no more so impatient as wee haue bin wonted to bee. Albeit that the griefe bee hard and bitter to vs, yet let vs confesse: alas! but yet God hath not touched mee in my soule. Let this come alwayes in our remembraunce, to the ende that wee acknowledging the goodnes of our God in that hee doeth forbeare vs: may returne vnto him; and not dout, but that hee is readie to take pitie vppon vs, when wee seeke vnto him vnfaynedly. Let that serue for one poynt which wee haue to remember in this lesson, where mention is made of the sayde blockishnesse.

Nowe Moses sayeth expressely, *that the transgressors of Gods lawe, shall grope at noone day*. As if he shoulde say: notwithstanding that God giue them many occasions to reioyce; yet shall they be frighted in such sort, as they shall not take hold of any grace, but be as blinde wretches. Seeing it is so, let vs mark farther that although God doe mitigate our greefes, and comforteth vs; yet doeth that serue vs to no purpose, if he giue vs not the wisedome to vnderstande his goodnesse. And we must vnderstand, that wee are not able to enioye the good that GOD offereth vnto vs, when wee be destitute of his holy Spirite. And this is one execution of that threatning that is here mentioned. True it is that we shoulde alwayes returne to this poynt, that our Lorde desireth not the vtter confusion of sinners: but ỹ forsomuch as such miseries doe happen oftentimes, we should not tarie till they light vpon our heads; but rather seeke the remedie, to the end that God haue not occasion to withdrawe himselfe from vs. Howesoeuer the case standeth, let vs first of all marke, that God directeth this doctrine to such as haue bin trained in his worde, as we haue already sayd. It is certaine that he is Iudge of the world: yet notwithstanding wee well deserue to bee chastised, after a more boystrous fashion, when wee haue beene taught at his mouth, and haue reiected his will, and bee so farre foorth corrupted that wee make but a iest of his word: and that whereas hee sought to retayne vs as his people; wee haue despised him. It is verie meete therefore that wee shoulde bee grieuously punished, and therefore let vs thinke, that seeing God doeth vs the fauour to let vs haue the pure doctrine of the holy scripture, the same serueth to bereaue vs of all excuses, and also to quicken vs vp to walke so much the more in feare.

But herewithall let vs marke farther, that God doth not onely vse threatnings towards vs, but also dayly exhort and allure vs vnto him, to reconcile vs to him: shewing that for his parte, hee is readie to come to attonement, so wee condemne our sinnes, and returne to his mercie. What else is the Gospell, that wee heare euery daye, but a message of reconciliation, as Saint Paul calleth it in the seconde to the Corinthians? Seeing then that God sendeth vs a herault to declare peace vnto vs, and to shewe that he is ready to doe away all our offences, let vs take heede, that wee vse this time of our Saluation, to receiue ỹ grace that is offered vnto vs in due season, as the Prophet Esay telleth vs, and as Saint Paul sayth, vsing the same testimonie. Againe when we haue bin ouermuch hardened, and that God hath patiently wayted for vs, and wee still continue in our sinnes: let vs not thinke that he in the end hath either giuen ouer or forgotten his office. We must needs yeeld an account of such vnthankfulnesse. When wee forsake the Saluation whereunto he called vs, and despise him out of measure: such wilful stubburnesse must of necessitie come to reckening. Then let vs stande in feare: and as often as wee heare speaking of the grace of God which is offered vnto vs in our Lorde Iesus Christ, let our heartes be enclined to receiue it: and let vs giue way vnto God to come in. And when wee

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goe vnto him, let it bee doone with bewayling our sinnes, and with yeelding ourselues guiltie, not onely in worde of mouth, but also with such griefe of heart, as may prooue that the euil displeaseth vs. And when wee thus mislike of our selues, let vs not abyde till our Lorde put in execution the threatenings that hee setteth foorth heere, but let vs turne them to our commoditie. And when wee heare the promises of the Gospell, let vs remember the threatenings also: that wee may bee so much the more prouoked, and euery man make haste to receiue the good which is offered vnto vs to enioy and to possesse, vnlesse the fault bee in our selues.

Nowe let vs cast downe our selues before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our sinnes: beseeching him to make vs to feele them yet better, vntill wee bee vtterly beaten downe in our selues, and seeke for the remedie whereunto hee calleth vs: namely, that beeing guyded by his holy spirite, wee may increase and profite more and more in all holinesse and righteousnesse, and that wee may endeuour so to glorifie him in all our whole life; as in the ende wee may attayne to that same euerlasting glory, vnto the which hee calleth vs: And so let vs all say: Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Munday the xxiij. of March, 1556.

The CLVIII. Sermon, which is the sixt vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

29 And thou shalt alwayes suffer iniurie and oppression, and no man shall deliuer thee.

30 Thou shalt mary a wyfe, and an other man shall lye with her: thou shalt buylde a house, but thou shalt not dwell in it: thou shalt plant a vyne, but thou shalt not gather the fruite thereof.

31 Thyne oxe shalbe killed before thine eyes, but thou shalt not eate of it: thyne Asse shalbee taken away before thy face, and it shall not be restored vnto thee: thy sheepe shalbe deliuered to thyne enemies, and there shalbe no bodie to saue them.

32 Thy sonnes and thy daughters shalbe giuen to another people, thyne eyes shall see it, and dasle at it all the day long, and thy hande shall haue no strength.

33 And a people which thou hast not knowen, shall eat the fruite of thy land, and all thy labour: and thou shalt doe nothing but suffer reuylinges and oppressions alwayes.

34 And thou shalt be amased at the sight of those things which thyne eyes shal beholde.

35 The Lord wil smite thee with a sore swelling in the knees, and in the legs, of the which thou shalt not bee healed from the sole of thy foote to the crowne of thy head.

WE ought well to remember the meaning of Moses, whereof wee haue spoken heeretofore; namely, wherefore hee continueth in vttering so many curses. For wee are slowe to bee mooued: when our Lorde doeth threaten vs, wee make a game of it: and albeit wee confesse that wee shoulde thinke thereon, yet doeth it escape vs: And furthermore, wee suppose that wee shall alwayes fynde starting holes, and that if God doe followe vs one way, wee by flying another way shalbee able to void his blowes. Thus doe men deceiue themselues, and thereuppon waxe hardhearted. Nowe Moses (or rather the spirite of GOD speaking by his mouth) perceiuing that men be so careleese, and that they shrinke not at the first

firſt, when the iudgement of God is ſet before them; continueth his matter ſtill and addeth threatenings vppon threatenings. Againe, on the other ſide, perceiuing alſo that men ſeeke ſtartingholes, and thereby deceiue themſelues, bearing themſelues in hande, that they can ſaue themſelues by ſlinging ouer the Fenne (as they ſay) hee ſheweth that God hath infinite meanes to puniſh vs wichall, both aboue and beneath, before and behynde, on the right hande and the lefte, and that wee ſhalbee ſo hemmed in on all ſides, that it ſhall not be poſſible for vs to eſcape his hand.

Nowe after the threatenings, which we haue ſeene heere before, hee preſently addeth that they which ſo reſiſt God *ſhalbee afflicted and tormented, ſo as men ſhall ſpoyle them, and they ſhalbee layde open to all violence for euer*, *and no man ſhall deliuer them*. Wee ſee heere that God ſerueth his owne turne by the wicked, and that although their intent bee nothing ſo, yet doeth hee apply them to a good vſe, when hee liſteth to puniſh vs. Whereas there bee theeues and robbers, albeeit that they bee giuen ouer to Sathan, yet fayle they not to ſerue Gods purpoſe; yea truely, for wee ſee in this text that our Lorde leaueth them not at randon, to robbe and to ſpoyle, whether hee will or no: but hee threateneth his people, ſaying, They that diſobey mee, ſhalbee vexed and robbed. And whence proceedeth that? It muſt needes, come from him.

Nowe albeit that God ſuffereth oppreſſions, robberies, and violence to bee done, hee can very well condemne them, according as hee is righteous, and muſt needes hate Iniuſtice: yet notwithſtanding, by his wonderfull wiſedome which to vs is incomprehenſible, hee turneth thoſe things to his owne ſeruice: ſo that when wee haue offended him, he muſt needs puniſhe vs by the hand of the moſt wicked: which is the more to our reproche. For if he himſelfe ſhoulde haue puniſhed vs, and we ſawe before our eyes, y^e^ reuengeth him of our iniquities, wel would wee ſay, ſeeing that wee haue offended him, it is good reaſon that wee ſhould come to account for it. But when hee ſturreth vppe leawd folke, and deſpiſers of his maieſtie, and ſuch as are giuen to all naughtineſſe, and maketh them our Iudges: it is to make vs ſo much the more aſhamed. Let vs therefore conſider, that whencefoeuer the euill commeth, wee haue euermore to deale with GOD: and wee muſt thinke that there is nothing done in this worlde but by his direction. And thereupon let vs enter into the examination of our faults. For it is not ynough to know that God ruleth al things: but euery one of vs muſt alſo make his owne inditement, and conſider that all afflictions and aduerſities, are tokens of Gods wrath. Nowe when wee ſpeake of his wrath, wee muſt in like wiſe remember his iuſtice; and thereuppon conclude that wee verie well deſerue to bee puniſhed. But yet hee threateneth vs before hee ſtrike, to the ende that wee ſhoulde not ſtand gaping til the things were come to paſſe; but rather preuent them aforehande, as Sayne Paul alſo doeth admoniſh vs. Whileſt God ſpareth vs, let vs bee aduiſed, ſo to walke in his feare, that wee prouoke him not to ſtirre vp theeues to torment, and vexe vs: but that rather (if men attempt ſuch iniuries againſt vs) wee may ſtande in his protection, according as hee promiſeth to vpholde all them that walke in his obedience. Then let vs ſee that wee doe ſo; and let vs remember that which is ſpoken by the Prophet Eſaye, to wit, that they which haue robbed, muſt bee ſerued with the ſame ſawce. And that is the cauſe why violences and extortions doe ſo continue in the worlde. 1.Cor.11.31 Eſa.33.1

Men wonder to ſee that the miſchiefe growes woorſe and woorſe: but they ſhoulde note the cauſe thereof. For they that beare chiefe ſway and preheminence, doe let themſelues looſe, ſeeking nothing but to enriche themſelues, and to ſwallowe vp other mennes ſubſtance. But haue they robbed? God muſt ſende a reuolution, ſo as other robbers ſhall come and bereaue theſe of their booties: and afterwarde, a thirde ſorte muſt ſtep vp to ſpoile them againe. And ſo there is neuer any ende. And why? Becauſe the worlde neuer ceaſſeth to prouoke the wrath of God. And for ſo much as wee bee headſtrong, it is reaſon, that our Lorde ſhoulde continue to ſhewe himſelfe our Iudge. But (as I ſayde euen nowe) let vs bee well ware to walke in ſuch wiſe, as innocent bloud crye not out for vengeance againſt vs. Let vs not doe iniurie or outrage to any perſon, that our Lorde may bleſſe vs for ſo doing, and not pay vs with like meaſure, according as wee ſee howe our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſayeth that it ſhall come ſo to paſſe. Let euery of vs therefore brydle him ſelfe in ſuch wiſe, as this curſe come not vppon vs, to bee robbed for vſing of robberie and extortion againſt the innocentes. But for as much as men imagine that their aduerſitie ſhalbee ſhort, and that they ſhalbee ſoone ridde of it: Moſes addeth, *This is ſhal bee for euer, and that when the hande of God is againſt vs, no man ſhalbee able to ſaue vs.* Matt.7.2

It is certayne, that like as God is ſlowe to anger, ſo is hee ſoone pacified: but that is but towardes the faithfull. As for the wicked, hee muſt holde on with them; and they muſt feele their burden euery day heauyer than other. And wherefore? According as they harden their heartes againſt God, they muſt in like wiſe feele him the harder againſt them. And albeeit that this is not alwayes, yet doe wee ſee it often come to paſſe, God will at ſome times withdrawe his hande after hee hath menaced the wicked; or elſe when hee hath giuen them ſome ſtrypes with his rodde, hee will let them goe againe: and that is, as it were a reſpyte, that they may haue leaſure to turne to repentance. Notwithſtanding, becauſe hee knoweth them to bee vnreformable: that dealing of his muſt of neceſſitie bee turned to their Pſal.103.8. Pſal.18.27.

sorer condemnation. If GOD then do spare the despisers of his lawe, and them that bee obstinate in malice, it doeth not therefore followe, that they shall bee saued: but it is to the ende that the plague shall come double vppon their heades, for their abusing of his patience after that manner. For when hee hath waited for them, and they proceede still from euill to woorse: hee must needes put to his hande at the last. Howsoeuer the case standeth, it is not in vayne that Moses telleth vs heere, that when GOD is our enemie, our life shall not bee miserable only for a day, or yet for a little while; wee must not limit our selues any terme in that case: but we must looke for one mischiefe to drawe another, and that there shall bee none ende, vntill hee hath layde vs quyte vnder foote, vnlesse wee turne to him to obtayne mercie. Wherefore let vs weye well this woorde which Moses addeth, where hee sayeth, that if GOD doe beginne to smyte vs for despysing of his iustice: it shall not continue for a little whyle, but wee must bee miserable for euer. And why? For in as much as the maiestie of God is euerlasting, he must needes take endelesse vengeaunce of them that despise his iustice. Therefore so soone as wee see the blowes come neere vs, let vs bee afrayde, and let euery of vs make haste to returne vnto him, whome wee haue offended, to wit, our GOD, to obtayne forgiuenesse of our trespasses. That is the onely remedie, without which there will bee neyther ende nor measure of our afflictions, except wee take order to reconcile our selues to our God.

Nowe where hee alleageth, *that none shall saue them*: That is to cut off all the vayne hopes which men doe forge to them selues in their owne braynes, when hee punisheth them. They looke hither and thither, and if they finde any comfort in this worlde, it seemeth vnto them, that they shall make a stoppage against God, and that they shall bee able to winne the goale in the ende. In deede they will not say so; for it is a blasphemie which all of vs doe holde accursed; but yet wee bee so doltish, that wee hope to turne away the hande of GOD when wee finde any helpe heere: in so much that if men beare vs any fauour, and wee bee supported in any thing, wee arme our selues therewith against God. But Moses telleth vs heere, that it is in vayne for men to seeke dyuers succours after that fashion, when GOD warreth vppon them. For why? All creatures are in his hande, and without him they can doe nothing. More ouer, that which is for our benefite, shall become our bane, and all thinges shall redounde to our confusion. Let vs not therefore looke to bee saued by anye meanes that may bee, when our Lorde taketh parte against vs: but let vs returne vnto him, seeing that there is none other remedie but that, and let vs ridde our selues of all such thinges as may hinder vs to come to repentance.

Let vs then bee quickened vp by these two sayings of Moses, that wee sleepe no more in our vayne fantasies, as wee haue beene earst too much accustomed. But what? There are very fewe which thinke vppon that. For euery man martyreth himselfe, if his griefe continue, and hee synde no helpe in men. In all our afflictions, wee can complayne welynough: but wee consider not that GOD withholdeth mennes helpe from vs, when hee intendeth to punish vs, in such wise that wee shall (after a sorte) bee vtterly ouerwhelmed. And againe, if our sorrowe continue; it is, because wee haue persisted too much in our stubbornesse. Wee thinke not a whit of all this. But yet are not these things written in vayne. And therfore let vs learne to profite better thereby, than wee haue done in times past.

Finally, Moses setteth foorth by this threatening, howe wee shalbee vexed and robbed, if wee offende against the lawe of God. Hee sayeth: *Thou shalt marry a wife and not lye with her: Thou shalt buylde a house, and not dwell therein: Thou shalt plant a vyneyarde, and not gather the fruite thereof. Yea, they shall take thy Beeues and thy Muttons, and kill them, and thou shalt continue still a lean seed: and not onely all thy cattell shall bee made a praye and a bootie: but thy owne children also shall bee deliuered into the handes of thine enimies, and thou shalt yerne after them, and thine eyes shall daily see vaine greefe and sorrowe, & in the meane whyle, thy hande shalbee vnable strengther power to recouer them.* It had beene ynough to haue layde in one worde, *Thou shalt suffer robberies, extortions, and wrongs:* but because men are slowe, it behoueth them to bee so much the better touched, and to beholde the thing as it were before their eyes. That is the cause why Moses speaketh heere of houses and vyneyardes, of wiues and children, and of cattell. As if hee shoulde say: Some shall bewayle the taking away of their houses which they had builded, the puting of them from their vyneyardes and their other possessions, the spoyling of their goods, and the driuing away of their cattell: And other some shall bewayle the wrong that is done vnto them in their children, and in their very wiues. But wee bee to consider that all these thinges bee the scourges of God, wherewith hee punisheth vs for our sinnes.

It is certayne (as I haue sayde alreadie heretofore) that GOD at sometimes, for the exercising of the faithfull in patience, doeth sende them the verye chasticementes heere mencioned, and yet punisheth them not for their offences. For Iob was not punished for his sinnes: Not that GOD had not iust cause so to doe, but for that hee had no respect to that: howe so euer the case stand, surely it is an ordinarie matter.

In

In deede wee may alleage many examples of men that are tormented and vexed by the wicked, so as they bee driuen from post to piller, and robbed of their goods: such examples doe happen euery day: but this prooueth not, that this doctrine taketh not place, and that it is not true in it selfe, as an ordinarie rule, to wit, that God punisheth mens sins by such meanes. Nowe when wee haue walked in the feare of God, and endeuoured to serue him: and yet notwithstanding, our substaunce is taken away, and the robbers possesse it: let vs consider, that if this bee not doone for our sinnes, our Lorde giueth vs a great preeminence. For first of all, of whome was it long that wee offended him not? We were preserued by his holy spirite. And moreouer, notwithstanding any good affection and zeale that wee haue had to liue vprightly and vncorruptly; yet wee cease not to be guiltie before God. But what for that? Hee spareth vs, and yet hee meaneth to trye our patience, for to humble vs. When it is his will that wee shall beare the miseries, which bee punishmentes for them that despise his lawe, and that wee must feele them: well, wee must stoope. And thereby hee tryeth vs, howe pliable wee bee vnder his hande to yeeld vnto his gouernement, as shall stande with his good pleasure. Moreouer, this alwayes taketh place, (as wee haue sayde afore) that our Lord punisheth the offences and transgressions of his lawe, by the things that are specified here. So then, when a man buildeth, let him take heede that hee buylde not with extortion, pilling, polling, and robberie, vnlesse it bee his meaning to haue his house taken from him, according as it is spoken by the Prophet Abacuc. For the Prophet bringeth in the walles singing and answering one another. For in as much as mens Palaces and houses, bee oftentimes buylded with bloud, robberie, extortion, and wicked practises: and the verie walles themselues doe crye out that they were buylded with pilling and polling: it must needes waken vp Gods wrath and vengeance against such buylders. Desire wee then to bee harbouted in peace? Let vs looke that wee buylde without doyng wrong to any body, whatsoeuer hee bee.

Hab. 2. 11.

And moreouer let euery of vs in his dwelling, dedicate himselfe in such wise to God, as hee may dwell with vs. For they that are driuen out of their dwellings, haue commonly driuen God out before: that is to say, they haue followed some lewde trade, so as GOD hath not reigned there. Is it then any wonder, if they bee driuen thence in the ende? No: For why? Shall GOD bee thrust from his right; and wee in the meane while possesse euery man his dwelling in rest? Were that reason? Therefore, when wee see such changes to happen, as they bee to bee seene in the worlde: let vs vnderstande that GOD drieth them out, which earst woulde giue him no lodging: and let such examples admonish vs to stande in feare of the threatenings heere specified. And let vs not tarrie till our Lorde banish vs from the place where wee bee harboured: but let vs rather endeuour to serue him, so as hee may continue alwayes with vs to maintayne vs. And if it come to passe, that wee bee driuen out, let vs vnderstande that the same is for our sinnes: for it is better late than neuer. Moreouer, if wee bee driuen out for any other cause, as at this day wee see the poore faithfull people, in stare like a byrde on the bough, as though the earth coulde not beare them: as Saint Paul speaketh of his time, and as it is knowen at this present time that the children of God bee as vagabondes, hauing not a hole to hyde themselues in: when wee beholde these things, let vs vnderstande, that forasmuch as our Lorde leadeth vs this walke, hee doeth vs great fauour that the same is not because of our sinnes, but for his names sake, and for our better establishment in the hope of the heauenly inheritance, seeing that there is nothing sure nor stable in this present worlde, but that wee must alwayes aspire to the eternall life, and to the rest that is prepared for vs on high. Let vs then acknowledge the good that hee doeth vnto vs in this poynt. But in any wise, let vs take good heede that wee prouoke not his wrath against vs in such sort as I haue saide afore.

1. Cor. 4. 3.

Nowe, whereas hee sayth: *Thou shalt marrie a wife, and another shall lye with her*: let euery man take heede to walke in such chastitie, as hee drawe not vppon him this curse of God, in such wise as to bee depriued of the wife that he thinkes to haue: and the wiues in like case of their husbandes. Wee see howe men bee giuen ouer to all vnchastitie, and God must needs yeelde them their rewarde accordingly. Dauid himselfe was not spared in this case. Wee heare howe it was sayde vnto him: Thou hast done this in secrete, but that shalbee done openly. Hee was fayne to abyde reproche before all the worlde, in hauing his wiues rauished openly. Sith it is so then; let vs take good heede, that wee walke in such chastitie, that when men take wiues, they may so liue together as they may feele the blessing of God, and that their marryages bee not broken through the committing of any offence. For, as I haue sayde: it is no wonder that there bee so confused changes in the worlde at this day, because men doe more and more kindle the wrath and vengeance of God. It is euen in like case with adulteries. For what is the cause that they reygne so tyte, and are come (as yee woulde say) to their full pryde? It is because wedlocke is so little regarded, and that there is no feare of God: there is neither faith nor trueth: and therefore must men needes plunge themselues in all misfortune, so that in the ende there will bee nothing but disorder. So much the more therefore ought wee to take warning to walke so in all cleanneſse of life, as euery one may keepe him to his owne wife, and the Lorde blesse their marryages and mayntayne

2. Sam. 12. 12

them in quietnes.

Moreouer, seeing that God is matched with vs in the person of his onely sonne, and woulde haue vs to keepe fast the faith of wedlocke towardes him, according to the simplicitie of his Gospell: let vs sticke throughly to that which hee hath commaunded vs: and to bee short, let vs be halowed vnto him, and followe his holy calling. For if wee doe so, our Lorde will graunt vnto husbandes the grace to liue quietly with their wiues and housholds, and vnto the wiues that they shall learne to liue in good agreement with their husbandes. For wee must marke, that if man and wife doe not ioyne in one mynde, there must needes bee discorde in the whole house, and one shall byte and snatch at another like dogges and cattes, and the one woulde wish the other a hundred foote vnder the ground, so as they shall liue in continuall miserie and disquietnes. And why? Because that neither the one nor the other hath any regarde to God, to yeelde themselues to his direction. Therefore let vs learne, not to prouoke any more the vengeance of God in this case.

As concerning the landes and possessions he sayeth: *That the transgressours of the law of God shall plant vines, but they shall neuer gather the fruite of them.* Nowe wee see that they which haue thus offended God, bee the stoutest and boldest sort, bearing themselues in hand that no harme can come neere them. And that is the cause why wee see that the greatest getters, & the doers of greatest enterprises, are those which wilfully giue them selues to pilling and polling by hooke and by crooke, hauing no care what polling and extorsion they commit, and offending both God and man without ende or measure. Such persons as these therefore must afterward yeelde an account. [They beare themselues in hand] that when they haue plãted vyneyeards, they shall inioy them without controuersie: and that when they haue buylded houses, they shall dwel in them without putting out againe. Thus do men hardẽ thẽselues against God. But Moses cõtrariwise declareth: *That when they haue planted vines, other men shall gather the fruite of them.* And in deede, whereas wee see at this day so much theeuerie in the worlde; let vs vnderstand, that it is because there bee so fewe that haue cleane handes, and are able to protest that they haue not encroched vppon the goods of other men by vniust meanes. Soothely there is so vnmeasurable disorder nowadayes, that the children of God bee fleeced though they abstayne from all manner of iniuries. But we must euermore haue recourse to the ordinarie course whereof I haue spoken, to wit, that our Lorde will not fayle to punish the sinnes that breake out after that fashion like a waterfloud. As for them that haue landes and possessions, they will not goe to steale otherfolkes goods, nor to picke a fewe grapes: they will not go filchingly to cut down a patche of medowe: it is for beggers to doe so: and wee see in these dayes, that the most parte of poore folkes are pilferers, filching and stealing all that euer they can finger. But yet they that haue landes and possessions, bee the greatest theeues: for the things which they possesse, they get by vnlawfull meanes. It is no wonder then, if God do requite them with the like; and that they bee so vexed in their goods and possessions. God therefore sheweth vs by experience, that his vttering of such speeches is not in vayne; but wee thinke not thereon. Men can well ynough complayne, as I haue sayde afore: but they haue no regarde to the principall poynt, which is; that GOD putteth the thinges in execution which hee spake by the mouth of Moses. Let vs therefore bethinke our selues; and whereas wee see so much stealing, both of vynes, of corne, and of such other things; let vs vnderstande that our Lorde punisheth the rauenousnesse and extortion that is committed both in marchandize, and in all other trades of occupying: and let vs not tarye till GOD doe punish vs in verie deede; but let vs walke vprightly, if wee will haue him to defende vs. For although that all places bee neuer so full of theeues; yet will our Lorde keepe our goods in safetie, if wee walke in his feare, and abstayne from all manner of euill doing. That is the thing whereunto we must haue our recourse; and wee must not thinke to escape euill, by euill doing: but wee must vse the remedie which our Lorde setteth foorth in this text. As much is to bee sayde of our cattell, and also of our children. Yea, and Moses proceedeth still with inlarging, to the ende that men shoulde so much the better perceiue, what the effect is of this speeche which hee vseth: namely, *that this shalbee for euer.* As if hee shoulde saye, that the hande of God shall euer waxe heauier and heauier. In so much that if a man which is driuen from his dwelling, doe thinke to remooue to his possessions, and to his landes; GOD will persecute him euen there: and if hee thinke to cheere himselfe with his wife, shee shalbee taken from him by force: and if hee thinke to fynde some comfort in his children, they shalbe deliuered into the hands of his enimies; and if hee thinke to haue any recourse to his cattell, they shalbee all stolne or taken away by force. Moses therefore beateth vs heere on all sides, to the ende wee shoulde learne to resort vnto our God; forasmuch as it is in vayne, for vs to labour to escape by any other way. This is the matter in effect which wee haue to beare in minde of this text.

Nowe hee addeth moreouer, to the increase of the mischeefe; *That the fruites of the earth and the labour of our handes, shalbee eaten by a people which wee haue not knowen: and that wee our selues shalbee distraughted by reason of the miseries which shall so light vppon vs.* That is to say, wee shalbee as out of our wittes, beholding the mischiefe before our eyes; and beeing amazed thereat, whereby wee shalbee enforced to perceiue that the hande of God is against vs. That is in effect the matter which hee meant to say in this text.

Nowe

Nowe I haue tolde you that the miſerie is ſo much the more greeuous to beare, when a people vnknowen commeth to ranſacke all. Truely if we be robbed by our owne neighbours, and by them that ſhould bee at amitie with vs: the ſame is verie harde to beare. But if there come a ſtraunge people, there is leſſe mercie. For when men bee ſo ſeparated one from the other, and haue no intercõmoning at all: there is the leſſe likelihoode of any meanes of ſafetie. And wee ſee howe this repetition heere is often founde in the Prophetes: inſomuch as it is ſaide ſometimes, that the people which ſhall perſecute vs, ſhall be a barbarous people without language whereby to haue any talke with vs: by reaſon whereof, when we ſhall aske them mercie, and cry alas, it ſhall ſeeme vnto them that wee curſe them; and that ſhall be an increaſe of their crueltie. So then lette vs marke, that his ſpeaking thus of a ſtraunge people, is to make vs to vnderſtande, that GOD will ſende vs ſuch chaſtiſers as will haue no pitie nor compaſſion of vs, vntill they haue quite and cleane rooted vs out.

And nowe by the way we be warned, that although the plague be not yet come neere vs, we muſt not therefore fall aſleepe. For wee doe alwayes meaſure Gods threateninges, by our owne conceiuing of them; and by the thinges that offer themſelues to our ſight. When men ſpeake of warre, and doe threaten vs with the Turke, But how can he come at vs ſay we? He is ſo farre off. Againe, can ſuch a Prince inuade vs? Tuſh, he ſhall be letted by ſuch a meane: the plague can not come that way, by reaſon of ſuch a cauſe. He may be dealt withall by ſuch a meane: it can not be. When wee haue ſuch kinde of worldely ſhiftes to defende our ſelues withall, thereupon wee deſpiſe GOD, not in worde, but in deede, for wee continue vnreformable and frowarde, and feare not that the plague can come at vs. Therefore ſayeth God, that he will ſtirre vppe ſtraunge people againſt vs, euen people of farre Countryes. When men doubt it leaſt, then ſhall they wonder to ſee howe GOD will come in vppon them on that ſide which they neuer thought of, and bring them enemies to ſpoyle them. Lette vs then marke by this texte, that Gods ſcourges lye ſometimes hidden, and breake out vppon a ſuddaine, ſo as men are taken tardie by them, according to this ſaying, that they be like to a woman that is childe bearing. For a woman that is with childe, is vtterly abaſhed when her houre is come; euen ſo fareth it with them that are puffed vp with their iniquities, and delight in them: they forecaſt not that the hande of God is neere them. It commeth vppon them like a tempeſt; when they ſay, Peace and all is ſafe, then commeth their ruine and vtter deſtruction. Therefore whereas we be tolde of ſtrange people, lette vs learne to looke farre beefore vs when GOD doeth threaten vs; for like as faith muſt aduaunce it ſelfe aboue the worlde to take holde of Gods promiſes, that it may reſt altogether vppon them: ſo likewiſe when GOD threatneth vs, our fayth muſt looke further off than we can ſee with our eyes, and we miſtruſt the thing which wee ſee not at all: like as wee may perceiue that Noe tarryed not till the floude brake out, and that GOD did vnlocke the Raine of heauen, and opened the waterſpringes of the earth: but as ſoone as hee hearde the woorde, hee did nothing but thinke vpon the vengeaunce of GOD: and by vertue of that worde, he behelde the floude as if it hadde beene preſent: and hee liued in ſuch feare and carefulneſſe, as if he had ſeene the rayne both euening and morning to deſtroy all thinges before his eyes. Euen ſo ſhould we do: and we be warned thereof by this ſaying, where God ſpeaketh of farre countries. Gen.6.22.

Moreouer wee bee therewithall warned to liue in peace and concorde. For ſeeing that GOD hath aſſociated vs and wee be intermingled together: we muſt learne to liue in ſuch vnitie, as our Lorde neede not to bring ſtraunge enemies to chaſtiſe our churliſhneſſe in reſembling cats and dogs. For when men which ought to agree together, doe vexe one another; it cauſeth GOD to ſtirre vp ſtraungers to bee their enemies; becauſe that the neerer that our Lord commeth vnto vs, the more would he haue vs giuen to doe good one to another. And if wee doe the contrarie, then muſt GOD ſtirre vp a people to come to ſpoyle vs, becauſe we haue not liued in peace like brethren, ne knitte ourſelues together like fingers of one hande. This is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde touching this text.

Nowe where he ſayeth, *And you ſhall be amazed at the ſights which you ſhall ſee*: it is according to that which was ſayde before; namely: that men ſhold be diſtraughted, and grope at noone-day, as doeth the blinde in the darke. For if wee be borne withall ſo farre as to gather and plucke vppe our ſpirites to call vppon GOD, and to bee patient in our afflictions; it is a great grace, and ſuch a one as can not bee ſufficiently eſteemed. But if our Lorde incourage vs not to repentaunce, ne giue vs wherewith to aſſwage and diminiſh our ſorrowes, but all hope is taken away, and we be as folke already forlorne, ſo as we bee beſides our wittes to ſee the naked ſword continually before vs, hauing no meane of remedie or ſuccour at all: that is a dreadfull threatning. Neuertheleſſe it is not ſent without cauſe, conſidering the hardeneſſe of hearte which is to bee ſeene in all men. For vntill GOD haue brought vs to this ſtraightedneſſe, we be altogether blockiſh, and we haue the contrarie vice, which is, that we can verie well complayne when any thing doeth trouble vs: yea, and ſometimes we lye as beaten downe, but yet doeth not that make vs to come againe to God; for we ſee howe euery man taketh the bridle in his teeth, ſo as they ſhake off all feare, and neuer thinke vpon that which is ſet downe heere. And ſo we ſee howe men become blockiſh. Now our Lorde would faine drawe them to repen- Deut.28.28

taunce, at leastwise if they were teacheable, that is to say, if they were not wilfull stubborne. For he tryeth all manner of wayes to drawe vs vnto him. This is the cause why hee doeth correct vs gently, and as it were within compasse, as with his litle finger. But when hee seeth that that will nothing preuayle; then must he bring vs to this kinde of woodnesse. For vntill he hath left vs as men distraughted, we wil neuer haue our minds peaceable and obedient, we will neuer be wunne.

Therefore let vs marke well that this threatning is directed to such as stoope not at the first blowe when GOD hath warned them, but goe on from euill to worse: for then must they of necessitie come to this woodenesse. Nowe he speaketh expresly concerning the sightes of the eyes. For men doe blinde themselues (as I haue sayde heeretofore) persuading with themselues that they can escape by some mean: in so much that although wee see the euill at hande, yet ye woulde wonder to see howe wee holde on our course, and care not for it, according as the prophet Esaie speaketh of the wicked: saying that when the scourge passeth ouer the whole earth, and the storme ouer taketh them all, they bee not any whit mooued thereat. After that manner doe the despisers of GOD speake, and the number of them is infinite. So then, when men doe thus blinde their eyes, and haue no respect at all to the plagues whereunto they be subiect: but notwithstanding that they fall into infinite troubles out of the which they can not get out againe, yet they holde on stil: forasmuch as they be so frowarde, Moses sayeth expresly in this texte: *You shall haue a sight before your eyes*: that is to say, after that you haue beene a long while hardened in your vaine fantasies, and haue flattered yourselues in your sinnes, imagining that GOD should spare you and that you be (as it were his mates, and haue made a league with death and with the graue, according as the Prophet speaketh of it: when as you haue beene thus a long while vntouched with any awe, and haue deceiued yourselues in bearing yourselues in hande that your plague shall not last: *There shall come a sight that shall make your eyes to dazle* in beholding the infinite mischiefes which you must bee faine to endure: and which way so euer you turne your eyes, whether it bee vpwarde or downeward, foreward or backeward, you shal see Gods hande continually pursewing you; by reason whereof you shal be driuen into a madnes. Let vs learne therefore to conuert this text to our benefite: and whyle GOD doeth forbeare vs, or at the least so moderate his plagues that wee be not thereby altogether ouerthrowen; let vs feare him, and lette vs bethinke ourselues howe sundrie wayes wee haue offended GOD: insomuch that if he listed to deale rygorously with vs, we shoulde then perish euerie minute of an houre. And therewithall lette vs not tarrie till hee thunder downe vppon vs, and powre out his curses vppon vs in such sorte as they may sinke into our verie bones: but let vs returne to him and to his goodnesse. And aboue all thinges when hee giueth vs the grace to foresee his plagues afarre off, so as wee may say that others bee punished for our instruction: lette vs take warning by their example, and in such wise by faith receiue Gods corrections wherewith he threatneth vs, as it may preserue vs from that sight whereof Moses speaketh heere: to the intent that our Lorde strike vs not with such feare, as we can not in anie wise thinke to receiue any recorde of his goodnesse by reason of our sinnes. Nay rather, that by putting this lesson of obeying him and of submitting our selues vnto him in vre, wee may eschewe this foresayde amazednesse, and not bee so oppressed as wee shoulde become like folke that were out of their wittes. Let vs not come to such an extremitie, neither let vs compell GOD to execute such Threateninges against vs.

Isa.28.15.

Isa.28.15.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our sinnes: beseeching him to vouchsafe to make vs so to vnderstande them, as euery one of vs may be his owne iudge, and turne to him, before we be thereunto constrayned: and that hauing willingly condéned ourselues & bewailed our sins, we may seeke to return to his obedience in such wise, as the same may be to dedicate vs wholely vnto him. And that in the meane while it may please him of like as he hath sent vs the message of reconciliation by his gospell, he will also giue vs of grace to obtaine mercie of him, & forgiuenes of all our sinnes in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ: and that resting thereupon, we fayle not to walke alwaies in feare: and that his bearing with vs through his fatherly goodnes may not cause vs to sleepe in our sinnes, and to flatter ourselues in them: but of euery of vs may quicken vp himselfe, vntill we be quite and cleane rid of them. And that forsomuch as wee are to passe through so much filthines in this world, we may be taught to amende our misdoinges continually vntil that we be throughly ridde of them, for the full vniting of vs to himselfe, and to make vs partakers of his heauenly glorie. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not only to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On

On Tewſday the xxiiij. of March, 1556.

The CLIX. Sermon, which is the ſeuenth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

36 The Lord wil carry thee and thy king which thou ſhalt haue ſet ouer thee, to a people which thou haſt not knowen, neither thou nor thy fathers: and there ſhalt thou ſerue other gods, of wood and of ſtone.

37 And there ſhalt thou be a gazing ſtocke, a skoffing ſtocke, and a byworde to all people, to whom the Lorde ſhall bring thee.

38 Thou ſhalt lay much ſeede in the grounde, and ſhalt gather litle: for the graſſehoppers ſhall deuour it.

39 Thou ſhalt plant a vineyearde and dreſſe it: but thou ſhalt not drinke the wine of it, nor gather any fruite of it: for the wormes ſhall eate it.

40 Thou ſhalt haue Oliue trees in all thy coaſtes, but thou ſhalt not annoint thyſelfe with the oyle of it: for all thine Oliues ſhal be ſhaken off.

41 Thou ſhalt beget ſonnes and daughters, but not to thy ſelfe: for they ſhall goe into Captiuitie.

42 The worme ſhall deſtroy all thy trees, and the fruite of thy lande.

43 The ſtraunger which dwelleth with thee, ſhall riſe aboue thee very high: and thou ſhalt ſtoope vnder him verie lowe.

44 He ſhall lende vnto thee, and not thou vnto him: he ſhalbe the head, and thou ſhalt be the taile.

45 And all theſe curſes ſhall come vpon thee and followe thee and take holde of thee, vntill thou be vtterly rooted out, becauſe thou haſt not obeyed the voice of the Lorde thy God, by keeping his commaundementes and ordinaunces which he hath commaunded thee.

WE know when the people of Iſrael choſe thē a king, with what affection they were led; euen of pride, for that they would not bee inferiours to their neighbours: Moreouer they thought to be very ſure, by hauing a head ouer thē; that ſhould haue the whole authoritie. And ſo ye ſee that the children of Abrahā could not cuntent themſelues with their libertie, but deſired to haue a king. Becauſe they ſawe the Egyptians, the Syrians, the Moabites, yea and the Tyrians, and other like people to haue kinges: they bare themſelues in hand, that if they alſo might haue a head, all would goe well with them. Now like as pride and ambition was the cauſe that they choſe a king in Iſraell: euen ſo became they hardhearted thereupon, ſuppoſing themſelues to be out of all perils, by hauing ſuch a defence: by meane whereof we ſee that they deſpiſed the prophetes, vnder pretence that they thought themſelues well ſenſed. The ſpirite of GOD foreſeeing this (albeit that it was not yet come to paſſe) ſayde in this Text, *That the king which they ſhall appoint ſhould be lead captiue into a ſtraunge countrey*: As if God ſhould haue ſayde that they might well ſeeke ſtarting hooles to ſaue themſelues: but they ſhould ſtande them in no ſtede at all againſt his hande. This is the thing that we touched yeſterday; namely, that when God is our aduerſarie, we may not thinke to maynetaine ourſelues againſt him by the meane of creatures; knowing that he will ſurely apply thē to our deſtruction. Therefore let none of vs deceiue himſelfe, neither let vs make our defence of that which is nothing but ſmoke and leaſing. It is true that the king which was firſt choſen by the people of Iſraell, namely king Saule, was not brought to captiuitie: howbeit that he dyed in battayle: but the ſucceſſours of Dauid were handled cruelly & with great reproch, notwithſtanding that God had ordained them, yea and that they were a figure and Image of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. And it is a horrible thing, that the kingdome which GOD had dedicated vnto himſelfe, (as witneſſed the annoynting) ſhould be layde foorth to ſuch a reproch. Yee ſee howe the ſucceſſours of Dauid which hadde receiued the promiſe that their ſeate ſhoulde be euerlaſting, and in the meane while

1.Sam.31.4.

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were as the figures of our Lorde Iesus Christe: were handeled on such a sort that they were led prisoners in chains, were arrained as offenders, had their eyes put out, hadde their childrens throtes cutte in their owne presence, were cast into a deepe dungeon, there to rotte or to bee eaten to death with vermine: and that, as you see is a verie strange matter. But the vengeance of God was to extende so farre euen of necessitie, because of the frowardenesse of the people, whereof was none other remedie. And the more that God had suffered them and patiently waited for them, the more were they to bee brought to the extremitie of all confusion, for despising so great goodnesse, and for beeing so frowarde and hardhearted against it. Nowe we may heereby gather a good warning, to witte, that (as was declared yesterday) albeit that according to the worlde, we seeme to stande in no perill: yet doeth it behoove vs to seeke to haue Gods favour: for if he be not on our side, and we vnder his savegarde, cursed are all the helps which we suppose to haue of creatures; for they serue rather to ouerthrowe vs. And therefore lette vs take heede that wee put not our confidence in the greatnesse of Princes, or in any other defences; for wee see howe they bee but meanes to blinde such as might else turne to GOD, and obtaine foregiuenesse of him: and that in the ende it shall ouerthrowe them vtterly. Let vs then bee better aduised, and though we seeme to be neuer so wel garded to ỹ worlde: yet let not that be a lette vnto vs to walke alwayes in the feare of God, knowing that all the favor which we are able to purchase in the world is nothing at all; and that if God doe but blowe vppon it all vanisheth away in the minute of an houre. That is the thing which we haue to mark vpon this text.

Nowe it is sayde expressly, *That as well the king as the subiectes shall serue straunge Gods, yea men of stone and of woodde*, that is to say, puppettes and Idolles. No doubt but that God by these wordes ment to vttet how dreadfull punishment was to come vppon the Iewes. For albeit that the nourishment that God giueth vs, and in like wise, all the Testimonies of his fatherly loue and goodnesse appertayning to this transitorie life, bee to bee highly esteemed: yet the most singular benefite that we receiue as long as wee liue in the worlde, is that we haue Religion well ordred, that his seruice be pure amongst vs, that we call vppon him, and that it bee lawefull for vs to claime him as our GOD, and that wee be not berayde and defiled with superstition and Idolatrie. That (say I) is the principall good thing whereunto the faithfull should aspire: and we be verie blockes and beastes, if wee preferre not the same before all manner of riches and pleasures, and before all our ease and commodities. Nowe then on the contrarie parte, the plague which ought to be most dreadfull to vs, and the horriblest calamitie that can fall vppon vs, is to be depriued of Gods seruice, and to haue our mouth shutte, so as wee can not call vppon him: and not onely that, but also through Tyrannie to be compelled to honour Idolles, and to defile ourselues with their abhominations, and to peruert that which GOD hath ordayned for the magnifying of his name amongest vs. When thinges be thus confounded, let vs vnderstande that GOD is departed from vs, and declareth himselfe to bee our mortall enemie, and hath quite forsaken and refused vs, and is loath that wee should thencefoorth haue anie token or inkling at all, either of his presence or of his favour. And so, whereas Moses sayeth in this Text, *That the Iewes shall serue straunge Gods*, he meaneth to threaten them more dreadfully than before, As if he should say; Right greeuous will it be vnto you when you shall be famished and want bread to eate, and water to drink, when your enemies shall robbe you of all your substaunce, and make hauocke of all your possessions, when ye shall pine away in griefe and sorrowe, without any meane to helpe you: surely these wil be verie hard thinges for you, specially when you can obtaine no favour of your enemies, who shall be as wilde beastes against you: but yet is all this nothing in comparison of the other curse, that whereas in steede of honoring the liuing GOD, and of confessing that he hath chosen you to be his people, (which is an immeasurable blessing) in steede of such thinges I say, you should serue Idolles; and bee conuersant amongest the superstitions of the Paynimes, and haue no more prayers neither Psalmes nor Sacrifices, but be dispersed and forlorne.

Nowe seeing that wee perceiue the naturall sense of Moses, let vs vnderstande that amongst all the blessinges of GOD which we enioy in this present life, this ought to be preferred aboue all the rest: namely, to haue libertie to serue our GOD, and to make confession of our faith, and to declare that wee bee his people, of his Church and of his flocke. Truely it is slenderly knowen: howbeit, it is not in vaine that we be admonished thereof. Seeing then, that it hath beene the will of God to plant his Church amongest vs, and that we should haue his worde and his sacramentes, by the which he declareth that he dwelleth amongest vs: lette vs accept such a blessing according as it is worthye: It will serue vs to a double vse. First of all, when wee fare the better by the doctrine that is preached vnto vs euery day, such a treasure perisheth not but through our owne vnthankefulnesse: as wee see that manie folke thinke it ynough to bee at sermons, and it seemeth vnto them, that God hath his duetie, so they haue vsed some ceremonie. But in the meane while the seede of life doeth perish without yeelding any fruite. To the ende therefore that we may apply the blessing that GOD bestoweth on vs, to this vse: when as wee haue libertie to heare his doctrine, and to bee trayned therein, and haue the Sacramentes for an establishment of our faith, and may declare that it is the liuing God whome wee worshippe and that hee gouer-

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neth vs: I say, let the same, profite vs; and so will it, if we acknowledge that our Lord can not bestowe on vs any greater blessing than that is. And in the meane whyle we will take it patiently if other thinges doe faile vs: as where many want their commodities, let them not be greeued at the children of this worlde, which haue their delightes, and do triumph, welt'ring themselues in their earthly pleasures; if the children of God haue not the same, let them knowe that they enioy a thing which recompenseth double, yea an hundreth folde; that is, that they can serue God. For to what purpose is it, that these wretched people which dwell in papistrie may lye slumbring in their neastes, and in the meane while be banished from the kingdome of GOD, and that Christ Iesus himselfe and his worde be banished from the countrey wherein they dwel? What auayleth it, that they bee serued in their houses, and in the meane while bee not suffered to serue GOD? What auayleth it, that they haue whereof to eate and drinke till they burst, and in the meane while be starued for want of ghostly foode? What auaileth it, that they be in honour and credite, and in the meane while be constrayned to defile themselues with these trecherous dealinges whereby GOD is despised, and his honour spoyled, and conueyed ouer to Idolles, and they be guiltie thereof? Alas; is not this a cursed state? Let vs therefore take it patiently, albeit that we we be had in contempt to the worlde warde, and counted as vnderlings and castawayes, not hauing our ease, nor that which our flesthe desireth: seeing that GOD giueth vs this special libertie, that we may purely worshippe him and serue him, and be deliuered from this cursed seruitude of Idolles; let vs be contented, and esteeme this sayde benefite, according as it is worthie, so as wee be not grieued towarde them that enioy the goods of this worlde, and in he meane while are destitute of the grace of God, which remaineth amongst vs.

Besides this, heere is a warning that seeing God hath put vs in possession and fruition of this libertie, we must take good heede that wee bee not deptiued thereof through our owne leudenesse: for this threatning which was made to the Iewes, is in likewise directed vnto vs. Let vs vnderstande therefore, that seeing we haue the Gospell preached vnto vs, if it preuaile not with vs, God must deliuer vs into the handes of other teachers when wee shall haue refused to obey him. And in verie deede, wee may not thinke that the horrible confusion which is in the Popedome, befalleth for any other cause, than that whereas they haue beene taught the pure doctrine of the Gospell, yet they haue beene rebelles to God, and haue not bowde their neckes to beare his yoke; and therefore GOD could not otherwise doe, than deliuer them ouer to such Tyrannie as wee see. And truely the same was tolde them aforehand by Saint Paule: It is good reason (sayeth hee) that the worlde, seeing that it will not beleeue the truth, should obey lies: and that they which would not be subiect to the liuing God, shoulde be obedient to the creature, euen to the Idolles, which be nothing. Beholding therefore the examples before our eyes, and hearing the threatning as it lyeth heere: let vs learne, whileste GOD doeth keepe vs in his schoole, so to walke in his feare, and awe, as we may not bee heresi of the welfare which we nowe enioy; but that God may rather augment it, and cause it so preuaile. Moreouer let vs marke that they which doe serue Idolles, shall not bee excused therefore, although the same be a punishment of God. We knowe that one sinne is punished by an other, according as it is spoken in diuerse Textes of scripture: and as we see it specially auowed in the first Chapter to the Romanes. That they which serued not GOD in giuing themselues wholely to cleannesse of life, shall be shaken off and giuen ouer to all maner of shamefull lustes, and haue no more vnderstanding to discerne betwixt euill and good, than brute beastes, but shall runne into all manner of infamie. Hereby Saint Paule doth very well shewe that when GOD giueth vs headie to bee plonged in the depth of our iniquities, it is for that we should be the more guiltie before him. They therefore which worshippe Idolles, notwithstanding that they be compelled thereto, and doe sigh and would faine be at libertie: yet cease they not to offende God: and thereby they should vnderstande the beastes whowe haynous their sinnes bee, seeing that they must receiue such correction for them. As howe? Whereas I should glorifie my God, I must offende him, he is faine to cast me off, because I am not worthie to serue him, and he must deprive mee of the liberty and mean to dedicate my selfe wholly to his obedience. Let all them therefore that be in the captiuitie of poperie and mingled amongst the superstitious, vnderstande that the vengeaunce of GOD lieth vppon them, and that they shalbe more and more guiltie for their seruing of Idolles. It is a poore reply for them to say, we doe it not willingly, wee wish that it might please God that the right and pure Religion were ouer all: but for all this, our Lorde doeth not exempt them from condemnation: And he is the competent Iudge. Let vs therefore rest vppon his worde: and seeke no more startingholes, but let them that indure such a state, vnderstande that it is nowe time or neuer, to turne to God, forasmuch as they bee as good as drowned therein, and haue a token of his wrath, against them, in that he is gone farre away from them. Therefore let them thinke thereuppon, and bee moued therewith to the quicke: according as the meaning of GOD is in this Text, and as we haue touched it heretofore.

Nowe Moses sayeth: *That this people shall bee a gazing stocke, and an example, and a byworde, and a shoffing stock vnto the nations, amongest whom they shall bee dispersed.* Heere our Lorde sheweth that as his goodnesse shoulde be knowen in the people

people of Israell, and euery man shoulde reioyce in the seede of Abraham, so shoulde the verie same people be abhorred and detested. The
Gen.22.18. promise was thus: All Nations shall be blessed in thy seede. The trueth is that we must resort to our Lorde Iesus Christ, which is the verie bonde of the seede of Abraham; or else this blessing hath no place, nor grounde to stande vpon. Yet notwithstanding, they which were descended of the race of Abraham, shoulde haue beene blessed of GOD, so as they might haue been an example, that euery one desiring grace might haue sayde, O God take pitie vppon me, as vpon the children of Abraham, whome hee hath chosen and adopted. Such was the promise. See heere the threatning that was layde against it, that seeing GOD did smite so rigorously vpon the people whome hee hadde chosen, men might bee astonished at it and thinke thus with themselues: Is it possible that they whome GOD hath chosen, should now be cast off, and be persecuted and throwen vnder foote with all manner of reproch? And hereuppon men may say: O God keepe mee that I fall not to such ease as this people is in, or else when they intende to curse, they might say, GOD doe vnto thee as hee hath doone to these vile Iewes. This much is to be vnderstoode of this place.

Nowe let vs marke that whereas the holy ghost spake this by the mouth of Moses, it was not his meaning that this doctrine shoulde serue onely for two thousand yeares or thereabouts, which time the law lasted vntill the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ: but we at this day must apply the same to our owne vse: that insomuch as God is come nigh vs, wee must walke in his feare in despite of Sathan, so as his goodnesse may shine in vs, and be perceyued to remaine vpon vs: and contrariwise that when wee bee vnthankfull, and our God is as it were mocked of vs, it behoueth vs then to thinke thus: Wel may wee shrinke backe, but wee shall gaine nothing by all our shiftes: for in the ende wee shall not faile to come to shame. Verily wee see how
Esa.52.5. it is sayde that the name of God shalbe blasphemed amongst y misbeleeuers, because that they which were counted faithfull before, bee so cast downe, as GOD may seeme to haue falsified his promise and to haue deluded them, so farre foorth must the vengeaunce of GOD extend. Nowe seeing it is so, let vs learne to submit ourselues to our Lorde while hee allureth vs vnto him with gentlenesse, and so to holde vs vnder his obedience, as we may not become a byword and a iesting stocke to all the wicked, which seeke nothing but to blaspheme GOD and to make a mocke of vs. Let vs (I say) looke well to that.

Moreouer, where Moses sayeth, *That GOD will thus disperse his people:* it serueth still to confirme his matter, to the ende that the Iewes, shoulde not thinke that they were carried away by a storme, as it were by happe hazarde; but that they should vnderstande that it is the hand of GOD that is vppon them: and that forasmuch as this threatening preuayled not with them, therefore the thing that is happened vnto them should stande vs in some steede. For looke what vengeance we heare GOD speake of in this place, the same we see executed before our eyes. Is it not a horrible thing that the Iewes be abhorred at this day throughout the whole worlde? Yet were they the people whom GOD hadde sanctified for himselfe, they were his heritage, they were the royal priesthoode, according as they bee termed in Exodus, and Exod.19.6. 1.Pet.2.9. they were the blessed Generation, and yet for all this, they be reiected of all men, insomuch that men doe as it were shudder to behold them as though they ought to be cutte off from mankinde. If it be sayde, O this may verie well happen to the faithfull, and the like befell euen to the holy Patriarkes; it did so in deede, howebeit after an other sorte. For the faithfull may well be put in feare, according as it is sayde in the prophet Esay, that folke shall point at them Esa.14. with the finger, and shunne them afarre off: and that is because GOD is not knowen, and his grace is despised. But whereas we speake of the Iewes at this day, it is very well seene that God is against them: for they be as rotten members, and their bodie is torne in peeces, and there remaineth not any token of this blessing which God hadde bestowed on them. Therefore when we beholde such a lookingglasse, let vs learne to make our commoditie thereof, and lette the example of them serue to seale this doctrine and to ratifie it, that wee tempt not GOD, and that wee continue not hardehearted so long till he bee faine to wrappe vs vp in reproch with all the rest of the nations of the worlde. After this, Moses returneth to that which hee hadde touched afore: which is, *That the people hauing* Deut.28. *tylled their grounde and their possessions, shall not drinke of the wine of their grapes, nor eate of the corne of their harueste, nor enioy the fruites of their trees.* This hath beene spoken afore: but there is heere a certaine difference to be noted. For therefore God had shewed, that when the Iewes had laboured for corne and wine, the enemies should come and take all away, and that all the same should be made a pray: but nowe he sayth, that without any force of man, and without any troubles of warre, they should neuertheless not faile to bee famished, and to bee destitute of all thinges that might doe them good. Why so? Because that wormes, beastes, Caterpillers, locustes, and all other thinges shall eate vppe the fruite of the earth. Loe what armies God stireth vp against the wretched. Againe, on the other side, there shal come blasting and findging, so that all must needes perish: albeit that men touch not the Iewes, but let them alone in rest, yet shall they vnderstande that GOD hath other meanes to punish them, and that hee is alwayes armed infinite wayes. That is the thing which GOD meant to declare. And therefore lette vs take warning by this Text, that when wee haue escaped one plague, GOD will finde

finde out an other for vs: and if we ſtep aſide to the left hand, & he neuertheles is armed againſt vs, and before wee haue gone three paſes, hee ſtoppeth vs of our way. Loe how men preuaile, when they ſeeke lurkingholes; according as we ſee how the Prophete Eſay mocketh them that thinke by their ſubtiltie to eſcape the hande of God. Dreame on, dreame on your fill (ſaith he) yet ſhall the curſe always ouertake you. And in like caſe, although we haue no enemies to trouble vs, & to riſe vp againſt vs to ſpoile our ſubſtance: yet let vs vnderſtand ỹ God hath other meanes, which we know not, for to bereaue vs of ỹ which he hath put into our hands, and that we ſhall be abuſhed, to thinke how wee haue wherewith to ſatisfie vs, and yet that the bread ſhall be pluckt out of our mouthes: and that when we thinke to drinke, we ſhall be drie. And whereof commeth that? Euen of this, that it is our Lorde which giueth increaſe to the corne when it is ſowen in the ground: It is he that ſendeth the Grapes; It is hee alſo that cauſeth all thinges to proſper for our nouriſhment. We be taught by this text, firſt of all, that when we till the fieldes, ſowe them & reape them, we muſt make prayers alwayes vnto God to bleſſe the earth, that wee may be fed through his grace; and wee muſt holde it for a certayntie, that it is his peculiar office to feede vs like as a father doeth his litle children. Thus much concerning that poynt. Whereof becauſe I haue treated more at large heretofore, it ſuffiseth as nowe to touch it in one word.

Now furthermore let vs marke, that whereas God ſpeaketh here of *Locuſtes, wormes, Caterpillers, & other beaſts*, & wheras he ſpeaketh of blaſting & of *burning which cõmeth therof*, hee ſheweth ỹ he hath men of warre of a ſtraunge ſort, when hee vouchſafeth not to doe men good: & this alſo ſerueth to pull downe the pride of men. For if we be ſpoyled by the enemies: verie well (will men ſay) this was doone by violence and plaine force. As for example when warre is, the whole countrie is ſpoyled, the richeſt ſoolke become beggers: and all this is wited vppon the warre, man is not blamed for it. But when it commeth to paſſe by other accidentes, ſo as men wote not by what meane their ſubſtãce is waſted, though they ſee it melte away before their eyes, one yeare by haile, an other yeare by froſt, and one while one way & another while an other, ſo as al thinges conſume betwixt their handes; God by this meane maketh it more manifeſt vnto men, that hee meaneth to confounde them vtterly. And indeed if we marke the courſe that he kept with the Egyptians, wee ſhall perceiue it much better. For we diſcerne Gods iugdementes better in other men than in our ſelues. If God had ſtirred vp a great armie againſt the Egyptiãs, in ſtede of the lyce and vermine: they would ſtill haue continued in their pride and preſumption: and albeit that they had beene a hundred times diſcomfited, yet woulde they not haue fayled to haue beene ſtiffenecked ſtill. When they were perſecured with lice, and that there were ſuch Souldiers in Egypt; they ſhoulde haue beene aſhamed. Therefore let vs well note, that God by ſending men ſuch chaſtiſementes as be ſet downe here doth warne them to thinke on their frailtie. If Herod had beene ſlaine with a thunder bolt from heauen; it had not beene ſo fit a puniſhment for the blaſphemie which he committed in ſuffering himſelfe to be called a God, and not a man, as when God cauſed him to bee eaten and conſumed with vermine, till hee was as rotten as coulde bee, inſomuch as hee was compelled by that diſeaſe to ſay (as hee that liued at that time and was his familiar beareth witnes:) Oh ſee here a goodly God, which is ſo rotten that he is inforced to feele that the hand of God doeth perſecute him for his pride. Let vs therefore marke well, that God, after he had threatened the Iewes to ſende them enemies, which by violence and force of armes ſhoulde ſpoyle the countrie of all manner of foode: now hee addeth moreouer that although they were not vexed nor troubled at al by mans hand, nor anie thing were attẽpted by man againſt their poſſeſſions and lands; yet notwithſtanding they ſhoulde not boote themſelues by their labours, nor by the well tilling of their groundes. And why? Becauſe the vermine ſhall waſt all. And hee ſaith againe expreſſely, *Thou ſhalt ſow much and gather nothing*, whereby hee ſheweth that when men make neuer ſo good prouiſion afore-hande, thinking vndoubtedly that all ſhall goe as they woulde wiſhe, yet ſhall they bee neuer the better for it. And it ſerueth to this end that we ſhoulde not fall aſleepe when wee ſee fayre likelihoodes, according as wee bee commonly woont to deſpiſe God: as who ſhould ſay, that if there bee a good ſeedtime, wee are paſt danger, and God had no more to deale with the thinges that bee vppon the earth, or if we haue reapt and laide vp the Corne in our barnes, it ſhoulde make vs to be the more proude, becauſe we ſee no likelihoode of any more daunger. But in ſteade of this, wee ſhoulde euermoe haue an eye to Godwarde, ſaying, Lorde, beholde, the earth waiteth for raine as though it were a thirſte, and when thou giueſt it, it is to make it to bring foorth ſuſtenance for our nouriſhment. Againe, ſuch ſtormes might fall from heauen as woulde waſhe away all from vs, and one warre woulde be enough to bereaue vs of all that wee haue. Thus is all in thy hande O Lorde, and wee muſt depend vppon thy mercie, and bee all our life long in thy cuſtodie; or elſe we muſt periſhe, and all the prouiſions that we haue ſhall profite vs nothing. Thus then muſt we call vpon God with diligence, and walke in his feare, ſeeing he is ſo gratious as to bee our forſterfather, and vouchſafeth to ſtoope ſo low vnto vs. Therefore hath Moſes verie wel declared in this text, ỹ wee muſt not be beguiled by the goodly likelihoods & faire prouiſions which we are able to haue. As for example, when we ſee ỹ corne to bee faire vpon the ground, we muſt not bee too luſtie as though all were won, no not euen when the corne is gathered in. For God will be then called vpon, according as we are bound to make our dayly ſute vnto him, ſaying, Giue vs our daily breade O Lorde, that day by day hee may feede

Ioſeph. de Ant. 17. lib.

Act. 12. 23.

Matt. 6. 11.

vs. For albeit we haue neuer so much to day, yet to morrowe we may starue. For when it pleaseth God, he is able not only to destroy ỹ corne and wine in the fieldes; but also he can make thẽ to bee worth nothing, euen when we haue them in our garners and Cellers. Nay, we heare the threatnings that he maketh, saying, You shall carie corne to the mill by measure, and ỹ bread to the ouen by weight, and yet for all that, you
Ezec. 4. 16. shall be stil emptie and hungrie, when you haue eaten neuer so much, there shall be no vertue at al in the meat, neither shal you be sufficed therewith. Seeing our Lord telleth vs that he hath so manie wayes to famish vs, let vs not bee harde hearted: but let it rather waken vs, that we may altogether depende vpon him, and walke in his feare, and be his children, if we intend that hee shall still continue to do the office of a father toward vs. That is the effect of the thinges which we haue to remember. Here againe Moses repeateth these threatenings, whereof he had spoken afore, saying: *That the Iewes and their linage shall be caried away into captiuitie.* Now certainly there can nothing more bitter happen vnto men, than to see their children taken away by force, eaten, and deuoured by the enemies, and cruelly dealt withal: they had rather to haue buried them a hundred times. Now then let vs marke in fewe words that God meant to declare in this text, that although he haue beene neuer so bountifull towardes vs, and filled vs with his blessinges, so as we be fenced in on all sides: yet he can verie well bereaue vs of them all againe, and that plague shal be much more greeuous vnto vs, than if we had neuer knowẽ, what his goodnesse meaneth. Wherefore the largelier ỹ God bestoweth his blessinges vpon vs, yea euen those blessings that concerne this transitorie life, let vs looke that wee bee alwayes so much the more prouoked to honour him and to serue him. For he for his part, will not cease to do vs good, so we turne not tayle, & giue him ouer. But seeing he allureth vs so gentlie, if we be willing to come vnto him; let vs assure our selues that his hande shall euermore be stretched forth to augment the giftes and blessinges that we haue receiued of him.

In the end he returneth to the matter which we saw heretofore. *All these curses shal come vppon thee, they shal cease vpon thee, & thou shalt be caught and besieged by them on all sides, vntill that God hath quite consumed thee: euen because thou hast not harkened to his voice, to obey his statutes and commandementes, which he hath giuen thee.* I haue tolde you herebefore howe that Moses hath oftentimes shewed to the Iewes, that no euill or aduersitie came vpon them but by the hande of God. But it behoueth vs also to knowe the cause. True it is that sometime God doth visite vs, and we cannot perceiue the cause thereof: for hee doeth it not for our sins, not for that he might not doe it, but for that he spareth vs. Yet is this alwayes to be looked vnto, that when we susteyne any afflictions, we must thinke on our sins, & enter into examination of them to condemne our selues before God: yea & we must not tary so long: but we must benefit our selues by al manner of calamities which we see throughout ỹ worlde, knowing ỹ God punisheth mens sins by such meanes: and thereupon bridling our selues from the like. The matter then whereunto Moses doth nowe returne, is, that hauing shewed vs howe it is the Lord that withdraweth all maner of blessinges from vs, it is he that curseth our possessions, and the fruites of the earth, it is he that sendeth vermine, stormes and tempests, to destroy all: it is he ỹ giueth power to our enemies: hee sheweth wherfore all this is done: to wit, because we haue rebelled against him, because we haue despised his law. That is ỹ verie cause why these plagues of vengeance do so pursue vs. Now then, let vs beare in minde the doctrine which hath beene sufficiently set foorth hereabout: which is, that when God doeth afflict vs, we must shutte our mouthes from replying or entring into plea: for we shal win nothing by standing in contention with him. Nay rather we must condemne our selues, confessing that hee dealeth iustlie. Although it be his will to proue our patience, and to trie vs to the vttermost; yet notwithstanding we must yeeld ourselues as guiltie before him, & vnderstand that our sinnes deserue to bee thus roughly handled at his hands. Here is wherwith to cause all ỹ blasphemies, murmurings and complaints to cease which are daily heard in ỹ world. Whẽ there happeneth any aduersitie or anie other afflictiõ, it is to the end we shold think on ỹ sinnes that we haue committed. Marke that for one point. And whereas mention is made of the commandements and statutes which God hath ordeined, the same expressely and purposely cõcerneth vs. For albeit that the Papistes haue the law, yet is it buried in them: the Iewes (as saith Saint Paul) haue a vaile before their eyes, so as they vnderstand nothing. The Turkes walke in their owne ignorance, so doe all the rest of the heathen. Now our Lord doth inlighten vs, and shew vs the way. There is therefore a more vilanous rebellion in vs, when we do not according as we be taught, and also wee deserue that God shoulde vse greater rigor toward vs, and powre vppon vs the plagues of vengeance which bee here conteyned. Therefore let vs benefite our selues by the things that are saide here, concerning the commandements & statutes that God hath ordeined. And seeing it is so, ỹ hee speaketh dayly vnto vs, declaring vnto vs his wil so familiarly: let euerie of vs submit himselfe obediently therunto. And whereas Moses saith further, *That these curses shall catch holde vpon vs, and that we shalbe hemmed in round about by them, vntil they haue consumed vs:* it is a warning to vs ỹ we should not be selfe willed against God: for wel may we seeke starting holes: but it shal nothing boote vs, (as hath beene saide heretofore) for the end shal be euer vnhappie for vs. And therfore let vs remẽber the complaint that God maketh by his Prophet Esay. He saith in that text (as we heard yesterday) that from the crowne of the heade to the sole of the foot, God must needs smite hard vpon all them that haue rebelled. And hauing spoken so by his Prophete Esay, he saith: What

2 Cor. 3. 14.

Esay. 1. 5.

may

may I doe more? I haue not ceased to chastice my children tinsomuch that from the crowne of the head to the sole of the foote, I haue so beaten them, that there is no whole nor sounde place, and yet they continue hardhearted still. Alas, what shall I doe? I must crushe them and breake them all too peeces. Then let vs be afraid to stande so wilful froward against our God, and let vs preuent the condemnatiō here pronounced. And so soone as God beginneth to correct vs, let vs bestirre vs to returne vnto him, yea and let vs not tarie so long neither, but being admonished by his worde, let vs fall to bewaile our sinnes, and to be sorie for them, and moreouer let vs aske forgiuenesse of them in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowlegement of our sins: beseeching him not to suffer vs to bee so blinded in this mortall life, as not to know that al ỹ miseries & wretchednes which we suffer, be warnings giuen vnto vs, to make vs to thinke vppon ourselues & vpon our liues: & also to moue vs to repentance. And therfore that if we be afflicted at his hand, it may not make vs to blaspheme his holy name, nor moue vs to impatiencie: but rather tame vs, so as we may fare the better by al his corrections, and turne againe vnto him. And that for asmuch as we see the wretched world at this day to be so full of wretchednes and miseries, as is horrible, and also do behold the wrath of God for the sinnes that raigne therein: it may be a meane to hold vs in awe, praying God not to vse any such rigour toward vs: but rather that we fleeing for refuge to his mercie in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, may be touched with true repentance: & increase and prosper more and more therein, vntill that, beeing deliuered from all our imperfections and sins, our God do cloath vs with his righteousnes vnto the which wee bee daylie called. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xxv. of March, 1556.

The Lx. Sermon which is the eight vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

46. And these things shal be for tokens and woonders to thee and to thy seede for euer,

47 Because thou hast not serued the Lorde thy God with ioye, and with a good heart, for the aboundance of all maner of thinges.

48 And thou shalt serue thine Enemy, whom the Lorde thy God will send against thee: I say thou shalt serue him in hunger and thirst, in nakednesse and in all maner of want. And he will lay a yoke of yron vpon thy neeke, vntill he haue rooted thee out.

49 The Lord will bring a people vpon thee from a farre, and from the end of the earth, which shal fly as the Eagle: a people whose language thou shalt not vnderstand.

50 A people of a shameles countenance, which will not reuerence the person of the aged, nor take pitie vpon the young.

BEcause that things bee so greatly confused in this worlde, that it is heard to discerne who they bee whome God meaneth to punishe for their sins: or to whō hee meaneth to shewe his loue? Moses sayth expressely, that God will send such apparant tokens vpon them that bee stubborne against him, as shall bee wonderfull to them: insomuch as they shall be compelled to vnderstande, that the same commeth to passe neither by fortune, nor by common meane; but that they bee extraordinarie thinges, and that God doth shewe foorth his power therein. It is true (as wee haue saide heretofore) that at the first sight it cannot bee well discerned, who they be whome God loueth, and who they bee whome hee misliketh: because that (as Salomon saith) both the good and the euil is common vnto all. Hee that serueth God doeth some times prosper; and oftentimes hee is afflicted: And so is a despiser of God also. This is the cause saith he ỹ men become hardhearted, for it seemeth vnto them ỹ they win nothing by seruing of god: or rather that it is but lost labor. Moreouer it is often 60 Eccle. 9. 2.

seene that the children of God bee sometimes more hardly handled than the most wicked in ỹ worlde, and therefore it is to bee gathered after carnall capacitie, that it is much better to despise God. Dauid confessed, that hee staggered as vpon the Ice, when he beheelde the course of thinges to be such as that the good, and they that endeavored to walke in all maner of integritie, must be constrayned to drinke the water of troubles, to eate the bread of heauinesse, and to moysten themselues with teares: and in the meane while the wicked, which cease not to doe evill, to lyue at their ease and in pleasure: whereby it should seeme that God loueth them. And what a dealing were that? But our Lorde declareth in this place, that in the ende he will make it apparant to the that be corrected at his hand, that their sinnes are the cause why they suffer smarte, howbeit that it be not so quickely perceiued. We haue seene heretofore among other curses which Moses denounced, ỹ they which cast off the worde of God be constrayned to borow, and to be euer in neede: and that the others which shoulde borowe of them, haue wherewith to help theselues. But yee see how al the children of God fall into necessitie, and find not any ỹ will comfort them: they make many turns before they meete with a man that will vse gentlenes toward them: and this seemeth cleane contrarie to the other. But yet doeth God exercise his people after ỹ maner: and in that respect it is that I said, that when we bee afflicted, whether it bee with pouerie, or with sickenesse, or anie other way, we must not fail to enter into accoũt with God, that is, to examine our life, and to see whether wee haue not committed manie faultes or not: & then shal euerie one of vs finde himselfe faultie.

Pſal. 73. 2.

Deut. 28. 44

Againe on the otherside, if wee perceiue not the cause why that God is mooued to vse rigour toward vs: let vs content our selues, that hee knoweth the same to be profitable for vs: and ỹ if we had not a readie offended him, yee were we in way to do it: and he hath preuented it: and that all these corrections, bee to bring vs lowe, to the end that we shoulde walke vnder him in feare, and that our lightie shoulde not be euerlastie, as it is thereunto enclined: for God doeth oftentimes foreſee the pride of a man, and then he taketh away the occasions and the obiectes. Besides this he knoweth that a man will be too lolie in his pompes and delightes: and therefore he cutteth off the occasion aforehande, whereby the partie is letted, so as hee cannot doe as hee would. Seeing that our Lord prouideth aforehand for our welfare after such maner, let vs thinke on the fruites which we haue earst compared. Moreouer if there were no further meaning in it, than to exhort vs to repentance, euen that were meete: but we haue alwayes to consider, howe God cannot too much prouoke vs to come vnto him: for euerie sinne is enough to slay vs in this world, and in the meane while we haue no minde of the heauenly life; or if we thinke thereon, it is so coldly, that our trauelling towardes it is not with so earnest affection as it ought to be, and therefore God is faine to deale with vs by manie afflictions. After this manner ought euerie of vs to behaue himselfe toward him. As touching others, we may not at the first dash condemne them whome God doth punishe: but we must remember that which is saide in the Psalme, Blessed is the man that doeth wisely of ỹ afflicted in the day of his trouble. But wee be wonderfull hastie in that point. As soone as wee see a poore man in miserie and wretchednesse, O say wee, God plageth him, and he hath deserued it: we be in the seate where he iudges. If God smite vs, after that he hath bestowed many stripes vppon vs, we will hardly remember that wee haue sinned: but as concerning others, our tongues be verie quicke to condemne them. But we shoulde much rather encline to gentlenesse: as for example, when we see the faithfull to suffer, we should thinke that Behold howe God dealeth with his children, instructing vs thereby, that there is no rest in this world, and that our happinesse is in heauen, and it is thither that wee ought to lifte vp our hearts. And againe, if this happen to the greene trees, what shall become of the drie wood? If God spare not them which haue indeuored to followe his worde, as appeareth vnto vs, what shall become of the skorners thereof, as hath the Prophet? If iudgement beginne at the house of God: miserable then shall they be which haue hardened themselues against him. Saint Peter also doeth admonishe vs to put the same in vre. And so yee see howe wee ought to deale in this matter. Moreouer, if wee haue patience, and meekenesse and bee apte to beg taught, it is certaine that wee shall euermore feele a taste of the goodnesse of God in the middest of the afflictions which hee sendeth vs. True it is that oftentimes wee shall bee put in feare by them. There will be a kinde of vnquietnesse in vs which will so vexe vs that we shall thinke our selues vtterly forlorne vnlesse GOD withdraw his hande very quickly. If he prolong our affliction, then we be altogether blancke, our courage faileth vs: so that if we be not held in with ỹ feare of God, and with patience, to be altogether quiet vnder his hande: we be euermore wandering. But if we holde vs still there, then shall we vnderstand ỹ he chastiseth vs in his mercie and goodnesse: according as it is saide in the Prophet Abacuc, That the faithfull after they haue been in heauinesse, doe in deede vnderstande, that God doeth neuertheleſſe vphold them, and forgetteth them not but doeth alwayes temper & mitigate their afflictions, so as they finde his fatherly goodnes towardes them, and therewithall doe comfort themselues, and can well say with Dauid, Lord if thou wilt be angrie, it is but for a little while: but thy goodnesse endureth all our life long. Beholde (I say) how we may alwayes haue matter wherewith to cheere our selues, and to reioyce in the middest of our afflictions: so as we may perceiue indeede that our Lorde will not faile to be merciſull vnto vs, notwithstanding that hee vseth some rigour towarde vs, to trye our patience, and to quicken vs vppe to come vnto him, and to labour to the

Pſal. 30. 6.

Luke 23. 31.

1. Pet. 4. 17.

Abac. 1. 13.

the celestiall life. But we must euermore haue an eye to the ende, according as Dauid saith. And therfore in the psalme 37. hee exhorteth vs not to be grieued at ỹ prosperitie of the wicked: for he knoweth that our eies be as it were dasled. When we see a wicked body to be at ease and to haue all wishes, we streight wayes conclude that God hath no regard to deale with me according as they be worthy: by meanes whereof we stagger and are in such perplexitie as we wote not what shal becom of vs. Now Dauid saith, that in thinking so, he played the beast, and was out of his wittes: and hee confesseth that hee was in that point, bereft of reason and iudgement, affirming that he did wrong to al the generation of Gods children, vntil he had looked into the Sanctuarie. It is true, that in the thirty & seuenth Psalme which I alleadged here before, he saith, I passed by and sawe the wicked floorish and growe high like a Cedar tree of Lebanon: and after that I had turned me about, he was cut downe as a tree that had nó more left but ỹ drie stocke vpon the earth: so as there remained no signe of him at al. Such changes do we see in this world; but put ỹ case we sawe none: yet must we enter into the Sanctuarie of God, as it is said in the threescore and thirteenth Psalme. And there we must wayte patiently till God make it apparant vnto vs that al afflictions be profitable for his children: and that hee sendeth them as medicines for their health: and contrariwise, ỹ the prosperitie which he permitteth to the contemners of his law and ballace, shall bee conuerted to their great confusion. We must therefore learne to hold our wits and soules in awe, that we wander not in the afflictions which God doth send vs.

But to returne to the purpose of Moses: let vs note well howe hee saith that the punishmentes which God sendeth vppon them that haue rebelled against him to the vttermost, and wouldc not be corrected: *shall be as tokens and wonders to them and to their posteritie*: that is to say, he wil punish them after a straunge fashion, and as hath not beene wonted amongest men: so as they shal be compelled in spite of their teeth to say: This is the verie hande of God. And indeed can there be a more beastly contempt of God found, than that which was in Pharao? Hee was a man not onely drunken with pride, but altogether senselesse: he was a man that despised the maiestie of God, and a man so rebellious, as was not in any wise to be deale withall. When he heard Moses and Aaron speake, he laughed them to shorne: his feeling of the first strokes couldc not make him to yeelde. And in the ende hee needed not a Prophet to admonish him, for he himselfe could say, Surely this is the finger of God. We see therefore howe God doeth oftentimes expresse his power in such wise, that euen the most hereticall are constrained to perceiue and to thinke that there is some maiestie in heauen, which afore that time they had not accompted of, and thereupon to enter into consideration of their sinnes and to confesse them, and to be the more lively touched therewith. That is it which Moses meaneth here concerning signes and wonders.

This matter is worthie to be marked. For (as I haue saide) if God beginne to punish men, it is euermore saide to be fortune, this is agreeable to our state, (say they:) we know that mans life is subiect to much wretchednes, and in ỹ meane while the hand of God is not regarded. And though he double it, yet do men continue dull, & seeme as though they could euermore hide them, & scape away, because they enter not into their consciences to searche out the sinnes that be there, but are loath to knowe them, as if a man should goe hide himselfe in a darke corner of set purpose to shun the brightnesse of the sun at noone days. Euen so doe we in al the chastisements which God doth send vs to waine vs of our sins and to drawe vs to repentance. But in the end God doth augment his punishments in such sort, as they become miracles: that is to say, they extende the common measure, order and course of nature, so as we might be rauished with astonishment, and thereby perceiue that God doth then shewe himselfe, as though his hand appeared vnto vs frō heauen. And that is the thing which he declareth more fully in the xxvi. Chapter of Leui. For after he hath pronounced the sentence vpon them that reiect the doctrine of saluation, he saith, I will send vpon you seuentimes as much, if I perceiue that nothing do preuaile with you: If my punishing of you amend you not, I will ad there to seuentimes as much. And hee repeateth this sentence againe in the end, & saith, If you will walke at al aduenture against me, I will walke also at all aduenture against you. Now this word, Aduenture, hath relation to the blockishnes that is in vs, which we haue touched here before. For we see very well the aduersities that doe befall vs in this worlde, & wading yet further we confesse that it is God that punisheth vs: but to thinke thereon in good earnest, and to iudge euerie man himselfe by calling our sinnes to remembrance so often as God giueth any inckling of them: it is the furthest part of our thought. Let euery man looke to himselfe: How many afflictions haue we in the yere which should be testimonies vnto vs of ỹ wrath of God, & as it were summons of apparance before him, warning vs to sue to him for pardon, and to haue pitie vpon vs? Scarsely doth any one day passe, but that a man is warned fiue or sixe times as if God should say vnto him; Wretched creature, why hast thou no minde of thy soule? Why hast thou no care to beseech me to receiue thee to mercie? But scarse once in a moneth wil a man enter into examination of his life to condemne himselfe; and if we doe it, it is but coldly. But we ought to be so ashamed and so vexed at the feeling of Gods wrath as though we saw hell lie open before our eyes. But wee see that very few doe thinke thereon: for euerie of vs forgetteth himselfe. That is the thing which God meaneth by this worde of walking at all aduentures against vs. Yet doe wee follow on our course still, as though no harme had touched vs, we swallowe vp our afflictions. They do indeede trouble vs, when they pinch vs, and yet

do we nothing but shake our eares (as they say) and followe still our owne way. Then goe wee at all aduentures, yea euen with excessiue ouerweening, when we acknowledge not the hande of God, ne perceiue that hee is a iudge, to the ende that we might misselike of our sinnes, and euerie man labour and indeuour to withdrawe himselfe therefrom. Our Lorde therefore saith, I will come against you at all aduentures, as if he should say, I will crosse you and ouerwhart you, & thinke not to gaine anie thing either by your hardening of your heartes, and by your kicking against me, or by your dulnesse in that yee perceiue not howe it is my hande that must bring you againe: No no, (saith hee) I will bee as stout and headstrong as you, yea and more stout and headstrong to. For I will come at all aduentures, I will let my plagues runne out at randon, so as I will breake your neckes, and beate you both backe and bellie, and that without pitie. Nowe we see howe much this word ought to wey with vs, where Moses saith: *That the plagues shall bee for tokens and wonders*, to all skorners: insomuch that when they haue bleared out their tongues at the threatenings of God, and haue nodded their heade against the first corrections which he sendeth them, & haue bitten on the bridle: he proceedeth on stil & ceaseth not to wring them, but driueth them in the end to come to a reckening do the worst they can, & to say openly, It is the hand of God that presseth vs; these are the miracles, they be no ordinarie things nor according to the course of nature.

Now therfore, let vs learn, not to prouoke Gods wrath so far against vs; but let vs suffer ourselues to be tamed by him; and let vs yeelde our selues conformable & gentle so soone as he hath summoned vs, let vs yeeld ourselues guiltie without vsing any startingholes: for we shall win nothing thereby. There is nothing better than to enter into pure and free confession, saying, Lord what wilt thou do to these frail & wretched creatures? It is true ỹ we haue a hundred folde deserued to be sancken: but yet for all that, wee flee vnto thy mercy: wherefore haue pitie vpon vs. When we haue thus condemned our selues, it is a meane to pacifie the anger of God, which thing will not be done by hardening of our hearts. For then he will euer more proceede farther, vntill hee haue brought vs to these signes and wonders, that be here mentioned. Again God must needs do the like also in respect of mens slouthfulnes & negligence, or rather vtter senselesnes. If wee could be subdued at ỹ first blow: God would take no pleasure in laying plague vpon plague. But when he seeth that there is such a kinde of stoutnes, and such a presumption in vs, that we wil not stoope nor bow our necks: he must needs hold on vntil he make vs to feel in very deed & after a strange maner, that it is he before whom we must yeeld our accounts. Let vs therfore marke wel how the obstinate malice of the worlde is the cause why God sendeth so strange corrections to put vs in feare. And if we considered well the state of the world at this day, it would make ỹ haires of our head to stand vpright. Certainely they doe all sigh at the feeling of the stripes, and they complain, howbeit not to any amendmẽt, but rather they bite on ỹ bridle: insomuch that when those which be not altogether blockish do make comparison of the present state, with that which we haue seene before the wrath of God was on this wise prouoked; they see it as it were a sengulfe & that ought to make vs afraid. And so let vs come backe againe to that which Moses declareth, to wit, that God must needs haue found the world very rebellious & hardhearted when he augmenteth his punishments in such sorte for it shoulde neuer come to that passe, were it not that men were otherwise vnreformable. Let vs not accuse God of cruelnie, when we see his rigor to exceed in punishing vs: but let vs acknowledge that our stubbornnesse is so great, that our Lorde must needes handle vs after that fashion: for otherwise he should neuer ouermaster vs.

That is the thing which we haue to beare in mind. Howbeit that is not al: for we must alwaies feare that which is to come. And sith we saw that God hath thus increased his punishmentes not vpon one man only, but vpon the whole world: let vs bethinke vs to call our selues home again before he fal to striking of vs with maine blowes to our confusion and vtter vndoing, without giuing vs any more respit to come to the acknowledgement of our sins. For it is the forest point of Gods wrath, when sinners be taken after such a sort out of this world, ỹ they cannot haue remembrance of their sins, nor take breath to retire vnto God, or to aske him forgiuenes. Let vs learne least Gods vengeance proceede so farre. And for asmuch as we see ỹ the aduersities of these daies be verie great, let vs acknowledge that we haue prouoked God verie much, & that it is not for vs to abuse his patience any longer. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to beare away, specially whē we see ỹ sin doth ouerflow, so as all the world is infected with corruption. Although a man doe good, yet neuertheless forasmuch as it is euermore mixed w sin, he shalbe chastised, howbeit not at the first dash: for as I haue said afore, God doeth spare the wicked and tarrie for them, and in the meane while punish the good that seek to walke a right: but yet in the end he alwayes plagueth the dispisers of his law & maiestie. And as touching the good, he will make thē to feele his grace to their ioy, so that although hee exercise thē with manie chastisements & aduersities: yet notwithstanding, they shal not faile to know him to be their God & father stil, & to rest vpon him. As for the wicked they be not disposed to take to feele the loue & goodnes of God: but are rather wood against him. But when iniquitie is become as a maine sea, & al men are corrupted: the vengeance of God must also ouerflow, so as none may be free from it. We haue seen already ỹ threatning ỹ was made here before, namely ỹ ỹ people should be led into captiuitie with their king. When this came to passe, were none caried away into captiuitie but the wicked, and such as stroue against the Prophetes, and such as despised the good doctrine, and such also as were headstrong against God like rebelles?

Yea,

Yea, there was Ieremie himselfe who had called vppon the people fiftie yeeres together and neuer ceassed to crie: What do ye, ye wretched people? Yet notwithstanding wee see that while others sported them, he wept and wailed: and not contented with that, saide; Who can turne my heade into teares, so as my braine may bee as a fountaine gushing out continually, that I may bewayle the sinnes and calamities of my people? See how the holy Prophet, (after that he had labored in the seruice of God, and fought against all the wicked, and made warre against all maner of iniquitie and stubbornesse:) is faine to be led away captiue aswell as the rest, and to be put to ransom, not of being caried to Babilon, for that had beene the best that could haue bin wished at that time: but God gaue him not the fauour to be brought thither, but he was faine to be hurried into Egypt: yet had hee sayde, Cursed bee they that goe into Egypt: goe ye into Babylon and serue the king of Babylon, be quiet and obedient there, and beare patiently this punishment of God, and in the ende he will take pitie on you. The holy Prophet had not the same liberte. So then wee see, that when calamities come for the generall corruption of all men, the good are wrapped vp amongst the euill. And why is that? Bycause it is not almost possible to liue amongst such infections, and not to bee somewhat spotted therewith. Albeit that Ieremie resisted the euill as much as he coulde: yet feared hee of the publique corruptions of the people, and therefore it behoued him to be punished with the rest; howbeit God did not execute such vengeance vpon him, as he did vppon the despisers of his lawe, no not by a great deale. Yet Ieremie had alwayes a good testimonie, that God did guide him, and when he was in Egypt, he was by a speciall priuiledge free from ỹ curse that hee had pronounced vppon all them that would goe into Egypt: for they drewe him thyther by force. Ye see therefore howe God wrappeth vp his people amongst the rebels, but yet succoureth them after a marueilous maner, which giueth them continuall cause of comfort in him. As much is to be sayd of Daniel. Daniel is set forth vnto vs as a myrror of integritie. Ezechiel speaking of him, putteth him for the third of the most holy that could be chosen; yet was he caried in Babylon, and was it for the sinnes of others? Was he an hypocrite and had lied vnto God, if it had not bin for his owne sinnes. For he saith expressly in the ninth chapter, I haue made confession as well of mine owne sinnes as of the sinnes of my people. He sayth euen as the first, Lord we haue offended thee, & bin disobedient, we haue rebelled against thee, both we and our fathers, our Kings and Rulers: which wordes of his are spoken generally: It may be sayde, that he put himselfe in the number with the others. But, to the end that nothing should be replyed thereunto, he goeth further and sayth, I haue confessed my sinnes and the sinnes of my people. Whereby wee see that Daniell, whatsoeuer integritie and perfection was in him, was neuertheless stained with the common vices, and therefore deserued to feele his part and portion of the punishments that God sent vppon all the people. Heereby wee are also the better warned, to stand in feare and to walke in the more warinesse when we see the world so corrupted; assuring our selues, that in the ende wee must feele by experience, that God hath spoken in good earnest, where hee sayeth, that hee will come stubbornly against vs, if we continue in going stubbornly against him. This is in effect all that wee haue to remember in this Text, where Moses speaketh of Signes and myracles. Wherefore let vs open our eyes in this case, and let vs not linger vntill GOD compell vs to come to him by force, and stretch out his mightie arme against vs: but let vs receiue his worde, and let it serue vs for Spectacles to beholde his iudgementes afarre off, and let vs not tarie the executing of his extreme rigour.

Nowe he addeth therewith, *Bycause thou hast not serued thy God with a good will, and chearefully when thou haddest abundance of all maner of things.* Heere doeth hee reproue the Iewes, for that they coulde not abyde that God should intreate them gently. And it is not all onely to them that hee speaketh, but also vnto vs. We haue therefore a generall doctrine to bee gathered of this speeche; namely, that God of his owne nature, is inclyned to allure vs vnto him by gentle and louing meanes, like as a father goeth about to winne his children, by beyng merrie with them, and by giuing them all that they desire. If a father coulde alwayes laugh with his children, and fulfill their desires, all his delyght should surely be in them: such a one doeth God shew himselfe to be toward vs. In deede he is not passionate as men are: we may not thinke ỹ God is like vnto vs; but in so much as we comprehend not his maiestie, bicause it is too high, he is faine to humble himselfe, and to vse a kinde of speech fitte for our rudenesse and for the weakenes of our wittes. Neuertheless it is certaine that the propertie of God is to winne vs gently, as a father endeuoureth to win his children. What is it that God requireth? That wee shoulde serue him with a franke and free heart, yea and euen with gladnesse. In what manner? Verily that bicause he dealeth gently with vs, and giueth vs all thinges that we neede, we therefore ought to be quiet and well contented, if we be not vnthankfull. And so let vs conclude, that all the calamities, troubles, wretchednes and miseries, which happen in this world, be the fruits of our sinnes, and that wee drine God to handle vs with such rigor. He is faine (as ye would say) to transforme himselfe, and to forsake his nature to ouermaister vs, bicause hee seeth that sinne is exceeding great in vs, and that we can no skill to turne the good to our benefite, which he is readie to doe vs. Howbeit (as I haue said afore) God doth not alwayes tarie till we haue offended him: we must needes graunt that he preuenteth our sinnes: he seeth that we be in danger to fall, and he doeth remedie it in due time. Yet notwithstanding, all the corrections which we endure in this world, proceede of our sinnes: and the sicknes that is

in vs, is the cause why God sendeth vs not abundance of good thinges according to our desire. And if there were nothing elle, but this, ỳ men fall asleepe, & sapa themselues in these earthly pleasures, so as they be not able to looke to the place which Dauid doth call them to, namely, to satisfie our selues with the sight of God, & to reioyce in his presence. Seeing ỳ men cannot attaine thereunto, but are euer wedded to these base things: doe not we deserue that God should withdraw ỳ plenty ỳ he was ready to giue vs, for ỳ he perceiueth that it wold burst vs: and in stead of susteining vs it would so ouerload vs ỳ it wold beare vs down to the ground. This is ỳ cause why our Lord vseth not such liberality toward vs as we desire. For he for his part is not dreined dry, neither doeth hee feare to bee impouerished, by sending vs plenty of al manner of good thinges. We know he is a fountaine ỳ can neuer bee drawen dry: but when he seeth that we waste & deuour his benefices, and be worse than drunken, & that besides the riotousnes which wee vse, we be also vnthankfull as not onely to fall into forgetfulnesse, but also to spurne against his maiesty, & so turne our backes vpon him: insomuch that if wee haue wherwith to maintaine our selues well, we fall to Glittonie, pompousnesse, whoredom, and other looseneſſe, and to be short, the abuses which we commit in the vsing of Gods blessings, are as an vnmeasurable seagulfe: therfore when he seeth such things, he withdraweth his hand & sheweth not himselfe so liberall toward vs. This is the Summe of that we haue to beare in mind. And therefore, seeing that God for his part is alwayes readie to multiply vs, & to giue vs plentie of all good things, were is not that we be not able to brooke it: we must vnderstand that wee are as sicke folke, which must haue a small pitteance allowed vnto them, and be constrained to a diet. And why? Bycause they bee not able to brooke their foode. Whereupon we ought well to vnderstande that which Moses speaketh to our reproche. For what a shame is it, that wee cannot abide that God should vse vs gently and after a fatherly sort? Behold, God offereth himselfe, not onely in woordes, but also in deedes: and he offereth to giue vs all that wee desire. But what? Hee seeth vs not disposed to receiue him, wee despise him, and thrust away his grace: must there not bee then a horrible frowardnes in men? Let euerie one of vs excuse himselfe as much as he will, yet must this saying needes bee verified, and when we haue kicked and spurned neuer so much, yet shall wee at the last bee conuicted of this maliciousnesse, that we could not finde in our hearts to suffer GOD to deale gently with vs, *we haue formed him lyingly, and with a merrie heart*. Therefore let vs not woonder though hee doe handle vs as wee deserue, when wee bee so rebellious against him. For when hee seeth that wee kicke against him, hee must needes breake vs, and deale with vs after such a fashion as wee may vnderstande that hee is our maister: not that they which bee punished, doe serue GOD: but for that they vnderstand that hee hath the maisterie ouer them, when the punishmentes come so farre that they are become signes and wonders. When GOD appeareth vnto them as it were in a visible manner from heauen; then doe they perceiue, Alas I cannot flee nor scape the hande of GOD. Then doe they vnderstande that hee hath the Lordship ouer them, not that they willingly yeeld themselues thereunto, but that they lye languishing and astonished therein, as men locked vp in prison. The thing then which wee haue to remember, is that sith wee could not bee contented, that God should handle vs gently by bowing vnder his hand, that he might guide vs, turne vs and returne vs which way he listed: wee must bee forced by trouble and sorowe, to vnderstand that he hath full soueraintie ouer vs, and that his vtter breaking and ouerthrowing of vs, is bycause wee could not abide to bee gouerned by his hande, when hee was ready to guide vs. This is the matter that we haue to note in the second place.

Wee see the very same in all mankinde, not only touching the afflictions of this present life, but also wee haue this reproch layde vppon vs, that we bee still as it were, famished for want of spirituall blessinges. For our father Adam was created in such state, that the worlde was an earthly Paradise: The whole earth yeelded him all good thinges to his wishe: hee endured neither heate nor colde, nor any greuous want. Thus was our father Adam appointed Lorde and Maister ouer all the worlde, all the Elementes and all the beastes of the earth serued him quietly, and all frutes feared his rust and sauour. What was hee in his person? Hee bare the Image of God, and was of so great noblenesse and worthinesse that hee was as the Angels of heauen: and hee had dwelled in this worlde, with all his lynage, as in a place where hee shoulde haue had no trouble but hee could not abide to bee so gently entreated. When God had thus enriched him with his benefites, hee must needes mistake himselfe, hee could not serue God with a good heart nor with ioy. What could haue grieued him? For God shewed him a faeere and a gracious countenance, and powred out the treasures of his fatherly loue towards him: but Adam could not abyde that, but through his vnthankfulnesse he alyenated himselfe from God. And in what case are wee nowe? We must serue God in hunger and thurst, in nakednesse and reproche, for the earth is cursed vnto vs. When we haue tilled it, it must bring vs foorth thistles and thornes. Wee see the seasons contrary: when we waite for a good yeere, we see hayle or frost, drought or rayne, which serue to pluck the bread out of our mouthes, and to disappoint vs of our foode. We see the ayre troubled, and infected with euill, which oftentimes engender diseases. Greefe is the toyle of men. For when they haue gotten foode with greate distresse; yet want they wherwith to cloath themselues. See there (I say) in what taking we be. And wherefore? Bicause wee would not serue our God cheerefully and with a good hart, when he gaue vs abundance of all

Psal. 4.7. Psal. 16.11.

Gen. 1.26.

Gen. 3.18.

all maner of beastlinesse? But this is not the cheefe matter, (as I haue sayde heeretofore) for wee are destitute of the righteousnesse of God. Our very true ornament, was that wee could haue obteined our selues to all manner of right: and nowe we be spoyled thereof. As then wee had reason and vnderstanding: but nowe bee wee become beastly, for the brightnesse that shoulde shine in vs, is but darknesse. Againe, wee bee couered with reproche: and whereas the Image of God shoulde shyne in vs, nowe we haue the markes of sinne; so that euen our very bare bodies must giue vs to vnderstande of the same: insomuch that if a man bee naked, hee is ashamed of himselfe. And why? God doeth by this meane shewe vnto vs what infection there is in our soules, in that wee bee fayne to hyde vs, as not beeing worthy to bee numbred amongst his creatures. Finally wee bee like dry earth. Truth it is that wee bee ouer fruitefull in euill: as of goodnesse, what is founde in vs? Seeing wee beg thus vnfurnished of all graces, it is good reason that wee shoulde languish in this miserie, bycause wee could not serue our God with ioy and a good heart, at such tyme as he had powred out all his riches most perfectly vpon vs.

Nowe sith wee beholde the euill that is in all mankynde; let vs also apply the same particularly to our selues. Therefore when as our Lorde visiteth vs, and maketh vs to feele afflictions that bee straunge vnto vs; let vs cast down our heads, and enter into such examination of our selues as this: Goe to, whereas GOD hath giuen vs wherewith to serue him, howe doe we discharge our selues thereof? If there arose an ill yeere that bringeth dearth of Corne or wine, so that famine doth threaten vs; let vs looke howe wee honoured GOD in the tyme that hee gaue vs plentie. If wee see there is aboundance of wine, then drunkennesse hath his full scope, so that men cannot bee restrayned from breaking out into all maner of disorder, and (which worse is,) they sticke not to blaspheme the name of GOD, and to rushe on into all disorder, and to take leaue to sinne, feeding and glutting of themselues out of all measure. In aboundance of Corne wee see the like; men bee so proude therof that they cannot abyde either warning or discipline: but they kicke against GOD, and their pryde is moreouer matched with cruelkie, so as euery man taketh to himselfe; hee that hath the mighte, will if hee can playe the Tyrant ouer his neighbours, in taking no pitie vppon them that bee in wante. At this poynt are wee in the tyme of plentie. Therefore, to turne Lande fayne to chaunge his Copie, and to humble his Maiestie vnto vs, and to compell vs to vnderstande what soueraintie and dominion hee hath ouer vs, seeing wee refuse to enter in our heartes to serue him with a cheereful heart and with a good will, nor so giue ouer our selues vnto him. Are wee in rest? All our indeuour is howe to plucke out one an others eyes, and to torment our selues lyke Curtes and Dogges. And if wee were not with men, wee fight against GOD, which is farre worse. And if wee holde on, let vs not bee greeued that wee bee confounded amongst them, seeing wee set vp our selues against the Maiestie of him, vnder whome wee ought to bowe. Nay, wee see that most commonly men make warre against GOD, when hee giueth them rest: wee shall see both generally and particularly that they which bee at leasure to doe euill, doe persecute the Church, and tormente the poore faythfull ones. As soone as GOD giueth them any respite, they seeke nothing but occasion to doe hurt and to exercise their cruelkie. And this is to be seene, not onely in the enemies of the Church, but also in all others: insomuch that both greate and small, when GOD hath left vs in rest, and wee haue made an ende of warring one against another, wee fall to despising of GOD one way or other. Let vs not wonder therefore, if when a warre is finished, it beginne againe immediately. For it is needefull that GOD should deale with vs in such maner: otherwise he cannot rule vs.

And let vs marke well howe it is sayde heere moreouer, *That GOD will raise vp a barbarous people against such as wouldo not bee obedient vnto him.* Such is Gods raigning ouer vs, that hee desireth to bee as a father vnto vs, rather than to bee a dreadfull King or Prince ouer vs. It is true that wee must doe him homage, as to our soueraigne Lorde, and that wee must behaue out selues as his people in all feare, reuerence and humilitie, submitting our selues vnder his obedience: but yet therewithall hee vseth the office of a father towarde vs, and will bee knowen to bee a father. For hee speaketh after an amiable maner, insomuch that although his commaundementes be holde vnto vs, bicause of our malice and rebellion concerning the flesshe, yet notwithstanding after hee hath declared his will vnto vs, hee exhorteth vs, he warneth vs, he rebuketh vs: and all these things hee doeth with such mylduesse, as wee must needes shewe our selues to bee both wise and reason, if wee bee not benefited by the goodnesse hee vseth. But will wee not hearken to our GOD when hee speaketh vnto vs in so gentle and gracious a maner? Then will hee take with vs with maine strokes of halberdes, pykes, and hagbuts. Wee shall there vnderstande nothing, the language of them will bee very straunge vnto vs. And wherefore? Bycause wee had no eares to heare when GOD spake gentlely vnto vs, yea and with such stregard so lowe, as to teache vs lyke litle children, that are taught their A, B, C. Go too then, let vs vnderstande that when wee bee so deafe against God: hee must talke with vs in an other language, and hee must stirre vp some barbarous and brasen faced people, that haue neyther reuerence, reason, nor equitie: to whom when yee shall pray for pitie and compassion, it shall be but in vaine, they will giue no eare vnto you, you shall goe that way in spite of your

beardes.

hearders. And that is the remedie of all these euils? Let vs enter, let vs enter into our consciences, let vs not grynde our teeth as men, as now we are wont so doe, let vs not striue with them. For our combate is not there. But let vs vnderstand that God meaneth to chastise vs by men, bycause we haue beene stubborn towardes him, and would not bee edifyed by his woorde, according as his meaning was. And therefore let vs beneffice our selues by all these warninges, and corrections which GOD doeth sende vs. And let vs not abyde till wee feele the knockes, but whensoeuer GOD doeth vs the fauour to seeke vs at other mens cost, let vs receiue profite thereby: and when he spareth vs, let vs not abuse his patience. And for as much as the meane to reconcile vs vnto him, is to accept the promise that hee offereth vs in the Gospell, let vs imbrace our Lorde Iesus Christ, which is our peace, to the ende that we may be ordered after a fatherly sorte, at the handes of our God.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our misdeedes, beseeching him to make vs to perceiue them yet better, and therewithall to beare with vs in such sort, and that his chastisements and corrections may bee so fatherly and moderable towarde vs, as wee may bee reduced to the obedience of his righteousnesse, and that he will euermore so comfort vs, as wee may haue whereof to reioyce in him, and to glorifie him, for his procuring of our saluation by all meanes. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xxvj. of March, 1556.

The CLXI. Sermon which is the ninth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

49.50 The Lord will stirre vp, &c.

51 The same shall eate the fruite of thy Cattel, and the fruite of thy land, vntil thou bee rooted out, and hee shall leaue thee neither Corne, wine, nor Oyle, nor any fruite of thy Cattel, nor of the flocks of thy sheepe, vntil he haue brought thee to noughte.

52 And hee shall besiege thee in all thy Townes, vntill hee haue cast downe thy high and strong walles, wherein thou diddest put thy trust throughout all thy lande: and hee shall besiege thee in all thy Townes throughout all the lande that the Lorde thy God hath giuen thee.

53 Thou shalt eate the fruite of thy wombe euen the flesshe of thy sonnes and daughters, which the Lorde thy God hath giuen thee, in the siege and distresse wherewith thine enemie shall straiten thee.

54 In so much that the man which is tender and exceeding daintie among you shall bee grieued to looke vpon his brother, and vpon the wife in his bosome, and vpon the rest of his children that be left,

55 And shall not giue vnto them of the flesh of his children, whereof hee himselfe eateth, for feare least he should leaue nothing at al for himselfe, by reason of the siege and straitnesse wherewith thine enemie shall distresse thee in all thy Cities.

56 Yea and the woman that is so tender and nyce among you, that shee will not venture to set the sole of her foote vppon the grounde, bicause of her tendernes and nycenesse, shall bee grieued to looke vpon the husband that lyeth in her bosome, and vpon hir sonne and vpon hir daughter,

57 And vppon the afterbirth which is come out from betwixt hir legges, and vpon the babes which shee hath brought forth: for shee shall eate them priuily for want of all manner of things, in the siege and straitnes, wherewith thine enemie shall distresse thee in thy Cities.

58 If thou doe not keepe and performe all the wordes of this Law, which be written in this booke, and feare this glorious and dreadfull name of the Lorde thy God,

WE must remember what was touched yesterday, and also what Moses doeth still continue to speake of: that is, that if men bee rough and cruell vnto vs, God doeth stirre them vp thereunto: by cause he hath found vs rebellious towardes him. And therefore whensoeuer men deale not so myldely with vs as we woulde, let vs looke whether we haue answered God, & whether wee haue meekely imbraced all that he hath commaunded vs: for if any of vs doe finde himselfe to haue made warre and to haue set vp himselfe against God; it is not to be wondered at, if God pay him with the like againe, on the behalfe of men. But wee shall neuer be perswaded of this doctrine, vnlesse we vnderstande, that God holdeth the hearts of men in his hand to soften them, when it pleaseth him be they neuer so hard hearted; and on the contrarie part to harden them, though they bore vs neuer so much good will before. Let vs not therfore trust to ỹ loue of men, vnlesse we walke in the feare of God. For it lieth in him so to change their hearts as they shal beare rancor toward vs, & be quite & cleane wdrawen frō vs for lesse than nothing, in so much as the worlde shall see ỹ they which were most foreward to helpe vs, shall become most against vs. And on ỹ otherside let vs vnderstand, ỹ our Lord can well qualifie al malice, yea though they be as fierce as a Lion, he will make them mylde & friendly towardes vs. There was neuer nation so proude & cruell as ỹ Egyptians: and in special, how spiteful were they against the children of Israel? It seemed ỹ this poore people should neuer haue founde any mercy. And yet God wrought in such wise, ỹ the Egyptians gaue them all their treasures, & all that euer was excellent in their houses, there was neither siluer nor gold spared. And whereof came that? Before ỹ time they had held the Iewes in bondage, they had vexed them out of all measure: they wold haue plucked ỹ bread out of their mouths, yea & haue cut ỹ throtes of thē all. A litle afore they had killed their children as soone as they came out of their mothers wombs, of purpose to haue destroyed ỹ whole stock of them: & wherof then came this soudaine myldnes ỹ euery man brought them ỹ things ỹ were most precious in his house? It was god ỹ cōuerted their harts. And likewise on ỹ cōtrary side, it is said ỹ he hardned the hearts of kings, when ỹ people were to enter into ỹ land of Canaan: whereas they shold haue him suffered to passe, there were many gainesayers ỹ resisted them. Whence came that? Euen of this, ỹ they had resisted their God. Let vs therefore learne (as I haue saide heretofore) so to behaue our selues in obedience towardes God, ỹ men also for their partes may be friendly vnto vs. For there is none so great nor so mightie, but he shal finde some miserie to rise vp against him, when he wil needes play the stout fellow in striuing against God. And we haue seene that they which are drunken wtheir owne greatnes, must in ỹ end bee punished, not by such as are in any authoritie, or by such as are of estimation in this world: but by rascals & naughtipacks: such folke must euen spit in their faces. And such examples are to be seen euen in princes, & men of greatest state. For when they yeelde not themselues to be gouerned of God, he is faine to stirre vp gouernours to ỹ contrary, to shame such as wil not be obedient vnto him. Yet notwithstanding when men yeeld not themselues tractable, then must we vnderstand ỹ god manageth the matter by a secret meane, and that he doth it to make vs to stoope. Therefore let vs not deceiue our selues in the creatures, saying, What fortune is this? In deede we may say so, but wee must go yet one step further: & we must vnderstand ỹ it commeth not to passe without ỹ direction of God. And thereupon wee must repaire to ỹ remedie, that is to wit, wee must stoope vnder the word & hand of God, and consider, ỹ if it please him, he can turne ỹ minds of men ỹ were so spitefull against vs, & make thē to become friendly to vs. And ỹ is a thing more than necessarie. For when wee haue to doe with them ỹ be rough & intractable, we be by and by out of heart, & would, (if we could possibly) ridde our selues of all troubles, and be set free from thē at the first dash. But we should rather returne vnto God, acknowledging ỹ those things proceede from his hand. And so, when men shew thēselues so vnfaithful and cruell towardes vs, handling vs scornefully & opprobriously, so as we cānot get one whit of right or reason at their hands, but we see how their whole seeking is to set their feete on our throtes, & they haue such a beastly shamelesnes (as it is said here,) ỹ they be not ashamed of any thing ỹ is said vnto them, but they take ỹ bridle in their teeth, & play the wilde beastes, so as there is neither grace nor honestie in them; when wee see such barbarous beastlinesse, let vs learne to resort vnto our God, & to acknowledge ỹ we deserue to be so tamed by him. Moreouer ỹ onely meane to appease such furie, & to asswage those which are so hot and hastie, is to call vpon our God, and to pray him to touche those inwardly with his holy spirite, which are so cruell and cannot yeelde to doe vs good, by cause wee haue set vp our selues against our God. That is the thing whereof we are admonished in this Text.

Nowe Moses repeateth that which hath beene touched heeretofore: namely, *That God will bring vs enemyes from a farre Countrie, and that they shall flie as Eagles*, to the intent wee shoulde not thinke that GOD needeth to make any preparation long aforehand. As if a man should threaten vs: we would looke whether he had a sword in his hand, and whether he be in readines to execute ỹ which he hath said. But if God doe but whistle (as he often speaketh by his Prophets,) by and by hee hath his men of warre in readines; he needeth not to make musters, or to inrolle them, or to sounde the drum: he needeth none of al this: onely at his whistle (for he vseth that similitude;) all the whole earth must needes bee moued. Therefore let vs not looke whether things be in a readines, nor whether any hurt or harme be done vs. Let vs not looke whether any worldly meanes bee prepared thereunto: but

Esa. 5.26.

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let vs vnderstand that ere we can conceiue what euill may happen vnto vs, we shall be presently ouerthrowne. And wherefore? Bycause it is God that speaketh, which maketh men to flye as birds, euen from ỹ one end of the earth to the other. There is neither sea nor mountains able to saue vs from the experience of ỹ which we neuer beleeued. Howbeit God hath so disposed things, yea & euen amongst the heathen is oftentimes seene incredible speedines, when God is disposed to chastise the greatest part of ỹ world: insomuch that some one man hath risen with a smal number of people, to chastice an infinite multitude ỹ did set themselues against him: and that not for one time onely, but twise or thrise one after another, with taking of Townes & Fortresses, which seemed to be so wel appointed, yea and strong by naturall situation, that they could not be approched vnto, & yet haue they bin sacked as if God had meant to renue a great part of the worlde. It hath bin in likewise seene, that a people without renoune or estimation, haue risen and made the most mighty to tremble. In this dooing God giueth examples of that which is written heere: to wit, that he can surely bring our enemies vpon the soudayne, and that they shal make such dispatch, as if they came swifter against vs than by post: and that when we suppose to haue some respit, by truce for one moneth, for one yeere or for al our lifetime, we shal be soudenly surprised in a morning before we thinke thereon. Let vs therfore vnderstand, that as soone as God speaketh, wee must haue an eye vnto the infinite power (that is in him, yea and which is incredible to mans vnderstanding,) & to tremble at his very word, and to yeeld vnto him: knowing well that if we delay from day to day, wee may be preuented, & then will it be too late. Let vs therfore be aduised to humble our selues in due time, and to craue pardon when we haue offended him.

Moses sayeth expressely, *That they which are disobedient vnto God, shal be besieged & shut vp within their walles, vntill all their fortresses in which they trusted, be beaten downe.* Here we see how God reproueth the false and cursed presumption whereby men deceiue themselues, in thinking themselues to be well fenced against him. It is a sacrilege whereby God is robbed of his honor, whē we attribute vnto the creatures, ỹ meane to vphold vs. It is certaine ỹ God serueth himselfe by meanes, & we must also apply thē vnto our vse: but in the meane while to settle our trust vppon them, were a robbing of God of his maiestie. For he wil haue vs to hold al things of him, and to do him homage for them. So then it is an intollerable presumption for vs to put our trust in creatures & to ground our selues on them: and yet there is no fault more common in ỹ world. We can say wel ynough, ỹ it is not lawfull, & that we ought not to doe it: but in the meane while euerie one doth it. Now let vs remēber our selues, for there is nothing ỹ God holdeth more deare, or whereof he maketh greater account than his honour. Neither is it sufficient for vs to leaue him the title & name of God: but he must also be knowne as he is, ỹ is to say, that al power lieth in him, that he is the fountaine of all manner of grace & goodnes: that it is his proper office to maintaine and preserue vs: that our life is in his hand, & all things that belong thereto. When we haue well thought vpon this, let vs take order to gather our wits so about vs, as we be not grounded vpon creatures. Surely the mischiefe is double when we shield our selues with ỹ creatures against God, & therby to become stubborne whē he threateneth vs, & to hold on still when he vttereth forth tokens of his displeasure: let vs consider that the offence is then much more grieuous. But yet is this ouer common. For whilest we perceiue not any daunger towardes, as in respect of the world, doe not we continue in our sinnes? And doe we not abide in stubbornesse? God speaketh: but we regard him not. So ỹ men doe fauour vs, & so we haue wherewith to fortifie our selues, we thinke that ỹ hand of God can not come at vs. And therefore it is not without cause ỹ our Lord reproueth the frowardnes of al such as are disobedient towardes him: that is to say, that they put their trust in their fortresses, in their high walles, in their munitions, and in such like things. Now forasmuch as we bee subiect to these things, it were better for vs ỹ we had neyther hedge nor aught else, than to be wel fenced with walles and bulwarkes. For they serue but to blinde our eyes, that haue no more respect to our God: but be bewitched by Sathan to put our trust in things which shalbe our confusion. Howsoeuer the case standeth, let vs stedfastly holde this rule in generall; that is, ỹ God be euermore our fortresse: as we see he promiseth by his Prophet Esay, aswel in the 12. Chapter, as also from Mmm.4 ỹ 55. vnto the end: for it tendeth al to this point. And it is so commō a doctrine in the holy scripture, that we can scarse turne a leafe, but we shal see some text, wherein God telleth vs ỹ he wil be our rampyres, our wals, our ditches, yea & double ditches, our towers, and whatsoeuer else is needefull for our defence. And why? For (as I haue heretofore said,) our mindes do forthwith slide into vanitie so as God is not able to hold vs backe to himselfe; and to make account that we will put our whole trust in him. What must we then doe? First of all, if we bee destitute of mans aide, let vs vnderstand that God alone is sufficient, if wee returne vnto him, [& say:] Ah Lord, it is certaine ỹ we are set for a pray, we haue not wherewith to saue our selues, for all the world doth faile vs: but yet it is ynough ỹ thou art our succour. After ỹ maner should wee learne to resort vnto him. And so shoulde wee take occasion to yeelde our selues wholly vnto him when the things of this worlde doe fayle vs. And by the way, although wee haue walles, and artillerie, money and munition, and all that wee can wish for, yea and people also, and all thinges else: yet let vs vnderstande that wee must in the meane while so vse them, as our Lorde may bee alway our trust, and we giue him euermore this honor, that it is his office to defend vs, and that thereupon wee wade no farther. It is certayne that wee may serue our turne with the things which hee putteth into our handes: but yet in the

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meane while, our hearts and mindes must bee rayſed vp aboue all the worlde, and hee alone muſt bee our ſhooteanker. Thirdely, wee muſt not vaunt our ſelues of the force of the helpes that he giueth vs: for a ſpeare of a bramble (as they ſay) is enough to make vs beleeue that wee bee inuincible. What [ſay wee?] Is it poſſible that they ſhould preuaile againſt vs? All this is nothing: no not worth the pill of an Onyon, as they ſay: yet will wee needes ſtreine our wittes to giue it price and the glory. Nay contrariwiſe, let vs acknowledge our debilitie and weakeneſſe, that we may repaire vnto God, and let nothing hinder vs from yeelding our ſelues wholy vnto him and vnto his protection: let vs not deceiue our ſelues with ſuch vaine confidence, as the Iewes had in their high wals. Now heerewithall hee ſheweth alſo that all that euer wee can deuiſe for our ſtrength and ſafegarde, can doe nothing againſt his power: for that wee ſhall continue beſieged, vntill wee be altogether waſted. Yea and wee may gather by this Text, that it were much better for vs to bee deliuered at the firſt into the handes of our enemies, than to haue meanes to reſiſt, whereby wee may bee made to languiſh in ſuch wiſe as wee may not dye a ſimple death [out of hand]: for the poore people that be abroad in the fields, are ſpoyled at the firſt, and ſo are diſpatched of it. Surely it is a pitious caſe, to behold their throates cut and all ſet on fire: but yet for all that, by that meanes they are deliuered from their miſeries, ſo as they pine not away in them. But as for them that are in ſtrong Townes, they muſt bee faine to abide a long ſiege, they muſt languiſhe and pine away by peecemeale, not for a moneth or two, but euen vntil they can holde out no more: and that is almoſt as if they ſhould paſſe a hundred deaths. Thus doth our Lorde reuenge himſelfe of them that thinke themſelues to bee diſpatched, when God doth not roote them out at the firſt. No, ſaieth hee, bethinke your ſelues whether of theſe fruites doe ſpeede beſt; they that are brought to the market in their prime, and euen out of hand; or they that are kept for a time, and in the ende doe rotte? It were better then for you to bee ouercome and vanquiſhed by your enemies at the firſt. Let vs therefore conſider well, that when wee haue wherewith to defend vs to the worldeward, where it ſhould profite vs, it ſhall turne to our double confuſion if we truſt therein: for wee muſt grone a great while vnder the burden, and bee waſted by little and little. For when wee bee diſobedient and will not be reformed, our Lorde will neuer leaue vntil he haue vtterly brought vs to nought, as he ſheweth here ſo often times. And yet is yet better expreſſed by this that Moſes addeth: *The man (ſaith he) that is tender and delicate among you, ſhall be grieued at his brother, and at the wife which ſleepeth in his boſome, but alſo hee cannot be ſtirred to eate his owne children alone.* The woman which is ſo nice that ſhee dare not touch the ground with her foote (for ſoure the very woordes of Moſes) ſhall ſeeke to deſtroy and to ſpoile her own children; yea, they ſhall no ſooner bee borne out of her wombe, but ſhee ſhall bee deſirous to deuoure them: and if ſhee haue brought them vp to ſome bigneſſe, ſhee will ſpare them neuer the more. Theſe bee dreadfull thinges: for it is not ſayd alonely, You ſhal bee beſieged, and tarie a long while in famine, ſo as you ſhall bee driuen to eate, Horſes, Rattes, mice, ſhooeleathers, yea and the very doung of byrdes (as it hath bin ſeene) and all theſe thinges ſhall bee your meate. Neither is it ſayd that men and women ſhould bee eaten: but that euery man ſhall eate his owne children. Seeing that God ſpeaketh in this maner, were it not enough to make our hayre ſtand vpright? Yes verily; and yet here is nothing declared by Moſes, which hath not bin ſeene in execution. It is not for a man to ſay, it is not credible, it is repugnant to nature; a man would plucke the bread out of his owne mouth, when hee is in extremitie, to giue it vnto his children, he would dy to helpe them, inſomuch that wee ſee that Agar could not abide to ſee the death of her childe, but ſhee let him alone, and wiſhed her owne death. But wee needе not to alledge examples of theſe thinges: for the common affection doth ſufficiently declare, that euery man would rather dy, than eate his owne children: but yet was ſuch crueltie ſeene among the Iewes. They which were inſtructed in the lawe of God, and ſhould haue had much more humanitie and compaſſion, than the Paganes and infidels, euen they forgot all maner of honeſtie, and were ouercome with this madnes. It was meete this this blindneſſe, whereof the Prophets had ſpoken, and which wee ſee here before touched alſo by Moſes, ſhould bee then accompliſhed in them, and that they ſhould bee rauiſhed of their wittes: For when GOD taketh away all reaſon and vprightneſſe from men; then hee leaueth them to a kinde of madneſſe. Such furie then muſt needes be in them, when they did eate their owne children.

2. Kin. 6. 25.

Gen. 21. 16.

Eſa. 6. 9. & Deut. 28.

Hereby wee bee ſpecially warned, that they which bee reſerued for the laſt caſt, bee in no better caſe than they, whom God hath chaſticed long afore. And this is a profitable warning. For ſo ſoone as God ſtriketh ſome, and forbeareth other ſome: And why not theſe alſo, ſay we? Haue not theſe deſerued almuch? We haue not the patience to ſuffer God to execute his iudgementes in ſuch order as ſeemeth good vnto him ſelfe: but wee ſurmiſe, that thoſe whome hee dooth reſpite, and whom hee for a little while forbeareth, bee priuiledged more than wee. But it is contrary: for it had bin better for them to haue bin puniſhed ſoonер than to be ſo reſerued. And therefore let vs not enuy them becauſe that God forbeareth them for a time, as though they were exempted from all plagues, but let vs tary till God fetch them about at their turne: for it had bin farre better for them, to haue bin diſpatched out of hand. And therewithall let euery of vs looke to himſelfe. Let vs not truſt to the patience that God vſeth toward vs, to deceiue our ſelues therewith. In deede when God hath bin patient, and forborne vs, it ſhoulde

giue vs the better disposition, to resorte vnto him, and to hope to finde him pitiful, to forgiue vs our faultes and trespasses. But we must not fal asleepe thereupon, to dally with him, and to say: O, hee hath taried for vs, he will yet doe the lyke hereafter; as wee see the wicked doe, which doe but shake their head at it: when they see that God hath spared them, they thinke they be discharged. Let vs beware that. For wee see how he saith, that when we be well appointed, and haue fortresses as it were inuincible, all must fall on our heades, and wee shall be so much the more grieuously punished. Thus much haue we to remember touching this text.

Now let vs marke further, that when we forget our God, wee must also forget all the course of nature, and he must needes bereaue vs of our Ephes. 3. 15. wittes: for it is hee on whom all fatherhood dependeth, he is the welspring thereof. We should not knowe what the ductie of the parents is towarde their children, nor what reuerence children doe owe to their parentes and superiors, vnlesse God did beare the souereintie. If we referre not all vnto him, he wil make vs to become blockish, so as wee shall not vnderstand what this fatherly affectiō toward our children should meane. Thus much for one poynt.

But by the way wee haue to note, that the men which did so deuour their owne children, were not so blockish but that they were pinched with terrible heartbitings, and vexed with such furious fearefulnes, as made them euen to abhor that which they did. True it is that they were caryed away by force, and had no reason in them; but yet for all that they had certaine secret stings and prickinges inwardly, and God held them as it were vppon the racke or torture, as if he should haue sayd vnto them, What wilt thou doe; thou wretched creature? It had bin better for thee to haue bin borne afore thy time, and y the earth had swalowed thee vp a hundred times, than thou shouldest haue cōmitted so terrible a fact: but yet must necessitie needs get the vpper hand of thee. Let vs marke therefore, that when wee be not meekened by the hand of God, wee must then fall into such a woodnes, as shall ouermaister vs, and make vs torment our selues without the helpe of any other executioner, so as euery of vs shall execute Gods vengeance vppon himselfe, which he had skorned afore and skoffed at. I haue sayd, that here is nothing spoken of, which hath not bin seene in effect: to wit, that the fathers haue eaten their own children, and in lyke case the mothers. But like as the Iewes had most exceedingly prouoked God; euen so came they to the fulnesse of iniquitie, and consequently it behoued God so to vtter his wrath toward them with extremitie, as it was seene when they were besieged with their enemies; for then did they eate Pygions doung, and bought it by golde weight; yee shall see that they committed actes against nature in eating one another. But when they had once reiected the sonne of God, & had vtterly cut themselues off from the hope of saluation by forsaking the redeemer vppon whome were grounded all the promises which had bin made vnto them concerning the goodnesse of God; then was it of necessitie that those thinges should bee the more accomplished. For if yee reade the histories, euen of them that were of the same nation, and which were present witnesses of the matter; yee would thinke that yee heard dreames or fables; and yet for all that, those thinges were then notoriously knowen, and noted to bee true, and God intended as it were to set vp scaffolds, that it might be seene how his threatning of his people after that manner, was not in vaine, as wee see, and that all men should take example thereat. For they bee horrible thinges, and such as may make our hayres to stand vpright, when it is sayd that the husband shall deceiue the wife and steale away the children issued of the bodies of them both, and that y wife lykewise shall seeke some secret place to cut the throat of her childe in, as if shee shoulde say, I will locke vp this for my selfe: and that both the husbandes and the wiues should bee so madde as to say, I will eate mine owne childe. Seeing that all these things were accomplished; and that our Lord hath executed such vengeance: let vs vnderstand that wee ought not to reade these thinges at this day without trembling, euen as if GOD shoulde lay forth his foredenounced vengeance before vs in a paynted table. Moreouer let vs vnderstand, that when God had pronounced such sentence against the Iewes, it was not executed at the first day. For he waited for them with so long patience, that it seemed that no mischief should light vppon them. But when the sore was burst, then was the rottennesse perceiued which lay hidde afore and the disease was the more deadly. Also let vs marke, that if God doe beare with vs, and afterward do direct eyes toward vs, and yet not strike so roughly as to come to extremitie: wee must not thinke that wee are thereby escaped his hand, but we must returne vnto him, and not tary till he set our disobedience vnreformable, and so be faine to procede to the extremitie of his threatninges. Thus much haue wee to remember touching this text.

Now finally Moses sayth: *If thou keepe not all the wordes of this lawe for to doe them, and feare this droadfull and glorious name: that is to say the seruice of God.* Verily it seemeth at the first sight, that Moses requireth of men aboue measure, that which is not in their power: for who is hee that can fulfill all the lawe of God? And againe, though a man misse in some certaine poynctes, should GOD vse such rigor? I haue tolde you heretofore, that hee directeth this talke towardes the mo that be altogether giuen ouer to euil, and to such as bee despisers of God to breake his lawe by all meanes they can. To what ende then doeth he so require such a perfection? Let vs first of all marke that GOD will not haue his law chopped into peeces & gobbetes: for therein he setteth forth his righteousnes vnto vs. Men therefore must not make a parting of stakes in this case at their own pleasure, as who wold say, I wil, for Gods honor, abstain from whoredome, but

but yet I will speake: I will abstaine from murther, but yet I will bee a blasphemer: No, but seeing that he which hath forbidden to robbe, hath also forbidden to kil; and hee which hath forbidden fornication, hath in lykewise forbidden to blaspheme: let vs learne to obey him in all poynts and all respectes: let vs restreine our lustes, and bridle our affections, and to be shorte let vs come to the poynt to giue ouer our selues wholy to the seruice of our God. So ought we to doe: and that is the thing also whereunto Moses hath respect. For if we misse in any one poynt, wee be accursed of God: and beare the rigor which is mentioned here. Nevertheless he of his mercie ceaseth not to beare with vs yea and he will neuer vse the great seuerity that is spoken of here, but towards such as for themselues altogether stubbornely against him. Yet notwithstanding, it is not without cause, that Moses seeth here exhorte the Iewes to the perfect obseruation of the law: A Phisition prescribing an order, giueth not the bridle to the appetite of his patient, to doe any thing amisse how little soeuer it bee: but he saith, I will haue you to doe thus, and thus. Now if the sicke man doe step any whit aside, very well, hee is not yet incurable, the Phisition will haue a care of him still: But if hee will needes set all at sixe and seuen (as they say) and cast off all order, and play the madman; well, hee shall haue his payment as hee deserueth. And in like wise will our Lorde haue vs at his commaundement in all cases: and good reason. Howbeit there is so great infirmitie (I meane euen in them which bee gouerned by the holy Ghost, and which streine themselues to bee obedient vnto him) that they faile in many respectes: but yet howsoeuer the world goe, sinne ouermaistereth them not, they strike not of set purpose to transgresse the Lawe; but they proceede and go forward stil: and albeit that they do it limpingly, yet doe they hold on still toward God. As touching these they bee borne withall. True is that GOD will chastise them: and in what maner? Euen in forgiuing them: according to this saying of his, If thy children transgresse my commaundements, I will visite their iniquities; but it shall bee with the rodde of men, and not with extremitie: I will not deale with them as with enemies, I will not take away my mercie from them, albeit that I doe correct them. Thus doth God deale in that behalfe. But if our hearts bee vtterly hardened: then will hee warre vpon vs, and destroy vs without sparing: & although hee beare with vs, yet shall all turne to our confusion. That is one thing that wee haue to remember concerning this Text.

Also it is a notable poynt to bee obserued, where Moses speaketh of the yoke of yron. For hee saith, *That the Lorde will lay a yoke of yron vpon the neck of all misbeleeuers vntill they bee altogether confounded.* And that is to the ende wee shoulde learne to receiue the correctios which we heare of, and not kicke against them. For wee see what befell to Ananias, when hee mocked at the threatninges of Ieremy, and came to breake the yoke which hee had vpon his necke, which was a yoke of wood and of cordes. The Prophet did weare that yoke, to moue the people to consider that they shoulde all become captiues, and to beholde their owne state in the person of the Prophet. Now this wicked one that was possessed of the diuel, (to make the worde of God to bee nought set by) came to breake the bandes of Ieremy, and sayd, euen thus wil God breake the yoke of Nabuchodonozer: and albeit he beseige you, and doe what hee can to carry you away captiues into a straunge land: yet shal you bee preserued by the grace of your God. God threatned, and this fellowe mocked all his threatninges: and thereto tooke the shadowe of the name of God to abuse the people. Well then, what wanne hee by such rebellion? It was sayd to the Prophet, Take a yoke of yron: for whereas the bondage shoulde haue bin gentle and tollerable, it must now be so cruel, as they shal not be able to endure any more. See here how hee dealeth with all such as harden their heartes against GOD, and will not abide to bee beckened by his hand. Then let vs bee afraid of this yoke of yron. First of all wee know that Gods yoke is amiable vnto all such as willingly yeelde themselues vnto it, and suffer themselues to bee gouerned by the hand of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Wee haue the testimony of the sonne of GOD, My yoke (sayth hee) is easie, and my burden is light. Come to me, and learne that I am lowly and meeke. Seeing that our Lord Iesus declareth, that they which be teachable and obedient shall perceiue that there is neither burthen, nor weight, nor griefe in his yoke, to ouerpresse them withall: it ought to moue vs to yeeld our necks vnto it, and to pray God, to put vs vnder it, and also to suffer him to chastice vs whē we haue offended him. In deed the strokes wil be greeuous vnto vs, as the Apostle sayth, and we shall neuer finde the corrections pleasant during the time God striketh vs. We bee lyke little children when they bee corrected, wee feele it greeuous, because our nature doth repugne against it. But howsoeuer wee lyke of it, yet God will vse that fatherly meane, and by little and little teach vs to returne vnto him. But if wee will needes tempt his patience to the vttermost, hee must then vse the yron rodde to breake our heades withall, as it is sayd in the Psalme: Wee shall bee driuen to feele the yron, which shall serue, not to reclayme vs withall, but to breake vs in peeces and to consume vs vtterly. And iustly. For wee doe heare what is sayd here: *If thou wilt not feare the glorious & dreadfull name of the eternall thy God.* Whence come the despising and contempt of good doctrine, and the boldnesse that wee take to sinne, but of this, that wee are deafe to all admonitions? In deede if wee could yeelde our selues obedient to our God, with a good heart, and with a good affection, and abide at that point continually: wee should no sooner heare these threatnings but wee should consider thus: Alas, haue wee not deserued a greeuous curse at Gods hand, seeing wee haue thus striuen against him? We see then

that all the euill deedes and disobedience which is committed, doe spring of ignorance and of the contempt of GOD, for that wee haue not regarded his maiestie. Certainely this kinde of stubbornesse is not alwayes directly of set purpose and foredetermined malice: but yet is there such rudenesse in vs, that wee yeelde not such a reuerence to God, as is requisite, nor the obedience whereby wee should endeuour to submit our selues to his worde. And because wee bee so dulhearded that nothing can quicken vs vp, when wee be called vppon to submit our selues vnto GOD: Moses sayth expressly, *This dreed full name, this glorious name*, IEHOVAH, *The eternall* thy God. Whereas he sayth, *The eternall* or *Euerlasting*: that woorde importeth all glorie and Maiestie: and therefore ought to ravish vs with astonishment: yea truely, for wee shoulde not haue this name of GOD alonely so vile in coldely, for to say, GOD, GOD, as they doe which haue it continually in their lippes, and afterward doe let it vanish, as though it were a thing of nothing: but wee must ioyne both twaine togethee, thus, GOD, euen the same that created vs; the same that holdeth all thinges in his hand, the same that is honored of the Angels, the same that is of glory infinite; the very same whome all the principalities of heauen cannot abide, at the sight of whome all manner of creatures must be faine to cast downe their eyes, euen the same which with one onely woorde can make all the earth to tremble, the same that can remoue mountaines with his only blaste, that same that giueth being to all manner of creatures, finally the same that maintaineth and gouerneth all thinges, and ordereth all thinges wel, righteously, and with wisedome: the same is hee that speaketh vnto vs. And so yee see after what manner we vse the woordes of Moses, where hee saith, *The eternall thy God*, this is hee that speaketh nowe vnto thee. Let vs therefore heare him speake, in such sorte, as his maiestie may possesse all our wittes, and that thereby wee may bee so humbled vnder the same, that when wee haue worshipped him, wee may so remaine vnder his hand, as wee suffer our selues to bee gouerned by him, to followe the rule that hee hath deliuered vnto vs.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Iudgement seate of our God, acknowledging the infinite faultes whereof wee bee guiltie: for hee liues to execute the office of a Iudge against vs: and therewithall let vs pray him, not to enter into our father for our Lord Iesus Christes sake: And that forasmuch as wee bee guiltie of many offences, wee may suffer our selues to be duly cutte off from our sinnes, so as nothing may hinder our comming to him to yeeld our selues in such sorte vnto him, as wee may renounce all our wicked affections more and more, vntil wee bee throughly ridde of them, and bee clothed with his heauenly righteousnesse. And so let vs all say, Almighty GOD heauenly father, &c.

On Fryday the xxvii. of March, 1556.

The CLxii. Sermon which is the tenth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

59 Then will the Lorde make thy plagues marueilous, and the plagues of thy seede, greate plagues and sure: euill and sure diseases.

60 And hee shall turne vpon thee all the plagues of Egypt, the presence whereof thou diddest feare, and they shall cleaue vnto thee.

61 Also all the diseases and all the plagues which be not written in the booke of this Lawe, the Lorde will cause to come vpon thee, vntil thou be destroyed.

62 And where as thou wast in multitude as the starres of heauen, thou shalt bee fewe in number, because thou hast not obeyed the voyce of the Lorde thy God.

63 And it shall come to passe, that like as the Lorde thy God reioyced ouer thee to doe thee good, and to multiplie thee: euen so will the Lorde reioyce ouer you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought: and thou shalt bee rooted out of the land to the which thou goest to possesse it.

64 And the Lorde will scatter thee among all people, from the one ende of the earth to the other ende of the earth. And there thou shalt serue other goddes, which neither thou nor thy fathers haue knowen: euen goddes of wood and of stone.

I haue

I Haue shewed here before, how slowe men are to bee taught by the chastisementes which God doth send them. For vntill they perceiue the hand of God, and be driuen to vnderstand, that it is hee with whome they haue to doe: of themselues they waxe hardhearted: and which worse is, they labour to cloke that which they ought to sicle and see as it were before the eye namely, that they bee smitten for their sinnes. Forasmuch therefore as men doe neuer willingly come to the knowledge of themselues: GOD is faine to enforce them to it. This is the cause why Moses, ouer and besides that which hee reciteth afore, doth adde, *That God will make the plagues of the despisers of his Lawe, wonderfull.* That is to say, they shall bee so notable, that euen in spite of their teeth, they shall be afraide of them as of thinges that were neuer knowen, nor in vse. For wee see that accustomed thinges are despised: and euen so is it also with Gods benefites. Forasmuch as the Sunne doth dayly rise to lighten vs: who is hee that thinketh of the change and intercourse which GOD maketh betweene the night and the day? according to the saying of the nineteenth psalme, that it is as if God should waken vs vp euery morning, and tell vs with a lowde voyce how it is good reason, that his infinite goodnes, wisedome and power should be knowen. But wee haue no eares to heare. What is the reason? It is because the sunne appeareth euery day in lyke order, by meanes whereof wee bee hardened with it: and because it is ordinarie, we make none account of it: euen so is it concerning punishmentes. For the more our Lorde prouoketh vs to come vnto him, the more doe we take heart to become vnreformable. And therefore it is needefull for vs that his plagues shoulde bee woonderfull vnto vs, that wee may bee made afraide of them spite of our teeth. And againe hee addeth, *That they shall bee great and certaine.* The last worde that Moses vseth, dooth signifie true or faithfull. Whereby GOD dooth vs to vnderstand, that his plagues shall holde on all, lyke as hee sayd also that they shoulde cleaue vnto the that were rebellious and could not bee wonne by gentleneesse: these plagues must bee rooted in them: and for that cause doth hee terme them *Certaine*. Here haue wee to consider our owne hardneesse, that euery of vs may bee the more vigilant in looking to the hand of GOD and conceiue the better thereof. Forasmuch as wee bee so dull of nature, we must learne to stirre vp our selues. And let vs feare least GOD should accomplish that which is pronounced in this text: Namely that when his accustomed punishmentes profit vs not, then hee must needes proceede against vs after such a straunge and horrible manner, as shall make vs afraide, and cause the hayre of all them to stand vp which doe but heare speake of it: yea, and (as the Prophet Ieremy sayth) to make mens eares tingle, whē the reporte thereof commeth into forraine Countries.

Let vs bee afraide therefore, least God doe worke after that manner, when hee perceiueth such stubbornesse in vs, as hee cannot winne vs by measurable and tollerable corrections. And therewithal let vs also take warning by this word *Of fore plagues*; that when God hath followed vs to reduce vs to the way of saluatiō, and we haue still fled from him, the plagues must also continue to the vttermost both vpon vs and vpon all our lynage, insomuch that when wee thinke to see an end thereof, we shal not haue yet begunne. Let vs not therefore make account to escape, when the plague hath lasted a while: for accordingly as wee proceede on in our naughtinesse; so must God proceede with his rigor and augment it more and more; according as hee seeth vs to waxe worse and worse. Then let vs not doe as we see most men doe, which cry out and storme at it, saying: And when shall this haue an end? How happeneth it that God taketh no pitie on mee to ease me of my paynes? But in the meane while haue they any minde to reconcile themselues to God? Do they cōfesse their faults and bewaile them? Nay rather they be at the very poynt to defy him. Yet doe they talke of their afflictions, and make complaintes: but in the meane while no man looketh to the ground of the mischief to amend it. Therefore when we haue bin stubborne against our God, let vs not thinke it straunge, that he should pursue vs with such rigour: but let vs acknowledge that it is expedient for vs. In the meane space, let vs not forget this that is written here: namely, that God threatneth sinners, to the ende to bring them backe againe, notwithstanding that they haue bin as folke forlorne and past hope of recouery. For God speaketh not to such as had committed but one onely fault, or some two or three faultes, or to such as hauing done amisse, did not wholy giue themselues ouer to wickednesse: but he speaketh vnto such offenders, as had made warre long time against him, and despised his word, and bin deafe to all his warnings, and had made but a mock of them. Yet notwithstanding he doth not cease to threaten them stil. And to what end and purpose? Euen to winne them by his amiable goodnes. So then although we haue bin misaduised for a time, yet is it better for vs to turne late than neuer: and so shall wee fare the better by that which is shewed vs here by Moses. Now consequently hee sayth, *Then God will cause the plagues of Egypt to come vpon the Iewes.* Wee vnderstand that God did so afflict the Egyptians, as that they were a terror vnto his own people, insomuch that the Iewes themselues were astonished thereat, notwithstanding that they were exempted from the euil. When the Egyptians were oppressed to the vttermost, thereby the Iewes vnderstoode that God spared them, and that hee held them in his protection, because hee smote their enemies, and in the meane space did keepe thē in peace and rest. And this wee see chiefely in his killing of all the first borne of Egypt: For GOD had commaunded, that the doore postes of the

Exod.12.7. houses should be marked with the bloud of the Paschall Lambe, There God gaue a singular testimonie vnto the Iewes that hee woulde spare them, and during that while he turned his wrath and vengeance against their enemies. But now he saith here cleane contrary, *That God will cause those very plagues to returne backe*. For the worde that Moses vseth doth importe as much as if he shoulde say, Thy fathers sawe howe God turned his wrath against the Egyptians, but nowe they must returne backe againe vppon thee, because thou makest none account to honor and serue him, which hath loued thee so much, and to whome thou art so greatly bound. By this saying we be admonished, that when God hath forborne vs for a time, and moreouer for the loue that he beareth towardes vs, hath punished our enemies, and shewed himself a contrarie partie against them for to maintaine vs: wee must not therefore flatter our selues, but rather bee more diligent to walke in his feare. For when we will not acknowledge such grace, but rather abuse it quite contrarie: it is good reason that our Lorde should cause the thinges to returne backe vppon vs, which hee had sent vppon our enemies, thereby to shewe vs that hee held vs in his defence and safegarde. It is sayd that the people of God shall be as a fyre kindled to consume all the wicked and vnbeleeuers. And God will shewe the same in very deede. But if we will needes kindle his wrath through our sinnes and transgressions: then the fyre that shoulde haue bin vppon the vnfaithful, must fall backe vppon our selues, and we must perishe therewith. Let vs therefore consider well of this worde, and let this which is recited concerning the land of Egypt be vnto vs a myrror and a learning, that we at this day may apply it to our owne vse; according as all these thinges bee written for vs. Let vs marke (I say) what our Lorde did in olde time for the Iewes, and let vs vnderstand that thereby he gaue record what loue hee beareth to his Church. But yet therewithal, let vs take warning to yeelde our selues in such wise obedient vnto him, as he may continue to doe vs good, and that this couenant may be confirmed betweene
Exo.23.22. him and vs, Namely, I will bee a friend vnto thy friends, and an enemy vnto thyne enemyes. It is certaine that this promise was giuen to Abraham: howbeit, to the ende that wee also should inioy the same. Now if we cannot suffer God to be our friend, but rather wil make war against him, and breake the faith and alliance that is established betwixt vs: then whereas afore, hee did set himselfe against our enemies, now hee must be faine to fall vpon vs, and to make vs to feele his infinite power, vntill wee be quite confounded and brought to nought. Therefore while our Lorde spareth vs, let vs acknowledge his goodnesse, and not prouoke his wrath to make vs to feele his power in smiting vs. And moreouer, when as we see, that whereas the vnfaythful shoulde be striken at his hand, wee feele the first blowes: let vs acknowledge that it is meete it should be so, because we haue broken the peace which he had made with vs. Let vs not thereupon be discouraged, howsoeuer the worlde goe, but let vs stick to him stil. Furthermore let vs not tary till he proceede to extremitie. And if we be not so wise as to haue that discretion at the first, yet at leastwise let vs benefite our selues by the aduertisements which are set down in this place. After that manner shoulde wee put this text in vre.

Now Moses saith expresly, that the Iewes feared the plagues of the Egyptians, and that they had good cause to stand the more in dread of them, for that in beholding them vpon their enemies, they were then astonished at them: & therefore it was good reason that they should magnifie the goodnesse of God: but howsoeuer the case stoode, the plagues which God sent vpon the Egyptians, were so great and so horrible, that the Iewes must needes be amazed at them, albeit that they themselues were free from the, because they beheld such an alteratiō of nature. Nowe if they feared the wrath of God whilest it was vppon their enemies, and had therein a testimonie of his loue & goodnesse: what ought they then to doe when God rusheth vpon their heades, and that they must be faine to feele the selfe same plagues which came vppon the Egyptians? Must they not needes be doubly discouraged? Yes: and therefore we see that this threatning is not superfluous; but serueth to waken them, according as we haue sayd herebefore, and as experience sheweth that we be too much deafe, yea and as it were senseleese, when God doeth warne vs; and that he must smite vppon vs as it were with a hammer, or else will wee neuer vnderstand what he saith. And so ye see the reason why this word is expresly set downe. Now when we see that God punisheth the wicked, let vs learne to haue such feare of his vengeance, as we doe not tarie till he wrappe vs vp amongest those whom wee haue seene punished afore vs. This is the thing that S. Paul meant in saying, Deceiue not your selues, neither let any man abuse you with vaine words: for the wrath of God hath bin woont to fall vppon the vnbeleeuers & disobedient for such offences. Hereby S. Paul sheweth to the faithfull, that they shoulde not feare the hand of God alonly when they see it armed against them, and when it toucheth their persons: but they ought to vse the opportunitie in reforming themselues, euen when God is so good vnto them as to punish the reprobates & rebels before their eyes. Let vs therfore be afraid when God punisheth the wicked, and let vs be aduised to acknowledge him for our Iudge aforehand, and that we haue wel deserued to be handled as seuerely as they, were it not that he of his goodnes forbeareth vs. Let this touch vs to the quick, that we may be brought to repentance. Thus shoulde we yet further put this saying of Moses in practise. Eph.5.6.

Nowe hee addeth, that God (ouer & beside all this which he hath declared,) will sende yet other aduersities and afflictions vpon the Iewes. In deede Moses did recken vp many sortes of plagues heretofore, and hee thought it not ynough to haue saide at once, God will chastise

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thez after such and such manner: but he redoubled it, because he sawe men so grosse and heauy that they bee not so moued at the first, as were to be wished. But our Lordes intent heere, is to declare that hee hath meanes of vengeance incomprehensible, and moe than can bee vttered by wordes; insomuch that if a man should make a Roll of them, and rehearse a whole million of seuerall sorts of them, yet shoulde he not comprise them al: for God hath other hidden means vnknowen to men, wherewith to punish them that doe still rancle in malice against him. And that is according as wee shall see in the two and thirtith chapter, in the solemne song that Moses maketh there. These thinges are laide vp in my Treasurie (saith the Lord) so as I haue my whole Chestes full of horrible plagues, such as euer were imagined nor vnderstood by men. As much is saide in this text.

And so let vs remember two thinges, to wit, when wee haue had experience of the power of God by his doings, or reade the threatenings that he hath made against the transgressours of his lawe, and doe beholde the practise and execution thereof: let vs bee amased thereat and say, How now? What a thing is it to prouoke the Lorde? For if hee spare vs on the one side, hee can well assaile vs on the other; and when wee bee deliuered from one hundred of afflictions, he hath three hundred others readie for vs: and when wee haue escaped all those, yet haue wee gotten nothing. Let vs therefore thinke vpon these thinges. Nowe let vs looke what a sort of threatenings there are in the holy Scripture, howe many sortes of deathes there bee that God hath denounced against the despisers of his maiestie, and against all them that despise and set light by his worde: it woulde wearie vs to recite them. And in reading the hystories, wee see the examples that God hath giuen vs of his wrath: and that not in one sort; wee shoulde needes bee at our wittes ende if wee shoulde thinke but vppon the tenth part of them. And if wee shoulde set our mindes to marke and to note them all: what a thing were it? The first thing therefore which wee haue to doe, is to be diligent to cal to remembrance all the threatnings whereby God woulde tame our wicked affections, and holde vs enbridled: and therewithall to compare the thinges that we see downe vnto vs, howe that God hath not threatned in vaine, but hath accomplished whatsoeuer hee hath saide. Let vs thinke on that. And moreouer let vs vnderstand, that besides the meanes which are contained in the holy scripture, God hath yet a great many of other meanes to punish men; and we see how he doeth dayly bring vp newe. If we had eyes, or rather woulde open them, wee might well see that God doeth daily sende newe kindes of his wrath: and that is to the end which I haue touched heretofore, namely to make his plagues wonderful, that men may be inforced to thinke vppon them because they see that God worketh not after the ordinary course of nature: but after a sort that hath not bin earst knowen. When euery of vs hath well studied all the lessons that be declared vnto vs in the holy Scripture; and made our cõmoditie of the examples & punishments ỳ bee there mentioned; let vs conclude ỳ God hath yet a great many mo meanes than be expressed, which men neuer thought vpõ. And ỳ thing he hath made manifest euer since ỳ the law was written: and he doth not yet cease to do the same still, that al maner of excuse may be taken from vs. If a man looke vpon the diseases that bee at this day in the worlde, hee shall see that there be many which were not expressed in the law of Moses, or in ỳ dayes of our fathers. Howe hath whoredome bin punished by diseases that be come vppe of late? Who knewe the pocks a hundred yeres ago? That is one horrible plague which God hath sent vpon ỳ worlde. And it is asmuch as if hee had stretched his arme out of heauen, and sayde, No, they knowe mee no more to be their Iudge, they harden their harts against al the plagues ỳ men did know & receiue afore time, they make but a figge at it; but now I will make them to vnderstand; that in my Cofsers, and in my storehouses there are yet other roddes that be incomprehensible to them. God sheweth this: and wee perceiue that wee cannot take a better course to profite by this doctrine, than to feare the rods and punishments, which be not written in the booke of the lawe: otherwise, it is meete that we vnderstand that GOD is stil our Iudge, howsoeuer the world goe.

Now he addeth: *That albeit they were as many in number as the starres of heauen, God would wel shew in such wise as there should but a handfull of them remaine*. Here must we remember that which was spoken of herebefore. For whereas God vseth this similitude of the starres of heauen, he hath respect to the promise which he had made to his seruant Abraham: namely ỳ his seede should be in number like the starres of heauen. So God spake. But now, to the end ỳ Iewes should not presume to thinke ỳ God was alwayes bound to multiply them, he sayth, No, I wil consume you whatsoeuer come of it, and you shalbee but a handfull of people. It seemeth at the first sight that here is contrarietie. For where as God promised so great a seed vnto his seruant Abrahã, it was not grounded vpon the merites of men. And why? For seeing that the promise dependeth vpon the free goodnesse of God, must it not be kept, albeit that men be wicked? Yes in deede. But we haue to consider, that God doeth not alwayes accomplish his promises after our fashion, nor according to our carnall capacitie: he hath meanes incredible to vs, & which we vnderstand not, vntil they appeare by effect. Whereas he promiseth to multiply his Church, that is to say, to make it to prosper, if he see that vnder colour thereof the hypocrites take libertie to doe euil, he withdraweth his hand. Let vs therefore consider wel, that forasmuch as the Iewes were puft vp w a foolish presumption, and thought it impossible for God to diminish them, seeing he had spoken the worde that he woulde increase them: forasmuch I say as they abused the goodnes of GOD and falsified his promise through

their hypocrifie, hee conſumed them and brought them to a ſmall number. Neuertheleſſe, of that ſmall number, there came a great ofspring againe, yea and ſo great a one, that men might ſo much the better perceiue his trueth and mercie, howbeit after an other maner. Therefore ſaieth hee by his Prophet Eſay in the tenth Chapter: Although you were as the ſande of the ſea, (for he did alwayes ſend them backe to the promiſe made to Abraham,) although thy ſeede (as I ſaide) be as the ſande of the ſea; yet ſhall but a ſmall remnant bee ſaued. But when ye are altogether conſumed, yet ſhall that little remnant bee diſperſed ouer all the earth, as if out of a little fountaine ſhoulde iſſue forth a greate riuer, or a great lake, wherewith verie many lands ſhold be watered. So ſhall it be. Nowe then wee perceiue, that although GOD puniſh the hypocrites which abuſe his promiſes, yet faileth hee not to performe his ſayings ſtill, howbeit by an extraordinary meane; as we haue ſeene it in the Popedome, and as is to bee ſeene yet ſtil. For the Papiſts haue ouerflowed the whole worlde with ſuperſtition and ydolatrie, and all manner of euill: yea and moreouer thy harden their heartes in pride, and ſcoffe at God with open mouth: Howe nowe, ſay they? Are not we the church? Is it not ſaid that Ieſus Chriſt ſhalbe with vs vnto the end of the worlde? Can he forſake his Church? Yet do they continually crucifie him as much as in them lieth, they ſpit in his face, and doe him all the reproch in the worlde; they make him as if hee were a priſoner or a bondſlaue amongſt them: and they conſider not that ſuch a horrible deſtruction happeneth throughout y whole worlde, through Gods iuſt vengeance for the ſhameleſſe hypocriſie which hath beene in them that haue rebelled againſt the Goſpel: yet notwithſtanding, GOD hath not omitted to ſaue his people, as it were vnder the earth. And in our dayes he hath raiſed his Church, as if y bones of rotten bodies ſhold recouer fleſh and ſtrength againe. For what were we through our vnbeliefe? Yee ſee howe it is a meruailous reſurrection that God hath wrought in that behalfe. Marke well therefore that when our Lorde promiſeth to maintaine his Church and to preſerue it, the ſame belongeth nothing to them that abuſe his name falſely, nor to them that come to deſpiſe him vnder colour that hee is gentle and mercifull. For they ſhall euermore be diſappointed of that fauour which God hath ſo reſerued vnto his people: for they bereaue themſelues thereof through their owne malice and vnthankfulneſſe. Yet notwithſtanding howſoeuer the caſe ſtande, God is euer faithful, and wil find incomprehenſible meanes to giue place to his trueth, by fighting againſt the malice of men. That is the thing which we haue to remember concerning this text, where he ſaith: *That he will waſt the Iewes though they were as the ſtarres in the ſky.*

Eſa. 10. 22.

Matt. 28. 20

And in verie deede the ſame appeared euen in Ieſus Chriſt the head of the church. And therfore we ought not to thinke it ſtraunge that that the members of the bodie ſhould be faſhioned like vnto him. Whence came Ieſus Chriſt when God his father ſent him to be the Redeemer? The Prophet Eſay ſaieth that hee ſhoulde ſpring from a ſtocke, as if a tree were hewen downe and there remained but the ſtub within the grounde, in ſuch ſort as men might tread vpon it. It is not ſaide that hee ſhould come out of houſe of Dauid, but out of the houſe of Ieſſe, who was a Neatheard and a man deſpiſed. That ſame was I ſay the father of Dauid a man of no eſtimation. Albeit that Dauid was ſo excellent a king, that he was choſen of God to be magnified to the skies; yet the Prophet ſheweth, that when Ieſus Chriſt ſhoulde come into the worlde, it ſhould not bee with any ſhewe of that royal maieſtie that was in Dauid, but he ſhould come out of the houſe of Iſay, as if he ſhould come out of a heard. And that euen then alſo hee ſhould not come of a tree, but of a ſtocke, that were cut off. And in what manner? And after what faſhion? As a little braunch, ſaith he. Nowe ſeeing that God did thus to the head of the church, we muſt vnderſtande that all the bodie muſt be ſuche: but this maketh not that the hypocrites ſhall be partakers of that which God reſerueth to his elect, and whom he hath choſen, and indeed doe ſhewe themſelues to be his children, and bee obedient vnto him, as to their father: which alſo come not alonely with all confidence, but alſo are drawen with a right affection to honor him. And wheras we perceiue y God doth at this day ſende horrible deſtructions into the worlde; let vs vnderſtande that he practiſeth that which is heere declared: yet let vs not doute, but that he doth euermore preſerue his Church: let vs not doubt but he doth vpholde vs as oft as wee haue our recourſe to him, according to this ſaying, that whoſoeuer calleth vppon the name of the Lord ſhalbe ſaued, yea euen amidſt the greateſt troubles that may be. Though heauen and earth ſhould run together, yet are wee ſure that by calling vppon the name of God, we ſhall bee preſerued. But let vs take heede, that wee abuſe not his name, to make thereof a fained cloake: for he can waſt vs well ynough. And if we boaſt that wee bee of his Church; when he hath cut vs off, he can quickely rayſe him a new people: and augment them in ſuch wiſe as his trueth ſhall not be defaced, and yet we ſhall periſh.

Ioel. 2. 32

After that Moſes hath thus ſpoken, he addeth: *That like as God had taken pleaſure in doing good to the Iewes, euen ſo he woulde take pleaſure in puniſhing them, vntill he had conſumed them and vtterly rooted them out.* Heere Moſes doeth firſt of all ſhewe what affection GOD beareth towarde theſe whome hee hath choſen out for himſelfe, and meaneth to take for his flock. It is certaine that God is not ſubiect to any humane paſſions: yet can not he ſufficiently manifeſt either the goodneſſe or the loue that he hath towards vs, but by transfiguring himſelf, as if he were a mortall man, ſaying that he woulde take pleaſure in doing vs good. Let vs vnderſtand therefore that God holdeth vs ſo deere as if a father ſhoulde ſhoulde delight and reioyce to doe good to his chil-

children. When hee seeth them according to his minde, and to doe him honour, and to bee obedient vnto him: then his feeding of them, and his clothing of them, is a comfort to him, and it doeth him good to see them in their braverie; for that it the very felicitie of a father. GOD likeneth himselfe to mortall men, and saieth that hee will delight to doe vs good. And therefore wee cannot magnifie the inestimable goodnesse of our God too much, seeing hee hopeth so to love vs to tell vs, that his whole delight is in making vs to inioy his benefites, and in deseruing himselfe in such wise towardes vs, as wee may haue cause to praise him, and finally, in yeelding to all our desires. But what? Wee cannot away with it: we are not able to apprehende that, for wee bee not able to consider it.

Wee see that God is (as yee woulde say) myrude towardes vs, wee see that hee doeth not onely bereaue vs of his blessings, but is also angrie with vs: and to be short, wee perceiue in him nothing, but all manner of rigour. And what is the cause hereof? Verily that wee shut the gate against his goodnesse, and will not suffer him (so yee would say) his naturall disposition. Loe heere a thing that should make vs the better to acknowledge our faultes, and not to accuse GOD of any accessiue cruelnie, when hee dealeth not with vs after our lyking. For it is certaine that hee will take pleasure in doing vs good: but on the otherside let vs consider alsó, that hee must in likewise delight to do vs euill. And why so? Verily because that he is iust. In deede, if wee did suffer GOD to followe his owne inclination towardes vs; he would bestowe infinite benefites vppon vs, and we lying in this worlde should bee as in Paradise: but because of our sinnes, wee must liue heere like wretched wanderers, wee must languish in many miseries, wee must dwell in continuall feare and in doubt, and wee must grone in great wretchednesse: it must bee euen so. And wherefore? Because God is iust.

This is the verie pleasure that is spoken of in this texte. According whereunto it is saide, that GOD will reioyce and bee gladde, when hee hath punished the wicked, and maintained his maiestie against them, for that they have despised him and set him at nought. Nevertheleslesse, it is likewise true that hee saieth by his Prophet Esay, that hee doeth it vnwillingly. Alas (saieth hee) must I needes reuenge me of mine enimies? GOD crieth there as if hee were in sorrowe and anguish for it. I must (saieth hee) take comfort in auenging mee of mine enemies. Those whom hee punisheth his enemies, are the children whome hee had adopted, and which boasted themselues to bee his people. And howe doeth hee comfort himselfe in them? Euen by giuing them ouer, and by driuing them away. But in the meane while, hee sheweth that it is against his will, when hee must so beate men downe with maine strokes, howbeit that hee can none otherwise doe. Yet notwithstanding, to verifie deede God is able so tame the hearts of men without any great violence: for (as wee haue saide) hee is not subiect to our passions. But hereby we be to consider howe his iudgements declare, that our vnrighteousnesse and naughtinesse is the cause why hee is faine to pursue vs after such sundrie sortes (spoken of before), and that hee is faine to take pleasure in doing vs harme, wherein the order of nature is after a sort quite altered and chaunged: but all is through our owne faults, and wee our selues are to blame for it: and it is not for vs to saie to any other creature therefore but our owne sinne, which hath kindled his vengeance to the vttermost. Thus much concerning that sentence.

Nowe for a conclusion it is saide, *That God will rescue his people from the hands of their foes that had planted them, and that he would afterward shew vengeance vpon all the nations of the world.* And that doeth this wretched people (which were cast in a countrey of freedome, wherein God had setled them to the ende that his seruice and pure Religion shoulde dwell there) *finde seruice strange Gods, images, idols of Woodde and Stone.* First we see that albeit the Land of Chanaan was giuen in Inheritance to the people of Israel, yet they failed not to bee put out and banished, when they abused the fauoure that had beene shewed vnto them. GOD had planted them there, euen as though hee had set them at his owne hande. Loe (saith hee) heere is my resting-place and yours: hee intended to dwell amongst them himselfe, and therevppon hee promised to giue them rest there, insomuch that although all other people shoulde bee displaced and remoued too and fro, yet shoulde the children of Abraham inioy the heritage of that lande still. Notwithstanding, this letted not God to driue them out againe, and so scatter them abroade with the winde, because they had defiled that lande, which shoulde haue beene kept holy to his name. Psal. 132. 13

Nowe sith it is so, let vs not thinke it straunge though God at this day doe sende many chaunges into the worlde: for he hath giuen no such priuiledge to any Nation as to say vnto them, You shal inhabite this lande, as the Lande of Chanaan was giuen to the lineage of Abraham. But wee see howe GOD is offended, wee see mens misdoings as haynous as can bee. Nowe then if GOD remooue men, let vs vnderstande that it is for their sinnes. Moreouer, let vs returne to the eternall rest, whereunto the Apostle leadeth vs in the Epistle to the Hebrues. Hauing spoken of the rest of the land of Chanaan, hee saieth that wee must looke vnto a rest that is higher. For the children of GOD are commonly as wayfarers in this worlde, as Sainct Paul termeth them, putting himselfe in the number, but let vs euermore direct our course and indeuour to this heritage, which is promised vs in heauen, for wee shall not bee disappointed of that heritage, so wee continue in our vocation whereunto Heb. 4. 9. & 11. 26. 2. Cor. 5. 6.

God

God hath called vs. Nevertheleſſe it is ſaid, that
Exod. 32. 34 they which giue themſelues ouer vnto wickedneſſe ſhalbe wiped out of the booke of life. Not that Gods choſen ſhall euer periſh: but it is ſpoken in reſpect of ſuch folke as thinke it ynough for them to beare ſname of Gods children, and to haue beene baptiſed, and to receiue the Lords ſupper, and ſuch like thinges, and make no further regarde. But our Lorde telleth vs that although it ſeeme for a time that they be written and enrolled in his Regiſter, becauſe they bee taken to be of the company of the faithfull: yet ſhall they not faile to be wiped out. So then let vs aduiſe our ſelues, and ſo long as it ſhall pleaſe God to keepe vs in this worlde, let vs walke ſo vnder his obedience, as his hande may euer bee ſtretched out to preſerue and maintaine vs: let vs ſo ſticke vnto him as wee may haue libertie to honour and ſerue him. For it is a dreadfull deſolation which Moſes ſpeaketh of heere, namely to be no more of the body of the church nor to haue any more the ſhewe or ſhape of Religion: and yet is this ſeene throughout the worlde at this day. Therefore let vs marke, that one of the greateſt benefites which GOD can beſtowe vppon vs in this tranſitorie life, is to let vs haue ſome little corner wherein to aſſemble our ſelues in his name, to call vpon him and to profeſſe our ſelues to be his people. This ought to be more eſteemed amongſt vs than either meate or drinke or any thing elſe. Howbeit verie few do think thereon. Yet notwithſtanding we muſt needs confeſſe, that albeit we haue ſufficient foode, and in the meane while forget God, our ſtate is miſerable. And if we think not thereon, we bewray our owne beaſtlyneſſe: for God telleth vs that this beneſite which is ſpoken of here, is farre greater than all the reſt, that is to wit that we may worſhip him in pureneſſe, & be gathered together vnder that head which he hath appointed vnto vs, namely our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. And therefore while wee haue ſuch priuiledge to heare the worde of God, to call vpon his name, and to walke according to his Goſpell: let vs harken vnto it, for feare leaſt God diſperſe & ſcatter vs abroad in like ſort as he hath diſperſed the Iewes. And ſpecially let vs ſtande in feare of this threatning, namely, to bee made ſuch beaſts, as to honour y dols againe, as we ſee it is become of others, who are a good preſident to vs of the vengeance of God, whereof wee our ſelues alſo haue felt our part. For wee haue beene as bondſlaues vnder y idolatrie, and vaſſalings vnto the abhominations of the Popedome, and that was for our ſins, and for the ſins of our fathers. Seeing we haue earſt felt the blowes, yea, and beene as looking glaſſes vnto others, ſhoulde wee nowe be ſo brutiſh, to prouoke our God in ſuch wiſe, as he ſhoulde bee forced as it were, to deprriue vs of the grace that he hath giuen vs? Let vs then vſe this beneſite and treaſure of the Goſpel, whileſt our Lord giueth vs place where to hide vs as it were vnder his hand while he doeth gouerne and guide vs, and while we be knit together in one bodie: that hee may bee magnified amongſt vs with one accorde not onely with the mouth, but alſo ſpecially with our life: to the ende that vppon our indeuouring of our ſelues to honour him, hee on his ſide may continue his good doing towardes vs: and that this threatening bee not executed vppon our heads, that is, to bee diſperſed heere and there, and to bee conſtrained againe to worſhippe y dols, and other deade and ſenſeleſſe things.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, beſeeching him to touch vs with ſuch repentance, as being aſhamed of our ſinnes, wee may ſeeke altogether to put our ſelues wholly into his handes, and that by obtaining forgiueneſſe of him, we may alſo feele that hee hath reformed vs, and that wee bee in his fauour, to giue ouer our ſelues altogether to his holy will. And that albeit there is alwayes much to bee amended in vs, and that our luſtes and affections doe drawe vs quite away from that which hee commaundeth vs; yet neuertheleſſe wee may not ceaſſe to ſtriue againſt them, and to yeelde our ſelues wholly vnto him, and to inforce our ſelues thereunto more and more, knowing that the ſame is our ſoueraine welfare: and that although hee ſhewe vs nowe and then ſome tokens of rigour in correcting vs, yet wee may learne to profite thereby, to the amending of our ſinnes, ſo as wee may bee brought to the perfection whereunto hee dayly calleth vs. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the xxviij. of March, 1556.

The CLXIII. Sermon, which is the eleuenth vpon the eight and twentith Chapter.

65 Amongeſt theſe people alſo ſhalt thou haue no reſt, neither ſhall there bee any reſt to the ſole of thy foote. Moreouer the Lorde wil giue thee a trembling heart, and dymneſſe of eyes, and a heauineſſe of minde.

66 And thy life ſhalbe hanging before thee: thou ſhalt be afeard day & night, and be vncertaine of thy life.

67 Thou

67 Thou shalt say in the morning, O that it were night: and at night thou shalt say, O that it were morning: because of the fearefulnesse of thy heart, wherewith thou shalt bee afraide, and because of the sight of thine eyes, which thou shalt see.

68 And the Lorde will make thee to returne into Egypt by shippes, by the way, whereof I haue said vnto thee, that thou shouldest not go about to see it any more: and there shalt thou bee solde to thine enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and none shall bye thee.

AMongst the benefites that we desire in this present life, one is to haue some restingplace and some harbor to lodge in. Though a man be poore yea and troubled on all sides: yet if he haue some little hole to hide his heade in, that he may resort thither: he careth not for all the rest. But if we knowe not where to become, nor haue any friend to receiue vs, nor any nooke nor corner wherein to rest vs; our state is then extremely miserable. That is the cause why Moses now (after hee hath declared that God woulde driue away and banish the Iewes out of the lande which hee had giuen them to inherite and to rest in for euer) addeth, that they shall be as vagabondes and haue no certaine dwelling place, but be tossed from post to piller.

Nowe it is certaine, as we haue alreadie saide y this shal oftentimes happen to the faithfull, but it is for another purpose: & God doth in y meanspace comfort them, & it is behoueful that their patience should be tried after that maner. For the thing wherein wee shewe our obedience towarde God; is when as hee mingleth vs among the wicked, so as wee seeme not to differ a whit from them, but all goes to hauocke (as they say) and yet notwithstanding we continue founde in heart, and commit our selues into the handes of our God, knowing that hee hath not forgotten vs, though he suffer vs to be so tossed. Contrariwise all despisers of the Lawe doe beare their mark, as if they were burned with a searingyron in their hearts, and do know that God is against them, and that their sinnes doe reproue them. Albeit that men doe not accuse them, yet doe they feele a sufficient testimonie in themselues to confound them withall. And that is it that Moses doth farther adde, saying: *That vnto such as are hard hearted against Gods worde, God will giue a trembling heart, a sorowfull minde, and dasseling eyes, so as in the morning they shall say: May I see night? And when night is come: Alas, how shall I passe it ouer? Can I continue vntill the morning? Insomuch that their life shall as it were hang before them, and they shalbe in miserable vnquietnesse.* That is the thing wherein the faithfull doe chiefly differ from the despisers of God, and wherein their state doth varie. For albeit that y faithfull do suffer much trouble in this worlde, yet haue they euermore wherewith to comfort themselues: according as our Lorde Iesus saieth in Saint Iohn: You shalbee vexed in this worlde (saieth hee) but yet shall ye not faile to haue comfort in me. Wee must consider what is the grounde of our comfort; namely that they which stande assured in the protection of God, do euermore commit their life into his hands, as we see Dauid did when hee was beset on all sides. When he was threatened with a hundred deaths, he said, Lord, I commend my soule vnto thee, thou art faithfull and thou hast redeemed mee. He knewe that God had maintained him euen vnto that houre; and that indeede without the marueilous power of him, hee coulde not haue liued so long. And thereupon he concludeth thus: because that God is faithful, hee will surely haue pitie on mee: and therefore I commit my soule to his keeping. Loe at what point the faithfull are. They verie well perceiue the daungers whetewith they be beset: they perceiue that their life is but a smoke that might vanish away out of hand: they see there bee many ambushes laide for them, insomuch that all the worlde is against them, and that they cannot safely steppe forwarde one step without incountring of some miserie. The faithfull vnderstande all this: ouer and beside, that they bee subiect to all the chaunges of this humaine life, and that they bee fraile as all the children of Adam bee, they see well there is no restingplace for them heere. But yet heerewithall they knowe that God hath care ouer them, and that hee is their protector. That is the thing which they rest vppon. Hauing such a stay, they holde on their way forward: but yet are they not careless; for we must not be so blockish as to cast no perils: for we coulde not call vppon God if wee sawe not the perils wherein we bee. And it prouoketh vs to seeke vnto our God, when wee see that without him wee shoulde perish euerie minute of an houre. The faithfull then must not be without feare, but resting vppon the tuition of God, they must sticke vnto him, & assure themselues that he will neuer forsake them. That is it wherein they reioyce. Yea and they goe yet farther. For although they be to go among thorns; although they bee driuen to make many leapes, although they catch now & then some knocks; yea and although they bee altogether shut vp & haue no way out: yet notwithstanding through the power of faith they euermore reioyce euen in the midst of all their sorowes & perplexities. On the contrary side, the despisers of God be as blind as is possible, and do close their eyes, least they might see their infirmities, & so do harden themselues. Yet for all this, God compelleth them to look vnto themselues, & then are they vndone: they be ouertraught with feare & amasednesse. It

Psal. 31.6.

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is not their manner to make their recourse vnto God. For they vnderstand nothing of his protection, nay contrariwise they shunne him, & flee as far from him as they can, bycause they conceiue nothing in him but dreadfull maiestie, which putteth them quite out of hart. As for the wicked therfore, and all such as haue rebelled agaynst God; they after long hardening of thé selues, when God waketh them, know not where to become. For they passe not of comming vnto him, but doe rather vtter their rage by spyting him and by gnashing their teeth at him. And because they finde no ende of their miseries, nor haue any rest, this terrour which God casteth vppon them is an incurable disease. As for to call vppon him, or to betake their liues into his hands, they haue no power: but rather forasmuch as they knowe that they haue warred against him, they bee likewise driuen to vnderstande, that in steede of helping them, hee will surely vexe them. That is the thing which we see heere in this text, where Moses saieth, *God will giue thee a trembling heart, a sorowful minde, and dasling eyes.*

Nowe here may a question bee demaunded. For we perceiue that Gods children, euen they that bee most deare vnto him, and which haue serued him in the rightest and soundest manner; euen verie they are oftentimes in such distresse, as doth amase them & make them besides themselues. What complaints maketh Dauid? That his eyes are forworne: that he is as good as consumed with mourning, that the marowe of his bones is dried vp; that all his strength is faded, that he is in so great feare, that to his owne seeming hee was swallowed vp into a bottomlesse gulfe. This happeneth sometimes to Gods children. How so? This threatning is made to them that despise him, to them that cannot by any good meane bee reclaimed, and which haue alwayes withstoode God. I haue tolde you already heeretofore, that God to trie his people to the quicke, suffereth them to bee altogether in like case as the wicked, insomuch that euen they themselues doe thinke so too. But yet doth God therewith reach them his hande, and although he doth not qualifie their griefes at the first, yet he holdeth them at such stay that they shall not quaile. There lyeth still some seede of Gods spirite hidden in them, which at length vttereth it selfe more fully, so they see well that God sustained them in the middest of those extremities, and in the end it appeareth vnto them, as it were in a visible manner. Let vs marke it well then, that when the children of God bee tossed and troubled with afflictions and haue so grieuous and harde temptations as were able to make them thinke, that God is their enemie, so as they dare not open their mouth to call vpon him, but are vtterly astonished: insomuch that although he alledge vnto them the promises of his grace, yet they cannot tast of them, but doe sometimes euen refuse them like the vnbeleeuers, as though they were fully determined to shut themselues out of all hope of saluation: when they bee at this point, then doeth our Lorde worke in them, in such wise as he suffereth them not to bee quite ouerthrowen with temptation. And that is Saint Paules meaning where he saith, We be afflicted, but we perish not, wee bee oppressed, but yet howesoeuer the worlde goe, wee bee not ouercome: for wee beare the mortifying of Iesus Christ in our flesh. Whereas hee saieth, that the faithfull may indeede be pent vp in afflictions, he saith also that yet notwithstanding they quaile not for euer: albeit that they are made to stoope vnder the burden, and to grone as though they were crushed and broken; yet notwithstanding, al those heartbreakings breede not any deadly fall. Hee addeth the reason. Namely that it is the mortifying of our Lord Iesus Christ, that they beare. As if hee should say, that God doeth euermore separate them from the misbeleeuing and reprobates, and from the despisers of his maiesty, and that hee printeth in vs the marke of his only sonne. It is true, that in this case they seeme as dead, but the same death is holy, for God sanctifieth it, for that they bee members of our Lord Iesus Christ: and thereby they attaine to the resurrection. True it is, that Saint Paul speaketh not alonely of the last resurrection, but he beginneth at the comfort which GOD geueth presently to his children to traine them on still to the port of saluation. Now then, they enter into the middes of death, euen while they bee aliue. And therefore let vs marke, that although God doe now and then so afflict such as haue walked in his feare and haue put their trust in him, that they bee stricken with terror and tossed with vnquietnesse: yet notwithstanding hee holdeth them vp by the secret operation of his spirit: and moreouer comforteth and gladdeth them in the ende, accomplishing that which he saith in an other text: That the more they were distressed, the more doeth hee set their hearts at libertie, that they may freely come vnto him: and so consequently maketh them to vnderstande that he neuer forsooke them. Lo howe our Lorde tempereth the troubles and afflictions of the faithfull: so as although they indure neuer so great paines, and doe euen pant in comming vnto him, as folke scarce able to open their mouthes to call vppon him: yet when they haue ended their conflict against their vexations, albeit that at the first they cannot get the vpper hande, yet shall they get the victorie in the end. But as for them that haue played the restie iades, they remaine pent vp in their miseries, without any remedie, because God doeth still set himselfe against them more and more vntill they become franticke, and gnash their teeth at him, and finally fall into vtter despaire. To be short, we see that which is spoken by the Prophet Esay, dayly accomplished: namely, that there is no peace for the wicked; but that their mindes are tossed like the waues of the sea: when there is any storme, the waues bee troubled and the water is full of mudde: and euen so is it with them that despise God. Because they make warre against him, therefore must he also trouble them: Insomuch that euen with-

Psal. 6. 7.

Esay 48. 22.

our enemie, yea and without any body to fray them, they of themselues be frighted, and beate and bounce themselues, as if they were at warre within themselues, so as there is no calmenesse at all in them, but all is full of trouble and disorder. For whereas the faithfull be inlightened in the middest of their darkenesse, and GOD doth still resort vnto them to giue them some little sparke of light, in such wise as they may beholde him, and albeit they attaine not thereunto at the first, yet notwithstanding they still freine themselues and holde on their way thitherwarde: in steede of this, the misbeleeuers are troubled at the very hearr voice, and can none otherwise conceiue, but that they must needes perish in despaire: and when they bee at the last cast, then fall they to spiting of God, and blaspheme him with open mouth. To be short, here wee see that the grieuousest curse that God can sende vpon men in this transitorie life, is that they cannot rest vppon him, to acknowledge him to bee the keeper of their life: but contrariwise, are cast vp at aduenture, by reason whereof they bee euer in doube of their liues, and bee so caried away with mistrust, that they wote not where to become. When men be in this case, it is the greatest curse that can light vpon them. Not without cause therefore doth Moses declare heere for a conclusion, as it were in way of summing vp the rest of all the curses which wee haue heard of heertofore, that there is nothing so dreadfull, as when men are become blockish, there is in them no vnderstanding, as who would say, God taketh not any more reckoning of them as of his creatures, but they may well perceiue that hee doeth not guide nor gouerne them any more. When men are come to this point, and that their life, (notwithstanding that it bee allowed of men,) is neuerthelesse hainous and detestable before God, and moreouer they haue no cast of his fatherly loue, nor of the care that he hath of other men, but they be as in the dungeon of despaire: when men (I say) bee come to such an extremitie, it were better for them that they had beene borne before their time, and that they had neuer enioyed this present life. And euen that is the verie cause why wee heare it threatened that they shall say, O ye mountaines fall vpon vs, and that they shall wish that the bottomlesse pittes had swallowed them vp. And why? For they finde that all creatures bee against them, when they haue no more accesse to God. When men perceiue once that hee will not maintaine them, but declare himselfe to bee armed against them: then do they vnderstand, that al creatures be their enemies, and regardeth them to behold the sunne: then be they so possessed with feare, that they wish there were no worlde at all: or rather that they were rooted out of it.

Nowe sith wee heare so horrible threatnings, let vs learne to walke in the feare of our God: for there is no other way to liue truely, and to bee comforted in the middest of our sorrowes and aduersities, but to come with a free will to yeelde our selues obedient to our God, and to doe him such reuerence as is due vnto him. For when we acknowledge him to be our iudge, wee will not play the Rebels; but bee willing to bee reclaimed, that we bee not in the ende compreheded and wrapped vp in the number of them that haue resisted him. Yee see then howe the way that wee shoulde keepe is that we must willingly hearken vnto God when hee menaceth vs, and that wee must bee moued therewith and bee touched therewith to the quicke: and that thereuppon wee endeuour to serue him, and to obey his worde. For it may well bee that we shall sometimes bee vexed with feare and vnquietnesse: but yet will GOD deliuer vs from them. It is certaine that wee shalbe weakened by that meane, and it is good for vs so to bee: but yet howe soeuer wee fare, God will so keepe vs that wee shall not fall into vtter despaire. Moreouer, when wee sometimes feele any vnquietnesse in our selues, and wee haue not power to call vpon God, but are tormented with distrust: let vs vnderstande that it is the fruite of our sinnes, and let vs desire God to make vs to perceiue that we haue not kept touch with him as wee ought to haue done, and that therefore hee casteth vs into that vexation and distresse. But let vs not so tempt our God, as he shoulde proceede to this rigour that is here mentioned: namely, wee shoulde haue no power to commit our life into his handes. So then, whereas heere is mention made of a trembling heare, let vs consider wherein our true rest doth remain, namely euen in this, God is our father, and that wee be his children. Likewise whereas mention is made of dasseling of sunken eyes: let vs vnderstande that we must looke vpwards, as often as wee be in any feare: and that there is no other remedie to qualifie our griefes, but to lifte vp our eyes to heauen. For as long as men looke downewarde, what shall they finde there but an infinite masse and muse of miseries able to feare them out of their wittes, so as they shall not knowe where to become? Let vs therefore seeke vnto this meane: that is to lifte vp our eyes to heauen, knowing that God hath his hande stretched foorth, to vphold them that returne vnto him. Where mention is made of a sorrowfull minde, let vs vnderstande that it is the proper office of GOD to set our hearts at libertie, to the end that no temptation may vtterly vanquish and ouerwhelme vs. And this shalbe treated of yet more fully.

Let vs come to that which Moses addeth, Namely, that in the morning they shall say, *Who is it that will make it day for the night: and at euening, Howe shall we attaine to the morning? For thy feare (which) shalbe hanging before thee, &c.* Heere we see yet better that which hath beene saide afore. For what is the cause that men bee thus in a continuall feare, but that they cannot commende their life into the hand of GOD? In verie deede and to speake properly, the liues of vs all are euermore, as it were hanging at a threede, but yet the despisers of God doe most peculiarly finde it so; and well worthie, for that they haue warred against

him that shoulde haue set them in rest and safetie. Their life is as it were hanging by a threede, because that in steede of life there is euermore this feare of death in their heartes: and reason good. For what is the life of man? A smoke that passeth and vanisheth away. And moreouer let vs see howe many deathes beset vs on all sides. So then as long as wee remaine in our naturall state, without hauing respect to GOD, our life is alwayes, as it were hanging at a Threede. Yea surely. Though wee bee neuer touched outwardly, how manie diseases beare wee in vs? A man needes not to goe out of himselfe, nor to seeke farre, to learne to howe many miseries and wretchednesse hee is subiect: for euen in his owne selfe hee shall foorthwith finde an infinite number of deathes. Seeing then that it is so, let vs knowe, that vntill wee haue learned to rest vs in the prouidence of God, our life must of necessitie bee as it were flittering before our eyes, and altogether vncertaine: and to bee short we beare it continually as it were in our hands: according as it is saide in Iob and in the hundred and nineteenth Psalme.

Iob.7.7.14
Psal.119.109

Nowe when it is saide that wee carrie our life in our handes, it is to shewe, that where as life shoulde beare the man, the man beareth the life: that is to say, the life is left vp to the hazarde of all misfortune. Euen so it is with al men naturally, and as we haue alreadie saide, the verie faithfull are not free from it, and that doe wee see by example in Iob, and Dauid. Notwithstanding, the despisers of God are they that feele most howe their life hangeth by a Threede. And wherefore? For God euen spite of their teeth inforceth them to perceiue the perils that beset them: they see it is good reason, that all manner of creatures shoulde become their enemies, by reason whereof they start when they heare but the falling of a leafe, and they bee afraide when nobodie pursueth them, as it is saide in an other place of the Prouerbes. Thus doeth God open the eyes of them that are puffed vp with pride, and are drunken with the delightes of this worlde, and specially which haue hardened themselues in stubbornesse against him. Hee openeth their eyes, that they may knowe howe their life is lesse than nothing, and that all these shadowes, leasings, and vaine hopes whereupon men are wont to rest, are but baites to beguile them. See heere I pray you whereunto they come which doe scorne God and his worde, and are wholly giuen to this worlde, reposing their trust on earthly meanes and on the creatures. Needs they must at the last be caught with such feare as will reach them double and trebble to vnderstand their owne state.

Prou.28.1.

Nowe when Moses hath spoken that, hee addeth what they then say. *Who shall assure vs to see the morning? Howe shall wee ende the day?* When men vnderstande once howe fraile they bee, and with howe many perils and miseries they bee enuironed: then haue they no more happinesse. In deede wee can well say, that there is nothing more certaine than death, nor any thing more vncertaine than the houre thereof: but in the meane while wee regarde it not, vntill God doe wring vs, and driue vs thereunto by force. For then they which did beare themselues in hande that their life should last without ende: (as we see howe men deceiue themselues by fancying an immortalitie in this worlde, imagining that they shall liue a hundred yeares after they bee deade,) [doe finde the contrarie.] And therefore because men are so blockish, God doeth still constreine them to beholde present death continually pinching them and holding them at a bay. Thereupon they bee in continuall feare, and albeit that they vtter nothing with their mouthes, yet doe they say thus in their heartes, Who can assure mee to see the morning? To bee short, to their thinking, the very earth sinketh vnder them. And albeit that this doth not alwayes appeare, yea notwithstanding the despisers of God doe feele that this threatening is not in vaine nor without effect. Wherefore let vs not linger the time vntill God doe execute such iudgement vppon vs, but let vs rather preuent it, by hauing that same willing feare which is spoken of in this wise: Blessed is the man (saieth Salomon) which feareth in his heart, that is to say, which calleth vppon himselfe, and aryeth not vntill God inforce him whether hee will or no. When euerie of vs doeth stirre vp himselfe, it is the greatest benefite that wee can haue. Therefore where as the worldlings make themselues dull heades, and wander away after their owne vaine imaginations, and fling beyonde the moone as they say to the intent to liue in peace and rest without feeling of any griefe or trouble, whereas they (I say) would thus fall asleepe; let vs looke to our selues, and gather our wittes into some feare, and let euery of vs quicken vp himselfe. And if wee doe not stirre vp our selues in this manner, then must God needes torment and vex vs, and make vs a liuely portraiture of that which is mentioned heere. For in verie deede, after that the despisers of God haue plaide the madde beasts, and bleared our their tongues at all manner of doctrine, and set light by all threatenings, and like chafed bulles haue rushed against God and all his iudgementes: they must at the last feele themselues vexed and troubled with vnquietnesse: as wee see howe the great Tyrants that make all the worlde to shake vnder them, haue their part hereof without measure: insomuch that where as they make others to drinke a litle glasse of feare and terrour, they themselues must drinke vp a whole potte full, and supp vp the dregges, according to the phrase of the Prophets, when they speake of the greatest punishment that God sendeth: Namely that when those whom God chastiseth, haue drunke more than their fill, in swallowing vp great hoop of sorrowes: then they which haue lued at their ease and in pleasure, must drinke the leeze, which is the bitterest, and will make them to burst. And in deede, we haue an example of a heathenish

Psal.36

Tyrant,

Tyrane, who hath verie well prooued and declared that all his whole life was a continuall torment, yea euen by his owne witnesse? For being flattered of one that saide vnto him, O sir, howe happie is your state? Yea (quoth hee) and I will make thee to vnderstande it by my selfe. And thereuppon hee made him a feast, and when hee had set him at y table, he pitcht a sworde ouer his heade, hanging by one onely hayre, to shewe vnto him, what manner of state that was, which hee had counted so happie. The man being himselfe in that perplexitie, saide: Let this kingly state be taken away from mee: for I had leuer die a hundred times than to be in such vnquietnesse and perplexitie. This I say, was the confession of a heathen Tyrant: as if GOD shoulde haue holde him vpon the Torture, that it might bee a generall lesson against all such as make warre with God, and trouble the worlde with terrour: they must spite of their teeth bee made afraide themselues, and finde no rest. After many tossings and turmoylings, hell must euermore waite for them, they must see their graues open which they are to fall into, and they must beholde the great gulfes readie to swallow them vp, and in the meane while can haue no succour nor refuge to God, but doe still flee from him, where as he is the onely person to whom they shoulde haue sought for succour.

Nowe ouer and besides that which wee haue saide already, namely, that we ought to preuente this threate, by feazing God of our owne accorde: let vs vnderstande, that forasmuch as we be all wretched sinners, and there is not one, be hee neuer so well and rightly minded, which ought not to vnderstande that hee is greatly indangered vnto God: yet when wee haue our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is our peace, and when wee can by his meane rest vppon the fatherly goodnesse of God: then may wee be sure that he holdeth vs for his children, and that hee watcheth ouer vs, and procureth our welfare. And that is the cause why Sainct Paul saith expresly, that when we be once iustified by faith, then we be at peace with God. He saieth that we must be iustified by faith, that is to say, that wee must haue imbraced the grace which is offered vnto vs by the Gospel: knowing that God forgiueth vs our sinnes, and is mercifull vnto vs; in that hee beareth with vs for our Lorde Iesus Christs sake. Vntill we come to this, we must needes be alwayes in doubt and in perplexitie: but hauing knowledge once that God hath buried all our sinnes, so as wee put our trust in the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ; then wee bee at peace, yea in peace and not in dulnesse like as the vnfaithfull and the despisers of God may haue some peace for a certaine time, as we haue saide afore: but forasmuch as they forget themselues, and do still followe on their wicked traine, they vtterly besot, and bewitch themselues. But Sainct Paul saieth that wee haue peace with God, that is to say, that we acknowledging our selues vndone without him, may boldly preace vnto him and say: Seeing GOD is my father and hee hath shewed himselfe so gracious to mee in this present life, as to giue me some rest heere: surely there is a more blissfull rest prepared for mee, when as our Lorde Iesus Christ shall come to meete vs, for to guide vs, and to bring vs vp, that wee may seeke our God, as in deede that is the place which wee must come vnto, if wee intende to haue a place to rest vs in. And in that respect is it that the Prophets in likewise speaking of the kingdome of our Lorde Iesus Christ, doe alwayes say, that euerie man shall then sleepe vnder his owne figge tree and vnder his owne vine, and nothing shall make him afraide. Nowe then concerning the threatenings which Moses hath set downe heere; the Prophets as true expounders of Moses, and as renuers and bringers of the Lawe to remembrance againe, hauing shewed vnto the people the vnbeliefe and rebellion which they sawe in them, and hauing shewed the vengeance of God which was readie to light vpon them for it, did bring those back againe vnto Iesus Christ, which erst were altogether vnreformable. And albeit that is behoued them to suffer smart for a time because of their sinnes; yet doe they giue them hope that God will make a couenant with them, and that then they shall sleepe euery man in his vyneyarde and vnder his figge tree: doing them to vnderstande that although they slept not in a locked chamber, but lay in y middest of the fields, yet they shoulde be safe ynough because they were vnder the protection of their God; by reason whereof they might sleepe at ease and in safetie. Mich. 4. 4.

Forasmuch then as wee haue such assurance, wee ought to bee well setled in our mindes: and sith wee haue vnderstanding of the reconciliation that is made in our Lorde Iesus Christ, wee haue nowe good cause to rest vs in our God, and to be still and quiet, howbeit, so as we forget not so great a benefite. And wee see that our Lorde Iesus Christ is minded to raigne among vs. Let vs therefore suffer our selues to bee gouerned by his hande, and as Ewes and Lambes let vs followe our shepeherde, and then shall wee do that which our Lorde hath appointed for vs, so as nothing may hinder vs, but that we may attaine vnto him. Although wee see thinges turmoyled in this worlde, so as all goes to hauocke, yet shall wee bee able to take breath againe, and to say, Yet hath my God still shewed mee the way: insomuch that whereas other men haue beene posted to and fro, I haue euermore stoode fast: and although I haue beene diuerse wayes troubled and vexed, yet doe I knowe Lorde that thou doest euermore gouerne thy people. Thus yee see that being stayed in our Lorde Iesus Christ, wee may bee assured that GOD will neuer faile vs. Seeing it is so, let vs returne vnto him, and pray him to defende and deliuer vs from all euill. The way then for vs to bee sure of our life, is, that although wee see nothing but continuall warre, yet wee must inforce our selues to fight, and persuere vntill we haue obtained the victorie, and if hee take vs away to himselfe, hee will then bee the keeper of our soules. He will guide vs in this present life, so as

both day and night wee shall feele his grace. When the euening commeth, albeit that the night doe bring vnto vs so much feare with it, yet shall we be in safetie. Why so? For God is that while our fortresse, and we shall not be forsaken of him. Therefore let vs tarie vntill the morning. Thus doe wee euer more referre our life vnto him. And although we be not senseless, yet shall we haue continually whereupon to stay vs when wee see our owne infirmitie. As for example, when a man perceiueth that hee is not able to stande, but his legges quake and tolter vnder him; hee either leaneth to some thing, or sitteth downe in a chaire, or else stayeth himselfe vpon some staffe: euen so is it with vs. For wee haue not the strength of Gyants, wee bee not of such power as to be able to defie our enemies, for wee see well that wee bee too too weake. But in the meane while wee ceasse not to stay vppon God, and that is our refuge. Neither haue we this affiance for this present life onely, but wee haue it also for the life to come: insomuch that although our Lord doe put vs into the handes of our enemies, yet will he not misse to be our sauiour euen in the middest of death. Let vs not doubt, but that he will safely conuey vs not onely from the morning to the euening, and from the euening to the morning, but also that euen in the middest of the darkenesse of death, we shall alwayes be lightened with his goodnesse, and hee will shewe vs that the life which hee hath promised to his people, shall neuer faile. Therefore doth Dauid vse this maner of speach: Lorde (saith he) thy staffe or else thy shepeherdes hooke. He taketh the similitude of a sheepeherd, that hath his staffe or his hooke. Lorde (saith hee) so long as I see thy staffe before me, I am safe, insomuch that if wee were to goe into the darkenesse of death, yet being in that dark and vnsome dale, yea euen in such sort as I might seeme to be cast into hell, I woulde not ceasse to reioyce. After this manner must we practise this doctrine.

Psal. 23. 4.

Nowe lastly it is said, *that God will cary his people by the way, concerning the, which is wel said: Thou shalt neuer see it againe: & that they should bee caried in shippes: and that being come into Egypt, they should bee set to sale as slaues, & yet no body should buy them.* They should not be esteemed, but as a people vtterly cast away, and euery body shoulde disdaine them. Now this was al one as if God should haue meant to cut them off, saying, Remember how I meruelously deliuered you out of the lande of Egypt, when I made you to passe through the wildernesse, and in like wise to goe through the red sea, or the sea of Bulrushes, (which they call red sea: but properly it is the sea of bulrushes, because of the Bulrushes that growe in it) for I caused that arme of the sea to shrinke back, that you might passe on drie foote. But nowe shall you returne thither in shippes; you must passe againe that way, yea, albeit that I forbade you, and inioyned you expressly, that you should not goe that way any more: yet shall you returne thither spite of your teeth. In deede at the other time that you were in Egypt, you sorowed for the oppression which you suffred, and I tooke pitie of you, and tooke you out of it. But at this time, when you shall require any bodie to buy you to bee their slaues, and to yeelde your life to the most miseries that may bee: you shall haue no buyer at all. As if hee had saide, Seeing you haue despised the deliuerance that was wrought for you, and haue forgotten such a benefite, is it not well knowen that you bee an vnhappie and a cursed people, and that I haue forsaken and refused you vtterly? This threatning coulde not bee but exceeding terrible to the Iewes. And when the Prophetes expounded Moses, wee see likewise howe the people gnashed their teeth against them. Howbeit, for all whit were they mollified thereby, but rather they doubled their confusion: insomuch that it was alwayes cast in their teeth that their iniquities proceeded to such extremitie as was insufferable. It is saide, that, notwithstanding all the menaces of the Lawe were pronounced vnto them, yet they regarded them not, but helde on still, and became so much the more hardhearted, as though they had ment of set purpose to make warre against God. Soothly it is a horrible thing and against nature, that they which were the houshold of God, the holy generation, the children of Abraham, and which from the beginning had beene trained vp in the doctrine of the lawe, and had had the sayings alwayes laide before them which were vttered by Moses, so as their eares were continually beaten therewith: shoulde yet notwithstanding neuer the better for it, but still goe on from euill to worse. Was not that a horrible thing? Yes verily: and yet wee see the like example. Let vs make our benefite thereof, and beware that we wax not so hardhearted, least wee be possessed of Sathan, and forsaken of God, so that whatsoeuer is tolde vs & shewed vnto vs, we be touched with no manner of feare, but become like wilde beastes which of their owne wilfulnesse doe cast themselues into death. Let vs take heede that we prouoke not our God in that manner.

And moreouer whereas it is saide heere, that God woulde bring this people whom he had redeemed, into a double captiuitie and more reprochfull than was the first: let vs repaire vnto that redemption which was once wrought by our Lorde Iesus Christ: and that we may be partakers thereof, let vs freely serue him which purchased vs so deerely. And seeing that our God hath redeemed vs in the person of his sonne, to such a state that now we be franke and free from the bondes of sinne and Sathan, let vs hencefoorth feare him and serue him all the dayes of our life, according as Zacharie speaketh in his song, recited by Sainct Luke. Seeing then that the case standeth so, let vs learne to walke in such obedience to our God, as hee may make the redemption auailable which is wrought by our Lorde Iesus Christ: and let vs serue him in all holinesse and righteousnesse, that wee bee not bereft of the fauour which hee hath purchased for vs as wee see this people were, who after they had beene settled in the lande of Chanaan, were put out againe

gaine for their vnthankfulneſſe. Therefore let vs bee well ware that God diſpoſſeſſe vs not of the grace which he hath beſtowed on vs: but let vs learne to take ſuch profite thereby, as all the whole may yeelde fruite to his glory, to the intent he may make vs to vnderſtand, that as well in life as in death, hee is euermore our Sauiour and our redeemer, and ſ we may make our boaſt that he hath not redeemed vs in vaine, but with condition, that we ſhoulde henceforth liue in liberte in deſpite of the diuell and of death, according as wee haue example thereof in Sainct Paul.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, beſeeching him to touch vs more and more to the quicke, that being ſtriken with ſuch a feare, as may make vs to ſee that of our ſelues we bee deade and forlorne, we may yet for all ſ not faile to flee for refuge to his mercie. Let vs therfore ſeeke the way thither, which is, that we acknowledge our ſelues to be reconciled by Ieſus Chriſt, and that hee is our peace vnto the ende, according as he doeth continually declare and teſtifie vnto vs by the doctrine of his Goſpell. Eph. 2. 14.
And that in the meane while it may pleaſe our good God, to giue vs the ſpirite of mieldneſſe and meekeneſſe, to the ende wee rebell not againſt him any more, nor haue our affections any more, ſtriuing and rebelling againſt his Lawe, but rather that wee may commit ouer ourſelues to his guiding, and bee confirmed in the aſſurance which hee hath giuen vs, that hee holdeth vs for his people, ſo as he may ſhew by effect, that hee watcheth ouer vs, and that hee will continue with vs to the ende to preſerue vs both in life and in death. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth. &c.

On Munday the vj. of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXIIII. Sermon which is the firſt vppon the nine & twentith Chapter.

THeſe bee the wordes of the couenant which the Lorde God commaunded Moſes to enter into with the children of Iſrael in the lande of Moab: ouer
2 and beſides the couenant which he had made with them in Horeb. And Moſes called all Iſrael, and ſaide vnto them: you haue ſeene all that the Lorde hath done before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharao, and to all his ſeruants, and to all his Countrie.
3 The great trials which thine eyes haue ſeene, and the great ſignes and wonders.
4 And yet the Lord hath not giuen you a heart to vnderſtand, eyes to ſee, and eares to heare, vnto this preſent day.

WHen GOD hath once ſhewed his wil vnto mẽ it ought to ſuffice for euer. For what would wee more, when wee vnderſtand ſ we ought to walke in the obedience of our God: euen of him who hath formed and created vs; to whome wee belong, and who hath ſo dearely bought vs? Needs muſt men be wonderfully vnthankful, whẽ they can forget that which God hath taught them: And that is the cauſe why it is ſo often times tolde vs, that wee muſt not turne away from the trueth when it is once knowen vnto vs. But we ſee howe God was faine to ratifie his Law againe the ſecond time, to the end it might be receiued, yea euen of that verie people whom he had choſen; and yet we ſee that at that time the Iewes ought to haue beene ſufficiently reclaimed to obey God, for hee had brought them lowe with long affliction, and ſurely it is a thing that ought to make men ſ more pliable to learn, when they haue bin beaten with the ſcourges of God and their pride bin long puniſhed in them, ſo as they haue beene driuen to flie vnto God to pray him to take compaſſion of their miſeries. It may well ſeeme that this ſhould make them as gentle and meeke as lambes. The people of Iſrael were in that caſe, but they did foorthwith forget the miſeries which they had ſuffered, they kicked againſt their God, and they coulde not finde in their harts to receiue the yoke that was laide vpon their necke. Therefore we haue here a faire lookingglaſſe of the naughtineſſe and frowardnes of our nature: for this is not written to

this ende onely that we should blame the Iewes: but much rather that wee shoulde consider that we our selues doe nothing differ from them, vntill God haue reformed vs by his holy spirite. Here then in ỹ person of the Iewes, God sheweth vs what we are of purpose to humble vs.

Therefore he saith, *that God commaunded Moses to make a couenant the seconde time with the children of Israel in the Land of Moab*, yea ouer & besides that couenaunt which hee made in Horeb, where the law was first deliuered. It is certaine ỹ Gods declaring of his law was to the intent that euerie man shoulde remember this lesson both night and day, and for that cause was the law set downe in writing. For it is not ynough for vs to haue had God speake once; but the fathers must also teach their children, and euerie man must exercise himselfe in that which he hath heard, ỹ he may frame himselfe thereafter frō day to day, & bee the better edified. Gods intent then was ỹ this people shoulde bee dayly furthered, and for that purpose also were the Priests ordained. For I haue tolde you for what purpose our Lord had chosen them from among the people: It was not for the ceremonies of the Temple onely but (as it is touched in the Prophet Malachy) it was to sowe good and profitable doctrine throughout all the whole lande: and to that ende also were they dispersed euerie where, that the people might be retayned in the purity of Religion, and in obedience to the lawe. But the question here concerneth the solemne couenant. When God published his law in Horeb, we vnderstand that the lightnings did flie foorth, that there was a sounde of trumpets, that the heauen moued, that the mountaine flamed, that mens minds were affraide, and to bee short, that God there shewed his presence with such maiestie, as all men must needes know that obedience was due vnto him. Marke heere the solemnitie that was kept to make the Lawe autenticall. I haue saide that this ought to suffice vs to the ende of the worlde. Shoulde wee then looke to haue him to doe it againe the seconde time? Seeing that God hath fully certified vs that the lawe proceeded from him, and ỹ it is not a doctrine of mans deuising, but Gods owne vnchaungeable wil, and the rule that hee meant to haue kept without breaking, not onely of them that lyued at that time, but also from age to age so long as the world should laste; seeing (I say) that God did so shew forth his power to his creatures, ought not the remembrance of such a deede preuaile to rule vs, without any opening of our lippes against the doctrine conteined in the Lawe? Yes surely. Needes then must it be that the people were verie leawd, yea and very rebellious, seeing they coulde so soone forget that which God had ordained to cause his lawe to bee receiued with all reuerence.

Mal. 2.7.

Exod. 19.16
Exod. 20.18

And that is the cause why it *is saide, besides the couenant that was made in Horeb*. Here Moses reproueth those that shoulde teach their children and posteritie, vpbraiding them that they had forgotten God, and not profited themselues by the woonders which they sawe at the publishing of the lawe, but compelled God to renue it againe at the ende of fourtie yeeres, as though they had not knowen whence the lawe came, but had cast doubtes of it still, and woulde make none account thereof, vnlesse they were forced againe by maine force, and fetched home againe by God like a sort of stray cattell. That was a token of great malice. But let vs marke howe God hath turned the euill vnto good, by making it to serue to our saluation. For by this meane wee bee the better confirmed in the doctrine of the Lawe. If it had beene published but onely once in Horeb, it ought to haue beene more than ynough to vs. And seeing that God gaue forth his voice in the aire, insomuch that if a beast had come neere the mountaine, it should haue dyed; and men heard dreadfull things and all their wits were troubled; the recising of these thinges vnto vs ought to make vs to cast downe our eyes, and to yeelde our selues pliable to receiue that which is contained in the Lawe of God. But nowe seeing it is saide that God began againe, and that there was a double confirmation, whereby the lawe was ratified anewe, and God avowed himselfe to bee the author thereof, and no mortal man: ought not the hearing of such thinges, to assure vs so much the more to stay vpon the doctrine thereof without any replying? If we doe it not, double condemnation will lye vpon vs. And thus we do see that the rebellion of the Iewes profiteth vs by that which fell out vpon it, inasmuch as it was occasion that God did yet better confirme the authoritie of his lawe.

Heb. 3.9.

Now let vs consider wherein Moses doth beginne. He saith: *Your Lorde hath wrought dreadfull woonders before your eyes in the Land of Egypt, those were temptations to trie you: you knowe what he did vnto Pharao and to all his subiectes: you notwithstanding, you haue not considered any of all those things, you haue had neither wit, nor eares, nor eyes, you haue bin deafe and blind, senseles & foolish*, and so ye see how al gods myracles haue nothing auailed you, because of your dulnes. Iustly hath Moses begun here with vpbraiding, and iustly doth hee blame ỹ people for that they had not bin more inuentiue to vnderstande and to marke the wonderfulnes that God gaue them: yea verely. Wherunto tendeth that, but vnto this which hee addeth for a conclusion, *My will was that you shoulde haue knowen that I am the euerlasting your God*? Lo howe God declared that his intent was to reuerse his people, as if he should haue said, hold ye no more, know ye that seeing I haue taken ỹ charge of you, your life shalbe happy, for I will haue care of you: therefore honor me, put all your trust in me, settle your affection vpon me, & glorifie me in al your life. That was gods purpose, when he shewed his wonderful power in deliuering ỹ people of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt. Seeing then that all this profited them not, must it not needs be that they were too too froward, in burying so many admonitions of Gods presence, specially seeing it was for their welfare and felicitie to haue yeelded themselues in subiection vnto God? Seeing then that they were so wildheaded, and

would not by any meane bee reclaymed. It is a figure of too diuelish malice. It is al one as if Moses should say thus: Look to your selues: For there is no excuse why you should be thus deafe, blind, and senseleese. Whereas God hath wrought so mightily in the land of Egypt for your deliuerance, it was to the ende that you should be stablished in the trust of his goodnesse and power, and bee stayed vppon the mightie strength which hee shewed vnto you in so excellent maner: But you haue doone no such thing: and therefore yee be more than guiltie, because nothing hath hindered you to knowe your God, which hath thus shewed himselfe vnto you, but your owne vnthankfulnesse in refusing al maner of vnderstanding.

In deede it seemeth at the first shew, y Moses doth in this place diminish the fault of the people, by saying, *God hath not giuen you eares to heare vnto this day, neither eyes to see, nor minds to vnderstand.* For hee sheweth that it was not in the peoples power to haue either reason or vnderstanding, vntill the same were giuen them from aboue. Nowe if men bee so brutish that they cannot bee taught, vntill God call them vnto him; what can they say, but y they are to be pitied, and that he ought not to condemne them for the same? It seemeth therefore that Moses went about here to cloake the iniquitie of the people, in saying, that it was long of GOD. For it was in Gods power to haue inlightened that people if hee had would, but he did it not. And he sayth precisely, *God hath giuen thee neither eyes nor eares.* Whereby hee sheweth that it is a singular gift of God, to bee able to beholde his workes and to discerne aright of them, that wee may be instructed by them. If we be destitute of the spirite of God, then are we altogether brutishe insomuch that although God speake, yet we heare him not: and although he stretch forth his mighty hand, yet we perceiue it not a whit. Should not this serue mé for some excuse of their ignorance? And in very deede, they that would washe their handes, wil alwayes say, Why? If I haue libertie to doe well, I am to be blamed if I discharge not my selfe: but of whom is it long that I haue it not, but of God who depriueth me of his grace? Thus doe men pleade their cause, and it seemeth to them that they be iustified and acquited, so they can declare that it lyeth not in them to doe wel, vntil God do assist thē. And so saith Moses. But yet is all maner of excuse taken away, insomuch that although men be not able to attaine to well doing, no nor (which more is) to conceiue one only good thought towards it: yet shal they stil abide condemned before God, neither can they haue any colour of excuse for their infirmitie, or of the faultinesse which is in their nature. Moses (as I haue already declared) doth here plead the cause of God against y people. The people therefore must rest in their condēnation, & be shut out frō al maner of shifts. And what saith he to thē? *The Lord hath not giuen thee eyes to see*, yea euen to this people that is depriued of the grace of God: and yet are condemned here neuertheleese. Let vs therefore marke it well, that the vices which bee in vs, serue not to discharge vs, so as God shoulde not alwayes haue his right to reproue vs, yea and also to condemne vs, if we folowe not his trueth when it is offered vnto vs. For the better vnderstanding whereof, let vs consider that this is not spoken of the Iewes onely, but generally of all men. For through the offence of Adam, we be so alienated from God, that al our powers be corrupted and faultie. By the powers of the soule I meane the vnderstanding, reason, will and iudgement: All these thinges are vtterly peruerted by Adams turning away from GOD. And for proofe thereof, the reason and wisedome which the first man had, were not in himselfe, sauing in that hee was fashioned after the Image of God: and therefore as soone as hee was separated from his creator, who is the fountaine of all goodnesse, hee coulde not but be depriued of all the graces that GOD had earst bestowed on him. Yee see then howe Adam did so banish himselfe from the kingdome of GOD, that in stead of the spirituall riches wherewith hee was first endowed, there is nothing in him now but al manner of wretchednesse. For the heritage which wee haue from him is to bee altogether sequestred from Gods grace. In deed there doe yet still remaine in vs certaine prints of them: to the intent wee shoulde not be like the brute beastes, I meane euen by nature. Although the Paynims bee not reformed by the spirit of GOD, yet are they not as Oxen, Asses, or Dogges. Wee therefore doe still beare some marke of that Image of God which was imprinted in the first man: howbeit that wee haue corrupted it altogether. For although that wee can iudge betwixt good and euill, yet is not that able to leade vs to perfection of true doctrine; neither is it able to make vs to knowe our God, to honour him syncerely as we ought: but whereas wee haue a certaine seede of knowledge that there is a GOD, wee bee dazeled in our thoughtes, and forge vaine dotages to our selues. Thence come all the idolatries, that euer were in the worlde. For albeit that men doe very well vnderstand that there is a certaine diuine maiestie which ought to be honored, yet are they not able to attaine thereunto: but doe beguile themselues with certaine imaginations, notwithstanding the light which is in them: whereby they shewe, that because of sinne, they be bereft of all good vnderstanding, so as they bee not able to sette one foote forewarde to march one steppe in the right way. To be shorte, all the vnderstanding and reason which wee haue, serueth but to make vs so much the more vnexcusable; for wee cannot pleade ignorance. Rom. 1. 20.

Nowe then wee perceiue that there is no vnderstanding in men that they shoulde say they knowe GOD, though hee haue opened himselfe vnto them. Therefore sayth Saint Paul that the naturall man is not able to vnderstand the thinges which belong to the spirit. Hee saith not that men be so froward that they wil not vnderstand: but hee saith that they can- 1. Cor. 2. 14.

not at all: the power or abilitie thereof is not in vs. And why? Because of the corruption that is crept into vs through the sinne of Adam. Nowe then like as our will is frowarde, so is our vnderstanding darkened, so as we neither discerne ne deeme as were requisite for our saluation. Whereas wee knowe both the good and the euill, wee encline to the euill rather than to the good. What causeth that? Because wee bee captiues vnder the seruitude of sinne, and 2.Cor.4.4. the diuell who is Prince of this worlde, reigneth ouer vs, vntill wee be deliuered out of his bands and Tyranny, through the grace of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And like as the will is frowarde in vs, euen so is our spirite wrapped in much ignorance, so that God must inlighten vs by a speciall grace, or else we shall neuer iudge of his word or works, as becommeth vs. Now therfore we see here, that God doth so accuse the Iewes, as that by that meane he sheweth vnto vs, that we be all deafe, blinde and senseleſſe. We must marke these three thinges; that vntill God giue vs eyes, eares, and spirite or heart, we can not but goe cleane contrarie to his will. Seeing it is so, let vs learne not to come with a foolish presumption, thinking our selues meete to bee admitted to the knowing of Gods secretes: but rather let vs referre our selues vnto him, that when his word is pronounced vnto vs, it may please him to giue vs the spirite to receiue it: and to worke before our eyes, that we may be so inlightened as we may fare the better for his workes, by taking hold of his maiestie and glorie, and by stooping vnto him. I speake aswel of his word as of his workes: and not without cause. For when we come to heare Gods worde, we see that many doe returne from it as they came to it, and beare nothing away; or if they can rehearse aught, yet are they neuer a whit edifyed thereby. Whence commeth that? Euen of this, that GOD giueth eyes and eares to whome hee thinketh good. Therefore, let vs not imagin that we be sufficient and capable to discerne well, when wee haue bin onely taught, but let vs referre our selues vnto GOD, knowing that all light, all reason, all skil, and all discretion proceede from his spirite. In deede wee vse that kinde of praying before our Sermons: but yet there are very many which doe vse it but as a ceremony, and are not touched with it at all. But looke how often wee desire God to inlighten vs with his holy spirite; so oft doe wee make solemne protestation, that wee come thither as wretches that are blinde, deafe, and altogether blockish, vntil God haue reformed vs, & drawen vs to himselfe. Then lyke as GOD speaketh vnto vs outwardly by the mouth of men whome hee hath appointed: euen so must he also speake inwardly by his holy spirit. Truely it is a grace that is not to be despised, when as wee haue the pure doctrine vttered vnto vs: but yet shall it not auaile vs, vntill GOD hath also touched our hearts and our mindes.

If wee will be edifyed in the word of God, we must bee drawen with this inwarde grace when wee be taught at the mouth of a mortall man. For lyke as the sunne yeeldeth light, and yet the blinde see neuer the more for it: Euen so the worde of God is preached vnto vs without edifying, vnlesse our Lord giue vs eyes wherewith to behold his countenance as it shineth forth in the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ. So much for that poynt.

Now as concerning the workes of God, it is a like. We doe continually eate the bread which hee giueth vs: wee take our fill of his benefites; but yet for all that wee resorte not vnto him, neither doe wee any way thinke to come neere him, vntill hee haue giuen vs wisdome and discretion, that so being nourished by his goodnesse, wee may yeelde him thankes, for that hee hath a fatherly care ouer vs. Lykewise wee see the punishmentes and corrections which hee sendeth vppon the wicked, wee be blockish, and passe them ouer, vntill hee haue wakened vs and made vs to vnderstand, that it is for our sinnes, that hee hath his hand so stretched out. To bee shorte, whether GOD speake gently to drawe vs vnto him; or whether hee correct vs, and shewe vs some token of roughnesse, to make vs to stoope: yet all this serueth to no purpose, vntil God giue vs eyes to see, eares to heare, and heart to vnderstand. Are wee thus reproued? Let vs learne to mislyke of our selues, and let vs not counterfeite those that kicke against God, as if their sinnes should serue them for a buckler: let vs beware of such blasphemies. For wel may wee reply and say, I cannot tell what to doe, my nature is so corrupted in Adam: and I am thereby diminished of all manner of power to attaine vnto goodnesse: but when wee haue well debated our cause, it is certaine that wee shall continue still in our condemnation. And why? For the euill commeth of vs. Is it not enough for a man that hee may bee his owne witnesse, and needeth not to haue any indictment preferred against him by otherfolkes, nor any information against him? If a man enter into himselfe, although he bee a slaue vnto sinne, and be altogether compacted of naughtinesse; and is not any way able to attaine vnto goodnesse: yet is it so, that of his owne proper motion, and of his owne free will (as they terme it,) hee is alwayes drawen vnto euill, howbeit, hee is not forced thereunto. It is certaine that it is not possible for him to doe good: and yet neuertheless the sinne which hee committeth proceedeth not from any where else, than of his owne inclination: his will is so. Now seeing it is proued that we sinne not otherwise than of our own freewill, is not that enough to stop our mouthes? To what purpose serueth it vs to spurne against God, seeing that wee must needes come to this condemnation? Therefore on the one side let vs learne to magnifie the grace of GOD towarde vs; and therewithall cast downe our eyes, for that wee can doe nothing else but sinne against him.

Sith wee see such dulnesse in vs, that the workes of God doe passe before our eyes, and wee perceiue them not: let vs sigh and say;

Alas

Alas, must it nede needs be that we bee very ſtiffe
vnder ſuche as God theweth vs here, ſeing
ſamiliarly he offereth himſelfe, and that his
power is open vnto vs, and yet notwithſtan-
ding we remaine worſe than wilde beaſtes? Ad-
uertiſe vs (ſay we) in what manner ought wee to lamente and ſeke
by the God doeth vs to vnderſtand of (albeit
God doeth) that the puniſhementes which he
ſendeth vs, be for our warning: if we profite not
our ſelues thereby, leaue vs inexcuſable, but ſtraine
vs not to ſeke him. Thus we ſee how ſlouthfulneſſe & ſay, needs muſt the wo rd
be preached vnto vs, ſeing that God calleth vs to his ſchole,
& ſtretcheth out his hand vnto vs, & by his word
preacheth vnto vs nothing, but continually ſuſtaineth vs
with ſuche a dealing as is vſed vnto children. Although then
we be both deaf & blinde, yet let vs learne alwayes
to giue glory to God by condemning our ſelues
willingly for that we reſort not vnto him, and for
that we ſeke not the meanes better which he profe-
reth vnto vs to bring vs backe againe into the
way of ſaluation. Thus much for one point.

Now on the other parte, when God hath
ſhewed vs the fauor to make vs ſee his workes to
our benefite, let vs alſo looke vppon his very
face in the doctrine of the Goſpell, that we may
be tranſformed into the ſame, and learne to magni-
fie ſuche goodneſſe, aſſuring our ſelues that
we ſhall not vnto faith by our owne
proper policie, as who ſhoulde ſay, we were
all in, and had well marked Gods workes,
and well conſidered of them. Nay let vs ac-
knowledge that all this commeth of him, and
that otherwiſe we ſhould haue remained ſtill
in our beaſtly ignorance, as welſed many doe.

Thus is yet more, for when we ſee that God
vouchſafeth vs, and that in the meane while hee
ſuffereth a great many others to remaine deaf &
blinde, ſame ought to leade vs to a farre greater
conſideration of his goodnes, to the end wee may
perceiue ourſelues to be ſo much the more behol-
den & bound vnto him. Dauid did acknowledge
that he was well tamed through Gods chaſtiſe-
ment, it was a ſpeciall gift, & likewiſe when God
did reforme him by his holy ſpirit. And when he
ſpeaketh of the vnderſtanding that he hath of the
ſecretes of God, and of all the doctrine of
ſaluation, hee attributeth the ſame to the holy
Ghoſt: ſhewing that it behoued him to proceed
alwayes in profiting more and more. And there-
fore he hath his recourſe to the heauenly grace,
confeſſing that there is not ſo much as one drop
of knowledge in him, but by the gift of God. And
when he is to treate of his obedience towardes
God he ſayth that it is the worke of God to ope
his eares, and to ſubdue him throughly vnto
him. We ſee then by this, how he by his owne
example teacheth vs to doe our homage vnto
God for all manner of wiſedome and diſcretion,
for all the light of faith which he hath giuen vs,
and for all the good affection and deſire that we
haue to worſhip him. But as I haue ſayd hereto-
fore, when God dealeth not alike with all men,
but whileſt he draweth vs vnto him, he leaueth
others in their vnbeleefe, therein hee magni-
fyeth his goodneſſe yet the more. And when we
ſay that God giueth not men the hart to vnder-
ſtand, or that he doth giue it them: our meaning
is that he draweth ſome & letteth otherſome a-
lone, according to his owne chooſing of them
as we haue ſayd before. Stoken. Paul ſaid how? Paul preached vnto you all, but ſome did not his doctrine, deſpiſed it, and ſome did receiue the knowledge of Iheſus Chriſt: and what is the cauſe thereof? What elſe can it be, but this diuerſitie? Euen of this, that God calleth and draweth thoſe vnto him whome he hath choſen? as S. Paul truely ſaith in the viij. Chap. vnto the Rom. As many as he hath knowen, he hath alſo predeſtinated. Now he diſcendeth from the calling, namely the cauſe: God hath choſen vs, he conſequently called vs, that is to ſay, he hath drawen vs vnto him. Hereto alſo doth he allude in the firſt to the Epheſ. Epheſ. 1. 5. & ſundry other places, where he ſheweth that God doth not without cauſe chuſe vs, he hath elected vs and predeſtinated vs for his children, to the end we ſhould glorifie him, and be vnto him (through his goodneſſe) That is the thing which we haue in effect to learne in this text. When we heare Moſes in this place exhorte the people of Iſrael, that they vnderſtand not the miracles of God, but with faith: That God had giuen them eares to hear, eies to ſee, &c.

Now if it be demaunded why Moſes vouchſafed not to expreſſe the cauſe, why God gaue not his ſpirite vnto the ſaid people, (for it ſeemeth that he might in one word more gloriouſly haue commended the people, if he had ſayd: Thou haſt not harkened, thou haſt not diſcerned:) There are two cauſes thereof. The one is to keep the people low vnderſtanding that they were ſo frowardly bent although God had wrought a million of miracles more than they had ſeene already, yea had it bin impoſſible that they ſhoulde haue bin conuerted by the ſame. When men ſee plainly they be ſo leawdly diſpoſed and froward, that although God ſhould create a hundred worldes before their eyes, yet would it ſtand them in no ſtead: ought they not to be the more aſhamed of themſelues? Yea ſurely. And againe let vs mark farther, that Moſes meaning to exhorte the people to pray vnto God, for that in deed is the onely remedy, when we find ſo groſſe and ſo exceſſiue brutiſhneſſe in vs, that wee forget all manner of good doctrine, and all manner of admonition which God hath giuen vs, yea euen when he ſtretcheth out his hand effectually to make vs to feele his power. When we haue buryed all theſe things, let vs reſorte to the remedy, which is, that wee pray vnto him to giue vs wiſedome and diſcretion to iudge better hereafter. Moſes therefore did aime at thoſe two endes, as if he ſhould ſay, Wretched people, looke to your ſelues: for to preſume any thing of your owne wiſedome, or of your vertues, whatſoeuer it bee, in ſuch experience doth ſhewe that you be altogether giuen to euil, & that although God worke neuer ſo mightily in your preſence, yet is ſenſeleſſe you are to no purpoſe. Therefore acknowledge your ſelues to be ſtarke blind, and no better than wretched brute beaſtes. Forget all your glorying, put away all ouerweening, & flatter not your ſelues, as if you had this or that? For you haue power to do nothing but euil. So much for one point. Secondarily again he ſayeth vnto the, Go to, what is to be done? As for to inforce your ſelues, you be not able, for all your indeuoring is but vnto wickednes. But wil you the yeld your ſelues wholy vnto God? Knowe yee that it is his

Act. 13. 45.

Rom. 8. 28. 29. 30.

Pſal. 115. 2.

his office to open mens eyes and eares. Therefore confesse your faultes and desire him to pray vnto you, and so inforce your minds in such wise, as ye may from henceforth well consider his workes, and also hauing considered them, ye may be edified in his feare and obedience, so as ye may haue eares to receiue the doctrine which is offered vnto you in his name. Thus it is whereof Moses mened. Thus we see that they which giue themselues to 20
Act.13.41. not to acknowledge their sinne, doe pervert the doctrine of Gods law, and falsifie it. When it is preached that in stead of free will (as they terme it) men haue but a cursed and a corrupt will, and are starke blinde, that all their reason is but brutishnesse, and that they cannot attaine to the doctrine of saluation, vnles they be haled thereunto: they fall to making of erroneous disputations. But the meaning of the holy Ghost is much differing from them. For it is to humble men, that they may learne to mislike of themselues, yea and vtterly to condemne themselues, when it is declared vnto them that they can doe nothing. And further more we be prouided to pray, seeing that God must be faine to worke in vs. And when we feele our feeblenesse and infirmitie, we be driuen to resorte vnto him and to desire him to keepe vs vnder his obedience, forsomuch as it pleased him once to elect vs. Let vs therefore take heede that we doe not wilfully wander hither and thither: but as often as it is told vs, that we haue not yet bin taught of the holy ghost, nor bin reformed by him after vs sight, as the beholding of our naughtinesse which ceaseth not in vs euer guiltie: And thereupon let vs before to our God, and pray him to haue pitie vppon vs, and to prouide remedie for all our faultes, and to giue vs henceforth both eares, eyes, and heart, to see, heare, and to vnderstand the thinges which he telleth vs.

Now then forasmuch as we haue here an instruction in the person of the people of Israel: let vs acknowledge our vnthankfulnesse. True it is y God hath so wrought, as there is none of vs which can excuse himselfe, that he hath not bin instructed sufficiently as some time of his lyfe, to walke in the feare of God. In very truth, we saw not the giuing of the law in Horeb, we heard not y thunder clappes, we saw not the lightenings, neither heard we the Trumpets sound: but yet doth God dayly worke in such maner, as he leaueth not himself without witnes, yea euē though there were none other thing than y he causeth the Sunne to shine, and sendeth vs rayne, and faire weather: as S. Paul sayth in the Actes. Behold, y heauen & the earth, & the thinges which we see are witnesses vnto God. And yet for all y, God ceaseth not to doe notable actes & worthy of memory, which ought to waken vs although we were neuer so blockish. Had a man liued but onely fifteene yeres in this worlde, it were time long enough to make him knowe Gods wonderfull workes. But when we haue continued here a fortie or fiftie yeres and more, and God in that time hath renewed the memory of his workes, one while comforting vs, and another while chastising vs insomuch that we are forced to confesse his power so many wayes, and to know y he hath deliuered vs from so many and so apparant daungers, & that he hath reached vs his hand to pluck vs, (as it were) out of the bottome of the graue, yea euen when we were as good as drowned in death; if wee notwithstanding such instructions, doe stil remaine deafe and blinde, shall we not bee condemned by this text? Verily. And let vs not in this case say, God knowes y I remained in papistrie; I was therein a blind wretch, but yet I sinned not: let vs beware of such fictions for they wil serue vs to no purpose. But let vs vnderstand, that we be alwayes to bee condemned for our ignorance, for they y sinne without law, shall perish without the lawe, as S. Paul saith in the second to the Romanes. For in whom is the Rom.2.12 fault y we see not the thinges which God sheweth openly vnto vs, but in our owne negligence? After that maner therefore must we condemne our selues, when we can not learne by any of the meanes which God deliuereth vnto vs, yea when he would drawe vs to his knowledge, & that we shoulde be inlightened to knowe him to bee our God & father, & that his loue might be imprinted in our hearts, to y end we should come vnto him freely, & with a pure & right meaning mind. But yet this acknowledging of our faultes to be guiltie, and this condemning of our selues for it, is not all y we haue to doe: but we must also seeke the remedie by praying vnto God to vse y affection in curing all our diseases. And forasmuch as he doth now send vs to our Lord Iesus Christ, vnto whome he hath giuen this charge & office: let vs commend our selues vnto him. It is sayd in the Prophet Esay, that Christ at his comming Esa.35.5 into the world should make the blind to see, the deafe to heare, the lame to go vpright, and that he should raise the dead. All these thinges hath he done visibly, as is to be seene throughout all the histories of the Gospel. But S. Matthew telleth vs that y same tendeth to a higher purpose. Mat.8.17 For in healing the bodily diseases, he sheweth himself to be the spiritual phisition of our soules, and saith that the same was done to the end that the saying which was spoken by the Prophet Esay should be accomplished, namely, that he did beare our infirmities. Now it is certaine that the Prophet spake not there neither of the feuer, nor of the burning agewe, nor of any other disease Esa.53.4 that appertained to the body: he speaketh of the diseases of our soules. Seeing it is so, let vs then conclude that it is the peculiar office of Iesus Christ to giue sight to the blind, and to giue hearing to the deafe. And forsomuch as he hath the spirit of wise dome and discretion in all fulnesse, we must come directly to him to be instructed. Esa.11.2 Wherefore let vs not doubt but that God is forward and ready to receiue vs. In consideration whereof let vs giue this honor to Iesus Christ, to acknowledge him to be the light of the worlde, and the Phisition of all our spirituall diseases, & that he wil worke toward vs, according as his father hath charged him. And to the intent we should not bee discouraged, Moses doth expresly vse this word, *to day*, or *this day*. In deede he doeth

reproue the people, for sleeping so long a while. What, saith he? is it now fortie yeeres ago since the law was published & you deliuered out of the land of Egypte and in al these fortie yeeres, hath God preuailed any thing with you? Ye haue had a tabernacle, wherein to doe sacrifice dayly; a number of miracles haue bin added thereto; yee haue bin fedde with Manna from heauen; you haue dronke of the water that issued out of the harde Rocke: and yet for al that, you haue continued stil lyke beastes, yea and much woorse: so as it may well seeme that yee haue made a diuelish conspiracie, to cast off all the instructions that God gaue you: and lykewise all the chastisementes, and punishmentes which hee hath sente vppon you. Moses therefore dooth iustly blame the people for continuing so long in their beastlynesse. But yet hee ceaseth not to encourage them to returne vnto God, saying: *Turne this day.* As if hee shoulde say: your GOD calleth you againe vnto him. For albeit that you haue persevered in your beastlynesse and ignorance, yet is he at this day ready to enlighten you, whensoeuer you come to seeke in him the remedy that hee hath shewed you. The thing then which wee muste doe, is, that hauing confessed our faultes past, wee doubt not, but that our Lorde Iesus Christ will reach vs his hand, and be ready to reforme vs. Let vs take heede therefore, that wee shut not the gate, lyke folke that willingedes throw themselues wilfully into hell, but let vs commit our selues to our God. And seeing he feedeth his worde before vs, let vs pray that it bee not lyke the seede that falleth among the stones, and among the thornes: but that he will so manure vs by his holy spirite, as we may be edifyed and established in his feare and obedience, and that he will so worke for vs, as wee may haue occasion to prayse him in all our lyfe, and the very infidels may knowe that hee dwelleth among vs.

Luke, 8.6.

Numb. 11.6.

Numb. 21.5.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes: beseeching him to voutsafe so to touch vs with them, as we may understand that there is nothing in vs but damnation: and that in the meane while wee may not seeke any startingholes, but come offer our selues before him as our Iudge, and perceauing how wee be altogether accursed, and haue none other remedie, but that hee through his infinite goodnes doe recouer vs and bring vs home againe vnto him. And that it may please him so to reclayme vs, hauing obteyned pardon of our trespasses, we may become newe creatures through the meanes of our Lorde Iesus Christ, seeing hee hath expressly sent him of purpose to replenishe vs with all manner of spirituall good things. Therefore let not vs hinder him to finish his worke in vs, nor shut the gate against his graces: but rather set it open with all lowlynesse and feare. That it may please him to bestowe this grace not onely vppon vs, but also vppon all people and nations of the earth, &c.

Deut. 3.2.

On Tewsday the vij. of April, 1556.

The CLXV. Sermon which is the second vpon the nine and twentith Chapter.

5 And I lead you for the space of fourtie yeeres through the wildernesse, and your garments waxed not olde vpon you, neither did thy shoes weare vnder thy feete.

6 Also you haue not eaten any bread, nor dronke either wyne or beere: that you might know that I am the Lorde your God.

7 And so you came into this place: And *Sehon* the King of Hesebon, and Og the King of Basan came forth against vs to battell, and we vanquished them.

8 And wee haue taken their landes, and giuen it in possession to the Rubenites and Gadites, and to halfe the Tribe of Manasses.

PRoceeding with the matter that was begunne yesterday, Moses dooth here declare vnto the people, that they were too dulheaded in that they considered not the goodnesse of God, which they had seene, and inioyed by the space of fortie yeres. If God should nourish a man but the space of a three or foure dayes, without one morsell of bread, it would seeme to bee about the ordinary course of nature. But behold, here was an infinite multitude of people nourished with a kind of meate that had not bin common. God made it to raine downe Manna frō heauen, and the people were fedde with it, for they had alwayes so much as was needefull, and this miracle was so visible, that it could not bee called in doubt. Yet notwithstanding, the people continued still hard hearted, howbeit, not for want of knowing that they receiued that food from God. If the Iewes had bin asked that question, there

there was none of them which woulde not haue answered thereunto saying, Since the time that wee came into the wildernesse, God hath had pitie of vs, and susteyned vs; we shoulde haue dyed through miseries and hunger, had he not caused Manna to raine downe from heauen. Also he caused water to issue out of the Rocke, that wee might haue whereof to drinke. Euery one would in deede haue confessed this. But yet notwithstanding they ceased not to murmure against Moses and Aaron, neither ceased they to haue longinges after their owne lustes, saying that the Manna was nothing toothsome; and therefore they coulde not lyke of it. Then fell they to fornication, and sedition, and gaue ouer themselues to idolatrie and muche filthines. Thus dooth it appeare that this people forgate GOD. The matter therefore consisteth not altogether in the hauing of some sleight knowledge; but it must bee applyed to the right vse, that is to say, that GOD bee honored among vs, that wee doe him homage for the benefites that hee bestoweth on vs, and thereby beginne to put our trust in him, and to haue recourse vnto him. Let vs marke then, that whereas Moses in this place reproueth the Iewes, for not knowing the fauour which GOD had done vnto them when hee fedde them with Manna in the wildernesse: hee meaneth not that they had giuen forth in speech, that the Manna came not to them through the goodnesse of God: but that they still continued dulheaded, whatsoeuer they did confesse; for that they despised their God, and turned away from his worde, and shut their eyes, euen knowing the thinges as altogether apparant.

Exod.16.15 & 17.6.

Num.20.11.

Numb.11.6.

Numb.25.1.

But as it was touched yesterday, albeit that Moses doe here speake to the Iewes; yet dooth it also concerne vs. So then wee be condemned here before God, if wee profit not our selues by all the benefites which wee receiue of his hand, as wee may thereby be induced and prouoked to honor and serue him, and to resort for refuge to his goodnesse, in such wise as wee wander not in our vaine and fraile hopes, ne stay vppon this present worlde, ne presume any thing vppon the creatures. Now therefore let euery of vs looke into himselue; howe doe wee make the giftes of GOD auailable, by yeelding our selues pliable to serue him? Nay it seemeth rather that when he hath made vs fat, wee take occasion thereby to kicke against him, as it is said hereafter in the song of Moses. In the meane while it appeareth that wee vnderstand nothing that may auaile vs, to leade vs in the right way. For whence commeth so much couetousnesse wherewith men be caryed away, so that some are insatiable in their greedinesse, some doe burne in their ambition to aduance to credit, some lyke brute beastes doe set their whole delite, and other some are caryed headlong to filthinesse and fornication? Thus are wee all lyke sheepe strayed from GOD. And whereof commeth this, but that wee neither taste of his goodnesse, neither doe wee vnderstand it as wittie, where as notwithstanding, all our wits should bee applyed thereto? When the worlde caryeth vs thus away, we make it manifest that wee haue smally profited by receiuing the benefites which God with his owne hand hath bestowed vppon vs. Forasmuch therefore as this people was at that time blamed by Moses for the vnthankfulnesse which you see here: let vs in these dayes cast down our eyes and confesse, that although God hath mightily wrought toward vs, yet doe we continue as dazed, and all our senses bee as it were, dazeled by Sathan. Insomuch that our eyes are blinde, & our eares deafe, and wee haue no vnderstanding nor reason. If a man reply, alledging that God hath not done any such miracle amongest vs as hee did amongest the Iewes when hee nourished them with Manna from heauen, let vs mark wel that which is sayd by our Lorde Iesus Christ in the sixt chapter of Iohn: for the Iewes at that time did take occasion to despise the doctrine of the Gospel, for that our Lorde Iesus seemed not comparable to Moses, because hee also had not led the people through the wildernesse. But it is declared there, that hee hath brought vs a meate much more precious, and of more estimation than the Manna: and that it is no excuse for vs, to say hee made no Manna to fall downe from heauen. And why so? For the sonne of GOD is content not onely to feede our bodies, but bringeth vs also the spirituall food to nourish our soules: which is not such a kinde of meate as Moses did giue. For although the Prophet, (to magnifie the grace of God) doth say that it was the bread of Angels, wherewith the people of olde time were feedde; yet is it nothing comparable to this fodde which wee haue at this day. For what else is our life than the sonne of GOD whose will it is that wee should bee fedde with his owne substance? Seeing then that wee liue in our Lord Iesus Christ, and that hee is giuen vnto vs, so as hardly may wee bee become fellowes with Angels, and bee partakers of his bodie, and bee made his members: there is no excuse for vs if we doe not acknowledge so excellent and inestimable benefite, to bee altogether enflamed with the loue of our GOD, to bee brought to his feare, and to trust stedfastly in him. And therefore let vs marke well the comparison that is made here betwixt the meat wherewith the fathers were fedde in the wildernesse; and the foode that is giuen vs at this day by our Lorde Iesus Christ.

Psal.78.25

Deut.32.15.

Hauing spoken thus of the Manna, Moses addeth: *That the people did neither eate bread, nor drinke wine, or any other liquor that could make them drunken.* That is to say, any mingled drinke, whereof much is made in the East countries, for there they haue excellent fruites, insomuch that they make drinke of Dates and of such lyke thinges: and all the compounded drinkes which they make, they call by one common name, Sicera. Nowe Moses sayth that there was no such kinde of drinke vsed among the people: but that the water which issued out of the Rock flowed out euery where, and accompanied them by the way, in such sorte that they were com-

compassed about with the maruaylous goodnes of God, by reason whereof they were driuen of necessitie to acknowledge that hee had stretched foorth his hande, as if he shoulde haue put the meate into their mouthes. That was the meaning of Moses. And this serued to make them to haue the better vnderstanding of the grosse brutishnes which was in them, in that they gaue not God his due glorie. In deede when the earth bringeth foorth corne for our foode, the same ought to suffice to make vs to perceiue that God sheweth himselfe a father to vs. But because wee bee accustomed to it, our hearres are hardened by it, and wee see that men bee not prouoked to yeelde thankes vnto God, when thinges followe all after one common rate. For this cause ought this circumstance to bee well weyed, according to this saying of Moses which wee haue seene heeretofore. When thou art come into the lande whether that thou shalt there eate bread; yea when thou hast tilled the earth, and that it hath yeelded thee her encrease, remember that thou wast nourished with Manna, and say not; It is mine owne skill or mine owne hande that hath gotten thee this foode. Looke thou beare still in mynde that thy God nourished thee after a straunge manner for the space of fourtie yeares, to the ende it shoulde remayne with thee for a perpetuall remembrance, and that thou shouldest acknowledge it thus: The same God that fedde mee in the wildernes, is hee that hath giuen mee this lande, and which maketh it to yeelde fruite, that I may bee nourished thereby. Let vs marke well therefore howe it is not without cause, that Moses sayeth: *Thou hast eaten bread, nor dronke wine nor other drinke, and yet hath he fedde.* Nowe a man woulde thinke at the first sight, that it were impossible for a man to liue without ordinarie foode, because we woulde alwayes tye the grace and power of GOD to these naturall meanes, wherewith hee is serued. It seemeth to vs that God cannot worke, but according to our vnderstanding, and experience. But on the contrary side it is sayde here, that the people hauing not a morsell of bread to eate, did not fayle for all that to liue in wildernesse. And why? For God hath meanes incomprehensible whereby to sustayne his creatures, as hee shewed manifestly at that tyme. In so much that if neede required, God would rather turne the stones into bread, than forsake his people. Also he could as well feede them with milke as with bread. To bee short, let vs marke, that the power which proceedeth from the Spirite of GOD is the onely thing that maynraineth and preserueth vs in our state: as it is sayde in the hundred and fourth Psalme. Is not bread a dead or insensible thing? Howe then coulde wee receiue life thereby, but that it is Gods pleasure? Thus doeth Moses here put the people in mynde of the miracle of the Manna, in such sort as hee had reported it afore. For if the people had incontinently founde Manna in the wilderneſſe, they woulde haue thought that the place had brought it foorth; but they pyned a whyle, and murmured against God. Then came the Manna, a verie vncouth and straunge thing. Whereby the people were conuinced, that God had regard of their necessitie. And when the Manna was fallen, euery man gathered his quantitie, and they distributed it all among them, so as nothing remayned, neither wanted there a grayne of the wonted measure. Whereby it appeareth, that the feeding of seuen hundred thousande persons with the Manna, yea and that in such certeine & sette appoynted measure as if a man shoulde say, euery man shall haue as much as hee needeth, came not of haphazarde. On the other side, there fell none vppon the Sabboth day, but on the day before fell double quantitie. Wee see therefore that God distributed his Manna, like as when a mans children come about their father for their foode, and hee giueth euery of them his pittance in due measure and proportion. Againe, if they keepe the Manna beyonde the Saboth day, it rotted: so as they coulde not keepe it longer than was appoynted by God, to receiue thereof any sustenance and nourishment. Wee see then that God vttered his power so many wayes, as the people ought not to haue doubted, but that they were fedde by myracle, and beyonde the common course of nature. That is the thing which Moses declareth heere, in saying, Thou diddest not eate any bread.

But let vs consider well the reason which hee addeth here, *That thou mightest knowe that I am the Lorde thy God.* Here the people bee reproued not onely of ouershameful leawdneſſe and stubbornneſſe, but also of vtter vnthankfulnes. If God vtter his heauenly power, so as it shewe it selfe apparant vnto vs; wee bee touched and mooued with feare, to yeelde him reuerence: but yet by the way wee may alledge that hee maketh vs afrayde, and that wee bee astonished at his glory, which is the cause why wee are not able to yeeld him the honor that he deserueth: but when God ioyneth both in one, that is to say, when on the one side hee maketh vs to vnderstand his infinite and inestimable power, and on the other side draweth vs vnto him gently & with fatherly goodneſſe, thereby shewing and witnessing the loue that he beareth vnto vs: then is there no more excuse, we bee dubble condemned. For (as I sayde afore) the glorie of God, ought to make vs to stoope, and to yeelde our selues pliable vnto him; and his goodnes ought to allure vs vnto him. So that vnleſſe we be too much blockish, we muſt needs be throughly moued to loue our God. Now then if there be neither loue nor feare in vs after that God hath ministred al meanes & occasions of them both vnto vs, is it not an vtter condemning of vs? That is the thing which Moses meant, saying, It is a wonder that you do not otherwise knowe your God; that is to say, That I am the Lord who haue shewed my selfe to bee your father & redeemer,

by that I have taken you into my keeping and protection, and haue not fayled you in any thing.

Nowe this that is heere spoken of Manna, wee must apply to all the benefites of Gods hande. What then is the thing which he intendeth in shewing himself thus bountiful towards vs? On the one side hee woulde that wee should acknowledge him to bee our onely God, and that hee hath in himselfe the fulnesse of all good things, and that hee is our father, and that wee shoulde not gadde here and there as men commonly doe, who swarving aside and fleeting too and fro, doe dayly forge to themselues newe gods. They will easily confesse that there is one soueraigne GOD; but yet for all that, they cannot fynde in their hearties to rest wholly vppon him, they hang alwayes in doute and waueringe, with what is this God? What maner of one is hee? Yee see here howe the intent of our God is to withdrawe vs from all outleaping imaginations, and to plant in vs a welgrounded and setled determination, that wee might say, O Lorde, thou art hee which made both heauen and earth, thou hast all thinges in thy power, and vnder thy dominion; it is to thee that all honour is due, vnto thee belongeth all power. Thus much for that poynt.

Nowe must wee proceede to the second; which is, that wee so acknowledge him to bee our father that, wee assure our selues of his loue, and that hee hath care of our saluation. For if wee bee at no further poynt, than to acknowledge him to bee God; it doeth but leaue vs alwayes in feare: and in verie deede the maiestie of God doeth of it selfe terrifie vs: insomuch that when as wee shoulde drawe neere vnto him, wee deuise to flee away, vntill the time that hee doeth assure vs of his fatherly goodnesse. The chiefe poynt therefore is, that hauing attributed all power and strength vnto him, wee vnderstande also that hee hath chosen and admitted vs for his people, and that hee will so holde vs in his custodie as wee may bee able to say, that our life is altogether blessed, for so much as hee hath seperated vs from the rest of the worlde, and giuen vs priuiledge to call vppon him, and to haue our recourse vnto him, and to trust assuredly that hee will neuer forget vs, but that hee will furnishe vs with all thinges that bee requisite not onely for this earthly life, but also for our euerlasting saluation. That then is the true knowledge of God; and if wee proceede not to that poynt, then are wee deafe, blynde, and senseleese. Let vs euermore conclude, that vntill wee haue learned to honour our God; to submitte our selues wholly vnto him; to doe homage to his maiestie; and to repose all our contentment and rest in his gracious goodnesse and fatherly loue; so as wee stay our selues altogether thereuppon, assuring our selues that our saluation is sure in him: if wee bee not at that poynt, it is a token that wee knowe nothing, and that wee bee still miserable beastes. Wee may well say this and that; but to what ende? All is but confusion. That is the thing which wee haue to remember concerning this Text.

Nowe, that this doctrine might bee of the more authoritie, Moses speaketh in the name of GOD, howbeit that it is hee himselfe that speaketh; wherein there seemeth some contrarietie and looseneese of matter. For hee sayeth, *Thou hast yee through the Wildernesse, wee haue discomfited Sehon King of Hesebon, and Og king of Bazan.* Thus doeth Moses follow that sentence; as it were by a threed, and sayeth: *I haue nourished you in the wildernesse*, and yet it was GOD that did it. Meant he to vsurpe the honour that partayned to GOD alone when hee sayeth, We did discomfite those kings? Surely the matter is all one in that Moses speaketh in his owne person, and in the meane while bringeth in GOD speaking also: this doeth rather giue vs a profitable admonition, to wit, that although GOD speake to vs by the mouthes of morall men, whome hee ordayneth for that purpose; yet must not wee therefore diminish the authoritie of his worde. Let vs therefore honour God, and yeeld obedience to his worde, when it is declared vnto vs by men, as if wee sawe him present among vs. That is the thing which Moses meant. In very deede, hee did acknowledge himselfe to bee a fraile man, and hee exempted not himselfe from the rest of Adams children, hee was a member of the Church. But yet for all that, forasmuch as hee was ordeyned to bee a minister of GOD, and was to carry the worde in his name: hee meant to authorise the woorde, to the ende that it shoulde not bee lightly regarded, nor despised, vnder pretence that hee which speaketh it is a creature. The thing then in effect, which wee haue to beare in mynde touching this place, is that when wee reade the thinges that were written by Moses, and by the Prophets, and Apostles, thereby wee vnderstande that GOD did rayse vp men to bee as instrumentes and woorking tooles of his holy Spirite: and yet notwithstanding that hee will not haue our faith turned away from him vnder that pretence, but rather that wee shoulde take holde of his power and maiestie by his worde, and to yeelde due obedience thereunto. Thus shoulde wee practise this place.

Nowe after this, Moses addeth; *Thy garmentes and apparell were not worne with age, nor shoes appaired for the space of fourtie yeere.* This serueth to aggrauate the peoples vnthankfulnesse, to the ende they shoulde acknowledge themselues the more guiltie, for not hauing acknowledged the goodnesse of GOD which had appeared so many wayes. Let vs then consider well, that the more GOD doeth multiply his benefites towardes vs, and the greater diuersitie that there is of them, hee vsing it as a meane to instructe vs vnder many fashions: so much the greater and

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more heynous is the offence, if wee profite not thereby.

True it is, that notwithstanding, although God giue vs a taste of his goodnesse and power, but in some one only thing, yet is that ynough to condemne vs, if wee bee not edified thereby. But when GOD multiplyeth his goodnesse by vttering his power to our eyes, to our eares, to our handes, and to our feete, so as the faulte is onely in the hardnesse of our heartes, that wee bee not exercised in his benefites; it maketh our sinne so much the greater. Wherefore let vs beare well in mynde the meaning of Moses, that wee may the better doe our endeuour to consider howe many wayes God hath made vs beholding vnto him, and howe greate the diuersitie of his gracious doings is towards vs; as in deede the number of them is infinite. Let this (I say) the more inforce vs to sharpen our wittes, that wee bee not dulheaded. Whilest God sheweth himselfe to bee neere vs, let vs not goe farre from him, vnder colour that wee bee turned away alreadie: but let vs gather our wittes to vs, and consider wel howe he worketh towardes vs. And notwithstanding that our garmentes at this day bee not preserued after that miraculous manner; yet let vs not omit to confesse alwayes that wee be cloathed through the free fauour of GOD, and that if hee did not furnish vs with woll and all other thinges that serue to couer vs withall, there woulde bee such a want, as wee shoulde dye of penurie and wretchednesse, and there woulde bee no meane to helpe it. Let vs acknowledge this (I say) and let vs profit our selues better thereby, than wee are wont to do.

Nowe Moses addeth more ouer, *that when the people came into the lande which was promised them, then Og king of Bezan, and Sehon king of Hesebon came forth and gaue them battell, and were discomfited by the people.* Moses doeth heere againe lay foorth the goodnesse of God, such as hee had shewed it to that people. Yet therewithall hee reproueth them still for their leawdnesse, and vnthankfulnesse. This meeting of them came to passe contrary to the expectation of the people: for they did not looke that Og and Sehon shoulde haue shewed themselues enimies; but rather that they woulde haue suffered the people to passe. These then were newe enemies that prepared themselues on the soudeine, whereat the people became abashed. And in very deede they had deserued to bee quite destroyed: for there was too shameful distrust to bee seene in them. When worde was brought them that it behooued them to goe to battell; beholde they were discomfited before they came at their enemies; & they considered not the power of this promise, namely, I will fight for you, you shall stande still, and winne the victorie by my power. Although that God had offered to bee their captayne and guyde in the warre, and had giuen them so good proofe aforehande, as they ought not to haue douted at all: yet were they in such perplexitie, that all was forlorne and past hope of recouerie with them.

Nowe we knowe that if men winne one battell, their heartes bee commonly puft vp, and they take better courage to goe forwarde: and that contrariwise, if they bee repulsed, then their heartes quayle. To the ende therefore that the Iewes shoulde not bee at that poynt, it behooued God to prouide a remedie for it, and in deede so did hee of his inestimable goodnesse. Insomuch that Moses nowe vpbrayding them with it, sayeth, That ouer and besides that God had fedde them fourtie yeares in the wildernesse, without bread or wine; hee had also fought against their enimies; and it was the handy woorke of God, that they had vanquished the two kinges, which came foorth against them, and had conquered their countryes, and settled there the two trybes of Ruben and Gad and the halfe Trybe of Manasses. By meanes whereof one quarter of their people or thereaboutes were prouyded of a sufficient portion to dwell vppon. Sith it is so, ought they not to haue beene wakened, though they had beene asleepe afore? Ought not this victorie to haue giuen them both courage and skill howe to honour their God, who had so shewed him selfe towardes them, and to haue caused them to put their trust in him, seeing his grace had beene so visible? But seeing they continue still in their stubbornnesse, doeth it not appeare that they bee vtterly past hope of recouerie? Therefore as nowe wee see the meaning of Moses. And heereuppon let vs learne, that wee must acknowledge the goodnesse of God, not onely in that hee doeth preserue and nourish vs; but also in that he doeth set himselfe against our enemies, and suffereth vs not to bee made a pray. When wee be in this wise defended by God; and that hee is our buckler and our fortresse; wee ought to magnifie his mightie power in that behalfe, and to acknowledge him to bee our God and father, and to yeelde him the prayse that is due vnto him.

True it is that wee haue no such victories as Moses speaketh of: howbeit, if we did wel consider the hatred that a great many beare toward vs, and how eager they be to deuoure vs and swallowe vs vp: wee coulde not but confesse that they bee brydled by some secrete working of GOD, seeing wee bee preserued all this whyle, euen without the power of man, and without any vanquishing of them with our owne handes. This is a marueylous goodnesse; which it woulde behoue vs to perceiue, and which wee doe very slenderly acknowledge. Nowe there are also ghostly enimies, against whome wee bee defended. For what shoulde become of vs, if GOD shoulde not fight against Sathan, and against all the powers of hell? There needeth no greate fighting against vs; (as wee see too much by experience) any one temptation bee it neuer so light, maketh vs by and by to slip away.

And what woulde then become of vs when wee bee assayled on all sides, and when the diuell inforceth him selfe to the vtter most to entrappe vs? If GOD did not helpe vs then, what woulde become of vs? Now then, let vs haue our wittes better wakened than wee haue had them heeretofore, that wee may perfectly perceiue howe many wayes GOD sheweth him selfe to bee our protectour, and that it bee not cast in our teethe, that wee bee deafe and blynde, and vtterly bereft of discretion and reason.

Nowe in the ende Moses addeth; *Therefore keepe the wordes of this couenant, to doe them, that thou maist prosper: and that in all things which thou doest, all may goe well with thee.* Here wee perceiue, first that which was more largely spoken of yesterday: to wit, that whereas Moses had declared vnto the people, that God had not giuen them eyes, nor eares, nor reason: his so dooing was not to make them careleſſe, or to rocke them asleepe, or to diminish the faulte whereof they were guiltie, but rather to driue them to seeke remedie where it was to be found. After that manner therefore must wee expound the doctrine that is contained in the holy scripture touching the fauour which God sheweth vs, in that hee vouchsafeth to enlighten vs, & to reforme our heartes to the obeying of him, that hee may drawe vs vnto him. True it is that many scorners will profite but little by this doctrine, and that they will rather take occasion by it to blaspheme God, and to say: Very well, if I cannot doe aught that is auaylable, let God blame himselfe. For seeing that hee hath not giuen mee the grace to doe better, what shal I doe? If I inforce my selfe to no purpose: to whome shoulde the fault bee imputed? There bee very many dogges, that doe thus barke against God. There bee others that fall fast a sleepe in their recheleſſeneſſe, saying: Seeing it is so, I will keepe on my course still. If God list to amende mee, let him doe it: I can doe nothing, it is but labour lost for mee to goe about it. Thus doe the wicked falsely abuse the doctrine of God.

Moreouer there bee some that haue their eares so tickelish, that they cannot abide that wee shoulde syncerely and plainly preache that thing which is manifestly declared in the Scriptures; to wit, that it is the peculiar office of God, to inlighten vs, to giue vs eyes and reason, and to drawe vs vnto him: and that otherwise wee bee so vntowarde, that wee cannot applye our eares, or eyes to any thing elſe than to euill, but are holden in the bondage of Sathan, so as wee bee not able to stirre one finger, nor to haue one good thought, vnleſſe it bee giuen vs from aboue. When wee speake thus, there bee some that are ouer dayntie, which woulde fayne that this doctrine were buryed. And wherefore is it, that they profite so little thereby, and that they doe thus kicke against the Spirit of God? Is it not wisedome ynough for vs to declare that which wee must vnderstande by the holy Scripture? We heare what speech God vseth; namely, that in man there is no goodneſſe, nor vnderstanding of the truethe, that hee is so corrupted through sinne, that all the light which wee suppose our selues to haue is but meere ignorance: that our luſtes bee rebellious against God, that wee bee so dull, as we vnderstande not what is profitable for our saluation; but doe drawe cleane backewarde. Let vs speake simply on that manner, seeing that God doeth so teach vs. But yet let vs vnderstande, to what ende this doctrine must bee referred. It is not to the ende that men shoulde passe their boundes, or not consider what they are, & that they shoulde be past shame & mocke God, as though they were not guiltie of euilbut rather that knowing themselues to bee men, (that is to say wretched creatures, vnprofitable to any good, and that this serueth not to make them careleſſe so as euerie man might say, I can doe nothing, let God worke if he wil) they should flee to him for refuge, knowing that it is his proper office, to remedie our sinnes, and defaultes. And therefore Saint Paule sayeth, Let vs followe our saluation, euen with feare and carefulneſſe. And why? Because God giueth the will, and the power to performe according to his owne free goodneſſe. Loe howe Saint Paule sayeth, that it belongeth to GOD to reforme our heartes, that wee may will well: for of our selues we are not able to attaine thereunto, but are altogether giuen to euill, vntill GOD doe prepare vs. Haue wee once a good will? That is not all, for GOD must also giue vs the power to doe it. His doing therof then is, not for that he is bound thereunto, not for that we on our part be readie thereto, or haue any disposition or deſert in vs: but of his owne free goodneſſe. Thereupon Saint Paule sayeth, O is it meete that euerie man should take his eaſe, and bee careleſſe? Nay, clean contrariwise he exhorteth vs to performe our saluation with feare and carefulneſſe. And seeing that wee can doe nothing, but it belongeth to God to giue vs the good that we want: lette the same teache vs to stoope, and to call vppon our GOD, and to seeke all our welfare in him. For otherwise, in what case were wee? Wee shoulde bee quickly surprised of Satan. That then is the thing which Moses meaneth in that hee addeth for a conclusion, *Keepe this commandement*. And whence then proceedeth this conclusion? Euen of this, that God had not yet giuen the eyes and eares, and that hee had not giuen them an heart to vnderstande. Moses maketh an argument thereupon, and telleth the people that they must bethinke themselues to returne vnto God, and to giue ouer them selues vnto him; and then shoulde they bee wel assured that God woulde so worke, that as many as sought him in lowlineſſe, should bee gouerned by his holy Spirite.

Moreouer, let vs mark wel, ỹ where it is sayd, *Thou shalt keepe the wordes of this couenant for to doe them*: Gods so saying vnto vs is not to ỹ intent we should

Ephes. 2. 1. 2. Cor. 3. 5.

double but only be talkers of the things which wee haue learned in his schoole; but also that wee shoulde endeuour to practise the doctrine which wee haue heard. Therefore, let not our reporting to heare the worde bee to learne onely to talke thereof: but let vs also understande, that it must reforme our life; so as wee may shewe by our deedes that wee haue not lost our time, and that the labour also which is taken for to teache vs; hath not beene bestowed in waste. After that manner ought wee to keepe the wordes of this couenant. And hee sayeth moreouer, *all the wordes*, to the intent wee shoulde put the more indeuour thereunto. For wee take some worde at a glaunce, and thinke that to bee sufficient. But God will haue vs to giue so attentiue eare, as nothing may escape vs; and in verie deede there is nothing superfluous in his doctrine. Is it meete then that when God doeth teach vs, wee shoulde haue our eares otherwise occupyed, or wandering hither and thither? The thing which we haue to remember (as hath beene declared more at large alreadie) is not that God woulde haue vs to learne but some little piece, and to bee able to talke of it, and so to let it slippe away againe: but that wee shoulde in all poyntes and in all respects be well aduised to yeeld him obedience. True it is, that this shall neuer bee doone perfitly, so long as wee bee in this worlde. Hee doeth no more but shewe vs the ende whereunto it behooueth vs to tende. Let vs enforce our selues thereunto as much as is possible for vs; and if God doe supply our infirmities, wee bee so much the more bounde vnto him, for that hee beareth with vs. But yet howsoeuer the case standes, let vs not flatter our selues, nor fall asleepe, vnder colour that wee bee weake yea and vtterly vnprofitable; but rather let that prouoke vs to goe farther, specially seeing wee knowe, that GOD hath not let downe one piece of his lawe for one man, and another for another, but will haue vs all to bee all of one sorte.

As touching this worde where it is sayde, *That thou maist prosper*, or else *that thou mayst goe right in all that thou doest*. For this phrase of speeche signifieth two things, as is to bee seene through all other textes of the Scripture. For sometime it signifieth to walke wisely, or to behaue a mannes selfe discretely; and sometimes it signifieth to prosper: and both these may bee verie well agreeing to that which Moses treateth of in this place. For it was first of all declared heere aboue, that when men will needes bee wise in their owne conceites, and forge vnto themselues any newe rules to liue by, then they bee blynde wretches; and doe nothing but wander from the right way. In deede there is a shewe of reason when men giue themselues ouer to their owne brayne, and saye, I finde it good. They may well please themselues, and also pretende some proofe of the pitching vpon the which they haue inuented; according as Sainct Paul sayeth, that the traditions of men haue in them a kinde of wisedome, yea, and a kynde of gloriousnesse, which is counted wisedome in the opinion of the worlde; and yet euery whit of it is but meere deedye. For whatsoeuer it is counted high and excellent in the sighte of men, is abhomination in heauen, as it is sayde in Luke: and so also hath Iesus Christ the soueraigne Iudge pronounced sentence thereof. Seeing then that the case standeth so: let vs consider that wee cannot walke wisely, nor our life bee well ordered, vnlesse it bee wholly and throughly conformable to the will of our God, so as wee gad not in and out at all aduenture, nor imagine that wee may doe what wee list, but onely giue eare to that which God sayeth, and holde vs to the same, without swarueing eyther to the right hande or to the left. This I saye is our wisedome and our reason: namely, that wee yeeld our selues teachable vnto God, and attempt not any thing of our owne motion and rashnesse: but holde our selues contented to obey Gods ordinance. And thereof also commeth all manner of prosperitie. For although men beare themselues in hande, that they gayne much by following their owne imaginations and deuises; and that God also doe often times permit them to haue aduancement and furtherance for a time, of purpose to blinde them: yet doeth it fall out, that our end is euermore accursed, when wee followe our owne deuyces, and giue the raynes of libertie to our lustes.

Luke 16.15.

God (as I haue sayde afore) doeth in deede suffer the backeslyders to haue successe in their doings, but surely they see not howe it is the iust vengeance of God, and that Sathan doeth carye them away, because they flatter themselues, whereuppon when they haue all things at will, they despise GOD and become vnreformable. I confesse it commeth so to passe: but woe to them which for a time haue any such prosperitie: for their laughter must needes be turned to weeping and gnashing of teeth, as it is in like wise accursed before God. Will wee then haue a true and a continuall happinesse, and that God blesse all our labours and all that wee goe about? Let vs then continue in that which is spoken in this place: namely, to submit our selues wholly vnto God, and to attempt nothing but that which hee giueth vs leaue to doe. For when the worlde deemeth vs most miserable, and our case seemes to goe altogether backewarde, and that GOD tryeth our patience many wayes, so as wee bee at the poynt to creepe out of the way into holes: then doth God make it manifest that there is none other happinesse but to sticke vnto him, and to yeelde obedience vnto his worde. This is the thing that Moses meaneth, according to that which wee sawe heere before, namely, that our Lorde promised his blessing to the people, if they holde them selues vnder the yoke that hee had layde vppon their necke. Let vs therefore marke it well, that Sathan must needes scatter vs, as often as wee thinke to bee of abilitie of our selues. For when

Luke 6.25.

Deut. 28.1.

wee shake off our God, and prouoke his wrath; then must hee make it apparant vnto vs, that all happinesse lyeth onely in him; and then when wee be gone away from him, there remayneth nothing but al manner of miserie; and although hee shewe it vs not at the first dash, yet shall it appeare in the end. Let vs therefore giue place to our faith, that wee may alwayes sticke fast to that which is declared heere.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our sinnes, beseeching him to vouchsafe to touch vs more and more to the quicke; that being beaten downe with true repentance, wee may wholly repaire vnto him, seeking to bee gouerned by his holy spirite: and that hee so reforme vs as we may no more liue after our wicked affections, but that all manner gainstryuing may bee quite displaced in vs: and that therewithall he make vs to feele the power of his grace; so as wee may stay vs altogither vpon the same, and neuer cease to call vppon him, as vpon our father & sauiour, in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, albeit that wee bee vnworthie, because there are so many things in vs, to make vs as strangers vnto him. That it may please him so graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the viij. of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXVI. Sermon which is the third vpon the nine and twentith Chapter.

9 You shall therefore keepe the words of this couenant & do them, that thou mayst prosper in all that thou hast to doe.

10 You be all standing at this day before the face of the Lord your God, your heades of your Trybes, your Elders, your captaines, and all the men of Israel:

11 Also your children, your wiues, and thy stranger which is in thy campe, out from the clyuer of thy wood, to the drawer of thy water.

12 That thou mightest enter into the couenant of the Lorde thy God, & into his othe, the which the Lord thy God couenanteth with thee this day.

13 That hee may establish thee this day to bee his people, and he to bee thy God, according as hee hath spoken vnto thee, and as he hath sworne to thy fathers Abraham, Isaac & Iacob.

14 I make not this couenant and this othe with you onely:

15 But also with him that is heere present with vs this day before the Lorde our God: and in likewise with him that is not heere with vs this day.

16 For you know that wee dwelled in the lande of Egypt, and that wee haue passed through the middest of the people that wee haue gone by.

17 And you haue seene their abhominations & their images of wood & stone, of Siluer & gold, which were amongst them.

18 That there shoulde not bee among you either man or woman, houlholde or Trybe that would this day turne away his heart from the Lorde our God, to serue the gods of those peoples: and that there bee not among you any roote to bring foorth gall and wormewood.

WE haue declared heeretofore that Moses in this place did not handle a comon doctrine: but that hee reuiued the solemne couenant which was made the second time when the people were in the lande of Moab. And that was, because that all they which were at mount Horeb, were dead in the wildernesse. God therfore intending that the memorie of that solemne couenant which he had made, should not be forgotten, commanded the people should be found again, & that the same should be made throughly knowen, so as their posteritie might vnderstand that they were a holy people; as wee see that Iosua did at his death. And then was the third confirmation. For this cause it is sayde, *That they do shew to the presence of God.* True it is, that as oft as the people came into the sanctuarie to offer sacrifice, God shewed them a token of his maiestie,

selfe, whereby they were assured that they sought him not in vaine, forasmuch as his power was neere at hande vnto them. But Moses taketh this word in another sense, because there had bin at that time as it were a solemne couenant, and a more familiar & certain setting forth of Gods glorie. In effect he signifieth, that it behoueth them to bring a certain vprightnes and soundnes of hart in entering into couenant with God to serue & honor him. It is no iesting matter (saith he,) you haue not to deale with a mortall man: thinke not ỽ this thing vanisheth into ỽ aire. For it is not some notary ỽ is to take your promise, neither is it some worldly solemnitie or ceremony wherewith you nowe deale: but it is God himselfe which receiueth the bond which you enter into, & for his part he is faithfull, he will not disappoint them whom he reckeneth for his people. Therefore be wel aduised ỽ you bring not with you any disloyalty or hypocrisie: but rather see that ye tremble before him which is heere present to receiue the protestation ỽ you make vnto him. Nowe we see what Moses meaneth. It remaineth ỽ we apply this sentence to our owne vse. It is true that God doth not euery day passe such couenant as that was. But yet so often as we be assembled in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, he is in the middest of vs, as he hath sayde: and when the gospell is preached vnto vs, it is asmuch as if he spake to vs in his own person: and it is our duetie to be answerable againe that we seeke nothing but to be his, and to giue ouer ourselues vnto him. Therfore if there be any counterfaiting, let vs not thinke to hide it; it must needes come to reckening. For whosoeuer cõmeth not to him with right soundnesse, doeth plainely mocke the sonne of God. Wherefore lette vs consider well that wee must not be double minded when wee come to a sermon, least Iesus Christ blame vs for falsifying our faith and promise, by our wicked abusing of his worde and by turning of a thing of such holinesse and maiestie to a iest and scoffe. For when he calleth vs to be members of his bodie, and would haue vs to doe him homage, it is an excellent benefite, and such a one as can not be sufficiently esteemed. And therefore so much the more diligent ought we to be to subdue our selues vnto him. To be short, as often as wee goe to the Church, if we steppe but one step thitherwarde, whensoeuer the bell calleth vs: it ought to come to our remembraunce, that our Lorde Iesus Christ commeth thither himselfe to receiue the obedience which we yeelde vnto him, and that wee come hither to make our suters before him, thereby to shewe that wee be his people, yea and his verie body. Nowe is it importeth an infinite reioycing, when our Lorde Iesus is neere vnto vs: to ought wee also to tremble before his royall maiestie, which was giuen him of God his father, and to resorte thither with a true and right meaning heart, as I haue tolde you afore. And Moses speaketh expressely both *of men, women, little children, gouernours, the Elders of the people, all the chiefes of the people, and the bandie craftsmen, euen from them that hewed the wood to them that carried water.* Also among them he comprehended the straungers, which were vncircumcised and dwelled amongest the people: and hee sayeth that purposely to the intent that the great ones shoulde not thinke themselues exempted from the common sort. For the greatest honour that kinges and princes haue, is to bee of the bodie of the Church, if they consider it well. But ceremonly the Pompes of the worlde doe so blinde them that they woulde bee diuided from the rest of men, and woulde haue a worlde by themselues; so as they will not in any wise bowe to submitte themselues vnto God. Neuertheless it is expressely shewed heere, that euerie high thing must stoope: and that when God vttereth himselfe, then euen the highest ought to vnderstande that they must shewe the way to others, and goe afore to prouoke them by their example. Thus much concerning that which Moses speaketh of Princes and Gouernours. And in likewise when Ioell exhorteth the people to bewayle and lament their sinnes, and to condemne themselues, hee beginneth with them. Albeit that at the first sight it may seeme to bee an vnseemely thing, and to import a certaine shame that the great ones shoulde come to acknowledge themselues offenders before GOD: yet because that oftentimes they bee most faultie, the prophete sayeth, that they must beginne the daunse, and that the litle ones must followe their trace, when they see that there is none exempted, no not euen of them that bee in any authoritie. Let vs therefore vnderstande, that Moses in this place obserued great order, in saying that the heades, and Rulers, and the greatest of the people, were there to binde themselues vnto GOD, that there myght bee no greatenesse in this worlde which shoulde not stoope vnto his maiestie. Ioel.1.13.

And hee addeth, the women and children, that the people might knowe, howe there was no person which shoulde not be comprehended in that couenaunt. And forasmuch as GOD did this fauour to their litle children to receiue them into the number of his people, it was meet that they should be taught the Lawe of GOD as soone as they came to the age of vnderstanding, to the intent they might knowe that they were that blessed ofspring which GOD hadde adopted and chosen out of all the worlde. Deut.6.2. And heereuppon Moses exhorteth the meane to haue care of their families, and to consider that seeing all were dedicated vnto GOD, all ought to be referred to that ende; and it behoued men to yeelde him his due, and not to disappoint him of his right. To bee shorte, husbandes were taught by this woorde to take paynes to guyde their wiues and children in such order, as GOD might bee honoured in all the house, and that there might be one common agreement in the same. Yea, and hee sayth that the verie straungers which were vncircumcised were to resort thyther, notwithstanding that they hadde not the marke of iis-

uation. And wherefore? Because God was to be honored in the Lande of Chanaan which he gaue to his people for an heritage. Albeeit then, that (to speake properly) these straungers were not of the bodie of the Church, yet behoued it them also to be bounde. To what end? Because it was not meete that they should haue leaue or liberte to mocke GOD, to vnhallow his Religion, and to peruert the order which he had appointed. That in effect was the meaning of Moses.

Nowe must wee apply the same to our owne vse. For we be neuer assembled or come together in the name of GOD, but we make protestation that wee be of his flocke. It is not enough that euerie man come thither for himselfe: but the great ones must vnderstande that they are to shewe the way to their inferiours, and vnderlinges. And they must consider that they bee bounde with a straiter bonde because GOD hath set them on high to the intent they should be as Lamps to giue light vnto others. And therefore if they doe not endeuour and enforce themselues to discharge their dueties in that behalfe, it is certaine that they be doubble guiltie. Againe, euery man ought to bethinke him of his housholde and family. They that will haue their wiues quiet and obedient vnto them, ought much rather to be diligent to cause them to serue GOD, and to take such paynes so to rule their children, as God may be the chiefe father, husbande, and master of the house. That is the thing whereof we be admonished heere. And if we doe not so, then looke how often we come into the Church, so manie witnessinges haue we to reproue and condemne vs before God, because wee doe not appeare in his presence with such humilitie as is requisite: but haue wickedly broken couenant with him.

And Moses speaketh expresly of straungers, to the intent we should vnderstande that when God hath giuen libertie to a Countrey, and stablished the certaine ordre of his seruice there, no abbominations must bee committed in that place, by the inhabitours thereof. For if they say, my seruice pleaseth not this religion: I graunt it lieth not in vs to conuert him to God at the first day: yet notwithstanding, that it shoulde bee lawefull for him to abiure GOD and his worde, and to vse superstitious wickednesse, and to bee disobedient to the common rule, that is too great and vntollerable a disorder. And therefore it is shewed vs heere in this Text, that if we conuet to be serued of them that haue not yet the knowledge of GOD, we must keepe them in awe, and not suffer the name of God to be blaspheamed amongest vs, what soeuer excuse be pretended. Thus much in effect haue we to beare in minde concerning these wordes of Moses.

Nowe he speaketh also of a Couenaunt and an othe, and sheweth that the same were mutually giuen and taken betwixt GOD and the Iewes. In deede this matter hath beene partly handled heeretofore. But yet wee must remember, that when God maketh vs to passe any solemne bande with him, that first of all he bindeth himselfe vnto vs. And it is a thing that ought to mollifie our hearres, though they were as harde as stones. What are wee that our Lorde shoulde stoope so lowe, as to enter into Couenaunt with vs, promising to bee our father and Sauiour, and to bee as it were a man that made a bargaine of a gift? God in deede requireth euerie of vs to consecrate himselfe vnto him, and to forsake all manner of liberte, and to become his subiectes, and to continue quiet vnder his gouernance; but ere he require this, he maketh a gift of himselfe vnto vs. That is a matter which ought to rauish vs in such wise, as wee should make no difficultie fully to dedicate ourselues to our GOD, seeing that he himselfe allureth vs thereunto by his owne example, and doeth guyde vs thither. And wee perceiue the same yet further as often as the worde of GOD is preached vnto vs: for that is the message of Reconciliation (as Saint Paule sayeth) and God is come neere vnto vs, 2 Cor. 5. 18. to be our leader. Iesus Christ sayeth that hee was sent vnto vs, to haue care of our saluation, and to holde vs in his keeping and protection, and also to dwell in vs, that wee might liue in him. Seeing it is so, is it not a brutish blockishnesse, if we come not with pure and right meaning affection, to giue ouer our selues vnto our GOD, who hath giuen vs the blessing and priuiledge to become our heritage, shewing thereby that he would bee possessed of vs? So then lette vs vnderstande, that there is no excuse for vs, if when wee come to heere the doctrine of the gospell, we runne euerie of vs after his owne lustes and affections, and behaue ourselues disorderly in our conuersation, whereas in verie deede we shoulde consider, that when we come from a sermon, we bring such a matter as can not be blotted out; that is to wit, that before GOD and in the presence of his onely sonne, we haue professed to bee a holy people vnto him, and to be separated from all manner of defilementes of this worlde: and that although it be not so tolde vs in expresse wordes, yet the order that GOD hath set in his church doeth of it selfe importe the same. Albeit therefore that those wordes bee not vttered by mouth, yet doeth GOD holde vs fast tyed to that bonde: namely, that wee should be his heritage, and that he should enioy vs quietly, as them whom hee hath taken to himselfe to be of his housholde. If it be demaunded, howe it is possible that men shoulde discharge themselues of such promise; it is easily answered: namely, that we promise not any thing to our GOD as presuming vppon our owne power, but receiue the grace which he offereth vnto vs, and thereuppon haue boldenesse and liberte to promise that we will be his people. And why so? For when GOD calleth vs vnto him, it is not to the ende that we should bring vnto him that which we haue of nature, for that is altogether euill: but because he receiueth vs with this condition, that hee will gouerne vs by his holy Spi-

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fire, and holde vs so in awe, as the rebelliousnes of our flesh shall be slayd by his grace, and wee so strengthened as we may be able to withstand all manner of temptations and encounters, and that he will so imprint his lawes in our heartes, according to his owne saying, as hee will cause vs to walke in his feare, by giuing vs the Spirite of holynesse, righteousnesse, and trueth. Loe after what manner GOD calleth vs vnto him.

Moreouer hee presently addeth a promise, that he will still beare with vs in our weakenesse, and in our sinnes, so wee trauell still towardes him. Insomuch that although there be manie thinges amisse in vs, and wee come not to him with such a perfection as is requisite: yet will he handle vs with fatherly gentlenesse, in such wise as our sinnes shall not bee imputed vnto vs. When we haue these two pointes, we may freely promise vnto GOD that we will be his people. And why? Because wee staye not vppon our owne freewill, neither presume we to haue such perfection, as we enter into account with him, to say, we be not beholding vnto him: but we presuppose that he is euer mercifull vnto vs, to forgiue vs our sinnes, and that he will succour our infirmities and imperfections, holding vs fast by his holy Spirite. Thus did the people of olde time make their othe. And so, wee see it is no point of rashnesse for vs to vowe vnto GOD in promising to serue him, so we haue an eye to that which hee setteth downe vnto vs on his part.

Moreouer we must remember, that GOD speaketh first and wee doe followe. If a man shulde beginne and putte foorth himselfe to say, I promise my GOD to serue him in all pureneſse of life, it were too greate an aduauncing of himselfe. And why? For (as I haue already sayde) there is nothing in vs but vtter corruption. And although GOD haue reformed vs, yet are we continually hindered from discharging vs of our duetie, so as wee doe not the tenth parte thereof, I meane euen them that haue profited best, which are most holy, and as it were litle Angelles. Moreouer when GOD hath once begunne, and hath sayde vnto vs: No, I knowe you can doe nothing, and that you be creatures destitute of all goodnesse, and that there is nothing in you but naughtinesse and rebellion; howebeit forasmuch as I accept you to be of my flocke, I promise to gouerne you with my Spirite. If we receiue that promise with assured faith, and accept the offer which GOD maketh vnto vs, wee may then say, Wel Lorde we come hither, not presuming anie thing vppon our owne power, but beseeching thee to gouerne vs: our onely desire is that thou shouldest holde vs as captiues to make vs to forsake our owne lustes and affections, with all the frowardenesse and wickednesse of our owne nature. Nowe then we see that this othe is lawfull, and that there is no rashnesse nor presumption in men.

The seconde point also is in like wise worthy to be well marked; that is to witte, that wee ought alwayes to confesse, that if GOD listed to examine vs with extremitie, notwithstanding that he haue giuen vs his grace, and strengthened vs against Sathan and all the temptations of the worlde, yet should wee be alwayes in his daunger, yea euen to our condemnation; were it not that hee did beare with vs. So then in making this promise, wee doe euermore remember that GOD will not enter into account with vs, to iudge vs according to our desertes; but will vse his infinite goodnesse towarde vs, and haue pitie on our infirmities. Thus much as concerning the othe. In the Popedome, when Monkes, Nunnes, and Priests make their vowes, they sweare to abstaine from mariage, wherein they make open warre against GOD, and defie him. And why? Because they take that vppon them which is not graunted them. They suppose that they shal be able to forebeare the remedie of mariage, and yet they can not tell whether GOD hath called them thereunto, or no: they haue not one worde of promise; God hath neuer required such thinges of them. Therefore is it a diuelishe arrogancie, and we see howe GOD hath punished it. But it is a farre other matter when we make no promise vnto GOD, but of that which he commaundeth, and which hee alloweth by his worde. Againe, wee goe not about it with opinion to bring it to passe by our owne power and abilitie; but because hee hath tolde vs that hee will helpe our infirmities: forsomuch as wee bee euermore grounded vppon his free goodnesse, whereof we may assure ourselues in our Lorde Iesus Christ. Thus must we make our solemne othe before GOD. As in deede wee bee alreadie bounde vnto him in Baptisme, vpon such condition as he maketh vs his promise, and wee for our parte must make good the same when wee come to the age of knoweledge. Thus yee see howe our Lorde continueth firme and constant to gouerne vs as his people, and to holde vs in his keeping to the ende: and also that wee in like case shall behaue our selues quietly towardes him, so as hee may wholly enioy vs. That is the thing in effect which we haue to beare in mind concerning this text of Moses.

Nowe hee ioyneth therewithall, that the people must *enter into this couenant, that they may be adopted as the people of GOD*. This worde *Enter* betokeneth that all men be of one condition, and that insomuch as they be the children of Adam, they are all straungers from GOD, and confusedly mingled together: and that God drawing his Church to him, shouleth it out in such sorte, that it is as it were a newe worlde. True it is that we must dwell heere beneath amongest the vnbeleeuers: but yet neuertheleſſe if we be the children of God, after wee bee once ioyned vnto him, we must withdraw ourselues from such as hee forsaketh, and who also turn their backs vpon him. The thing the which Moses ment chiefly by this worde *Enter*, is that we must be well aduised that wee rest not vppon our first nature, if wee inte nde to bee taken for

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Gods children: but that wee muſt reſorte vnto him, not on our feete and legges, but with the heart carried out of the impedimentes of this worlde, in ſuch wiſe as wee faile not to dwell in the kingdome of heauen, as fellowes with the Angels and with all the ſaintes, notwithſtanding that we dwell in the middeſt of this world. Marke that for one point.

Nowe heerewithall, Moſes doeth giue the people to vnderſtande, that this couenaunt muſt be receiued with feruent affection, ſeeing that GOD did it not, but for the welfare of them that were there aſſembled. He ſayeth that the onely intent of GOD was, that Abrahams children ſhoulde bee his people, and that hee would holde them for his Church. Is there any thing more to bee deſired than that? It is ſayde in the three and thirtith Pſalme, Bleſſed is the people whoſe GOD is the euerlaſting God. That is all our felicitie and all our ioye. The onely thing wherein we may glorie, is that God ſheweth himſelfe to be our protectour, and that hee receiueth vs vnder the couering of his winges. Nowe if he offer himſelfe thereunto, and doe freely allure vs vnto him, requiring nothing but that we ſhould be his houſholde folke: ought we not to bee inflamed with ſo vehement deſire, that we ſhoulde forgette the worlde, and that nothing ſhoulde hinder vs from comming vnto him? Yes truely. The thing then which wee haue to remember concerning this Texte, is that wee bee dubble guyltie, when we will not bee prouoked to ſubmitte ourſelues to our GOD, ſeeing he ſeeketh neither profit nor aduauntage to himſelfe, nor wee are able to yeelde him any; but he would that we ſhoulde be his people for our owne welfare, and he hath no reſpect but to his owne goodneſſe and infinite mercie, by reaſon whereof, ſeeing vs to be curſed and forelorne, he accepteth vs to the inheritaunce of Saluation. Seeing then that our Lorde vſeth ſuch louing kindeneſſe towards vs, and powreth forth the treaſures of his goodneſſe vppon vs: bee not wee too leaude, if wee come not to him with all our heartes?

Moſes addeth moreouer, that GOD doeth this, for none other reſpect, but becauſe hee hadde ſo promiſed afore, *And that he hadde erſt ſworne it to the holy Patriarkes, Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob.* Heere in effect Moſes meant to take away and to aboliſh all manner of imaginations, which the Iewes might conceiue of their owne deſertes and worthineſſe: for men are commonly giuen to beare themſelues in hande that GOD is much beholding to them; and that they haue the forehande of him, and that they were alreadie diſpoſed, and that he findeth in their perſons ſome thing to like of, or to loue them for. Forſomuch therefore as men are wonted to deceiue themſelues after that manner, by ſuppoſing that GOD hath founde them better than others when hee choſe them: heere Moſes cutteth off all temptations of Sathan, and ſheweth that GOD did not chooſe the Iewes, for that they hadde more vertue and nobleneſſe or worthyneſſe in them, than all the reſt of the worlde? but that his chooſing of them was altogether grounded vppon his owne free goodneſſe, becauſe he hadde ſo promiſed. And the ſame is common vnto vs all. And therefore lette vs learne, that if GOD doe noweadayes come neerer vnto vs than to a greate manie of other nations; it is not becauſe wee bee more worthie, or more able to receiue it than they be, which are deſtitute of his grace: but becauſe it is his good pleaſure ſo to do. Now therefore, let vs learne to put away all manner of pride and preſumption. When wee ſee that the Goſpell is preached vnto vs at this day, and that we haue ſome order in the Church: it is an ineſtimable benefite. But wherefore is it giuen vnto vs? It is not becauſe wee haue obſerued it by our owne trauayle, nor becauſe wee haue preuented the grace of GOD through our ſeruiceableneſſe, but for that it was his will to ſhewe himſelfe kinde hearted towarde vs after this manner. Thus much haue we yet to beare in minde concerning this text.

Nowe finally Moſes addeth. *Remember your ſelues* (ſayeth he) *for you haue ſeene the abominations of Egypt, and alſo the Idolatry that is among all the heathen through whome you haue gone: therefore be not deceiued, neither let there be either man or woman, houſholde or Tribe among you, that will turne away or ſlide backe, and forſake the euerlaſting your GOD, to giue ouer himſelfe vnto Idolles.* Heere Moſes, to confirme the people in the obedience of faith, and to holde them vnder the yoke of good doctrine, doeth vſe an argument which at the firſt ſight might ſeeme ſtraunge: for wee bee eaſily thruſt out of the right way, when wee ſee the worlde corrupted and ouerthwart. Albeit that we haue ſome good motion, and be diſpoſed to ſerue GOD; yet notwithſtanding, as ſoone as any ſtumblingblocke comes in our way, by and by it maketh vs to turne heade, as we ſee examples thereof euery day: inſomuch that the man which is well inſtructed, and brought to a good point, runneth after the mockers of GOD, as ſoone as hee ſeeth them. Another which hath taſted of the trueth of the goſpell, beholdeth ſome fooliſhe toye, and ſome hypocrite ſeduceth him ſo as he is chaunged. Such lightneſſe and vnſtedfaſtneſſe doe wee ſee in many folke: and yet doeth Moſes take the ſame as a confirmation to make folke the better reſolued to ſerue GOD: as if he ſhould ſay, My friendes, you haue the lawe which is certaine and infallible vnto you, for it is the trueth of GOD which can not lye. Seeing that GOD hath reueiled himſelfe vnto you, it is reaſon good that you ſhould obſerue your faith and loyaltie towarde him. But if you ſay, Why ſo? Other people deale not after this manner; wee ſee many faſhions through the worlde, euerie nation hath his God by himſelfe; euerie man hath a religion after his owne fantaſie. Well might you be aſtoniſhed at theſe thinges (ſayeth Moſes) and well might you be offended at it, if it were newe vnto you. But you haue ſeene the abhominations of

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the Egyptians, you haue seene howe foolishly the heathen doe worshippe their Idolles; and therefore if you be nowe moued and offended through the same, what excuse is there? For Goddes meaning was to arme you and to furnish you afore hande against these temptations, to the end you should not be in daunger to slide backe. We haue a good and a profitable lesson to gather out of this text; to witte, that the more we knowe superstition and Idolatrie, so much the more must wee eschewe the same. And euen so it is of all other thinges that are repugnante to the will of GOD, namely, that we may be seduced by them by the sodaine beholding of them, for want of knowing them afore hande: for wee haue not the discretion to keepe ourselues from them, but are surprised for want of foresight, by reason whereof wee perish, and Satan doth foorthwith trap vs in his ginnes and snares. Let vs therefore marke, that when we once knowe the corruptions that bee contrarie to the seruice of GOD, and to the doctrine that is contayned in his woorde, wee must take so much the surer holde, that wee be not any whitte moued, but goe on forwarde boldly, following the way whereunto GOD hath called vs. As for example; If wee haue once knowen the wretchednesse that is among the Papistes, wherein wee ourselues also haue bene plunged in time past, or if we haue seene the mockeries of GOD, which are there vsed, and the blasphemies, and all the rest of the trash which the Papistes call the seruice of GOD: we can not but perceiue that they be the verie inuentions of the deuill, to turne vs away from the obedience of our GOD, to darken his maiestie, to cause him to bee mocked, and to blind the wretched worlde. Wee haue beene sufficiently warned thereof, yea and we haue hadde the experience thereof. Nowe if any of vs doe henceforth turne away, and yeelde himselfe againe to such abhominations, is he not so much the more vnfaithfull towardes GOD? See you not howe his wickednesse is so much the greater, seeing hee doth it not through ignorance, nor as a thing that is straunge vnto him, but as one that is altogether saped in it? Let vs therefore vnderstande that when GOD hath once made vs to perceiue the filthynesse and abhominations which are among the Idolaters, the same ought to settle vs the better, to obey him and to persеuere in his holy calling. And I haue tolde you howe it is after the same maner in other vices. When GOD sheweth vs any shamefulnesse, as to bee giuen ouer to whoredome, or giueth vs examples of such as are dissolutely giuen to swearing, drunkennesse, or such like thinges, and that these thinges bee so vilenous that they make vs ashamed: if we bee ouercome of them, is not our damnation doubled? Yes surely. It is not therefore without cause, that Moses sayeth heere, *You haue seene.* For thereby hee sheweth that wee may despise all that the worlde can doe; and that although the misbeleeuers bee more in number than wee, and doe vaunt themselues to haue all the sway, as concerning the worlde; so as wee bee but a litle handefull of people, and they triumph ouer vs: yet wee may defie them, because wee doe knowe what difference there is betwixt the pure doctrine of the Gospell, and all the abhominations and Idolatries that Sathan hath brought into the worlde: insomuch that hauing the trueth of GOD once manifested vnto vs, we ought to stay vppon the same, we ought neuer to be shaken for anie thing that can happen vnto vs. Loe to what purpose this admonition ought to serue vs at this day. Nowe therefore when we looke vppon al the whole worlde, beholding the horrible diuisions that be in the Popedome on the one side, and howe Mahomet the deceiuer hath seduced all his sect, and thirdely howe blinde the wretched Iewes are: thereby we ought to be the better assured, that seeing our GOD hath called vs vnto him: and familiarly vttered his fauour towardes vs (according as our Lorde Iesus Christ doeth protest that he will call vs his friendes and not his seruauntes, because the secretes of the kingdome of heauen are reuealed vnto vs by the Gospell); we ought thereby to learne to apply the same to the certainetie of our fayth, and not to regarde though the faithlesse doe sooth themselues and boast of their abhominations, because we knowe well that GOD condemneth them altogether, and that wee ourselues may be iudges thereof, forasmuch as we haue the woorde, whereby the worlde must bee iudged. Iohn. 15. 15.

In dooing heereof, Moses keepeth heere a certaine manner of proceeding which is worthey to bee noted, saying, *That neither man, nor woman, house nor tribe, ought to turne away or goe to serue straunge Goddes.* Nowe he doeth vs to witte, that when mischiefe is begunne, and a breache made, the deuill will finde meanes, to spreade his poyson farther, if it be not preuented and remedyed in dewe time and place. When some one man steppeth vppe to peruert the pure religion, it seemeth at the first to be a matter of nothing: but if it be let slippe, that one man will leade a whole house, and that house will leade the Tribe, and so at the length the whole people is peruerted. So much the more vigilaunt therefore shoulde wee bee, specially seeing that the Spirite of GOD doeth stirre vs vppe wee ought to bee moued to keepe good watch in this behalfe, for we cannot bee too diligent therein. Nowe then let vs not foreslowe the redresse of any manner of corruption bee it neuer so small. When wee see a wicked man that goeth about to infect the flocke, let him not be suffered: for if wee suffer him, the corruption will foorthwith spreade it selfe both into smal and greate. After one man followeth a whole house, and after a house goeth a whole kinred, and woulde GOD there were not so notable examples thereof. But what? Albeit that GOD doe shewe vs this by his worde, and although experience ought to make vs wise; yet is it not regarded. For men doe euermore beare with some euill or other,

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and suffer it to slippe. And why? It is not yet common (say they,) it is not yet hurtfull. Nay but they foresee not the daunger. Nevertheless there is a daunger, which I pray GOD wee feele not in the ende too much to our cost. So much the more therefore ought we to marke well this doctrine, where Moses sayeth not at the first dashe, Looke that all the people swarue not, or that one Tribe giue not ouer it selfe to the superstitions and Idolatry of the heathen: but he beginneth at one man alone, and then setteth downe the woman, and after proceedeth to the whole house, and consequently to all the people. For if there be but one serpent, he poysoneth all thinges out of hande with his onely byting. And if Serpents can also infect the ayre with their verie breaths sutely when men are poysoned by Sathan, they carrie abroade so much the more venemous corruption: insomuch that if anie bodie come nygh them be it neuer so litle, it is a wonder if they be not infected and marred with the very breath of them. Seeing then that wee haue made a couenaunt with our GOD according as hee hath gathered vs into his flocke, and doth dayly make it manifest to our eyes, we be his church; let vs continue in that obedience, and let euerie of vs first of all watch ouer himselfe, according as is seene heeretofore, where it is sayde, Take heed to your soules: let vs take good heed, for euery man is commanded of God to watch ouer his owne soule. But yet thereuppon wee must yet goe further, namely, to haue care of our neighbours, that euerie man helpe to amende them that haue doone amisse, without any bolstering or bearing with the euill committed. Otherwise it is a wonder to see howe that after one man hath once infected his wife or familie, the corruption will spread it selfe ouer a whole people, in such wise as the mischiefe can not bee holpen any more because it hath gotten so farre.

Deut. 4. 9.

And Moses doeth purposely vse a similitude, which is worthy to bee well weyed, where hee sayeth; *that there be not founde among you any roote that bringeth forth wormwoode and gall.* Whereby he warneth vs, that as often as Sathan sendeth foorth his vnderlinges to turne vs away from GOD, and wicked people goe about to bring Religion into contempt, and to bring to passe that all thinges may be so turned vpside downe and mingled together, as there may be nothing any where but vngodlynesse: it is all one as if there were some secrete roote, which afterwarde will sprout foorth, and wee must needes be poysoned with the fruite which is shall yeelde. Nowe therefore let vs in good time plucke it vppe. We see whereto this similitude tendeth. Let vs adde thereto the exhortation which the Apostle maketh in the Epistle to the Hebrues; for he hath respect to this text and expoundeth it, and applyeth it to our instruction. Forasmuch (sayeth he) as the despisers of GOD, which goe about to seduce the people, and to turne them out of the right way, be bitter rootes, we must not looke if they shall yeelde foorth good fruite. For we can not easily plucke vppe an euill weede, when it is ouerspred so as it hath choaked and corrupted the good seede, because it was not taken in time. Lette vs therefore bee diligent and carefull to plucke vp euill rootes: and when wee see any bitter weede, although it beare no fruite, yet let it be looked vnto in due time. For GOD vseth a great miracle, when hee deliuereth his people, at such time as they be careleslie. And woulde GOD that the examples thereof were not so common in the worlde as wee see them. For then would not men giue so much libertie to the wicked, nor suffer them to prouaile so mightily. When they haue infected, then men sigh and lament, but in the meane while they seeke no meane to prouide for it. So then let vs marke well, that (as the Apostle teacheth vs) wee must not bee careleslie and slowe in this behalfe: but as soone as we see any lewde disposed folke which obey not the direction of GOD, ne yeelde any reuerence to his worde, let them be cutte off. If we see them sowe among wicked matters as cockle or darnell, to make men to swarue which were in the good way, let vs resist them with all our power, and let them which be in authoritie bende all their force and diligence thereunto, and let euery man in likewise apply himselfe to further the same, so as we may be the true seede of GOD, and continue in the puritie of his Gospell, and bring him foorth such fruite, as he may be glorified throughout all our life.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good GOD, with acknowledgement of our sinnes, beseeching him to make vs to feele them more and more, as wee may bee touched with true repentaunce, and we come vnto him, not onely to obtaine forgiuenesse of the sinnes that wee haue committed, but also to bee gouerned by his holy Spirite, and to bee kept in such sorte by him, that albeit Sathan fight against vs, yet neuertheleslie wee may continue in the seruice of him which hath once called vs, and purchased vs for himselfe. And therefore let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On

On Thursday the ix. of April. 1556.

The Lxvii. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the nine & twentith Chapter.

that there bee not among you any roote that bringeth foorth Gall and woormewood:

19 And so it come to passe that some man hearing the woordes of this curse, doe blesse himselfe in his heart, saying: I shall haue peace, notwithstanding that I walke after the purpose of mine owne heart, and so put drunkennesse vnto thirst.

20 The Lorde will not agree to forgiue him: for then the wrath and Ielozie of the Lord will kindle against that man, and heape vpon him all the Curses that are written in this booke.

21 And the Lorde wil wype out the name of him from vnder the heauen, and the Lorde will shoole him out from all the Trybes of Israell to mischeefe, according to all the Curses of the Couenaunt that is written in the booke of this Lawe.

WEe beganne yesterday to declare, wherefore Moses dyd put foorth this similitude of the euill roote, which bringeth forth bitternesse and gal. For we do not perceiue at the first sight, when the diuel beginneth to worke in vs, euill wee be corrupted and marred, yea and that the thinges bee past remedie, which at the first might haue bin taken away. Therefore wee cannot be too circumspect in keeping ourselues, seeing that of nature wee bee inclined to euill, and we bee so fraile, that ere wee bee aware, the diuell taketh possession, and then euery man inforceth his neighbour, and so the corruption is spred throughout all. Heere hee sheweth the principall daunger that men ought to beware of, which is, that they become not hard hearted against the threateninges of GOD. For it must needs be that we are altogether senseless, when we feele no more any remorse or griefe of conscience, but rather doe spyte God through diuelish pride. For men to ouershoote themselues, it is too ordinarie a matter, to be slowe when they are driuen and pricked foreward, is yet a common faulte againe, not to beleeue good counsell at the first, is a thing to bee seene dayly. But if a man become a scorner and take the bridle in the teeth to dally with God, perswading himselfe that all the threatenings, which are layde before him, bee nothing, and that all is but a fable whatsoeuer is sayde concerning the iudgement of GOD, so as hee taketh leaue to doe what hee listeth, and will bee ordered by no meanes, but followeth his owne swindge lyke a horse that will not bee tamed, and resisteth all that may bee doone vnto him; when a man ouershooteth himselfe so farre, it must needes be that hee is like a desperate creature. Thus yee see whereof Moses admonisheth the people in this place. Let a man beware (sayeth hee) that when hee heareth the curses which are set foorth in the Lawe, hee say not? Well, yet shall I not fayle to haue peace still although I giue my selfe ouer to all mine owne wayes, and followe my lustes. In deede GOD saieth that I shall bee accursed, but I see it not, I will abide the hazard come what will: in the meane while I will not vexe my selfe with melancholy, I will make merie, come what come will. When men iest thus desperately, they bee vndoone, and they become altogether vnreformable.

Nowe first of all let vs marke howe it is sayde heere, that when wee haue heard the curses that are contayned in the Lawe, it is a token of a spitefull and bitter minde to say, Tush I care not a whit what God speaketh. Albeit that we were not taught by any doctrine: yet haue wee a witnesse within vs which speaketh vnto vs, namely our owne conscience, whereby euerie of vs is reprooued, and driuen to vnderstand that God is our iudge, yea, euen when wee bee absolued by men, as they bee which escape by bribes, presentes, fauour, sleightes and sutteltie; who being absolued by men, faile not to beare their condemnation still about them in their owne hearts. But if when God sheweth vnto vs that we must come to an account, and wakeneth vs vp, by confirming and ratifying that which wee doe alreadie knowe and perceiue, concerning the difference betwixt good and euill: if wee then continue still hardhearted; is it not to bee sayd that wee bee as good as bewitched by Sathan, and that hee hath bereft vs of all vnderstanding and reason? To bee shorte, let

vs learne to walke in feare and carefulneſſe, whenſoeuer our Lorde ſpeaketh vnto vs, and quickeneth vs vp by good warnings and admoniſhmentes: Let vs beware that wee ſtand not ſtubbornly againſt him: for wee ſee what they gaine in the ende which bee ſo cankerhearted againſt GOD. Therewithall let vs call to minde that which I haue ſayde alreadie; namely that the hygheſt poynt of all wickedneſſe is when men bleſſe themſelues in their heartes, that is to ſay, when they beare themſelues in hand, all ſhal goe well with them notwithſtanding that God doe threaten to bee their enemie, and to make them to feele his wrath. And this is written more at large by the Prophet Eſay. For there GOD complayneth of ſuch as ſcorned the Propheetes; for there were in thoſe dayes the lyke ſcorners that are to bee ſeene in theſe dayes. Tuſh (ſay they) let vs make good cheere, wee ſhall die to morrowe. Eſa.22.13. They had made that ſaying a common prouerb. Therefore when the Propheetes perceiued that all things were ſo far out of order as was horrible to ſee, and that iniquitie was become lyke a waterfloud, ſo as men kindled the wrath of God more and more: they dyd not ceaſe to crie: Wo, wo, it is impoſſible that GOD ſhould forbeare vs or ſuffer vs any longer: he hath vſed ſo long patience, that now wee muſt needes periſh all of vs. They hearde nothing but dreadfull threatenings. When the Prophet ſpake to them, it was not to qualifie the plagues, but as it were to ſay, you doe not yet heare the hundredth part of the puniſhmentes that ſhall come vpon you: and for ſo much as you make none account thereof, but ſhew ſuch hardneſſe of heart and ſtubbornneſſe againſt GOD and his Propheetes, you muſt bee all confounded. Theſe Galantes ſcoffed at ſuch threateninges, ſaying: Loe, wee muſt dye to morrow, let vs therefore make good cheere to day. Loe at what poynt they were. Would GOD that ſuch ſcorning of GOD and his worde were not yet ſtill in the world. But our Lorde addeth, ſaying, I haue called you to ſackcloth and Aſhes: I required nothing but your repentaunce and amendment, that yee might obtaine mercie. Howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, I am deſirous to ſoften the curſed hardneſſe and ſtubbornneſſe of your heartes, and you hold on ſtill, and ſcoffe out all thinges. Eſa.22.12. But as truely as I am God (ſayth hee) this ſinne of yours ſhall neuer bee blotted out. As if hee ſhoulde ſay, neuer thinke mee to bee GOD; nor neuer take mee to bee the Iudge of the worlde, if euer this ſinne of yours bee forgiuen you. It is an offence not pardonable, when men doe ſo harden themſelues againſt mee. Soothly, it is a threatening that ſhould make vs to tremble, and cauſe our hayre to ſtand on end, when GOD ſweareth by his name, and proteſteth that he will be no more knowen for God, if he puniſh not thoſe ſcorners with all extremitie, which will not bow their neckes when hee would haue them to feele their ſinnes, that they might repent.

This ſentence anſwereth to the Text of Moſes where he ſayeth, *Beware that none of you hauing heards the curſes which bee ſet downe heere, doe bleſſe him ſelfe in his heart*, and that he ſay not: God will eaſily forgiue mee: and thereupon foedeth himſelfe with hope of eaſe, notwithſtanding that GOD denounce warre againſt him. Now therefore as ſoone as GOD ſummoneth vs to his iudgement, let vs learne to enter into our ſelues, and let euerie one of vs make his owne indicement, and let vs looke aforehand a farre off at the curſes whereof hee ſpeaketh. Albeit that they doe not appeare at the firſt, yet let vs behold them by faith, like as it is ſaid, That Noe ſawe the floud aforehand when all was at reſt, Gen.6.13. and when men were moſt drowned in their delightes: for the world was faire and pleaſant, and it ſeemed that all ſhould goe well. But Noe in the meane whyle ſtretched out his ſight aboue a hundred yeeres before him; euen fiue ſcore yeeres aforehand did hee beholde that which God had ſpoken. And euen ſo muſt wee doe. Let vs not tarie till GOD ſmite vpon vs with mayne ſtrokes: but as ſoone as we haue offended him, let vs by and by looke into his law, what our ſtate and condition is. And forſmuch as wee ſee there how God declareth that he will puniſh the deſpiſers of his Maieſtie, and all ſuch as ſtriue againſt his wordes; threatning ſpecially all aduoutrers and whoremongers, all drunkardes and blaſphemers, and condemning all extortion, deceyte, periurie and crime: let vs beware that none of vs promiſe himſelfe peace and reſt, whyleſt he ſeeth that God exhorteth to repentaunce. For it muſt needes come to paſſe, (as he ſayeth in another place,) that when they ſay, Peace and all is ſafe, then ſhall they 1.Theſ.5.3. bee ſuddenly confounded. Certainely it is a monſtruous matter and againſt nature, that men can thinke themſelues bleſſed, when they heare that GOD doth curſe them. And heereby wee ſee howe frowarde wee are, if GOD reſtraine vs not: yea and wee ſee howe it is a common and an ordinarie faulte. For GODS threateninges bee not ſecrete, they ſound continually, and wee haue our eares beaten with them; and yet who is hee that is moued at them? True it is that with our mouthes wee vtter not the woordes that are ſet downe heere: but yet wee neuer haue any ſuch obedience, neyther are wee euer ſo beaten downe with our ſinnes, as to bee afrayde of GODS threateninges: Nay, wee rather defye him and all his power; and to our ſeeming, all the afflictions wherewith wee bee threatened are nothing, vntill wee feele them. So much the more therefore ought wee bee warned to looke to our ſelues, or elſe wee ſhall haue our eyes and our ſenſes ſo blynded, that wee ſhall not vnderſtande any thing of all that is tolde vs. Wherefore let vs benefite our ſelues by the leſſon that Salomon giueth vs, where hee ſayeth, Bleſſed is the man that is afrayde in his heart, Prou.28.14. to the intent wee bee not deſirous to cheere vp our ſelues, as it were in deſpite of God.

Alſo

Also wee haue heereuppon to marke that which is sayd of *the vndertaking* or double dealing *of the heart*. This word comprehendeth all thinges that men forge of their owne fantasie. Soothly the imagination of man is a dreadfull dungeon; and when wee be once plunged into it, there is no way to get out agayne; and yet there is none of vs all but hee seeketh to followe the imaginations of his owne hearte. Seeing therefore that on the one side, when a man giueth himselfe lybertie to doe whatsoeuer hee hath deuiled in his owne mynde, hee plungeth himselfe as in the gulfe of hell, and yet neuertheleſſe euery one of vs is drawen and driuen that way: let vs haue so much the better consideration of this that is spoken heere. Nowe Moses intendeth to make men ashamed, by setting before them the prefixings of their hearts, together with the Rule that God hath giuen them. Wee cannot doe amisse in following the will of God, as heereafter wee shall see more at length: it is a ready way; and hee doeth euermore reache vs his hande, wee doe see whither hee calleth vs. The way is certayne and infallible, when we obey GOD. Nowe if wee notwithstanding, doe wittingly lyke better to blinde our selues with our owne vaine fantasies, and to intangle our ſelues in them, so as wee wote not which way to turne, but wee bee carryed hither and thither, and one mischeefe haleth an other, without ende or measure; must it not needes bee, that wee bee too much bewitched? So much the more therefore behooueth it vs to weye well this woorde of Moses where he speaketh of the vndertakinges of the heart.

Moreouer, men followe the deuises of their owne hearts in two manners; the one is when they forge vnto themselues a Religion after their own lyking, and thereupon wil needs serue God after their owne fantasie; or else when they flatter themselues in their sinnes, although they haue them laide open to their faces. The Idolaters thinke not that they doe yll, when they bring their owne pelting trash vnto God; as for example when they set vp a puppet and kneele downe before it, they thinke that GOD is well honoured. Agayne as wee see amongest the Papistes, howe they trotte on Pilgrimage, and cause Masse to bee sung, and babble before an Aultar, and carie Candelles, and fast some certaine dayes; when the Idolaters doe thus torment themselues in vaine, it seemeth to them that all is well, and that it is acceptable to GOD, and that he doeth them wrong, if hee take it not in good part. And yet in the meane whyle they bee but inuentions of their owne braine, such as God vtterly misliketh and condemneth. And therefore let vs marke well that Moses in this place meant chiefely to plucke men away from this kinde of madnesse, which is in all Idolaters, in that they would serue God after their owne fashion, hauing no respect to that which he hath commaunded by his worde. Albeit then that at the first they doe not perceiue their lewdnesse; yet is it not to bee sayd that they be cleare, neither can it serue them for an excuse. Marke that for one point.

Nowe if they bee to bee condemned, which thinke themselues to doe their duetie, and haue a good intent, as they terme it: what shall become of such as weetingly prouoke the wrath of God? They knowe well it is nought, and that it shall not scape vnpunished, and yet neuertheleſſe they cease not to harden their hearres. And wherefore? For their lust doeth driue them thereto, which boyleth so in them as they must needes accomplish that which they haue imagined. Now when men do thus harden themselues against God, notwithstanding that their conscience doeth reproue them, and they knowe that they doe yll: what is to bee saide to it? Let vs learne therefore to behaue our selues well in these two pointes, and generally let vs not fight against GOD; but when our heart draweth vs eyther one way or other, let vs vnderstand that all that euer procedeth from our selues, is contrarie to the rule that our Lord hath deliuered vs: and let vs knowe that there is none other meane to discerne what is good and what is euill, but by submitting our selues to the doctrine by the which our Lord holdeth all our senses, thoughtes and affections captiue. That is the effect of the matter which we haue to beare away in this place.

Nowe Moses addeth another similitude, saying, *That such folke doe mingle drunkennesse and thirstinesse together.* The wordes import as much as if it were sayd, that they do mingle drunkennes and thirst together; but wee will take it as it is here set downe. In deede this place hath bin expounded diuerse wayes: in so much that some to play the fine headed fellowes, haue said that by the phrase which hath y word *Thirst* or *Thirstie*, Moses meant that part of the soule, which yeeldeth it selfe to be gouerned by reason, for as much as it is desirous of knowledge and seeketh after it: and yet neuertheleſſe doeth intermeddle with the other which maketh him drunken with his owne voluptuousnes and delightes, and hath neither measure nor stay of it selfe. But these be vaine speculations which we must let alone: neither had I spoken of them, but to y ende y none shold deceiue themselues w them. Let vs come to the playne meaning of Moses. We haue seene heere afore the matter which he treateth of in this place, and no doubt, but this serueth as an exposition, for the better declaring and confirming of that which we haue seene alreadie. By the *Thirstie* therefore or by *Thirst*, hee meaneth the appetite of man which is alwayes hungrie: and I meane not the appetite of eating and drinking, but the appetite of all our lustes. Yee see then howe man in his owne nature is as it were thirstie, so as wee bee alwayes sharpe set, and can not bee satisfied by any maner of meanes; for as soone as we haue beene tempted with one wilfe by and by wee come to another, and there is no man but he is vexed with diuerse chaunges and sortes of thirstinesse. For albeit that vices raigne more in some than

in other some, yet notwithstanding the man that is giuen to couetousnesse misseth not to haue other lustes, in so much that couetousnes is not
1. Tim. 6. 10. without cause counted the roote of all mischief. Likewise a whoremonger is caried away by his affections, and wicked lustes, and yet hath he other vices also therewithall. When we haue well examined the nature of man, it will bee founde that Moses could not better compare them than to such as bee thirstie. And why so? For they are neuer at rest, they bee neuer contented, they are alwayes sharpe set, and they bee euermore eagre of their desires. Hee speaketh it expressly in the Feminine gender and sayeth, *Shee that is thirstie*, bycause the present case concerneth the lust of man. Hee putteth it in the person of a woman, but yet neuertheless we see what hee meaneth. And wherefore doeth hee put in Drunkennesse? Bycause men be so farre out of order, that they seeme to haue no discretion at all: and when they bee once a little disguised, anon they become starke drunken, in so much that they seeke prouocations to drinke still, and to guzzle wine, and to swill it in more and more. Ye see that when a man is once out of the way, he layeth on drinke still, and the more he drinketh y more he may (as they say) and experience sheweth it. Now then, when man is accustomed and throughly nusled in drunkennesse, hee becommeth a winesacke, so that although hee powre in neuer so much wyne, yet is he neuer filled, but doeth still gulp it vp without ende of drinking. Wee see these great drunkardes, how all men woonder at them, and it is a marualous matter where they bestowe the drinke which they take in. It seemeth vnpossible that any stomacke should holde it. Againe wee see that they are past all shame, and at all their venting places doe cast out the wyne which they had taken in. And be they once emptie, they be as readie to drinke againe as euer they were: and when they sauour not the wine, then must they haue new deuises to procure appetite. If y wyne mislike them, though they be ready to burst, yet must they eate some straunge meate, as either a Carbonado, or the verie snuffe of a Candle, or a pickled hering, and I wote not what else; so that to all seeming they meane rather to murther themselues, than to haue any honestie in them.

Nowe let vs looke to the course of the Text, and wee shall finde that this similitude is so fit, that Moses coulde not haue set foorth the lustes of men better than by comparing them to men ouersurfeited with drinke: for it is certaine that wee shall neuer bee so well stayed in our affections, but that we finde this in them, I meane vntill God hath reformed vs by his holy spirit. In deede we see some haue more honestie in them, and which leade not a dissolute life, neither in whoredome, nor in drunkennesse, nor in swearing, nor in theft, nor in any hurtfull thing. Well then, in these there is some shewe of vertue, but yet it is impossible that a man should not be vncleane in his heart, vntill God doe gouerne him: for our nature must needes bee euermore sinnefull: and that which is sayde in Genesis must
Gen. 6. 5. needes be accomplished in vs: namely that all that euer the heart of man doeth imagine, is froward and wicked. Now seeing it is so, Moses telleth vs heere, that it is ouer much for vs to haue this cursed inclination by nature; and therefore wee must fight against our lustes: like as when a sicke man sees himselfe out of temper, he must thinke that if he fulfill his owne fantasie, he shall bring himselfe to a hotte and continuall ague, and so kill himselfe. Hee must therefore restraine himselfe. And why? For his desire is disorderly. Euen so it is with vs: and so must wee fight against our lustes and affections; and it is a difficult combat. Let vs labour therein by all the meanes wee can, and yet shall we not so much preuaile, but that somewhat will bee still amisse. Now if in stead of repressing our lustes & of holding them straite curbed, wee flatter our selues and nourish them: is it not a wilfull throwing of our selues into destruction? I knowe a vice that doeth raigne in mee, and I am to fight against it: that is my right exercise, vnto the which God hath called mee. Nowe I confound with my naturall inclination, which is wicked; I see it is a disease that will kill me; vnlesse I prouide for it and keepe good order: and yet neuertheless I will as it were compact with the sickenesse, and followe myne owne appetite: what is to bee sayde to it? The greatest mischiefe of all is this, that Moses leaueth downe heere: namely that men bee not content to foster their lustes, and to foade themselues with vaine flatteries, but they do also cast themselues to the spoyle lyke madde men, and become drunken to bereaue themselues of discretion; yea they become verie beastes, to the intent they may haue no more feeling of their euill, they cast away all shame, to become like vnto brute beastes: they haue no griefe of conscience, and they proceede so farre as to bleare out their tongues against all manner of admonitions that bee giuen them. When men come to that poynt, it is a right adding of drunkennesse vnto thirst. But nowe let vs learne, that when our Lorde sheweth vs our faultes, it is to the ende, that euerie of vs shoulde enforce and straine himselfe to correct his wicked lustes, and beware that we maintaine them not. But aboue all thinges let vs take heede that wee tempt not GOD, ne make warre vppon him openly, ne proceede to adde drunkennesse vnto thirst, that is to say, that wee adde not beastly distemperance to our owne wicked inclination. It is too much that wee should bee allured by our desires, and lustes; but to become so drunken and beastly in them, as to haue no consideration at all of them; and to bee soaked in our naughtinesse that we fall to seeking of monstrous thinges after the manner of drunkardes: Alas, whereto tendeth it? Is it not an vtter defacing of GODS image in vs, as much as wee can? And yet is it too much seene in the worlde; for they that flatter themselues in common vices, doe fall in the ende into so haynous and great enormities, as it seemeth, that they would confound heauen & earth together.

When

When a man hath a long while made none account of God, and is become drunken in his filthinesse, what will he doe after he is so besotted? He will passe the boundes euen of naturall honestie, in so much that the verie beastes do hold their lustes in order: but man, not knowing at all what he is, transfigureth himselfe: and that is it that Saint Paule meaneth in saying, that when men haue despised GOD, they fall into many concupiscences, and they must needes forget themselues, and throwe themselues headlong into so shamefull enormities, as a man cannot well how to woorke them greater reprothe than they doe to themselues. Wherefore let vs bee afrayde of such vengeaunce, and let vs alwayes be mindefull of this drunkennesse whereof Moses speaketh in this place, that wee may beware of it.

Then he addeth, *That GOD will neuer bee merciful to such a man: but his wrath shall kindle against him, and his indignation shall bee mooued against him, all the curses contained in the Booke of the Lawe shall bee heaped vppon him and rest vpon him, and hee shall bee put off from the Tribes of Israel to his vndoing.* This is the same thing which I alleaged erewhyle out of the Prophet Esay, where God sweareth, that hee will neuer forgiue such people, as haue so abused his patience, and made a iest and a scoffe of the warninges that he gaue them. As much also doeth Moses say thereof here, though in another phrase. God (sayth hee) will neuer forgiue such a man. Heereby we are admonished, that although wee haue offended God, yet there is place to obtayne mercie and forgiuenesse, so we be not hard hearted, but doe lament, specially when we be admonished, and when men shewe vs more plainely that we must repaire to the goodnesse of God. When wee deale so, then there is a conuenient helpe alreadie prepared for vs. But contrariewise, if wee continue in our stubbornnesse, and for the hauing of more libertie, doe proceede to wilfull stubbornesse against all counsaile, and become deafe to all the threateninges of the Scripture, bearing our selues in hande that there is no iudge in heauen: when wee deale so, let vs not thinke that our Lord wil suffer such frouwardnesse, for it is too diuelish. Needes must men haue vtterly forgotten what they are, when they can so prouoke their iudge. GOD therefore wil neuer forgiue such a man. Now then, are we called to repentance? Let euerie of vs bow downe our neckes, and bee touched with such a feare of Goddes iudgement, as may holde vs in awe, and make vs to repaire to him when he calleth vs, whyle wee haue time, and whyle the gate is open let vs enter, for if GOD doe once shutte it, wee may knocke, and wee may waile and howle as Esau did, but it is too late. To bee short, Moses telleth vs, that whyleste wee haue meane and accesse to returne vnto him to obtaine grace, wee ought to steppe to it without mocking of his woorde: and that when wee bee exhorted by it to consider our sinnes, wee ought to beware that wee make a right confession of them, and not resemble other men which are so dull that they haue no vnderstanding of the vengeance of God wherewith they are beset.

Moses sayeth farther, *That the wrath of GOD shall kindle, and his indignation shall bee mooued against such a man*. Wherby hee signifieth, that GOD will neuer pacifie his wrath against any of those that doe so abuse his fatherly gentlenesse, and haue hoorded vp the treasure whereof Saint Paule speaketh in the second Chapter to the Romanes in the time of GODS long sufferaunce. For certesse Gods sparing of vs, is to giue vs leasure to come to repentaunce. Hee wayteth for vs, and if wee make no accoune of returning vnto him, specially when he doeth prouoke vs, but doe yet woorse: is it not good reason that hee turne our wilfull stubbornnesse backe vppon our owne heades? Yes: For wee doe but heape vp so much the greater cursednesse vppon our selues. Vppon whom shall it light, but vpon vs, in such sort as wee shall be altogether ouerwhelmed? When a man doeth thus increase his leawdnesse, and scorneth God, and besides all the other sinnes which hee hath committed, outrageth so farre as to say, I will not giue ouer mine owne pleasure, bearing himselfe in hand that Gods hand cannot touch him, but that hee hath a couenaunt with Hell and death, as sayeth the Prophet Esay; when we be at that poynt, is it not, as if we should draw some mountaine or house vppon vs to ouerwhelme vs withall? Let vs learne then that our Lorde doeth here vtter forth a speciall wrath against all them that will not bee mooued by his word, but continue vtterly vnreformable. His wrath (saieth he) shall be kindled against them, and his indignation shall be stirred vp.

Rom. 2. 5.

Esa. 28. 15.

And for the better expressing thereof hee saieth: *That the curses of the Lawe shall lie vppon him.* He had sayd afore, all this shall cleaue vnto thee. And here it is sayde, that they shall rest. Purposely is this word set downe, by cause men doe euer thinke to escape and to outrunne the punishments of God: as when a dogge feeleth a stripe with a cudgell, hee shaketh his eares; and would faine scape, but the blowe doubleth, and he is cudgelled well and throughly, and yet hee seeketh still to flie away: Euen so it is with vs. Therefore if God punish vs, there is none other helpe but to stoope, and to lament by considering our sinnes. But in steede of this we thinke to go quite by remouing from our standing. That is the cause, why men bee tossed with vnrest, when God doeth visite them, and they perceiue that they haue offended him; they torment themselues, supposing that it shall auayle them much; whereas it is neuertheleste to their confusion. Therefore saieth Moses, that the curses which be contained in the Lawe shal rest vpon vs. Let vs not thinke then to cast them behinde vs, neither let vs thinke to escape, whe we play the madde bedlems and kicke against him. That is but a folly; they must of necessitie lye vppon vs, yea in such wise as wee shall not feele any ease. That is in effect the thing which we haue to beare in minde concerning this place.

Deut. 28. 15.

Deut.28.15 Afterwarde he sayeth yet farther, *That such a man shall be rased out from vnder the heauen, and his name also*. Nowe GOD speaketh not of one curse onely: but saieth that when a man is not humbled throughly by one punishment, there shall come a whole dosen vppon him. Nay the number shall not bee certaine, but (as wee haue often said heretofore) the number shall bee infinite, as we shall see againe in the xxxii. Chapter, that God hath incredible meanes to tame those that are so stubborne against him. And now for a conclusion he saieth, that the name of such a man shall be rased out from vnder heauen. As if he should say, God will roote him out from the number of his creatures, so as hee shall bee no more reckoned among men. Indeede the principall matter which wee shoulde desire, is not to haue a name vnder heauen, but to haue our Luk.10.20. names written aboue in the booke of lyfe. Nettertheleese, Moses in this phrase of speech, comprehendeth also the eternall damnation. And why? For wee knowe that our Lorde did at that time vtter foorth his goodnesse and loue towardes the Iewes, by earthly benefices: and contrariwise his wrath also by temporall punishments. Moses therefore in saying heere, that God will wype out the name of such a man from vnder heauē, meant according to the same rule, that GOD would no more reckon him in the number of his creatures. Nowe if wee bee not woorthie to bee counted heere beneath for the creatures of God, nor to liue amongst horses and Asses: howe shall wee bee partakers of the glorie of heauen, to bee companions with the Angels, in the immortalitie which is prepared for all the faithfull and for all Gods children? We see how the meaning of Moses is that God will so rase vs out of the roll of lyfe and saluation, as wee shall not be counted woorthy to beare the place of his creatures, but this curse shall appeare vppon vs euen by the thinges of this world.

And thereupon he sayth, *That such a man shall bee cast off from the tribes of Israel to his vndoing*. Whereby it is shewed vnto vs, first that God had separated that people to bee preserued. And it is a doctrine that appertaineth to all the faithfull. In deede we haue a speciall myrrour therof in the Iewes: for wee see that when the first borne of Egypt were slaine, the Angell touched not the houses which were marked with the Exo.12.23. blood of the Paschall Lambe, but it was Gods will that they shoulde bee free from such vengeance. Although then that as long as wee liue in this world, we bee inuironed with all maner of miseries, whereunto this humaine life is subiect, and that all the diseases which can happen vnto men, be threateninges of death, and that wee be likewise subiect to all the mischaunces that can happen vnto vs, by ayre, water, fyre, earth, and the heauens, which doe all seeme to bring vs to ruine and confusion: although I say I haue as concerning the humaine state, wee differ not from them that be afflicted to the vttermoste; yet nettertheleese our Lord preserueth vs and shoulder vs vp, as if he should gather vs into a corner by our selues. Well may wee bee mingled among those whom God hath cast off: but yet beholdeth he vs alwayes with mercie. This is in effect that which wee haue to remember concerning this place: and it doeth import an inestimable comfort. For albeit that we bee subiect to all the myseries of the world, yet doeth God so preserue vs, that of a speciall priuiledge, wee bee safe by his meanes, because he is neere vs: so as the mischiefe is euer put off by his hand which is present with vs, and either wee bee exempted from it, or at the least, he giueth vs such force, as wee haue cause to reioyce, and to giue him thankes for that he hath so preserued vs. Thus much for one point.

But yet for all this let vs beware that we abuse not that goodnesse of God; for if we doe, when we be gathered to be as of his household, hee can very well cut vs off againe, as in a manner he doeth say, *that such a one shall be cut off from among the Tribes of Israell*: to shewe that it is not enough for vs to be receiued into Gods Church, but that we must continue in his obedience vnto the ende, to the intent that hee may continue his grace towardes vs, yea and to continue it in such sort, as we may bee of that Israell, whereof God speaketh by Ezechiell, to witte, that wee may be in his secret Roll. For there bee many that bee enrolled before men, which nevertheleese be rased of God. And therefore hee speaketh properly of his secret Roll, where they bee written that be his people indeede. That is it that Paule speaketh vnto Timothie, that they bee keuers enclosed vp. God (saith hee) knoweth them that be his: and that is a decree which standeth stedfast. Therfore let vs learne so to yeeld our selues obedient to our God, praying him, that lyke as he hath vouchsafed to draw vs vnto him, he will also pursue it, and increase his blessings: and that when we be once graffed into the stocke of Abraham, to be his children by faith, wee may alwaies hold on stil in the course of our adoption, that in the ende God may acknowledge vs for his children, and we bee made partakers of the glorie which is prepared for vs, seeing that in this worlde and in this short life wee haue inioyed blessings, by the which hee maketh vs alreadie to taste of his loue.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the face of our good God, acknowledging our faultes, and beseeching him that we may bee more and more cast downe in ourselues, so haue such a hearte and feeling of our sinnes, as wee may not fayle to runne vnto him, and to flee for refuge to his mercie, that by forgiuing vs our sinnes from day to day, he may amend vs euermore, vntil hee hath quite ridde vs of them. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely vnto vs, but also vnto all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On

On Friday the x. of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXVIII. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the nine and twentith Chapter.

22 Thus will the generation to come, say, namelie your children which shall succede after you and the straunger which shall come from a farre lande, when they see the plagues of this lande, and the diseases of it wherewith the Lord shall haue smitten it:

23 The brimstone and sault wherewith hee shall haue burned all his lande, so as it shall not bee sowed, nor yeelde fruite, nor haue anie grasse growing therein, as in the ouerthrowe of Sodome and Gomorrah, Adam and Seboim, which the Lord destroyed in his wrath and displeasure.

24 Then shall all Nations say, wherefore hath the Lorde doone this to this Lande? O how fierce is his great wrath?

25 And it shall bee aunswered, because they forsooke the couenaunt of the Lorde GOD of their fathers, which hee made with them, when hee brought them out of the land of Egypt.

26 For they went and serued other gods, and bowed themselues before the same gods whome they knewe not, neither hadde they doone them anie good.

27 Therefore is the wrath of the Lorde kindled against this land, to bring vpon it all the curses written in this booke.

28 And the Lorde hath rooted them out of their lande in wrath, anger, and great indignation, and he hath throwne them out into an other land as it appeareth this day.

29 The secretes of the Lord our God be reuealed vnto vs, and to our children for euer, to the intent we should do all the wordes of this law.

MOses proceedeth here still with the matter which wee beganne yesterday, namely, to declare howe detestable our rebellion is vnto God, when he hath once caught vs by his worde, and can not winne vs, but wee turne heade to the contrarie. For it had beene enough to haue declared in one worde, that none shoulde remayne vnpunished: howbeit forasmuch as men doe not so quickely consider the vengeaunce of God to be moued therewith to the quicke, therefore Moses addeth threateninges vpon threatninges, declaring that the punishmentes shall bee so greeuous, that euerie man shall bee abashed at it: according also as the Prophet Ieremie vseth this phrase of speach, saying, *y* al mens eares shal tingle at the hearing of the straunge thinges which God shall haue wrought in Ierusalem & the lande of Iudah. For if God chastise vs after the common order, wee regarde it not, we take it to be but haphazard, or else we doe linger til *y* plague be past: but as for submitting ourselues to God, it is no part of our care. That is *y* cause why Moses doeth in this place inhaunce the plagues which God woulde sende vppon that lande, to the intent that the people might bee the better instructed, and euerie man looke to himselfe, and vnderstand that if they tempted Gods patience, they must needes fall into this so horrible extremitie. In which respect hee saith, *That the generation to come, and those also which shoulde resort thither from farre countries, shall behold the plagues of a people chastised.* By which woordes hee doeth vs to vnderstande, that the punishmentes which God woulde sende vppon the rebelles, shoulde be straunge, such as should make all folke astonished, and amazed at the sight of them, and to say, this is a maner that hath not beene wonte to be: it must needes be that the hande of God hath gone this way. Nowe wee see the meaning of Moses. And herein wee haue to condemne our slowenesse, seeing that God must be faine to describe thinges vnto vs, as it were in a painted table, the cause whereof is for that wee bee not plyable to receiue

ceyue the admonishmentes which hee giueth vs. We thinke our selues able folke: but in so doing wee doe all of vs beguile our selues with selfe-louthing, vntill our Lorde doe as it were beate it into our braynes by force, that if wee procede on to offende him, wee shall not escape his hande, yea, and that wee shall be handled with such rigour as shall make all them to tremble which see but the tracte thereof: so that not onely wee that receyue the strokes, shall be confounded, but they also which come from farre shall confesse, that it was the vengeance of God, which was not without cause, and that it must needes bee, that wee did committe ouer greeuous and hainous offences, seeing that God is thus inflamed against vs.

Moreouer Moses sheweth that God will no more spare a whole country, than one man: least they should shroude themselues vnder the multitudes of people that giue themselues to wickednesse, and thinke thereby to scape the better cheape before God. It is expressely saide that Ezech.18.4. if a true man sinne hee shall be punished: and if a whole lande be faultie, God will wrappe them all likewise into one fardell. Therefore let vs not bleare our eyes wilfully as wee see the Papistes doe, who vaunte themselues this day, because ỹ number of such as are inclined to their superstitions is not small. They boast them of their great multitude, making it their buckler against both God and men. And thereupon they doe despise vs, and it seemeth to them, that they may of good right condemne the pure and true religion. But contrariwise God telleth vs, that when a whole land hath forsaken the right way, that rebellion of theirs shal not go vnpunished, albeit that the multitude of them which be faultie, be neuer so great. Finallie wee must beware that we follow not one an other to do euill: for if a blinde body doe leade the way, hee shal fal into the ditch, and likewise they that followe him: hee shall not exempte them by his fal. We must therefore vnderstand, that when God calleth vs, wee must sticke vnto his voyce, and obey it: and if all the worlde fall away, and euerie man goe astray, yet must not we ground our selues vpon the examples that wee see, as if wee would say, It is lawfull for mee, for manie haue this custome. We may not make that a law, but we must stand stedfast in ỹ obedience of our God. This is the thing which we haue to remember concerning this place, where Moses speaketh not of euerie man particularly, but of the whole lande, vsing the comparison of Sodome and Gomorrah, of Adama and Zeboim: according to the comon maner of the holy Scripture, where the Prophets doe put men in mind of the dreadfull punishmentes which God sent vpon those cities. And indeed S. Iude saith in his Epistle, that it is as it were a myrrour of the fire that Iud.7. is prepared for the wicked, ỹ wee might alwayes behold howe God is iudge of the world. Therefore it is not without cause, that Moses speaketh here of Sodom & Gomorrah: as if he should say, albeit that God do alwayes punish sin, yet the examples thereof be not alwayes so notable, as in that ouerthrow of Sodom & Gomorrah, and of the townes neere vnto them. For there it was his will to shew by one deed that he was not a partie to be dalied withall: and therefore it was his wil that the remembrance therof should continue, and that euerie man should walke warely. When men speake of Sodom & Gomorrah, they ought to consider that he which ouerthrew them with lightening and tempest, is at this day liuing in heauen, & that he hath not changed his purpose nor giuen ouer his office, but that his maiestie is accompanied with his iustice and power. Therefore let vs not tempt him: but if hee vse patience toward vs, let vs vnderstand that when hee hath long delaied, we must come to reckening: and if the punishment be not now visible vpon vs, as it was then vpon the said townes, yet wil the time come that we shall perishe. That in effect is the thing that Moses ment to signifie in this place.

We haue here a generall instruction, which is, ỹ for asmuch as God hath euermore punished the worlde, it shoulde therefore be the more to our reproch, if wee profited not thereby, in acknowledging our selues so much the more guilty according to the saying of S. Paul who giueth ỹ verie same rule, in the tenth chapter of the first 1.Cor.10.11. to the Corinthians, namely that when God punisheth mens stubbornnes, couetousnes, rebeleese, superstition, fornication, and such like sinne: his so doing is a liuelie image of his iudgement. Let vs beware that when God teacheth vs at other mens cost, wee profit in that schoole. For if we bee one hairdbearted, it shall be made manifest vnto vs at the last day, that it was long of no body but of our selues, that wee were not reduced into the way of saluation, because we would needs wilfully misse it, as if we had couenaunted with Satan, to our owne destruction. Therefore doth he also say, that the vengeaunce of God is wont Col.3.6 to come vpon all misbeleeuers: as if he shoulde say, let vs not tarrie till God strike vs, but seeing we do perceiue him to be iudge of the world, let ỹ touch vs, & let euery of vs bestir himselfe to repentance. Moses hauing spoken so, addeth this further declaration, and saith that they which come from far countries, & the children also that shold be born after ỹ euent of such a punishment shal al inquire of it as astonished, saying: What meaneth this? And now he addeth for a confirmation, ỹ the shame therof shal remain vpon them ỹ be so afflicted: wherby he sheweth, that they shal not yet escape, after that God hath taken them out of the world, but that they shall beare the marke of infamie, insomuch that euen the blind shal condemne them, and euery man despise them euen when their carkesses be rotten and brought to nothing, and ỹ the remembrance of them shal be odious to the world. For men will say, *It is because they forgat the God of their fathers, which had brought them out of the lande of Egypt, and serued strange Gods whō they neuer knew.* That is one point which we haue to note in this place.

And by the way Moses doth vs to vnderstand, that if the Iewes be not pliable afore hand, it shal come to passe that afterwarde other men shalbe taught to beware by their great destruction who-

whether they will or no. And that is well worthie to be marked. Whensoeuer God reproueth vs, we couer our sinnes, and although we haue no great colour so to doe, yet doe wee euermore take leaues to hide vs, after the example of our father Adam. To be short, wee bee so shameles, that wee will rather alleadge friuolous excuses, than yeelde to condemne our selues. God doeth threaten vs, but we do make none account thereof; wee offende notwithstanding, whereby we shewe our rebelliousnesse. If wee be asked, Goe too, doe you perceiue the hand of God? O say we, I wot not wherfore I am afflicted. Thus do men euermore goe backwards: and in steede of appeaching themselues, they fal to disputing and cauelling to escape as they may. To be short, we will neuer come willingly to the acknowledging of our sins. What doth God then, when he seeth vs to bee so vntractable? Hee teacheth others. Forasmuch as it is but labour lost to apply himselfe to vs, & because we be as logs of wood, hardharted and wilful in wickednes: the exãple of vs is a good instruction to others, which come to read ỹ it is the vengeance of God, & so do acknowledge it in our persons: & in the meane while, we be shut out from all remedie: for wee had not the power in time and place, to receiue the correctiõ that God sent vs. Thus ye see what we haue to note in this place, where Moses saith: *that they wil say*: It is not a matter any whit darke nor anie more to bee doubted of, that they which bee stubborne hearted against GOD and haue vsed contention to make them selues innocent, may very wel write their mouthes: but yet will GOD sturre vp tongues to discouer their iniquities, and they must become a common prouerbe, and haue their doings blased abroad: as who should say, god hath punished thẽ on this wise, because they forgot him. After he had deliuered thẽ by his increable power, and wrought so many wonders for their safetie, they laid al this vnder foote, & turned themselues vnto strange gods. And hereby we be taught that when God giueth vs yet meanes to returne vnto him, we must not draw back, seeing ỹ we shall gaine nothing thereby. And moreouer, sith it is his wil to teach vs at other seasons: let vs consider what is happened vnto the Iewes, (according as S. Paul also leadeth vs thither:) for they were the adopted people of God when wee were yet but as rotten. God had left our fathers in their confusion, when in the meane while the family of Abrahã was chosen & aduãced to ỹ heritage of saluation. Now then, if they being ỹ first borne, were so grieuously punished, should it not make our haires to stand vp on end, seeing ỹ in comparison of thẽ we be as children borne before their time? In deed we haue beene grafted in their place: but yet they were ỹ naturall oliue, they were the branches proceeding of ỹ same roote, which was dedicated in the person of Abrahã. But we for our part were vnholy. Now if we succeed in their place, thinke we ỹ God wil spare vs, if we folow their iniquities? We see how he hath dealt w them, & it is a dreadful matter. Therefore let vs learne to profit thereby, & not tary till our Lorde make vs as it were a looking-glasse, ỹ others may be taught by vs to our confusion. Thus ye see how we ought to put this place in practise.

Now Moses doeth here expressely accuse the Iewes, to ỹ intent to take away from thẽ al starting holes; saying: *They forgot the God of their fathers & him that had deliuered them out of the land of Egypt, and set them frõ frõ that hard bondage.* By saying, The GOD of their fathers, he meaneth that they were reuolted without cause. Which complaynt the Prophete Ieremie doeth also vse. Go (saith he) ouer the sea, goe through- Ier. 2. 10
out al the countries of the worlde, see how constant the heathen are, they chaunge not their Gods, & yet they be but Idols: men did deuise of their owne fansies, ỹ such a religion was to bee had, & they sticke to it, shewing great constancie & stedfastnes, albeit that it haue no foundation. But I am the true God, & you haue knowen me to be so by experience, & yet notwithstãding you be euermore fickle to haue some noueltie, you cannot bee stayed nor restrained in my seruice: & is not ỹ to great an vnthankfulnes? So thẽ Moses telleth them here, that they haue forsaken the God of their fathers, Yet notwithstanding, it is not to be inferred hereupon, that because our fathers haue helde some euill trade of life, therefore wee must follow the same, for the Papistes & Turkes haue that defence common amongst them, namely, that it is nowe a long while since they haue behaued themselues after that manner. The Turkes say: What? It is eight hundred yeres ago since that Mahomet brought vs to his law, and it hath bin kept euer since, our fathers haue deliuered it vnto vs from hand to hande. The Papistes also doe alledge their holy Councels; and the Traditions of auncient lawes: but (as I haue alreadie touched) it is not enough for vs that our fathers haue deliuered vs such a religiõ as they thought good. But Moseses speaking here of fathers, doeth separate Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, from the worlde, because God did sanctifie them. Those bee the fathers that deserued to bee of dignitie and reputation aboue worldlie men: for God did ordeyne thẽ to be followed that other men might become like vnto them. That is the thing which Moses regarded. For in deede wee see that Ezechiel blamed the people for following the Ezec. 18. 2.
lawes and righteousnesse of their fathers: it might seeme at the firste showe, that here is some contrarietie. God on the one side condemneth the Iewes, for that they followed not their fathers; and afterwarde hee condemneth them, for that they followed them too much. Yea but those fathers did differ verie much. For in this place the fathers bee they whome GOD hath exalted to credite, to whome also hee willeth vs to sticke, that is to say, the holie Patriaches. They therefore shoulde drawe after them all their generations that there might bee a true vnion of faith, and one accorde, to proue that they be the children of Abrahã: but in steed of these, they folowed their bastarde fathers, as S. Steuen telleth thẽ, saying,

You

Act.7.51. You haue alwaies resisted the holy Ghost, as your fathers did: and againe, bee not a stubborne and frowarde generation, as your fathers were, which prouoked God to wrath in the wildernes: they were full of bitternesse. Therefore we must haue this difference of fathers. And if we meane now to worship the true God in such sort as is requisite, we must haue the holy Patriarches to guide vs, so as we may protest that we be ioyned with them in true vnitie of faith. Also we must haue the Apostles, which bee called the fathers of the Church. For when wee followe that rule, wee cannot faile. And therewithall let vs beware that we mingle not our selues with them y are growen out of kind from the true fathers, as the Papistes doe, who sticke stoutly to them. For they which were backesliders, which forsooke the pure doctrine of the Gospel, which also peruerted and corrupted the religion of our auncient fathers: those be the verie fathers of the Papistes, which haue falsely vsurped that title. Let vs therefore beware of such a mingling, without any discretion. Marke that for a speciall point. Finally, forasmuch as God hath at all times beene reuealed vnto them that haue shewed vs the way of saluation, let that suffice vs: and let it serue to confirme our faith, that we be not hindered in the submitting of our selues vnto him to whome we owe all manner of obedience: nor become so sickleheaded as to turne from that which hath beene taught vs from the beginning: for wee haue the Lawe, which beareth vs witnesse, that the religion which we hold at this day, hath beene alwayes among the Patriarches, and that it was then ratified when the people were brought out of Egypt. And we haue the Gospel, which is a whole and a ful confirmation vnto vs, and the finishing vp of the lawe, from whence we must drawe all thinges, if we intende that God shall allowe of our religion.

Nowe secondly GOD speaketh of the deliuerance of his people, that by their owne experience they might bee conuicted of their transgressions. I haue (saith he) brought them out of y land of Egypt. Here did they feele the grace of God, and like as it was manifested to them by effect, euen so should they haue acknowledged that they were so much y more bound vnto him. Nowe then if they turne away, are they not double faulkie? Yes truely. Thereby we haue yet to marke another warning; which is, to note well the giftes and benefites which God bestoweth on vs, that the same may holde vs in awe, and make vs to yeelde our selues so much the more vnto him: and not to bee wauering. Howsoeuer Satan intice vs, let vs euer holde our owne still, and say, What? Our God thinketh it not enough to giue vs his worde, but ouer and besides that, he maketh vs to vnderstand y power of his hande, by succouring vs so manie wayes: we knowe that he neuer fayled those that serue him. Nowe then shoulde not the same be sufficient to prouoke vs also to serue him? On the otherside, if wee doe forget the benefites which we haue receyued of God, we must not thinke that he will suffer them to be buried, he will surely put vs throughly in minde of them, euen to our vtter confusion: according as we see how he speaketh here of the Iewes.

And nowe on the contrarie part he blameth them for that, *That they bee turned away after straunge gods, which they haue not knowen, and which had done them no good.* This is *generally incident to all Idolaters.* For notwithstanding that there be a kinde of wilfull opinion in them; yet are they at no certaintie. Like as the Papistes, which can not say that they bee assured of their religion, all is grounded vpon a supposition. True it is, that they play the madde men: for when they bee tolde of their foolishnesse, they rage and storme and thinke that men do them the greatest wrong in the worlde, when they make any gainesaying to that which they imagine to bee good: and yet howsoeuer they fare, they haue but a supposall. For all their saying is, Our fathers taught vs so: it is the order of our holie mother the Church: this hath nowe beene receyued of olde. Verie well, shall God bee outfaced with that? Shall his trueth, which wee ought to admitte to bee vnfallible, bee made voyde vnlesse wee bee grounded vppon custome and authorities of men? Nay, without that, there is nothing in men but vanities and lies. Hereby then wee must learne not to thinke that straunge which the Scripture speaketh, namelie that wee must fashion our selues after our fathers, howbeit those fathers which haue followed the trueth of God and none other. To bee short, wee shall finde that there is no certeyntie in them that followe not the Lawe, & that none but the children of God can talke of it vppon knowledge, according as Saint Iohn sayth in his Canonicall Epistle. Soothly it is not for vs to bee taught by coniectures of men, when the worde of God is laide before vs: for it is good reason that God shoulde haue so greate authoritie ouer vs, as that when hee saith the worde, we shoulde wholy sticke to it, and seeke no farther: but yet is there alwayes a true knowledge in faith, and not a wauering opinion. Contrariwise, all they that serue GOD after their owne deuotion, doe but imagine, and serue gods whome they know not. The Papistes say, that the Virgin Marie is their aduocate, euerie one hath his patron, such as hee hath deuised of his owne heade: doe they vnderstande that GOD hath giuen them these offices? Haue they any Testimonies thereof? None, but they thinke so. When I goe on Pilgrimage or cause a masse to bee sung, or founde such a yeares minde: O that is goodly seruing of God. What? Haue you authoritie for all these thinges, that they be pleasing to God, and that hee alloweth them? O no sir, but our intent is good. Yea, but that is not enough to binde God: for hee must bee serued according to his owne will: and hee will none of all those things. To bee short, examine all that the Idolaters doe, and yee shall finde that they be rauished and puffed vp with a wauering opinion. Thereupon they sooth themselues exceedingly: but yet are they neuer assured of their

1 Ioh.5.10

case. Therefore it is not without cause that Moses reproueth the Iewes, for following the gods which they knew not. And indeede howe shall a man knowe that which is not: for there is no knowledge, but the truth: and there is nothing but lies in all that men doe deuise, without the worde of God.

Againe hee saith yet further that the Idoles whome they serued, *had doone them no good.* Truelie the wretched misbeleeuers doe beare them selues in hande, that the Idoles whome they serue, haue doone them much good: as we see the Papistes doe, saying: Lo, wee finde it good to goe to such a Saint, for there is such a miracle as sheweth that this deuotion is not vnprofitable: after which manner wee see the Idolaters to haue doone at all times. When we serued the Queene of heauē (say they in Ieremie) we had our fill of meate and drinke, there was plentie of all manner of good thinges. Lo howe Satan blindeth these wretches, and God doeth suffer them to bee fedde with vaine flatteries, and to please themselues with their owne superstitions, to their condemnation. Neuertheless, that which is spoken by the Prophet Isay, shall bee alwayes true, namely, that Idoles haue no power to doe either good nor euill: for they bee nothing. Therefore let vs learne first of all to sticke vnto the word, whereby God teacheth vs, and let vs followe our fathers, that is to say, those whome hee hath allowed and chosen, and set foorth for our example to the intent that wee shoulde imitate them. The verie point whereat wee must beginne, for the hauing of a pure religion, both certaine and infallible, is the said doctrine: and secondly that we be confirmed by the gratious giftes and benefits which God bestowed vpon the olde fathers, yea and euen by those also whereof wee our selues haue had proofe in our own persons. Let these things induce vs so much the more to giue our selues ouer vnto him: and therewithall let vs stande in awe of his threateninges, and likewise of his punishments, which we see executed vpon all the wicked that haue forsaken him. That in effect is that which we haue to remember vppon this place.

Nowe for conclusion Moses addeth: *The secrets belong to the Lorde our God, and the things reuealed be for vs and our children for euer, to the end we shoulde doe the thinges that are written in this booke.* This text is taken diuerse wayes: Some doe expounde it, that the secretes of our God bee reueiled vnto vs, and to our children: and that is a verie profitable doctrine; for it is saide, that the lawe conteineth wonders that be incomprehensible to men, vntill time that hee hath opened their eyes. Therefore Dauid prayeth thus, Lord, lighten me that I may beholde the wonderfull wisedome, which is in thy lawe. And indeede, we doe neuer by our naturall wit vnderstande that which is shewed by the worde of God; it exceedeth all that is in man. And that is the cause why this grace is so highlie magnified in holie Scripture, that God dealt not with any nation, as hee hath doone with the Iewes: for that hee had not reuelled vnto them the secretes of his woorde: but left them to walke in brutishnesse and ignorance. Deut. 4. 8.

It is to a good purpose therefore to say, *That the secretes of our God be reuelled vnto vs at this day*, that folke might be the more mooued to be attentiue to the law, knowing that God hath vsed a speciall goodnesse towarde them to whome he hath shewed himselfe so familiarlie; as wee haue alreadie seene in the fourth Chapter. But albeit ỹ same doctrine be verie good & profitable, yet is it somewhat strained, because of ỹ words: for the text is thus, *The secrets belong to our God:* And immediatly after there is a letter set downe, which is as much to say in our language, as, *And the things that are reuealed belong vnto vs and vnto our children.* Moses maketh heere a distinction, after which manner also it was taken by the Iewes, which rested vpon the letter, and they did well therein. For we must looke diligentlie to the letter, if we wil attain to the vnderstanding of anie text: but because they did not vnderstande the true sense that was in the same letter, they haue forged one that is altogether straunge, and haue played the beastes too much, for want of hauing an eye to the naturall sense of Moses. They say in effect, that the secrete Idolatries belong vnto GOD, and the apparant Idolatries belong vnto vs, and to our children; to witte, to punishe them. In deede it is true that God punisheth priuie faultes, for hee reserueth manie sinnes to his owne punishing. We see that Idolaters do bleare out their tongues, and make a mocke, when they haue rushed out into all manner of naughtinesse: for their iniquitie is not yet ripe. Yet notwithstanding, God taketh order that some crime shall come to knowledge, and bee iustly punished, that they which see it, shall be compelled to say, that it was right. This is verie true. But Moses meant not so: for that were too bare a matter for this place. The thing that he meaneth in effect is this; That God hath his secretes to himselfe, and that vnto vs & vnto our childrē he hath vttered his law, which is an apparant matter: as if he should say, ỹ we must put a difference betweene that which is conteined in holy scripture, and that which GOD hath hidden from vs, of which also we haue neyther doctrine nor Testimonie. Wee must put a difference betweene those two thinges. True it is, (as I haue said) that all the doctrine of holie scripture surmounteth our capacitie, and is too high for vs, were it not that God did inlighten our mindes. Notwithstanding, howe soeuer the worlde goe with vs, yet when God vttereth a thing vnto vs, then hee calleth it an open matter. Why? Because hee woulde haue vs to applie our selues to the same. And thereunto hee addeth a promise, that they shall not bee disappointed; according to this saying of his by his Prophete Esay: It is not in vaine that I haue saide, seeke mee; As if yee shoulde say; that all they which are desirous to be instructed in the worde of God shall knowe his will by the same, neither will hee suffer them to erre, or to bee deceiued. Thus ye see how Isa. 45. 19.

all

all thinges that God hath reuelled vnto men, are called open matters. And why? Because it is not a doctrine laide vp in hudder mudder, but a matter that ought to bee knowen to all men. Nowe we vnderstande, what Moses meant. Vnder colour that wee must not bee too inquisitiue of Gods secretes through too much curiositie, the worlde becommeth brutishe, and is well appayed to haue some excuse of ignorance: the Idolaters yea euen the veriest idiotes of them can skill to say, Let Gods secretes alone. And to what end? Verilie to the intent that men should seeke for nothing. O, beware, we must not know too much. No: but what meane you by that? For as for the thinges which our Lorde hath reuealed vnto vs by his worde, it is good reason that they shoulde bee knowen, and that wee shoulde giue eare to them, and bee diligent to applie our indeuour to the same. If we passe our boundes, by beeing more inquisitiue than is lawfull for vs, wee enter into a maze. Thus see wee as now what Moses meant to say in this place, namelie that the people should not foode their owne ignorance, as men are wont to doe. My friendes (saith hee) be well aduised; for the secret thinges belong to our God, looke what hee woulde not haue knowen, that hath hee reserued to himselfe. But as for the thinges that are reuciled, hee hath imparted them to vs, & to our children for euer, to the ende that we shoulde doe the thinges that are written in this booke. Knowe yee (saith hee) that the thinges which are conteyned in his lawe, are profitable for the well ruling of our liues. And agreeably hereunto also Saint Paul saith: that all the scripture is profitable to teach, to exhort, to reproue & to make the man of God perfect to all good workes. Sith the case standeth so, let vs applie the exhortation of Moses to our owne vse. And first of all let vs marke well, that none bee exempted for their ignorance, that is to say, that none shal haue anie excuse which haue disdayned to heare God when he spake vnto them. And why? If they say, these be secret matters, I aunswere, and hath not God published them? Yes, but they be aboue our capacitie: let vs craue the spirite of vnderstanding, and it shall bee giuen vnto vs. But howe soeuer it bee, let vs not say, I am no clerke, I haue not beene at schoole; for beholde, the lawe is set foorth to all folke both litle and great, God woulde haue vs all to bee instructed therein. Therefore they be apparant matters, which must bee knowen to vs and to our children. And wherefore? Because it is for our profite. We shall there finde wherewith to bee edified, and wee knowe that God woulde haue our life to bee ruled thereby. Let vs therefore bee diligent, in such sorte as wee presume not to passe our boundes, when wee be desirous to be taught in the schoole of God. Thus much for one point.

2. Tim. 3. 16.

Neuertheless God reserueth his secretes to himselfe, from the which wee must absteyne with all modestie, and submit our selues thereunto. Wee may not therefore doe as manie fantasticall heades doe, which couet to knowe this and that, whereof wee haue no reuelation in holy scripture. Wee must holde vs still when God hath not spoken of an vnknowen thing and which is not conteyned in holy scripture. For it is the greatest wisedome that can bee in men, not to bee inquisitiue of further thinges than God hath reuciled vnto them, and simplie to content themselues, with y which they are able to conceyue. They (say I) which can thus holde themselues within their compasse, be farre wiser than all they which pretende to knowe and vnderstande all thinges: and to bee ignorant of nothing. Nowe we see it is an excellent thing, in that the things which bee conteined in holy scripture bee called open. And on the other side let vs keepe our selues in sobrietie and temperance, to the ende that if our mindes be infected with couetousnesse, wee may holde them as it were captiues, and not be too inquisitiue of the secretes of God more than is lawfull for vs. This matter might be discoursed more at length but that were an endlesse thing. It sufficeth to haue it in a breefe summe, namely that as long as wee seeke to be instructed by the worde of God, wee cannot doe amisse. But on the tother side, when wee will needes presume aboue our power, then are we out of the way, we take that vppon vs which God hath reserued to himselfe, the secrete thinges belong vnto him. And for a conclusion, let vs take an example of that which is fittest for this purpose. It is a wunderfull secrete of God and such a one as surmounteth all others, that GOD hath chosen men as seemed good to himselfe, and that before hee created the worlde, hee determined in his euerlasting purpose, whatsoeuer hee meant to doe, choosing and electing some to himselfe, and refusing the others. Well then, this is declared vs in holy scripture, and wee ought to knowe it, notwithstanding that these mastiue dogges doe barke against vs, as wee see howe these wretches doe murmure against this doctrine, yea and blaspheme it. What say they? It is too obscure a doctrine, wee vnderstande it not. Well admitte it be strange vnto you, yet is it not to be graunted, that it shoulde therefore take no place: but howsoeuer it bee, it is God that hath saide it, and we must sticke to this saying. And if wee will needes knowe wherefore, as these peking reasoners doe, who in all matters behaue themselues spitefully against God, saying, I woulde knowe what is the reason, vnlesse God is vniust. O miserable creature, whither runnest thou headlong? God sheweth that wee must rest vpon his holy will, and wee bee not permitted to seeke anie further, but are commaunded to confesse that hee is righteous in all that hee doeth: and that hee hath compassed all thinges in iust weight and measure, so as nothing proceedeth from him, which is not wholie ordered with infinite wisedome and equitie. When we bee at that poynt, wee must sticke to it and behaue our selues soberlie. So then by this example, wee see howe men ought to behaue themselues and what mean they ought to hope.

It is not for vs to play the doltes as the Papistes doe: but wee must vnderstand the things which God hath reuealed vnto vs, and then we must in likewise take heede that vnder colour that God hath reuelled his secretes vnto vs, we stie not vp into the aire, seeking to knowe this and that, and giue ouer our selues to fonde questions. Let vs seeke that onely, which GOD woulde haue vs to knowe, and let vs be ignoraunt of all thereof, yea and let vs be willingly ignorant of 10 knowing that our true wisedome is to be learned alonely in his schoole. And further to the ende we may turne holy scripture to our more profite, we must haue an eye to edification, and referre all thinges to the learning of our saluation, as we haue said alreadie.

Let vs nowe fall downe before the maiestie of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, beseeching him so to reforme vs, as wee may not linger vntill hee sende foorth his horrible vengeance vppon vs, but that we may preuene it; and that forasmuch as we haue heretofore offended him so many wayes, wee may returne vnto him, at the least when hee prouoketh vs thereunto, so as hee may be merciful vnto vs for our Lorde Iesus Christes sake, and that we may haue our eyes open to beholde the doctrine which he setteth before vs, and our eares vnstopped to hearken vnto all the counsailes & corrections which he continually and incessantlie bestoweth vpon vs: and that by this meanes we may be able to possesse all y blessinges which hee hath purchased for vs, and which hee hath prepared for his children and for all them that loue him. That it may please him to bestowe this grace not vppon vs onely, but also vppon all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the xi. of April, 1556.

The CLXIX. Sermon which is the first vppon the thirtith Chapter.

19 The secretes of the Lorde &c.

The thirtith Chapter.

WHen all these thinges bee come vppon thee, whether it bee the blessing or the curse, which I haue set before thee: and that thou remember them in thine heart, among all the nations, to the which the Lorde thy God shall haue cast thee out,

2 And doest returne vnto the Lorde thy God, and obey his voyce, according to all that I commaunde thee this day, thou and thy children, withall thy heart and with all thy soule:

3 Then will the Lorde thy God bring againe thy Captiues, and haue mercie vpon thee: and he will gather thee againe from all people, among whom the Lord thy God hath dispersed thee.

4 Notwithstanding that thou were cast out into the farthest parts of y hauen: from thence will the Lorde thy God gather thee, and from thence will hee fetche thee.

5 And the Lord thy God will bring thee againe to the land which thy fathers possessed: and thou shalt possesse it, and he will doe thee good, and cause thee to growe much greater than thy fathers.

WE must remember well what was treated of yesterday: to wit, that when GOD doeth imparte himselfe vnto vs by his worde, wee must bee attentiue to receyue the doctrine that is conteyned in the same. For although that all thatn declared vnto vs in holie Scripture, be a farre higher wisedome than our wittes are able to attayne vnto: yet would not GOD that it shoulde bee kept hidden or secrete. Wherefore? For if we resort vnto

him with lowlineſſe, yeelding our ſelues as ſcholers, he will doe the office of a teacher, in ſuch wiſe as his will ſhal bee altogether open vnto vs, nothing of all that is profitable for our ſaluation ſhall bee darke vnto vs, ſo we ſuffer ourſelues to be inſtructed of GOD. But there bee two thinges which we muſt obſerue: the one is, that wee bee not poſſeſſed afore hande with ouerweening, as a great ſort bee, which thinke theſelues wiſe enough to iudge, & receiue no more of Gods worde than is to their owne liking. Let vs beware of ſuch diueliſh pride: and let vs ſubdue all our wittes to GOD. And wee muſt alſo vnderſtande, that wee ſhoulde neuer conceyue the thinges which are deliuered vnto vs in his name, and from him, vnleſſe hee himſelfe inlightened vs: for wee bee blinde wretches, and there is nothing in vs but rudeneſſe and beaſtlineſſe. GOD therefore muſt in this caſe worke by his holy ſpirite. On the other ſide, when wee reade the holy ſcripture, or come to heare the word declared vnto vs: let vs ſeeke to be edified thereby, and not goe about to ſatisfie our owne luſtes and fooliſh appetites, as manie people doe, which vnhalowe the worde of GOD: for they trouble themſelues with manie vnprofitable queſtions, and thinke that they haue doone much, when they ſhewe them ſelues ſubtill. But GOD woulde that his woorde ſhoulde profite vs, and that it ſhoulde bee expreſſed in our life. Let vs remember thoſe two pointes, and then wee ſhall ſee by experience, that our LORD proteſteth not in vaine by his Prophete Eſay, that where hee ſaith, Seeke mee, it is in good earneſt, and that hee will bee founde: and that when hee ſpeaketh, it is his will that wee ſhoulde vnderſtande his doctrine.

Esa.45.19.

Nowe if this were ſpoken in the time of the lawe, much more reaſon is it, that it ſhoulde bee verified at this daie. For wee know that Ieſus Chriſt hath declared himſelfe vnto vs more familiarlie by his Goſpell. Therefore let vs not be afraide, that things be too obſcure for vs. For beholde our God allureth vs to profit in his ſchoole, and ſaith that it belongeth to vs and to our children, and that the things which he hath reuealed vnto vs, are directed vnto vs, to the intent we ſhould aduiſe ourſelues to walke according to his will. This is a thing that ought to encourage vs to ſeeke God, to ſerue foorth as is lawfull for vs, according to the meaſure that he appointeth. And herein wee ſee what the malice of the Pope and of his is, in ſhutting out all the world from the word of God: like as at this daie they do yet ſtill exerciſe the ſame tyrannie, maintaining that the holie Scripture was made for none but Monkes, Friers, and Clergie men: ſo ſeemeth it to them. And yet haue they no care thereof. For they haue a diuinitie by themſelues, which is as it were but a brawling of beggers. As for holie Scripture they leaue it at their heeles. Albeit that they deſpiſe it, yet they take out ſome worde, as it were by peeces and gobbets, and in the meane while ſuffer not the people to enter into the kingdome of GOD. They hold the keye to keepe the gate faſt ſhutte, and like as they liſt not to enter themſelues; ſo woulde they haue all others to bee ſhutte out. They ſay it is a daungerous matter to deale with holie Scripture, that it is a noſe of waxe, that men may turne it which way they liſt, and that there bee ſo high ſecretes therein, as men may thereby enter into a bottomeleſſe pitte. In deede they haue made a playne mockerie of Gods worde; for they haue falſifyed it in ſuch wiſe, as men can ſcarcelie know the meaning thereof. If wee ſhoulde hearken vnto them, it is but a hodge podge, yet neuertheleſſe wee ſee that it is the certayne and infallible truth of GOD.

Mat.6.13.

And moreouer, albeit that the doctrine thereof bee high, and that wee are not able to attayne thereunto by our owne vnderſtanding, yet will GOD neuer fayle them, that yeelde themſelues lowelie and apte to learne. Hereby therefore wee ſee, howe the diuell reigned altogether in the Popedome, ſeeing they vnderſtoode not what Moſes meaneth in this place: namely that the doctrine of GOD which is deliuered vnto men, is not a hidden nor an obſcure matter, but open and manifeſt, and that it is the lampe which muſt giue vs light, and the true myrrour wherein wee may beholde the face of our GOD, and whereby wee may bee transformed to the likeneſſe of his glorie: yea in verie deede, ſo wee reſorte vnto it with ſuch vnfayned zeale and affection, as I haue tolde you of. But there are but fewe that vnderſtande the thing which is heere declared: and in deede, the greater part of the worlde is not worthie therefor: for wee ſee manie that doe continuallie holde on, and bee deafe eared, in ſomuch that although GOD ſpeaketh loude and ſhrile; yet they doe wilfully deſpiſe him. Nowe then, let him that is ignoraunt bee ignoraunt ſtill. See how Saint Paul ſhorteth all ſuch as will needes bee wildeheaded, and not ſubmit themſelues quietlie to the obedience of Gods worde. Goe too, ſayth hee, will you bee ignoraunt? Then bee ignoraunt. And wee ſee howe in another place, hee ſayth, that they which woulde not beleeue the truth nor regarde the light of lyfe and ſaluation, muſt needes be caſt into horrible darkeneſſe: as we ſee manie bee, which make a ieſte of GOD. When they come to heare his woorde, what reuerence yeelde they vnto it? It is rather a rayne curioſitie: GOD muſt bee fayne to punithe ſuch fooliſhneſſe, and to deprine them of the fruite which all the faithfull receyue, that is to ſay, that they ſubmitte themſelues vnto him, ſeeking nothing but the profite by hearing Gods worde and beholding the force which is hath in working.

2.Cor.2.15.

1.Thes.2.11.

Now therefore when we ſee that the word of God is after a ſorte vnprofitable vnto many people, and

and also a sauor of death vnto the misbeleeuing which disdaine to be partakers of the grace that was offered them; let vs not starte aside for all that, but let vs heare our God, and in like wise be afrayde to bee punished, for our despising of such a treasure. Let vs benefite our selues by the doctrine of saluation. As how? Euen by yeelding our selues quietlie vnto GOD (as I said afore) to be instructed by him who sheweth him selfe to bee a teacher of the little ones and lowlie ones: and seeking nothing but to bee edified through faith in the feare of his name, and in all godlinesse that wee may bee mooued to call vppon him and labour to serue him. When wee be so minded; let vs not doubt, but that hee will vse vnto vs that power of his which is shewed vnto vs in this text.

And nowe Moses addeth a comfort to them that are afflicted, when they haue offended God and that hee vseth rigour towarde them, and that is verie necessarie. For the lande of Chanaan was as a speciall earnest pennie and pawne to the Iewes, that GOD had chosen and adopted them for his people, they were separated there from the rest of the worlde, it was a lande that GOD had dedicated and reserued to himselfe, as if hee had saide, Here shal my name bee called vppon. The lande of Chanaan was, as it were, a mirrour of the kingdome of heauen, and of the euerlasting inheritaunce. When the Iewes were banished from that land, it was, as if GOD shoulde haue rooted them out of his house, and saide, I doe refuse you, and I renounce you: and that was enough to bring them in dispaire. On the otherside, God promised to keepe them euermore with a fatherlie care, and to cause them to prosper continually. Therefore when they sawe themselues ouerwhelmed with many miseries, yea almost infinite, it was a kinde of driuing of them into dispaire, yea euen into vnmeasurable dispaire, as if God had forgotten them. Finally GOD saide that hee woulde bee their heade and their king, and that they shoulde be as a bodie gathered together vnto him. Nowe when they bee dispersed vnder the Painyms and the infidels, vnder the wicked and the despisers of the lawe, among people vnholie and vncleane: the raygning of such kinde of people ouer the Iewes, made it seeme vnto them that God had forsaken them, and that his whole adopting of them was lost; so as they should all haue perished in their afflictions, vnlesse they were comforted. And that was the thing which Moses amed at. Hee sheweth them, that although God be harde and rough to them for a time, yet doeth hee not faile to remember that hee had chosen them for his people, of purpose to vse mercie towarde them, yea, when the time serueth for it: howbeit not ouerhastily; but after that hee had well tamed them, so as in steede of rebelling agaynst him, they haue chaunged their minde to obey him. Nowe wee perceiue what is the meaning of Moses; And this is the more expressely and largelie shewed vnto vs, according as the Promise concerning ỹ redeemer came more to light. For when God laide to Dauid, that the redeemer of the worlde which was promised vnto Abraham shoulde come of his seede, he confirmed and ratified that which we heare in this Text, saying, If thy seede do fal away and forget my lawe, and goe astray: I will (saith he) visite their iniquities, but it shall bee with the rodde of a man: I will punishe them, but it shall bee with measure, & I will neuer take away my mercie from them. This is a more large declaration of that which is sayd here, to wit, that God must needes so punishe the Iewes, after hee had long suffered their misbehauiour. And when they had shewed themselues vnreformable, hee must punishe them, howbeit in such wise, as there should yet bee reserued some mercie. And wherefore? Because he hath not respect vnto them simplie, but vnto him selfe and to his owne trueth. Nowe wee must note that when God made his couenaunt with Abraham, as we haue alreadie saide, the same was not for the woorthinesse that was in that people, neither was it for their deserres; but God grounded himselfe vppon his owne free goodnesse onely. Albeit that the people shewe themselues vnworthie, yet notwithstanding must GOD remayne alwayes firme in his purpose: according as Saint Paul also speaketh, saying, that the calling of GOD whereby hee did choose the linage of Abraham and sanctified it, is without repentaunce, and inchaungeable. It is true, that the hypocrites, (as it hath also beene treated of,) haue beene punished according as they were woorthie, and yet Gods continuall keeping of his promise profited them nothing at all. And why? See here howe it came to passe. God had chosen the linage of Abraham; that people fell away from him, and hee punished them: according as their malice did increase and augment, euen so were their punishments alwayes the sorer, vntill they came euen to the extremitie, insomuch as God seemed euen to haue forsaken them, and to haue cutte them off from his house. And when he hath doone so, then wrought hee after such a sorte, as there remaineth yet some seede hidden vnder the grounde, and in time will hee make it manifest that hee forgetteth not what he had saide, namelie that in the seede of Abraham all nations of the earth shoulde bee blessed. Loe heere a handfull of people whom God keepeth, euen after an incomprehensible maner. Anon after, out of this, he raised a great multitude of people vntill that Iesus Christ himselfe was come. Bee the wicked and the contemners of God and his lawe escaped thereby? No, God hath punished them. But nowe must we benefite our selues by this doctrine. For albeit that our Lorde Iesus Christ hath appeared for the saluation of the world: yet must the Church remayne vntill the ende: wee haue the promise that cannot fayle. But in the meane while wee see the thankelesnesse which is too common in the worlde, yea and it so ouerfloweth

2. Sam. 7. 14

Rom. 11. 29.

Gen. 22. 18.

the worlde, that GOD must needes withdrawe his goodneſſe, and exclude vs from being partakers thereof, becauſe wee haue thruſt him farre from vs. And that is the cauſe of the deſolation which is to bee ſeene ſtill in the Popedome at this day. The Papiſtes woulde ſhielde themſelues againſt GOD and his worde, by alleadging that it is vnpoſſible that God ſhould forſake his Church: yea, but in the meane while they doe not vnderſtande howe they misbehaue themſelues againſt him, and are gone away from him, and cannot ſuffer him any way to come neere them. And why? Becauſe they driue away the Goſpel from them with ſwoorde and fire, ſo as Ieſus Chriſt hath no place with them, nor acceſſe vnto them. We ſee therefore, howe GOD at the firſt bluſhe ſeemeth to roote out thoſe whome hee had called, and nothing is to bee ſeene but confuſion, as if the Church were loſt, and vtterly wyped out of the worlde. Yet notwithſtanding God keepeth his owne, hee knoweth howe to accompliſhe his promiſe; which is, that the ſtate of the Church bee euer continuing: and we ſee the markes of it. For when it was to haue bin thought that there was no more trueth in the worlde, and that the ſeruice of GOD had beene altogether brought to nought, hee did ſet vp ſome doctrine againe. In deede the number of them that beleeue the Goſpell is little: yet neuertheleſſe it is a matter that exceedeth all expectation, and is woulde neuer haue been thought, that hee would haue wrought after that faſhion, againſt all hope: inſomuch that (as it is ſaid in the Pſalme) it might bee ſaide that it is as a dreame, if a man conſider howe the Goſpell hath beene ſet vp againe. Yet notwithſtanding it falleth out that the wicked, & they that are wilfully bent to euill, gaine nothing by that which God doeth, for it is to their more confuſion: but the faithfull haue wherewith to comfort themſelues, when they ſee that God doeth chaſtice them; for they perceiue that hee doeth it not of purpoſe to forget his mercie, or for that hee meaneth not to vſe it towarde them. Loe here a ſtaffe to ſtay vs by, when God chaſtiſeth vs for our ſinnes. For one fillippe of his finger were enough to bring vs to ruine, and to throwe vs into the deepeſt dounegeon of death. As ſoone as GOD doeth but blowe vppon vs, (ſaith the holy ſcripture,) bee a man neuer ſo freſhe and flouriſhing, by and by hee withereth and droopeth. And what then ſhall become of vs if wee bee ſmitten with his mighty hande? Muſt wee not needes bee worſe than miſerable? Here therefore wee bee admoniſhed to ſtay our ſelues vppon ſome comforte, or elſe wee ſhall bee vtterly vndoone as ſoone as God giueth vs any token of his anger. Hereby wee ſee howe profitable this doctrine is for vs, where hee ſaith, that when God ſcourgeth thee, yet hee will not forget the promiſe which he ſwore to thy fathers: and albeit that thou bee thruſt out into the vttermoſt partes of the worlde, yet neuertheleſſe the Lorde will gather thee againe into this lande which he hath promiſed thee for thine inheritance. As often therefore, as God puniſheth vs for our ſinnes, be it that eeh of vs haue his priuate diſeaſe or wretchedneſſe or any other token of the wrath of God: or elſe that wee be generaly ſcourged with the plague, with warre, with hunger, or with anie other affliction: firſt let vs acknowledge our ſins, and be ſorie that we haue offended our God, and prouoked his wrath againſt vs; and heerevpon let vs alſo bee alwayes reſolued in this point, that he will not ſo puniſh vs, but hee will yet giue place to his goodneſſe and pitie, and that we ſhall finde mercie at his hande, when we condemne our ſelues, and confeſſe our offences, and beſeech him to receyue vs into fauour, not for our deſertes but in reſpect of the couenaunt which hee hath made with vs, becauſe hee hath choſen vs to bee graffed into the bodie of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. And like as in olde time hee declared by circumciſion, that the Iewes were a people ſanctified vnto him, euen ſo hath hee nowe giuen vs baptiſme, whereby he marketh vs, as it were to be of his flocke, and wherein wee haue a warrant that the bloude of our Lorde Ieſus is our clenſing, ſo as wee bee thereby waſhed from all our vncleanneſſe. Hauing this, let vs come boldlie to our God, for we haue here wines that he wil receiue vs.

Pſal.126.1.

Pſal.104.29

But to the ende that this doctrine may bee the better vnderſtoode, let vs follow the order which is kept by Moſes. *When all theſe thinges* (ſaith hee) *bee come vppon thee, whether it bee the bleſſing or the curſe.* Hee ſetteth the bleſſing foremoſt, to ſhewe that the ende whereat GOD doeth alwayes ame, is to drawe vs vnto him by gentleneſſe, and after a gracious and a louing manner. In deede if hee ſhould deale with vs according to our kinde, hee ſhoulde bee rough vnto vs at the firſt: but hee prooueth whether hee may winne vs by faire meanes, and therefore hee doeth alwayes vtter his goodneſſe towardes vs, and maketh vs to feele it. That is the cauſe why Moſes ſaith, Thou ſhalt firſt ſee the bleſſings, and haue experience of them. And in that reſpect alſo is GOD called gratious, liberall, long ſuffering, and ſlowe to anger. This word therefore muſt bee well weyed: for Moſes ſheweth what the nature of GOD is towarde vs, to wit, that hee deſireth nothing but to handle vs gentlie as a father doeth his children, and that hee taketh not anie pleaſure in dealing with vs roughlie. Thus much for one point.

Pſal.32.

And on the other ſide, hee meant to doe the Iewes to vnderſtand, that ſeeing they had had experience as well of the one as of the other, that is to ſay, as well of Gods fauour and of the benefites which hee had promiſed them, as alſo of his puniſhmentes and corrections: the ſame ought to giue them the more light, and confirme them the better in the thinges which they hadde heard, and that they had not beleeued. As for example.

The

The Iewes were taught, that if they serued God and obeyed him, hee woulde keepe them as his flocke and haue a speciall care of them, and as it were dandle them in his lappe, and bestowe all his richesse vppon them, and finallie deale with them as they coulde wishe: And likewise they were threatened on the contrarie side, that if they transgressed the lawe of God, and were wilfull and frowarde against him, they shoulde be driuen to feele his hande against them; and like as they had fought against him, so hee also woulde fight against them. Thus yee see howe the threatenings are declared vnto them as well as the blessinges; and they cared neither for the one nor for the other, but played the brute beastes, and tooke leaue to deale wickedlie: insomuch that when GOD chastised them, they regarded it not. Neuertheless, in the end it must bring them to consideration of themselues, when they make comparison after this manner; As howe? God hath verified it vnto vs, and shewed it as it were with his finger that he hath not said in vayne vnto vs, I will blesse you if you walke in mine obedience. We haue perceiued it by experience. Again, as touching the threatenings, hee hath put them in execution, and wee haue beene blockish for a time, but yet behooueth vs nowe to consider the matter. Thus ye see howe the blessinges beeing ioyned with the punishments serued the better to bring backe the Iewes vnto God: and therefore they ought to haue touched them the neerer to the quicke. And that is the thing which Moses meant in saying, Gods chastising of you when you haue doone amisse, is not the onely way whereby hee will instruct you. In deede hee will punishe you, but that is not the onelie meane whereby hee intendeth to teach you. For he wil first make you to feele his goodnesse and patience, and when you haue considered both twain of them, then is it time or else neuer to call your selues to remembrance, and not to continue still brutish and senseless as you haue bin afore. That is the thing which we haue to mark in the first place.

Nowe lastlie hee saith, *When God hath cast thee out among the strange nations, if thou return thee vnto thy hearte,* (That is the worde which Moses vseth, but hee taketh it for remembrance) *so thou turne againe with al thine affection vnto the Lorde thy God to obey him, hee will then haue pitie on thee.* Whereas he saith that the people shall bee driuen out of the lande, it is the vttermost of all the punishementes whereof hee had made mention afore, according to that which we haue alreadie touched, namelie that the lande of Chanaan was as it were a warrant, that GOD tooke the Iewes for the householde people of his realme, of purpose to leade them from thence to the inheritaunce of the kingdome of heauen. Nowe on the other side, when the Iewes were driuen out of the saide Lande, they were as people aliened from God. Alas [might they say] what a case is this? For our God which stretched out his hande to bring vs out of the lande of Egypt, did promise vs therewithall that we shoulde possesse all the lande that hee gaue to our father Abraham; and that it was vnto vs a token and a mark of his Adoption: but now be we depriued thereof, and that is a token that hee hath vtterlie forsaken vs. Vppon this forewarning we haue to gather, that seeing God, (after meane punishmentes) did not onely promise and offer his mercie vnto the Iewes, but also euen when the rigour seemed extreeme, and the woundes incurable, yet hee lefte them some hope, howbeit not vnto all, but vnto such as were reserued for seede (like as wee haue seene here before, and is also treated of aswel in the first chapter of Esay as also in the tenth). The same may serue vs to great purpose. For when our Lorde punisheth vs but meanely, wee take courage to returne vnto him: but if hee continue to punishe vs a long while, and it seemeth that hee hath quite cast vs off, and wee perceiue nothing but rigour: then wee be so beaten downe, that wee bee not able to open our mouth to call vpon him, and wee bee so caught with feare and sorowe, that wee hadde leauer to pine away in our miseries, than to returne vnto him. To the ende therefore that wee may fare the better by it, because men bee so vnowarde to be brought vnto God, when hee afflicteth them roughlie: let vs marke wel what is saide in this place. Although that GOD doe smite stroke vppon stroke, although it seemeth that hee is determined to ouerthrowe altogether: yet notwithstanding hee doeth still call vs backe vnto him, and woulde not haue vs to bee faintehearted. And therefore let euerie man stirre vppe himselfe, and although hee bee at his wittes ende as they say, so as hee woteth not where to become: yet let him not cease to take heartre in consideration of this promise and to say, No, although I were brought to the borome of the graue, yet doth my God call me backe to him, and telleth mee that seeing I am touched with repentaunce, he will haue mercie on mee to forgiue mee all my sinnes. This therefore is it that wee haue to marke further in this place.

Nowe Moses sheweth what is true repentaunce, saying: *If thou doe turne vnto the Lorde thy GOD with all thy minde.* For euen the wickeddest, after God hath ouermastered them, will not sticke to say, wee haue doone amisse, and they will seeme to bee chaunged. But as soone as God giueth them anie releasement, by and by they are worse than euer they were before. Or if they doe not shewe at the first dashe, that they bee rebellious against GOD, yet doeth their hypocrisie disclose it selfe at the last, and it will appeare that there was a hidden sore within, and that there was nothing but filthie matter. To bee short, there are verie fewe, that turne themselues to GOD, though they bee admonished by neuer so many afflictions. Therefore hath Moses in this place defined true repentaunce: and the same ought to serue vs for manie purposes. Let vs first of all marke, that when God doth punish vs we think

it enough to be smitten with one stripe or twain. O, say wee, In deede I haue offended: but seeing I doe acknowledge my sinne, shoulde God persecute mee yet still? Hee seeth I am a fraile & a wretched creature, what would he haue more than the confession of my faulte? But we looke not on the otherside, that our hearres bee still hardened in wicked affections, and that it is become of vs (according as the Prophet complaineth) They turne vnto mee, howbeit no longer than whilest I doe punishe them: for afterwarde they are worse, or elle they become as bad as they were afore. Seeing then that the case standeth so, let vs learne, that when God, after hee hath punished vs once, doeth hold on, and the plague increaseth vppon vs; it is not without cause that hee doeth so. For hee perceiueth that there is yet a hidden naughtines in vs, like as a Physition perceiueth well that although a disease bee mended in outwarde appearaunce, yet the roote thereof is not quite taken away. The sicke person coulde well find in his hearte to bee let a lone: but hee doeth still carrie the disease about him although hee feele it not. Let vs therefore learne to yeelde our selues patiently to the corrections which God sendeth vs. If they continue longer than wee woulde, and our affections cannot abide it: wee ought so much the more to turne vnto him, specially with all our hearte as Moses saith. Therefore hee saith by his Prophete Ieremie, If you turne, turne vnto me, ye children of Israell. For hee seeth that this worde repentaunce is abused by men: for it rowleth in their mouth, and euerie man maketh a kinde of cloake thereof; as wee see the Papistes doe, which call it a dooing of penaunce, when folke make crosses, or take a crosse vpon their backe, or besprincle themselues with holy water, or say *amea culpa*, or fast a certayne day, or trotte on pilgrimage, and doe all other such abhominations. Our Lord perceiuing that these are al but mockeries, saith, It is to mee, it is to me that you must turne. As if hee shoulde say, Am I a little babe, that you shoulde bring mee bables to please me, and to make me passtime withall? No: but knowe yee that I am the liuing GOD which searcheth the heartes and knoweth all the thoughtes of men; and though there be neuer so much doubleneese in you, you shall not be able to deceiue me. Assure your selues therefore that I am hee to whome you must conuert. And in that respect doeth Moses speake here of the whole heart. Let vs consider then that to pacifie the wrath of God when wee haue prouoked it, euerie of vs must enter into himselfe and so examine all our thoughtes, as wee may be no more giuen to our owne sensualitie; and that if we goe about to be wise in our conceytes, it shall come to nought, and God must haue the gouerning of vs by his worde, and ouerrule our affections, that they may bee bridled, and for asmuch as they boile against God, and resist him, let vs thrust them vnder foote: for we shall neuer bee able to dedicate our selues vnto God, vntil we haue forsaken al our owne lustes, which he contrarie vnto him. Thus you see how men must examine their hearres, to come to GOD indeede, and to haue a right and a true repentaunce, such as is heere mentioned by Moses.

Psal. 81. 8.

And nowe he adderh afterwarde, *If thou do then call to remembrance.* Wherein yet better than before, he sheweth the fruit of the chastisements which GOD doeth sende vs. And that is alwaies to the ende to induce vs to suffer afflictions patiently; for we be like litle children, as Apostle saith in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. As long as a father holdeth the rodde in his hand & scourgeth his childe, there is nothing but weeping & sobbing: and euen so it is with vs. But if we could consider of the ende of our afflictions, to wit, that they be a furtherance to our saluation and doe stand vs in steede of medicines, (as we haue alreadie said) then were we too much vnthankfull if we coulde not finde in our hearres to bowe downe our neckes to him and say: Lorde conuert thou vs at thy pleasure seeing thou knowest that we haue neede thereof, and makest it profitable to our saluation, and doest not shew thy selfe altogether a rigorous Iudge. Moses therefore prouoketh vs thereunto by telling vs, that although the people of Israel hauing beene afflicted, perceiued not at the first that their sins were the cause why they were cast into farre countries, and as it were rooted out of the Church, and by all likelihoode vtterly reiected of God: yet shoulde they at length beginne to perceiue it. And therefore let vs learne to looke alwayes vnto our GOD when he scourgeth vs and if we haue forslowed to do it, yet when he holdeth on still, let vs then at leastwise remember him, seeing that he doth still visit vs, and let vs not be wilful stubborne.

Heb. 12.

Ier. 4. 1.

But indeede this is not common to all: for there be many which continue frowarde, and are vtterly cut off from the Church, and from al hope of saluation. And therefore seeing that the world is vnreformable, Let vs looke wel about vs that we bee not comprised in the number of the: and when God maketh vs to feele his wrath, let vs so feele it: as it cause vs not to dese him, & to vomet our bleasphemies as many do; but to bring vs in minde of our sinnes, and to make vs ashamed of them; and moreouer, that therwithall wee may bee assured to finde mercy in our GOD: for without that, it is impossible that wee shoulde haue anie desire to turne vnto him. As for those which thinke that God will not be mercifull vnto them, albeit that they doe acknowledge their sinnes, yet will they squame them downe in their filthinesse, and they can neuer be deliuered or dispatched from the. And why so? Because they runne away from God, neither is it possible to make them to come neere him; for that they haue none vnderstanding of his fatherly goodnesse, nor bee asserteyned that he is readie to receyue them vnto him. Hereby wee see, howe the diuell hath reigned and yet doeth reigne in the Popedome. For they talk much of repentance, but the wretched sinners are still left in doubt. In deede they

they giue them rotny plaisters, howbeit not to purge away the inward vncleanes, but rather to qualifie, and to sweeten the sore on the outside, which inwardly continueth still: wherevppon they become drunken with his foolish opinion, of satisfying God: & that thereby they deserue and make full amendes. Thus the wretched Papistes doe, they indeuoure to reconcile themselues to God, but with what certainties? None at all: all is haphazard. Againe they alleage the keyes of the Church; but those keyes, bee Pardons, Satisfactions, and Indulgences, and Merites before God, but no promise at all. Nowe contrariwise wee must vnderstande, that, for to haue true repentance, it is behouefull that God doe declare vnto vs his fatherly loue, and that in making our repaire to him we bee fully certified that we shall not be disappointed, nor haue the gate shut against vs. How so? Moses hath spoken obscurely of the Redeemer, for the time was not yet come that the plaine declaration should bee made thereof. At this day Iesus Christ doeth call vs, and wee vnderstand what the Apostle saieth; namely, that Gods Throne is not dreadfull and terrible vnto vs to make vs afraide, but that it is a Throne of Grace vnto vs, to the which wee may boldly approch. Nowe then let vs acknowledge the inestimable good which God hath doone vs, in drawing vs out of this maze of the Popedome, and in telling vs, that hee is readie to receiue vs to mercie, and to deale with vs like a father, notwithstanding that we haue bin rebellious children towardes him. This did Moses meane in this place.

Yea and for a more confirmation thereof he addeth, *Although thou were dispersed into the vttermost coastes vnder heauen, yet the Lorde thy God will fetch thee from thence, and bring thee againe into this lande which he hath promised thy fathers, and thou hast will increase thee more than euer thou wast.* Moses doeth here shewe that wee must not mistrust God, albeit that there bee nothing but troubles, mysteries and calamities, so as wee bee vtterly forlorne. Let vs haue an eye to this comfort. For ye see here howe y people of Israel was like a bodie torne in pieces, and driuen away as dust before the winde: and yet notwithstanding God doeth promise to gather them together againe. Nowe seeing hee hath wrought so with them, wee must vnderstand that he will doe the like toward vs at this day, and that although we were dispersed, he will not fayle to holde vs vnder his protection, so as we shall be gathered together againe, if Iesus Christ doe the office of a Shepeheard towarde vs, and wee bee of his flocke. And hath he not in deede accomplished towarde vs that which is spoken heere? Wee must consider, not onely howe God hath gathered vs in, when wee were vnder the tyrannie of the Pope; but moreouer howe he hath assembled vs heere in a flocke: wee must vnderstand that wee bee heere vnited all together, as if wee were of one housholde. Whereas we were dispersed and alienes from our Lorde Iesus Christ, he hath now reuuited vs to himselfe. For as Paule saieth to the Colossians, his office is to gather all thinges together as well in heauen as in earth. So long as we bee cut off from the vnitie of faith, and alienes from Iesus Christ, wee bee like dust driuen with the winde, and in such confused state haue wee beene, but God hath deliuered vs from it. As often therefore as wee come into extremitie, let vs vnderstande that God woulde haue vs yet to turne vnto him, and will giue vs furtherance thereunto: wherefore let vs plucke vp our heartes, following the exhortation that is giuen vs heere. Col. 1. 21.

And by the way Moses sheweth that GOD doeth it not for any recompence which he looketh for at the peoples hand, but for loue of his owne free choise, and for his promise sake, by the which he bounde himselfe when he swore vnto Abraham to giue vnto him and his that land for their inheritance. Therefore when wee turne vnto our God to aske him forgiuenesse of our sinnes, if wee woulde haue him mooued to shewe vs mercie: wee must not come vnto him vpon presumption of our merites; we must not thinke to obtaine grace by our owne satisfactions, or by our good workes, or by any other meanes: but wee must be wholly grounded vpon this, that it hath once pleased him to receiue vs vnto him, and also declared by his doomges, that he will holde vs for his children, seeing hee hath giuen vs Iesus Christ, by whom wee obtaine forgiuenesse. When wee bee once grounded vppon this free mercie, let vs not doubt, but that our Lorde is alwayes prest and readie to receiue vs to mercie. But if wee doe swarue neuer so litle from that way, woe shall so stray, that in stead of approching vnto God, wee shall goe further from him. That is the thing which Moses meant to signifie, in making mention of the othe, whereby God had sworne to their fathers that he woulde giue them the lande. Likewyse if at this day wee perceiue the Church to decrease, yea euen so farre as it may seeme to be nothing; let vs vnderstande that GOD will multiplie it, seeing hee hath made that promise, at leastwise if wee returne vnto him according as it is heere spoken. And seeing he hath iustified the knowledge of his mercie in the land of Chanaan, let vs not doubt at this day, but that to bring vs into the heritage of the kingdome of heauen, he will shewe himselfe much more stedfast, yea and vtter such power in our behalfe, that albeit wee see neuer so many lettes, as it were to shutte the way of saluation against vs, from the which euen our owne sinnes doe turne vs away; yet shall the goodnesse of GOD get the vpper hand, so wee bereaue not our selues of it altogether through our owne vnthankefulnesse. Seeing then that we doe heare such exhortations, let vs enter into examination of our sinnes, and let euerie of vs confesse howe many wayes hee hath offended his God, and let all of vs in generall doe the lyke with one common accord. And when wee haue mourned and sighed for them, let vs then pray vnto our good GOD, to touche vs so to the quicke, that wee may not onely come and

confesse our sinnes with our mouthes, and with certayne ceremonyes, but also returne to our GOD with heart and minde, so as he may asswage our plagues, griefes and afflictions, through his infinite goodnesse, which hee hath manifested vnto vs by his Gospell, and wee turne vnto him with sure and infallible confidence, to obtaine fauour at his hand.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good GOD, with acknowledgement of our faultes: beseeching him to cause his admonitions to profite in vs more and more; and that seeing he hath once called vs vnto him, he suffer not his labour to bee lost in afflicting vs so many wayes, but that wee may finally returne vnto him: and that in so returning wee may yeelde foorth true righteousnesse and soundnesse, so as wee double not nor play the hypocrites. And that to accomplish this thing hee make vs to feele and to acknowledge his fatherly goodnesse, that wee may bee altogether giuen ouer thereunto, and haue our eyes and all our senses so fixed on our Lorde Iesus Christ, as wee may vnderstand that it is by his meanes that wee must obtaine mercie at GOD, of the which wee bee vnworthie as touching our selues. That it will please him to bestowe this grace not onely vpon vs, but also vpon all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Munday the xx. of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXX. Sermon which is the second vpon the thirtith Chapter.

6 And the Lorde thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seede, that thou mayest loue the Lorde thy GOD with all thine heart and with all thy soule, to the ende that thou maist liue.

7 And the Lord thy God will lay all these curses vpon thine enemies, and vpon them that hate thee, and which haue persecuted thee.

8 Thou then shalt returne, and obey the voyce of the Lorde, and doe all these Commaundements, which I commaund thee this day.

9 The Lorde thy GOD will make thee plentifull in all the woorkes of thy hande, in the fruite of thy wombe, in the fruite of thy Cattell, and in the fruite of thy Lande to thy welfare. For the Lorde will reioyce agayne ouer thee to doe thee good, lyke as hee did reioyce ouer thy fathers.

10 If thou obey the voice of the Lord thy God, in keeping his Commandementes and his ordinaunces written in the booke of this Lawe, and returne vnto the Lorde thy GOD with all thyne hearte and with all thy Soule.

HItherto Moses in promysing y God would vouchsafe such fauour on his people, as to blesse them, hath spoken but of the thinges which concerne this present lyfe, as of bodily health, of foode, of peace, and of preseruation from their enemyes. But nowe hee speaketh of a higher and a more excellent matter, to wit, that GOD will chaunge the heartes of them which before were euil and froward. And that is a farre greater thing than to giue vs onely meate and drinke, and whatsoeuer else is to bee desired for the flesh in this transitorie lyfe. Wee haue moreouer to gather out of this text, that whereas the holy Scripture requireth vs to doe that which God demaundeth; it is not bycause wee haue the power to doe it: for GOD doeth not measure his commaundementes after our power: albeit that wee be weake, yet neuertheless wee bee bound vnto him: but when he hath shewed vs our duetie, it belongeth to him to giue vs the grace to accomplish it. And this text doth shewe it vs very well: for we haue learne it heretofore, (and Moses doeth yet againe confirme the same,) y men ought to turne to God, Deut. 30. that they ought to feare him with all their heart and with al their soule; & that they ought to obserue his law. Now when we heare this, we may iudge that if men will imploy themselues & take a good way, it is in their libertie, and they haue free choise to gouerne themselues well if they list: and the Papistes in deede doe abuse themselues with such Textes. For as soone as they heare that God commandeth, they do forthwith conclude that wee are able to put all in execution. But we see howe Moses speaketh thereof. He saith, Thou shalt keepe the commandements of the Lord thy GOD, to loue him with all thine heart and with all thy soule; and then he addeth, It is the Lord that will giue thee such a minde, & such an affection. Also he saith in another place, Cir-

Circumcise your hearts this day vnto the Lord: and now he saith, *It is the Lord that will circumcise thine hearts.* It is his very office. We see then, that when God giueth vs his lawe, it is not bycause we are able to attaine to the accomplishment of that which is contayned in it: but it is ynough for vs to vnderstand wherein we bee bound vnto him: and that knowing once our infirmitie, we resort to the remedie; euen to pray him that he will supply our default. But they may heere reply, that Moses meaneth not, that only GOD shold altogether change men, and reforme their hearts: for this place seemeth to shew, that God will ayde men, when they haue some good motion, and be disposed to serue him: and that it is so, he saith, Thou shalt loue the Lord thy God with all thy heart. But yet hee addeth, And the Lord wil make thee to loue him. It seemeth therfore that Moses placeth some good disposition in men, and that they doe begin on their part, and that thereuppon God helpeth them and addeth that which they want. Thus do the Papistes turmoyle themselues, when men alleage vnto them whatsoeuer is spoken in holy Scripture concerning the grace of God; as ỹ it is he which inlightneth our conscience, it is hee that giueth vs the knowledge to discerne good from euill, it is he that giueth vs wisedome to walke as becommeth vs, it is he that giueth vs power to resist temptations, it is he that weldeth & guideth our hearts in his obedience; it is he that giueth vs the power and vertue to continue: when men tell them any of these thinges, O [say they] it is true that men doe not all for, seeing that they be weake, God must ayde them: but yet doeth it lye in them to guide themselues, and to haue some good preparation: and moreouer it lyeth in them also to follow the grace of God and to receiue it; and hauing accepted it to make it to preuaile. To bee short, the Papistes make a parting of stakes as if it lay in vs to seeke God, & then that it were in vs to put his grace in effect, in such wise as it should not be vnprofitable, and that there is also a certaine agreement betweene God and man, so as God for his part doth one peece and we doe the other, yea and the principall part. But the meaning of Moses is nothing so. For he sheweth not what belongeth to man, as in comparison and in respect of God. But it is the common fashion of the holy scripture, first to shew vs what is our dutie, and then to adde that although we be not able to resort vnto God when he calleth vs, yet we must not be fainthearted at ỹ feeling of our weakenesse: but rather resort vnto him that is able to helpe it, according as he hath promised to do it. Let vs marke wel then, that when holy Scripture speaketh of that which men doe owe vnto God, yet must not in that case stand scanning of our owne power and ability: for we shall not faile to be euermore detters, as we haue said: and yet we must note also, that the vnabilitie which is in vs, proceedeth of our fault. Yet notwithstanding the Papists alleage, that it were a cruelkie in God to require of vs to do more than we can. It seemeth indeed, that God ought to be contented; if a man doe what he can. Now then if we cannot haue a good desire, and if we haue yet lesse power, that we cánot so much as think a good thought; wherfore doth God constraine vs to loue him perfectly? There seemeth to be no vpright dealing in ỹ. But we must repaire to our originall sinne, which hindereth vs so as we serue not God no nor haue not the will to serue him. Indeede God hath imprinted a will in vs by nature, and for as much as we are mẽ, we haue a discretion to discerne good and euill, whereby we be inexcusable: and when we sin, it commeth not of compulsiõ, neither are we forced by other meanes; but it proceedeth of our own will and inclination. But now let vs see whether our wil can bend it selfe both the waies, and is able to chuse either good or euill? No. For we be captiues vnder sinne: and whence cõmeth this captiuitie and bondage? From the offence of Adam. Seeing therefore that the euill is in our selues; wee must not seeke for fonde and vnprofitable excuses, for we shall win nothing thereby; but let vs stoope and condemn our selues. If God therfore require aught of vs, he doth vs no wrõg; and yet notwithstanding, men may not reply that they be feeble and weake, for the euill shall euermore be imputed vnto them, & they shal be found guiltie thereof. But now let vs come back to the matter which we haue touched. The holy scripture setteth before vs the lawe of God as ỹ thing which we ought to follow; and that is our rule. We for our part doe draw cleane contrary. Whereto then serueth the law of God so long as it is but a dead letter, that is to say, so long as we haue but our eares beaten therewith, or so long as it is written but in paper & parchment, or in stones as this was, as it is in deede so long as it is but preached vnto vs? It serueth but to our condemnation, so as we be there conuicted and can no more pleade ignorance: but rather shew our selues open rebels, in that we bow not downe our neckes, to receiue the yoke which God hath ordained for vs. That is the cause why the lawe of God vnder Moses did bring nothing but wrath. Therefore he saith ỹ it doth augment sinne; and consequently that it is vnto vs the messenger of death. So then, let vs marke well, that whereas God teacheth vs what wee ought to doe; albeit ỹ the same doctrine ought of it selfe to serue vs to saluation: yet neuertheless it bringeth vs nothing but condemnation, euen bicause of our sin. Such is the falling out of it; but howsoeuer ỹ case stand, yet must the law of God alwaies condẽne vs. Now after that God hath conuicted men, & beaten downe their pride, to the intent they should not presume of themselues; he addeth the promise, and saith: Go to, It is true ỹ your hearts be incircumcised, it is certaine ỹ you haue blind motions, and that you be corrupted in all your nature: but I will change your heartes, I will remue your mindes, I will reforme you to my selfe: whereas heretofore you haue been rebellious against me, & there hath bin nothing in you but malice: henceforth there shalbe a readines to obey my lawe. God giueth that very promise. Whereby hee sheweth that whatsoeuer hee commaunded vs afore, our doing thereof shalbe by his only power, & not in any part by our own.

2. Cor. 3. 5.

Rom. 2. 14.

Rom. 6. 17, & 7. 14.

Rom. 4. 15. Rom. 5. 2. 2. Cor. 3. 7.

In

In this case it is not for vs to father the cheefe part vppon our owne free will, no nor the one halfe neither, for God must haue all the prayse without exception, and that whatsoeuer we doe, doe proceede of his woorking of it in vs, and of his reforming of our wittes, and of his changing of vs. And for that cause the holy Scripture
2.Cor.5.17. sayth, that we be made newe creatures. When it sayth so, doth it meane that men were earst good? No, but that GOD doeth reforme them. And in deede if it were in vs to amende our soules, and to renewe them; wee shoulde doe more than GOD doeth. GOD hath created our bodyes and also our soules; but yet notwithstanding, what bring wee from our mothers wombe, but all maner of cursednesse? For (as I haue sayde) wee bee infected with originall sinne. Thus doeth GOD make vs mortall men; yea, but in the meane whyle, there is this mischeefe, namely, that wee bee aliened from him and from all goodnesse. Nowe if men were able to deliuer themselues out of the curse wherein they bee, and could giue themselues a newe power: shoulde not they then doe more than GOD hath doone? Nowe then whereas Moses sayeth in this place, *The Lorde will circumcise thy heart to loue thy GOD with all thy heart and with all thy soule:* hee sheweth thereby that if wee doe amisse, (as we doe indeede,) wee cannot haue so much as any one good motion to come vnto GOD, vntill wee be altogether renewed by Gods working in vs: and therefore that we must not be fainthearted. Wherfore? For when he hath taught vs what we ought to doe, he giueth vs also the power to performe it. After hee hath taught vs by the voyce of men, hee teacheth vs also by his holy Spirite in our heartes; and that teaching is of efficacie; so as wee doe not onely knowe the good, but also wee haue a desire to followe it and to giue our selues ouer vnto it. And
Iohn.6.44. that is the cause why hee sayeth that we bee drawen vnto him. And indeede Moses sayth not, The Lorde will circumcise thyne heart, to the ende that thou mayst bee able to loue him, but hee sayth, to the ende that thou loue him. Hee sheweth that GOD doeth not onely giue vs the power to will well, but also doeth throughly fashion vs to the same. And that is a further point wherein the Papistes doe abuse themselues too grossely: for when they speake of the grace of the holy Spirite, they vnderstande that GOD in deede giueth vs the power, if it seeme good to vs: but yet that all the same lyeth in our discretion, and that GODS woorking in vs is not in such sorte, as that both our listing and our performing proceede both thereof. But it is too nygardely a speaking of the grace of GOD, that he should say vnto man, Well, I wil giue thee power that thou mayst doe well, if thou wylt: but I will lay the brydle on thy necke, and when thou hast a good will, and that of thy selfe, if thou hast constancie and power to put it in execution: thou mayest well doe it, and I will helpe thee therein. If GOD shoulde doe so, what shoulde become of our saluation? For can men in such fraylie as wee doe feele, and amiddest so many combattes as Sathan doeth deliuer vs, haue one onely firme and constant will? It is impossible. Moses therefore sayeth not, that GOD will circumcise our heartes, to the intent wee may haue power to feare him: but hee putteth the thing in effect, to the intent that wee shall feare him; after which manner also hee speaketh by his Prophetes, as well Ieremie as Ezechiel. Hee Ier.32.39. Ezec.36.26. sayeth, that hee will put his feare in our heartes. Hee sayeth not that hee will giue them power. And then will I make them (sayeth hee) to walke in my commaundementes. This is it that GOD doeth attribute vnto himselfe, to wit, that hee will so imprint his Lawe in our heartes, as wee shall haue a will agreeable vnto his: and then hee will guide and gouerne vs in such sorte as wee shall ouercome all temptations, and accomplish that which hee commaundeth vs. It belongeth not to vs then, to challendge such prayse to our selues. Thereby wee see that the Papistes deale treacherously in all the doctrine of freewill: for all their whole seeking is to robbe GOD of all that euer the holy Scripture declareth to bee his, and which hee reserueth to himselfe, and to spoyle him of his honour, vsurping it euerie man to himselfe. Let vs therefore beware of this deuilish arrogancie, and let vs vnderstande that Saint Paule hath not sayde without cause, That it Phil.2.13. is GOD that woorketh in vs both the will and the deede. Saint Paule sayeth not after the manner of the Papistes, that when God giueth vs the meane, wee may bee able to will that which is good, but hee sayeth, that hee will put the will in vs. And then hee addeth, that GOD in likewise doeth woorke the matter, that is to say, hee accomplisheth the good woorkes in vs: and the whole is performed (sayeth hee) after his owne will. Therefore, whereas the Papistes saye that GOD hath respect whether wee bee able to vse his grace well or no: and that according as euerie man behaueth and gouerneth himselfe, GOD dealeth with him thereafter; Saint Paule sayeth that it proceedeth altogether of GODS good pleasure. And yet it is not therefore to bee sayde that wee bee blockes of wood. But let vs marke well what Saint Paul concludeth, that is, that wee must Phil.2.12. walke in feare and warinesse, woorking our saluation. What? Is it in vs to doe it? No: but hee sheweth that wee bee instrumentes of GOD, and that when hee giueth vs the will and power to performe, it is bycause that euerie one of vs shoulde offer himselfe to doe his indeuour, howbeit vnder the leading of the holy Spirit, acknowledging that all of it proceedeth from aboue: and Saint Paule sayeth that wee must doe it with feare and carefulnesse, to the intent wee bee not vnprofitable; and yet that in the meane while, there bee not any drop of presumption in vs, to suppose that

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wee haue any abilitie or power of our selues, but that GOD bee honoured as hee deserueth. Nowe wee see, what is the naturall sense of this Text, where Moses promiseth vnto the Iewes that GOD will circuncise their hearts. Thereby hee sheweth that it is not ynough for men to haue the Lawe preached, and to haue their eares beaten therewith, and to vnderstande what their duetie is: for all that will be but as a dead thing, vntill the time that God doe chaunge their heartes, and reforme them, and woorke within them; and that the affections of men and their thoughtes bee guided by the holy Ghost.

And by the way hee sheweth heere the vse of Circumcision, which is another poynt worthie to bee marked. For the fantasticall felloes of our dayes, which woulde take away the Baptisme of little children, neuer vnderstoode the vse of Circumcision. It seemed vnto them that it was but a temporall matter, yea and a tryfling thing, and that it was not spirituall for the auncient fathers: in so much that the cursed heretike which was punished in this Towne, mocked all the Sacramentes of the Lawe of Moses. Abraham [sayd hee] had but a shadowe of the heauenly lyfe; and albeit that hee was named the father of the faithfull, and it appeareth, that hee did alwaies stay himselfe vppon the celestiall heritage: yet was hee not touched therewith, neither dyd the fathers knowe GOD, but worshipped an Angell which was there in a visible shape in steade of GOD. These bee the horrible Blasphemies, which insue when men doe so separate the Lawe from the Gospell. In deede wee haue at this day a grace which surpasseth that grace which GOD shewed to our fathers: but yet must wee not so bereaue Abraham of the spirituall kingdome of our Lorde Iesus Christ, as to make Circumcision to bee but an earthly Sacrament. Therefore let vs heare well in minde, that when GOD ordayned Circumcision, besides that it was a seale of the righteousnesse of fayth, (as Saint Paule sayeth in the fourth Chapter to the Romanes:) it did also shewe vnto men that they ought to bee mortifyed, and renewed by regeneration to the obedience of GOD. Whereby wee may gather, that Circumcision signified the same thing vnto the Iewes, which Baptisme importeth vnto vs at this day. What haue wee in Baptisme? That wee bee blessed in our Lorde Iesus Christ; and that whereas wee haue nothing but accursednesse by the beinge of Adam, wee be sanctifyed to bee adopted into the celestiall heritage, so as God by iustifying vs, doeth accept them which were not earst woorthie to bee numbred amongest his creatures. Againe, wee haue also a similitude and a portraiture of death, that wee myght bee chaunged to serue our GOD. The same was likewise in Circumcision: and Moses doeth shewe in this place, that it was not a vayne figure. It was not a marke that GOD had set vppon his people, but onely to say, You are a chosen people, and in the meane whyle they shoulde haue thereby no promise, nor warrant of their saluation, nor of any thing that was spirituall. But contrariwyse in saying that GOD will Circumcise their hearts; hee sheweth that this Sacrament, this visible signe of Circumcision, declared vnto them that they ought to bee chaunged, and that they ought to be a holy people vnto their GOD. And therefore let vs learne that Baptisme at this day succeedeth circumcision, like as Saint Paule sayeth in the Epistle to the Colossians. After hee hath shewed that Circumcision remayneth not at this day as touching the outwarde vse: hee sayeth that wee bee Circumcised, not by the hand of man, but in that wee bee buried in the Baptisme of our Lorde Iesus, whereby the olde man is mortifyed, that from henceforth the spirit of God may gouerne vs. Thus yee see what we haue to obserue in this place, as touching the first poynt. Therefore let vs marke, that although the fathers which lyued vnder the Lawe were as little children vnder their Tutors and Ouerseers: yet were they the children of GOD as wee are; and had the verie same promise of saluation, and the Sacramentes which GOD deliuered them, tended to the selfe same ende, and so consequently were spirituall. Thus much concerning one point. Col. 2. 12. Gal. 3. 23. & 4. 2.

Nowe furthermore it is heere shewed vnto vs, that Circumcision did not onely signifie vnto the Iewes, that they shoulde bee a holy people vnto GOD, and that they shoulde change the malice of their hearts: but it shewed also that God would do them the fauour to regenerate them by his holy Spirit. As at this day in Baptisme, when the water is powred vppon the head of a little childe, it is not onely to signifie, that beyng come to mans age hee must serue GOD, and yet notwithstanding is not able to doe it vnlesse it bee giuen him from aboue: but the infant is baptised by the hande of another, and the hand of the Minister is, as it were the hand of Iesus Christ, to whom onely it doeth appertaine to Baptise, as Saint Iohn sayth: Wee in deede doe Baptise with water, but his office is to Baptise with the Spirit and with fyre. Therefore let vs marke it well that when the Minister layeth the water on the childes head, therein hee representeth the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ, witnessing thereby, that our Lorde Iesus will bee so gracious to as many as beleeue and are chosen of GOD his father, as to drawe them to him and to gouerne them, so as they shall become newe Creatures. And euen so is it with Circumcision. Abraham in deede was circumcised, but what was after an extraordinarie manner. But yet ordinarily it behooued men to bee circumcised by the handes of them that were appointed thereunto: and these did represent the person of God. It was therefore a testimonie that men of themselues could not be circumcised, but that it was necessarie that God shoulde put his hande thereto, and that he should change them.

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Seeing it is so, let vs marke, that in all the Sacramentes wee bring nothing of our owne, but that wee doe rather come to receiue that which is offered vnto vs in the name of GOD. The Sacraments then be not meritorious matters, that men might alledge any seruice that they had doone; but rather come to seeke that which they want. Whereby wee see the foolishnesse that is in the Iewes: for they boast themselues of Circumcision, as if it had beene a great vertue, and woulde needes bring it in reckoning, as if God had beene beholden vnto them, bycause they were circumcised. To bee short, whensoeuer deseruing and grace came in question, the Iewes pretended that they were not saued by the free goodnesse and mercie of God. And wherefore? To what end serued ỹ circumcision? It serued for a testimonie, for an earnest, for a visible signe, to declare ỹ it is God that doth all in vs. But these miserable beastes vnderstand not that. See here I pray you the vnthankfulnes of men; which hath taken place not with that nation onely, but among the christians also, where ỹ goodnes of God hath bin vttered much more at large. Behold, our Lord Iesus Christ calleth vs vnto him, he telleth vs that we must seeke all our welfare in him: & yet the Papistes haue not ceassed to distinguishe, and to seeke out a woorke, which is wrought on mans part as they terme it. They haue yeelded that the principall part of the Sacramentes is a diuine worke, but yet neuertheless they sticke not to say, that men doe bring thereunto somewhat of their owne. And no maruaile. For we see to what point they are come, namely that they haue chaunged the Supper of our Lord Iesus Christ, into a charme, and a diuelish sorcerie. Thus saide Iesus Christ; Take, Eate; he commandeth vs to receiue it: & the Papistes make God to beleeue, ỹ they do offer it vnto him. And further they stablish thereupon a worke of merite, euen the most excellent ỹ euer they could dreame of. But yet for al that we see how ỹ diuell hath bewitched them, so as they haue changed ỹ whole order of nature. For in sted of receiuing ỹ thing with humilitie which God offered them; they haue presumed to offer vnto him the things which they haue forged in their owne braine: & doe make themselues beleeue, that all those things are acceptable vnto him, yea and that he is very much beholding to them for so dooing. So much the more therefore doth it stand vs in hand to mark that which is spoken here, namely, The Lorde thy God will circumcise thy heart. So then, seeing God hath shewed vs what Baptisme doeth signifie, let vs vnderstande howe it is our duetie to reforme vs, and to renounce our owne nature to serue GOD. But doe wee once knowe that? Then let vs proceede to the promise that is giuen vs, which is, that bycause wee can doe nothing, GOD sayth that he will put to his hand, that wee may bee chaunged, and become new creatures, through his holy spirite. This is in effect that which wee haue to obserue in this place.

Nowe Moses addeth, *That thou mayst liue,* not that God dealeth with vs according to our deseruings: but bicause wee be slouthfull, therefore he addeth this promise, namely, that wee shall be blessed of God: and whatsoeuer he hath sayd to make vs to walk in his obedience, it is to shewe vs, that wee must walke in such sort, as wee prouoke not the vengeaunce of GOD against vs, if wee will bee blessed of him. It is true that hee may alwayes punish vs by good right: and that although hee guide vs, and that wee haue a good will to serue him, yet is there such imperfection in vs, as wee bee euermore faultie before him: but yet hee forbeareth vs. And therefore when these thinges be put together, namely, that GOD maketh vs to walke according to his Lawe, and that hee doeth it to the ende that wee may liue; it is allone to if it were sayde, that men bereaue and spoyle themselues of the grace of GOD, bycause they are wicked, and liue not as becommeth them. And therefore God is fayne to reforme it, and to drawe them vnto him, and to reforme them, and by that meane to make them to inioy all his blessings.

Nowe hee addeth thereunto, *That he will reioyce ouer thee for good, as he reioyced ouer their fathers.* This is a manner of speeche that importeth much. In deede GOD is not subiect to our passions, to reioyce after the manner of men, there is no such matter in him: but hee speaketh thus, for that hee coulde not sufficiently expresse the loue which hee beareth to vs, but by such similitudes. The thing then which the holy Ghost meant, is that GOD holdeth vs so deare, and beareth vs such feruent loue, that a father reioyceth not more when hee is able to aduaunce his childe, or when he can doe him good, than GOD reioyceth in vs, when hee hath occasion to doe vs good; as who woulde say, that his afflicting and scourging of vs doeth grieue and vexe him, and that hee doeth it contrarie to his inclination. For hee requireth nothing but to finde vs alwayes disposed to receiue the riches which hee hath in his hande, which also hee is readie to bestowe vpon vs. And therefore doeth GOD borrowe the same similitude of men. For (as wee haue sayde) hee is not like vnto vs, neyther must wee haue so fond imaginations, as to thinke that hee is mooued with passions eyther one way or other, but to the intent to manifest vnto vs, howe much hee loueth vs, hee crieth alas, when he is to afflict those to whome he meaneth to doe good. Alas [sayeth hee] must I auenge my selfe as of myne enemyes, and reioyce mee in vexing them? Hee calleth them his enemyes, and yet hee speaketh still of the Iewes, whom hee had chosen: but hee presupposeth that they made warre against him, and that therefore hee was driuen to be reuenged of them: howbeit hee declareth that it was to his griefe. Let vs therefore learne to taste of this loue whereof the holy scripture speaketh vnto vs, that we may be so rauished therewith, as to desire nothing more thē to submit our selues to our God, which is in deede the thing that he shooteth at.

Where-

Col. 2, 10.

Matt. 26. 26

Deut. 30. 9

Wherefore is it that God forceth himselfe to shewe vnto vs so vehement an affection? It is to mollifie the hardnes of our hearts, that we may be enflamed with an other maner of zeale than wee haue. Will we then enioy our God? Let vs giue him occasion to doe vs good, let vs (I say) suffer him to be merciful and liberal towards vs: when wee hinder not God to doe vs good, hee protesteth that he is glad of it. And cõtrarywise, when we lay a barre in his way; so as he cannot vse his gratious goodnesse towards vs, in powring out his benefites vppon vs as hee for his parte is ready to doe: hee sayth, that we grieue his holie spirit. For after that manner speaketh the Prophet Isay. They haue grieued the spirit of God (sayth hee.) Not that God is subiect to vexation of minde, as I haue sayd already; but it is to shewe that men are so much the more faultie, and to cause them to abhorre their naughtinesse the more, when they bee thus rebellious against him, and cannot suffer him to doe them good. Moses dooth adde moreouer, *Because thou shalt haue hearkened to the voyce of the Lord thy God.* Here hee commeth againe to the order of speaking: for it is enough that hee hath tolde vs in one worde, that because wee bee not able, God promiseth to doe it. Yet neuertheless hee continueth his office: and as hee was the lawegiuer ordeyned of God, so doeth hee require the people to walke vprightly. That is the cause why hee vseth all this speech, saying: Because thou shalt hearken to the voyce of the Lorde thy God, yea and that thy hearing shall bee to keepe that which is contained in the Lawe. Heereby he meaneth to shewe vs, howe wee shoulde obey God, that is to say, by what meane. And as touching the ende, wee haue seene heeretofore what it is: namely that hee requireth obedience at our handes, to the ende hee may haue occasion to deale with vs gently, and after a fatherly manner, and that hee desireth nothing but to powre out his great treasures vppon vs. It is then to our profite and saluation that wee shoulde obey him. That is the ende, and the meane is, by hearing his voyce. We must therefore beware that wee rebell not against him, nor that wee care when hee speaketh vnto vs, except wee meane to grieue him, as hee sayeth in the Psalme: Bee not rebellious as your fathers were, which prouoked Gods spirite euery day. There God complaineth that hee was prouoked so much, when that the people grieued him, and that hee was fayne to enter into a dislike of them. So then, let vs holde this rule that is deliuered vnto vs, whereby to enioy our GOD, that hee may cause vs to prosper. The meane thereof is, that whilest hee speaketh vnto vs, we haue our eares attentiue to receiue his voyce. And Moses doeth therewithal expresse what is the manner of hearing God well. For there are a great many which bring Asses eares with them: they can welynough say that the things which are spoken are true, like the Asse which can well ynough nodde with his eares. So it costeth them nothing to say, It is all good, I like well of it: but yet they bee not a whit touched at their heartes, nay rather, wee see they despise all that is tolde them; and they suppose that God is beholding vnto them, when they haue not openly spoken against him, nor blasphemed his doctrine. But Moses requireth an other manner of hearing farre differing from this; namely *The performing of the thinges which are contained in the lawe.* It is sayd in an other place, that Iesus Christ auoweth them to bee blessed which heare the worde of GOD and keepe it. And there our Lord Iesus Christ speaketh the more grossly, to the intent we might be the better enformed: for we forget things, and we think that if we confesse the Law to be good, righteous, and holy, wee bee then discharged: But our Lorde saith, that wee must first heare and then keepe. And Moses ioyneth both together, as in deede, to heare and to keepe, are thinges which ought neuer to goe a sunder. Yea, but yet therewithall hee giueth men a perfect rule, so they yeelde to bee taught of him; and they shall not neede, (as wee haue seene here before) to turne either to the right hand or to the left. Therefore let vs marke that the doctrine of the lawe dooth teach vs what is good, and that thereby GOD meaneth to informe vs playnely of his will, that wee may bee pliable to bee taught, and submit our selues obediently vnto him. They then which inuent one thing or other of their owne braine, and would doe as they list: doe shewe that they rather serue their owne affections, than GOD. Therefore to order our lyfe well, wee haue none other rule but that which is giuen vs from aboue, nor any other than the very same which is contayned in the Lawe of God. In deede men doe euermore confesse that nothing ought to be done which is not agreeable vnto Gods will: but yet for al that, they forge and deuise still some new inuention or other. And that is because they thinke that God hath not in his Lawe declared vnto vs, all that hee requireth of vs, and that hee woulde haue vs to stay altogether vppon that. And therefore Moses sendeth vs backe to that which is set downe heere: as if hee shoulde say, Men must not take vppon them to adde any thing in this behalfe vnder colour that the same is well pleasing to GOD; for I tell you that whatsoeuer God requireth and alloweth, hee dooth declare it in his Lawe: content your selues therefore with this doctrine, and bee not wiser than needeth, seeing that your GOD hath taught you perfectly. For the better confirmation hereof hee sayth, *Because thou shalt be conuerted to the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with al thy soule.* He sheweth here, that before wee can heare GOD, or keepe his lawe, and bee obedient vnto him: wee must bee conuerted vnto him. In deede hee speaketh to such as were already swarued: But yet the nature of men is so in generall, that euen from our mothers wombe wee bee all of vs backslyders, and enemies to GOD, and

Luke.11.28.

Deut.5.32.

there is nothing in vs but vtter frowardneſſe and rebellion. God therefore muſt bee faine to chaunge vs from the roote. For he ſhall neuer get good fruite out of vs, vnleſſe the roote be firſt chaunged. Now this worde Conuerſion, or *Turning* importeth, that, whereas man hath his backe turned vpon God, he muſt turne againe toward him with his face: and that is all one as if the ſcripture ſhould ſpeake of a change; as it is in lykewiſe ſayde that wee muſt bee renewed. Wee muſt therefore conſider, that if wee haue the witte to ſuffer our GOD to teach vs, it is a token that wee are going toward him, and that wee bee willing to ſhewe the feare, obedience, and ſubiection which wee owe vnto his Lawe: But yet wee muſt come to this poynt, of conuerting or turning back. And wherefore? For vntill men doe knowe themſelues, how can they ſo order their lyfe, as it may bee acceptable to God? Wee muſt vnderſtand that wee bee altogether vntoward, and wee muſt beginne at this poynt, that whereas we haue bin lyke ſtrayed beaſtes, we muſt come and ſubmit our ſelues to our God. And for that cauſe the Prophet Ieremie ſaith, that the thornes which bee in vs muſt bee plucked vp, and then the good ſeede ſhal haue place: as if a place were full of thornes and bryers, and euill weedes, the ſame coulde not bee ſowen, neither coulde any plough goe there to put in the good ſeede: and therefore it muſt firſt bee ſtubbed and rid cleane. And that is the cauſe alſo why the Apoſte ſetteth downe the ſame ſimilitude, according to that which Moſes meant to ſhewe in this place, inſomuch that hauing treated of the feare of God, and of obedience to his lawe, hee dooth purpoſely ſpeake of Converſion, ſaying it is needefull that men ſhoulde bee chaunged. And hee ſayth, *with all the heart and with all the ſoule*, ſhewing that the repentance which God requireth of vs, is that wee ſhoulde ſerue him vnfainedly, according as all the Scripture declareth. For men bee giuen to hypocriſie: It is enough with them to haue a certaine faire ſhewe and outward appearance, and it ſeemeth to them that God is payed. But he regardeth not that which is faire to the eye. hee would poſſeſſe our hartes and affections, that is the principall poynt. Meane we then to direct our lyfe in ſuch ſorte as it may bee allowed of GOD? It is not ſufficient to occupie our handes, our feete, and our eyes, and to order our outwarde lyfe vnblamably, ſo as men may finde no fault therewith: but alſo our thoughtes and our affections muſt bee altogether changed, as Saint Paule alſo declareth, that the ſame is our reaſonable ſeruice. Renne your ſelues (ſaith he,) He ſpeaketh neither of hands, nor of feet, but of al your vnderſtanding & of al your ſoule: you muſt of neceſſitie be changed, if you deſire that God ſhold accept the offering which you make vnto him of your lyfe. Herein we ſee how much the Papiſtes be deceiued, when they ſpeake of repentance. For among them repentance [or as they terme it, Penaunce) is but the dooing of trifling toyes, as to goe woolwarde, to trotte on pilgrimage, to doe other gewgawes, to cauſe ſome Maſſe to bee ſayde, or to beſtowe ſome Almes. That is the thing which the Papiſtes doe comprehend vnder this woorde Penance. But the holy ſcripture ſaith that men muſt conuert, that is to ſay, bee chaunged. There is no worde of gadding hither and thither, neither is there any talking of the making of any outward countenance; but that there muſt bee this renewing. And it declareth yet farther, y the ſame renewing muſt be of our hart, and not onely of our hart, but alſo of all our whole heart; as if it were ſayd, that God accepteth no fayning, but rather vtterly abhorreth it. True it is that we cannot haue a heart ſo perfect as is requiſite, it ſhall want much thereof: neuertheleſſe, wee muſt miſlyke of all fayning, and not be double minded: And wee muſt enforce our ſelues to fighe againſt all our wicked affections, and not ceaſe vntill our God doe raigne ouer vs as wee ſerue him, not vppon compulſion and in outwarde ſhewe, but of a free good will, and as ſeeing all our delight in his Lawe, according to that way which Dauid ſheweth vs by his owne example.

Rom. 12. 2.

Ier. 4. 4.

Rom. 12. 2.

Pſal. 119.

Nowe foraſmuch as wee bee ſo farre off from this perfection, and ſo guiltie before our God, as hee may iuſtly caſt vs off altogether: let vs come and with all humilitie fall downe before him, beſeeching him that it may pleaſe him to haue pitie vpon vs, and to receiue vs to mercie in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, blotting out our faultes and offences, and not to reſpect what wee haue deſerued: But rather to vſe his infinite mercie, that wee by that meane may bee reconciled vnto him, and nothing may hinder him to make vs to feele his grace and to guide vs by his holy ſpirite in ſuch ſorte as wee may bee all wholy his, and hee poſſeſſe vs, and euermore vpholde vs, as we haue neede, vntill he hath throughly reformed vs, and vtterly ridde vs not onely from the imperfection of our fleſhe, but alſo from this morrall body it ſelfe, to bring vs into the glory of his kingdome. That it may pleaſe him to beſtowe this fauour not onely vppon vs, but in lykewiſe vppon all the people and nations of the earth, &c.

On

On Tewsday the xxj. of April, 1556.

The CLXXI. Sermon which is the third vpon the thirtith Chapter.

11 For the commaundement which I commaund thee this day, is not hidden from thee, nor farre off from thee.

12 It is not in heauen, that thou mightest say, which of vs shal go vp into heauen and fetch it vs, to make vs heare it that we may doe it?

13 Neither is it beyond the Sea, that thou mightest say, which of vs shall goe ouer the sea, and bring it vs, that we may heare it and doe it?

14 For this worde is very nigh thee, euen in thy mouth and in thine heart, to doe it.

HEretofore in the last Chapter, Moses had put a difference betwixt Gods secrets and the law, saying that if wee bee learned in Gods worde, we shal alwayes find such doctrine as is behoouefull for our selues and for our children. And in the same place hee protested, that God speaketh not in such darke manner, as men cannot vnderstand what hee meaneth: but that he expresseth his wil faithfully, to the end they should haue good and conuenient instruction to their saluation. Nowe continuing his purpose, he saith further, that the Lawe which he had declared, is not a secret doctrine, nor farre distant from the people, so as they might reply, saying: Who is hee that shall passe ouer the sea? or who is hee that shall mount vp aboue the clowdes? No, saith hee, the worde is set downe before thine eyes, thou hast it in thy mouth and in thy heart: and so is there no place at all of excuse through ignorance: wherefore turne this grace to your profite; otherwise there is nought else to be looked for, but dreadfull condemnation before God vpon all them that continue in their blindnesse; for here is that true light which shoulde guide vs in all the course of our life. Wee see what Moses meant in this Text, euen to exhorte them to whom hee had deliuered the Lawe, to be attentiue to the same. Now for that purpose, he promiseth them that in so doing, they shoulde not spend their time in vaine, but that if they would apply their studie to bee edified in the worde of God, they shoulde finde sufficient for that purpose. On the contrarie side, he pronounceth a terrible threatning against all them that goe about to shielde their faultes with ignorance. For there remaineth no more excuse after that GOD hath spoken. If this were said in the time of the Lawe: howe much more conueniently may it bee sayd to vs in these dayes? For wee are not ignorant that God hath shewed himselfe vnto vs more familiarly, than to them to whom Moses spake: they had onely that which remaineth vnto vs to this day. But since that time, God sent his Prophets, which haue more largely expounded y thinges, that were briefely and darkly mentioned in the lawe. After all this, the Lorde Christ our sauiour is come into the worlde, and hath accomplished that which was spoken by the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrues: that God had spoken after diuers manners vnto our fathers, but nowe lastly, he hath shewed himselfe by the mouth of his onely Sonne, giuing vs a final conclusion of all Propheties, and euery maner of doctrine. We heare also how our Lorde Iesus sayth: that many kinges and Prophets had longed to see and to heare that which his disciples sawe and heard, and that they found not that fauour. This also is spoken vnto vs. So then let vs marke well that the reproofe which Moses layd to the Iewes whom hee taught, shall turne to our dreadfull condemnation, if we profit not in the schoole of God, whiles he taketh the care and trauaile to teach vs. Nowe for one point wee haue to note what is sayd here: namely, *That the word is not hidden nor farre from vs, so as we might say: who is hee that shall passe ouer the Sea? who is hee that shall mount vp aboue the Clowdes?* By these wordes God sheweth, that when his word is published, it is not in vaine, as it is also sayd by his Prophet Esay: Wee conclude then, that the doctrine of God is not of it selfe so incomprehensible, that wee haue not abilitie to conceiue it: but that it is a perfect light whereby wee may beholde the way of saluation, as hereafter shall be shewed. It is such an orderly kinde of teaching, as no body but our selues is to bee blamed, if we be not edified as we ought to bee, and so farre forth as it is necessarie for vs. See here then I pray you the Testimonie which God giueth vnto his worde: namely, how it is not a iarring that cannot bee vnderstoode,

Luk. 10. 24.

Heb. 1. 2.

Esa. 45. 19.

but a playne speech, to the end that men might be brought vnto him, by knowing what is meete and expedient for them, by discerning betwixt the good and the euill. Nowe seeing that God speaketh thus of his worde, wee must not doubte to finde that which hee saith. For otherwise we shoulde make him a lyer: but hee shall be found faithfull, and our selues condemned of Blasphemie. Let vs marke farther, that the promise which God maketh vs, is infallible, to the end that wee should stand fast, and not wauer with any doubt or scruple, if wee suffer our selues to be caught by him. Then let vs but yeelde our selues teachable, and sure it is, that God for his parte, will not suffer vs to dwell in suspence, nor our mindes to wander, and to goe on groping like blinde folke. There is full certainetie of knowledge, if wee become good scholers to God, and resist him not as robbers. And here a man may see the froward vnthankfulnesse of the Papistes, which would make men beleeue, that they should not venture to reade the holy scripture, nor once be so hardy as to looke into it, because it is so high and so deep a thing, y men shal be forthwith caryed away into many errors and many fancies. It is very true that men doe abuse the trueth of God: and we our selues doe see, howe they turne the trueth into lyes: But yet to impute the same vnto Gods word, it were a diuelish blasphemie. And therefore let vs learn that we must settle our selues wholy vppon that which is shewed vnto vs here. For God himselfe dooth assure vs that in his worde we shall finde the right vnderstanding of all thinges that are expedient for our saluation. Thinke we that our good God will deceiue vs? Let vs therefoee abhorre the excuse which the Papistes doe holde, of purpose to dwel, to nestle, yea and altogether to rotte in their ignorance. But contrariwise, let vs trust and wholy rest vpon this promise, knowing that God doth vs an inestimable good turn, whensoeuer it pleaseth him to set his worde before our eyes; and to deliuer it to bee preached in our eares. Now then, whensoeuer God giueth vs his knowledge, let vs vnderstand that he will not haue such a treasure to be lost or to perish: but that we should receiue it, and turne it to our cõmoditie. But herewithal we haue to mark also, that vntill God haue spoken and taught vs in his schoole, we haue neither learning nor wit, but are as stray cattell, and as a woode vtterly forlorne. It is not therefore without cause that Moses saith: The commaundement which I giue thee, is not hidden from thee, nor farre off, so as thou mightest say: Who shall goe vp to heauen? Who shall passe ouer the Sea? or who shall goe downe into the deepe? Hereby he giueth vs to vnderstand that if God doe pluck back his word, so as we know not what hee requireth of vs, nor haue any testimony of his will: then may wee well seeke about lyke people in perplexitie, crying alas, what shall we doe? Who is hee that shal goe vp aboue the clowdes; who is hee that shall goe downe into the deepe? Who is hee that shall passe the Sea? To what end? There is no other instruction at all, whereby God giueth vs any certaine, and infallibe direction. When we bee thus destitute, wee bee as lost people, hauing neither way nor path to leade vs, we can discerne nothing. Howe much soeuer men doe attribute to their owne wisedome, supposing themselues discreete enough to rule themselues all their lyfe long: yet are they but wretched beastes, vntill God haue shewed them his will. Thus much for one poynt.

Nowe it is farther to bee vnderstood, that if GOD come not first to vs, wee haue no meane to come at him. Who is he that can giue vs winges to mount vp to heauen? Or howe shall wee be able to passe ouer the deepe? Although we had the knowledge of all secrets of nature: well might we trauell all the worlde from place to place, and well might we mount aloft vnto the very skyes: and yet in the meane while wee shoulde want the cheefest thing of all, which is to vnderstand the trueth of God; for that surmounteth al the wit of man. Let vs learne therefore, that God in his infinite goodnesse, perceauing that we haue no meane to approch vnto him: giueth vs an easie accesse thither. Yea and hee commeth downe vnto vs, to fashion himselfe to our rudenesse and infirmitie. We see how he dooth (as ye would say) stammer with vs: for hee speaketh not in such loftinesse, as might well seeme agreeable to his infinite glory & maiestie; but the phrase of holy scripture is grosse and rude; by the which God speaketh to vs in such plaine maner, as there remaineth no excuse for vs, if we vnderstand him not plainely. Seeing it is so, let vs vse this marueilous goodnesse which God hath bestowed on vs, and let vs holde vs to the same: and therewithall let vs also acknowledge our owne ignorance, that wee may humble our selues for the very cause why so fewe folke doe profite in the holy scripture; is their owne ouerweening, in that they be forepossessed with an imagination of their owne wisedome and sharpnesse of wit: and so being drunken with their owne conceite, they alwayes despise the worde of GOD. Let vs therefore humble our selues, for wee knowe that God calleth himselfe the teacher of the lowly and of lyke ones, to the ende wee shoulde not come to the hearing of his worde, as people puffed vp with our owne greatnesse, fondly fansying our selues to bee men of great abilitie to discerne: but that our whole wisedome should consist in obeying him, in considering that seeing hee hath stooped so lowe vnto vs, it is not for any of vs to aduaunce himselfe. And seeing wee haue no winges to mount vp aloft, let vs take heede that wee attempt it not for so may wee fall and breake our neckes, more wee neuer so little.

But let vs marke moreouer, that his promise dooth importe also a condemnation to them that haue their eares continually beaten with the worde of GOD, and yet remaine hardhearted still, and receiue no profite thereof at all. In deede the Gospell (wherein the Law of righteousnesse is conteyned) is preached continually:

continually: and if wee be of that sorte which S. Paul speaketh of, which are alwayes learning and neuer come to the knowledge of the trueth, thinke we that wee bee excusable before God? Surely no. It will come to passe that whatsoeuer we haue at any time heard of the worde of God, the same must come to reckoning and we shall be reproued of vnthankfulnesse, because great treasure shall haue perished without any benefite vnto vs. Wee shall not haue heard that Sermon in all our lyfe, which God will not lay to our charge at the latter day: as how? How haue you profited by it? Wee haue not heard one lecture, that shall not bee recited vnto vs. Let vs therefore bee well aduised, and whilest the Lorde is willing to teach vs, giuing vs faithfull expounders of his worde, and dealing so familiarly with vs: let vs for our parte bee diligent to receiue it, and embracing the doctrine that is deliuered vnto vs, let vs frame our selues more and more conformable to the same: not alledging the obscuritie and depth of it therefore, as the Papistes doe, which goe about to shield them with their ignorance, saying that the holy Scripture is too high and too deepe to bee conceiued. It is true that the holy scripture is too high and too deepe: but that is in respect that wee be wrapped in mistie darkenesse. But it is the office of GOD to inlighten vs; as wee shall see hereafter. Howsoeuer the matter standeth: let vs assure ourselues of this, that if wee yeelde our selues pliable to Gods direction, he will instruct vs faithfully in his worde, so as wee shall feele it to bee true vnto vs. But yet is this neuer accomplished in vs, vntill our Lorde instruct vs by his holy spirit, together with the preaching of his worde by the mouthes of men. And that is the cause why Saint Paul in the x. Chapter to the Romans sayth, that this sentence is to bee applyed to the Gospel. At the first sight, it woulde seeme that S. Paul tooke it contrary to the meaning of Moses. And for proofe thereof, doth not Moses in this place speake of the Law? Hee saith: The commaundement which I ordayne for thee this day. In saying, this day, hee speaketh of his office. Nowe his office was to bring the Lawe and to publish it. It is sayd in the first of Iohn, that the Lawe was giuen by Moses, but grace and trueth were giuen by Iesu Christ: It seemeth not then that this can in any way agree with the Gospell. But if we marke it well, wee shall finde it good reason, that Saint Paul saith, that this poynt is not verifyed, vntill wee come throughly to Christ. And why? Let vs take Moses to witnesse without going any further. Wee haue seene here afore, that in fourtie yeeres space after the setting forth of the Lawe, the people had profited nothing in it. The reason thereof is this: For thy God hath not giuen thee an vnderstanding heart, euen to this day. Wee haue the Lawe beaten into our eares, and yet in the meane while wee are still dulheadded, and conceiue not the meaning of Gods speach. This (as I haue sayd afore) proceedeth not of any faulte [y] is in the Law, but of our owne wretched blindnesse: As the Sunne is as bright to the blinde, as to all other men: but yet they bee not able to receiue lyke benefit by the light thereof: Euen so standeth the case with vs. (Thus much for one poynt.) Insomuch that as long as God speaketh to vs but onely by the mouthes of men: It is but losse of time. And wherefore? Because wee are deafe, wee are blinde: wee are dulheaded; neither is it sufficient for vs that the commaundement bee layd directly before our eyes: that wee neede not to mount aboue the clowdes; and that wee neede not to discend into the deepe to seeke for it: for it must bee in our mouth and in our heart. But how shall we haue it in our mouth and in our heart? Soothly euen by Gods putting of it there by the grace of his holy spirit. Saint Paul therefore presupposeth this grace to proceede from God peculiarly toward his elect; that he not onely offereth himselfe freely vnto them, (which manner of speach Moses also did vse when he sayd, God sheweth vs his goodnes after a special maner;) but also imprinteth it in our hartes, making vs to vnderstand what he sayth, by giuing vs the spirit of knowledge and discretion: for vntill God hath so wrought with vs, his word lyeth still hidden from vs. And we heare what he saith by the Prophet Esay: I wil (saith God) speake vnto this people in a straunge and vnknowen language: And when I send forth my Prophets, euery man shall bee astonished saying; What is this? What is it that God sayth? For I will speake to them in high Dutch, of purpose that they shall not vnderstand one iotte, and so shall all the prophesies be vnto them, as a sealed booke: which if you offer to a learned man, hee will answere: I would read in it, but the booke is close and sealed vp: therefore let it be opened and I will see what matter is in it? Againe it shall bee a booke layd open, yea but as a booke offered to the vnlearned, and to little children; and they shall say, I see heere is a booke, a man may well perceaue the letters, but I haue not bin at schoole, I am not learned: I see well the letters, but I knowe not what they meane. Wee see that our Lorde speaketh, and yet notwithstanding, he is not vnderstoode. Therefore let vs marke that Moses presupposed God to haue giuen vnderstanding to the people. Now his giuing of it was by the meane of Iesus Christ our Lord, and that not through the Lawe, but through the Gospel. The Lawe of it selfe bringeth nothing but condemnation, conuerting men before God, making forth their proces, and finding them guiltie: as wee haue heretofore alledged. The case beeing so: there is but onely one meane, whereby to bee inlightened from God, so as wee may attaine to the knowledge of his holy will for our saluation: And that is to acknowledge the grace which is offered vnto vs in his Gospell through our Sauiour Christ.

Deut. 4. 7.

Esa. 28. 11. & 29. 11, 12.

Rom. 4. 15. & 7. 7.

It is not therefore without cause that Saint Paul addeth this title vnto the worde: It is (saith he) the word of faith that wee preach vnto you.

Rom. 10. 8.

He calleth it the worde of faith, when wee not onely knowe whereto we be bound, and vnderstand what God exacteth and requireth of vs, and what hee commandeth vs: but also, when wee come to him as destitute of all goodnesse, beseeching him to vouchsafe to take pitie of our want and needinesse, and to enrich vs with his graces. When wee seeke God in this maner, and aske of him that which wee want: then haue wee the worde of faith, and not the word of the Lawe. For the worde of the Law sayth, Doe this and doe that, and beware of such a thing, which if thou transgresse, beholde the curse is prepared for thee. By the worde of the Lawe wee see whereunto wee are bound, but wee bee not able to discharge it; but wee stand all confounded and damned. It behoo-neth vs therefore to haue the worde of faith, that is to say, to taste of Gods promises, where-by hee sheweth himselfe so bountifull towarde vs through our Lorde Iesus Christ. When we receiue this as it is offred vnto vs in the Gospel; then is that fulfilled which is spoken here; to wit, that the worde is not aboue the clowdes, that it is not in the bottome of the deepe, nor on the other side of the Sea: but in our mouth and in our heart. Wee haue therefore to consider first of all, that God holdeth men sufficiently guiltie, after hee hath once taught them. For as soone as the worde is preached, there is presens condemnation to all them that cannot profite thereby, and there is no way for them to scape. And why? For God hath called vs, and wee haue not aunswered him: he hath shewed vs the way, and we haue not vouchsafed to enter therein: to bee shorte, wee see that when Gods worde hath bin preached vnto vs, there is matter sufficient to reproue vs, and wee cannot reply vnto it. But herewithall let vs marke also, that as touching our parte, the worde of GOD is at it were aloft aboue the skyes, or as if it were in the bottome of the deepe, notwithstanding that wee haue our eares continually beaten therewith. Herein wee see the wretchednesse of our nature, that though God speake vnto vs with open mouth, and teach vs neuer so faithfully, yet doe wee continue still as we were, so as no amendment at all is perceiued in vs, for all the long schooling that God hath bestowed on vs. What is to be done then? That GOD hauing spoken by the mouth of men, and by the holy scripture, doe also gather vs vnto him, and make vs to feele his goodnesse towarde vs. For it is not sufficient for vs to vnderstand the thinges that are shewed vs in the holy scripture: but wee must also bee touched to the quicke with them in our hearees, that wee may bee well assured of Gods fatherly loue towardes vs. Whē wee are once at that poynt, there is no more hyding, then is there no more darkenesse in the holy scripture: but it is a sufficient instruction, insomuch as it is good and expedient for vs. For this cause dooth Saint Paul sende vs to our Lorde Iesus Christ, saying, That if we be-lecue with our heart to Iustification, and con-

Rom.10.6.

fesse with our mouth to saluation that Christ dyed, and that GOD raysed him againe, then are wee in that perfection which Moses speaketh of here. Nowe it is true that Saint Paul dooth vse in this place, the worde Hell, for the worde Deepe: which hee dooth for the fitter applying of that sentence to his owne purpose, which Moses did vse after a general manner. Moses speaketh after the common custome of men. O what is hee that can dig down into the bottome of the deepe? Who is he that can mount vp aloft aboue the skyes? Saint Paul minding to apply this to our Sauiour Christ, sayth, that we need not to alledge either heauen or hell, or aught else that can bee imagined in this worlde; God dooth sufficiently shewe himselfe vnto vs, in that wee haue witnesse that Iesus Christ dyed and is risen againe. For wee knowe that by the vertue of that worde, Hell is bereft of all power ouer vs; and heauen is set open for vs. True it is that wee must beginne with this simplicitie that Moses speaketh of. When hee saith that the worde is in our mouth, and in our heart; his meaning is that the being thereof in our mouth, is to the end wee shoulde talke of it, and so become learned: and that the being thereof in our heart, is to the ende wee shoulde vnderstand it. But Saint Paul goeth yet farther: not that hee wresteth and wringeth the Testimonie of Moses: but hee sheweth that the same is in very deed fulfilled: to wit, that wee haue power to speake the worde of GOD as wee ought, and that we haue it also imprinted in our hearts. He sayth then, first that wee must come vnto our Lorde Iesus Christ, according to this saying, which is set downe in another place, namely, that Iesus Christ is the ende of the Lawe, and also that hee is the lyfe of it. Then we see that if wee meane to profite by the holy Scripture, wee must hye vs to our Lorde Iesus Christ; for hee is the liuely Image of God; it is he in whome are comprehended al the treasures of wisedome and vnderstanding. Thus much concerning that poynt.

Rom.10.4.

Coloss.2.3.

Are wee nowe come vnto Iesus Christ? It behoooueth vs to knowe the principall thing that is giuen vs in him, to wit, that wee bee redeemed by his death and passion; for he hath suffered the paynes that were due vnto vs, and hath borne that dreadfull vengeance of God, which belonged vnto vs, and hath thereby made vs free. That then is the benefite which wee reape by the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ: and by his resurrection hee hath purchased righteousnesse and lyfe for vs: and hath also opened vnto vs the kingdome of heauen, from the which wee were earst banished. Nowe first of all, when wee call to minde the death, and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ, wee must needes bee deliuered from all anguishe and distresse of minde. For hee telleth vs (as it is sayd here) that it is not for vs to alledge any more; Who shall goe downe into hell? (as we haue beene woont

to doe.) Howe nowe? If all sinners must be condemned before God: seeing that wee bee sinners; surely wee bee all vndone. And who is he that can assure mee that hell shall haue no power ouer me? I feele the sinne which doth accuse mee, and that is all one as if I shoulde beholde the gulfe open readie to swallowe mee vp; Sathan hath gotten the maisterie ouer me. See how men are dismayed and plunged in continuall griefe and trouble of minde, vntill they haue receiued knowledge of the benefite that commeth by the death and passion of our Lord Iesus Christ. But we knowe that our Lorde Iesus suffered the sorrowes of hell, and yet was not holden prisoner of the same (as Sainct Peter sheweth in the Actes:) whereby wee be well assured, that the bandes of death are broken, and that hell hath no more power to swallow vs. And why? Because the Lorde Iesus hath purchased vs freedome. But howe know we that? By the Gospell. But if I still stande in doubt whether I bee deliuered from the curse of God; it is as much as if I shoulde drawe Christ againe from death: for hee is not deade in vaine. To what ende is it? Let vs consider a little wherefore the onely sonne of God yeelded himselfe to such shame; as to be hanged on tree, and to be as it were accursed before God his father, (according as wee haue seene euen in the one and twentith Chapter of this booke,) and to bee beaten by the hande of God, vntill hee seemed as vile as a Leper, as the Prophet Esay saith in the 53. Chapter, that hee bare the burden of all our offences: as if he had beene a miserable sinner; and was enuironed with such extreme sorrowe, that hee wist not what to say, but to crie out: My God my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And thinke wee that the sonne of God dayed when he was so humbled, yea and not onely was made vtterly of no reputation, as Sainct Paul saieth: but also fought with the pangues and sorrowes of death? He offered himselfe in the person of vs, as a wretched sinner to beare that vengeance of God which was due vnto vs, so as (to bee short) he knewe that God was bent against him, to thunder downe vppon him for our sakes. Forasmuch then as we know that Iesus Christ abode such incounters for our redemption: stande wee yet still scanning and replying, as who woulde say, O I cannot tell, and howe can I bee sure of it? Surely that were mens as much as to deny the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ. For it is a plaine scorning of all that hee hath endured and suffered for our saluation, when wee acknowledge not the fruite that doeth growe vnto vs thereby. So then the first point is, that hauing the Gospel, wee haue whereuppon to rest, so as wee neede not to alledge: What is he that shall goe downe into hel? For Iesus Christ hath beene there, to the end that wee shoulde not come there at all: and at this day hee giueth vs witnesse of the same by the Gospel, to the intent wee shoulde knowe that his death hath alwayes present power and operation for all such as flee vnto it for refuge.

Also there is on the otherside, that wee haue no more cause to replie, Who is hee that shall mount vp to the heauens? Why? That is as much (saieth Sainct Paul) as to plucke downe Christ from the heauenly glorie, whereunto hee is exalted. Wee say in an article of our faith, that Christ descended into hell. In so saying wee ought to assure our selues, that we bee nowe out of daunger, for hee entred thither to the ende that wee should be free from it. We adde thereunto, that hee is also ascended into heauen. And why? To the ende that wee might knowe that the gate thereof standeth open for vs. We heare also how hee tolde his disciples: In my fathers house are many mansions: signifying therby that heauen was not onely for himselfe, but that it is a common heritage for all the faithfull, and that hee hath taken possession thereof, as it were in our behalfe. Nowe then, we protest in the article of our beliefe, that the heauens at this time stand open for vs: and that wee ought to assure our selues to come thither, because our Lorde Iesus Christ, our heade, is gone vp thither and will not bee separated from the members of his bodie. Notwithstanding that wee haue confessed this: yet wee stand scanning still, and are full of wauering fancies: Ah, say wee, I know not for all that, what shall become of mee, I cannot tell whether God doth recken me to be one of his children: who is he that hath bin in heauen, who is he that hath come thence againe to bring vs newes? See these diuelish blasphemies. This is not onely to stande in doubt of the trueth of the Gospel, but also to teare Christ Iesus in peeces, asmuch as we can. O horrible outrage against the sonne of God: for hee that doubteth of his saluation, sheweth himselfe to beleeue no whit of that which wee confesse, namely that Iesus Christ hath soueraigne dominion both in heauen & in earth: that God gouerneth the world by him, & he maketh al creatures to kneel down to do him homage? to be short, wee acknowledge not that the Lorde Iesus Christ is risen againe from the deade: but to the vttermost of our power, we go about to deface and to abolish the power of the holy Ghost, which shewed it selfe in his resurrection. See nowe in what case wee be, if we receiue not the Testimonie of the Gospell, to assure vs, that wee bee as it were, rapted vp into heauen, euen to enter directly into the possession of all those goods which ly hidden from vs, and are not visible; as the Prophet Esay saieth: such as the heart of man is not able to conceiue. If wee see not an open gappe euen vnto hell; to spyte Sathan, to defie death, and to triumph ouer all thinges that may impeach our saluation: well, let vs on the one side consider howe sainct Paul saieth, that when wee haue receiued the Gospell through faith, wee bee foorthwith set downe in the heauenly places: we bee (as yee would say) enthronished with the Angels of Paradise, as alreadie raised vp thither by God. It is true that heere

Iohn.14.2.

Phil.2.10.

Esa.64.4. 2.Cor.2.9.

Eph.2.6.

beneath, wee be as wretched wormes creeping vppon the grounde; but when wee haue once
1.Pet.1.3.4. the doctrine of faith, we haue the earnest penny of our saluation: according as saint Peter saieth, that through faith wee may put our selues into the handes of God in such manner, that lifting vp our eyes & minds into heaue, we be brought in thither, because that Iesus Christ our heade is there before in our behalfe, and hath there prepared the heritage which he will hold in common with vs. Thus ye see how we must practise this point, following the exhortation of S. Paul. Moreouer wee must likewise marke howe hee saith, that wee must beleeue with the heart to iustification, and confesse with the mouth to saluation. I haue heretofore shewed you briefly the substance of our faith; howe it must rest wholly vppon the death and resurrection of our Lorde Iesus Christ: I say vppon his death, because that hee by his obedience, hath put away all our iniquities and transgressions: hee hath suffered the punishment that was due vnto vs, to discharge vs of the same, he hath also dispatched away the curse which lay vppon vs. So much concerning the first point.

Nowe concerning the seconde; wee must vnderstande, that by his rising againe he hath purchased righteousnesse vnto vs, and therby shewed himselfe a conquerour ouer sinne and death: and his resurrection doeth also import that hee is ascended into heauen, of purpose to take the possession of that inheritance, which hee will make common vnto vs, and of the which hee will make vs partakers with himselfe. This is the substance of our faith. Nowe it behoueth to haue this faith both in our heart and in our mouth. Truely it were to small purpose if wee did but talke of the graces and blessings which our Lorde Iesus Christ hath brought vnto vs; as wee see a great number of ablers doe; they talke much thereof, but what are they the better for it, sauing that it increaseth their condemnation? It is no great matter then to haue the confession of faith on the tippe of the tongue before men: for it must be rooted in the heart, we must (say I) haue y vertue of the death and resurrection of our Lorde Iesus Christ imprinted within vs, and saint Paul saieth, that that serueth vs for righteousnesse. And why? Because wee knowe that wee bee reconciled to GOD, insomuch that Christ hath taken our burden vppon him, so as wee being thereof discharged are become acceptable vnto God, so y he will no more impute our sinnes vnto vs. And why? For Christ should haue suffered in vain for vs, if we should nowe be called to reckening for our sins. Thus then wee stand acquited through the satisfaction made for vs by Christ Iesus: and that is the righteousnesse whereof Saint Paul speaketh. For when wee receiue Iesus Christ, it is certaine, that hee reneweth vs by his holy Spirit. And wee bee not onely adopted to bee the children of God by his meanes: but also wee receiue therewith the warrant of our Election, which is that wee bee reserued for the inheritage of God. So then let vs vnderstande, that there is none other meane whereby wee may attaine to righteousnesse, but by beleeuing with the heart.

Nowe this worde Beleeuing importeth that wee shoulde seeke in Iesus Christ, for that which wee want in our selues. For if wee rest vppon the Lawe, for as much as it commaundeth vs to doe that which wee ought to doe, it is nothing woorth. But if wee repaire vnto God, knowing that hee is readie to releeue our want: that is the thing which is meant by the worde *Beleeue*, according to the meaning of Saint Paul. And of a trueth, when wee doe so beleeue, and are so iustified: the same sufficeth for our saluation: For iustification doeth of it selfe import life euerlasting. Neuertheless Saint Paul doeth put ouer saluation to the confession, doing vs to vnderstande, that the children of GOD ought not to bee tongue tyed, but to magnifie the goodnesse whereof they haue had triall, and euerie man to edifie his neighbour as much as in him lyeth.

Nowe then like as wee haue our hearties set vppon God to receiue his worde which is offered vnto vs: so must wee haue our mouth open to glorifie him, by acknowledging howe much wee are beholding vnto him. They therefore which haue through faith embraced the benefites of the death and resurrection of our Lorde Iesus Christ, ought to indeuour to set the same foorth, saying, Our GOD hath so powred out the inestimable treasures of his goodnesse towardes vs, as it is good reason that all our whole life shoulde bee spent in glorifying him, and yeelding him praise and thanksgiuing: according also as Saint Peter in his first Epistle saieth: that the same is the 1.Peter.2.9. verie ende why we were brought out of the horrible darkenesse of death, to bee conueied into the kingdome of Gods light, and into the kingdome of life. S. Paul then doeth expressly match the confession of the mouth with saluation, not that faith being right and true is not sufficient of it selfe: nor that wee doe purchase Saluation by speaking: but to shewe that faith cannot bee without confession. Whereby wee see that they which nowadayes doe renounce God by holding their peace, or keepe the knowledge of the Gospell, as it were, buried within them; doe defraude GOD of the honour that is due vnto him, and neuer knewe what faith meant. O say they, I keepe my faith to my selfe. Yea? Then doest thou make the holy Ghost a lyer. As for those that bee of the Popedome, communicating with ydolaters in al their abhominations, and being readie to turne with euerie winde: if a man tell them that it is a kinde of renouncing God, and a forsaking of him that redeemed them from death. O (say they) I holde my faith in my heart. It is vnpossible that there shoulde bee faith in the heart, but that confession with the mouth shoulde presently followe: or elle were the holie Ghost a lyer, as witnesseth Saint Paul. And

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that is the thing which hee meant in saying that when we haue beleeued with the heart to iustification, wee must then also confesse with our mouth, that wee haue a redeemer which hath deliuered vs from death, and opened vnto vs the kingdome of heauen, to the intent it shoulde nowe bee our inheritance. To bee short, we see howe sainct Paul agreeth very well with Moses. For albeit that Moses intended heere to reproouе such as had hearde the lawe, and to conuict them of vnthankfulnesse: yet hath hee shewed afore, that it is not ynough for vs to haue our eares beaten with the literall worde, vnlesse that God doe also giue vs vnderstanding thereof: and that doeth hee giue vs by our Lorde Iesus Christ. It followeth then, that vnlesse the lawe bee matched with the Gospel, it is not neere vnto vs: For although that wee for our part bee dayly taught in it, and that the worde doe dwell amongst vs; yet shall we wander farre from it, and receiue no taste of that which is vttered vnto vs. That then is the meaning of Moses. And Saincte Paul doeth verie well agree therewith, in that he telleth vs that we must resort to Iesus Christ, and acknowledge what profite wee receiue by him, and to what ende hee was sent vnto vs from God his father. And moreouer let vs acknowledge it in such sort, as wee may rest wholly vppon his Gospell, and stande contented when God hath spoken vnto vs; and not go about to fetch downe Iesus Christ from aboue, as folke that woulde crucifie him newe againe. Let it suffice vs, that hee hath fully redeemed vs by that one sacrifice wherewith hee hath made perfect satisfaction for all. Let it suffice vs that hee is ascended into heauen, to the ende to drawe vs vnto him. And sith we haue receiued knowledge hereof by the Gospell, let vs make our profite of it, and beseech God that this doctrine may first of all be printed in our hearts, to the ende that being iustified by his free goodnesse, wee may stande fully assured vppon the redemption and satisfaction which our Lord Iesus Christ hath purchased for vs, because wee haue no righteousnesse in vs. And thereupon let euery of vs endeuour to glorifie God, knowing that hee hath adopted vs to the ende that he might be magnified in all our whole life, according as it is saide in the Prophet Esay, The people which I haue created shall shewe forth my praises. Esa. 43. 7. & 21.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our sins, beseeching him to make vs to feele them better than heretofore wee haue done, and that wee may attaine to the remedie; that is to say, the forgiuenesse of them in our Lorde Iesus Christ. And that forasmuch as our God ceaseth not daily to instruct and to edifie vs in his worde, it may please him not to suffer vs to bee deafe heaters of him, but rather to pearce our eares, to the ende wee may become throughly obedient vnto him, and holde vs therein; and to shew forth the vertue of his holy spirite, to the ende that the thing which is saide heere may bee accomplished in vs: And that when we haue beliued with our heart, we may also confesse his holy name with our mouth, and our whole life may bee agreeable to the same confession. The rest may please him to deale so graciously not with vs onely, but also with all Nations and people vpon earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xxij. of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXXII. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the thirtith Chapter.

19 See, I haue this day set before thee, lyfe and good, death and euill.

20 For I commaund thee this day to loue the Lorde thy GOD, and to walke in his wayes, and to keepe his commaundementes, and his ordinaunces and his iudgementes: that thou maiest liue and increase, and that the Lorde thy GOD may blesse thee in the Lande which thou goest to possesse.

17 If thy heart turne away, and thou obey not, but beest led aside, and bowest thy selfe to other gods, and seruest them:

18 I doe tell you this day, that you shall surely perishe, and not prolong your dayes in the lande, into the which nowe passing ouer Iordan, thou goest to possesse it.

19 I take heauen and earth this day to witnesse against you, that I haue set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life that thou maist liue, thou and thy seede,

20 By louing the Lorde thy GOD, by obeying his voyce, and by cleauing vnto him: for hee is thy life and the prolonger of thy dayes: that thou maist continue in the Land which the Lord hath sworne to thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, to giue vnto them.

WE haue yesterday howe Moses did magnifie the authoritie of the worde of God which was committed vnto him, saying: Seeing that God is come nere vnto vs, and hath opened his holy mouth to declare vnto vs his will, we must holde vs wholly thereunto, and without seeking any further, wee muste not aske any more, who shall goe vp into heauen, or who shall go downe into the deepe? For wee haue sure witnesse and such a one as cannot faile vs. Seeing that God hath spoken let vs followe it. He addeth here moreouer; *See, I haue this day set before you, life and blessing, death and euill.* Whereby hee sheweth vs, that the worde of God, when it is taught vs, doeth carry with it such vertue, and such power, that we ought to holde the things which are there tolde vs, to bee as certaine, as if they were alreadie done in deede. The worde which Moses doeth vse in saying, *See*, as if he shoulde paine with his finger; to make the matter visible vnto vs, doeth import that wee muste yeelde such reuerence to the worde of God, that wee muste esteeme the thinges therein conteined, to be as present vnto vs. And the same is to bee applied as well to the threatenings as to the promises. If God doe promise vs any thing, it is not for vs to cast doubts thereof, and to say: Yea, but how may it come to passe, seeing there is no likelyhood thereof? Let vs sticke to that which hee telleth vs. Likewise if God doe threaten vs, wee must tremble and not doe as they doe which tarie for the strokes, for they be so ouertaken vnawares, as they haue not the power to crie alas, they be ouer raught with feare, and God giueth them not the grace to returne vnto him, because they coulde not finde in their hearts to doe him the honour, to submit themselues vnto him vntil such time as he wayned them a farre off that hee is their Iudge. Thus are we to practise this sentence which Moses vseth in saying, That when wee heare the worde of God, hee will haue vs to cast altogether there-ness and to settle our wittes wholly vpon it. And this ought to serue vs to double purpose: that when as it shall seeme vnto vs, that it is but lost time in this worlde to serue God, yet notwithstanding we may not surcease to obey him, waiting for the blessing which hee hath promised vs, and assuring our selues, that wee shall not be deceiued because he is faithfull. And likewise on the contrarie part, when wee be tempted to doe euill, in hope that we shall remaine vnpunished: let vs bee holden backe with this bridle, namely, that wee cannot escape the wrath of God, because hee hath declared that hee is the Iudge to doe vengeance for such thinges. The faithfull therefore in ordering their life, muste alwayes bee fully resolued of this, that in seruing of God, they bee sure that hee will guide them, and that their ende shalbe good and happie. But in the meane while the worlde shall scorne them, and they shall haue many temptations to turne them away; they shall see the wicked prosper, they shall see them make their triumphes; and on the other side they shall all that while see themselues goe to wracke. Nowe when wee bee thus tossed, wee muste take our stay in the worde of GOD. Seeing that God hath promised to blesse vs, when wee walke according to his will: we are sure that he will not abuse vs; for his worde is the infallible truth; and therefore let vs sticke vnto it. Againe, it seemeth vnto vs, that we shoulde make mountains and worke wonders, when we let loose the bridle to our owne lustes: Let vs feare God: for he telleth vs, that when men haue once misbehaued themselues, their sinne abideth still at their doore and keepeth continuall watch; so as when they haue wandered hither and thither, and passed their boundes neuer so farre, yet they muste come to reckening. Seeing it is so, let vs learne to bridle our selues, and not to tarrie till God execute his iudgementes vppon vs: but let vs rather preuent them through feare. Nowe wee see to what end Moses hath declared, that he set before the eies of the people, both life and good, death and euill: verily euen to assure the Iewes thereof, that they might no longer stande in doubt. And wherefore? For there needeth nothing to carrie vs away, as wee see too much by experience. For it is a verie rare thing for men to rest them vppon the promises of God steadfastly without wauering, they bee blinded with the thinges of the worlde: and vnlesse God doe out of hande accomplish the thing which hee hath spoken; they thinke they shalbe deceiued. And although they dare not accuse God of vnfaithfulnes: yet can they not find in their hearts to doe him the honour to thinke him to be true. Againe, although God threaten vs, yet are we so dulbrained, (euery of vs perswadeth himselfe) he shall go vnpunished, and escape scotfree. Seeing then that there is such lightnes in vs, & that we be so wauering, we ought so much the more to put the lesson in practise which is set downe here. Now set nothing life and good, is as much as if he should say, all manner of happinesse and likewise by death and euill, is meant all manner of wretchednes. Indeede this present life is not the full meting or perfection of the blessings which God hath promised vs. It is but as it were a certaine tast of them. Death also is but a little tast of Gods wrath. The state of the life to come is the perfection both of weale and woe. But Moses speaking vnto the people, that were yet holden vnder the figures and shadowes of

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the lawe, did name life, and thereunto added this worde blessing, to signifie, that the people by seruing of God shoulde bee blessed, euen in all manner of felicitie; and contrarywise that they must of necessitie looke for all manner of wretchednesse, if they did fall away fró the seruice of God. For the better confirmation hereof, hee saieth, *This day I commaunde thee to loue the Lorde thy God, and to keepe his commaundements, and to cleaue vnto him, that thou maiest* 10 *enioy to possesse the Lande which he hath promised vnto thy fathers.* Heere is a confirmation to holde the people conuicted, that they might haue no occasion to reply any more, but be compelled to confesse that the Lawe of God serued to call them to saluation, if so bee they had obeyed him: And contrariwise that it shoulde bee vnto them a good Testimonie of their condemnation, so as they coulde not pretende any excuse, seeing they were so well instructed, and yet con- 20 tinued hardhearted and stubborne still. Moses sheweth this by the substance that is contained in this doctrine. What is it (saieth hee) that I haue inioyned thee? It is, that thou shouldest loue the Lorde thy God. Hath not nature left this marke imprinted in our heartes, namely, that wee bee created euen to this ende: to loue our God? Wherfore are we in this world? Wherfore doth God keepe vs heere? Is it not reason that he should haue some homage of vs, and that 30 forsomuch as wee be his creatures, wee shoulde haue an eye vnto him, & he bee the scope of our life? If it be not so, what order will there be? Wee see in this worlde very many Testimonies of Gods wonderful wisedome, iustice, righteousnes, and power, and he hath placed vs here beneath, to beholde al these thinges; and also he hath fashioned vs after his owne image and likenesse. Now if our eyes bee blindfolded, if wee bee dulheads, if we wil not vnderstand the things which 40 are shewed vnto vs, is it not a kinde of turning of all thinges vpsidowne which God hath stablished both beneath and aboue? Yea surely. Ye see then howe it is an vtter confounding and ouerthrowing of all order, whé men worship not their God, ne submit themselues vnto him. It is not therefore without cause that Moses alledgeth this reason, when he meant to shew vnto the Iewes, that it was not for thé to argue any more as touching that doctrine, seeing that the ende 50 whereto it tended was that God should be honored and haue his right. But this word *loue* importeth yet more. For it ought to touch men more liuely, than if he had spoken simply of feare & subiection. Indeede Moses addeth by and by y wee must obey our God, and that we must keepe his statutes & his decrees. God then doth iustly require of vs seruice, & we ought not to denie it him: but yet hee beginneth at loue, to the intent to draw vs vnto him after a louing manner, 60 and not by force as if we would say, well it is ynough for vs to serue our God: but yet let vs goe to it with grinding our teeth, because no man can exempt himselfe from that necessitie. But Moses sheweth that the doctrine of y lawe ought not only to holde vs in awe, and to bring all our senses and affections in captiuitie vnder the obedience of God: but also that it ought to win & possesse our harts, so as we shold come of good will to offer our selues vnto God, to bee altogether his. Let vs therfore consider that God doth vs a singular good turne, when hee beginneth at this point, namely, y he will haue vs to loue him. But we be also exhorted to serue him, not by cópulsion, as y most part of the world doth, in whó (as wee see) there is nothing but slauish feare. Therefore let vs learne so to gouerne all our affections as it may be our chiefe pleasure to serue God. Now on the contrary part, whereas Moses ioyneth the obedience of the law with loue, thereby hee sheweth that there may bee hypocrites which shall make a countenance to loue God, & will boast themselues therof with full mouth: but yet the very true proofe thereof is that wee honour his maiestie and submit our selues to the same. For God hath not bounde vs to him by halues: what manner of superiority hath he ouer vs? Now then like as a child loueth his father, & as a good subiect loueth his prince; euen so must we loue our God, that is to say, wee must beare such reuerence towards him, as to couet nothing but to frame our selues to his good pleasure in al things, so as he may weald vs at his wil, and bee glorified in all our life: And forasmuch as he wil haue a triall of vs; when hee hath giuen vs his lawe and set vs downe the rule whereby our life should be guided: if we behaue our selues thereafter, then doe we shew indeed that we loue our God aright. And therfore let vs conclude cócerning all such as pretend deuotion & holines, (of which sort we see many nowadays in y popedom yea & euen where the gospel is preached, there be many that make pretence to be rauished and caried away with a zeale) that all that euer they do is but smoke, vnlesse our life bee answerable thereto, so as we follow the wil of our God, & indeuour to obey him by keeping his commandemets & ordinances. That (I say) is y true mirror where we may behold whether we loue our God or not, and whether there be any faith & purenes in vs. And herewithall Moses telleth the people againe, that they shall not loue God but to their owne profite & welfare: as if hee shoulde say, although God doe by iust title, require that wee shoulde loue him, yet doth he not that in respect of his owne profite or aduantage, for he can receiue nothing of vs. Howe then? He seeketh and procureth our welfare. For hee seeth verie well that we be miserable when wee are fallen away from him: and therfore he is desirous to win vs, not for any gaine that can therby redound to himselfe, but to the intent that all the benefite thereof shoulde redound vnto vs. Nowe then what a churlishnes is it, that men cannot finde in their hearts to submit themselues vnto God, specially seeing that he neuertheles hath such a care of their welfare, that he seeketh them, and taketh paines to reduce them to him, howbeit (as I said afore) not for that he can be any thing bettered therby for his part, but because he wold not haue them to perish. Seeing then y we know this, must we not needs be too too dulheded, yea

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ſtarke mad, if our harts be not meekened; yea & not onely meekened to ſtoope vnder the obedience of God; but alſo therewithal ſet on fire with a zeale to come vnto him, & to bende all our indeuour that way? Nowe wee perceiue in effect whereat Moſes amed in all this ſentence. And moreouer on the contrarie ſide hee doeth alſo ſet downe the threatenings; for (as I haue ſaid) hee expoundeth more at length this doctrine, which he had erſt touched in fewe wordes. See, I ſet before thee this day good and euill, life and death. Hauing ſaide ſo, hee taketh the firſt part thereof. For (ſaieth hee) I craue nothing of thee, but that thou ſhouldeſt loue the Lorde thy God, that by obeying him thou mighteſt liue and poſſeſſe the land which hee hath promiſed vnto thy fathers, which is as it were, a pawne of his loue, and the true felicitie vnto the which thou art called, for to attaine to it, that is to ſay the kingdome of heauen. Thus much concerning the firſt part.

Nowe he commeth to the ſeconde and ſaith, *If thou turne away, and rebell, and beeſt caried to ſerue ſtraunge Gods: I tell thee, that thou ſhalt periſh*, (ſaith hee) and thou ſhalt not eſcape the hande of the Lorde thy God. Looke not to prolong thy dayes when you ſhall haue ſo deſpiſed him which hath all goodneſſe in his owne power, and will in the end reuenge himſelfe of the diſpiſers of his worde. Nowe wee ſee the meaning of Moſes in generall. It remaineth for vs to marke the manner of ſpeech which hee vſeth. He ſaith, *If thy heart looke backe nor to obey, and that thou beeſt moued to obey ſtraunge Gods and to ſerue them.* When hee ſaith, If thy heart turne backe, his intent is to expreſſe heere the malice of men, which couet nothing but to flee from God. For if we were not caried away by our wicked affections, it is certaine that euerie of vs woulde followe this Principle, and the ſeede which is in vs; namely, That foraſmuch as there is but one God, therefore we ought to worſhippe and ſerue him. Let men bee as wicked as they liſt, and let them ſtriue as much as they can to extinguiſh al manner of light, that they may haue no more reaſon in them: (as we ſee many doe, whoſe whole delight and indeuour is to make themſelues verie beaſtes); yet doeth this remaine ſtill engrauen in them, That there is a God which ought to be ſerued. What ſhall become of vs then, if we ſeeke him not as we ought to doe? Againe, ſee we not the worlde howe it is ſo farre out of courſe, that there is nothing but confuſion throughout all, and that thereuppon euery man goeth aſtray? Whereof commeth it (ſay I) that we bee ſo witleſſe, as to follow the wicked trade of other men, and yet bee compelled to condemne the ſame? Euen of this, that wee turne away our heartes backe; that is to ſay, that euerie of vs wrappeth himſelfe in wilfull blindneſſe, and euery of vs ſetteth himſelfe backe, notwithſtanding that we haue beene taught the contrarie. For albeit that it is true without exception, that all they which turne away from the truth, doe it of a certaine wickednеſſe: yet notwithſtanding, we bee double folde the leſſe excuſable, when wee haue bin taught by the word, ſo as God hath ſhewed himſelfe vnto vs familiarly. Therefore when we heare this ſaying of Moſes, wee muſt apply it to our vſe. For we ſee how our Lorde hath ſhewed vs the way of ſaluation by his Goſpel, wee ſee how he continueth it ſtill from day to day: what will become of vs then, if wee ſtray away? Wee ſhall not bee as the Turkes, or as the vnie Papiſtes: but it ſhalbe vpbraided vs that wee haue turned our heartes backe, and that whereas God had ſet vs in the good way, and reached vs his hande to guide vs: wee haue beene frowarde, and woulde not hearken to the thinges which hee tolde vs: and that all this wee haue done of wilfull malice. Yea and Moſes addeth yet an other worde, ſaying, *If thou bee driuen to ſerue ſtraunge Gods*. He ſheweth that men be diuen with a certaine furie or frentikeneſſe when they cannot finde in their heartes to ſubmit themſelues to God, to bee wunne vnto him by his worde. Needes then muſt there bee a dreadfull rage in this caſe, and that Sathan worketh after a horrible manner, when men bee ſo farre out of order. Wee haue ſeene in the fourth Chapter, howe hee ſaide, Looke well to thy ſelfe, that in beholding the ſunne and the ſtars, thou be not compelled to worſhippe them and to make them ydols. There Moſes ſheweth that men woulde neuer runne out to ydolatrie, vnleſſe they had ſome outrageous prouocation within them to driue them thereunto, as if they were out of their wittes. For were men well aduiſed & ſetled in their wits, as they ought to bee: they woulde certainly come to their God. And therefore wee bee double guiltie, when hauing turned away from our GOD, and drawen backe our heartes through wilfull malice and ſtubborneneſſe, ouer and beſides that, wee haue beene caried with ſuch a raging moode, as wee cannot bee tamed, neither can any repentance take place in vs, neither will wee bee ruled by reaſon; but we behaue ourſelues like folk that are ſtraught or rather ſtarke madde. And hereby wee ought to take warning to miſtruſt all our affections, and to bridle and impriſon all our wittes, ſeeing wee bee ſo lightly withdrawen from God, and turned away to become backeſlyders. If men giue themſelues libertie, what followeth but that their heart will quickely bee turned backewarde? When wee ſhoulde walke vprightly, wee make it difficult to goe one ſtep, but if it come to backeſlyding, wee ſlide away like water, there is nothing in vs but flipperneſſe. Therefore muſt wee holde our ſelues as captiues, knowing well that if wee haue neuer ſo little libertie, wee bee ſtraight way gone quite from our God.

Moreouer when men doe ſo beleeue their paſſions, they muſt needes become like madde beaſtes, neither reaſon nor equitie may beare ſway, there is no more vnderſtanding in them, and to bee ſhort they are become beaſtiſh of their owne accorde. Seeing wee bee warned of theſe thinges, let vs learne ſo to fight againſt all manner of exceſſiue luſtes, and againſt all the appetites that boyle within vs, as GOD

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may gouerne vs quietly, and wee bee readie to follow which way soeuer he calleth vs. Now after that Moses hath spoken so, he addeth, that albeit that the people haue passed Iordan, and be come to the possession of the land, yet they shal not enioy it for euer. Here our Lorde declareth vnto vs, y if he beare with vs for a time, wee may not thereupon fall asleepe, nor perswade our selues that wee bee at peace with him, as the hypocrites do, who vnlesse they be pinched with miserie, and that God doe pursue them roughly, doe alwayes make their market after their owne deuise. Well [say they] God must needes loue mee, for I am at myne ease: and thereupon they flatter themselues. And whereas they do but mocke God, they thinke that hee seeth it not a whit. To bee short, the blessinges that God bestoweth on them, they turne as it were to a shrowding sheete, of purpose to keepe God from espying any whit of their life. And thus they bleare their owne eyes, & make them selues pastime & good cheare, as though they should neuer come to reckoning. And that is too common a fault. Now Moses sayth vnto them here, Albeit your God doe at this present time bring you into the lande which hee promised you, and that you passe ouer Iordan, where God will shewe his power, euen in drying vp ỹ Iordan as hee did in drying vp the read sea, where your enimies were vanquished & put to ỹ foyle; insomuch that when you were like to haue bin stopped from entring into your inheritance, yet notwithstanding al those lettes were ouercome. For as much therfore as you see such fauour of God, beware that you sleepe not in the meane whyle, but walke in his feare; for he can as well driue you out of that land, as he doeth at this present bring you into it. To be short, whensoeuer we haue receiued any fauour at Gods hand, we be exhorted to vse it in such wise, as ỹ same may be an occasion vnto vs to serue him, so as wee conceiue courage to yeeld ouer our selues to his obedience, for least we be bereft therof a gaine either early or late, for playing the wylde beastes & for dealing stubbornly after that God hath made vs fatte, according as wee shall see in the song of Moses. Moses hauing spoken so, vseth a greater vehemencie, saying: *This day I call heauen and earth to witnesse, that I haue set before you life and death, blessing and cursing.* The same in effect was spoken afore, but (as I told you at a glance) Moses meant to expresse yet more, to the intent that the people shoulde vnderstande that he spake in good earnest, and that although their hearts were of stone, yet ought this to soften them. And let vs marke first of al, that if the Iewes were thus harde & slowe, yea and ranke rebelles too, we be no better than they. For it is not in respect of them onely that God sayth hee wil chaunge mens stonie heartes; it is a generall promise. Hee sheweth that of nature men be such, namely, altogether rebellious, & that they will by no meanes be ruled. And therefore Moses is fayne to inlarge his speech, and to haue recourse to heauen and earth. Hereby we haue matter first of all to pricke vs forwarde. In deede men suppose that they be able fellowes to come vnto God: but were there such forwardnes in vs as wee surmise: it were ynough for God to becken to vs with the finger, and to say, Come: But nowe when hee is fayne to crye out, and to vse roughnesse, and to handle vs sharply, yea, and (as yee woulde say) to coniure vs; it is a token that hee perceiueth well, that without this manner of dealing, hee coulde not drawe vs to him; but that wee woulde still drawe backewarde from him. Therefore let vs learne to condemne our selues: and moreouer when we heare that GOD doeth prouoke vs more roughly than wee woulde, wee may not for all that bee nyce, nor grieued thereat. In deede it is meete for vs to bee tender hearted one way, that is to say, that wee bee not like Stithyes or Anuyles, which beate backe the strokes of the hammer: but yet let vs take heede, that wee repyne not at the vehemencie which GOD vseth towardes vs; knowing that the same is necessarie for vs. If GOD then after hee hath taught vs gently, doe exhort vs with a more quickenesse, yea, and threaten vs, and moreouer summon vs, and afterwarde frame our inditement against vs, let vs vnderstande that it is necessarie that it shoulde bee so, and that wee ought not to bee offended thereat: for wee shall winne nothing by it. Yee shall see many which can fynde in their hartes that the Gospell should be preached: but after what manner? Forsooth after a deade manner, so as the letter shoulde be layed foorth, and then euery man holde what hee listed, without any exhortation to bee made, and without vnfolding of the inwarde force thereof. Such scoffers as these are to bee seene, which doe flatly mocke GOD, and yet in the meane whyle will needes bee borne withall. What, say they? Is it a preaching of the Gospel, when men threaten, and deale thus roughly? But in the meane whyle let vs consider what wee be, whether it be meete that God should deale with vs after our one liking. In deed if we were pliable, so as our hearres did yeeld at euerie word: then weare this vehemencie superfluous & vnprofitable: but seeing we be as slow as Asses, and also frantique, so as he cannot tame vs, nor reclaime vs vnto him; it is good reason that he should speake in an other phrase. That is the thing which wee haue to obserue, where Moses doeth in this place call to heauen and earth. Yea and let vs marke, that he expresseth more in saying, heauen and earth, than if he had called all the Angels of heauen, (as hee might haue done,) and in likewise all the dyuels of hell, as executioners of the iustice of God. But it ought to make vs more ashamed when he setteth before vs ỹ senselesse creatures. Now therfore when wee haue not obeyed our God, who shalbe our witnesses to condemne vs? The creatures ỹ haue neyther reason, nor vnderstanding, nor senses. The earth knoweth not wherefore it was created, no more do the heauens; and yet doe euen they preach with a loud voyce, that their creator is to be obeyed.

To take these wordes of *Heauen* and *Earth*, for men & Angels: were too colde a doctrine. Moses vndoutedly had a farther respect, which is, that men shalbe woorse than ashamed, if they giue not eare to God when he teacheth them. And wherefore? For it might be replyed that it was an vnreasonable kinde of speach, to cal heauen and earth to witnesse. For they bee not of capacitie to alleage any thing. No: but let vs consider howe the earth, hauing no vnderstanding, doeth through a secret inclination obey God; shee openeth her bowels to nourish men; shee bringeth foorth fruite, shee doth her dutie in all respectes; yea, and shee doeth it in such wise, as shee maketh it manifest vnto vs by effect, that shee tendeth to none other ende, but to obey her creator. And what doeth the heauen? Wee see howe it goeth about, and is in continuall labour: what voyages doeth the Sunne make euery day? hee fetcheth an infinite circuit. Wee see likewise howe the moone doeth the like, and so the rest of the Planets. Also wee see other motions which goe a contrary course to these. To bee short, the heauen doeth as it were burne in desire to serue God; and yet these bee creatures without reason, without vnderstanding. Seeing then that these shewe openly vnto vs, that the secrete inclination of nature doeth lead them thereto, & they neuer leaue off, but there is such a constancie in them, that since the worlde was first created, this order hath alwayes continued still: what is to bee done of vs in whome God hath imprinted his owne image, to the intent wee shoulde haue witte and discretion; telling vs in our consciences, that wee ought to discerne good and euill asunder, and prouoking vs thereto by his worde, whereby he discouereth himself vnto vs familiarly? If we for al this do draw back stil, & wil not receiue his yoke, nor yeeld him any obedience, must we not needs be worse than monsters; and consequently bee counted detestable? And on the other side, if after wee haue shewed some semblance of obedience to God, wee then become wauering, and by and by become wearie of seruing him, and turne away from him: shall wee not bee reproued & conuicted by the continuall order of nature? Let vs marke wel then, that it is not without cause, that Moses, (to make men more ashamed) telleth the that heauen and earth shalbee witnesses against them, whereby they shalbee conuicted. Thus yee see in effect what wee haue to obserue. Now let vs come to that which hee addeth, *I haue set before thee good and euil, blessing and cursing: to the intent thou shouldest loue: verily, euen by louing the Lord thy God, for that he is the life and the long continuance of thy dayes.* Here Moses addeth not any new thing; but confirmeth his former matter. Whereby wee doe still see, that we be so dulheaded when obedience to Godwarde commeth in talke, that it is not ynough for vs to haue the matter spoken briefly, & as it were by a glance: but it must be beaten into our heads. And therfore God neuer vseth any superfluous speache: but thereafter as he seeth it expedient for vs, so doth he repete things: and because he seeth that we haue but a short memorie, hee is faine to put vs in mind of the things which we knew & haue now forgotten. Also for as much as he seeth vs to be hard of digestion; he is fayne to chaw the doctrine to vs afore hand, that we may bee able to digest it. That is the thing which Moses doth presently, when he sayeth: This day I call heauen & earth to witnesse, that I haue set before thee good and euill, blessing and the curse. Nowe let vs returne to that that wee haue spoken; which is, that as often as the worde of God is declared vnto vs, wee must looke into the power therof, euen to stay our selues thereuppon: that after wee haue once receiued the grace which hee offereth vnto vs, wee may not dout that wee shalbe deceiued, being so stayed vppon the testimonie which hee hath delyuered to vs of his goodnesse and loue. And likewise that beeing touched with dread and feare, to the intent we may preuent the threatenings, wee must not linger till hee put the thinges in execution, which hee hath denounced against vs, but we must goe and yeelde our selues vnto him, to pray him to receiue vs to his mercie and pitie. And albeit that this solemne protestation bee not made euery day, as it was here done by Moses; yet wee must vnderstande that it belongeth vnto vs at this day, to the ende that none of vs shoulde beguyle himselfe.

Moreouer it is sayde that both blessing and cursing are set before our eyes when wee haue the worde. Why so? For when our Lord trayneth vs vnto him, what remayneth then? Is not hee our life and the length of our dayes? Shall wee liue when wee bee parted away from God which is the fountaine of life and of all manner of happinesse? If wee take this worde *God* [in our mouth] and do not vnderstande whom we bee, nor what wee owe him; wee make him but an idoll, hee is but a fantasie: as there be many which talke ynough of God, but yet they doe not thinke that they leaue him emptie of all his glorie. But it is not for vs to speake after that manner of our God: wee must yeelde vnto him that which belongeth to his maiestie. Beholde, our God is the fountayne of life, hee is the welspring of vertue, of ioy, of felicitie, & of glorie. To bee briefe, the fulnesse of all goodnesse lyeth in him; and therefore as soone as wee turne away from him, wee cannot haue any droppe of those things: but all manner of mischiefe shall pursue vs. That is the thing which Moses hath declared vnto vs in this place. So then by this worde *God*, and by his proper office, he sheweth vs, that when we haue his word, we must not then any longer stagger, neither is there any excuse for the misbeleeuers which do not this honor to God, to conclude & to answere Amen, as soone as he saith the word. And why? For it is alone as if they renounced him. And the Apostle vseth as it were a like reason, in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, where hee sayeth: Heb. 4. 12
For as much as it is the office of GOD to search mennes heartes, hee hath also giuen

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the same power to his word, so lasse must peace our bones, and spake euen into the marrow and very thoughts. He putteth downe there a likenesse and conformitie betwixt God and his worde. So also in this place Moses telleth vs, that it is not for vs to cauill or wrangle any more, when wee haue once beene instructed by the worde of God. For therein hee sheweth himselfe what he is, there must wee behold his power. Nowe then, if wee knowe God to this prayse that hee is our life, and the length of our dayes, it is certaine that wee must fynd the same in Gods worde, and thereof wee ought to bee throughly well assured. To be short, wee see howe Moses standeth vppon this point, that the worde of God ought to haue such honour & reuerence at our handes, as to set before vs as if God himselfe appeared vnto vs visibly in his maiestie, and to submit our selues obediently thereunto, as in very deede that is the true proofe and tryall of the obedience which wee yeelde vnto him. But herewithall, wee bee also admonished, that men deceiue themselues, when they seeke either life or prosperitie any where else than in God. For wee foorthwith goe to wracke as soone as he draweth his spirite from vs. Do wee then desire to liue? Let vs abide vnder the wings of our God, and cleaue vnto him, according as it is sayde here. True it is that in this place Moses setteth forth an earthly life vnto the Iewes, and also the land of Chanaan, which was assigned vnto them for their inheritance: but yet he sheweth that God meant by exercising of them in those thinges to trayne them on farther. Let vs marke (I say) that Moses did not meane to holde the people to this earthly life, but to make them to vnderstande the goodnes of GOD, and to giue them some certaine taste therof, by the testimonies which they had here beneath. Moreouer, seeing that it is so that God protested vnto the Iewes by the mouth of Moses, that hee layde before their eyes both life and death, when hee willed that the Iewe should bee published: let vs vnderstande that the sayde life is yet better vttered vnto vs at this day. For the lawe is called the ministerie of death, because life is not there so largely knowen, as our Lorde Iesus Christ doth shewe it vs at this day, in that hee commeth to offer himselfe vnto vs as the liuely image of his father, to the ende that wee shoulde be transfigured into his glorie. Let vs then make well that as oft as the doctrine of the Gospell nowadayes is preached vnto vs, God sheweth forth life vnto vs, and calleth vs in such wise vnto him, as wee may become one with him, according to this saying which wee reade in the seuenteenth Chapter of Saint Iohn, Holy Father, I beseech thee, that they may bee one with vs, as thou and I are but one. Seeing then that our Lorde Iesus hath pronounced this with his own mouth, let vs not feare but that whensoeuer we bee called vnto him, hee dooth ioyne vs perfectly to himselfe in glory. But yet therewithall, let vs also bee afrayed, least for our refusing to receiue life to inioy it, death bee giuen vnto vs. Not that that is of the nature of the Gospell (for wee our selues be the cause thereof) but because the reprobates bee euermore consumed by the onely sauour of the Gospel, through their owne malice and vnthankfulnes. Let vs bee admonished to choose the life that is offered vnto vs, seeing wee neede not to seeke it farre off, but the matter resteth onely in receiuing it, when it is set before our eyes. But as touching the cause, and how God gouerneth vs by his holy Spirite that was treated of yesterday, shewing that the same is done by his word, notwithstanding that it is vttered vnto vs by the mouthes of men.

Col. 1. 25.

Iohn. 17. 21.

2. Cor. 2. 16.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our sinnes: beseeching him to make vs feele them more and more, yea, and to mislike them, and that wee may bee so reformed to his obedience, as we may couet nothing but to dedicate our selues wholy to his seruice, vntill that being quite dispatched from our olde Adam, wee bee fully reformed by his righteousnesse. And so let vs all say, Almightie GOD heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xxiij. of Aprill, 1556

The CLXXIII. Sermon which is the first vpon the one & thirtith Chapter.

THen Moses went and spake these wordes vnto all Israel,
2 Saying vnto them, This day am I fiue score yeres olde, and I can no longer goe in and out: And the Lorde also hath sayde vnto mee, Thou shalt not passe ouer this Iordan.

3 The Lorde thy God will passe ouer before thee: It is hee that shall destroy this people before thy face, and thou shalt possesse them: Iosuah is hee that shall goe ouer before thy face, euen as the Lorde hath spoken.

4 And the Lorde will doe vnto them as hee did to Sehon and to Og the kinges of the Amorrhytes, and to their countries, the which hee hath destroyed.

5 And the Lorde will deliuer them before thee, to the intent you may doe vnto them according to all the commaundement which I haue commanded you.

6 Be of good comfort, and take courage, feare not neither be dismayed before their face: for the Lorde thy God goeth with thee, hee will not leaue thee nor forsake thee.

7 And Moses called Iosuah, and sayde vnto him in the presence of all Israel: bee of good comfort, and take a good heart to thee: for thou shalt goe in with the people into the Lande, which the Lorde hath sworne to their fathers to giue them: and thou shalt diuide it vnto them for their inheritaunce.

8 And it is the Lorde that goeth before thee: it is hee that is with thee: hee will not forsake thee nor leaue thee, therefore haue no feare nor dread.

HERE it is shewed vs, howe Moses was not cõtented to serue God & the people vnto y which hee was apointed all the dayes of his life: but also did his endeuour, that the remembrance of the name of God might continue among the people, and also that all things might be gouerned accordingly, euen after his death. Also hee gaue them to vnderstande, that Gods calling of him was not to the ende that the people should bee so entreated for a certaine time: but that as the lawe was giuen for a witnesse that God had chosen the children of Abraham; so hee would guyde them euen to the comming of the Redeemer, according whereunto hee went through with his calling. That is the very thing, which we haue here chiefely to obserue, when Moses by the commaundement of God ordayned Iosuah to bee his successour to gouerne the people. And therewithall hee sheweth that hee had faithfully trauayled all his life, and that it was not for any want of good will, that hee gaue ouer the charge that was committed vnto him: but because *hee was altogether ouerwarne with weakenesse*. For if Moses shoulde haue withdrawen him to bee at rest, the people might haue beene in doute, and also much discouraged thereby: but whereas hee declareth that hee neuer ceassed vntill hee had finished his course: therein hee sheweth the way and example vnto all men, that none ought to turne heade; but that so long as God doeth prolong their liues, they ought to goe on foorth whither soeuer hee calleth them, and to bee firme and constant without swarueing aside or chaunging. Moreouer hee sheweth vs, that wee must not shrinke away for any mans death, because God continueth euermore in his state. And although y they by whom he meant to be serued doe perish, yet must not his right be thereby diminished: and that is a poynt worthie to be remembred. For wee see what happened in that people; notwithstanding that they had beene forewarned thereof, yet fell they away after the death of Iosuah, and God was driuen to afflict them by the handes of their enemies to bring them backe againe. But felt they once agayne the fauour of God? By and by they fell to their olde byasse againe, and remembred not a whit that they were deliuered, but returned to their idolatric againe. The booke of the Iudges is full of these thinges. When God had raised vp Samuel who was the excellentest of all others: yet could not they abyde him, but desired a king, and the State was fayne to bee changed after their appetite. Wee see therefore that this people were so wretched, that they continued not any longer in the seruice of God, nor in the obedience of his lawe, than a man of courage and stoutnesse had the gouerning of them. Therefore it is sayde here, that although Moses was olde and short lyued, yet was it not for them to looke eyther this way or that way, but to consider that the liuing God had chosen and elected them for his people, and promised them to haue care of their welfare: and that seeing hee had taken them into his safegarde, hee woulde neuer forsake them, so they did sticke vnto him, and were faithfull vnto him, and turned not away. And thus wee may gather a good admonition out of this place: that is to saye, that hauing both our eyes and our wittes fastened vppon the

the worde of God, wee muſt haue a right continuance in y faith, albeit that things do change as touching the worlde. In deede, if wee haue good folke to leade vs, wee bee ſo much the leſſe excuſable, if wee profite not thereby. For if God ſtretch out his hande vnto vs, and giue vs gouernours which bee as his meſſengers, edifying and gouerning vs faithfully; it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde ſtrayne our ſelues ſomuch the more: for wee haue one generall rule, to cauſe the meanes that God giueth vs to bee auaylable, euen by turning them to our profite. It is a ſingular thing, when hee giueth vs ſuch men as haue the vertue of his holy ſpirite, which alſo hee ſo endued with whatſoeuer is for our benefite, as wee may vnderſtande that hee offereth himſelfe vnto vs in their perſons: It behooueth vs I ſay, to bee ſo much the more moued at ſuch times to ſerue God. But howſoeuer it bee, let vs content our ſelues with the doctrine; and albeit that men do dye and fayle vs, let vs neuertheleſſe vnderſtande, that God is alwayes the ſame, and that his truethe cannot change. For it is ſayde of men, that they bee but a ſhadowe; but the worde of GOD continueth for euer. And that not onely in it ſelfe, but it muſt alſo haue a rooting in vs, euen an incorruptible roote, as ſaith Saint Peter. Let vs learne therfore, that if the people of Iſrael were exhorted to continue in the faith and ſeruice of God after the death of Moſes, wee alſo muſt doe the like at this daye.

And Moſes in ſo dooing doeth make it manifeſt, that hee beareth no enuie towarde Ioſuah, as many do, who ſeeke their own renown, and would not that others ſhould do any thing, for feare leaſt their owne prayſe ſhoulde bee ſtayned, and that men ſhould not talke ynough of them. Moſes had not this curſed ambition, that hee ſhoulde hinder the procurement of the peoples welfare by the aduauncing of Ioſua, but as much as in him lay hee did put him in authoritie, yea euen to perfourme a farre greater matter than was graunted to him ſelfe to doe. For God tolde him before, that hee ſhould not enter into the lande that was promiſed to the people. In deede hee ſawe it: but hee was ſhut out, becauſe hee honoured not God, when the people murmured for want of drinke. Becauſe hee did not then ſufficiently glorifie God: but was troubled and vexed in his minde, hee was depriued of that honour, and God did diſgrade him in that behalfe. And yet for all that, Moſes omitted not to take Ioſuah, and appoynted him to bee his ſucceſſour, willing him to doe his duetie in ſetting the people in poſſeſſion of their inheritance. Seeing then that wee perceiue that Moſes did willingly ſubmit himſelfe, let euery of vs learne to haue no reſpect to himſelfe, nor ſo vaunt himſelfe, nor to ſeeke our owne credite in this worlde, of purpoſe to bee renowmed both during our life and after our death: but let vs content our ſelues, that God doeth acknowledge, that wee were willing to ſerue him, ſo as the Church might feele the profite of our labour, and bee edified thereby. When wee bee at this poynt; let vs referre our ſelues to our God, and beare no enuie to thoſe whome hee rayſeth vp in our ſteed. For wee knowe, that if GOD doe not worke continually amongeſt men, the grace that hee hath put into them will quickly vaniſh; (ſuch is our frailties:) and then all that wee haue profited ſhall bee nought woorth. Is it our deſire that GOD ſhoulde continue that which hee hath wrought by vs? It is neceſſarie then that hee haue alwayes people to ſerue him. Let euery one therfore endeuour to diſcharge his duty without enuie, and without ſpyting: let the maſter haue his honour and preheminence, and let vs bee cohelpers one to another, and doe our endeuour to ayde ſuch as wee ſee to bee acceptable to God. Thus much is here ſhewed vs by the example of Moſes.

Nowe hee ſayeth vnto the people, *I am an hundred and twentie yeares olde, I can no longer goe and come: and the Lorde hath ſayde that I may not enter into this lande.* Firſt of all hee alleageth his weakeneſſe, for that hee was ſo olde, ſo bruſed and broken: that hee was no longer able to ſatisfie ſo difficult a charge. I can not goe and come (ſayeth hee). Nowe hereof I gather that which I haue touched, namely, that whileſt Moſes was luſtie, or had in him any ſtrength at all, hee ſpared not himſelfe, knowing well that the ſame was not giuen him for himſelfe, but for the common benefite, and welfare of all the people: hee then practiſed that which Saint Paul ſpeaketh of, namely, not to liue to himſelfe. Nowe in deede wee bee not all ſo excellent as hee was: yet neuertheleſſe this rule is common to all the children of GOD, that is, that no body is created for his owne particular behoofe; but that we muſt looke to our vocation, that wee may followe it, and offer vp our ſelues in ſacrifice to God, & euery man liue and continue according to his abilitie and meaſure without ydleneſſe. And let vs not flatter our ſelues, as to ſaye, I am excuſed: for it is not for vs to take our leaue, and to giue ouer, and to diſcontinue when wee our ſelues liſt. Every man (I ſay) muſt goe on euen to the ende, without beeing wearie: and when it ſhall pleaſe GOD to deliuer vs out of this world, then are we diſcharged, and not afore.

Rom. 14. 7. 2. Cor. 5. 15.

Rom. 12. 2.

Nowe when hee ſayeth that God depriueth him of going into the lande, hee alleageth a matter not honourable to him ſelfe: but doeth call to remembrance the fault that he had committed. Hee doeth not here accuſe God, neither fretteth hee at the puniſhment whereof he ſpeaketh, but he acknowlegeth his offence with meekneſs. Seeing that Moſes, a man ſo excellent which was as it were an Angel amongſt mortall creatures, was contented to teſtifie his fault, and often times to rehearſe that he was not worthie to enioy the heritage which God had promiſed to Abraham, in ſo much that although hee had deliuered the people, and had doone ſo many noble actes, & had publiſhed the Lawe, and was reputed gouernor of y Church of God euen vntill y comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: yet

notwithstanding euen after all this, hee was not ashamed to lay foorth his owne fault, and to declare that God would not admit him to the promised heritage: what ought wee to do? So then whensoeuer God punisheth vs, let vs not seeke vayne shiftes to couer our vncleanneſſe: but let vs rather bee well contented, that the punishmentes which God hath sent vs, may profite & serue for instruction to all our neighbours. Hee sayeth moreouer, *The Lorde thy God will goe before thee, and destroy all those people before thy face, and thou shalt doe vnto them, as thou didſt vnto Sehon & Og kings of Bazan & of the Amorites*. Here Moſes confirmeth the matter which we haue touched, to wit, that although hee be not present in person, when the people should enter into the lande of Chanaan, yet was God of right to be esteemed more than mortall men, so as the people ought not to bee afrayde though they sawe not Moſes any more, nor aske, where is hee that hath led vs? Be contented (saith he) to haue the Lorde to goe with you. Hereby wee bee yet better warned to yeeld God his due honour, which is, to rest in him alone, although wee bee bereft of all meanes heere beneath. In deede it is a thing to bee desired, that wee might euer bee gouerned by such rulers as are led by the Spirite of God: for it is a priuiledge and fauour, that cannot bee sufficiently esteemed, and it is also a signe and token that hee is amongest vs: Therefore it were greatly to be wished. Neuertheleſſe, although wee bee depriued therof, and that God taketh them away by death, whereby his blessing, to the outward shew, is so much the lesser: yet, let vs looke vp higher and by fayth behold howe he is present to them which seeke him, and that he hath his hand euermore stretched out to helpe them, so as his power shalbee strong ynough, albeit that hee shewe them nothing visibly. That is the thing which we haue to remember where Moſes sayeth, *The Lorde thy God will goe before thee*. It is certaine that as touching my selfe I shall not be there any more, but shoulde you therefore bee dismayed and fayntharted? What is God? Wote ye not that he hath all in his owne power? What am I? I am but a shadowe. Now God hath put a certaine droppe of his power in me, and you haue perceiued the experience thereof: and although the same haue profited you, what is it in comparison of his helping of you with the whole fulnes of his power? Nowe then, looke that you measure not Gods power by a mortall man: neither bee yee so grosse headed and witleſſe, as to say that you be discouraged because I am no more with you, and that yee bee alreadie vanquished: for that were a curſed blasphemie. But vnderstand, that God is not diminished: when the creatures be perished, hee is able to rayse others: and without rayſing vp of any at all, he is sufficient himselfe: for hee hath no neede to borowe from any where elſe. Now then the verie office and propertie of faith, is to rest vs in God and to staye vppon him, so as although all the worlde fayle vs, yet wee assure our selues that God wil worke mightily ynough, without being ayded by any other partie. Moreouer, for the better confirming of the people in hope, Moſes telleth them that they had seene alreadie after what maner God had wrought in his peoples behalf. You haue had (sayeth hee) victorie against Og the king of Bazan, and against Sehon the king of the Amorrhites, and you know that God did then fight for you. (For in deede the people had beene at that time, as it were vtterly forlorne, and were driuen of force to confeſſe that the victorie came not of themselues, but that God through his grace did vanquish these two mightie kings.) Seeing therefore that GOD hath alreadie shewed himselfe a father towards you, feare not but that he will continue so hereafter. Thus should wee bee confirmed in hope, by our former experience & feeling of the fauour and helpe of our GOD. When he hath once made vs to taſt his goodneſſe, let vs thereby bee so much the more assured. That is the thing which Moſes meant to teach vs in speaking here of Sehon and Og. Now hee addeth farther, that the Israelites shoulde doe vnto all the nations whom God would deliuer into their handes, according as it is commaunded them here. It shoulde seeme at the first sight, that the people ought much rather to haue vsed mercie, than so to haue rooted them out vtterly. But (as wee haue seene heretofore) God had sayde vnto them: You shall spare none, neither litle nor great, all the race of them must bee rooted out: for I will not haue any of them remaine vnto you. Nowe it seemeth to bee a kinde of cruelties, that notwithstanding that they yelded themselues, and craued mercie, yet they shoulde neuertheleſſe be al kild. Yea, but yet for al that seeing God had spoken it, the people were of duetie to execute it, & not to be wise to the contrarie, nor to gloſe vpon the worde of God, or to reply vnto it at all. Wee see then that when men will needes twins betwixt two streames, and make a medly betweene the worde of God & their own fancies; they marre all. There is nothing better than to followe that which God sheweth & cõmandeth vs. For if we take vpon vs to be too forecasting, hee will laugh our presumption to scorne, & in the ende we shalbe accursed. Let vs marke then, that seeing it was Gods will that all those people (to wit, the Chananites, Pherezites, & their like) shoulde bee rooted out: it was the duetie of the Israelites to doe that which was giuen them in charge: for there was none but GOD him selfe that coulde bee Iudge thereof. Yet notwithstanding, it is certaine y God dealt not excessiuely in punishing those people: for hee had long time patiently wayted for their amendment; euer since the time of Abraham had they bin vnreformable; they had bin spared foure hundred yeres. But were they therby any whit amended? Nay, they were become worse than euer they were: was it not reason then, y after god had so lõg borne with them, he shold lay his hand vpon them at y laſt? Yes verily. Let therfore let no bodie murmur in this behalf against god, as thogh his vẽgeãce were too rough. And in very deed it is a wonderous thing

Deut. 3. 16.

Gen. 15.

that

man cannot content thē selues with the iustice of God how moderately soeuer he vse it. When we perceiue any ouer great iniquitie (specially if it touch our selues, & that we receiue damage & hurt thereby) we cry vnto God: & be greeued if he bestirre him not at the first dash, & we think that he is as it were asleepe. What say we? Is it possible that God should suffer so long? If hee looke downe, how can he be so patient? We will needes haue God to take weapon in hande at our pleasure: and when hee doth any execution if it like vs not, we say: Howe nowe? What rigorous dealing is this? God sayth, that he is long suffering, full of goodnesse, slowe to wrath, and inclined to mercie: howe is it then that he dealeth thus roughly with men? Nay, wee thinke that he is cruell, and we will also condemne him in that point. Seeing then that wee be so vntoward, and that in steede of iudging rightly of the workes of God, we wrappe vp all in confusion: let vs learne to like well of all his doonges, without any gainesaying: and when we perceiue not the cause, let vs make this conclusion, that howsoeuer the case stande, all that euer proceedeth of him, is rightfull, & that there is nothing in him but infinite wisedome and vprightnesse. And moreouer let vs also shut our eyes close against all conceites, which may hinder vs and make vs vnable to serue GOD, yet let vs not range hither and thither: but let it suffice vs to haue the worde from his mouth, and to holde vs to that which he hath commaunded. That is the thing which we haue to gather out of this text, where Moses telleth vs that the people of Israell must do vnto all their enemies, according as God hath commanded them.

Nowe thereupon he sayth, *That they shoulde not be discouraged nor afraide, but that they shoulde bee courageous and behaue themselues manfully.* Whereupon is all this exhortation grounded? Vpon the promise which he made, namely, The Lord thy God will goe before thee. We must therefore marke that men shall neuer take good courage, what soeuer is sayde vnto them, vnlesse they bee assured of the helpe of God, and that he will be on their side, and giue good successe to all their enterprises. It is certaine that men be too bolde to do thinges, and to attempt more than is lawfull for them: but they do euer go about it carelesly, and without discretion. And as a madde bedlem, notwithstanding y he bee brought lowe with his long sicknes & feele not his own weakenesse: yet is he much stronger and rageth in such wise, as he cannot be ruled, and worketh more trouble than if he were in perfect health: euen so is it with men when they haue no promise of God, but be chafed in their owne rashnesse and presumption. They dare doe wonders: but in respect to doe well, we neuer take courage therin, vnlesse we be assured of the will of God: and to be short, we can neuer build but vpon his promises. We must therefore remember that Moses, before he exhorteth the people to be valiant & to behaue themselues stoutly, sayde vnto them, Thy God wil be with thee, feare them not. And why so? For thou art sure that thou canst not quaile, because thy God gouerneth thee. Howbeit, forasmuch as wee doe not at the first take sure holde of the promises of God, neither are they so certainely settled in our hearres, as is to be wished; Moses doth also adde a confirmation, and sayth: Nay, the Lord thy God will not leaue thee, neither shalt thou euer be forsaken of him. It was ynough that he hadde sayde afore; Thy God will goe before thee, hee will giue thee victorie against all thine enemies; thou hast alreadie had experience of his helpe: It shalbe alwayes the same: this may seeme to haue beene ynough. But yet that which Moses addeth vnto it is not superfluous, because of the vnbeleefe of men: who notwithstanding that God doe assure them, doe yet still doubt and be wauering, vnlesse they haue a newe confirmation. Whereby we perceiue that it is no light matter to giue credit to the promises of God, and to holde vs to them, as many do suppose, but that is because they neuer tryed it. They that thinke themselues to bee most faithfull, haue neuer tasted what faith is: according as we see a great manie fooles, which speake of warre, and thinke to deuour all at one bitte, whereas in deede they neither knowe nor haue seene any thing. Euen so is it with thē that haue a speculatiue faith: they make themselues y ablest folk in the world, they boast themselues to be as faithfull as any can be founde: but they that knowe what faith is, doe vnderstande that there is nothing more harde, than for vs to stay ourselues vppon God; and in that behalfe wee must bee faine to imprison our senses, and to take the bit in our mouth (as they say) and to enforce our selues: yea and that God also on his side doe worke in that behalfe, as we doe see that he doeth. For it is no superfluous talke, when hee setteth his promises before vs, and putteth vs so often in minde of them. For it is a token that they beare no great sway with vs, or rather that they enter not into our hearts to settle there, as were meete they shoulde. Thus yee see what Moses meant, in saying, That the Lorde will neuer forsake his people.

Moreouer, vnder this worde, he sheweth vnto vs, that Gods offering of his grace vnto vs is not for a day, but that hee will continue it vnto the end conditionally that we also do receiue it with the like condition. In deede it is true that in this place he treateth but of the Land of Canaan: but we knowe that it was a pleadge of the eternall life, and of the inheritaunce that is prepared for vs in heauen. Now he sayth expressly, Thy God wil neuer leaue thee, neither will he euer forsake thee. Wee see therefore that our Lorde meaneth not to encourage vs for a day, but he meaneth that we should depende vppon him to liue and to die, and that we should be fully resolued, that when he hath begonne, he will performe his worke towarde vs, and that he wil not leaue vs at the halfe way, (as they say). And this is to bee well noted, because that although men imbrace Gods promises, yet are they sometimes or other in dout, and wot not where to become: and specially when any temptation com-

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meth vpon them, then be they so scarred, that to their seeming, God is loth to doe them good, or else that he will not continue to doe them good. Seeing then that we be thus tossed with doubtes and troubles, we haue so much the more neede to remember the lesson that is here deliuered vnto vs: namely, ỳ God doth offer vs his grace, with such condition as it shall neuer faile vs. But we see how this doctrine hath bin peruerted specially in the popedome. They be not ashamed to say, that we must stande alwayes in doubt of continuaunce to the end, and that we wote not what God intendeth to doe heereafter; insomuch that it is a principall article of their faith which they holde in the Popedome. Neither meane I that it is the ignoraunt sort of the simple people only which do say so, but that it is the resolution of all the Monks and Freers; who affirm it to be the principal article of their faith, that men must stande alwaies in doubt whether God wil saue them or not. Seing then ỳ the deuil hath borne such a sway, somuch the more ought we to be confirmed in this doctrine, where it is sayde, The Lord thy God will not leaue thee, neither shalt thou euer be forsaken of him.

Now when Moses had thus spoken to the people: then hee called also Iosuah and confirmed him. And moreouer in the person of Iosuah, we may perceiue the thing yet better which I haue sayd afore; namely, ỳ it sufficeth vs not to be once certified of the grace of God; but that because of our weakenes, we haue neede to be vpholden & maintained, leest wee fall away or swarue aside. For behold, here is Iosuah whom God had chosen to be gouernor of his people to set them in ỳ possession of their promised inheritaunce. And yet notwithstanding for all that he had hearde his duetie and office at the mouth of Moses, yet was God fain to giue him new reuelations after the death of Moses, & to vse the like words vnto him againe. And how so? Was he so short witted, that ere three dayes to an end, he had quite forgotte what had bin said vnto him before God and the sanctuarie? He was there present, and a solemne ceremonie was vsed thereabout, & was it because that Iosuah had forgotten his duetie? No: But he was a fraile man: and God knowing him to be so, did confirme him, and encourage him. And if this needed to bee done to Iosuah; what needeth to be done to vs? Therefore let vs beware of the presumption that blindeth vs, in that we thinke we neede not to serue our minds continually vppon the worde of God as there be many doe, which hauing hearde some one sermon, do suppose that they bee clarkes good ynough, not considering that the thinges which they haue heard will soone vanish away, and be quite and cleane gone ere three daies to an end, vnlesse they doe still beate vpon it. So then, let vs be well aduised that wee exercise ourselues in the promises of God, and when they be often laide afore vs, let vs not thinke the time to be lost in hearing them: but let vs vnderstand that our Lorde intendeth to emprint them in vs; to the ende we should sticke vnto them, and be so throughly grounded in them, as Satan may neuer haue power to turne vs away, by any meanes whatsoeuer. That is a thing which we haue yet farther to remember.

Nowe let vs come to that which Moses spake vnto him. *Moreouer thou shalt go before the people* (sayeth hee) *and therefore bee of good courage and behaue thyselfe manfully*. When hee sayeth vnto him, that he shall goe before the people, he stablisheth his authoritie in the name of GOD. Whereby he maketh it manifest, that it is not for men to thrust in themselues; accordingly also as the Apostle saith, ỳ no man ought to vsurpe honour vnto himselfe, but hee ỳ is called to it must vndertake and discharge the same: let vs then learne to hold vs in such modestie & simplicitie, as ỳ none of vs auaunce himselfe aboue measure, ne passe his boundes, as who would say, I will do this or that, not knowing whether he be appointed of God or not, but let euerie man be contented to doe that which is his charge; let a man gouerne his owne housholde; and sith he is but a priuate person, let him not vsurpe vppon that which is not permitted vnto him. Let the minister of the worde preach, and exhort, and accõplish his dutie, let the magistrate in like wise looke whereunto hee is called, let euerie of vs, keep his degree & his order: and let there be no confused mingling among vs. That is the thing which we must remember. Very large doctrine might be gathered out of this article, but I will not stande much thereuppon; for it hath beene often spoken of, & it is sufficient for me to touch these matters in fewe wordes, for when they be once hearde, euerie man may thinke vpon them afterwarde. And greatly shall they haue profited in Gods schoole, which can holde themselues in quiet, and not attempt more than God hath cõmanded them, but simply followe their cõne vocation. That is the thing which we haue to marke in this place, where Moses ordaineth Iosuah in his steede, howebeit speaking, as in the person of God, and by his authoritie.

Moreouer he sheweth that when God calleth vs to any charge, he doth also giue vs the ability to accomplish that which he cõmandeth vs. And this is a necessary doctrine. What is the cause ỳ men be so feareful, that if they see but a shadow, by and by they be amazed and at their wits end how to do the thinges which they knowe to belong to their office? They see wel ynough whereunto God hath called them; and yet for all that they shrinke away their shoulders: and what causeth that? Euen that cursed distrust of ours, in that we consider not that God doth guide vs, and that he hath his hande euermore stretched out to helpe vs, so we walke simply, and doe our endeuour to obey him, and followe him quietly, hauing regarde to our office and calling. And so it is a lesson whereof we can not be too mindful, which is ment in these wordes: *The God will not forsake thee*. And well ought we to put the same in vre. For it is a Testimonie, that God will neuer giue them ouer, whom hee setteth a worke, but that he wil giue them power, & blesse them, & make the successe of their trauaile to be good and happy, if they stay vpon him and leane vpon him.

him: You find wee see that in the epistle to the Hebrues, the Apostle extendeth the same yet further, where he saith, Let your heartes be farre from couetousnesse, and know ye that it is written, The Lorde wil not forsake you. Whereby he sheweth vs, that whereas we vse so many wicked trades; and whereas treason, cruelrie & malice doe leade vs into such enormities, that we fling ouerthwart the feeldes, and walking in bypathes doe followe our owne disordered lustes: the welspring of all these vices is that we put not our trust in God; naither is it throughly wel sealed in our heartes with any certaine assurednes that the Lorde is neere vnto vs, and that he will neuer forsake vs. And therefore seeing we haue no stay, but be so wauering & carryed away with vnquietnes, yea & set on fire, and our lustes be as a thousand fornaces continually burning within vs, because we haue not our trust in God; let vs learne to commit ourselues to his prouidence, & to holde ourselues assured þ hee will not faile vs: & then shall we finde the thing þ is tolde vs heere: namely, þ euerie man in his vocation may be assured þ God will be alwaies present with him. Is a man charged with a household? Then will he be full of care, & if he haue a number of children, hee trauaileth, saying, Alas what shall I say? If I had but one or two children, I could deale as wel as they þ haue no charge at all: but now þ I haue so many hanging on my shoulders; alas what shall I do? True it is, þ a father ought in deede to take care for his children: but what manner of care should þ be? It must moue him to call vpon God to haue recourse to his helpe, to hold his family in order, that thinges go not to hauocke: it must cause him to instruct his children to liue in sobriete, and to bee contented with a litle, & not to lauish out þ which they haue: but labour that God may blesse thē. Such is the care that a father ought to haue. And this kinde of care hindereth him not to rest vpō God, þ hauing tasted this promise; namely, Thy God will not forsake thee, he do alwayes his dutie, and gouerne well his household. And euen so it is of all others. Although they see neuer so great difficulties (as there be many which in their vocation, notwithstanding þ they be priuate persons, do finde thēselues greatly pulled backe) yet must they euer haue recourse to this ankerhold; Thy God is a-boue, he will guide thee, care not: so thou folow him, his helpe shall neuer faile thee. Much more reason is it therfore, þ such as be in higher office and haue a heauier burthen to beare, shold haue recourse to this promise when they see troubles, and many grudginges against thē, and perceiue the world inflamed with malice, & to say, What will our Lord sleepe in heauen? The thing þ was spoken to Iosuah, was it spokē only for one yere? Not but in þ person of him God meant to assure vs, þ when we walke in our dutie, and go directly to work as he hath cōmanded vs, hauing regard to obey him rather than to please the world, he is with vs and will assist vs. Seeing it is so, let vs march on, and not care for any thing that can happen vnto vs. This (I say) is the true vse of this doctrine.

Heb. 13.

Moreouer, although we haue this assurance, that God will accomplish & performe the worke that he hath begun, yet doth it not follow therfore, þ we also should not inforce ourselues. For these two thinges are ioyned together, namely, thy God will neuer giue thee ouer; and therfore be thou of good courage, & behaue thyselfe valiantly. It is not meant then, þ God leadeth vs as it were sleeping, and as though it were no harde matter for vs to do him seruice, when it pleaseth him to imploy vs to any charge & office. No not so: we must labour therein, till wee pass againe, & sometime it shall seeme vnto vs þ God is farre frō vs & thinges shall be doutfull & disordered, þ we wot not what shall become of vs: but then let vs cheare vp our selues. After þ maner must wee trust in the prouidence of our God. And when we be so stayed thereupon, it is not meant þ we should therfore let things fall out as they may, as wee see many doe, which take occasion to waxe cold. God (say they) will prouide, & in the meane while they neglect their owne duetie. It is not ment that we should shut our eyes, saying, God will prouide for it. Truely although all things in the world were as far out of order as could be, yet ought we to be well affected, howsoeuer we fare: but yet on the other side we must serue God after such maner as he hath appointed vs to be his instrumentes, yea and þ in such wise as if it be his will, that we must suffer much, þ then wee must haue patience & not be ouerthrowē nor broken therby. The thing thē in effect which we haue to beare in mind cōcerning this place, is þ we must labour all our life long in such wise, as euery one may keepe himselfe within his owne boundes & limites, and þ we attempt not rashly more than God giueth vs leaue to do. And moreouer þ we must not be afraid to do, & to employ vs to those things which our duty requireth, assuring ourselues þ God is neere vnto vs, and that we shall feele his power at our neede, and þ hee will not forsake vs. When men thinke þ all is lost, & doe mocke vs, & count vs as people past hope of recouery, let vs not dout but þ our Lord will accōplish that which is heere promised: and therfore let vs euermore holde on with patience, waiting for the performaunce of that which wee heare spoken of heere.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, beseeching him to make vs to feele them more & more, and þ in likewise by acknowledging the frailety þ is in vs, we may seeke to arme vs so with his promises, as we may be fenced vntil the end, not only to sustain one cōbat or two, but also to fight all the daies of our life, & to remaine inuincible against al maner of tēptations: And þ forasmuch as it behoueth vs to depend altogether vpon him; we may be so stayed thereupon, þ when things do happen vnto vs contrary to our mindes as in respect of the world, we may not therby be abashed or dismaied, but trust that he only is as good as all other helpes, & therupō cōmit ourselues vnto him, endeuoring to glorifie him: and þ seeing it is his will to gouerne vs by the hand of our Lord Iesus Christ, we may be

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pliable and obedient vnto him; that being assured that he is our good and faithful guide, & that he will not faile vs, we may euermore take the more courage to giue ouer ourselues, and whol-

On Friday the xxiij. of Aprill, 1556.

The CLXXIIII. Sermon, which is the seconde vpon the one & thirtith Chapter.

9 And Moses wrate this lawe and deliuered it to the Priestes the sonnes of Leuie, which bare the Arke of the couenaunt of the Lord, and to all the Elders of Israell.

10 And Moses commaunded them, saying, At the ende of euery seuenth yeere, in the time of the yeere of freedome, in the feast of Tabernacles,

11 When all Israell commeth to appeare before the Lord thy God, in the place which hee shall choose: then shalt thou reade this Lawe before all Israell, in the hearing of them.

12 Thou shalt gather the people together, men, women, and children, and thy straunger which is within thy gates, that they may heare and learne and feare the Lorde your God, and keepe all the wordes of this lawe, to doe them.

13 And that their children also which haue not knowen it, may heare it and learne it, so as they may feare the Lorde your God all the dayes that thou liue in the Lande whither thou goest ouer Iordan to possesse it.

14 Then the Lorde sayde vnto Moses, beholde, the dayes of thy death are at hande: call Iosuah and stande ye at the Tabernacle of the Congregation that I may giue him his charge. And so Moses and Iosuah went, and stoode at the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

WE do wel confesse that God dealeth graciously with men, when he vouchsafeth to teach them, and to shewe them the way of saluation. For we see well it is a most miserable state when men haue no teaching all their life long, but do guide themselues at all aduentures. Nowe the case so standeth that we can not holde any way that is certaine for vs, but only y which God sheweth vs: for as for the thinges which men deuise, in deede they thinke them good enough, but in the meane while, albeit that they bee blinded with their owne fantasies, yet must they needes euermore stande in dout, and God maketh it manifest at the last, that it was but vanitie and folly. If men therefore were well aduised, nothing should be more deere vnto them, than to haue Gods trueth to guide them, which woulde be a lampe to shewe them the way of saluation. Beholde, God calleth vs, hee tarrieth not till wee come to seeke that which is good for vs, neither would he haue vs to fetch long windlasses: but he offereth himselfe of his owne good will, assuring vs that we can not faile, if we will hearken to his voyce: he will giue vs sufficient instruction, and he protesteth that it shall not be in vaine for vs to followe that which we shall haue heard at his mouth. Yet notwithstanding, wee for all this doe make smal account to be taught of him, euery of vs wandereth after his owne imagination: and (which worse is) hauing hadde some tast and knowledge, and hauing founde by experience that all our whole happinesse lyeth there, and that our whole contentment and rest ought to be settled in the obeying of Goddes worde; yet is there none of vs but hee turneth aside from it, and the same hath beene common in all ages. Nowe therefore, to remedie this mischeefe, GOD hath vouchsafed that his woord shoulde bee kept by some meane, and that some certaine folke shoulde haue the charge to preserue it safe and sounde, that it might not perishe. Wherein we behold the inestimable care that he hath of our saluation. Be not wee worthy to be depriued of such a treasure, seeing we do esteeme it so lightly? Yes for our vnthankefulnesse deserueth the wrath of God, and that he shoulde withdrawe the thing which hee hadde bestowed vppon vs. Yet notwithstanding, hee ceaseth not to drawe vs still backe vnto him: and heereof wee see heere a goodly example in that it is sayde that Moses *hauing written the lawe, committed it to the priestes*

the children of Leuie, which carried the Arke, and to all the Elders of Israell, which hadde the charge and authoritie to gouerne the people. True it is, that when GOD hath once publiſhed his worde, euerie man ought to bethinke him to receiue it, for euerie man ought to take heede to it, for himſelfe; men ought not to depende one vpon an other: neuertheleſſe there is not any man that is greatly carefull thereof. It is beecauſe it therefore that GOD ſhould appoint people to watch ouer vs, whileſt we ſleepe, and to call vppon vs: and if they ſee vs readie to ſwarue aſide, they muſt reſtraine vs. This is the cauſe, why it was ſpecially requiſite that the lawe ſhould be deliuered into the handes of the Prieſtes. Firſt of all it was written; and it was ſufficient, that the people had hearde the will of God. If men had good remembraunce, and woulde not forget that which they haue learned, it were ynough I ſay, that Moſes had once declared vnto them that which was requiſite for their welfare. For hee hadde commaunded them to occupie their mindes about the ſtudie thereof both night and day, and to write the lawe vpon the poſtes of their houſes, vpon their tables, and euerie where elſe; to the intent, that whyther ſoeuer they turned their eyes, they might euer be ſtirred to thinke vppon God. Againe, they ought to haue had a care to inſtruct their children: and beſides this, the Lawe was copyed out, yea and to be kept as it were vppon Recorde of authoritie, as which proceeded altogether from the hande of God. And the reaſon was that the people did ſoone growe out of kinde, Although they hadde their eares beaten with the thinges that were contayned in the lawe; yet turned they away to ſuperſtition, and afterward euery man became dulheaded & had nothing in him but ignorance, ſo as vnto a while there was no knowledge of God among them. But is the lawe written? Yet is it neceſſarie that it be comitted as a treaſure into the hands of the Prieſtes, which be the meſſengers of God, as ſaith the Prophet Malachy; Knowledge ought to dwel in their mouth; and when we haue asked counſell of the, we ought to hearken vnto them to be enformed of the truth. Nowe then they are appointed to be keepers. But what came to paſſe after that God had prouided ſo well for the matter? The lawe periſhed and was loſt. And ſurely ſeeing there was ſo good order take for the preſeruation thereof, that men might heare it ſpoken of, yea and that at the end of euery ſeuen yeere in the feaſt of Tabernacles, in that ſolemn day, the couenant of God was to be renued, & the whole law was to be repeated before all the people: it is an incredible matter that the ſame was ſo ſtraitely kept, yet notwithſtanding that in the meane while there was ſuch rechleſnes, that the people made no reckoning to be depriued of their chief welfare. For men (as we haue already ſayd) be more wretched than brute beaſts, vnleſſe they be taught by God. To what end ſerueth all the reaſon & vnderſtanding that they ſuppoſe the ſelues to haue by nature, but to their greeuouſer condemnation, vntil God hath put forth his hand to them, and haue ſhewed the wherunto they muſt ſticke? But yet howſoeuer the worlde went, the children of Iſrael, that bleſſed ſeede of Abraham, the choſen people, elect & adopted of God, his inheritance and his Church, they (I ſay) vnto whō God had done ſo great honor, whō he had exalted vnto ſo high a dignitie, hauing heard the law publiſhed, ought euery of them to haue borne it in minde, and to haue kept it as carefully as men keepe the charters of a kingdome, or the Crowne, or other ſuch thinges. And truly in all cōpariſon, the lawe of God deſerueth well to haue the preeminence aboue al that euer is in the world. But yet for all that it vaniſheth away, & in the meane ſpace the people had no great care thereof. And ſurely it is a very ſtrange caſe how it ſhold come to paſſe, cōſidering that the remēbrance therof was ſo ſolemnly kept, by reaſon wherof al the people ought to haue thought thus: How now? We loſe this good cuſtom, wherby that law of god ſhold now ſound in our eares, wherby we ſhould haue that remēbrance therof renewed, whereby we ſhold be confirmed in his couenant, & whereby the ſame ſhould be ratified vnto vs by that reading of the law. The people (I ſay) had no regard to any of theſe thinges. In deede they aſſembled at that feaſt day, & made great cheere, but yet euery body returned home to his owne houſe, wout hauing regarde to theſe things, inſomuch that the lawe lay as it were buried vntil the time of Ioſias, in the which it was found againe. True it is that at that time they were greatly abaſhed at it: but yet we ſee the rechleſnes of men in that they ſpake not a word when they were depriued of ſo great a benefit. And that is a token of too ſhamefull thankeleſnes. Heere haue we a lookingglaſſe, wherein we may very well behold the affectiō of men: for we at this day be no better than the Iewes were. And in deede wee perceiue howe the world ſeeketh nought elſe but to be exempted, that they might not haue their eares troubled with the law of God, nor with his word. True it is that they are aſhamed, & do abhor to ſay that Gods word ſhould be deſpiſed; but yet they would make it a relique, to be worſhipped a farre off, & as a ſealed letter, ſo as men ſhould content theſelues with the doing of ſome honor & ceremony to it, as if they ſhould ſay, Lo, the word of God ſhalbe reuerenced, but yet it belongeth not to vs to trouble ourſelues ouermuch therewith, by applying our ſtudy thereunto. We ſee then how the world doth euermore ſhift it ſelfe from taking any ſuch knowlege of Gods word as they ought to haue. For whereof cōmeth the horrible ignorāce, which reigneth yet ſtil in may coūtries, & generally in all the popedome, but only of this, that men referre theſelues to the Monkes & Freers, and ſuch other people, or at leaſtwiſe to the Popes Clergie for the knowledge of the holy ſcripture? For it is not for ſecular or temporall perſons (as they terme them) to deale therwith. And the ſecular prieſtes alſo (as they call them) diſcharge theſelues thereof & put it ouer to the Monkes: they ſay it belongeth to none but doctors of diuinity to deale with it. See how bruiſh the world was become. And yet a man would thinke it ſtrange that men ſhould be ſo groſſly ouerſeene

2.Chr.34.24

seene, as to haue no discretion in ỹ behalfe, but that they shold be led by the musels like beasts, and go astray after ỹ maner. How is it possible ỹ God should so forsake his church, & that thinges should be so grossely abused? Let vs looke to the cause & fountaine of the mischiefe. When God kindleth the light of life amongst vs, if we shutte our eyes thereat, & turne our backes, or take couertes to sleepe in, & play the sluggardes, which shut their windowes, ỹ the sun should not shine into their eyes: if we secke to settle after ỹ sorte in our lees; is it not meete ỹ God shold withdraw all his teaching from vs? Surely it is the paymẽt which the world hath receiued, because ỹ where it shoulde haue sought learning fit for it; it chose rather to be ignorant, ỹ it might haue excuse before God. And moreouer, when our Lord vouchsafed ỹ his Gospell should be preached, that the world might be inlightned by ỹ brightnes thereof; men did openly rebell against it, & chose to obey lyes rather than the trueth. Therefore it could not be but ỹ such horrible vengeance must needes come vpon them. Againe we see the care that God hath had to preserue his gospel in perfect state. For like as he had prouided for ỹ law, euen so hath he also done by the gospell, which is the perfection of all learning, according as S. Paul sayth in the second to Timothee. We see there what order he established in the Church, Looke what thou hast hearde of me (saith he) by many witnesses, commit thou it ouer as a gage vnto faithfull folke, which be meete and able to teach others. There S. Paul appointed keepers of the gospell, as God had earst appointed ỹ Leuiticall priests for keepers of the lawe. Also hee would ỹ they shold be faithfull folke which shold be occupied & employed therein: and he would ỹ they likewise should doe their dutie in deliuering ỹ things ouer frõ hand to hand, as they had receiued thẽ, to ỹ intent they might not lie hidden in darkenes. Yet neuertheless we see howe it is come to passe. Therefore, wee must marke well in this place, ỹ God hath euermore procured the saluation of his people, & of those whom he hath chosen, & not forgotten any thing that might be a meane to keepe them vnder his obedience. Thus much for one point.

2. Tim. 2. 2.

Moreouer, wheras the world hath bin alwaies wauering, & caried hither & thither, and could not stay nor hold it selfe to ỹ seruing of God, nor suffer it selfe to be guyded by the doctrine which is for the saluation thereof; & to be short, wheras men play the wilde beasts; it is not at the first dash ỹ they haue so resisted God, or made countenance to disobey him: but they haue turned away frõ him by litle & litle, in such sort ỹ within short time they haue falne quite & cleane away. And so ye see how men haue continued in their naughtines, & not kept the lawe ỹ was deliuered vnto thẽ for a rule to liue by, & for ỹ way to lead them to saluatiõ. Seeing it is so, we ought to take so much the more heede to the things which are shewed vnto vs heere. What must then be done? It is not ynough ỹ the truth be [but only] written: for to what end shall ỹ serue me but to my greater condemnation? But forasmuch as men are so wedded to the thinges that concerne this transitorie life, & think not on the heauenly treasure; it is requisite ỹ there should be good keepers: and aboue all thinges wee must note ỹ there will alwaies be a speciall order to retaine vs euermore in the obedience of God, so long as his worde is dayly shewed vnto vs, & that euery man hath it in his handes. And if this be not permitted, wee shall quickely be carried hither & thither, and there will be no stay in vs, vnlesse we haue such a bridle to hold vs backe. That is a thing which we haue to marke.

Nowe in ỹ meane while we see what charge is here cõmitted aswel to the Leuites, as to the rulers. True it is, ỹ at this day there is no certaine kinred allotted thereto by God in his Church: for his wil is, ỹ Shepherds shold be chosen which office is no heritage: but he would ỹ they should be taken according as they bee knowen meete. Neuertheless al Pastors, & Elders, that is to say, all Officers, & such as haue publike charge, must vnderstande that they must employ themselues to maintaine the pure religion, & that they must be as keepers of the word of God, to the end that it should not perish. And albeit ỹ there is no excuse for the rest of the people: yet shall these seeke double vengeance, if they do not, what lyeth in them, to cause men to continue constant in the pure worde of God, & to see that euery body be taught, & that both great & small do yeelde themselues thereunto. If they straine not themselues to the vttermost of their powers ỹ Gods trueth may continue sounde, it is certaine that they are to account therefore.

Now as touching that which Moses saith further, *That he commaunded the children of Israel, that on the solemne day at the feast of the Tabernacles at the end of euery seuen yeare, the law should be reched to all the people*: it is not meant ỹ God would not haue the Iewes taught it dayly: but it was yet a straiter band, & the keeping ỹ solemnity, (as we haue seene heretofore where we treated of the couenant made by Moses) was not to the intent ỹ the people should [at other times] be vnmindfull of the lawe, but to ỹ intent they should be ỹ deeperlyer touched therewith, & haue it the better ratified after a solemne maner. That is the very meaning of this place. Euery yere, yea at euery feast or solemnitie, ỹ people cõming to the temple were to be taught in deede. The sacrifices were not to be done as a vaine pompe, but in such sort as men might know the end & vse of thẽ, so as euery body might vnderstãd what God he serued, & be put in mind of the couenant which he had made with their fathers. But yet herewithall, besides all this, God did moreouer ad a larger confirmation thereof, by renewing the remẽbrance thereof at ỹ end of seuen yeres, as it were by the solemne taking of a new oth, to the end ỹ it shold not vanish away. Let vs vnderstand then, ỹ when men had exercised thẽselues frõ day to day, and frõ moneth to moneth, & had all their life long studied in the lawe of God, & bin taught his will, yet this ceremony was neuertheless obserued, that they did reade all the contentes of the lawe that the people might consider thus ỹ thẽselues;

Deut. 31. 9.

This

This is not a treasure ỹ may at any time perishe from among vs, God hath not giue it for a time: but it is for vs & for our childre for euermore, as we haue seene in ỹ 29. chap. Seeing it is so, let vs take heed ỹ we continue the possession therof among vs, & ỹ through our own recheleſnes we be not defeated of so inestimable a benefite, which ought to be preferred aboue all ỹ riches & delectable things of this world. Now wheras he speaketh of ỹ feast, it is said, *to the intent they shall learne to feare the Lord their God, and to obserue all the wordes of this law.* We haue heretofore often times treated of this maner of speaking, & it is nowe needeleſse to stande long vpon it. It is ynough for vs alwayes to remeber, ỹ God in commanding men to come & worship him in his holy sanctuarie, meant that the faithfull should haue a certein testimonie & pawne of his presence, to the intent they should the willinglyer resort thither, & vnderstand that so to do was not an vnprofitable & lost labour. Yet notwithstanding God ment not to hold ỹ Iewes in any grosse imagination, as if he had been enclosed in the Arke of the couenant, or as if his seate had bin betwixt ỹ Cherubins: but his comming down was of purpose to make ỹ faithfull to mount vp to heauen through faith. & that is the common maner which hee hath alwayes holden in his church. For in as much as wee are not able to approch vnto him, nor to haue any accesse thither because of our infirmities; hee vouchsafeth to stoope to our littlenesse: howbeit not to make vs to nestle ourselues here beneath, & to conceiue grosse opinions, as though hee were tyed to the elements of this world: but rather ỹ by such meanes, hee might raise our faith vp on hye. Thus were they taught in the time of the law. And euen now also doth he vse the same maner of dealing with vs at this day. We haue at this day the Sacraments. In deede wee haue not so great a multitude, as the fathers had, for it were more than needed for vs, because wee haue the substance of all the olde shadowes our Lord Iesus Christ. But yet for all that, God doth stil at this day apply himselfe to our rudenes by his sacraments. In ỹ water of baptisme we haue testimony ỹ we be washed & made cleane, and that we be renued by his holy spirite. Now then we must not muse vpon the water; but when we see the visible signe, we must rise aloft, & vnderstand ỹ God accomplisheth the thing in trueth, which is signified vnto vs by the visible Sacrament. Euen so also it is of the Supper. Wee see there bread & wine, but we must through faith mount vp to our Lord Iesus Christ, who is ỹ true foode of our soules, that wee may be fed & satisfied in him. And the same is called the presence of God. And why? For it is no deceitfull matter, neither doth God intend to beguyle vs, when he declareth & witnesseth vnto vs, ỹ we be washed, & fed by the vertue of his onely sonne; but hee would that we should be assured of it, by feeling the verie effect therof. Now when God vttereth such vertue, do not we feele him present? Let vs note then, that God is present with vs when we come vnto him, being called thither, & hauing the meanes which he hath ordeined: and in like wise when wee be assembled togither, there is a presence of our God. For our Lord Iesus Christ Mat. 18. 20 hath set in the middest of vs, because wee bee his. We must not think that he is farre off, but that he receiueth al our requests, & that we be hard, & do obtaine of God his father all that is conuenient for vs. Thus ought wee to take courage. When we vse the Sacraments, when wee come to heare ỹ word of God, when we make common prayers, & when wee obserue the whole order which God hath established in his church: let vs be assured that he is with vs, & that hee assureth vs not in vaine, & that we make no windlasses as other men do, greatly tormenting themselues in following their owne fansies. No no; but in so doing our God preuenteth vs, & seeketh altogether to haue vs ioyned vnto him, & that hee will shew the same openly & make vs to vnderstand it by effect. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to remember concerning the manner of speach which Moses vseth here.

And by the way, the people are warned by this meane, to heare the law with ỹ more heede & reuerence. What is the cause, that when the worde of God is preached vnto vs, many in the meane while doe wander in the ayre, or bee at home with their household, or else fall on asleepe, and (to be short) that although they doe both heare & vnderstand, yet they bee not moued a whit; the law & the Gospel bee vnto them as a matter of nothing: whence commeth such contempt? For it is against nature; that our GOD should speake, & that the creatures which liue by his grace, & which ought to dedicate themselues wholy vnto him, should yeeld him so litle honor & authoritie. We do easily vouchsafe to heare a man, if we haue him in any estimation; no worde that proceedeth from his mouth shal fall to the ground, but we wil as it were suck vp whatsoeuer is spoken by so great a personage; in so much that before his words be fully pronounced, we conceiue what he meant to speake. Behold, God speaketh, & albeit ỹ it be by ỹ mouth of men, yet is it his will that his word should be of like maiestie with vs, as if hee himselfe were here in person. But it preuaileth not: & that is because we thinke not on this presence wherof Moses speaketh in this place. Let vs marke wel then, that where it is sayde that when the people assemble togeather, *in the presence of their god*, then the law shalbe repeated; it is as a preparatiue. For to the end that wee should be drawne away, & carried vp from the cares of the world, & from the vaine & fond gasings, with ỹ which we be intangled by nature; our Lorde doth here waken vs, and tel vs, that it is he that speaketh, & that hee wil throughly instruct such as wil heare him with all humilitie, and that his worde shall in like wise haue the power and force to searche mens heartes and to trye all their thoughtes & affections. Seeing it is so that we cannot eschue the presence of our God, and that hee summoneth vs before his maiestie, and declareth that when wee heare his worde, it is to note and marke out them that obey him; that so at the least wise wee shoulde not bee so doltish, as not

to apply our endeuour to bee taught as wee ought, nor to conceiue a feruent zeale, with such meekenesse and aptnesse to learne, as S. Iames requireth in vs, but that wee may haue the seed of life take roote in our hearts to bring foorth such fruites as may bee acceptable to our God. This then is one circumstance more which wee haue to obserue in this place, where Moses declareth ſ when the people were come together after the order which GOD had set downe in his lawe, hee woulde bee present with them, and it was as an opening of the gate of heauen.

Iames. 1. 21.

Nowe let vs come to that which hee addeth. He sayeth, *That all Israel shalbe gathered together, and that they shall read the law before men, women & little children.* When he saith, Thou shalt assemble the people, he doth againe make it manifest that men will neuer come at God vnlesse they bee thrust forward & pricked as oxen or asses: & that serueth to make vs yet more ashamed of such rechlesnes. For litle children need not to be exhorted to breake their fast, they can very well aske their foode: the great ones also are desirous ynough to be fed, euery man hath care ynough for his belly: we neede no solicitors to come vnto vs to say, And wil ye not dyne? But in ſ meane while, behold, our soules starue, if they want the foode which God hath ordeined for them: and yet who is he that careth for it? Who is he that commeth to seeke that foode? None. Therefore it is said, *Thou shalt assemble the people.* We see the what beastlinesse there is in vs: albeit that wee think our selues to be very able, & that euery of vs boasteth himself to be a reasonable creature, & that we haue wit & discretion to gouerne our selues: magnifie we our selues neuersomuch after ſ maner, yet seeke wee nothing but to perish in our ignorance: and we be so farre off from seeking God, that he is fain to giue vs many strokes with the spurre to draw vs vnto him, because we be so ill disposed: yea & we see ſ example hereof in our selues, in so much ſ if there were not an houre appointed for it, how many should a man finde that would haue the regard to say, Let vs heare the word of God, ſ we may haue some teaching? Nay, euen when the houre is come, & the bell hath bin tolled, euen then stil the most part make none account therof. I speake not of them which haue smal leisure therunto, & which haue some excuse: but of such as haue ease & al things at wil, insomuch as they knowe not howe to bestow the time, they are euen wearie of it & wote not what to do, nor (as they say) how to driue away the time; and yet rather than they will go to the church, they will sit downe ydly in their houses, or else in the streetes rather than come to heare a sermon. It is certaine ſ there be some venimous toads, which gnash their teeth against the word of God, & doe flee from it as much as they may; but there be others which come thither, they wote not wherefore, sauing that they looke for no teaching. Others come thither for a fashion, & because there is in it a certain ceremony: but yet for all that, they be neuer ſ better mynded nor the better disposed towardes it. Now then we perceiue ſ looke how much God calleth vpon vs to heare his word; so much the more slow we be thereunto. And also contrarywise, we see how our Lord reproueth our vnthankfulnes, & ſ we misapply & misuse the good which he doth to vs, & as much as in vs lyeth, suffer it to perish, vnlesse he vse al maner of helpes, to set vs forward more & more.

As touching that he saith, that the law *shalbe preached & rehearsed to men, women, & litle children*, wee see in this place, ſ God hath not giuen his word to a smal portion of people only, but would ſ al in general should be partakers of it, euen fro the most vnto the least; & that is a very notable lesson. For we see the craftines of Sathan, how he hath laboured to depriue the greater part of the world of that benefite, vnder colour that the word of God is no cõmon matter, ſ it is too high & too deepe; and that it is too obscure. And moreouer they haue had this opinion, that it is not for men to enter into it, for that it is a Labyrinth to maze men withal, & men cannot fasten vpon it. Wee see howe these hypocrytes in the popedome do terrifie the people from reading the word of God. Take heede (say they) for it is dangerous for you to aduenture so farre. In very deede ſ word of God is sacred and holy: but what then? If the vnlearned sorte should taste of it, they should foorthwith be infected with heresies, & their errors would be infinite, so as they should fall into great confusion. By this meanes men dare not once seeke after the will of God: but they be borne in hande, ſ as soone as they enter into it, they by and by plunge themselues into a bottomlesse gulfe. Contrary to that, here God sayth, ſ when he gaue his law, it was not solely for the Trybe of Leui, but for al ſ people: and not for men only, but for women also, yea, & euen for the litle children. Let vs holde it (say I) for a conclusion, that whereas God hath giuen vs his lawe, and all the doctrine that is contayned therin; it is the testament which he hath left for vs: and thereby hath he adopted vs for his children. Nowe if wee bee not the children of God, then are wee not worthie to haue any thing in common with him: but hee calleth vs vnto him. And how shall we be sure of it, if he himselfe bee not a faithfull witnesse vnto vs of his will? Seeing then that our Lorde certifyeth vs of our saluation, when he giueth vs his word: wee must vnderstande that he will not suffer vs to stray, as though wee knewe not whether wee shoulde turne on the right hand or on the left: but that hee doth giue vs an infallible direction. Seeing then that hee vouchsafeth to doe the office of a schoolemaster towardes vs; let vs indeuour to profite thereby, and let vs behaue our selues like good scholers towardes him, and let none of vs in this case alleage, I am no clarke. For God hath not spoken to the greate doctours onely, but his will was to deale foorth his worde in common both to great and small, and to the most ignorant: and hee hath so tempered it to their capacities, as that all they which come to yeeld themselues teachable, shall very well perceiue that our Lorde knew well what is meete for

for them, and they shalbe taught after such sort as he knoweth to be most conuenient for them. Now if this be verified of the lawe, much more reason is it that it shoulde at this day take effect in the time of the Gospel. For we heare how it is saide by the Prophet Esay, that in the kingdom of our Lorde Iesus Christ all shalbee taught of God. Marke the prophet Esay, who knewe very well that God had giuen his law to al the Iewes, and that it was a good and profitable instruction, as well for the litle children as for the Elders. But yet for as much as hee knewe wel that God would vtter foorth his grace more largely, and sende a newe manner of light of vnderstanding, when as Iesus Christ shoulde bee manifested vnto the world; hee sayth that then all the children of the church should be taught of God. And we see that in the Popedome, where they turne away the people from reading the holy Scripture, it is a wicked blasphemie, when men suffer themselues to bee so blynded, and vouchsafe not to suffer theselues to be lead nor taught at Gods hands, yea & they haue proceeded to so diuelish blasphemie, as to accuse the holy Scripture of too much darknes, as a thing of too great depth wherein men ought not to be instructed, for feare lest they should forthwith be possessed with many errors. When they talk on that wise, the iniurie tendeth to ỹ liuing God; for they accuse him of vntrueth, notwithstanding the protestation that he maketh by his Prophet Esaye; Yea & wee see, howe all the whole Scripture is full of the like testimonies, whereby it is auowed that the holy Scripture is profitable. There needed no more but this one place of S. Paul, where hee sayeth, That all scripture is profitable to instruct, to exhort, to disprooue and to rebuke. Hee sayeth not that it is profitable for three or foure rables of scruuie Monkes or shauelinges; hee sayeth not so: but he sayeth that it is profitable to make the man of God perfect. And therefore let vs not doute, but that when our Lorde deliuered his lawe hee knewe our capacitie, and applyed himselfe in such wise thereunto, as hee teacheth vs according to our measure. In so much that if wee bee teachable, wee shall fynde that his doctrine was not deliuered vs in vayne, but that hee meaneth to guyde vs thereby vnto saluation, as it is in deede the true meane to attayne thereunto: onely let vs suffer our selues to bee gouerned of our GOD, and not behaue our selues stubbornely towardes him, seeing hee offereth himselfe so freely vnto vs. And surely it ought to mooue vs very much, when hee sayeth, that God will haue all, yea euen the litle children and all to bee hearers of his lawe. For he telleth vs (as Salomon also sayeth in his booke of the Preacher) that men must not delaye to thinke vppon GOD, till they beginne to droope and bee broken with age. Yet notwithstanding, wee see howe youth runneth astray, and that there is nothing harder than to make young folke beleeue that they must be bridled in, that they must imploy themselues, whileſt they be strong and lustie, and that they must so much the more apply their wittes to be instructed in the word of God. A man can not bring this to passe, but the stronger & lustier they be, the more careleſse be they. Now Moses sheweth in this place, that as soone as the litle ones begin to discerne betweene good and euill, they must learne to knowe what God created them; and then what God hath shewed himselfe to be their father; & what God they ought to serue, & wherein they must put their trust.

39 And in very deede, at the verie same time, God did alreadie at ỹ eighth day, giue a marke of his free adoption; for before they knew either good or euil, God entertained them to be of his flock, and the circumcision serued to seale the promise of saluation which he had made in saying; I wil bee the GOD of thy seede. Seeing that Gen. 17. 12.
children be thus entertained, and God hath made it manifest that they bee of his church, & housholde people of the kingdome of heauen: is it meete that when they be come to the age 39
of vnderstanding, they shoulde holde scorne of him which hath preuented them with so great goodnes? Ought they not to know, who is their creator, and in likewise, who hee is that hath vouchsafed to shewe himselfe to bee their father, when as hee hath receyued them for his children?

And wee at this day haue so good reason as the Iewes had. For as soone as our children be born, they be caried to baptisme. And there God 40
doth shewe that hee hath already chosen them, and that his will is that they should bee as of his housholde. Therefore when an infant is thus declared to bee a member of our Lorde Iesus Christ, before he doth vnderstand what ỹ grace of God or religion or any thing else is, should he not when he commeth to age of vnderstanding, indeuour to learne ỹ he was created of God: who hauing created him after his owne image, hath vouchsafed also to chooſe him to be of the number and company of his people: and hath placed him in the body of our Lord Iesus Christ, to the end he should be partaker of the inheritance of saluation? Considering so many and so inestimable benefites receiued at Gods hand, ought he not (say I) to giue himselfe wholie to him and to his seruice? And if they doe it not, doe they not shewe themselues too much vnthankfull in disappoynting the grace which was then giuen vnto them? Also our Lord sheweth the zeale that 50
ought to bee in them which bee taught by his word: namely, that so much as in them lyeth, they must not suffer any despisers of religion to dwell amongest them: but rather take paines to winne the poore ignorant sort, and euery man reache his hand to him that goeth astray, so as it may not bee long of vs, that all men bee not brought into the way of saluation, and that all of vs liue not with one accorde as wee ought to 60
doe.

It is saide: *The stranger also that dwelleth with thee, shall in likewise be taught.* In deede they had not the promise, as the childrē of Abraham had: they were not of the body of that people. But neuertheleſse God would not haue any brutish people to abide there, which shoulde despise

all religion; for it is such an infection and corruption as is not to bee borne withall in the church, when such folke are to bee seene there as knowe not whether there bee a God in heauen, or not, or which knowe not what religion they shoulde holde. Such are to bee ridde away, or elſe there wilbee nothing but corruption, which in the ende will marre all.

Againe, it is sayde, *The children of them which haue not knowen thereof afore.* It is shewed in this place, that when the lawe of God hath serued to establish vs in his feare, and in the hope of his goodnes, and that wee our selues haue beene edified thereby from day to day: wee muste not forget them that haue not yet tasted of y truethe, but doe as yet goe astray in their errors: we muste pitie them, and doe our indeuour, so much as in vs lyeth, to winne them, that God may be honoured of vs all together. That is all in effect which wee haue to beare away concerning this place. Nowe (as I haue alreadie sayde) if the people of Israel were exhorted to haue such a care, in the time when they had the doctrine yet more darkely than it is nowe deliuered vnto vs in the Gospel, (for albeit that it was sufficient for that time; yet in comparison of the Gospel, it was not so large as wee haue it now) sith it is so, let vs looke well to our selues, and marke well, that if euer wee be bereft of this so precious treasure which God hath giuen vs, so as it be taken from vs; it is for our owne malice, recklesnesse, and vnthankfulnes, because wee haue despised God, and thrust the things vnder foote which wee shoulde haue kept most carefully.

And therefore let it be a warning to vs to make vs giue good heede to the heauenly doctrine when it is once taught vs, and set afore vs. And moreouer let vs followe the order which our Lorde hath established in his Church, and not onely let euery of vs for his owne particular part and person followe it and indeuour to profit his owne housholde: but also let vs benefite al other folk in common by exercising our selues in that which God commandeth vs. And againe, when euery of vs hath so considered of himselfe, let vs in likewise bee careful of our neighbours, & doe our indeuours to winne the ignorant, & to confirme them which be alreadie brought into the good way, vntill wee bee all come to the marke that God hath set before vs.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults; beseeching him to make vs to feele them more and more, euen with such repentance, as being beaten downe in our selues, we may seeke nothing but to obtein mercie of him, according as he hath promised vs in our Lord Iesus Christ: so as he will cause the desert of his death & passion to be auailable, that we being washed from all our filthines, may be so gouerned by his holy Spirite, as we may desire nothing but to giue ouer our selues vnto him, fighting against all maner of wicked lustes & affections, & labouring more and more to bee ridde and deliuered from all things that may hinder vs from yeelding our obedience to his righteousnes. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not only vnto vs, but also to al people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Munday the iiij. of May, 1556.

The CLXXV. Sermon which is the third vpon the one & thirtith Chapter.

14 Then the Lorde saide vnto Moses: Behold the dayes of thy death be at hand. Call Iosuah, and stand both of you at the Tabernacle of the Congregation that I may giue him his charge. So Moses and Iosuah went and stoode at the Tabernacle of the congregation.

15 Then appeared the Lord at the Tabernacle in a clowdie pillar: and the clowdy pillar rested vpon the doore of the Tabernacle.

16 And the Lord said vnto Moses: Beholde thou goest to sleepe with thy fathers, and this people will stande vp and commit fornication with the strange gods of the lande whereinto they goe: and will forsake mee, and breake my couenant which I haue made with them.

17 By reason whereof my wrath shall in that day be kindled against them, and I will forsake them and hyde my face from them, that they may be a pray. Many mischiefes and troubles shall they fynde: By reason whereof they shall say at that day: Do not these mischiefes finde mee out, because my God is not with mee?

GOD

GOD hath such a care of mans welfare, that hee delayeth not the remedying of a mischiefe til the mischiefe be come: but preuenteth it aforehand, as we haue here a faire exãple thereof. He tarried not til the people were turned away after idols, but forasmuch as he knewe well ỹ it would so come to passe, hee vouchesafed to warn them of it, & made an assay to see whether any preseruatiue medicine might holde it from breaking out. God therefore ordeined this song to the intent ỹ the people shoulde daily haue in their mouth a testimonie against themselues, & ỹ they should by that meanes be either restrayned, if it were possible; or else bee left vtterly without excuse. And here we see first of al ỹ God did not choose this people for that they were more worthie or more righteous than other nations of ỹ earth. For proofe wherof, he knew very wel that they would be always inclined to euil, and not cease to shrinke away, but become hardhaned in rebelling against him: & yet for all ỹ, he forbare not to deliuer them out of the land of Egypt, & to powre out all ỹ treasures of his infinite goodnes & mercie vpon them in doing the good. We haue then heere a certaine proofe, ỹ when God did choose the people of Israel, hee had no respect to any worthines or merites that were in them; but rather meant to glorifie his own free mercie, in shewing, ỹ although men be neuer so vnworthie to be receiued to mercie, yet doth he not therefore cease to shew himselfe a father towards them. But herewithal we see also (as I haue already sayd) that god ordeineth such remedies as hee knoweth to bee conuenient to bring them back into the right way, & delayeth not the releeuing of them till they haue done & are falne downe: but prouideth all the helpes aforehand which he knoweth to be meete for the leading & guiding of them, to the intent they should not swarue nor start out of the way.

Now in deede here might be a question put, whether God could not haue restrained ỹ people of Israel better, if he had would; for we knowe ỹ, if he list to restraine mens harts by his holy spirite, he is able to doit. And why then wrought he not so with this people? We cannot binde God to giue vs such constancie, as ỹ we might continue in his seruice. And therfore we must not argue against him in this case, nor say that this song was not sufficient, & that it had bin better that God had wrought effectually by his holy spirite. For it was not his will, he left the people in their own frailtie. Howbeit wee must not say as some blasphemers do, that God mocked them, in that hee vsed such a remedie, as hee knewe to be vnsufficient: for God may wel still vphold, that he hath discharged his office towardes men, when he hath once giuen them his worde, insomuch ỹ although it cannot touch them to the quick, but remaineth as a dead letter vnto them; yet nerthelesse, they continue iustly condemned. But this woulde bee darke if it were not better declared. Let vs marke therefore first of all, that by this song, (according to the shorte thereof reported by Moses,) Gods will was that the people, (before they were fallen away and estranged from the way of saluation,) shoulde haue a testimonie against themselues, as wee shall see more at length hereafter. But it sufficeth for this present to touche the contentes and summe of this song: which is, that God being the creator of all the worlde, chose the lyne of Abraham, whome hee adopted, and bestowed vpon them all the blessings that were possible to bee wished, and lastly brought them out of the lande of Egypt, and put them in possession of the lande which hee had promised them for their inheritance, and there sedde them fatly: notwithstanding all which things, that people rebelled against him, (as horses that bee too much pampered in the stable, and bee too fat, and therefore doe kicke against their masters) and turned away after strange Gods. And therefore that God being prouoked to anger, stirred vp strange nations to chastice them and to punish them for their rebelling after that maner: howbeit that it grieued him to deale so roughly with them, like a father that is very sory to vse rigor towards his children, after which maner we shal see ỹ God setteth forth himselfe like a man sore grieued: (as if he should say) were not this people very far ouerseene, or had they any drop of reason & good vnderstanding, to consider their owne ende: they would not haue bin so turned away from me. After that manner then is the song, as we shal see. Now it was a cõmon song. God willed that it should bee in euery bodies mouth both great & smal, to the end that euery man should be daily called vpon, to walke in the feare of God. And so we be warned of that which may happen vnto vs. God doeth first declare vnto vs his curse: and to what end, but that euery one of vs should keepe himselfe from it? Againe, he sheweth vs the inconuenience wherinto we shal fall, he telleth vs that he wil reuenge our recklesnes, & therefore let vs beware of it. For to what end doth he it, but that he woulde not haue vs to tempt him, but rather ỹ it should exercise vs in his seruice? So see then howe the people ought to haue taken warning hereby.

But now we aske whether that ought to haue sufficed, and whether the people had power to restrayne themselues, as it is imagined that men haue free wil to choose good or euil. The answer is, that it was not ynough for GOD to put his word in their mouth, but it behoued him also to imprint it in their harts by his holy spirit. We see how it is said farther in this place: *Thou wylt be dye, and the people after thy death will fall away, and runne a whoring after strange gods.* It is God ỹ speaketh on this wise to Moses. Now it must needes be ỹ he foresaw what would come to passe, yea, but they wil alleage ỹ Gods foresight kepeth not men back fro turning vnto God whe they list. In deed it is certaine ỹ the foresight of God is not ỹ cause that men do either good or euil, but yet god did know very wel ỹ this people, whatsoeuer doctrine or religion they should haue, would not cease to be wicked & froward: he knew very wel ỹ his warning of the aforehande would not suf-

fice to conuert them. God knewe it welynough. Wherefore then did he not prouide for it? See here how men do take vpon them to pleade against God: but they must bee stopt with their presumption. If they allege, Wherefore is it that God, when hee seeth men go out of course, doeth not remedie it? The aunswere therunto is this, that God is neither tyed nor bound therto: it is ynough then that they bee made thereby inexcusable. And therefore, although God doeth knowe aforehande, that wee, because of our infirmitie, shall not bee able to continue in his obedience; and that there wilbee such malice in vs, that wee shall not ceasse to prouoke his wrath: yet is it ynough ỹ he doth instruct vs by his word, & that we bee accused & condemned by him. Yea: but in deede it lyeth not in vs to do well. Al these replyes be friuolous before God. For men cannot allege that the euil commeth from any where elle [than themselues.] Although we be enclyned to sinne, & although we be altogether thereto giuen by nature; shall we say that it is by any constraint? Shall we say that the fault therof is not in vs? It is impossible. Seeing then that our mouth is stopt in this case, we must condemne our selues & humble vs before God. And albeit that his word serue but to make vs guiltie, & not to change our hearts from euil to good: yet neuertheless, it is not superfluous, neither ought we to say that God doeth daly, or that hee doeth mocke vs: for hee doeth the office of a teacher towarde vs, & telleth vs what his will is. Wherefore let vs desire him, not onely to teache vs by the mouth of men, but also to print his worde in our hearces, and to make it prouayle, to the ende it bee not in vaine. Such request must wee make, sith wee see what is contained in the song of Moses. Moreouer we must honor the wonderfull prouidence of God in that it is sayde vnto vs, that he foreseeth what shall befall vnto men, & yet notwithstanding taketh no order for the redresse therof, as wee woulde if hee should followe our appetite. It seemeth a straunger matter at the first sight, that God shoulde say, This people wil runne a whoring, and goe and defile themselues with strange Gods. He sayth it, and yet he giueth none other remedie but a song, of purpose that this people should bee condemned by their owne mouth. And wherefore doth he not rather preuent the mischiefe? For he might do it. But (as I haue said alreadie) it is not for vs to enter into disputation in this case: for surely all they that vse such arrogancie & boldnes, shall finde themselues confounded. What must wee do then? We must stoope & honor the glorie of God which is incomprehensible to vs, & suffer our selues to be gouerned by him. And whereas he knowing mens lewdnes aforehande, doth neuertheless suffer them to roote therin vntil he prouide for it: we must vnderstand that he doth it iustly, though the reason therof be vnknowen and hidden vnto vs. Wee in deede will euer be grunting at it, vntil we be subdued vnto such humilitie & reuerence, as to conclude that God is iust, & that we know not what is good for vs, except that God reueile it vnto vs. Nowe then if wee haue not this modestie and sobrietie in vs, there wil alwayes seeme to bee some cause for vs to grunte at. But yet must wee euer be confounded, according as it is saide in the 51. Psalme, that when men haue condemned God, yet his righteousnes shall not bee a whit diminished thereby, but hee will well defende it. Seeing it is so, let vs beware that wee enter not into such boldnesse as to reply against God, and to moue the questions which many people in the worlde at this day do moone, like these mastiue dogges which cease not to bark against God when they cannot byte him: but let vs stand silent, when it is sayde that God doeth well knowe what shall come to passe vpon men, & neuertheless bestoweth not his grace, but vppon those whome he listeth. For it is certaine that hee toucheth with repentance whome hee will, but not al. For a great number of the people are farre out of square. If wee aske howe it commeth to passe, that some haue continued in the pure religion, & haue alwayes serued God: vndoutedly it came of a speciall grace; no man prepared himself to it. As touching the others which haue misled, & repented: if it be asked who recouered them; it is not of men that they bee conuerted, it is this speciall gift of God. We see then how God hath wrought in some, to guyde them alwayes in the pureneese of his seruice; and that others haue bin receiued to mercie, albeit that they had offended; & that the same hath not fallen out to al indifferently. We see then that God bestoweth his grace where it seemeth good to him self, and we must not pleade against it, to say: And why doth hee not deale egally with all, as her doeth with some? Why vseth he not like measure? We shall winne nothing by pleading so against God. Thus much wee haue to consider concerning this place.

Herewithal let vs mark also what hath beene touched afore: to wit, that although the word of God, of it selfe, hath not power to reforme our harts, to lead vs vnto God, to heale our faults, & to bring vs to good: yet is it certaine ỹ we ceasse not therfore to be condemned therby. For although the word of God be dayly preached vnto vs: yet are we neuer the better for hauing our eares beaten therewith as wee see a great many people are, who hauing bin instructed in ỹ Gospel, become worse therby than they were afore. And the reason is, because ỹ the worde of God entreth not into their harts, but through ỹ grace of ỹ holy Ghost. And this grace is not bestowed on all. They therfore which come to heare the worde, become so much the more blameworthy, when they profite not thereby, & God must needes cast them off in a leawd mind. Let vs mark then ỹ the word of God being spoken by a mortal man, without any further help than ỹ outward teaching therof, is not ynough for so it shal but beat our eares: as for our harts, they shal not be touched therw. What must then be done? We must pray God to speake vnto vs inwardly after a secrete manner, and to cause the voyce which soundeth in our eares,

Psal. 51.6

eares, to enter like wise into our thoughtes and affections, that wee may bee touched therewith to the quicke. That is the point which we muste come vnto. Yet nevertheleſſe we muſt not thinke that the word of God ſerueth to no purpoſe, whē we reade it in holy ſcripture, or haue it expounded vnto vs. Let vs aſſure ourſelues that it ſhall not fall to the grounde, either it muſt ſerue vs to ſaluation, or elſe we muſt receiue thereby ꝙ greater condemnation. Now if we couet to haue this doctrine profitable to ſaluation, let vs pray God to write it in our hearres; and furthermore we muſt beware ꝙ we be not therby ꝙ more guilti. For when wee haue heard the will of God, and be not therein throughly certified: if afterward we continue hardened in our ſtubbornes, what excuſe is there for vs then? We haue bin wont to make a buckler of ignorance, but ꝙ will ſerue the turne no more. Therefore wee muſt marke, ꝙ although the only word of it ſelfe can not conuert men: yet doth it ſuffice to caſt them into vtter condemnation, as thoſe which would neuer deſire God wilfully. It is alſo ſayd in this place, ꝙ God *appeared vnto Moſes at the Tabernacle, in a cloudie piller*. This was not done for Moſes only, but rather for all the people. In deede it was very behoouefull ꝙ Moſes ſhold be aſſured of Gods guiding. For the enterpriſe which he vndertooke to bring the people out of the lande of Egypt, was not for a mortall creature to haue done of himſelfe. It was needefull then ꝙ they ſhould know ꝙ God did allow him. And therfore it was Gods will to ratifie the cōmiſſion which he had giuen him, ꝙ it might haue full authoritie among the people. After the ſame maner was it Gods will to deale in giuing new cōmiſſion to Ioſuah, who was to ſucceede Moſes. Alſo it was his will to cauſe this laſt ſong to be receiued without gaine ſpeaking, & to do them to vnderſtand ꝙ it was not forged nor hāmered in ꝙ head of a man, but ꝙ it came frō heauen, and ꝙ it was God that ſpake it. To the end therfore ꝙ the people might be throughly aſſured of theſe thinges, he ſayth, Come thou & Ioſuah to the Tabernacle. And what is the cauſe ꝙ God would not aſwell ſpeake to Moſes in his owne Tent? It was becauſe hee would haue the people to be ꝙ more moued. For men are ſo ſlender witted & earthly, ꝙ they haue neede to bee led vnto God by viſible ſignes. To what end ſerued ꝙ Tabernacle? It was as a witneſſe ꝙ God dwelled amongſt his people, as wee haue ſeene heeretofore. It is certaine ꝙ God filleth all places with his power & eſſence: But yet becauſe men are rude & groſſe, it behoueth thē to haue ſome helpes to bring them vnto him. So then, the Tabernacle ſerued to waken mens wits that they might vnderſtand, ꝙ in cōming thither they came neere vnto God, as if they had beene preſent before his maieſtie. For ꝙ cauſe therfore it was ſaid vnto Moſes & Ioſuah, that they ſhold come to the Tabernacle of the congregation. But that is not all. For there appeared a cloudie piller, and (as we knowe) ꝙ was a double ſigne or miracle, to ſhew vnto the Iewes ꝙ God was nigh vnto thē. For in the day time there was a long thicke cloude, which was like a great piller; and in the night the cloude turned to a fire. And to what end was the piller darke, & like a cloud by day? Becauſe the fire ſhould not be ſo apparant to the people. Moreouer it was Gods will to refreſh them, as if it were ſayde, I haue my wings ſtretched out, to giue you ſhadowe, & to maintaine you vnder my protection: that if the ſonne be ouer whot by day, you ſhalbe hidden as vnder me & vnder my leading. And by night, when all is darke, I will ſerue you for a light, & you ſhalbe guided thereby: there ſhalbe continually a burning fire, to ſhewe vnto you ꝙ I am waking, and that I am neuer aſleepe, & that I haue not mine eyes ſhut, but that I do foreſee for all your neceſſities. That is the cauſe why God appeared in ſuch maner to the Iewes, to wit, ꝙ by day he gaue them a cloud to couer them, which was long and in forme of a great Pyller (as I haue ſaid), and by night there was a burning fire, all on a length, like vnto a train of fire ouer al ꝙ people. And this fire ſerued to giue light to the people; as if God had ſhewed his hand, as who wold ſay, feare not, for I haue not forgotten you, I wot what is neceſſary for you. But yet it is ſayd ꝙ when Moſes was called to the Tabernacle to receiue any great charge, then the cloud deſcended by day, like as the fire alſo did his office by night. Thus did God cauſe the cloud to deſcende of purpoſe ꝙ the doore of the Tabernacle ſhould be ſhut, and that was aſmuch as if ꝙ people had bin taught thus: Behold, now is Moſes to be withdrawen from all ꝙ world, God ſpeaketh to him as it were mouth to mouth, it is not for vs to looke to haue him conuerſant any longer heere beneath after the maner of mortall men, there is an other reſpect to be had of him: God hath ſequeſtred him, becauſe it is his will to haue ſuch familiaritie & cōmunicatiō with him, as we may receiue ꝙ which he bringeth vnto vs, as if it came from heauen. That then is the cauſe why the cloud deſcended vpon the Tabernacle. And this is not ſpoken here only, but as often as it was Gods will to authorize Moſes, and to ratifie the office which he had giuen him, to ꝙ end that the people ſhold ꝙ the greater reuerence receiue ꝙ doctrine which proceeded from him. The ſame in like wiſe was alſo done when Moſes appointed Ioſuah in his owne place to ſucceede him. Inſomuch ꝙ when God was about to ſhewe him what he had to do, the cloud appeared againe. Now theſe thinges ought to ſtande vs in ſtede at this day. For God did not meane to giue authoritie to his law, only for that time, but to the end of the world. Therfore when we reade ꝙ which is ſet downe heere concerning the cloud, it is all one as if God had ſet his ſeale to the doctrine of Moſes, to the intent that we ſhould receiue it without any replying or doubting, and thinke that it was not Moſes that was the chiefe author thereof: but that he was the inſtrumente of the holy Ghoſt. Thus yee ſee howe the ſame miracle doeth yet at this day apply it ſelfe vnto vs, and howe we ought to be edified thereby. But by the way, we ſee the malice of men, in that they which hadde ſeene ſuch a ſigne with their eyes, did yet for all that not ceaſe to play the rebels againſt Moſes. It is a

Exod. 19. 9. Numb. 12. 5.

great matter, that God shold put forth his hand as if his maiestie descended from heauen; & wil stifie vnto men ỹ it was he that spake, & that yet notwithstanding the people should stil continue like wilde beastes, and not vouchsafe to hearken vnto him. Is there any reason in that? Neuerthelesse we see it in the people of Israel. Albeit ỹ in the time of Iosuah, there was some good gouernment; yet ceased they not to abuse ỹ benefits which they had receiued afore time. Indeed there was no general falling away: but yet to say that the people did behaue theselues vprightly in ỹ obedience of God, it wanted a great deale thereof. Therfore we see that whatsoeuer God doth, men notwithstanding be so blinde & blockish, that they cannot find in their hearts to submit theselues vnto him: and if they doe, it is not with any constancy or stedfastnes. Sith we know this, let vs cast downe our eyes, and pray to our God, that when he giueth vs any signes to confirme vs in the obedience of his word, & to edifie vs in the faith, we may haue ỹ skill to profit our selues thereby, so as he loose not his labour, nor we striue against his power: but that as soone as it sheweth it selfe, wee may be moued to honour him, & to yeelde vnto him his due glorie. Thus much haue we to gather vpon this place, where it is sayd ỹ God hauing caused Moses and Iosuah to come vnto the Tabernacle, did therewithall appeare in ỹ cloud. It is out of doubt, ỹ God shifteth not his place: for (as we haue already sayd) he filleth all places with his essence: howbeit in respect of men, it is sayd that he descended from heauen. To what end? Because that when wee perceiue his presence, it is sayd ỹ he is nigh vnto vs. Is it because that there is any change in him? No, there is not so much as a litle shadowe, as saieth S. Iames. But let vs consider how foolish we are, and then shall we not find it strange that the Scripture speaketh in this maner, to fashion it selfe to the weakenes of our vnderstanding. We suppose that God is farre from vs, and ỹ there is a great distance betweene him & vs. And wherefore? Because he hath told vs ỹ he is in heauen. Howbeit, it is not meete that he is there shut vp, we must not imagine so: but if it were sayde that God is heere with vs, we would tye him to the earth, yea and we would clap him vp in euery corner. We see how men diuide in that behalfe, when it is holde them ỹ God sheweth himselfe in Baptisme and in the supper also: they make Idols of those visible signes, & thinke that God is included in them. Therefore it is sayde that he is in heauen. But yet we must not imagine it to be in power onely; but wee comprehende him not in our vnderstanding. And that is the cause why the holy Scripture stammereth and stutteth after our rude maner, & saith that God commeth downe, as I haue sayd afore: for he shifteth places (touching himselfe) but it is sayd in respect of vs. Wherefore let vs learne to ascribe to our profite all the signes ỹ God hath giuen vs of his presence, in such sort, as we may thereby be drawen as in chaines celestiall, by lifting vp our mindes aboue all this world. That is the thing which we haue to gather.

Now let vs come to ỹ which is here recited. *Behold, thy dayes are come that thou shalt dy* (sayth God to Moses) *thou shalt goe sleepe with thy fathers, & this people shall arise* (saith he) *& go a whoring after strange Gods* (or else the Gods of the strangers). When God told Moses in this wise that he must die, we perceiue thereby that he strengthened him, and that this tidinges of death was not to make him afrayd. And in deede, if we be not alwaies ready to depart the world, when it shall please God to fetch vs, what profit receiue we of all ỹ doctrine that is preached vnto vs? What doth God purpose when we be taught in his word, but to giue vs to vnderstand ỹ he placeth vs in this world as in a passage, ỹ we must be strangers heere, that our inheritance is aboue, and ỹ we must be euer shapen from day to day, by putting away frō vs all our affections, & whatsoeuer else is of the old man, to the end we may come vnto him, vntil ỹ he hath clothed vs w his heauenly glorie? Thus ye see how it is the purpose of God, to draw people from the world, & to bring thē vnto himself. But now if we be so giuen to this present life, that God must plucke vs away from hence as it were by force: and ỹ when his will is that we shall die, we be full of spite & rage and torment our selues therat, we shewe well that we vnderstande not what the word of God meaneth, and that we neuer had such taste thereof as was requisite. Let vs therefore by the example of Moses, be so disposed to dye, that whensoeuer it shall please our Lorde to take vs away from hence, we may be readie to goe, and to depart out of this prison of our bodie. If it be alleadged that we haue not so much profited as Moses, and that we be not so farre forewarde as hee: it is out of doubt that God bestowed on him a speciall grace, which was not common to all, & is verie rare to be found. For it is no litle matter, when it is sayde, ỹ there neuer rose vp a Prophet in Israell, so great nor so excellent as he. But yet notwithstanding we haue the Gospell which Moses hadde not. Albeit that God gaue him largely of his spirite, more than wee haue; yet had not he the doctrine of the Gospell, but in shadowe and figure: because Iesus Christ was not yet manifested: but had the sacrifices of the lawe, as well as the rest of the people. And whereas our Lorde Iesus is come to bee our life, we know that he is now ascended vp to heauē, we know ỹ first he was beneath in the deepe, that is to say, that he satisfied the wrath of God to the ende to redeeme vs from eternall death. Seeing wee haue such an aduauntage, what excuse is there, if we be afrayde when death is talked of vnto vs, and thinke that all is lost for our part? So then, let vs striue (as it is to bee well learned in the gospell) it behoueth vs to knowe, as well what it is to die, as what it is to liue. And howe? We must not be tyed vnto this present worlde, nor make account to dwell heere for euer: but wee must hate the obiectes vp (as they say) [as] ready to goe]. Also wee must consider how frayle our life is, & euen in our full health wee must alwaies haue death before our eyes. For the performance whereof, let vs looke vp vnto the heauenly

heauenly life ỽ is promised vnto vs, whereof also we haue so good a pawne in our Lord Iesus Christ. That is the way for vs not to be afraid, whensoeuer God shal make vs to vnderstand ỽ our end is nigh, and shew vs that he wil take vs vnto him. I ỽ it shall neither abash vs nor make vs afrayde, but we shalbe determined to go vnto him with a good will: as no doubt but Moses receiued that tydinges with great ioy, [as if hee should haue sayde] Wel Lorde, I haue finished my course, I haue trauailed in ỽ world so long as I had power and strength, and now beholde I am old & drooping, but yet shall I be restored in thy saluation. Seeing then ỽ it is thy will to sequester me from all the troubles of this world, behold I am nowe ready: like as I haue continued in the world, so long as it was thy wil, euen so doe I nowe desire nothing but to yeeld my selfe vnto thee. And for the same cause S. Paul sayeth, that the Christians turne all thinges to their owne benefite, aswell death as life. For if we liue in this worlde, though it be in miserie & wretchednes, so as we be afflicted and despised, and tormented, and seeme to be as people cast away yet doth ỽ same turne to our profite and aduantage. And why? For all out afflictions be blessed in our Lorde Iesus Christ, because God maketh them auailable to our saluation: according as it is sayde in the eight to the Romanes: that the thinges which seeme to hinder our felicitie, are in deede giuen vs of GOD as helpes and furtherances thereof. When it commeth to death, we know that Christ Iesus had victorie thereof, and ỽ seeing he is ryssen, we be assured ỽ forasmuch as we be his members, and haue one common life together with him, therefore wee shall not perishe. Thus doth death turne to our gaine and profite, and we haue cause to reioyce in all respectes.

Moreouer where it is sayd, *That after the death of Moses the people will rise*, there is no doubt but ỽ this greeued Moses. For he bare such a feruent zeale to the welfare of the people, that he forgot himselfe and said, Race me out of the booke of life, and let the people bee saued. See heere howe Moses was content to bee cutte off, yea, and euen to be damned so that God would saue the people; not because that that was possible, but he was so rauished, that hee had no care of himselfe. Nowe therefore when he heard that the people would fall away from God, there is no doubt but his heart was mortally wounded. But what? Yet must hee needes heare these tydinges full of sorrowe and anguish. Heerein we see how God did exercise him euen vnto ỽ end. We must not therefore suppose, that Moses discharged his duetie, as it were with dallyaunce; but that he had terrible hartbyting, so as he was tossed too and fro, and God gaue him alwayes dreadfull grypes of minde. But yet neuertheles he did still continue. And therefore when we see that matters fal not out as we wold, albeit that we haue faithfully laboured, and it seeme that our trauaile is vnprofitable, and that Sathan will throwe downe that which we haue indeuoured to set vp; and thinges fall out to trouble and disorder: let it not turne vs aside from the good way: let it not repent vs that we haue serued our GOD, let it content vs that our labour is acceptable vnto him: for although it be not so profitable vnto men as were to be wished, yet haue we done such a sacrifice vnto God as he doth receiue and accept. Yea but yet if men fare litle the better thereby, wee may be sorrie and sigh therefore. Neuertheless we haue not lost our time, because God liketh well of our doinges. That (say I) is the thing whereby the ministers of Gods worde should cõfort themselues at this day, when they see the worlde so drunken, as we see it is, and that in steede of going forwarde, the greater part goeth backewarde; and that whereas Gods worde is so preached vnto them, that the very walles doe ring of it: yet doe they but make a scoffe of it. When we see such thinges, let vs resort to God and say: Alas Lorde, thou knowest wherfore thou hast employed vs hereunto, and albeit that thy doctrine be so slenderly receiued of the worlde, yet is it alwaies a sacrifice of good sauour vnto thee; according as Saint Paul sayth: Beholde (sayth he) it behoueth our preaching to be as the sauour of death to many people. They be the misbelieuing which be hardened against God: but howsoeuer they fare; that sauour is a sweete sent to our God, forasmuch as it is his will, that his Gospell should be preached vnto all creatures. And all the faithfull in generall ought to apply the same to their owne vse, specially when wee deale vprightly with men, and they render vs euill for good. For then it seemeth that the thinges which we haue indeuoured to doe for their welfare, are taken in disdayne; and by meanes therof we cõmonly repent vs, by reason of our frailtie. What then? We must arme ourselues with stedfastnesse in this case. And although there be neuer so great vnthankfulnesse in the world, yet must we neuer be sorry that we haue obeyed our God. No; but the issue is not answerable to our desire. There is no remedie. Let vs be contented that our God alloweth our obedience. So much concerning that point. 2.Cor.2.15.

Moreouer whereas it is sayd that *the people will rise vp*: God telleth of a change, that whereas they shoulde holde them quiet vnder the bridle which God had giuen them, they would rise vp proudly and stubbornely, & through inordinate desire seeke to shake off the yooke which was layde vpon their necke. By the sight heereof we may learne what our owne nature is. For it is certaine that heere God ment to shewe vs as in a glasse, what wee be, vntill such time as hee hath wrought in vs. Nowe then, when we be taught in the doctrine of the Gospel, what is our dutie, but to hold ourselues quiet, without wrenching either hither or thither, as we be too much giuen by nature? The word of God then must hold vs in and settle vs, that we couet not newe changes euery day & euery minute of an houre: but that God may haue the obedience that is due vnto him, and wee followe that which he commandeth vs. Thus ought the word of God to preuaile in vs, to keepe vs quiet. But yet we

see howe the children of Israell dealt in that behalfe, and howe they rose vppe, that is to say, that they changed, and could not keepe themselues in the obedience of God. At the same point are we. Therefore let vs mistrust all our owne conceites. When so euer any thought comes in our minde, or whensoeuer we take any thing in hande; let vs euermore suspect it, for feare least wee shake off the yoke which GOD hath layde vppon our neckes, and let vs vnderstande that God must guide vs to the ende. Seeing then that we be so wauering by nature: let vs learn to submit ourselues the better to the word of God, & not to enterprise thinges of our owne heades, as who would say, I will doe this, I will doe that: for as soone as we followe our owne wit, and aduise, we become stray beastes. There is no more then for vs to doe, but onely to liue in continuall obedience. And for somuch as our Lorde hath shewed vs howe he would haue vs to walke; let vs hold vs thereto, & not follow our tickling lustes, to be carried too and fro by them. After that manner are we to practise this place, where it is sayde, *That the people would ryse vp after the death of Moses*. True it is that wee ought to haue our hearts alwayes lifted vppe to Godwarde: but yet must they also bee brought lowe through humilitie, and we must not lift vp ourselues with pride and presumpeion, euen the way that which hath beene taught vs.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our sinnes: beseeching him to vouchsafe to receiue vs to his mercie. And forasmuch as wee know we bee no better than these whom we see here condemned euen before they were borne, according as it is heere spoken of them which should succeede after the death of Moses: let vs pray to that good God, that seeing he knoweth the vices that be in vs, & that we haue not ableto helpe it, vnlesse he worke by his holy spirite, he will therefore clense vs from all wicked affections, and so subdue vs vnto him, that though we be straied away by nature, yet notwithstanding he suffer vs not to continue still in our iniquitie: but that being drawen vnto him, as he hath vnto called vs thereunto, we may continue constantly therein, and so persueere vnto the ende: and that in the meane while, hee will vphelde vs because he knoweth vs to be weake, vntill hee hath fully restored vs by his power. That is may please him to graunt this grace, not onely vnto vs, but also vnto all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the v. of May, 1556.

The CLXXVI. Sermon which is the fourth vpon the one & thirtith Chapter.

17 Is it not because my God is not with me, that these euils haue found me out?
18 But I will hyde my face in that day because of the wickednesse which hee shall haue committed, euen for that he shall haue turned away to other gods.
19 Now therefore wryte this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel, putting it in their mouthes, that this song may be a witnesse to mee against the children of Israell.
20 When I haue brought them into the lande which I sware to their fathers, flowing with milke and hony: and they shall haue eaten and beene filled and become fatte, and haue turned away to other gods, and serued them, and blasphemed mee, and broken my couenaunt.
21 And when many euils and tribulations be come vppon them: then shal this song answere to their face for a witnesse: for it shall not be forgotten in the mouth of their seede: for I knowe their thoughtes, and what they doe already at this day before I haue brought them into the land for the which I haue sworne.

THe chiefe thing that God telleth vs, to assure vs in this present life, is this, that hee hath his eye vpon vs, and that he is so mindefull of our welfare, that nothing shall want vs, because he is able to prouide all thinges that bee necessarie for vs; and therewithall is able also to defende vs from all anoyaunce, insomuch that his eye is vnto vs a buckler, a fortresse, and a shadowe to shroude vs vnder it. Likewise it is sayde of his good will in the fifth Psalme, that it shall be our shielde. The thing then wherein the faithful ought to rest and reioyce is, that God looketh vpon them with compassion, & he neuer forgetteth them, that he guideth all their steps, and

and that he hath a fatherly care ouer them to remedie all their euilles. And on the contrarie side, the greeuousest threat that God can vtter is to turne his face away from vs, and no more to vouchsafe to haue care either of vs, or of our life, but to forsake vs. For then wee are set open to Sathan and all maner of misfortune. And where is then our defence? For wee haue no meane to resist, we see we be fraile and wretched creatures, there is nothing in vs. And therefore woe to them of whom God wil haue no longer care, but forsaketh them as theefes that belong not vnto him at all, ne be of his houshold. And that is the thing which he sayeth in this place, *that when the people of Israell haue left him, he will hide his face from them*, and will be no more their father, as he had beene afore time. Nowe this is spoken vnto the Iewes, as it ought to serue vs also for a warning at this day. Will we then haue this souereigne and inestimable benefite, namely, that God should guide vs, that our life should be in his hande, and that he should take vs into his keeping to vpholde vs? Then must we looke that we call vpon him, and as we professe his name, so must we also serue him in truth according to this saying of Saint Paul, that whosoeuer calleth vpon the name of the Lorde, that is to say, whosoeuer professeth to be of his people, must depart from all iniquitie. Therefore let vs learne to serue our God with a pure conscience, to resort to him for refuge, and to put our whole trust in him. And then are we assured that one hayre of our heade shall not fall away without his will. For if he haue care of the sparrowes, (as our Lorde Iesus sayth) what will he doe by them whom he hath chosen for his children? We be not onely men created after his owne Image, but he hath also set his marke vpon vs, to the end to saue vs as members of our Lord Iesus Christ. Let vs not doubt therefore, but that he wil euermore performe the duetie of a father in looking to vs. But if in the meane while we become wandering beastes, and euery man fall away from him, then must that which is pronounced heere be accomplished vppon vs, namely, that God will hide his face; not because that he forgetteth any thing: but he speaketh in this manner after the fashion of men, to make vs to vnderstande that in deede he will not looke vpon vs with compassion, nor prouide for our life, nor succor any of our necessities; but that he will doe y cleane contrary, that is to say, that he will leaue vs for such as we be, and shew vnto vs, that we be not worthy for him to encumber himselfe any more with vs, or to busie himselfe about vs. Surely it is a dreadfull vengeance, when GOD hath so forsaken vs. Therefore let vs beware that we sticke so vnto him, as there may bee an inseparable band betwixt vs, that is to say, as we for our part may honour him as our father, reposing and setting all our trust in him: and he go forewarde continually in doing vs good, and as his regarde may be the couert to hide vs from al y assaults of Sathan, from all the troubles that he deuiseth against vs, and from the hurtes and anoiances of this worlde.

Now he sayeth expressely, that he will bring the Iewes to that passe, that they shall confesse those mischiefes to bee falne vppon them, *because God is not amongst them*. Heere he treateth of a forced confession: for hee speaketh nee a whit of true repentance, but onely of a remorse, which all the despisers of God doe feele, for that they haue of long time beene stubborne, y can not abstayne all correction. When they be pinched to the vttermost y they can no longer hold out, then must they needs confesse some of their teethes, that there is a God which is their Iudge. He sayth that the Iewes shall make such a confession, when he hath brought them vnder foote with maine stroken. Heereby we see y he threateneth them that his punishing of them shall not be mieldly and after the cõmon maner, but that also he will vse such rigour, that what hardnesse and stubbornesse soeuer be in them, yet shal they be broken if they will not bowe, accordingly as I haue handled the same point heeretofore. Neuertheless it is good for vs to bee often put in mind of it, & to bethinke vs thereof often times. For men do alwayes deceiue themselues herein, that they thinke that they shall by and by scape the hande of God, and when they haue receiued a stripe or twaine, they doe but shake their eares & thinke all is done. Therefore if wee be stubborne in naughtinesse, let vs looke surely to bee beaten downe, vntill we be driuẽ to confesse that he punisheth vs iustly. Nay, let vs not tarry till then. But when we heare how God proceedeth against such as are vtterly hardhearted and will not yeeld vnto him, let vs be afraid. And as soone as we heare him threaten vs, or perceiue any token of his anger, let vs turne againe vnto him, and meeken our hearts, and let vs vnderstande y vntill he be appeased, our sorowes must needes increase, euen to the veter ouerwhelming of vs. That is the thing which Moses ment in saying, that they which despise God and his word, shall feele that there is neither ende nor measure of their calamities, and that they shalbe cõstrained to say, These plagues are come vpon vs, because God is not among vs.

And heerewithall we must also marke the experience which the people had. For (as the cõmon prouerbe sayth) experience is the mistres of fooles. The people had then already of long time knowen what it was to haue God dwelling amongst them, and y it brought all maner of ioy, all maner of rest, and all maner of happines. And when y God was turned from thẽ, they were driuen to consider to their cost, what an vnhappinesse it was to haue him a stranger to thẽ. To be short, heere Moses sheweth the diuersitie y is to be seene, when God doth for a time blesse a people, & make them to prosper: and contrariwise when for the misusing of his grace he turneth away, and sheweth himselfe an enemie and aduersarie against them. Nowe therefore while we inioy the tokens and Testimonies of Gods loue, let vs learne to serue and feare him, that y possession therof may continue with vs for euer. If we be so wicked and froward, as to skorn God when he vseth such goodnesse towarde vs, and

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forbeareth vs with patience: let vs assure ourselues that he will giue such glorie to his benefits as that the extreme miseries which he will make vs to feele, shall force vs to say, Where is the Lorde that dwelled with vs afore time? How soeuer the case stand, Gods will was that the song which was deliuered to Moses, should be a witnesse to aunswere against the people. He sayth yet againe that hee will hide his face, and that by reason thereof the people shall be a pray, and vtterly destroyed, and that there shalbe nothing but tokens of horrible confusion in all their state. The people then is sufficiently warned and certified of Gods wrath: but yet God addeth this song more, to the ende that on the one side the people perceiuing their state so wretched, shold say, God punisheth me and that iustly. And on the other side, that in this similitude they might behold themselues as in a glasse, and that by the hauing of this song, they might bee put in minde of their misdeedes and transgressions, and made to consider that God doth the office of a Iudge, and thereby be the more moued to thinke vpon their faultes, and to humble themselues. Now we see heere first of all, what dulnesse there is in men: for God giueth vs no superfluous thing, nay there neuer departeth word frō his mouth which is not profitable for vs, and which ought not to serue vs for instruction. Wherefore is it then that God giueth this song to the people of Israell? It is because it should serue them for a Testimonie. At what time? Euen at such time as they should be afflicted to the vttermost, that they might be holden as it were on the torture, and be constrained to confesse the faultes and iniquities which they had committed. And how then? Could not the plagues which they endured, suffice to bring them to reason, and to cause them to turne againe vnto God, whom they had forsaken? Yes in deede, were it not that men be so hard hearted, that in seeing they perceiue not a whit, and that their wittes be as it were dulled and dead. We see by this then, that although our Lorde chastise men, euen with such extremitie, as they must needes confesse that it is he to whom they be to aunswere and to yeelde account, and that it is his hande that pursueth them, and that he is their enemie: yet they be so foolish that they settle themselues in their owne imaginations, and although they knowe it, yet they bee not throughly perswaded of it in their hearts: but let it escape them and by and by forget it, vnlesse God doe put to his worde, and tell them, It is to me that you must haue an eye: for I do summō you before my iudgement seate. When I do thus scourge you, I set your faults before you, I do heere make out your processe for you. If God spake not when he striketh with his hande, the stripes would bee vnprofitable to vs. Now we perceiue the hardheartednes that is in vs. For although it be heere spoken of the children of Israel, yet doth the holy Ghost vnder the example of them, tell vs what we be. Therefore let vs learne to know our selues better, and consider that although it bee needefull for vs to receiue instructiō concerning Gods punishments, least we should become vnreformable? yet notwithstanding it would profit vs nothing, vnlesse we had the word of God, whereby he draweth vs to repentance, and by the which he doeth vs to vnderstande, that the thinges which we suffer must not be imputed to haphazard, but we must vnderstand that they come frō him. And thus must we resort to the holy scripture, so often as we be afflicted. For on the one side, when men are scourged they chafe vppon the bridle, and become as dosed, as if they were astonished with the stroke of a hammer; they thinke not of God. True it is that when they feele themselues pinched with aduersities, they crye alas, but they doe neuer the more lift vp their eyes to the hand of God, to vnderstande him to be their Iudge. Therefore we must proceed thus far; that is, we must haue recourse vnto Gods word; and when God smiteth vs on this maner, let vs take warning to submit ourselues vnto him, & not keepe vs aloofe as we are wont. Now the same word not only will shewe vs that it is Gods hande that smiteth vs; but it will also bring vs to examine our life. It is not said in the scripture that God punisheth men not knowing wherefore, or that he taketh pleasure in tormenting them: but it is sayd, that he punisheth them for their faultes so as we must alwaies needes acknowledge his iustice, insomuch that if men could skill to profit themselues by the afflictions that are sent them, they be all of them as medicines, and Gods intent is to shew himselfe a father by warning them after that maner. Moreouer they serue to make men inexcusable: insomuch that all the afflictions which they suffer in this world, shalbe an augmentation of the last vengeance, because they would not stoope vnder the hande of God, while he nurtured the for their welfare. Thus ye see that when we be scourged, we must resort to the holy scripture, first of all to vnderstand that it commeth not by aduenture, but that our Lord doth thereby shew vnto vs that we haue offended him, & that he meaneth thereby to make vs to feele our sinnes, to the end we should not be so senseless as we were before, to flatter & to harde ourselues but that we should come directly vnto him, and yeelde ourselues guilty, yea euen with such misliking of our sins, as we shold hate the euil that is in vs, and seek nothing but to be receiued vnto his gouernment, to be changed & renewed by him, so as wee may take no pleasure but onely in framing ourselues to his good pleasure. That is the thing which Moses meant in saying, that although the people should be constrained to say, that they suffered those so many plagues & miseries, because God was no more among them, yet should they also haue a testimony to follow the, and to holde them as at a bay, as who would say, Thou shalt not escape, but shalt know that thy sins be the cause of al these euils; although thou seeke starting holes, yet must thou bee as it were pent vp, and feele that God is against thee, & that thou shalt be more & more tormented, vntill thou turne againe vnto him. True it is that this is spoken of a witnesse that was against the people, and it serueth to expresse the stubbornes which was in the children of Israell, as hereafter we shall see more at large.

And

And surely although God vouchsafe to shewe vs mercie, and would haue vs to heare his woord, to the intent to bring vs to repentaunce, yet must that woorde first bee a witnesse against vs. As for example, wee shall neuer obtaine fauour of God vntill hee haue condemned vs. And wherefore? Bicause we be wrapped in our sinnes, and doe sooth and flatter our selues in them. Nowe so long as men doe thus glory in themselues, or become careleſſe, there is no place for mercie: for they make but a scoffe of the goodnesse of GOD. Yee see then that wee bee shutte out from all hope of saluation, vntill wee bee condemned of God. To bring this to passe, his word must discouer our iniquities, and all our filthinesse, and make vs abashed and ashamed, and also driue vs to feele the sorrowes of death, and to see hell which is prepared for vs. The point then whereat God beginneth when hee meaneth to bring men to saluation, is that he stirreth vp his worde for a witnesse to them, to make them to know that they be vtterly forlorne and damned. Is that done? Then doth God admonish vs, and giue vs Testimonie of his good will; and not onely lay vs foorth his doctrine, but also recite the processe of all our faultes. Nowe then, let vs receiue the woord when it testifieth vnto vs our condemnation; that beeing drawen thereby to repentance, and altogether ashamed of our selues, wee may obtaine fauour before GOD. Yet let vs vnderstande moreouer, that when GOD doeth so frame our inditement, it is for our benefite: for hee maketh vs our owne Iudges, to the intent that hee himselfe would not iudge vs, but succeede from it. Nowe if wee will needes play the wilde beastes, when as GOD testifieth our sinnes vnto vs; or else if wee goe to seeke for leaues to couer vs, that is to say, if wee will needes scape his iudgement by our lying and hypocrisie, and play the skoffers which make a mocke of all warninges that are giuen vnto them; or if we play the mad bedlems in despising GOD as we see many doe, who cannot abyde any rebukes, but doe grinde their teeth as often as they bee made to vnderstande their sinnes; if (I say) wee doe proceede so farre, then must the woorde of God stand still in his first force, to wit, it must bee a Testimonie to vs of our damnation. And therefore seeing it is sayde heere that the Song is a witnesse to vnderstande that GOD hath iust cause to punishe his people, and that the people stande conuicted thereby: let vs feare, let vs feare (I say) least our Lorde doe with lyke extremitie pursue the processe which hee hath made against vs, and that there bee no place of refuge to his grace after wee haue once reiected it? nay rather, as soone as hee summoneth vs, let vs learne to stoope, and to shut our mouth; and not to make any excuse, but to say, Lorde, wee see verie well, that if thou wouldest vse rigour towardes vs, we were vndoone, there is no shift for vs but that thou must receiue vs lyke damned and forlorne castawayes as wee bee, and bestowe thy mercie vpon vs: for all our welfare lyeth in this, that thou looke no more vpon our sinnes to punish them, but that through thy free goodnesse, thou doe take them away and blot them out. Thus ye see how we ought to put this place in vre, where Moses sayeth, that this *Song shall be for a witnesse to the people of Israel.*

Hee sheweth yet better what testimonie hee giueth by this Song. *It is* (sayeth he) *that I will bring you into the lande which I haue promised to your fathers, a land flowing with milke and honie.* Hereby he giueth vs to vnderstande, that it is a fatte lande, and fruitfull of all good things in such abundance, as if milke did runne therein, in stead of Riuers: and as if they had withall the like abundance of hony. This maner of speech is very commonly vsed whensoeuer God speaketh of the land of Chanaan: and not without cause. For God had blessed it aboue all the rest of the world; yea and no doubt, but the people found that with their comming thither, the fruitefulnesse of that land was augmented. And surely it is a marualous matter, how such a huge multitude was nourished in so small a countrie. But at this day we see it is a land halfe barren. True it is that euen as yet there are some places thereof as little speckes, which are very fat & abundant; but yet farre vnable to verifie that which wee reade of it here, namely that the land did flowe with milke and honie. But herein we do so much the better see that which is spoken in the 107. Psalme, namely, that when God hath giuen neuer so great fruitfulnesse to a land, he can make it barrain againe, as if it were sowed with salt, so as there shall be nothing but leannesse, nor any sustenance to bee found therein. Wee perceiue then by the land of Chanaan, how it is the hand of God that giueth aboundance to a land: and likewise that his withdrawing of his blessing, causeth a land to become fruitlesse and altogether barraine. And therefore doeth Moses nowe protest that when the people come into ỹ land, and there be nourished, filled and fatted, & then serue straunge gods: they shalbee condemned so much the more: and then they must not looke for any startingholes, but bee discouered to the whole world to their condemnation, and this present song shalbe as a processe wherin the forme of law is obserued; so as ỹ summons shalbe made first, & then the examinations and informations shalbe exhibited; and afterward ỹ malefactors being arrained and condemned by their owne mouth, shall receiue the sentence of iudgement against them. Now wee see what the meaning of Moses was. Psal. 107. 34

Heereupon let vs marke that by making comparison of the woord of GOD with the thinges which are befalen vnto vs, and which wee haue felt by experience; wee ought to be wakened, or else we be too brutish. As for example, whereas the Scripture telleth vs that God bestoweth his richesse vppon men, of purpose to bring them backe vnto him by his gentlenesse, and fatherly goodnesse; and also that hee continueth to doe them good, of purpose to drawe them to repentaunce, when he seeth them goe astray: although wee had no experience thereof, yet is it

certaine that the holy Scripture ought to suffice vs. But if wee looke into our owne state, and vppon the thinges whereof God hath giuen vs experience; and consider howe many wayes he hath shewed himselfe liberall towarde vs, so as his goodnesse is throughly knowen vnto vs, and we bee resolued that it is his hand that hath fed vs: surely ỹ beholding of so many benefits which God hath bestowed vpon vs, ought to make vs to proceed yet farther, & to consider that although we haue offended him, and bin wicked and vnthankfull, yet is he not weary to do vs good: but doth rather striue against our leaudnes, & ouercome it with his goodnes. When we think vpon these thinges, then hath ỹ scripture a good testimony of our experience, and then must we needs be so much ỹ more guilrie. That is ỹ thing which Moses meant in this text. For hauing tolde the Iewes that this Song should serue for a testimony to stop their mouthes so as they should not haue any thing to reply against GOD, hee saith: for proofe heereof, *I will bring them into the land which I promised vnto their fathers*, and there they shall be fedde and fatted. For seeing that euen after they haue tasted my goodnes so great towards them, they will needes turne away from mee, and follow after strange gods: is it not ynough to bewray their filthynes vnto all the worlde? Must not all creatures be witnesses thereto? Shal not my word thē haue good authoritie to say, that they be too leawd a people, & a people that are not worthy, that I should euer haue giuen them one morsell of bread to eate, & much lesse that I should haue adopted and chosen them from among all the nations of the world, to be a holy people, and a Royall preesthoode? Now we perceiue the meaning of Moses. It remaineth ỹ wee apply it to our vse. It was meete that the Iewes after this warning peale, should haue acknowledged that they came not into ỹ land of Canaan, otherwise than by the leading of God, and that the same lande was giuen them in possession bicause of the Promise made to their father Abraham. Moreouer they saw, how God held them there. It is good reason then that they should haue concluded, that (seeing they were depriued of so great a benefite, and yet God is vnchaungeable & altereth not his purpose) the euill came of themselues, in that they suffered not God to continue his mercy toward them, but did refuse it, & shut the gate against him. Indeede we haue not at this day a land of Canaan; we haue not ỹ which the Iewes had, to be gathered into one certaine Country. But what? We be too blind, if we vnderstand not that what Country soeuer God hath giuen vs to liue in, yet it is he that doth harbour vs. And although we had neither Testimony nor Token of his goodnesse as concerning this present life: yet there is a matter which passeth all this; which is, That he hath drawen vs out of the darkenesse of damnation wherin we were plunged: and hath brought vs to ỹ heritage of saluatiō. For through hope, we be already set aboue with Iesus Christ; as S. Paul speaketh in the Epistle to the Ephes. Yet neuertheless besides this, God of his exceeding great goodnes, faileth not to giue vs many mo testimonies of his fatherly loue: for who elles nourisheth and feedeth vs in this world? How many wales doe we dayly perceiue that he hath his hand stretched out, yea or rather his winges, (as he saith in the Song) as it were to broode vs heere like little chickins? We see it with our eyes. Seeing then that wee haue so much experience of the goodnesse of God; and againe ỹ on the other side, he by his scourging of vs doeth traine vs to the vnderstanding of our sinnes, and therupon doeth offer vs his woorde wherein to beholde the articles that are layd against vs: must we not needes be too hard hearted and brutish, if wee bee not mooued to come vnto him with true repentance? So then, let vs learne to exercise our selues better in the rememberaunce of Gods benefites, & to acknowledge them accordingly, as he hath bound vs vnto him: and on ỹ other side to consider, that if be at any time faile vs, the same must needes come of our vnthankefulnes. For as for him, he will continually proceede more and more to doe vs good, vnlesse we hinder him, and turne away the course of his goodnesse, as if a man should stay the running of a Riuer. For the goodnesse of God is a fountaine that neuer dryeth: it is certaine that he neuer ceasseth to doe vs good. Doeth he then scourge vs? Our sinnes must needes be the cause thereof, bycause we haue prouoked his wrath. After that manner must wee consider as well of Gods benefites, as of the afflictions that he sendeth vs, specially when wee bee warned by his word, as the way is here shewed vs.

Deut. 32.11.

Exod. 19.6. 1. Pet. 2.9.

And whereas he sayeth, *That the people drue shal they be filled and fedde*: It serueth to aggrauate their vnthankefulnesse the more. For if the people of Israel had bin afflicted, and that thereupon they had fallen away, [there had bin some colour:] as oftentimes men being tempted doe fall away from GOD bycause they be at their wits end. And albeit that the same be no sufficient excuse, yet may it seeme that the fault is so much the lesse. As for example, whē a man hath meandly serued God, and it hath not appeared that he hath dealt amisse, but rather that hee had a good zeale and affection: if God thereupon doe punish him, and he bee so vexed that he woteth not where to become; in so much that hee doe murmure, chafe, and blaspheme God, or is induced to doe euill; men will say, Wel, this man, as long as GOD dealt gently with him, did shewe himselfe to bee in good order: but nowe see what temptations doe. But when a man is blessed of GOD, and doeth prosper by all meanes, and it is Gods pleasure to wynne him by gentlenesse and goodnesse: if thereupon hee become a rebell, and despise God, and giue ouer himselfe to all manner of lookenesse, (as some are seene to do, or rather as the common manner is, that as soone as GOD giueth men that which they doe long for and desire, they become drunken, and doe lose both wit and reason;) if a man [say I] doe then ouershoote himselfe after that fashion when GOD dealeth with him so graciously: is not his sinne so much the more haynous? Yes certainely.

Eph. 2.6.

That

That is the thing which Moses meant to declare in this place: [where he sayeth,] They shal come into the Lande which I haue promised them; there will I sustaine them, there shall they bee filled and made fatte; and then will they turne away after strange goddes. By these wordes we are made to vnderstande, that the more our Lorde maketh vs to feele his fauour and fatherly goodnesse, the more ought we to be allured to rest wholly vppon him that hee may possesse vs, and the more ought all our wittes and affections to bee stayed vppon his fear, so as the diuell may not finde any breach nor gap open to deceyue vs, for so much as GOD hath so wonne vs vnto himselfe. That is the instruction which we must learne by this text, otherwise the complaynt that GOD vttereth against the Iewes by his Prophet Ieremie, shall lyght vppon vs. My people [sayeth he] what haue I doone to thee? Heere GOD entreth into disputation with the people because they were so defiled with Idolatry and had peruerted all together. Goe to (saith hee) let vs nowe pleade together; my people, what haue I doone to thee that thou shouldest complaine? I haue brought thee out of the lande of Egypt, I haue stretched out my mightie hand to deliuer thee from thence, I haue ledde thee, and fedde thee, I fedde thee in the wildernesse, I caused Manna to come from heauen, I gaue thee the foode of Angels: and when thou wast come into the lande which I had promised thee, I fought against thine Enemies, and I gaue thee victorie against them all. But these bee not the cheefe matters: I haue moreouer giuen thee my Lawe, which is the couenant of lyfe and saluation, I haue giuen thee my Sacrifices, to the ende thou shouldest haue a Testimonie that it is not without cause, that I would haue you to my selfe. Also I haue made thee to finde so great riches of my bountie, that it is impossible to value the benefites which I haue bestowed on thee: and doest thou nowe fall to despising me, and to breaking thy fayth, and to turning away after strange Gods? Is this the recompence that I lookte for? If a man doe plant him a vine and tend it; he meaneth to eate and drinke the fruit thereof. And if the vine do yeeld a strange and a bitter fruite, to choke the maister withall, what wil come of it? Deserueth not such a vine to be quite plucked vp? Let vs therefore bethink our selues, and not tarie till our Lorde accuse vs to haue greeued his holy Spirite: but let vs turne this text to our profite. And for as much as we knowe by experience, that he is a liberall father vnto vs; let it mooue vs to soften our hearts, how hard soeuer they bee, that wee may learne to giue ouer our selues wholly to him. Thus ye see whereto this Text ought to serue vs where it is sayde, *I will set them in the Lande which I haue promised to their fathers, they shall bee nourished there and made fatte, and they shall turne away vnto strange gods*. And therefore seeing that GOD maintaineth vs, let vs suffer him also to guide and gouerne vs, vntil he hath brought vs to [illegible] eternal inheritaunce, which he hath promised vs, and which we looke for.

Yet moreouer hee saith, that this song shall aunswere them as a witnesse, because it shall neuer depart from their mouth. Hereby we do see how it is our Lordes will that his word should serue not to some one vse onely, but also for a continuall instruction euen vnto the end; & that the fathers should conuey it ouer to their children. And the chiefe succession which we ought to leaue to them that come after vs, is that when God hath once vttered his will vnto vs, wee must beware that it be not buried, so as none of vs bee so fond as to hold himselfe contented with his owne only knowing thereof, as though the light of saluation ought to die with vs! but rather that they which come after vs may inioy it also. And therefore when we our selues haue knowen God, and haue had his trueth preached among vs; wee must to the vttermost of our power indeuor, that it may continue after our death, and that our children may come to receiue the doctrine which we haue followed. And if the word of God slip away, and men think not thereon (as it is come to passe in the Popedome, & as it was afore time:) it commeth of their owne leawdnesse, and they must needes yeelde a reckoning for their disanulling of so great a benefite. Wee see that the law was lost for a time amongst the people of Israel, and this song was one of the mouthes of both great and small: but yet God at the last did not suffer the people to continue in such ignoraunce; but it was his will that the Lawe was founde, and that the people came with great solemnitie to receiue it, and hee tolde them that they were woorthy of blame for defacing the doctryne of Saluation, and therefore hee willed them to repent. Nowe, seeing it is so; as I haue already touched, when GOD hath once taught vs his will, let vs learne (as I sayde afore) not onely to profite therein for the present tyme or for the tyme of our owne life, but also to procure as much as in vs lyeth that our Children after our death, may still enioy the same Religion, and that the name of GOD may euer bee had in remembraunce.

And although there be many that cannot profit themselues thereby; yet shall it turne to their condemnation, and God shall not fayle to bee glorified. For surely Moses speaketh in this place, not onely of Gods elect, and of such as were the true seede of Abraham: but also of such as were willing to take profite by the lawe, and were not altogether reprobates. For seeing it was Gods will that this song should bee in their mouthes: thereby wee ought to be so much the better aduertised, that our Lord doeth oftentimes leaue his worde to the worlde, to bee a message and a testimonie of his loue and goodnes; howbeit not for the saluation of all men, but for the condemnation of the greater part. Wee see that euen among the Heathen there remained alwayes a remnant of the trueth: wee see such sentences vttered by the heathen, as it is impossible for a naturall man to thinke the least of them which they haue alleaged. By what meanes then did

they it? It was Gods dooing, who brought them so farre fooorth to their greater condemnation; and at the last day they shall full well be brought in minde of it againe. Nowe if we haue the word of GOD, which ought to bee a much more familiar instruction to vs; and that God constraineth vs to haue our eares beaten therewith, and to bee able to talke thereof; if wee make none account thereof, but walke altogether contrarie to it, so as it may seeme that wee haue conspired to prouoke the wrath of GOD against vs; Alas how dreadfull condemnation is readie for vs? Therefore let vs looke well to our selues, and let vs consider that our Lorde doeth often times lesue his worde in the mouth of men, not to the intent they should be instructed thereby to their profite; (for they be neither worthie nor capable thereof, by cause of their malice and rebellion,) but to the intent they should haue the lesse excuse, at such time as they must condemne themselues, and when this sentence is to bee executed vppon them, namely, Thou wicked seruaunt I condemne thee, yea euen by thine owne mouth. Let vs therefore take heede of that, and let vs make such confession of Gods trueth; as the same may proceede from the roote of our heart, and be a good Sacrifice, and so consequently turne to our saluation, as Saint Paule sayeth in the tenth Chapter to the Romanes, which was alleaged by mee, not long sithens. Thus must the woorde of GOD bee alwaies in our mouth, not to condemne vs, in such wise, as wee may sit rucking still continually in our filthinesse: but to condemne vs in such wise as wee may bee touched with repentaunce, and vtterly mislike of our sinnes, and flee vnto God to obtaine fauour at his hand: yea euen in such wise, as he may rule and gouerne vs by his holy spirit, and from hencefoorth bee glorified in all our life.

Luke.19.22.

Rom.10.10.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes: beseeching him to vouchsafe more and more to giue vs a true vnderstanding and feeling of that which wee haue deserued, so as wee may bee altogether cast downe in our selues, and lay away all glorying of our selues, and haue our whole resorting for refuge may bee alonely to his goodnesse: and that in the meane whyle we may sigh vnder the burthen of our flesh, for so much as wee bee so ouerloaden, that wee are not able to come to him with so pure affection, as we ought: and that he will augment the graces of his holy spirit, vntill he haue rid vs quite and cleane of all maner of vices and imperfections, and renewed vs after his owne image, so as we may forsake all thinges, to giue our selues vnto him: and that renouncing this present world, we may labour to attayne to the inheritaunce of the heauenly life. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely vnto vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth &c.

On Wednesday the vj. of May, 1556.

The CLXXVII. Sermon which is the fifth vpon the one and thirtith Chapter.

22 And so Moses wrate this Song the same day, and taught it the children of Israell.

23 Then hee commaunded Iosuah the sonne of Nun, and sayde, bee strong and of good courage: for thou shalt bring the Children of Israell, into the lande concerning the which I haue sworne to them, and I will bee with thee.

24 And it came to passe that Moses finished his wryting of the woordes of this Lawe in the booke: so that hee made an ende.

25 Then Moses commaunded the Leuites that bare the Arke of the Couenaunt of the Lord, saying:

26 Take the booke of this Lawe, and lay it in the side of the Arke of the Couenaunt of the Lorde your God, that it may bee a witnesse agaynst thee.

27 For I knowe thy stubbornnesse and thy stiffe necke, beholde, whyle I am yet a liue with you this day, you bee Rebelles agaynst the Lorde: how much more then will you be so after my death?

28 Cause all the Elders of your Trybes and your Rulers to come before me, that I may vtter these words in their hearing, and that I may call both heauen and earth to witnesse against them.

29 For

29 For I knowe that after my death, you will bee corrupted and fall away from the way that I haue commaunded you. And finally euill will come vppon you, bycause you shall haue doone euill in the sight of the Lorde, by prouoking him to anger through the workes of your handes.

30 So Moses spake the words of this song in the eares of all the congregation of Israell: vntill he ended them.

WE haue heere before already seene, howe Moses exhorted Iosuah, whome GOD gaue him to bee his successor. And therein wee haue seene also, that he was contented to haue serued God during his owne lyfe time, and that hee was not grieued þ another was reserued for the charge which was more excellent than that which had beene committed vnto him. For the chiefe matter was to put the children of Israel in possession of the heritage that God had promised them. Moses is removed from that honor, and GOD tolde him that it was to shame him withall, bicause he had not glorifyed him, when the people strove, at such time as they asked water to drinke. God sayd that Moses behaued not himselfe constant ynough at that time, and therefore hee punished him, and would not that hee shoulde put the people in possession of the land of Chanaan. Nowe see with what patience Moses did beare this chastisement which God layd vppon him: In so much that although Iosuah was appointed in his place, yet hee was not a whit moued thereat with enuie or euill will: but did rather exhort him, desiring nothing, but that such a man might be set vp, as should maintayne and preserue the state of the Church. Hereby wee are taught, that although God doe pardon our faultes, yet neuertheleſſe if it please him to send vs corporall punishmentes to the intent wee shoulde the rather humble our selues, and not spurne against his power, but stoope to it, and yeelde our selues altogether obedient; surely it is conuenient for vs as he knoweth verie well. And therefore let vs suffer our selues to bee gouerned by his hand, as it is the generall rule that we must obserue in al the punishments that God doeth send vs.

And by the way, wee are also to marke, that the zeale of the honour of God and of þ welfare of his Church, ought to beare rule in vs: so as none of vs doe couet to bee in high degree, and to mount aboue his neighbours: but bee contented that God doe conduct vs by the meanes of men, and that hee choose such instrumentes as it pleaseth himselfe. For so hee may alwayes haue the soueraintie, and the Church prosper, let vs reioyce therein, and let no man haue regarde of himselfe. Moreouer wee are to call to remembraunce, that when Moses meant to encourage Iosuah, hee assured him vppon the promyse of GOD. And that is the thing which must bee the stay of all our strength. For if wee will bee stout vppon our owne heade; GOD will ouerthrowe such a rashnesse, lyke a fond thing as it is. What must then bee doone? Wee must embrace the promises of GOD, and when hee hath once tolde vs that he is our defender: wee must not feare that wee shall bee forsaken of him, but bee resolute in all thinges. And although the worlde doe offer vs many ouerthwartes to make vs to distrust: yet let vs stande stedfast in the thing which our GOD hath tolde vs. For it is good reason to doe him the honour, that his woorde may bee preferred before all thinges that may turne vs away from the affiaunce that hee hath giuen vs.

Thus see you heere a very profitable lesson which is, þ bycause we feele so many infirmities in our selues þ there needeth nothing to beate vs downe, but as soone as þ wind bloweth, we be shaken, or else doe fall altogether: we perceiuing such feebleneſſe in vs, must receiue the remedie that is offered vs here; which is to hearken to the promises of our God. And for as much as hee assureth vs that he will neuer faile vs; let vs trust to that stay: For when the winds, the Stormes, and the Tempestes of this present world come; wee shall neuer bee shaken. Ye see then that the strength and stay, of the faithfull, is to rest altogether vpon that which God hath promised them. And for that cause doeth Moses say to Iosuah, *Thou shalt put the children of Israell in possession of the land.* And Moses speaketh it not at aladuenture; but to ratifie that which we haue seene more at large here before; namely that God had chosen Iosuah to that office, and that hauing committed the charge vnto him, he promised him in likewise to vphold him with his mightie hande, Whereupon it is saide vnto him, *be strong, and behaue thy selfe manfully*. So then let vs learn to fight against al temptations when wee haue once tasted the force of Gods promises. For it is a token that wee giue no credite to that which God speaketh, when wee continue lyke Reedes shaking with euery winde, and tremble at euery trouble that commeth: standing in a mammering, or starting from the right way, and waxing reckleſſe in discharging our duetie. As often as such thinges happen, wee shewe our weaknesse: and wee giue good proofe that wee beleeue not that which GOD hath spoken. Wee may well alleage and say, As for my selfe, I hold the promises of God for certaine, I doubt not but that whatsoeuer proceedeth from his mouth is an infallible trueth. Wee may well so say; but the deede it selfe proueth that there is nothing in vs but hypocrisie, and that wee bee not firme to go through with that which is commaunded vs, and to discharge

Deut. 30.

our duetie in following our vocation, ne walke steadily when all thinges seeme forlorne. To be short, let vs learne that faith ioyned with such power, as ought alwayes to make vs to go forward still, whithersoeuer God calleth vs: And so shall it doe, conditionally that we bee grounded vppon his woorde. And on the contrary side, we must needes be tossed with vnquietnesse, and be wandering hither and thither, and trotte vp and downe without any stay, if we haue not the word of God to guide vs, and to be our lanterne. And it is the right payment of all them, that leane to their owne fansies, and make foolishe enterprises, and passe their boundes and lymites: It is requisite (say I) that our Lord should beate them downe as the last, though they were aduaunced for a tyme. And what is the cause? Bycause (as I salde afore) there is no power but that which is grounded vppon the woorde of God.

But there is yet one point more, which is that euerie one of vs must haue respect whereunto hee is called, and what it is that God hath committed to his hands: for (as we see heere) if Iosua had thrust in himselfe, without God had appointed him, what power could hee then haue had? Peraduenture for a braide or twain he might haue done wonders, as we see Children of this worlde doe, who in their brauerie doe as it were spitte fire for a whyle as they say, but in the end are quite confounded. And euen so shoulde it haue happened to Iosua. But forasmuch as hee taryed till God had shewed him his wil, therfore he was not disappointed of his hope. So then, let none of vs take more vppon him than is lawfull for him: but let vs consider what our office and calling requite, and so let euery of vs keepe him within his degree, with all soberneſſe and modestie: and then will GOD bee our guide, according to this saying of his, that his Angels shall alwayes beare vs company, euen in our iourneyes, so wee goe not astray. Nowe heerewithall it is declared heere, that Moses did write this Song and all the booke of the Lawe; and that hauing written it, hee red it openly before all the people, and gaue the booke of the Lawe to the Leuites, willing them to lay it in the side of the Arke or Coffer of the Couenant, and telling them that it should be a Testymonie against the people. Yea and once againe he accuseth the of rebellion. *Thou shalt know* (saith he) *what a one thou art.* God must alwayes haue an action framed against thee and bee thy Iudge; for thou art full of Rebellion, thou wilt not bee gouerned but by strong hand; If thou wouldest willingly serue thy God, hee would vse thee after a more myeld and gentle fashion. But what? Bycause thou art so hardened in euill, that thou wilt not by any meanes bee bowed, GOD is fayne to vse rigour. And nowe yet once againe (sayeth hee) I will call heauen and earth to witnesse against you. That is the effect of that which is declared in this place.

Now as concerning the first poynt, we must marke that this woorde *Writing* doeth import, that Moses was not the author of the Lawe nor of the song; but was onely the writer or recorder thereof, at the mouth of God. Nowe then, like as a clearke of an office writeth what is appointed him; Euen so it is sayd expressely here, that Moses wrate the things which he receiued of God, and not any thing that was forged in his owne brayne. And this serueth to giue such authoritie to the Lawe and to the song which wee shall see heereafter; as may make vs to giue eare with all reuerence, not to a mortall creature, but to the liuing GOD, whose will it is to haue his Maiestie knowen there. Thus much for one poynt.

And herewithall it is shewed vs that our faith oweth no obedience but to him onely, neyther ought to depend vppon men, howe wise soeuer they be; but that God ought to haue the gouerning and whole Lordship thereof. According whereunto Saint Paule protesteth, that he reigned not like a Lord vnder any colour ouer their faith, but that he reserued that right vnto God, to whom alone it belonged. And in verie deede if wee should compare all the men liuing in the worlde with Moses, it is certaine that we should alwayes finde, that hee is the excellentest Prophet that GOD hath chosen of all the rest, according as wee shall see in the ende of this song: and yet for all that, his speaking of the law which was published by him, is not to bring vs in admiration of his person, that wee should say, Truely that was an excellent man: but it is sayde that God was serued by him. After what manner? Soothly euen thus, that hee did not take any thing in hand, nor put foorth any dreame or deuise of his owne, but onely wrate that which hee had receiued at the mouth of God. Seeing that this testimonie is deliuered concerning Moses: what diuelish boldnesse and arrogancie is in them that bee farre inferiour to him: which will needes bee heard, when they bring foorth nothing but their owne fantasies, and submit not themselues to the woorde of God? And yet wee haue to marke that the charge of Moses differed greatly from theirs which be at this day ordained Ministers in the Church. For God gaue him his lawe; and therefore hee was fortie dayes and fortie nights in the mountaine without meate or drinke, to the ende that his doctrine shoulde bee authorised. Nowe, this was peculiar to him, and as a speciall priuiledge. Seeing it is so, then are we so much the better confirmed in that which I haue spoken: to wit, that it becommeth not men to enterprise any thing of their owne braine (as they say,) but that they must onely deliuer forth that which God commandeth them, and be (as it were) his instruments.

And heerewithall let vs marke also, how it is not without cause, that Moses commandeth the Leuites to lay *the booke of the Lawe in the side of the* Chist or *Arke of the couenaunt*: for thereby it had the more Maiestie, not bycause the Sanctuarie of it selfe was of more worthinesse than other places, but bicause God had ordained it to vse, and that it was his pleasure that it shoulde be as a pledge, & a visible signe of his presence.

This

Pſal. 91. 11.

Deut. 31.

This matter hath bin alreadie treated of hereto-
fore: & therfore we need not to stand vpō it any
long whyle: neuerthelesse it is requisite to haue y
remembrance of these of briefely renewed vnto vs.
Men of their owne nature bee so dull, that they
can neither attaine nor indeuour to attayne vn-
to GOD vnlesse they haue some helpes.
As for vs, wee haue not nowe the figures and
shadowes which the fathers had vnder the law.
For GOD hath nowe reuealed himselfe vn- 10
to vs more familiarly in the person of our Lord
Iesus Christ, who is his liuely Image, but vn-
der the lawe, it was necessarie that the fathers
shoulde haue the figures to aide them, to the
intent they might bee confirmed in the fayth.
And when they came to the Sanctuarie or the
Tabernacle, it was a kind of offering themselues
before the face of God. There were no Ima-
ges nor Puppets: for it was not their fashion to
haue anie such remembrance of God, as the Pa- 20
pistes doe imagine, but there were the ten com-
mandements, which were laide vp there, and
God woulde that his maiestie shoulde bee loo-
ked vppon in his worde. And Moses giueth ex-
presse commandement, that the booke of the
lawe which he had written, shoulde bee laide
there in the side of the Chest of the couenaunt.
And to what ende? As if God shoulde say, Here
is my Testimonie, you must not receyue this
doctrine as if it were fraughted after the deuice of 30
man: ye must hold it as a thing that comes from
me: for you haue a visible token thereof. Nowe
then we see what ende this ceremonie of y put-
ting vp of the booke of the lawe into the Chest
of the couenaunt did serue for. It was all one as if
God had protested that hee auowed it to be his
owne, and that Moses had no further to do with
it than onely that hee serued him as his minis-
ter.

Here we see yet againe that which we haue 40
declared alreadie, namely, that God calleth vs
together to himselfe, and that hee would not
haue drawen vs away one way or other to
haue regarde vnto men: for so shoulde our
faith bee alwayes wauering, and there woulde be
no stay. It is his will that wee shoulde haue our
eye vppon him alone, to yeelde our selues to
his obedience. And therefore let vs learne to
knitte vs wholly to our God, if wee meane to
haue a true and holie vnion in the Church. The 50
Papists do prate much of the Catholike church,
and of the agreement that ought to bee there-
in. Yea, but in the meane while there is horri-
ble diuision and hellishe confusion among them,
because God beareth not rule there by his word,
neither is there any allowable doctrine, but they
be tossed too and fro. I meane not the common
sort onely, but euen them also which make the
articles of fayth and frame commandements &
traditions at their owne pleasure, wherof they 60
haue hoorded and heaped so manie one vpō an
other, that they can scarsly weete who is the re-
porter of this or that, or who is the inuenter
thereof, or whowas the first maker of such an
order or of such a tradition. Thus ye see how
all things goe to confusion and disorder, when
men direct not themselues by the pure doctrine
of GOD. And therefore let vs marke, that
when our Lorde willed that the booke of the law
shoulde be put vp in the Sanctuarie, it was as if
he were his Royal seate where he sate himselfe, &
where hee woulde bee honoured. And there-
by hee shewed in effect, that hee woulde not
haue his Church to be gouerned after the plea-
sure or liking of men, but meant to holde it in
awe, and that his onely worde shoulde bee re-
ceiued, so as men should looke onely vnto him,
and be gathered together there. But now that
wee haue our Lorde Iesus Christ for our heade, Iohn. 10. 45
and that he is appointed our Shepeheard, and & 5. 27.
telleth vs that if wee be his sheepe, wee must
not onely heare his voyce, but also discerne it
from the voyce of straungers: I pray you shall
there be anie excuse, if we be so wauering in the
aire, as we see the Papistes are, following euery
man his owne deuice, or else busying themselues
about the Traditions of men? Therefore let vs
learne to submitte our selues vnto God and vn-
to him whome he hath set vp in his behalfe to
be our onelie gouernour: Also let vs learne to
heare the lawe and the Gospell in such wise, as
wee may quake at the Maiestie of our God: and
let vs come with such reuerence and humilitie
to the hearing of the doctrine that is deliue-
red out of it, as wee may not in anie wise replie
against it, nor bring thither anie one droppe of
our owne wisedome, to say, I shall think it not meete
to what purpose is this spoken? But let vs with-
out gainesaying, receiue all that euer our Lord
declareth vnto vs. Thus much for one
point.

And moreouer let vs so sticke to him, as our
faith be not tossed to and fro. When wee see di-
uersitie of opinions, and that to adnaubce them-
selues euen doe through ambition vnder colour of
great matters; let not that carie vs away, but let
vs continue still resolute to this, that there is none but
GOD alone that will teach vs (aright,) & that
he hath doone it by his lawe, and lastlie by the
Gospell, insomuch that our Lorde Iesus Christ
is appointed by him to be our Teacher, and we
haue expresse commandement to heare him. Matt. 3. 17.
This is my welbeloued sonne, heare him. By
the which point he doeth giue to vnderstande
that he will haue them to sticke vnto his doctrine
and be obedient to the same.

Moreouer it is saide, *There be set vp Testimonies against the people of Israell,*
It should seeme at the first sight, that the law
serueth but to condemne men: but I haue al-
leadie declared yesterday, that it is saide so as
in respect of folke. Howbeit these which will not
be caught but by compulsion. True is it that this
hardenesse is so beastlie in all men: for by
nature we are hard to be wrought in order, we bee
combersome, like wilde beastes: doe we not refuse
become gentle, nor suffer themselues to be tra-
ded at our handes; but yet there is not so wild
a beast to bee founde in the worlde as euerie
man is, vntill our Lorde haue subdued the stub-
bornesse that is in vs, and geuen vs the spirite
of meekenesse, and therefore our Lorde is faine

to speake vnto vs, and as it were to enter an action to reproue vs. In respect whereof it is
Iohn.16.8. saide, that the spirite shall iudge the worlde. There our Lorde Iesus Christ treateth of the Gospell, and sheweth to what ende it shall be preached. I will (saith hee) sende foorth my doctrine, and to what ende? To iudge the world. Yea but the Gospell is a message of grace and fatherly louing kindnesse. God doth heere offer vnto vs his heart, and telleth vs that hee requireth nothing, but to bring vs to saluation: and wherefore then speaketh hee of condemnation? It is impossible for him to bring vs to saluation, vnlesse we bee first condemned. Therefore it behoooueth vs at the first entrie to be inforced to submit our selues vnto God: for vntill he hath made that chaunge in vs, wee will neuer yeelde to bee gouerned by him. Yet notwithstanding our Lorde so worketh in his elect, ỳ after he hath humbled them, they suffer themselues to be led without any more resistance; insomuch ỳ their whole pleasure and ioy is to bee subiect to God, and to frame themselues altogether after his will. The others be so rebellious, that our Lord is faine to vse continuall roughnesse and sharpnes against them. True it is that euen the faithfull haue alwayes in them some kind of striuing, so as they bee neuer so throughly reformed but that there is euer some replying. Yet notwithstanding, as manie as are gouerned by the Spirite of God (as all his children bee) shall chiefely haue their whole desire and affection to bee altogether subiect vnto God, and to doe nothing vppon their owne heade or after their owne liking. As for the others which be not reformed, it is requisite that God shoulde alwaies stande in lawe against them, and vse rigour to their condemnation. For this cause it is saide heere, that the booke of the lawe shoulde bee a witnesse against the people. Moses meaneth not but there shoulde bee some, that should profite by the law, so as the doctrine thereof should not be a warrant vnto them of Gods goodnesse to guide the to the hope of euerlasting life; but he treateth here of the greatest sort which was wicked and froward. And ỳ scripture vseth such a maner of speech, when a people is for the most part vicked, saying, All of you. Although our Lorde knoweth his owne people, and separateth them from the rest, yet forbeareth he not, to say, Ye know that though hee speake generally without exception. Let vs marke then, that the lawe was laid vp for a Testimonie against the people: not because it doeth not conteine a witnesse of the loue of God for mans welfare: but because of ỳ peoples malice, who could not finde in their hearts to fare the better thereby, but turned the light into darkenesse, and conuerted their breade and meate into poison, and altered life into death. Also we ought to chinke vppon this
2.Cor.3.7. which Paul speaketh, namely that the lawe is a ministery of death: but he speaketh there but of ỳ commandements: whereas here Moses comprehendeth all the couenaunt that God had made, euen the couenant of the Gospel, concerning the which we haue seene heretofore how Saint Paul saide, that the same perteineth not to the Deut.30.14. lawe name lie: The word is in thy mouth and in Rom.10.8. thy heart. Also I haue tolde you, and wee haue had sufficient proofe therof, that Moses was not onely a minister of the law, but also did set forth the free promises of saluatiō which were grounded in our Lord Iesus Christ. And now he doth briefely comprehende all that in a summe. Neuertheles he forbeareth not to say, that the lawe shall be a witnesse against the people. And why? As I saide afore, it commeth not of the nature of the lawe, that is to say of the doctrine, but of ỳ malice of that people, which could not abide, that God should be their father and Sauiour. Now then, the thing which is here preached of the lawe, perteyneth to the Gospel: to wit, that when the Gospell is preached, if wee accept the message which is offered vnto vs, wee haue GOD for our father, we bee assured of his free adoption, and we may freely call vpon him in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ. Thus ye see howe wee ought to be rauished with ioy, when God sheweth himselfe so good and gracious towardes vs. Neuerthelater, if we despise so great a benefite, or abuse it as the hypocrites do, or if we be scorners of God, or loose liuers, or if we be so wedded to this present worlde, that the heauenly inheritance seemeth nothing vnto vs, God will holde skorne of vs also, and moreouer there shal not one onely word be spoken, which shal not ask vengeance against vs at the last day: God wil haue infinite witnesses. Looke how manie sermons haue beene made, looke howe manie lectures haue beene reade, and looke howe manie bookes haue beene printed: and they shall be witnesses to condemne vs as guilty, and to make vs inexcusable before God. Although then ỳ this ceremonie of hauing a booke laid vp as it were in the presence of God, be not now obserued: yet notwithstanding seeing we haue God with vs in the person of our Lord Iesus Christ, and that Iesus Christ hath receiued and auowed vs for his Church, and also authorised his Gospel according as we perceiue by this saying of him, He ỳ heareth you, heareth me, and he ỳ refuseth you Luke.10.16. refuseth me; Seeing (say I) ỳ we be at this point there needeth none other proces to bee framed against vs. Let vs looke therfore that we withall reuerence and feare receiue the doctrine which is deliuered vnto vs in the name of our God, to the end wee bee not iudged and condemned thereby at the last day. According whereunto our Lord Iesus Christ threatneth the Iewes in an other place, saying: Is it not I that will condemne you, but the word which you haue heard Iohn.12.48. at my mouth shall be your iudge. So then, let vs take heed while our Lord alureth vs vnto him gently, and let vs goe to him: and let our whole seeking be to put our selues as sheepe vnder the guiding of our sheepherd: and then shal not the worde be a witnesse against vs, not serue to condemne vs: but much rather we shal haue in it a certaine Pawne of our saluation: and we shall see in the ende, that it is not a vayne doctrine. Wee see yet better by that which followeth, that the malice and rebellion of the people was

the cause why Moses vsed such severitie. For is is saide that he was verie mield and gentle: and yet howe speaketh he? What maner of speech doeth he vse? I haue knowen you of long time to be very hardhearted and stubborne, and at this day, I perceiue not that you bee any whit amended; nay ye bee rather waxen worse and worse: ye bee become wilde beastes, euermore rebelling against GOD, and howe much more then will ye do so after my death? As if he should say, I knowe you to be such as wil neuer be good. And nowe must I haue recourse to heauen and earth: for I find no sufficient witnes among you I must call the senseleſſe creatures, to shewe that the heauens and the earth, albeit they haue neither reason nor vnderstanding, shal appeare before GOD to crie for vengeance against you. In speaking after this maner, Moses might seem to bee the sharpest, the roughest, and the cholerickest man y euer was: and that was against his nature. But what? Hereby wee doe so much the better perceiue, that the people were in maner vnreformable and past hope of recouerie, and that there was none other way to deale with thē but after such a fashion. And indeede, if wee compare Moses with God, what is al the mildnesse that may bee in a mortall man in respect of the fountaine of all goodnes? For albeit that Moses was of a meeke spirit, so as there was nothing in him but meekenes, and that he was as milde as the scripture speaketh: yet notwithstanding, all the goodnesse which he could haue was but a little droppe of that which GOD had shed out vppon him by his holy spirite. In GOD we finde all perfection of goodnes: yet doe we see howe sharpe and rough he is against men. And whence commeth that, but of our proning of him? Insomuch that hee is faine (as ye would say,) to transforme himselfe, because we cannot finde in our heartes to suffer him to behaue himselfe towardes vs, as hee woulde in following his goodnes, which is infinite and vnmeasurable in him. So then, we see that the frowardnes of the people of Israel was horrible, seeing that GOD and his seruant Moses, (who bare the marke of the goodnes and meekenesse of his holy spirite) were driuen to behaue themselues so roughlie. And hereof wee may gather, that when GOD chose that people, it was not (as we haue alreadie saide herebefore) either for desert or worthinesse that hee founde in them. And indeed Moses casteth it in their teeth [saying,] Shoulde you thinke that GOD is bound to you? If he haue aduanced you aboue al other nations, & giuen you anie dignitie or excellencie, should you therefore boast your selfe thereof? Nay you be a *stiffe necked people, which cannot bowe, you be* (saith he) *rebellious and froward*, and therefore it is so bee concluded, that God was not mooued to choose you, but of his owne goodnesse.

Nowe that we haue found such frowardnes in the people of Israel; let vs repaire to ourselues: for the meaning of God is to teach vs at other folkes cost. They which be deade so long while since, be at this day set as it were on a stage, God putteth them to reproch, that they might serue for an instruction to vs. We heare that the people of Israel were froward & stubborne, and we see how God condemneth them, & discouereth their shame. To what ende? For our good & for our learning. Now then, seeing that the childrē of Israel be put to shame here after such a sorte, let vs learne to examine well whether there bee the like faultes in vs: and surelie when we haue serched all thinges throughly, we shall find that we be no lesse faultie than they. For where is the readinesse to serue our God when hee calleth vs? Wee be so slowe and so rechleſſe, as is pitie to see. Neither is there onely slownes and slackenesse in vs: but also wee cease not to kicke against him. Howe manie wicked fansies haue wee, which turne vs away from the simplicitie of faith? Howe much are wee tempted of our wicked lustes, which serue to make vs to kicke against our God? How bee wee held down in this present worlde, whereas wee shoulde mount vp vnto heauen? Howe doe wee breake all manner of order which our Lorde hath set amongest vs for our welfare? And albeit that for a time, wee pretende some good desire and inclination: yet it lasteth not, wee bee changed from it with the turning of a hande, so as we be caried nowe this way, nowe that way, & euerie little ouerthwart is enough to make vs mislike of Gods worde. And haue we once conceiued such misliking, in the ende wee become like venemous Todes against God: and wee see so manie examples thereof as is horrible. Nowe therefore, when wee haue well looked into our state, wee shall bee constrained to confesse that we be no better than this people. Wherefore let vs beware that the worde of God which is preached, be not a Testimonie against vs at this day. Yea and let vs not thinke it straunge, though God reproue vs sharpelie, and send vs such rebukes as he did to the Iewes: neither let vs say, with such, as settle themselues in their filthinesse, Howe nowe? God pincheth vs too harde. Alas wee had neede to bee called vppon a hundred foolde more than we bee. What must we then doe? We must be more quiet towardes our God than we haue bee ne; specially when he vseth roughnesse in his worde, and that our sins bee laide open, so as our shame bee discouered: and that on the otherside he threateneth vs, & summon vs before him, and lay there before vs the condemnation that is prepared for vs, vnles wee returne vnto him by repentaunce. Therefore whensoeuer hee vseth such vehemencie, we must not kicke against him, but wee must acknowledge the same to be more than needefull for vs, because that if hee helde vs not short after that maner, he could neuer weeld vs. Thus yee see what we haue to remember, in that we see Moses to haue been so vehement, as to haue vsed the tearmes of rebellion and malice, and to haue tolde the people that if they had beene stubborne in his life time, they woulde much more bee so after his decease. When we see all this, let vs vnderstande that our Lorde teacheth vs, that we haue neede to be subdued af-

ter

ter that manner; for what were to bee wonne at our handes, by vsing gentleneſſe towardes vs? The matter is apparaunt. True is it that God allureth vs ſo gently, that hee may ſeeme to flatter vs as a father doeth his children: but if hee continue in ſo doing, wee fall to making heade againſt him, and to ſetting vp of our briſtles, and finally to daſhing at him with our hornes and to ſpurning and kicking at him, ſo as it woulde pitie one's hearte to ſee it. Foraſmuch therefore as our Lorde knoweth that he coulde not holde vs in obedience, but by ſuch threateninges, rebukinges, and rigour he faſhioneth himſelf to our nature, to the intent to ſubdue the ſtubborneſſe that is in vs. Thus ye ſee ſtill what wee haue to remember vppon that place.

Nowe it is ſaide herewithall, *That Moſes willed the People to bee aſſembled together, euen of purpoſe to call Heauen and earth to witneſſe againſt them.* Howbeit, foraſmuch as this hath beene expounded once alreadie; I will not ſtande vpon it anie more. Onely this ſhall ſuffice, that to make the people the more aſhamed, Moſes calleth the heauens and the earth to witneſſe, which are vnreaſonable creatures. As if he ſhold ſay, needes muſt theſe bee deteſtable people: for it is an vtter peruerting of the order of nature, when men which are created after the image of God vſe neither wit nor reaſon, but become blockiſhe; inſomuch that if God ſpeake to them it is but loſt labour, and hee is fayne to haue recourſe to the creatures which are voide of vnderſtanding, as to heauen and earth. Here therefore Moſes meant to touch the children of Iſraell to the quicke, in ſaying that hee called heauen and earth againſt to witneſſe which are creatures euen without ſenſe, to the ende they ſhoulde the better know what a bruitſheneſſe it was that they would not giue eare vnto GOD, who notwithſtanding had not onely printed his image in them inaſmuch as they were men; but alſo had choſen them for his people, and giuen them his lawe to leade them a right. Nowe, although this thing bee to bee counted as a monſtrous and ouglie thing: yet is it to bee ſeene in manner euerie where. For God ſpeaketh as well in theſe dayes, as hee did by Moſes. Yea and hee hath ſhewed himſelfe more familiarly to vs, in the perſon of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt: and yet for all that, what manner of eares bring wee to the hearing of his worde? Wee be not onely deafe but alſo partlie madde, and partlie ſo blockiſhe that if wee were timberlogges, wee coulde not in a manner bee ſo ignoraunt as wee bee. Not without cauſe therefore is it rehearſed here againe, that Moſes had recourſe to heauen and earth, to the intent to make vs aſhamed, becauſe wee bee ſo poſſeſſed aforehande with our wicked luſtes, or with the vanities of this world, or with our owne blindneſſe; that for all that euer GOD can ſay or ſpeake vnto vs, hee cannot preuayle at all with vs. Yet notwithſtanding, it might ſeeme that this people had more modeſtie in them, than Moſes ſpeaketh of: For in the ende it is added that Moſes ſang this ſong, and put the people in minde of the thinges which they had ſeene alreadie, and moreouer threatened them that GOD woulde puniſhe them, telling them that although God did at that time ſet them in poſſeſſion of the lande which hee had promiſed them, yet ſhould they not abide anie long time in it, ere hee ſhoulde bee faine to driue them out againe, and all for their wickednеſſe. Doeth Moſes ſay ſo? They heare him well enough. And it is a woonder to ſee howe this people are painted out in that ſong: for there all their leawde dealinges are diſcouered; and yet they replie not to it any more. For if a man ſhoulde ſpeake to the people of Geneua nowedayes, as Moſes ſpake to the people of Iſraell; and repeate folkes ſinnes as they deſerue, ſhoulde hee bee receyued? If a man ſhoulde lay foorth the leawde dealinges that reigne among vs, and tell vs of our contempt of GOD and his woorde, of our ſtubborneſſe and wicked practiſes, of our whoredome and looſeneſſe, and of ſuch other like thinges: and not onely ſpeake of the deedes that are doone nowe adayes, but alſo ſhewe other thinges that haue beene committed; and not onely ſpeake of actuall ſinnes, but alſo ſay after this manner, Ye bee of ſuch a nature as this, namely yee bee thankeleſſe towardes GOD, ſtubborne againſt him, full of crueltie, pride, malice, and al maner of iniquitie. If a man ſhoulde ſpeake al theſe thinges, I pray you howe ſhoulde hee bee heard? O, what murmuring woulde there bee? Nay it woulde paſſe murmuring: for men would gnaſh their teeth at it, and there woulde be no ſuch patience in vs, as was in this people: for they coulde well enough endure Moſes to tell them the thinges aforeſayde. It is ſaide expreſſly, that hee rehearſed all the ſaide ſong in the hearing of all the people. And there is yet this ſaying added more, *Throughout the ende.* And why was that? Hee coulde haue ſaide well enough, that Moſes had rehearſed the ſong with a loud and cleare voyce, in the hearing of the people: but hee ſayth, that euerie whit of it was rehearſed in the eares of the people, euen from the beginning to the ending. So then, his meaning is, that the people ſtoode as dumbe, and yeelded themſelues guiltie. And therefore ſith wee ſee that notwithſtanding ſuch ſilence, and ſuch apparancie of the feare of GOD and of godlineſſe, yet GOD vttered ſo rough a ſentence: wee muſt vnderſtande, that it is not enough for vs to proteſt ceremoniouſly, that wee bee ſubiect to GOD: Inſomuch that although wee reſorte to ſermons, and haue our eares beaten continuallie with them, and call vpon GOD, and make profeſſion of our faith; yet notwithſtanding all this is nothing. In deede all theſe thinges are good and holy: but if we vſe them in way of hypocriſie, curſed bee we, and we muſt not thinke to pay GOD with ſuch kinde of Coyne. What is to bee doone then? When wee haue hearde Gods worde, let euery

of vs examine himselfe, let vs search out our sinnes, let vs be sorie to see that we be not so forwarde as were requisite: and beeing prouoked hereby, let vs pray God to change and reforme vs, and to bring vs home wholy to himselfe. After that manner must wee deale. And moreouer, although wee haue had some order, and kinde of gouernment among vs for a time; yet let vs be afraid alwayes, least there haue beene some faynednesse lurking vndernеath it. For we see what befell to the people of Israel: and in verie deede the thing shewed it selfe. For wee see that by starres they submitted themselues, and there seemed to bee some feare of God in them. And yet as soone as any occasion was offered, as soone as anie wicked deceiuer stepped vp, by and by they were turned away againe. Examples hereof are to bee seene: and God graunt we see them no more. Yet ought they to warne vs, that if there bee anie forme of good gouernment or behauiour among vs, so as the Church seemeth to be in good state, and religion to florishe, and God to bee honoured: the sight of all this must not make vs to thinke that that is all which we haue to do, as though a great number of vices lay not lurking vnderneath it: but wee must pray God to vouchsafe to make this gouernment to bee of such force, as it may drawe our heartes vnto him, and euerie of vs may haue an eye to himselfe; that when wee once knowe throughly the euill that is in vs, we may seeke to God to rid vs thereof: that where as wee haue beene stubborne, and hardhearted aforetimes, we may no more followe that trade, but come and submitte our selues with all meekenesse and mieldnes to our God, so as he may rule vs without any gainstriuing.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our sinnes, praying him to vouchsafe to burie them quite and cleane, and therewithall to receiue vs so into his protection, as we may fight against al the lustes of our flesthe, and the temptations of the worlde; vntill wee haue finished our course. And that because wee be so frayle of our selues, wee may alwayes resort vnto him, euen vpon truste of the promises which hee hath made vs, specially in that hee hath promised to heare vs in all our petitions which wee make to him in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenlie father, &c.

On Thursday the vij. of May, 1556.

The CLXXVIII. Sermon, which is the first vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

HEarken O yee heauens, and I will speake: and heare thou earth the word of my mouth.

2 My doctrine shall flowe as doth the rayne, and my wordes shal drop as the deawe, euen as the raine vpon the herbes, and as the great raine vpon the greene grasse.

3 For I will call vppon the name of the Lorde God: yeeld yee honour to our God.

4 The workes of the mightie God are perfect, for all his wayes are iudgement: God is true, and without wickednesse: he is righteous and iust.

IT shoulde seeme that for as much as Moses was ordeyned to bee the teacher of the Iewes, hee shold chiefly haue exhorted the to heare the thinges that were spoken to them for their instruction and welfare. But hee seemeth not to vouchsafe to direct his speach to them; but rather to heauen and earth, as though hee condemned them aforehande for stubborne people, and not of capacitie to receiue anie good learning. Neuertheless his so doing is not for that hee woulde not haue the same to serue their turne, that they might benefite themselues thereby: but for that hee was faine to quicken them vp in such wise, as it might grieue them at the heart, to see that God

taketh

taketh them for condemned persons aforehand, to the end that the same might touch and moue them the better. And so let vs marke, that because Moses sawe that the people were all prepared, and he ment to teach them to bee reformed by that meanes, it behooued him to vse such manner of proceeding. And it is verie needfull towards those that are stubborne, and vnwilling to learne at Gods hande, for such are to bee rebuked and threatened, their lewdnesse is to be discouered, and they must bee put to shame, & being dismayed, they may aduise themselues to returne vnto God. And this sheweth vs, that such as haue the charge of teaching in ỹ church, ought to bee indued with wisdome and discretion. For if their hearers behaue themselues meekly, and be willing to be guided by the hande of God: it were no reason to thunder at them or to vse roughnesse against them. But on the contrarie part if there appeare anie hardnes of heart and stubbornesse in them, or if it be founde by experience that it is but lost labour to speake gently to them, as when men make theselues deafe: then behoueth it the Preacher to step to them with greater vehemencie. And Moses beganne not his gouerning of the people at the making of this song, but he had felt the experience of it long time afore, whereby he perceiued that it was a verie harde thing to bring to passe. And moreouer he regarded not onely the folke then present, but also the ages then to come. True it is that those which liued in the time of Moses, coulde not but haue their eares beaten with the thinges conteyned here: but yet was the same to serue for their children also. Moses therfore foreseeing that the Iewes might become worse and worse, as it is the common custome of the worlde, yea and being aduertised thereof by Gods spirite, vseth such a kinde of roughnesse as wee see here. And herewithal we haue to remember the thing which I haue expounded alreadie: namely that *Moses* calleth heauen and earth to witnesse, to the intent the people shoulde bee the more ashamed, seeing that the senseleſse creatures doe frame their indicement, and that there needeth none other condemnation before GOD. For had Moses called the heathen and vnbeleeuers to witnesse, it had bin sufficient to put those to shame whome God had chosen and adopted to bee his children, but yet woulde not that haue mooued them: for all men are of one common nature, al haue reason and vnderstanding: and although they bee not al trained familiarly in Gods word, yet haue they al some seede of religion in them. Therefore the alleadging of the heathen and vnbeleeuers (as he will alledge them afterward) had not beene of such force as the vsing of this preface that heauen and earth shall bee his witnesses in all ages. As if hee shoulde say, as long as there is either Sunne or Moone in the skie, as long as the earth doeth her duetie in yeelding sustenaunce and foode for man: so long shall I haue good and faithfull witnesses, that I haue spoken in the name of God: and yet for all that, this people continueth hardhearted stil. Ye see then that the worde shall continue still, and although men straine themselues neuer so much to abolish this doctrine, yet notwithstanding all creatures shall beare me recorde before God, that I haue spoken, and that he authorised me to speake, and that he sent me to doo it. Thus we see now the meaning of Moses.

Deut. 30.19

Cap 32.8.

And so wee haue to note, that they which referre this saying to men and Angels, restraine the wordes of Moses ouer coldlie. True it is that both men and Angels might well beare witnes of the vnthankefulnesse of the Iewes: howbeit (as I haue shewed alreadie) the holie Ghost proceedeth yet further, namely that although no man speake in the mayntenance and defence of Gods cause against the Iewes: yet notwithstanding the order of the worlde, and the onely beholding of the sunne and Moone, & of ỹ things which wee see here beneath, will suffice to shewe that God discharged himselfe of the promise which he had made to that people, in powring out his great treasures vppon them: and yet that they continued still in their malice & wilful stubbornesse: insomuch that whereas hee foresawe, that they were fully bent to all euil, and woulde fall away to all manner of wickednesse: he warned them of it aforehande, & yet that woulde not serue, but euen of a malicious and spitefull wilfulnesse they turned away from their God, and would not hearken to anie warning, notwithstanding the good order which God had taken for the procuring of their saluation. Now let vs applie the same to our selues also, and let vs vnderstand that whensoeuer Gods worde is preached vnto vs, if we receiue it not, our refusal must be grauen in heauen and earth, and all the worlde shall ring of it, and the same shall serue to confirme our indicement before God. Indeede it will seeme, that when wee haue despised the doctrine that is preached vnto vs, it was but lost labour, and as a sounde that vanisheth in the aire: but there shal not one of the words that God hath spoken fall to the grounde, whereof we shall not feele the power. For needs must they either turne to mens saluation, or vtterly bereaue them of all excuse and make them double damnable. Therefore let vs thinke wel vpon it. For as oft as God graunteth vs the fauour to be taught in his name, & by his will there followeth this seale, that heauen and earth shall be witnesses against vs to our condēnation, if we wil not yeeld reuerēce to him which hath al authoritie ouer vs, in shewing our selues obedient towardes him by our willing imbracing of his word with a quiet minde.

Now Moses hauing vsed such a preface, wisheth, *that his doctrine may be like a flowing rain, so as his wordes may fall like the drops that fall vpon the grasse, and fall abroad like the dew which waters the medowes.* And why? *For* (saith he) *I will call vppon the name of the Lord*, I wil exhort mē to *giue glorie vnto God*. Here Moses sheweth, that when wee bee about to set foorth the praise of God, and to treate of his goodnes, wisdome, and power, to the intent hee may be honoured of men as hee deserueth, it is not for vs to vse a common and ordinary kind of speech,

speeche, but wee must streine our wit and skill to the vttermost of our powers, that our woordes may be aunswearable to the infinite maiestie of God: or if they cannot attayne thereunto, (as in deede we must needes come farre short of that,) they may at leastwise come as neere as is possible, and tend to that ende. When we speake of worldely matters, wee may well vse a common style, & yet if we treate of any matter of importance, we sharpen our wittes to speake after the best maner that we can, for (to our seeming) the thing is worth it. But when we come to GOD: then must we vse a new and more exquisite maner of speaking: specially when we will maintain his maiestie against men, and shewe that hee is woorthy to be honoured of al men, because hee hath created the worlde, and maintaineth it stil at this day by his power, and also because hee feedeth and susteineth men: but most of all for his choosing and adopting of his people and Church, by the knowledge whereof, men see wel howe bountifull God is towardes them. Now then, are wee sufficient of ourselues to treate of such thinges? Who is hee that can bee founde fit for that purpose? If all the Angels of heauen woulde magnifie God with one melodie & one accord, could they counteruail that infinne glorie? No surely, they should come farre shorte of it. And what shall become of vs then, who be fraile creatures, and can but stammer, when we be to speake of God but somuch as in a shadow? But there was yet one other reason why Moses desired *that his doctrine might flowe like raine that moysteneth the grasse, and watereth the medowes*. For hee considereth that if our Lorde giue vs not a grace which farre passeth the measure that wee haue receiued, all is to no purpose: For although God raise vp Prophets and good teachers, and gouerne their tongues by his holy spirite, and giue them wherwith to teach his Church faithfully: yet shal they not greatly edifie it. And why? Not for any default in them: but for that they speak somtimes to stones, men be so dulheaded, and malice doeth so reigne in vs, that God can haue no accesse nor entrie in vnto vs. By means whereof Gods worde becommeth drie and barren, notwithstanding that of it owne nature it be moist and haue power to wet throughly. For it falleth but vppon stones and Rockes, where it parcheth and is lost out of hand.

Nowe first of all we be taught heere, that the chiefe thing which wee haue to doe in all our life, is to magnifie Gods name and to set foorth his praise, not onely with our mouthes, that all other men may be prouoked to praise him with one accord as wel as we; but also with our hearts that euerie man may giue himselfe to it, and exercise himselfe therein. That is the thing (say I) wherein men ought to occupie themselues, if they were not misaduised to turne themselues away from such indeuour. And aboue all others, they that haue the charge of preaching Gods worde, haue heere a good lesson: to wit, that of themselues they bee farre vnable to performe their duetie, they haue a charge that is ouer high and excellent for them, yea euen though there were farre greater ability in them without all comparison than there is. Chose me out the ablest in the world; and yet must they be faine to acknowledge such weakenesse in themselues, as that they cannot speake of God with such maiestie and reuerence as they ought to do, no nor once come neere it, vnlesse God gouerne them and giue them a new speech, altering and reforming their tongues, so as they may not speake after the manner of men, but may shew howe it is the holy Ghost that raigneth in them. Nowe if Moses wished this in respect that he might faile bicause hee was a man: if so great a Prophet did both know and acknowledge that hee could not magnifie God as became him: alas, much lesse can we discharge our selues thereof. Therfore let vs acknowledge our infirmitie and resort vnto God, praying vnto him that as he hath vouchsafed to admit vs into his seruice, so be will also giue vs power and abilitie to handle those high mysteries to the edifying of his Church, and to set forth his praises in such wise as he may be honored as he deserueth. And ỹ two reasons which I haue spoken of, ought to moue vs thereunto. The one is by considering what oddes there is betweene the infinite glorie of God, and the slendernes that is in vs. For what is it that causeth men to presume to worke wonders, and to stand so much in their own conceits, as to think themselues able to go through with all thinges, but that they thinke not of God as they ought. Now therfore, when we know that God doth vs the grace to vouchsafe vs to be his lieutenants, to beare abrode his name among men, and to bring folke to the knowing of him: truly it ought to induce vs to humilitie. And when wee once know our vnsufficiency, we must also bee prouoked thereby to pray God to supply our want. Besides this let vs also consider what ỹ world is. For although God had giuen vs more grace than we haue: yet is the worlde so frowarde, that the doctrine of God can haue no entrance at all. For it belongeth alonely to God to alter mens hearts, that is to say, to soften them, that his doctrine may drop into them and become like a moistening shower watring the medowes, whereas it dryeth away vpon stones and Rocks. Seeing it is so, let vs learne to call vpon God better than we haue done, forasmuch as our labor were vnauailable without him.

And herewithall we be all warned in general, after what sort we should receiue Gods doctrine, that is to wit, as a raine. Were a peece of lande neuer so well husbanded and neuer so well seeded, yet if it wanted moistening from heauen, to what purpose were it? Shoulde not all the paine that is taken about it be vnauailable? Euen so is it with vs: god must water vs dayly with his word, or else hee shall draw no nourishment out of vs, we wil bring forth no fruite. Sith wee know this, wee ought to bee more diligent in hearing Gods word than we be. The earth openeth her mouth in the drought of summer, so as it chinketh if it want raine: and (as we haue seene heretofore) ỹ heauen must be faine to hearken to the earth, as though the earth made request and supplication

Of ver. 2, 21.

when it wanteth moisture. And seeing it is so; why perceiue we not our owne neede, & why go we not like hungrie folkes to pray God to water vs with his worde? Nay, the sloth that is in men doeth well shewe, that they neuer knewe either the power or the office of Gods worde; namely that it is a dewe and a raine. Finally forasmuch as the scripture telleth vs, and we our selues doe feele indeed that our hearts are hard, insomuch that although God do water vs and raine downe vppon vs neuer so much, yet doth not any drop enter into vs, vntill hee haue touched vs to the quicke, and taken away the sinne that is in vs: he must be faine to clense all our wicked affections, to the end that his worde may enter, so as there may be neither marowe, nor bone, nor thought, nor affection, nor aught else in vs, whereunto this word of his may not extend, that wee may feele the force thereof. Thus ye see in effect what wee haue to remember vpon this place.

Nowe whereas Moses saith *that he will call vppon the name of the Lorde*; hee meaneth not simplie that he will but onely pray, as indeede that manner of speech is so taken in many places: [as for example] I will call vppon the name of God, that is to say, I will flee to him for refuge: but the scripture oftentimes taketh the calling vpon Gods name, for the spreading thereof abroade, that it may bee knowen in all places. According hereunto, Moses saith that he wil cal vpon the name of the Lord, that is to say, that in this place he will not treate of common things, such as belong to this transitorie life, nor such as concerne the corruptible matters of this world: but that he will mount aboue al the creatures, because hee will haue God to bee knowen, worshipped, and honored of all men, and specially of the people whome hee chose to bee his flocke, whom he marked out to bee of his owne household and Church, whom he woulde haue to honor him as he is worthie. And that doeth hee shewe immediatly in saying, *Giue glorie to our God*. Heere Moses sheweth to what end and intent he would call vppon God; his meaning was not that he himselfe alone would call vpon God, but to exhort all those whom hee had charge of, to submit themselues to God, and vppon the knowing of him, to yeelde him his due right. Wee see howe God is defrauded by men: they robbe him and bereaue him of his honour. And although we haue an infinite number of other vices in vs, and bee blameworthie innumerable wayes: yet the greatest cuill that is in vs, is this trecherie of ours, that to the vttermost of our power, wee darken yea and vtterly deface the glory of our God. And yet the verie cause why wee were created, is that we shoulde giue him his owne, and yeelde him the honour that belongeth vnto him. In this respect therefore doeth Moses tell vs that Gods name must bee published, that al men may indeuour to glorifie him as hee deserueth. And heere wee see also to what ende Gods worde is dayly preached vnto vs, and beaten into our eares. It is not to the ende wee shoulde but confesse the thinges to bee true which are vttered, and in the meane while goe away so colde as though wee were no whit moued at the doctrine which wee haue hearde: but that wee shoulde bee all of vs inflamed to glorifie our God, and not take his worde to an vncertaine vse, (for that were a defiling thereof:) but heere the holy Ghost sheweth vs to what ende God will haue his name knowen in this worlde; namely that his praise may bee giuen vnto him, according as it is saide in the Psalme, Lorde, after as thy name is in the worlde, so also be thy praises. Yee see then howe that when folke resort to Sermons, they ought to dispose themselues to the receiuing of the thinges which are tolde them concerning God; that knowing him to be such a one as hee is, they may giue themselues wholly to the glorifying of him, and that when we haue heard the doctrine whereby God sheweth himselfe decked with his most excellent vertues, we may bee prouoked thereby to consider thus with our selues: I see it is my dueti e to inforce my selfe to the glorifying of my God. That then is the thing in effect, which we haue to remember vpon this place, where Moses saith that he will call vppon the name of the Lord.

Pfal. 48. 12.

Pfal. 118. 4.

Afterwarde hee exhorteth those whose Prophet hee was, to yeelde glorie vnto God. And he sheweth therewithall, that God will not bee praised and commended at our handes without cause why: but that wee haue matter to inforce vs thereunto, though no man exhorted vs to it. His saying is, *The working of the mightie is perfect* or *whole*. By this title which he giueth vnto God, hee meaneth to shewe, that God requireth not that we should knowe but onely his being, so as wee should stand gasing at him without the liuely knowledge of his power. True it is that the woorde which Moses vseth doeth signifie properly *a Rocke*. But the very meaning thereof is, that when wee speake of God, or heare him spoken of, it must not be alonly to feede soma fond and idle imaginations, but to make vs vnderstand that his power is present with vs, and that it is spread abroad euery where, so as wee may rest vpon him, and well perceiue that we be gouerned by his hand, and so knitte vnto him, that we liue in him, and that without him we should perish, and the worlde bee brought to nought in the twinckling of an eye. Therefore as for them that treat of suttle deuices concerning Gods being, and in the meane while doe not edifie men in the faith and feare of him, ne cause them to vnderstande his power: they bee but lightheaded and rouing teachers: they vse not the speech of the holy Ghost. Wherfore let vs mark wel, how Moses hath shewed vs here, not onely that there is a God, but also that wee ought to take hold of his power, as which is spread abroade euerywhere, filling the whole worlde, insomuch that euen wee our selues are partakers thereof.

Nowe it is saide, that Gods woorking is perfect or whole. And afterward he addeth, *that God is faithfull*, there is no fault to bee founde in him, *there is no vnrighteousnesse in him, his wayes are straight, hee is iust and soothfast*. And whereto serue all these thinges? For it might seeme

seeme that all these words were needelesse, because the wickedest folkes that are, will confesse God to be righteous, and that it were too horrible a blasphemie to accuse God of vnrighteousnesse. It should seeme, that in this place Moses reasoneth not of any great matter, when hee sayeth that Gods workes are perfect, that hee is righteous, that he is faithfull, and that there is no fault to be founde in him. But if wee looke vpon the vnthankfulnesse of men, wee shall easily perceiue that Moses doth not without cause in this place maintaine Gods trueth, righteousnesse and wisedome, and all that hee deserueth to be glorified for. True it is that men will not bee so bolde as to belche out their blasphemies with full mouth, to accuse God: but yet they will goe about sundrie shifts to deface the commendation of his goodnesse, power, and wisedome, and of all that euer is in him. First of all wee see howe men contemne themselues with Gods doings. They can well ynough say that his workes are perfect and faultlesse: but in the mean while, which are those works? We must come to the ordering of the whole world. The holy scripture telleth vs that there is not one thing done here below, which is not disposed by the ordinance & hand of God. Nowe wee see a great number of strange things, insomuch as wee be abashed to see howe things fall out cleane contrarie to our expectation and desire, as we thinke. When wee thinke to take our ease, beholde, a storme commeth. When wee thinke to sceade our selues sure; beholde, God cutteth our pittance short. When we thinke to line in peace and reste; beholde, by and by there commeth some warre or strife. To be short, both priuately and generally we be tossed vp and downe among a number of whirlewinds. Yet for all this, we must glorifie god, offering our selues that his afflicting, his exercising, his humbling, his remouing, and his tossing of vs to & fro after that fashion, is not without cause. Men therefore must suffer themselues to be gouerned after that maner by the hande of God, and they must glorifie his prouidence, although they haue not their owne desires and things. But what shall wee doe? Doe wee neuer finde fault with any of Gods doings? Whence come so many murmurings? Whence come so manie cries and Lamentations, but of this, that men cannot finde in their hearts to frame themselues to Gods will? What meaneth this? Howe goes the worlde with vs? Men torment themselues. True it is that if we aske them, How now? Will ye goe to law with God? Thinke yee to get the vpper hande of him? They will say it is no part of their thought. But yet must wee needes graunt, that Gods will is to trie vs after that fashion, by the disorder of things in this world, or else we must needes denie both his iustice, and his vprightnesse, and vtterly bereaue him of all power, and make him an ydol, as all these rascals do which denie Gods prouidence: For they will needes shut him vp in heauen, as though he had no regarde of the worlde, ne ordered not all the things that are here beneath. Nowe when men do so make an ydoll of God, it is a double blaspheming of him. And although we attribute vnto him the gouernment and dominion of the world: yet must wee not looke to see a reason of all his doings, or to finde the cause why they should be right full: and yet must we with all lowlines confesse them to be faultlesse: And so when we haue once learned this lesson, y Gods workes are perfect, we shall haue profited greatly, not only for one day, but also for all our life long.

But some fantasticall persons misunderstanding this text, haue troubled themselues greatly, without reason. For they fall to scanning, with howe can Moses say that Gods workes are perfect, considering the great number of defaultes which are to bee seene in this worlde? For one is blinke eyed, another is lame, the thirde is croopleshouldred, another hath but one hand and another wanes a legge. Also we see trees wherein there is much amisse: and to be short, we see diuerse creatures which want their perfection in many things. And how is it then said, that Gods works are perfect? Such reasoning is too beastly. For the meaning of Moses is no more but this, that we must glorifie God in all his doings, confessing that all things are ordered by good reason, and by wonderfull righteousnesse and wisedome; and that when we haue searched them throughly, wee shall finde that men shalbe confounded euen in the thinges which they woulde needs encounter & set themselues against. To be short we must apply hereunto the doctrine of S. Paul (which he alleadgeth to another purpose, but yet it will serue well to this text) namely that Gods foolishnesse is wiser than all the wisedome of the world. S. Paul speaketh there indeede of the Gospel; but yet is that saying verie true in generall. For when thinges go out of order and cleane arriuerse, and we perceiue not wherefore God dealeth after that fashion, but (to our seeming) hee dealeth vnaduisedly: we must vnderstand that in the things which to vs seeme folly, that is to say, wherin Gods wisedome appeareth not, there is wisedome ynough to confounde vs, and therefore wee must not turne againe with presumption and ouerweening, to replie; This seemes not good to me: but we must stoope, and imbrace Gods doings quietly. And herein we see y rage of these rascals, which babble nowadayes against all thinges that exceede their capacitie. If a man speake of Gods eternall election, & say he hath chosen whom he thought good through his owne freebestowed goodnes, and also that he reiecteth whom hee listeth: and moreouer, that he disposeth al things that are done in y worlde, and holdeth the reines of the bridle secretely, (so as although men ouershoote themselues in their naughtinesse, and that the diuell also doe strein himself to make a botchpotch of al things as it were in spite of God: yet notwithstanding God ouerruleth all, causing euen the diuel himselfe in despite of his teeth, to execute the things that he hath decreed, and that men (bee they neuer so stubborn against him,) cannot but do that which he hath determined:) These rascals glorying in themselues do say; O, I concerne not that. And thou beast, what art thou? If all the

greatest doctors of ȳ world shold lay their heads together, they coulde not attaine to the vnderstanding thereof. And I make no reckening of some hypocrits which disguise themselues, and counterfait themselues to be doctors in despite of nature: but if ȳ Angels of heauen shold come, yet should they be faine to reuerence the wonderfull secrets of God. Wee see howe the Cherubins are described vnto vs in Esay, namely Esa. 6. 2. how they stretch out their winges to hide their faces, because they be not able to comprehende the infinite maiestie of God. And yet for al that, vnder pretence that our braine conceiueth not the full measure of the things which the scripture telleth vs concerning God, wee reiect it. Thus we see yet better, how it is not for nought that Moses saide that the workes of the mightie are perfect, but [that it serueth] to make vs to tremble before the maiestie of God, and by acknowledging that he is almightie, to refraine frō incountring him by saying, Why doth he so? Or why willeth he this or that? Nay let vs simply confesse that his works are perfect, namely in wisedome, in righteousnes, and in goodnes, so as there is no fault to be founde in any of al his workes.

Now hee addeth, *that all his wayes are righteousnesse, that God is true, without wickednesse, iust, and vpright.* Whereas he saieth that all his wayes are righteousnes, it is a more larger expounding of that which he had said afore. For by a similitude this worde *Way*, is taken for all manner of doings. And herein Moses sheweth vs, that it is not ynough to haue glorified God in some part or portion, but that wee must confesse without exception, that hee is the welspring of all wisdome, of all power, of all goodnesse, and of all iustice. We shall see some which will be contented to glorifie God, so long as things fall out to their lyking: but if God deale with them to their misliking, they alter their speech, and spit out their venim against him. See howe men woulde part stakes with God, reseruing to themselues the libertie (or rather the diuelish malapeartnesse) to freate and fume at God when hee doeth not as they woulde wish, and as seemeth good to their opinion. For this cause Moses saieth, that all Gods wayes are righteousnes, that is to say, that although God as now remoue things cleane one side and cleane a tother, and wee see great backturnings and chaunges, and he seemeth to be minded to turn ȳ worlde vpside downe: yet notwithstanding he for his part knoweth why he doeth so. True it is that we shalbe abashed at it, and the rudenesse and frailty of our vnderstanding sufferreth vs not to conceiue Gods wonderfull counsailes: they bee too deepe a gulfe for vs: but yet doth God alwayes keepe a measurable and euen hande in all his doings. Then is it not any one or two deedes wherein GOD sheweth his righteousnesse, but in the whole gouernements of the worlde. Lo to what point we must come.

Moreouer Moses doth expresly call him *true*. And that is to bee referred to the doctrine, to the ende that men should learne to receiue that which is saide and set downe vnto them in the name of God. And indeede, vntill such time as we knowe God to bee true, we can neuer tast of his righteousnesse nor of his goodnesse: or if we haue any tast thereof, yet can we not be sure and fully resolued of it. For proofe hereof, we neuer vnderstande Gods iustice, wisedome, goodnesse, or any other of his vertues, but by his worde. True it is that wee haue experience of them: and God sheweth himselfe sufficiently both aboue and beneath, that hee might bee glorified at our handes, at leastwise if wee had eyes and eares to see and heare. But what? Such is our slothfulnesse, that we wote not howe to benefite our selues by the great number of the recordes wherein God maketh his glorie to shine forth. His worde therefore must goe ioynly with it: for if wee bee not taught at his mouth, wee shall neuer attaine vnto him, no nor come any thing neere him. But if wee doube of Gods worde, and haue but an opinion of it, as who woulde say the thinges that are contained in it haue some reason, but yet wee doe but coniecture so: what a thing were it? What certaintie shoulde wee haue of God or of any of all his vertues, for the which hee is to bee glorified? Wee shall bee alwayes in a mummering. And so wee see of what importance this saying is, where Moses termeth God *True*. For hee woulde haue vs to learne to yeelde such authoritie to his worde, as it may benefite vs, and that as soone as wee heare God speake, wee shoulde bee fully resolued and perswaded, that wee shall not bee disappointed in following all that hee saieth to vs, and in beleeuing the same. By this meane then wee may consider all Gods workes, so as wee shall haue a lampe to guide vs and to giue vs light, that wee may not runne reeling in continuall doubefulnesse. But forasmuch as Gods worde is the infallible trueth to vs, wee shall haue a stayed iudgement concerning the thinges that are saide vnto vs, and wee shall trust in God, not as the heathenish sort doe, who bee shaken from it out of hande, because there is no steadinesse of faith in them: but wee shall haue a good staffe to stande by, so as Gods trueth shall fence vs against all distrust, against all grudging and against all thinges that may turne vs from the glorifying of him. And therewithall wee shall also haue a good foundation of our saluation, when wee once knowe that God is *True*. For if wee imbrace not the thinges that God doeth, what will become of vs? There is nothing but damnation in men, and the more they trust in themselues, the more must they needes bee confounded. Then can wee not conceiue any hope of saluation, vnlesse wee bee well assured that God foadeth vs not with wordes without effect: but that wee knowe him to bee faithfull and trustie, so as if wee haue but a worde of his mouth, it is as good as if our saluation were already shewed.

And thereuppon hee saieth further, *that there is no wickednesse in him*, [but] *that he is iust and faithfull.* It should seeme ȳ Moses speaketh too coldly

coldly of God in this place, in saying, There is no wickednesse in him. For who doubteth of that? Nay, it is to cut off all the wicked imaginations that men deuise, when they be not holde in awe so as they may yeeld to conclude that God is faithfull, good, and iust, yea and voide of vnfaithfulnesse. And who accuseth him thereof? But yet wee see howe that euen the holy Prophets were driuen to resist those temptations. Lorde I knowe that thou art iust, saieth Ieremie. As much doeth Abacucke, and they crie out so of purpose to shewe that they bee troubled with many incumberances, when they see things so out of order in the worlde. There then wee see howe they had easily beene caried away to blaspheme God, and to deeme some vnrighteousnesse to bee in him, if they had not beene restrained. And so wee see, that it is not without cause, that Moses saieth heere: that *God is true & without wickednesse*. There is nothing in him (saieth hee) but the same is praise worthie, insomuch that when wee speake of his trueth and righteousnesse, we must exclude all wisedome & power of man. And to be short, he must be praised without exception and not after the common manner of men. And that is the cause that when Gods word is spoken of in the Psalme, it is saide to be like siluer tried seuentimes in the fire after it hath beene molten and all the drosse of it taken quite and cleane from it. At the first sight this similitude may seeme to vs to bee but colde. But let vs looke a little vppon our selues, and we shall finde that our wits doe tickle vs incessantly, insomuch that when wee haue confessed God (yea euen without dissimulation) to be true: yet when wee come to his promises, euermore we will haue some reply, and we will neuer be contented in our minds, nor well at rest. For we haue a lewdnes which holdeth vs back, and hindereth vs that wee cannot glorifie God as becommeth vs. So then let vs marke, that Moses doth not heere without cause exclude all iniquitie: to the ende that when we speake of God and of any of all his vertues, wee shoulde doe it with such reuerence and admiration, as wee may not onely not accuse him of any vnfaithfulnesse, and confesse that wee perceiue not any vice in him: but also be throughly perswaded and resolued, that there is such perfection in him, as that there remaineth no more for vs to doe, but onely to worship him, yea euen though we conceiue not the highnesse that is hidden from vs.

Nowe let vs cast our selues downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to take from vs al hardnesse and stubbornnes, and to frame vs to the obeying of him, that the preaching of his worde vnto vs may not bee in vaine, but that it may profite vs, so as wee may become good ground, and serue in such wise to the glorie of our God, as that the labour and paine which he shall haue bestowed vpon vs, may not be in vaine, but that all may redounde to the full establishing of his kingdom. And moreouer that seeing it pleaseth him that our saluation should be matched with his glorie, he will also so further the same, as wee may bee incouraged by that meanes to giue our selues more and more vnto him. That it may please him to grant this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth &c.

On Friday the viij. of May, 1556.

The CLXXIX. Sermon which is the second vpon the two & thirtith Chapter.

5 They haue corrupted themselues before him by their sinne: euen they that are not his children, but a froward and wicked generation.

6 Doest thou reward the Lorde so, O thou foolish and vnwise generation? Is not he thy father, and thine owner, is it not hee that hath made thee and fashioned thee?

7 Remember the time past, consider the yeares of so many generations. Aske thy father, and hee will shewe thee: inquire of thine elders, and they will tell thee.

YEsterday wee sawe why Moses speaketh here expresly of Gods truth. For men had neede to be assured of Gods promises, that they may holde themselues to them and rest vpon them: and also to know that his worde is the rule of all perfection, that they may receiue it with all reuerence. And it is saide expresly, that there is no vnrighteousnesse in him, to the ende that men should learne, not to measure him by their owne scantling as they be wont to doe. For inasmuch as we comprehend not Gods iustice, wee drawe it downe to ours, by meanes whereof wee abase his maiesty too much. Therfore if we will yeelde God his due honor, we must separate him frō all his creatures: wee must not imagine aught of him after our owne fancie, nor compare him to

mortall men: for in so doing wee shall diminish his glory too much. But now Moses addeth, *that the children of Israel had corrupted themselues towards him.* Nowe if we ioyne these two sayings together, to wit, That God is true, iust, and vpright, so as his workes are perfect, and also that the people of Israel were marde out of hande: thereby wee shall the better see howe detestable that people was for their vnthankfulnesse. For Gods trueth and righteousnesse shine forth the brighter, in that they could not holde themselues to him. Beholde, God chose the children of Abraham. But let vs see what he was. To bee short, had the children of Israel sticked to him, and continued in the vnion which hee hadde appointed and called them vnto, it had beene to their highest welfare, yea and their whole happinesse and glorie. But they turned from God and fell away from him; and therfore must is not needs be that they were mad, and caryed away with a diuelish rage, accordingly as he saith in Ieremy, They haue forsaké me, euen me who am the fountaine of liuing water? Nowe then wee see better the meaning of Moses, for hee shewed heretofore the goodnesse, iustice, and righteousnesse of God, to the ende that the people shoulde haue the lesse excuse, and their sin be knowen to be the more heynous, in that they coulde not abide that God shoulde holde them still for his inheritance. But (as I haue saïd alreadie) if we be separated from God, we bee as it were in the bottome of the dungeon of all mischiefe; whereas if we be knit vnto him, wee can want nothing. Seeing then that the case standeth so with men when they cut themselues off, yea & banish themselues out of Gods kingdome after he hath gathered them to him, and shewed himself willing to take them to be of his household: worthily bee they to be condemned for folk voide of wit and reason, and their vnthankfulnes is too too detestable.

Ier. 2. 13.

And that is the cause why Moses speaketh so roughly, saying: *They haue marred themselues towards him:* yea but they were such as be no more his children. It is certaine that God had chosen Abrahams linage, with condition to bee father to them all. And therefore hee saieth by his Prophet Ezechiel, that the children which came of them, were begotten vnto him. True it is that all men in generall are called Gods children: but yet that title belongeth alonely by priuiledge to those that be of his church. Let vs marke well then, that in respect of adoption, the children of Israel ought to haue beene held and auowed for the children of God. But it is saide here, that they were not so: for they were growen out of kinde, accordingly also as God complaineth by his Prophet that their fathers deale vnfaithfully with him, for they had begotten strange children, ỹ is to say, they had so corrupted themselues, ỹ there was no more soundnesse in them, neither belonged they at all to the house of Abraham, but had so wrapped themselues in the wickednesse of their forefathers, that God saw not any thing in them belonging vnto him. Nowe then we see, to what purpose Moses saide that they had marred themselues, meaning those that are not Gods children, whom he blameth for their depriuing and disappointing of themselues through their own malice, of the inestimable benefite and honour which God had bestowed vppon them. For what a thing is it that wee may bee so bolde as to call vppon God, as our Father, and resort vnto him familiarly, and to be receiued as his children? And euen so was it with the lynage of Abraham: but they continued not in the possession thereof. Who was to bee blamed for that? It was because they yeelded not to God the honor due to their father, as he himselfe complaineth by his Prophet Malachie, saying: If I be your father, where is the honour which yee owe vnto me? But all their seeking was to hold themselues aloofe from God. Ye see then how they renounced that manner of kinred, which God had set among them; and therefore it is not without cause that Moses vpbraideth them, that they were become straungers. True it is that they vaunt themselues to be Gods children: but by what right? Only by stablishing ỹ fleshly kinred. And we see also how the Prophet Ezechiel saith vnto them, What? Are you of the linage of Israel? Hence yee harlots birds. Was not your father a Chananite, and your mother a Iebusite? Nowe it is certaine that as touching the flesh, they came not of ỹ people of Chanaan, nor yet of the Iebusites: but the Prophet doeth them to vnderstande, that they had no more to doe with the holy linage, but had cut themselues off from it as rotten members.

Mal. 1. 6.

Ps. 51. 5.

Ezech. 16. 3.

Nowe let vs nowadayes bee well aduised, and seeing that God hauing called vs to him, hath giuen vs the marke of his free bestowed adoption, that is to say baptisme, wherby he doth vs to wit that wee bee reckened for members of Iesus Christ, and be as it were grafted into his bodie: let vs bee well aduised I say, that wee boast not thereof in vaine. For if wee despise God in liuing vndiscreetely, and falsifie the faith that we haue plighted vnto him: let vs not thinke that he is so bounde vnto vs, but that hee may forsake vs, and that for al our boasting of our selues to be his children, he will tell vs plainely (as wee heare in this place,) that wee belong not vnto him at all, but that wee bee vtter straungers vnto him. For (as saieth Sainct Paul) all that come of Abrahams linage are not accounted his seede, that is to say, they bee not spirituall children. To be short, will we haue God to auowe vs for his children? Let vs beware that wee walke in his feare and loue. At a worde, let vs take him for our father, and shewe it by our deedes: and then shall wee be acknowledged to bee his children. But if hee see vs growe out of kinde, hee must needes tell vs that seeing wee haue not kept our faith and troath towardes him, hee will haue no company with vs. For what a bondage were it, if God shoulde take vs for his children, and in the meane while be scorned & misused among vs, so as his grace shoulde bee croden vnder foote, and his holy name defiled? Should God then mingle himselfe with

Ezec. 16. 20.

Rom. 9. 8.

with out filth and vncleanesse, whiles wee be so full of vnbeliefe? No: For then should hee renounce his owne nature, which is impossible.

Now it is sayd here, *They marred themselues towardes him*. The worde that Moses vseth, beroheneth to destroy, corrupt, or marre. And some expounde it, that the children of Israel did not any harme vnto God in their turning away vnto wickednesse: as in very deede hee shoulde receiue no harme at all, though wee were all become straungers vnto him. Can wee aduantage him any whitt? What benefit shall hee receiue at our handes? When men turne away from God, hee is neither hindered nor furthered thereby; for hee continueth euermore at one stay, without increasing or diminishing. This then was a reproofe which Moses gaue to the whole people, as if he should say, Go to, you haue followed your owne lustes, you haue made no reckoning of your God, and what will be the ende of it? In deede hee will forsake you, but his so doing is not for any harme that hee shall haue receiued by it: What passeth hee for that? Shall not all turne to your owne confusion? This lesson deserueth to bee wel marked: For it is good to humble men, by making them to vnderstand that God may euer forbeare them well enough, and that his seeking of them is for their benefite and welfare, without regarde of himselfe. But wee may take this saying of Moses more playnely, that they had marred themselues towardes him, because their true soundnes had bin to haue liued in obedience towardes the Lawe. That is the meane wherby men may abide in their state, I meane them whom God hath called to him. And I speake not of the corrupted state as it is in Adam, and as wee bring it from our mothers wombe: but of our state when God hath repayred vs after his owne image. That is the meane for vs to persist, namely by holding our selues to the pureneſse of his worde, without swaruing to the right hand or to the left. But if we leaue the doctrine of God, by and by we be corrupted and mard. Therefore when men turne away from the pure and playne worde of God; it is an infecting and corrupting of themselues, such as alwayes leadeth them to death.

And hee expresly addeth: *in their spottes*. This saying importeth a reproch lykewise; insomuch as it might bee sayd, that they had cast themselues wilfully into leawdnesse, of purpose to shame themselues. Now wee knowe how it is sayd in Exodus, that God was (as yee would say) the honor of his people. For when wee be vnder the protection of our God, there is as a royall Crowne vppon our head: and it is a greater honor, than if wee had all the dignities in the worlde. And for the same cause also dooth Moses say, that this people became shameleſse in giuing themselues to idolatrie and superstition, and discouered their owne filthynesse as a man that sheweth his owne shame. So then, it may well bee taken that the people ouerthrew themselues in their vncleannesse, because they did cast themselues into reproche and infamie, by forsaking their God, yea euen that God of theirs whome onely they were bound to glorifie. But by the way by this worde *Spottes* or *vncleannes*, Moses meant all the wicked lustes which caused the people to ouershoote themselues. As if he shoulde say, Beholde, your God had shewed you the fashiō and mean to make your selues cleane, that you might haue bin a holy people. For the Lawe serued to haue withdrawen you from all the defilementes of the world; so as by keeping of that rule, ye should haue continued vnder his obedience. And what haue yee done now? Yee haue vnhallowed the Law of God, yea euen lyke as a Swine should wallowe himselfe in the myre and dyrt. The thing then which you haue gayned by forsaking your God, is that your lustes haue so caryed you away, & you haue gone and plunged your selues in doung, yea euen with the vtter renouncing of the honor which God had bestowed vppon you.

Hee addeth *That they were a frowarde and cursed generation*. And it serueth to expresse yet better, that although God had preuented them with his grace, & giuen them occasion to continew still with him: yet they coulde not haue that stedfastnesse. And what should a man say, seeing them so vnconstant, but that they were a frowarde generation? For if other men to whome God shewed not the lyke grace, were to be condemned iustly, if they shoulde haue dealt so wickedly: are not those dubble guiltie which being adopted by God, and being ayded and succoured so many wayes by him, had neuertheleſse so farre ouershot themselues, as to forsake him and disclaime him vtterly? And therefore let vs marke that Moses beholding the outergreat vnthankfulnesse of that people, did so aggrauate their offence in respect thereof, that hee vtterly disgradeth them in this place. Nowe must we apply this to ourselues. For according as God hath vttered the treasures of his goodnesse towardes vs, so much the more be wee bound and beholden vnto him. And if we falsify our faith, cursed are we: for our enormitie is the more accursed, and our iniquitie is the greeuouser both before the Angels, and before all mortal creatures. And therefore let vs so walke in the feare of our Lorde, sith it hath pleased him to take vs for his inheritance, that wee take not vppon vs that title in vaine, least wee become lyke vnto them which are falne away from him.

Heereuppon Moses maketh an other complaint more sharpe and bitter. *Thou foolish people*, (sayth he) *wilt thou needes requite the Lorde so?* Here Moses toucheth the vnthankfulnes of the people as it were with his finger, vnder the word *Requite*. For he falleth to vpbraiding them with the benefites which God had bestowed vppon the children of Abraham. But as God is no nigard, so dooth hee neuer cast vs in the teeth with the benefites which we haue receiued at his hand, vnlesse hee be inforced thereto by our abusing of them, for that hee seeth them vnhallowed and defiled by our leawdnesse, accordingly also as Saint Iames speaketh thereof, saying that God giueth all thinges bountifully, and that he is of such liberalitie, that he neuer ceaseth to Iames.1.5.

giue, yea euen without vpbraiding. Hee is not like mortall men which haue a certaine repining at their giuing, or which grudge when a man commeth to them the second time, saying, What? Ought not that which I haue done for you already to suffice you? God (saith hee) is none such. For the more that wee be bound vnto him, the more is he willing to increase his gratious giftes dayly. Yea, but when hee seeth them misbestowed, & that we turne them cleane contrarie to his intent & purpose: then holdeth he his hand, the restraineth he the good that he had done vnto vs, then blameth he vs, and putteth vs in minde of them to make vs ashamed. And therefore let vs looke well vppon this text [where it is said,] *Thou foolish & wicked people, doest thou requite thy God thus?* Accordingly also as hee sayth by his Prophet Ieremie, My people what haue I done to you, saith hee? If thou hast any thing to say against me, alledge it, and thou shalt finde that I haue not failed at any time, to giue thee cause to followe me and to cleaue vnto me. For I haue powred all good thinges vppon thee, and yet notwithstanding thou hast bin so beastly as to forsake me. Let vs mark I say that here Moses speaketh not of Gods common giftes, which hee bestoweth vppon all men indifferently: but of the speciall giftes, which the people of Israell had receiued aboue all other nations. If GOD list to vpbraid all mankinde in generall, he may wel doe it if he say no more but, Who is he that created and shaped you? Who is he that hath giuen you wit and reason? Who is hee that maketh the Sunne to shine vppon you, and the earth to yeelde you fruite? God therefore hath largely wherewith to vpbraide all men for the good which he hath done them, to shewe that they be too too blame worthie, if they doe not honor and serue him. For euen the very knowledge and light which God giueth vnto vs, dooth vs to vnderstand, that we liue at his cost, that wee be guided by his power, and that it is hee which dooth both clothe and feede vs: to the intent that his so doing should make vs to put our trust in him, and to commit the whole state of our lyfe vnto him, thereby to shewe that hee is our souereine, and that we be vnder his gouernment; and therefore that wee be to be condemned whē we rebel against him. So then, God might well vpbraid all men in cōmon: but here hee speaketh to those whome he had adopted. And y is the cause why he treateth peculiarly of the benefites which he had done to them as to his Church and peculiar children.

Ioel. 3.

But before wee come to that point, let vs marke how Moses in this place dooth iustly call them *foolish and wicked people*. True it is that all men may well bee condemned of folly likewise, when they serue not God. For if wee haue any vnderstanding, ought wee not of right to imploy it to the knowing of him who hath created and formed vs? Can men boast themselues to bee wise, if they knowe not who hath set them in the worlde, or who maintaineth and preserueth them? If on the other side they haue any reason, is it not a raging madnesse, when they knowe not the principall point of their whole lyfe? Now forasmuch as God came neere to the people of Israell, it must needes bee that they were bewitched, seeing they were not touched with so many and so euident recordes of Gods goodnesse: I say it was more than beastly blockishnesse. For as for the heathen and infidels, in deede they be vnexcusable in that they knew not God, who sheweth himselfe to them in the whole creation of the world. But as for the Iewes, who had the Lawe, and had seene so many miracles, and finally had bin conuersant with the Lorde, who came downe to them, (I speake after the manner of the holy scripture, for wee know that God shifteth not from place to place, but is infinite and filleth all places,) and applyed himselfe to their rudenesse, insomuch as he verifyed the thing which he so often protesteth, namely, I will dwell among you and abide with you: [they were much more vnexcusable.] And therefore, when notwithstanding all this, they turned away from him and forgat him, yea and spited him as though they had conspired together to prouoke his vengeance by doing against him all the outrages that they coulde: must it not needes bee an horrible ignorance, yea and a very brutishnesse, vtterly voyd of all wisedome and reason? Wherefore let vs marke, that our true wisedome is to honor God. And in that respect is it sayd, The foolish man dwelleth in his owne heart, and hath no lyfe in him. True it is that the heathen folke thought themselues fine witted and of abilitie, when they despised God and thought to beguile him by their subtelties, as wee see these courtiers & all the brute laddes of the worlde doe nowadayes, and as wee see these fineheaded fellowes doe, which skoffe at all religion. To their owne seeming they bee men of great wisedome, at leastwise when they haue digged so deepe, that (in their owne opinion) God cannot spy them out. Yet notwithstanding, we may wel call them fooles, and not without cause dooth the holy Ghost terme them so. For why? Our very wisedome and the chiefe point thereof, is to feare GOD, saith the holy scripture. And in deede, euen nature ought to teach vs that. For what is a man, when hee knowes not whether hee was shaped by haphazard, whether there bee a God that created him, or if he be as a blinde wretch, not knowing who is his God, that hee may worship him and make an oblation and sacrifice of his lyfe vnto him? Must it not needes bee that a man is worse than all the brute beastes in the worlde, when hee is become so brutishe, or rather falne into such blockishnesse? Yes verily. Then let vs beare in minde the wordes that Moses vseth here, and let vs wey them as they be worthie, that wee may apply our indeuour to the seruing of our God, knowing that the hauing of that poynt is our true wisedome, and that all other thinges are but appendantes, and that by and by wee runne astray as soone as wee haue left the pure doctrine: insomuch that although the whole worlde commend vs, and clap their handes at vs, and wee seeme so bee excel-

Psal. 14.

Prou. 1.

collent in all respectes: yet in very deede wee be wideſſe, and it were better for vs a thowſand times to be frantike, yea and ſtarke mad, than to leaue wit and reaſon (to all lykelihood) after that ſort, and to be without any knowledge of our God.

But now let vs come to the contentes of the ſentence and proces that Moſes maketh here. *Is not he thy father* (ſaith he) *which poſſeſſeth thee? Hath not he made thee? Is it not he that hath ſhaped thee?* Whereas he calleth God the father of the children of Abraham; I haue tolde you already that his calling of the ſo, is but in reſpect of adoption, becauſe they had bin choſen to be Gods flocke & his Church. True it is that foraſmuch as we beare the image of God, wee bee his children euen by nature. But foraſmuch as wee be confounded in Adam, and Gods image was defaced in vs: we deſerue not that title, wee be vtterly bereft thereof. Therefore we muſt be faine to begin againe at this poinct, namely at his calling of vs back againe vnto him, ſo that although we were cut off from his houſhold, yet hee reacheth vs his hand, and of his own mercie taketh vs to be of his houſhold againe. This did hee to the ſeede of Abraham. For of his own free goodneſſe he made him this promiſe, I wil be thy God and the God of thy ſeede after thee. Thus ye ſee by what title the Iewes might clayme God for their father. It was not for that they were better worthy of it than other men, it was not for that they had attained ſuch nobilitie by their deſerts, or for that they had purchaſed it by their owne policie, or for that they had gotten it by any other way or mean [of their own:] but for y God had called them to it, as we haue ſeene heretofore. And ſo much the leſſe excuſe had they, whē they turned away from him, and lifted vp their hornes againſt him. For it is an ineſtimable benefite for vs to haue God to our father. Becauſe that therein we be made fellowes with the Angels, who are lykewiſe called the childrē of God, in reſpect that they be members of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Seeing that God hath called vs to the fellowſhip of the Angels, to be their brethren & companions: what a leawdneſſe were it to make our ſelues vnderlinges to the diuels, & to ſubmit our ſelues vnto their bondes and tyranny? What a dealing were it that I being made a companiō to the Angels of heauen, ſhould take the diuel for my Lord & king? What a choyce were that? Were I not worſe than mad? So then, let vs mark well, that when as Moſes dooth here call God the father of the Iſraelites, it is to inhaunce their vnthankfulneſſe the more, and to ſhewe their leawdneſſe the playnlyer. [As if he ſhould ſay,] Conſider your former ſtate. For God had aduaūced you wonderfully high, and you haue wilfully caſt your ſelues downe to the bottom of hell. After which maner he vpbraideth the king of Babilon, that he had bin as the morning ſtarres and now behold (ſaith he) thou art in the bottom of hell. True it is alſo that God calleth kinges his children, & lykewiſe all Princes and Magiſtrats. But if we compare them with the childrē of the Church, and with the flocke of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, ſurely Gods calling of vs to the knowing of him, and his marking of vs out to aly himſelfe vnto vs, dooth farre furmount all the kingdomes and Empyres of the world. And therefore it is certaine that when men turne away from their aliance with God; it is all one as if they forſooke heauen to goe to the bottome of hell. For (as I haue ſayd afore) they cannot away with the company of the Angels, but will needes goe to ſubmit themſelues in bondage to the diuels.

And according hereunto Moſes addeth, *that God had poſſeſſed that people*, as he termeth them his heritage. Whereby he doth vs to vnderſtand (as he will declare afterward) that God meant to haue held that people as his owne houſhold, ſuffering the reſt of the world to wander away & to become ſtraungers vnto him, whereas his wil was to haue the people of Iſraell as people familiar and well acquainted with himſelfe. According whereunto he addeth, *Is it he that hath created thee, is it he that hath ſhaped thee.* And this creation is not the ſame that belongeth to all men and to all the childrē of Adam: but it is the ſame that is ſpoken of in the hundreth Pſalme. It is he that made vs, and not we our ſelues. And it is a very common ſpeech in the holy ſcripture, to ſay that God hath created and faſhioned his Church. This is a people whom I my ſelfe haue created, and they ſhall ſet forth my prayſe ſaith he, in the three and fourtith of Eſay. But it were needeleſſe to alledge many places, for all the ſcripture is full of them. And it is a notable point of doctrine, that God declareth vs to bee newe creatures, at ſuch time as he chooſeth vs to him. Pſal.100. 3. Eſa.43.7. Eph.2.10.

ſelfe. True it is that wee be greatly bound vnto him, for vouchſafing to ſet vs in this world. For although he had made vs but brute beaſtes, yet were it a great thing that we might bee counted the worke of his handes. But it was not his will that wee ſhoulde bee Aſſes or Horſes: it was his will that wee ſhoulde bee reaſonable creatures. This is ſo high a preheminence, that wee cannot commende it ſufficiently. Yet is that nothing, in compariſon of his calling of vs to the faith. Inſomuch that when hee telleth vs that hee will take vs to bee of his Church, hee dooth after a ſorte forget his former creating and ſayth: that he giueth vs a farre other thing than to haue bin mortal men, which is nothing in compariſon to bee of his Church. And this ſerueth to humble vs, to the intent we ſhould not thinke our ſelues to bee come to the faith by our owne power, but acknowledge the ſame to be the gift of God, leaſt we ſhold vſurpe the title of the creator, by imagining our ſelues to haue gotten faith by our owne abilitie, as the Papiſtes doe, who ſay that although they cannot doe any thing but through the grace of God, yet doe they prepare and diſpoſe themſelues thereto aforehand. Againe, they haue a kinde of concurrence, or running together, whereby they be as companions with GOD, ſo as they worke together with his grace, or elſe doe ſo aunſwere thereunto, that Gods grace dooth nothing but by halues. Loe at what

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poynt the Papistes are saued by that reason they should be halfe their owne creatours. For I haue declared already, (and the very truth is so), that it is a farre greater thing for vs to be counted of the Church, than of the common kinde of men: for it is a farre nobler creation to bee the children of God, than to be the children of Adam. Yet notwithstanding, the Papistes doe chalenge the one halfe thereof to themselues, saying that they dispose themselues easily by their owne free-will, and that they deserue grace at Gods hand, and also that they worke together therewithall. By which reason, the one halfe of this creation, which is the excellenest, shall belong to men. And what a treacherie were that? Therefore when wee heare that it is God that made vs, Psal.100. 3. and not wee our selues; let vs not make accoumpt of our selues nor be puffed vp with the winde of presumption, which serueth to no purpose but to make vs to swell. Let vs vnderstand then that we haue nothing of our owne, but that all is Gods, in that it hath pleased him to call vs to his word, it is not we. A man might thinke it strange why it should be sayd, it is not wee that haue created our selues: for there is none of vs all but he knoweth it and confesseth it. But if we haue an eye to the fond and disclish ouerweening wherewith men are besotted: we shall see that this kinde of speach is not superfluous, but as the holy ghost meant to exclude all such foolish imaginations, to the intent that men should not reserue aught to themselues, but yeeld fully vnto God, that which is belonging vnto him. And that is the cause also why S. Paul saith in the second Chapter to the Ephesians; We be his workemanship, Eph.2.10. for he hath created vs to good workes, namely which he hath prepared for vs before wee were borne. If men think themselues to be y founders of their owne good woorkes, yea or euen of their good thoughtes, they deface themselues from God had prepared all those thinges aforehand in his treasures saith S. Paul, and now hee hath put them into vs. And why? For we be his workmanship, it hath pleased him to fashion vs to another vse. Thus yee see how men are beaten downe, and how God sheweth that hee himselfe alone is to haue the honor of the disposing and preparing of them. And so in this text whereas it is sayd, It is hee that hath created thee and fashioned thee: it is because it is a more excellent gift, that is to wit, that God printeth his marke vppon vs, as who shoulde say that wee shoulde bee reckoned for his children, so as hee gathereth vs vnto him, and maketh vs in effect new creatures; by reason whereof our fayning becommeth the more heynous, if wee deface the same againe, and fall to wallowing of our selues againe in the filth and vncleanesse of this worlde, as who would say it greeued vs that God had not made vs brute beastes at such time as he tooke vs to be his children. And therefore we haue to marke, what the words import which Moses vseth here: For his meaning is to shewe, that this people was the leawdest and most detestable that coulde be imagined, because they had forgotten such gratious benefites as coulde not be sufficiently commended. And looke what is sayd of the Iewes, agreeth fully to vs lykewise, namely that we must not forget Gods grace. We in these dayes haue receiued no lesse than the fathers that were vnder the Lawe. For wee haue the very pledge it selfe, which the Iewes had not: that is to wit, our Lorde Iesus Christ. He is the onely sonne of God, and is come down to vs from the bosome of the father. Hee hath yeelded vs recorde of our adoption: the gate of paradise is now opened vnto vs: wee may now not onely call vppon God as our father, but also call vnto him with full mouth, so as wee may cry *Abba father*, for that is the worde which Saint Rom.8.15. Paul vseth expressly. Seeing then that God hath discouered himselfe more fully to vs than to the fathers that liued vnder the Lawe: Surely our fault will be the more grieuous and lesse excusable, if we yeelde so poore a recompence as is spoken of here. Againe, hath he not purchased vs to himself? If he possessed the people of olde time because he brought them out of the land of Egypt: let vs see how much more he hath done now for vs than for them. Trust it is that Gods redeeming of the Iewes was by the power of the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ: but that thing was not yet declared vnto them, they had but the figures and shadowes thereof. But as now we see that the blood of our Lorde Iesus Christ hath bin shed for our redemption, and for the purchase of our saluation. And shall we now go trample vnder our feet the holy blood, whereby the couenant of the spirituall bond which God hath entered into with vs, is ratified and confirmed? And as touching the Law, how doth the Apostle speake of it in the Epistle to the Hebrewes? As many (saith he) as vnclosed the tabernacle that was made by Moses, were not spared, Heb.2.2. their fault was vnpardonable: and what shall become of vs now adayes? Is not our leawdnesse much more shamefull? Therefore let vs beare now in minde that we be Gods peculiar possession, to the intent we giue not our selues ouer to Satan. Moreouer let vs vnderstand, after what manner he hath created and fashioned vs, and let vs not refuse that grace: but sith he hath vouchsafed to reforme vs, let vs not defile our selues with reproche, by going about to deface the image & workmanship which he hath put into vs.

Howbeit forasmuch as men doe by all meanes possible pleade ignorance, to the intent they might not come to account before God, nor be conuicted or touched for their euill doings: Moses addeth; *Aske of thy fathers, and they will teach thee what they haue heard him: Inquire of all those Elders, and call to minde the time that is past.* Here Moses meant to spurre forward the slothfulnesse of the Iewes, because they did wilfully bury the grace of God, and tooke pleasure in the not minding of them. Now although he spake this to the Iewes: yet notwithstanding, forasmuch as the same vice is common & ordinarie through the whole world, and that we be too much attainted therewith: it stādeth vs in hand to thinke, that the holy ghost directeth the lyke accusation to vs nowadayes. For after what sorte doe we call Gods benefites

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to our mind? Do we bethink vs of them euening & morning? Nay there is none of vs all which shutteth not his eyes against them, as much as he can. To be short, nothing grieueth vs worse, nothing troubleth vs more, thā to be bound vnto God. And yet is that the thing wherein all our happinesse consisteth. For it is not with him as with mortall men. If we be ouermuch bound to a creature, we wil be as it were ashamed of it. I am so much in such a mans debt say wee, ỳ I wot not how to requite it. But if we consider how liberal God hath bin to vs, it is a meane to confirme vs all the more in faith, & to make vs the bolder to repayre stil vnto him: for he is the fountain that neuer dryeth. Thinke we that God can euer bee diminished in his grace, or in any goodnes? Nay. And yet notwithstanding, our naughtinesse is such, ỳ when God hath bestowed neuer so great graces and benefites vpon vs, insomuch that we be as good as ouerwhelmed with thē; al our seeking is to put them out of remembrance: let vs marke wel therefore, that Moses hath not without cause blamed the Iewes, and that we nowadayes haue need to bee blamed after the same manner, and to be pricked foreward lyke Oxen and Asses.

As concerning the Iewes, he sayd, *Bethinke thee of the olde time, call to minde the dayes that are past.* As if he should say, How now ye wretches? Must God giue you wit and memorie, and yet you not consider what he hath done heretofore? The wit of an Oxe or of an Asse extendeth no further than to the thinges ỳ are present: but men haue reason to consider of thinges past and of thinges to come. For wee haue a certaine foresight of thinges to come: we make comparison of things past, experiēce sheweth vs how to dispose things in our selues. Now if we apply not all this to consider how God hath euer gouerned vs, and how he hath shewed himselfe a father towardes vs, shall we not be guiltie of peruerting the whole order of nature? So then, not without cause doth Moses say: *Bethinke thee of the old time.* And afterward he sayth: Thou hast witnesses enowe: *Inquire of thy Fathers, inquire of al those that* haue liued afore thee, & they wil tel thee newes; they wil shew thee, that at such time as thy God diuided the nations of the world, and made ỳ partitions betweene people & people, hee had a special regard of thee, & shewed playnly ỳ his adopting & choosing of thee was not in vaine. For the marke he aimed at, was to dedicate thee to his seruice, & to reserue thee for his owne inheritance. Now thē, is it not a peruerting & confounding of ỳ order which he had set down to be inuiolable, when thou turnest so away from him? Yes: for hee had seuered thee out from al ỳ heathē, & chosen thee as it were for his own portion. That is the thing in effect which Moses meant to say vnto ỳ Iewes.

And this text ought to teach vs, first to bee mindefull of the benefites which he hath done to our fathers, although we haue not seene them in our owne time. For that is a thing whereon we must set our mindes. Hath God giuen vs wit and reason but onely to conceiue thinges present & which we see with our eyes? Nay, our vnderstāding must proceede further, yea and all must be referred to the honor & glory of him which hath giuen vs that vnderstanding. And it standeth vs so much ỳ more in hand to marke well this doctrine, because we see men fickleheaded & giuen to all vanitie & fond speculations. True it is that we would be loth to be as brute beastes, and we would faine be as men of vnderstanding: there is none of vs all, but he laboureth for it. And yet for all ỳ, what is our vnderstanding, but an inquiring of the thinges that passe our capacitie? Men neuer cease to be inquisitiue of the thinges that are farre aboue their vnderstanding, yea euen of thinges needeles & vnprofitable: insomuch as they will needes knowe what God did afore hee made the world, & such other thinges. Againe, as touching stories, if a man occupy himself in thē, it is but to range abroad here and there, without consideration of Gods doinges: insomuch that God is quite forgotten, & thinges are not referred to their right and due vse. Wee see then how men runne rouing, so as they can babble well enough of thinges past, that ye would take them to haue good knowledge of them. But it is but in thinges vnprofitable, & in the meane while God is let alone, & they haue no regard at all of thēselues. But contrariwise it is shewed here, that when we talke of matters of olde time, and enquire of thinges that haue bin done long agoe, we must keepe this order of proceeding, that we haue an eye vnto God, how he hath gouerned ỳ world, and alwayes shewed himselfe righteous, faithfull, vpright, good, and pitifull. First therefore let vs consider that. And afterwarde let vs come vnto our selues: and sith we see that hee hath separated vs from the rest of the worlde, & taken vs for his children without any worthines of ours, preferring vs before those which were no thing inferiour to vs: (for in deede we be no better than the rest of Adams children:) seeing (say I) such goodnesse of God towardes vs, we ought to apply our indeuour to know the same wel: and by inquiring of former yeres: we ought to behold Gods working, to the end he may be glorifyed at our handes, for that we haue found by experience, that we be so many wayes bound vnto him; and that the infinite goodnesse which he hath shewed towardes vs, may prouoke and inflame vs to yeelde ous selues wholy to the seruing of him. If wee so doe, wee shall not bee blamed for the vnthankfulnesse, for which the people of Israell are blamed here by Moses. For consequently all those whome God hath called vnto him, shall be comprised vnder the same condemnation, vnlesse they can skil to benefite themselues the better by his gratious deslinges.

But nowe let vs cast our selues downe before the maiestie of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs to feele them more and more, so as wee may not onely condemne our selues with our mouthes, but also vtterly mislyke of them, and turne againe vnto him with a true meaning minde, to obey him and to submit our selues to his good wil: & that therwithal he may so worke in vs by his holy spirit, that sith he hath vouchsafed to begin to make vs newe creatures, hee do also reforme vs to the full, vntill wee be throughly

throughly clothed with his righteousnesse, and that all our imperfections and vanities be mortified: That it may please him to grant this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people, &c.

On Munday the j. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXX. Sermon which is the third vppon the two and thirtith Chapter.

8 When the highest diuided to the Nations their inheritaunces: and when hee separated the Sonnes of men: then did he set the boundes of Nations according to the number of the children of Israel.

9 For the Lordes portion is his owne people, and Iacob is the meteline of his inheritaunce.

10 He founde him in a desert Lande, and in a horrible wilderneſſe where nothing was to bee heard but roaring. He led him vp and downe, and gaue him vnderstanding, and kept him as the apple of his eye.

11 As the Eagle stirreth vp her neast, houering ouer her young ones, and spreading out her wings, taketh them vp, and caryeth them vpon her wings:

WE haue seene already heeretofore, howe the intent of Moses in this text is, to shewe the children of Israell how greatly they bee bound vnto God, in that he loued them, and chose them out from among all the nations of the earth, and adopted them to bee his children without any desert of theirs, or without hauing any respect of their worthinesse, only of his own meere mercie. Now hereuppon hee sayth, *That when God distributed the world into partes, assigning all Nations their Countries: hee holde still this Lande for the heritage of his people*. True it is that notwithstanding this, he did as it were lend the land of Chanaan for a time to the olde inhabiters thereof, that is, to the Hethites, the Heuites, the Pheresites, the Chananites, and such like. His assigning of that Countrie to them was not for euer, for hee reserued it till the time that hee should fetch his owne people out of Egypt. And wee must marke, that at that time Abraham was not yet borne, neither was there then any people of Israel: Howe can it then bee, that God should bee prouoked by any desert, seeing hee tooke the thing which as then had not any being? Yea and let vs marke alwaies, that the people which was to issue out of the stocke of Abraham, had beene no better than other nations, if God had not wrought in them. Therefore it is to bee concluded that God vttered an infinite goodnesse towardes that people, and that his will was that they should bee a looking-glasse of his grace, to the whole worlde. And where as Moses saith, *that God diuided landes to Nations, according to the number of the children of Israel*: he maketh here a comparison betweene the ofspring of Abraham, and the seuen nations that dwelled in the Countrie, which they entred into and possessed afterwarde. Surely they were a great multitude of people, and seuen sundry nations were of them: and yet our Lord preferred one lynage before them al. True it is that hee encreased the same lynage beyond the opinion of men, according to this promise which hee had made to his seruaunt Abraham, Number the starres of the Skie and sand of the Sea if thou canst: for so shall thy seede be in multitude. But who wold haue thought that for one houshold sake, there needed so great a lande as that seuen nations should haue bin driuen out of their Country, to giue place to them that were descended of one barren man, as the prophet Esay telleth them, saying: Go seeke your originall, get ye to the stone that ye were heawen out of, for Abraham was alone, and Sara was a barren woman to her vttermost olde age: and yet hath God made you to issue out of these two stones as it were by myracle, and not by the common order of nature: knowe yee therefore that he hath wrought so mightily toward you, that of ductie you ought to be the more prouoked to serue and honour him, that his glorie may shine foorth in you. Yee see then that the meaning of Moses in saying, *according to the number of the children of Israel*, is that forasmuch as God had foreseene that hee would adopt the ofspring of Abraham; hee gaue the Lande of Chanaan, not to one people alone, but to seuen Nations in number.

Gen. 9

Esa. 51.

And here we haue to note in the first place, that inasmuch as the office of distributing the worlde into portions is attributed vnto God: wee soiourne as it were by his appointment, so long as wee dwell here belowe. True it is that the children of Israel had a peculiar state: but here Moses speaketh of the whole worlde, accordingly also as the same is treated of in the hundreth psalme and in other places. And that ought to make vs to liue in the feare of God, whersoeuer wee bee. For why? We be found at his cost, & our dwelling vpon earth is not by haphazard, but where it pleaseth him to maintaine vs. Yee see then how it is a profitable lesson to teach men to liue as in the presence of God, because it is hee that hath appointed them to dwell there. But by the way we be warned al-

Psal. 107

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so, not to trouble the boundes of places or the common order, but to holde our selues euery man to his owne, without incroching vppon other men. For why? God hath ordayned bounds in the world from the beginning. This being so, let euery man now abide in his owne possession, and let not men trouble nor molest one another. Yet notwithstanding we see how malicious men are. For ambition and couetousnesse haue caused all the boundes to bee broken which GOD had set in the worlde. Nembrod began first with setting vp the kingdome of Babylon: and afterward other men became desirous to win one frō another. Yee see then how men haue perverted the order that God had set in the world lyke vnsatiable gulfes. But howsoeuer men haue dealt, yet hath God alwayes so bridled them, that for all their greedinesse they could neuer set such confusion, but that some certaine order hath remained still. Howsoeuer the case stand, let vs marke wel, that Gods creating of men was not to cast them here at aladuenture: but that his ordeyning and setling of the earth was to the ende we shoulde dwell therein. And truely wee knowe that the earth was couered with water, & naturally the sea ought to be aboue the earth, so as al of it should be ouerflowen. It is of speciall vertue that wee haue any dry place whereon to set our foote. And who is the doer of that? As soone as God commaunded the waters to withdrawe, by and by there was place for men to dwell on. Seeing then that we liue here, and that the earth dooth feed & susteine vs, let vs assure our selues that therein God sheweth his pitie towardes vs. And therefore let vs serue him with the earnester minde, & euery of vs be contented with that which he hath, without intermedling within other mens boundes. Let vs not through couetousnesse rake to vs the things ỹ belong not to vs but let euery man hold himselfe as it were bolted vp, because we offend God and not men when we seeke to incroch vppon that which hee hath not giuen vs.

Now then, seeing that Moses telleth the people of Israel that they be bound vnto God for his allotting of their inheritance vnto them in the land of Chanaan, yea euen before Abraham was borne: there is much more reason that we should magnify the inestimable goodnesse of our God, in consideration of the heauenly heritage which he hath promised and prepared for vs. For his preparing of a place for vs in heauen, was not at that time when he parted the worlde into portions: but euen before the world was created, as sayth S. Paul. For before there was either heauē or earth, God hauing adopted vs to be his children, prepared a dwelling place for vs aboue. Such it is so, we conclude that he had no respect of any worthines in our persons, ne looked that wee should merit or deserue aught at his hand: but onely vsed his owne free goodnesse. Yee see then how we must be caryed vp aboue the world as oft as we thinke vppon our saluation.

And the reason hereof is added forthwith by Moses, namely, *Because they were the people of God, and his portion, and Iacob is the meteline of his inheritance.* The if it be demaunded, why God in making partition of the world, preferred the children of Israel before all the residue, & why that one house was so deere vnto him, that he vouchsafed to appoint them a countrie certaine: If it be demaunded what moued God thereto: Moses answereth, it was because Iacob was his portion and the meteline of his heritage. As if he should say, Ye poore soules, your God hath vsed such gratious goodnesse towardes you, as yee cannot say there was any thing on your owne behalf, or that ye had any vertue in you, or (at a word) that ye can dim Gods glory any whit by your owne deserts. There was no such thing: for all proceeded of his owne free adoption. What was the cause that the linage of Abraham became Gods inheritance, & as it were his portion? For by the worde *Meteline* here is betokened a part or portion. For in those dayes men measured Landes by Metelines, & that is the cause why the word *Cord*, or *Meteline* is so often spoken of in the holy scripture, when mention is made of distributing or diuiding into portions. Now then if it be demaunded why ỹ people of Israell belonged more to God than all ỹ rest of the worlde; or what affinitie or acquaintance there was more betweene him and them: It cannot be sayd that they had purchased or procured more to themselues, or that they were nobler than all other men, as we haue seene heretofore. What canst thou say (sayth Moses in the seuenth chapter?) Hath God chosen thee, because thou wast a nobler, a worthier, or a more renowmed Nation than any other? No: but for the loue which he bare to thee. Therefore lyke as in that place Moses vsed the word Loue, to shewe that Gods owne freegoodnesse moued him to take Abrahā & his ofspring: so in this place he saith, Know ye that your God hath chosen you, & that it is his will to take you for his heritage. And so ye see in effect, ỹ to take away all pride and presumption from the children of Israell, & to shew them that they could chalenge nothing to thēselues, Moses bringeth them backe to the welspring which the whole scripture sheweth vs, to wit, that all the benefits and gratious giftes which God bestoweth vpon vs, and which wee receiue at his hand, proceede of his owne meere goodnesse, without being bounde thereto, or without inclyning thereto in respect of any deserte of ours, but onely because hee loueth vs, yea euen without any cause why that wee can alledge: for we bring nothing at all vnto him. That is the thing which we haue to beare in minde.

Deut. 7. 7.

And if this doctrine was true as in respect of ỹ Land of Chanaan: what shal it be in respect of our comming to the immortalitie of the heauēly glory? The people of Israell could not obteine the land of Chanaan by their owne deseruing, but GOD was faine to loue them euen of his owne meere mercie, wherethrough hee did thē all the good that they receiued at his hand. Yet notwithstanding, that land was nothing in comparison of the immortall life. Whereas it is sayd that wee bee reformed after the image of God, to bee partakers of his glory, and that

wee bee his heires, and companions to the Angels, yea and to our Lord Iesus Christ: it is a far other thing than ỹ land of Canaan and the sustenance that is giue vs for this transitorie life. And therefore let vs vnderstand that men are worse than blinde, yea and more than mad, whē they thinke to attaine to so great a good thing by their owne desertes. Yet notwithstanding, we see how this diuelish opinion hath reigned and had full scope in the world, and how the Papistes are still at the same poynt at this day, that when ỹ inheriting of paradice is talked of, [they say] that men must purchace it by their own merites. And in the meane while they consider not how the immortal lyfe is named an inheritance, because it dependeth vpon Gods free adoption. And whereon is Gods free adoption grounded, but vppon his choosing of vs before ỹ world was made; I say vpon his choosing of vs, euen of vs which were forlorn as well as ỹ rest of the whole world? For we know we be all cursed in Adam. Again, what is ỹ cause ỹ he chooseth vs, who were lyke to those whō hee reiecteth? What is ỹ cause ỹ he proceedeth yet stil in drawing vs vnto him? Shall wee finde the cause thereof in our selues? Alas no: but wee must discharge our selues of all ouerweening, and repaire to the foresayd fountaine of his freegoodnesse. And therefore let vs beare well in minde, that here wee bee warned, that we must not seeke the cause of our saluation in our selues nor of any of all the benefits which God bestoweth vppon vs, no not euen in respect of this present lyfe: and therefore that wee can much lesse seeke the cause or ground of the promised immortalitie, in our selues or in our owne deserts, but ỹ we must magnify his meere goodnesse in that behalfe. And seeing that God hath chosen vs to bē his heritage, we must suffer him to possesse vs. But there is a greater reason in respect of vs than of the Israelites; because he hath not onely reserued vs in creating the world, but also purchased vs by our Lord Iesus Christ. Doth not this price which God hath bestowed for our saluation to ỹ intent we should bee his heritage, deserue to haue vs wholy at his deuotion, and ỹ euery man should so indeuour to dedicate himselfe to his seruice, as that he might haue the dominion ouer vs? So then, let vs not play the traitors in bereauing God of the thing which he reteined to himself when he voutsafed to haue vs to be of his Church. Also let this moue vs that he will not possesse vs, but vppon condition that as we inioy him, so hee may inioy vs: and what an exchange is that? Consider what we be. We be dung, filth, and vtter cursednesse, and yet ye see how God accepteth vs for his heritage, and for his part would that we should possesse him. Sith it is so, what an vnthankfulnesse is it, if we continue not in obeying him, that he may possesse vs?

Ephes. 1. 4.

And let vs mark further, that there is not any thing which ought to moue vs more to the serning of God, than to come to the knowledge of our free election, so as we know that his beginning to doe vs good is not now presently, but before we were borne, before the creating of the world, insomuch that he tooke vs to him and adopted vs aforehand euen before that time. So much the more ought we to abhorre these raskals which would haue the doctrine of Election abolished: for by that meane they ouerthrowe ỹ whole groundwork of our saluation, as though they should stop the spring from whēce the water floweth, so as we may no more drink thereof. For how shall we know that God hath called vs to saluation, but for that he hath loued vs without any desert of ours, and taken vs aforehand to himself, euen before ỹ world was created? Also how shall we know our selues to be beholden to him for all thinges, and that he is not bound vnto vs; vnlesse we come to this poynt, that we were lyke to those which perish, so as there was no difference at all betweene them and vs, saue ing ỹ hee hath marked vs out to be his, without finding any cause in vs why, that we were deare to him than other men, and that he made more account of our welfare, all which thinges are grounded vppon his euerlasting vnchaungable purpose and will, the reason whereof is vncomprehensible to the worlde? They therefore which go about to abolish this doctrine, are deadly enemies to God his glory, and to our saluatiō, and would (as much as in them lyeth) deface al religion. That (say I) is the thing which we haue to remember vpon this Text.

Hereupō Moses sheweth yet better, how God hath vttered his goodnesse towards the people of Israel. *He found him* (saith he) *in a desert land, in a desolate place, in a dredful wildernes, where vanishing hee roring of wild beasts. There he led him vp & down, there he nurtured him, there he kept him as the apple of his eye.* If the people of Israel had not serued as slaues in Egypt, and trauelled through the wilderneste: Gods goodnesse had not bin so well knowen and so glorious as it is at this day. For why? Whereas God tooke Abraham out of his countrie, and brought him into a strange Land, and afterward gaue him a sonne when hee was vppon the point of a hundred yeres old, & that of that one child there issued such an infinit multitude: it might well haue bin sayd that God had shewed fauor to that linage: but yet so blind are men in considering Gods goodnesse towardes thē, that it would neuer haue bin perceiued how God vttered his bountifulnesse towards ỹ stock, vnlesse Iacob had gone downe into Egypt, and that the people of Israell had bin kept in cruell bondage, as Moses reporteth in Exodus. But when they had bin held in such slauery that the king of Egypt had commaunded all their men-children to be slayne: then were they come to ỹ vttermost pinch. And then did God fetch them away, and make thē to passe the red sea, hauing wrought a great number of miracles before. By meanes whereof they were after a sort wakened, that they might the better bethinke them how dearely God loued them & how much he set by them, seeing he vouchsafed to yeeld so great & so stately recordes of the goodnesse and fauour which he bare towardes them. Moses therefore following the same reason, saith here, Looke backe to your first originall from whence you be issued. Did God find you in a fat and fertile countrie, as though he should say, I wil maintaine you

Exod. 1.

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in the state wherein yee be: for it is not enough for men to haue a conuenient and easie dwelling place, vnlesse I preserue them and hold the vnder my protectiõ. You therefore shal be mine, and I will bee your safegarde. Did God finde his people in such state? No. And therefore Moses sayeth to the children of Israel, Consider from whence ye came, & from whence your God hath fetched you. Were ye not in a wildernesse sayeth hee? Yes; that then is the place from whence hee hath fetched you: and so much the more ought you to consider the fauour which hehath shewed you, that yee may perceiue howe much you be bounde vnto him: Now then, ye were in a wildernesse: and after what sorte? There was not one graine of Corne to feede you withall, there was not one drop of water for you to drinke, he was faine to make water to issue out of a dry roche miraculously for you, hee made Manna to fall from heauen. Ye were in a place where yee coulde not build you one house, ye were there among the wild beasts, so as ye must needes haue perished, and therfore a man needes not to vse long discourses to shew how God was bountiful vnto you. For ye were as good as in a graue by the space of forty yeeres, and yet God kept you alliue after a straunge fashion & vnknowen to men. Ye were destitute of foode and drinke, & God furnished your cutne. Your shooes, your hose, & your garments did not rotte all that while. Now then, seeing that God maintained you after that manner against the commõ order of nature, did he not shew thereby what care he had of you, and what loue he bare vnto you? So then, looke that ye neuer forget so great benefices, specially being so many and so huge in number as he hath done for you.

Nowe we see the meaning of Moses in that hee sayeth that God founde his people in a wildernesse, a dry and barraine ground, a desolate place. And the selfesame thing meaneth Ezechiell in his sixteenth chapter, where he vpbraideth the people of Israell with the vnthankfullnesse which they had shewed. What are yee, sayeth hee? For I tooke you comming out of the land of Egypt, as a Child borne out of time. The Child is so commeth out of his mothers wombe, is al to berayed, and he should perish in his own filth, if he were not rid of his spottes and blemishes, and washed from the vncleannes which he bringeth with him. To be short, he rehearseth all the thinges that are wont to bee doone to a child that is newely borne. Againe he vseth another similitude which is, as if a man should finde a wretched harlot that were starke rotten and readie to fall in peeces by reason of her infection: And I haue washed you & made you cleane, yea and I haue taken you in mariage: and doe ye not knowe that to bee a benefite? Thus we see that Ezechiell hath followed the same order which Moses did in abasing the Children of Israell, by bringing them backe to their first state, to the intent they shoulde learne that Gods aduancing of them after that fashion beyond al expectation of man, was to the end his grace might be the better knowen in them.

And now to apply this doctrine to our owne instruction, let vs consider what wee be before God chooseth vs. It is sayd that hee found his people in a wildernesse. True it is that he had adopted them before that time, insomuch that the promises were made vnto them before they went downe into Egypt. But it is enough that the people were there in so miserable state, to the end they shoulde perceiue that God had at that time giuen them as it were a second byrth, and so dooth the scripture customably terme it. But now let vs come to our selues. In what case dooth God finde vs? In what state dooth hee take vs? We bee the children of Adam, that is to say, cursed, and heires of euerlasting death. There is nothing in vs but sin, there is nothing in vs but corruption, God must needes reiect vs and hate vs, he must needes become our deadly enemy, and vtter his vengeance vppon vs. To bee short, wee be in the dungeons of hell, vntill God haue reached vs his hand, and had pitie vppon vs. It is not for any man to exempt himselfe from this confusion: for from the greatest to the least of vs, we be all plunged in it. Now let vs boast of the thinges which we haue of nature. For God findeth vs voyd of all goodnesse, we haue not one droppe of vertue, wisedome, or righteousnesse: but contrariwise wee be full of corruption, wee bee ready to burst for filth and vncleanesse, wee bee bondslaues to Satan, vnder the tyranny and bondage of death, and at a worde we bee plunged in hell. At that poynt are wee when God chooseth vs, that is the poynt whereat hee beginneth our saluation. Now sith it is so, let vs learne first of all to rid our selues of all pride. And although Satan beguile most men, making them to beleeue that they can deserue at Gods hand: yet let vs assure our selues that we bee beholden to Gods free goodnesse for all thinges. Marke that for one point. To the intent that all mouthes may bee stopped before GOD (as saieth Saint Paul) let vs so humble our selues, as that wee make not any mo allegations, as who would say, we haue done this or that: but let vs preach the mercie of our God, and let vs declare that he is the beginning, the ende and the increase of our welfare, so as wee drawe out of that fountaine wherewith to satisfy vs, without seeking of any peece of our saluation either in our selues or in any creature. Otherwise wee make our selues to beleeue wonders, and they shall serue to feed vs withall: but in deed it will be but deadly poyson to make vs to burst. Rom. 3. 19.

And now let vs marke well, that Moses hauing sayd that God found his people in a wildernesse, addeth *that he led them vp and downe there, that hee nurtured them there, and that he kept them there as the apple of his eye.* By this terme of *leading vp & down*, Moses dooth the people to vnderstand, that it was not for a day or twaine, nor for some short time that God made them to taste his goodnes, but that he had continued it by the space of forty yeeres together. Lykewise, his heaping vp of these words together, *A desert land, a desolate wildernesse, a place full of rorings, a barraine ground*, is not

for nought, but serueth to touch the people the better to the quick, that they might call to mind what plight they had bin in before their cõming into the land of promise, where Gods blessing was powred out vpon them most aboundantly. And therfore the word *Lead* betokened as much at ỹ time as if Moses shoulde haue said, Ye wretched people, had God vttered his loue & goodnesse towardes you but for one moneth, ỹ same ought to haue bin remembred of you for euer, so as you should neuer haue forgotten it. But now, it is not one moneth no nor one yere, but whole fortie yeres together, that God hath held on & continued his goodnesse towardes you: of all which time, your fathers hauing not a crum of bread to eate, were miraculously fed with Manna from heauen; nor hauing any wine or other liquor to drink, had water giuen them out of the rocke. And as they shifted from place to place,

Num. 20.11. Psal. 105.41 GOD gaue a continuall course to the water, wherewith to refresh themselues and their cattell. Seeing then that God hath so imprinted his grace ỹ it may be wel knowen of you in the great number of good turnes which he hath done for you: you be the lesse to be helde excused, if yee make not account of the glorifying of your God, who hath shewed himself so liberal towards you.

But we must alwayes marke, that the speaking of these thinges by Moses to ỹ Iewes is after such a sort, that his doctrine is behoueful to vs at this day. And therefore we must vnderstand, ỹ God leadeth vs vp and downe in this world, to ỹ end we may haue the more leisure to seeke his fauor, if we perceiue it not sufficiently in one day. True it is ỹ if we should haue experiẽce of Gods goodnes but once in all our life, ỹ same ought to suffice vs, at leastwise if we had not our eyes blindfolded, or that we were not shortwitted to forget Gods doinges out of hand. If he had once giuen vs any recorde of his fatherly loue, we ought to acknowledge the same and to minde well ỹ lesson, and to exercise our selues therein dayly both euen and morne. But what? Because al is marred by our vanitie, and all the good ỹ God dooth for vs is by and by forgotten: therfore doth he traine vs in this slightful lyfe, and leade vs vp & downe after such a fashion, that wee be put in minde of our wretchednes many wayes. The happening of so many necessities & Gods deliuering of vs from them, is to the intent ỹ we shoulde beare it the better in minde, how he not onely succoreth vs once or twice at our need, but also holdeth on with his fauor throughout, yeelding vs record by infinite wayes ỹ he is our father & taketh vs for his children. After this manner ought we to wey this word *Lead*, when God tosseth & turmoyleth vs to & fro in this world, making vs to feel many things, so as we haue not one continual state of quietnes, but are fain to walk one while one way, and another while another, & anon to go clean backe again, enduring now cold and now heate, & another time hunger, & being vexed sometimes with noyse of warres, sometime with sicknesses, & somtime with other things. Now when we be so led vp & downe, let vs assure our selues that our Lordes meaning is to make vs to come to the knowledge of his goodnesse.

And hereunto Moses addeth farther, *that the people were murmured*. Truely ỹ chiefe learning and instruction which they receiued was by the law. Yet notwithstanding, all the warnings that God gaue them in the wildernesse, serued to nurture them. Moses therefore speaketh not here alonely of the Lawe which was vttered to the people to giue them knowledge of Gods will: but also generally of all the instructions & warnings which God gaue them by the space of forty yeeres, as when he punished the idolaters, when he punished ỹ whoremongers, and such as were giuen to their lustes, and when hee punished the rebels. For at those times it behooued them to receiue newe instruction. Yea and all of vs must vnderstand, that generally al ỹ benefites, al ỹ threates, & all the punishmentes which God at any time vsed towardes the childrẽ of Israell, were as many instructions to them. But we must marke here that it is Gods will that we should learn by them so long as we liue in this world. For like as he executeth ỹ office of a schoolemaister towards vs, so will he haue vs to play the good scholers vnder him, & to profit in the doctrine which he deliuereth vs. And it is a very notable point, that God will not haue vs to liue here lyke brute beastes without reason & vnderstanding. Whereto then ought our lyfe to serue here, & whereto ought it to be applyed? Wherein ought men to busie themselues during ỹ time that they be here beneath? To profit in Gods schoole. That is ỹ end whereunto we be sustayned and maintained here. But we abuse the life wickedly which hee giueth vs, applying it cleane contrary to his will, if we become not euery day better than other. Therefore let vs not lose our time, but let vs imploy it according to ỹ meaning of our God. And when we rise a mornings let vs thinke with our selues, God hath preserued me hitherto to the intent I should profit in his schoole, and therefore I must not forget the benefites which God bestoweth vpon me this day, but make them meanes whereby to confesse my faith, that ỹ praise of all goodnes may be yeelded to him, & I imploy my selfe with so much ỹ better courage to the serting and honouring of him, knowing ỹ he furthereth my saluation continually more and more, seeing he draweth me to him by so many meanes: & therwithall I must also learne to stand in awe of him, ỹ I may yeeld him his due reuerence. Lykwise when euening commeth, let vs consider thus with our selues, seeing that God hath vouchsafed to imploy me hitherto in his seruice, it is good reason that I should holde on still, and ỹ I should not turne away from him. Therefore when wee haue reckoned all thinges well, we shall finde ỹ there hath not passed one day no nor one howre or minute wherein our God hath not giuen vs some instruction. And if we fare neuer the better by it, who is too blame for it? Then haue we here a very profitable lesson, namely that as long as we liue in this world, we be in Gods schoole, & that he for his part ceaseth not to giue vs good instructions and furtherances to our saluation. Whether he bestow his benefites vppon vs, or

chastise

chastice vs for our sinnes, or shewe vs examples of his goodnes, or of his wrath and of his rigour in punishing such as haue done amisse: all ot thē are euer instructions for vs to fare the better by.

Now in the end Moses addeth, *shew God kepe that people as the apple of his eye*. Here is a similitude which ought well to rauish vs to wonder at it. For Moses could not haue vsed a fitter speech to shewe vs what care God hath of vs & of our saluation. He saith here that if God were a mortall man, he could not more charily keepe the apple of his eye, than he kept his people. Wee knowe it is the tendrest part of all a mans body. If a man be striken on the head, or on the hands, or on the armes, it may be borne with: but if he be but touched on the apple of his eye, al his bodie starkles at it: we be as greatly grieued at it as if a man had stabbed vs in with a dagger. It wold not greeue vs so much to haue one of our armes cut off, as to haue but a phillup with ones finger vppon the eye. And it is expressly sayd, that God keepeth vs not onely as his arme or as his legge. True it is ỹ God hath neither armes nor legges, we must not imagin any such thing in him: but he borroweth a figure from men, to make vs vnderstand the thing ỹ else were too high for vs to reach vnto. For if hee should speake according to his own maiestie, we could not conceiue him: but he stoopeth to vs & vseth a maner of speech that is agreeable to our rudenesse & infirmitie. His saying then is, that he will defend and preserue vs, not as a mortall man dooth his armes or his feete, but as he would doe the apple of his eye. Wherby we learne that God vttered such a charinesse in preseruing the people of Israel, that if all the gentlenesse and louingkindenes in the world were put together, it were nothing in cōparison of the infinite gratious goodnesse which hee shewed in that behalfe.

And this is sayd for vs also. God must be faine to keepe vs as the apple of his eye, as he himself speaketh thereof by the Prophet Zacharie. For Moses maketh here a recitall: but there is a promise which serueth for all ages. And lykewise also it is sayde in the Psalme according to that which Moses had set downe afore. Lorde keepe vs as ỹ apple of ones eye. This prayer was penned by the holy Ghost for all the faithfull: and it is needefull for them, as I haue sayd. For let vs see what our state were without it. We be in daūger of a thowsand deathes, not without cause is Satan named the prince of this world, and what power haue we to withstand him? He hath fiery dartes against vs, there is not that stroke which he striketh but it were deadly, if we were not defended and preserued by the wonderful gratious goodnes of our God. Seeing it is so, it standeth vs in hand to be maintayned by him, yea & to be so maintayned, as he ouercome al ỹ dangers ỹ may befal vs in this worlde, & also al ỹ assaults which wee may haue within our selues. God I say must be faine to ouercome thē all, or else we shall liue in continual doubt & anguish, & not know where to become euery minute of an houre. We should be shaken with dispayre of our saluation, were it not that we were thus shielded by God, yea euen in such sort, that if wee were to indure all that euer coulde light vppon vs in this present world, yet we might conclude with our selues, that God wil get the vpper hand howsoeuer the world go.

And here is added another similitude, that is to wit, that God played the parte of an Eagle or of a Hen in speaking after that manner. Now we knowe that in the holy scripture there is often mentiō made of Eagles. And why? Because they be much commoner in that countrie than they be hereawayes: and the Prophets after Moses time did apply themselues to ỹ common maner of speech of that country. Therefore let vs mark wel that whereas here is speaking of an Eagle, it is as much as if God should say, Go to, I haue bin as a Hen is towardes her Chickens. Here we see how God stoopeth to vs. When the case concerneth Gods maiestie, we see how ỹ very Angels doe couer their eyes, & are not able to looke vppon it, accordingly as the Cherubins are described vnto vs by the Prophet, namely ỹ they haue winges to couer their faces withall, because they could not abide to beholde ỹ glory of God, without dazeling of their eyes. Now if the Angels of heauen cannot stand before the glory & maiestie of God, but that they must be faine to cast down their eylids: what shal wee be able to doe? And yet notwithstanding God lykeneth himselfe here to a Hen. And why? to the end to vpbraid vs with our vnthankfulnesse. For he should neuer need to vse such similitudes, if we were not too too blockishe, not considering his gratious goodnes when he vttereth it vnto vs, insomuch that although we haue the fruition of it, yet notwithstanding we perceiue it not. Therefore to rid vs of this brutish blockishnes, God is faine to say, Ye wretched people, knowe ye not that I am towardes you as a Hen that broodeth her Chickens vnder her winges? So then, let vs marke first of all that here we be reproued of the ouergreat blockishnes which is in vs; in that we consider not Gods benefites. That is the cause why God vseth such comparisons: And yet is not that any derogation at all to his glory or highnes. For his goodnes & his power are thinges ỹ agree wel together: they be no such thinges as cannot abide to match one with another. God is mightie, God is dreadfull in his maiestie, all ỹ is true: but yet is his goodnes as infinite as his power. And what importeth his goodnes? That hee should be as a Hen. And therefore let vs marke, that this dealing of God must not diminishe his glory, so as we should not worship him with all humilitie & reuerence: but rather touch vs to the quick, that when God (hauing bestowed so many benefites vpon vs, & we thinke not vpon them but doe bury his goodnes in forgetfulnes) vpbraideth vs ỹ he hath played ỹ Clockhen towardes vs and we could not abide it: we may learn to apply all our wittes to consider how good & gratious God is towardes vs, & that knowing him to be so, wee may also assure ourselues that hee ought to bee worshipped in his glory & maiestie, to the ende we may be subiect to him and come shrowd our selues vnder his winges, to be defended by him. But this shalbe layd forth more at large to morrowe if God will.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of

our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better, yea in such sort, as wee may returne to him with true repentance, acknowledging the transgressions and iniquities which we haue committed, not only to obteine forgiuenesse of them, but also to be maintained by him all the time of our lyfe: and that in the meane while it would please him to keepe vs to himself and correct all things that are contrary to his righteousnes, and doe hinder vs from giuing our selues wholy to him as we ought to doe. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the ij. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXI. Sermon, which is the fourth vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

11 As the Eagle stirreth vp, &c.

12 So the Lord alone did leade him, and there was no straunge god with him.

13 He caryed him vp to the high places of the earth, and made him to eate of the fruits of the fieldes: and he made him to sucke Honnie out of the Rocke, and Oyle out of the hard stone.

14 He fed him with butter of kyne and milke of sheepe, with fatte of Lambes and of sheepe fed in Bashan, and Heegoates, and with the fatte of wheate: and made thee to drinke the iuice of the most excellent grape.

15 But he which ought to haue beene vpright, became fatte and fell to kicking. Thou art become fatte, lustie, and thicke. And so hee forsooke God his maker, and regarded not the strong God of his welfare.

YEsterday we sawe the similitude which Moses brought in to expresse what goodnes and gentlenes God vsed towardes the children of Israell: for he dealt with them as when a hen gathereth her chickens vnder her winges. We see the howe God dooth in such wise vtter and make knowen his infinite power to his children in the preseruing of them, that hee stoopeth to them, beareth with them in respect of their frailetie, and (at a word) maketh himselfe lyke a Clockhen. Now it remaineth on our side, that we knowing our owne feebleneese, should flee vnto God, and hide ourselues vnder his winges, that wee may there be defended and kept safe. And wee must not bee afraid to preace vnto him, for his maiestie ought not to be terrible to vs any more sith we see he hath made himselfe familiar with vs, & draweth vs to him by gentlenes. And surely it must needes bee that we be destitute of wit and reason, if we goe not to seeke him: for howe shall the little chicken doe, if he be not vnder his dammes wing? Much lesse can wee continue without the protection of our God, than little chickens can doe, if they run not vnder the wings of their dam which leadeth them. But in the meane while we fare little the better by this lesson. For although we bee warned sufficiently of our infirmities, yet doe we not cease for all that to be blinded with presumption, insomuch as euery of vs thinketh to maintaine himself well enough. And by this meanes we hold skorn of the help of our God. Or else we be so full of distrust, that although he call vs to him with all the gentlenes that can be deuised: yet we cannot finde in our heartes to come to him, but doe alwayes stand in doubt of him. And that is the cause why our Lord Iesus Christ finderh fault with the citie of Ierusalem, that when as hee would haue gathered her chickens together, she would not. Hee maketh euen a complaint of it in way of lamentation, saying: O Ierusalem Ierusalem, how often would I haue gathered thy childrē together, as the Hen stretcheth out her wings to gather her yong chickens to her, & thou hast despised that great benefite, thou hast not voutsafed to shroud thy selfe vnder me. I haue bin desirous to make thee to feele my power to the maintaining of thee in thine estate. But what? Thou hast bin faine to feele heeretofore many chastisementes because of thine vnthankfulnes: but the time will come that thou shalt bee vtterly destroyed. Let vs beware that God haue not lyke cause to finde fault with vs nowadayes, and to powre out his vengeance vpon vs after he shal haue borne with vs a long time. For the foresaid threatning which our Lord Iesus Christ made, befel not out of hād. God had many ways assayed to gather the citie of Ierusalem vnto his obedience: and when he saw them so stubborne that they were past amendment, he punished them according to their desert. Therfore let vs not tempt the patience of our God, but when we see him spread out his wings to gather vs to him, let vs runne to him, & let necessitie driue vs thereto: For what shall wee doe if our Lord keepe vs not? Againe, Let not fearefulnes or douting keepe vs back from him. For what can he do more, than abace himselfe after the maner of a clockhen, to the intent that his maiestie shoulde not bee terrible to vs and scarre vs away?

Let vs marke further, that God playeth the part of a Clockhen in all pointes, to gather vs vnder his winges. For on the one side he calleth vs vnto his tuition by the preaching of the Gospel, promising vs that the power of his holy spirit shall not faile vs, but that it shall defend vs against all the assaultes of Satan, according as it is sayd that all the fortresses of hell shall bee able to doe nothing to vs, if wee bee grounded vppon the faith of the Gospell. Besides this, wee knowe

Matt. 23. 37

Matt. 16. 18

that

that God watcheth ouer his seruaunts, and that he guideth them. Therfore let vs sticke to those promises; and suffer our Lorde to vse his kindnesse, as he setteth it forth by this similitude; and sith we see he is willing that we should come familiarly vnto him, let vs not play ỹ wild beastes.

Nowe, it is saide immediatly after: *thus God alone ledde his people, and that there was no strange god with him.* This serueth to condemne the wickednesse of the children of Israel; which coulde not rest wholly vpon God; whereas hee was so sufficient for them: for they had founde by experience, that they needed not to seeke any other. And not without cause is this set downe. For although men doe not vtterly refuse Gods help, yet can they not content themselues with it, but they fall to raunging and rouing and make bylropes, bearing themselues in hand, that it wilbe good for them to match some other helpe with God. Lo at what point we be. For we woulde bee ashamed to say that God can doe vs no good, & that we can well forbeare him. Therefore wee can finde in our hearts that he shal haue the first place and chiefe preheminence: but we cannot finde in our hearts to rest wholly vpon him, but we fall to conceiuing of fonde imaginations, O, God is farre from vs, wee deserue not that hee should haue care of our saluation, and therefore it were good for vs to get vs this or that. To bee short, in all ages men haue sought occasion to turne away from God, not by falling quite and cleane away from him, (as I saide) but by making a mingle mangle, and by seeking still the things which haue seemed best to their owne lyking, as though God were not ynough of himself alone.

In respect of such naughtinesse it is said here, *that there was no strange god with him when hee led the people through the wildernesse*, and conueied the into the Lande of promise. The God which had adopted Abraham, the same which made both heauen and earth, the same which afterwarde did set forth his lawe, euen the same was hee alone, and hee called not any others to his helpe. True it is that God continually vsed the seruice of his Angels for the welfare of his people, and for the maintenance of his Church: but yet doth it not followe that hee borrowed aught of them. Whereas it is said that the Angels are appointed to haue care of vs, it is not to stoppe vs from repairing right foorth vnto God, nor to darken his brightnesse therby, that men should honour him the lesse: for the Angels are nothing as in respect of themselues. And therefore the holy scripture termeth them the vertues or powers of God, for he vseth them as his owne handes. Not without cause therefore doth Moses say, that God was alone in the leading of his people, and had not any straunge god with him. For we see how those wretched folke forbare not to forge ỹ dols to themselues. Insomuch ỹ although God 400 yeres before had promised to redeeme them, although he had performed that promise in very deede, although he had shewed himself to them so many sundry wayes, so ỹ they had euery day some newe visible token and ỹ the cloude by day and the fire by night were a warrant of Gods presence: yet notwithstanding they forbare not to inuēt new superstitions. And why? Because that (as I saide afore) such is our cursed inclination, that we cannot repose our selues vpon God alone, but we fal to raging here & there, and our wits are rouing abrode to inuent ỹ dols to our selues. For this cause doth Moses here reproue the leawdnesse of the children of Israel, which could not hold themselues contented with God, though he gaue them sufficient cause.

But now let vs applie this lesson to our selues also. For we see what ỹ Prophet Esay saith where he speaketh of the redemption that was to bee wrought in the person of our Lord Iesus Christ. It is said in the 59. Chapter, that God sought and looked about him if he coulde finde any helpe to redeeme the worlde. Not that God was cumbered with the matter, or that he wist not what hee had to do but by that figure the Prophet expresseth the better, that it was onely God that redeemed vs, and that he was not helped by any other. Therefore when he had sought, he found that he shoulde bee faine to vse his owne onely power. Then armed hee himselfe with his iustice, hee fenced himselfe with his owne power, and so finished and performed the thing which hee had determined, that is to wit, the redemption of his people. Seeing then that God hath so purchased vs to himselfe in the person of his sonne, as that he had not any companion in the doing thereof, but hath vttered forth the infinite treasures of his goodnesse, iustice, and power: let vs learne to hold our selues wholly to him, and not to be so sickleheaded as to set vp ỹ dols, and to runne gadding here and there, and to let our selues loose to no benefite. Let vs rather consider howe God himself alone hath redeemed vs once for all, and that hencefoorth hee will haue the guiding of all his himselfe alone, and that hee wil haue vs to sticke to him alone. True it is that our Lord Iesus Christ also was a leader of the people of Israell in the wildernes, as sheweth S. Paule in the tenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians; where he saith that they tempted Iesus Christ. And how was that? Euen because he was alwaies the mediator: howbeit, that was after a darke maner. But nowadaies hee sheweth himselfe to vs face to face: insomuch that if we looke there, we haue there ỹ whole fulnes of Gods maiestie. Seeing it is so, that God in these daies discouereth himself more fully vnto vs, than he did to the Iewes in the time of the law: there wilbe so much the lesse excuse for vs, if wee abyde not fast setled in him; so as hee alone do suffice vs, and we doe take our whole contentation in him. Yet notwithstanding, wee see howe froward the worlde hath beene. For what a number of ỹ dolles haue men forged euen since Christes comming into the world? And howe haue we behaued our selues since the time of our ignoraunce? For looke howe manie Patrons and Aduocates the Papistes haue imagined, so many fellowes haue they added to our Lorde Iesus Christ, and so doing they set their minds vpon the creatures, and let the liuing God goe. Indeede they will

Esa. 59. 16.

1. Cor. 10. 9.

proteſt that their intent is nothing ſo: but a man may ſee by their doings that God is not knowen there from his ſainctes, as they themſelues haue ſaide in their common prouerbe. After that manner haue we erred: and we haue alienated our ſelues (to our power) ſo farre from our God, that we haue wel deſerued to be ſhaken off at his hand. But foraſmuch as he hath ſhewed vs that it is onely hee to whom wee muſt ſticke, and foraſmuch as he offereth himſelfe ſo familiarly vnto vs, to the intent we ſhoulde ſubmit our ſelues to him: we ought now to be ſo much the more ſtedfaſt: and ſeeing wee haue ſuch aſſurance, let vs not be drawen too and fro by our vnconſtancie and lightnes, but let vs conclude that God cannot away to haue any ſtraunge gods with him, and that it behoueth vs to doe him the honour of reſting in ſuch wiſe vpon his power and goodneſſe, as it may ſuffice vs to call vpon him, and to flee to him for all our refuge.

And Moſes addeth immedialty, *that God caried vp his people, (or made them to ride vp) vppon the high places of the earth, and gaue them the fruites thereof to feede them*, namely *the butter of Kyne, the milke of ſheepe, the fat of Muttons, of Lambes, and of Goates, the fat of Corne and the blood of Grapes*, (for ſo he termeth them:) *and that he made them to eate Oyle out of the harde ſtones and honny out of the Rocks.* Hereby Moſes ment to vtter howe liberall (yea euen beyonde all opinion of man) God ſhewed himſelfe towards his people. His ſpeaking of the high places of the earth, is in reſpect of the ſituation of the lande of Chanaan: for it is high in compariſon of Egypt and of the countries thereabouts. To ſay (as ſome haue imagined) that it is the middeſt and (as ye would ſay) the Nauill of the earth, is to no purpoſe. Becauſe mention is made of the mids of the earth among the Prophetes, ſome haue furmiſed that God meant to bound it out, as if he had beene ſome Geometrician that ſhould haue butteled and bounded the whole world. But whereas it is ſaide, in the mids of the earth, it is meant, in the mids of the lande that is to ſay, of Iewry. Yet notwithſtanding, as I ſaide afore, the Lande of Chanaan is high, if a man haue an eye to any of all the Countries round about it. Againe, it hath many mountains and high Rockes in it, inſomuch that at the firſt ſight a man woulde take it to be barren. And therefore Moſes declareth that the people ſhold eate honnie out of the Rockes, and Oyle out of the harde ſtones: that is to ſay, that where men would think there were nothing but wilderneſs, there would God make Olifetrees to growe: and where men would thinke to be nothing but barrenneſſe, there they ſhoulde gather honnie, and (to be ſhort) that euerywhere there ſhoulde bee nothing but ſweetenneſſe and abundance.

Pſal. 74. 12.

Afterwarde hee ſpeaketh of *fat Sheepe, Goates and Lambes*. Trueth it is that in this place is vſed the worde *Baſan*, which had that name, of fatneſſe: for the hill of Baſan was a goodly countrie of paſture. And this is the cauſe, why hee expreſſly ſpeaketh thereof. And let vs marke that Moſes neuer came within the land of Chanaan, hee had neuer ſo vewed it that hee coulde deſcribe it, as he doth heere. Needs therefore muſt hee ſpeake, not as a man, but as one whoſe tongue is gouerned by the ſpirite of God. And heere he treateth of the thinges which the people were to finde after the deceaſe, and yet hee ſpeaketh of them as if he had ſeene them, and as though the thinges had beene done alreadie. So then we haue a plain proofe that Moſes wrate not any thing on his owne heade, but was an inſtrument of the holy Ghoſt. For he left this ſong to the children of Iſrael, and made it common among them before his death, as wee haue ſeene afore. Whereby it was apparant, that hee was taught at Gods hand all the thinges which were vnknowen vnto him as in reſpect of the fleſh: & ſurely not euen the children of Iſrael themſelues coulde vnderſtande the contentes of that ſong, vntill they had had the experience of it. But the effect ſhewed that his ſo ſpeaking was not in vaine. The thing then which Moſes (or rather the holy Ghoſt by his mouth) intended, is to put the Iewes in minde, howe liberall God had ſhewed himſelfe to them, namely by bringing them into the Lande of promiſe, and by giuing them fruitfulneſſe, that it might ſuffice to maintaine them. And no doubt but he meant here to magnifie Gods goodnes, by declaring that he paſſed the common order of nature when he had ſuch a care to ſuſtaine his people ſo welthily in that lande which a man woulde neuer haue thoughte able to do it. So much the more therefore ought we to abhorre theſe diueliſh heades, which haue gone about to deface Gods grace in this behalfe, ſeeing that the holy ſcripture ſtandeth thereuppon, namely that men muſt not deeme according to the common order of nature, concerning Gods mainteining of his people after that manner. As for example, that curſed heretike which was executed heere among vs; was not aſhamed to write in one of his bookes that the land of Chanaan is indeede ſpoken of, howebeit ouer fauourablie, and that they which haue ſo ſpoken thereof, haue made vs to beleeue many things vnaduiſedly. And what cauſed him ſo to do, but that he was a worldly man and a deſpiſer of God, ſeeking by all meaner to ſherne God, and to aboliſh his grace, and that men might no more knowe how to worſhip him? So then yee ſee howe Gods grace was had in contempt. But contrariwiſe, we muſt alwayes be reſolued, that God hauing once made his promiſe to his ſeruant Abraham, did therupon intend to vtter his wonderfull power, as one that had a care of his people. Yea and we muſt call to mind what was ſaide yeſterday, namely that GOD had made his partition to the former inhabiters of that countrie, (to wit of the lande of promiſe) according to the number of the children of Iſrael, for he knewe wel ynough what a multitude of people he was to maintaine there. That is a cauſe why Moſes declareth here again, that the Rocks yeelded hony, and ſtones brought forth Oliues: that there was paſtureground to yeelde fat muttons, lambs & goats, & to yeeld butter, & all manner of white meate, ſo as nothing might be wanting: alſo that the land yeelded fat of corne

He meaneth Seruetus.

(for

(for he vseth that terme,) as who should say there were lumps in the meale, and nothing but pure and fine flower of wheate, so as our Lorde gaue his people abundance of all things ỹ he knewe to be meete for them: and that hee gaue them the bloud of ỹ grape, that is to say, the grapes were so full, that a man might haue pressed as it were bloude out of them. To be short, he declareth that God failed not his people in any thing, but prouided them store of all things necessarie, yea and shewed himselfe so liberall, that hee gaue them euē more than needed. Now after as God dealeth largely vnto vs, so must wee inlarge our harts to serue him, that we may be fully fraught with loue towardes him. For all the benefites which we receiue of him, must kindle our hearts to goe vnto him. We haue in them a tast of his goodnesse to draw vs vnto him. Now then if wee make not Gods gracious gifts auailable to vs, so as we loue him for them, and bee rauished with desire to come vnto him: it is certaine that wee must yeelde a sorrowfull account for it. For wee vnhallow them, and abuse them too shamefully, and thereby God looseth the things which hee had bestowed vpon vs as his children, because it is not his meaning that they should haue beene cast away as vpon dogges.

For this cause Moses aggraueth heere the malice of the people, in that he saieth, that after God had shewed himselfe so liberall, *foorthwith they became fatte, and being become thicke, fat, and as it were so brawned that they were readie to burst with grosse, they fell immediately to defie the God which had made them, and to mocke at the strength of their welfare.* Here wee be taught to call our selues daily to account for the benefits which God hath bestowed vppon vs. Wherefore let vs beware that we deuour not the benefites which wee haue of God, forgetting them and the giuer of them; Nay, let vs make them all as notes of remembrance to put vs in mind how much we be bound and indebted vnto him. True it is that wee can neuer bring that to passe, according whereto it is saide in the Psalme, that if men imploy themselues neuer so much to the considering of Gods gracious gifts, they shall finde themselues graueled, for they be mo than the hayres of our heads. Yet notwithstanding, it behoueth vs to doe our indeuour to magnifie our God, considering how greatly wee be bounde vnto him, and how many wayes hee maketh vs to feele his goodnes. That is our true studie; that is ỹ thing wherein we must exercise our selues all the time of our life. And the chiefe sacrifice that God requireth of vs, is thanksgiuing, which is when we honour him with the things that we haue receiued of him, according to this saying of the hundred and sixteenth Psalme, What shall I yeeld vnto the Lorde for all the good which hee hath done vnto mee? I will take the cup of saluation, and call vpon his name. So then let this text bee warning and incouragement to vs, to consider better of our Gods benefites that wee may fare the better by them. That is one point.

And moreouer, when wee once knowe that God hath bounde vs vnto him, and dayly bindeth vs in hauing a care to sustaine these our mortall bodies which are but carions & dung, the which neuertheleſse he feedeth with bread: let the consideration thereof make vs to mount vp higher, and to bethinke vs howe we be dayly fedde with the grace of his spirite, and refreshed with the liuing waters which wee haue of him, yea and that we be fedde with our Lord Iesus Christ himselfe who is the heauenly breade that feedeth our soules. Let vs consider these things, and learne therby to giue ourselues wholly to our God who sheweth himself so bountifull and liberall a father towards vs. If we do not so, we haue here a horrible condemnation. For (as I haue saide) to the intent to set out the mischiefe so much the more to the full in that men discharge not their duetie to Godwarde, being so preuented by his drawing of them vnto him: Moses putteth heere as it were into a paire of scales, on the one side Gods benefits, and on the otherside the peoples forgetfulnes, negligence & vnthankfulnes. And this is the thing that in effect wee haue to remember out of this place.

Iohn. 4. 14. & 6. 35.

Now it behoueth vs to marke well the thing that is rehearsed heere by Moses, namely *that the Righteous was growen fatte*. His attributing of that title to the people of Israel, is to signifie whereto they were called of God: for this comprehendeth the principall end of our calling. Gods adopting of vs to bee his children, is to the ende wee shoulde liue righteously. The Iewes are called a froward and crooked generation. Such then are the vnbeleeuers vntill our Lorde Iesus Christ haue brought them home to himselfe. On the contrarie part, when God calleth vs to be of his flocke or household: then he reformeth vs, and he will haue vs to holde the way of saluation as he sheweth it vnto vs. And such ought the children of Israel to haue beene, seeing that God had chosen them. But what? It is said that after the rightfull or righteous was waxen fatte, he fell to kicking against his master. Now if this bee saide nowadayes, it will bee double to our shame: for if our Lordes speaking of righteousnesse or vprightnesse be to shewe ỹ those whom he had sanctified, defiled themselues, and that those whom he had brought into the right way, were gone astray: it is to condemne them the more grieuously. Therefore it ought to make vs the more ashamed, whē God shal say, What are yee? For I haue adopted you to be my children, and what a lookingglasse and patterne haue you in me? Ye ought to resemble your father: ye knowe my goodnes and my iustice, and yet are you as crooked as serpents. Must we not needs be confounded with double shame, when God vpbraideth vs after that sort? So then, let vs learne to what purpose God hath ordained vs in vouchsafing vs the grace to gather vs vnto him. Let vs follow the vprightnes which he cōmandeth vs, & let vs not swarue aside from it. Moreouer let vs beware ỹ fatnesse blind vs not, and so mar vs: least when we haue beene full fedde for a time, we growe frowarde through Gods vsing of his liberalitie towards vs. And ỹ is a very needefull point.

Matt. 18. 2.

point. For when God sheweth himselfe so liberal, and feedeth vs with abundance of all things: his so doing is to make vs to perceiue his goodnesse the better. Therefore it ought to inflame vs the more, seeing that our Lorde handleth vs gently as though wee were his tender babes, as he himselfe termeth vs. But wee see on the contrarie part, that if God deale bountifully with vs, wee play the stubborne and vnruly horses. As a horse that is ouerpampered in the stable wil not be ruled, but fals to kicking, and becomes so lustie as if he were wilde: euen so is it with vs also, such is our nature. And are wee to bee excused, when we shall haue abused Gods gifts after that fashion? If it be demaunded what maketh men proude, what maketh men become wilde beasts, so as they cannot away with any yoke, but are feerce and hardharted, and cannot afterward away with good instruction and warning, but are madde against God, puffed vp with pride and presumption, starke blinde, destitute of reason, and vtterly voide of modestie and humanitie: what is the cause of all this, but the good things which God hath bestowed vppon them? And how may that bee? For it is a monstrous thing, and a thing vtterly against nature. God commeth to vs, he vttereth his treasures, hee woulde haue vs to knowe him to be as gentle and gratious a father as can be, hee maketh vs as it were cockeneyes, he could do no more to shewe what affection he beareth vs, except he should powre out his bowels vppon vs; he intertaineth vs as if it were in a Paradise, accordingly as it is saide of
Psal. 36. 10. all those whom God hath taught, namely that he keepeth them as much at their ease, as if they had all the commodities that coulde be wished. Seeing then that God hath shewed himselfe such a one; what a thing is it that men shoulde take occasion thereby, to kicke against him, and to bee proude and full of presumption & ouerweening, so as they shoulde despise all admonitions, yea and be as it were stark mad against all doctrine? And what a horrible sin is this? Yet do wee make a trade and custome of it. Whereby we see howe froward our nature is, and what a bottomlesse pit of al vices and infections is in it.

And therefore let vs beare this doctrine so much the better in minde, where it is said *that the righteous fall to kicking when he ones became fat*. How that although wee had earst some good plaine meaning in vs, & there appeared in vs some willingnesse to serue God: yet assoone as we be waxen fatte, by and by we become wilde beastes, as appeareth euen by experience. Howe many be there, which are treatable & liue after some vpright manner, so long as God holdeth them in meane state? True it is that we shall see a number of hypocrites also, who as long as they haue not wherwith to set out themselues, will pretend to be as lowly as is possible, and yet all is but hypocrisie. Again there are others which wil beare the countenance of good behauiour, and be well ruled, and liue in the feare of God: but as soone as they be growen fatte, by and by they play the wilde beasts, they be starke mad, they shew their teeth, they put out their hornes, they fall to kicking, & they fling out against God. This is seene too much. And therefore it was not for the children of Israel onely that Moses spake so: but the holy Ghost hath shewed vs heere as it were the lively picture or image of the naughtines which is in vs, and whereunto we be inclined and giuen: that is to wit, that when God hath once made vs fatte, by and by in steede of liuing righteously which is the very condition whereupon he hath chosen vs to be his children, we fall to kicking against him.

And to amplifie the lewdnesse yet more, of such as doe so abuse Gods gratious gifts; Moses saith further, *Thou art become thicke and fatte, thou art as it were couered with thine owne fatte, thou art ouergrowen with fatte. And so he forgate* (or forsooke) *the God that made him, and abhorred the strong God of his welfare*. Whereas Moses saith here that the people became lusty, fatte & thick, as though they had bin choked with their own greace: it is in two respects the one to blame them for, for that in steed of noting & marking well Gods benefites, that thereby they might haue bin the more prouoked to serue and honour him: they deuoured them vp without measure or temperance: and also that the quantitie of Gods benefites was so great, that it behighted them the greater condemnation. Let vs marke well then, that if wee forget Gods benefites, they be registred vp before him to put vs to reproch. Therfore we shall gaine nothing by the shortnes of our remembraunce, nor by our forgetting of the great number of Gods benefits, no nor yet by our defacing of them as much as in vs lieth: for God forgetteth not any thing, all thinges must needes come to account before him. Wherefore let vs prouide for it aforehand. And as (I haue said) let euery of vs looke neerely to himselfe, & the rather commodities we haue, let vs consider that our Lord bindeth vs the more to magnifie him, & wil haue vs to receiue the cup of saluation at his hand, & to call vpon his name, that our mouthes may be open to sing songs of praise vnto him. Mark that for one point. And therefore let vs assure ourselues that this vnthankfulnes wil make vs the more vnexcusable, seeing that God setteth here before vs the benefites which he had bestowed vpon his people, & vseth such a number of words to shew that nothing was forgotten which he had done for the people when they had once estranged themselues from him, and that his intent in shewing himself so liberal, was not that the people shoulde make none account of it, but that they shold haue born al things wel in minde. Let vs therfore serue for one point.

Againe, when our God giueth vs such abundance; let vs beware that we vse his benefits wel. For surely to learne to be rich, and to haue abundance, and also to be contented with poueric & Phil. 4. 12.
want (as saith S. Paul) is a poynt very hard to bee attained vnto: and yet it ought to be common to al the children of God. S. Paul, in saying that he could skil to be poore, meaneth that hee was patient, so as he neither troubled nor tormeted himselfe when God sent him scarsitie and want of ease: for he knew that God would not fail him in the end. Ye see then that the knowledge of Gods

children

children, is on the one side to be poore. Againe on the otherside he saith, that he can skill to abounde: meaning, that when God gaue him abundance and more than he needed: hee ouershot not himselfe by abusing it in superfluous expenses or in playing the loose colt as men term it, but that he vsed it moderatly and measurably. Then if God giue vs more than wee neede, let vs assure our selues that in so doing he approcheth the neerer to vs, at leastwise if we can skill to vse well the benefites which he hath bestowed vpō vs, that is to say without vainglory, without pride, without disorder, so as wee be not too much giuen to our delights, but vse Gods benefites with measure and stayednes, and therwithall be readie to indure hunger and thirst when it pleaseth God, that if he giue vs abundance wee be not so drunken with it but that we stil acknowledge him to be our fosterfather. But we see on the contrary part howe the worlde behaueth it selfe in this behalfe. For what a sort of drunkardes, what a sort of gluttons shall a man see, which are like swine in a stie without any vnderstanding or reason? They can fill their paunches wellynough, but they can no skill to lift vp their handes to heauen to honor him that findeth and maintaineth them so wealthily: their groynes & mussels are euer grubbing downewarde to their feeding. Therefore let vs not resemble them. If God giue vs wealth, let vs not pamper or pranck vp our selues, but rather let it bee as a spurre to quicken vs vp to come vnto him: the nearer that hee approcheth vnto vs, and the more that hee maketh vs to feele his goodnes: the more wholly let vs yeeld our selues thereto. That is the thing which we be taught in this text.

Now whereas Moses saith, *Hee forsoke the God which made him, and skorned the strong God of his welfare*: thereby hee sheweth vs after what manner we abuse Gods benefites, namely by shrinking away from him, whereas he would haue vs to bee brought neerer to him. For (as I saide afore) all the commodities which God giueth vs in this world ought to be as ladders whereby to climbe vp to him. And if we be wedded to the earth, this the way to make vs turne the benefits of our God to the cleane contrarie. Therefore let vs take good heede that we prouoke him not to displeasure. And whereas Moses saieth, that it was God that created his people: hee meaneth it not simply as in respect that he is the maker of the world, but as in respect that hee had chosen that people, and had made as it were a newe worlde of them. For Gods fetching of the children of Israel out of the lande of Egypt, his feeding of them in the wildernes, and his putting of them in possession of the land which he had promised vnto them, were as a newe creating of them: He had not onely made them men, but also newe men. So then the making that Moses speakes of here, is not of the first making whereby the children of Israel were brought into the worlde: but of Gods reforming of them to bee his children. And it is the very same thing that is ment in the fourescore and fifteenth Psalm. Now then (saith Moses) will ye spite him which hath twice made you after that fashion? What an vnthankfulnes were that? The like condemnation lyeth vpon vs nowadayes, if we walke not in the obedience of our God, seeing he hath not onelie placed vs in the worlde, but also called vs to the hope of the endlesse life, reforming vs by his holy spirit, and calling vs to the knowledge of the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ. Sith it is so, let vs beware we forget it not, or that we shrink not away from him in any wise. Yea and let vs marke well the word that Moses vseth in saying that *they mocked or skorned the strong God of their welfare*. The terme that hee vseth commeth of a *foole* or *thing of nothing*, [as if a man would say, they befooled him, or they louted him.] Whereby he aggraunateth the ouergreat skornefulnesse of that people in not honoring God as they ought to haue done. Then if wee yeelde not God his due glorie and praise, it is all one as if wee made no account of him, or as if wee bleared out our tongues at him in way of mockage. And that were too excessiue vnthankfulnesse or rather vntolerable trecherie. Therfore let vs beware that we be not guiltie of such a crime as is the despising of him which is the strong holde of our welfare, that is to say, him vpon whom we stay, without whom we can by no meanes continue, which keepeth vs vnder his protection, and to be short, of whom we hold our life and all that belongeth thereunto. Must we not needes be worse than brute beastes, when we forget him? Let vs vnderstand then that besides the other benefites which God bestoweth vpon vs, we be also setled vpon his power, so as he hath y gouerning of vs, and we be after such a sort in his tuition, that we finde him alwayes the fortresse of our welfare, to the intent that wee holding our selues to him, may knowe also that hee is euer readie and forwarde to increase his gratious giftes and to mukiplie them, vntill hee haue brought vs to the full perfection of our saluation.

Psal. 93. 91

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good GOD with acknowledgment of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them more and more, and therewithall that hauing shewed himselfe so gratious towards vs, hee suffer vs not to forget his benefits, nor to abuse the sustenance which hee giueth vs in this worlde, but that wee may be drawen further by it, namely to seeke the heauenly foode of our soules leaste they shoulde starue, and that our whole stay and contentation may be in the doctrine which is dayly deliuered vs by the Gospel, and in the grace of our Lorde Iesus Christ; so as all his spirituall gifts may bee applied by vs to the glorifying of our good God: that when his glorie shineth forth in this world, we may perfectly be partakers thereof, after wee bee rid of this mortall flesh, and dispatched from the transitorie state of this earthly life. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but also to al people and Nations of the earth &c.

On

On Wednesday the iij. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXII. Sermon which is the fifth vppon the two and thirtith Chapter.

16 They haue prouoked him with their ſtrange gods, & ſtirred him to diſpleaſure with their abhominations.

17 They haue offered ſacrifice to Deuils, and not vnto God: to gods whom they haue not knowen, to newe gods lately come vp, whom your fathers feared not.

18 Thou haſt forgotten the ſtrong God that begate thee: and beene vnmindefull of the God that ſhaped thee.

19 The Lorde ſawe it and was ſore grieued at it by reaſon of the prouocation of his ſonnes and daughters.

HEere Moſes declareth the vnthankfulneſſe of the people, in that they perverted the ſeruice of God, hauing the lawe whereby they were taught after what manner God woulde bee honored, and being inſtructed at his hande that they ought to giue themſelues wholly to him, and not go ſeeke vnto ydols, nor borrowe any thing of the heathen and infidels. But notwithſtanding all this, the people ceaſed not to take the bridle in their teeth, and to mingle a ſort of ſuperſtitions with the ſeruice of God. Inſomuch as it ſufficed them not to haue God to their father, but they woulde needes haue a number of other patrons, as men terme them. And this befell not onely when Moſes wrate this ſong: but alſo the holy ghoſt informed him of the things that were then to come vpon that people, and this record was of neceſſitie to bee giuen thereof. And ſo this ſong ſerued to ſhewe the tranſgreſſours of Gods lawe, that they coulde not ſcape the hande of the heauenly Iudge, ſeeing their ſinnes were knowen ſo long aforehande. For howe is it poſſible that God ſhould forget the faultes that wee haue committed, or howe is it poſſible for vs to blindfolde his eyes that he ſhould not ſee them, ſeeing he foreſawe our euill doings euen long afore we were borne, and is the iudge of them?

But heere Moſes vpbraideth the people, *That they had prouoked God by ſtrange Gods, that they had ſtirred him vp to iealouſie, and that they ſet his wrath on fire with their abhominations.* Firſt wee muſt call to remembrance what hath beene ſaide as well in the fifth Chapter as in other places: namely that this worde *Iealouſie* is attributed to God, becauſe hee will haue vs to worſhippe none but himſelfe alone: and alſo becauſe hee admitteth vs with this condition, that wee ſhoulde walke before him in all manner of pureneſſe. When a man misbehaueth himſelfe, it is all one as if a woman forſaking her husbande, ſhoulde play the harlot and giue ouer her ſelf to al leawdnes. That then is the cauſe why God termeth himſelfe iealous. Not that he is ſubiect to any paſſions; but to ſhewe that his honour is deare to him, and that he cannot away with any compaNion, but that if we will acquite our ſelues of the faith that we haue plighted vnto him, wee muſt yeeld ourſelues wholy vnto him, we muſt behaue ourſelues ſoundly & vncorruptly without doubleneſs, we muſt not ſtand debating what God we ſhould ſticke vnto, but we muſt let him haue the poſſeſſion of vs, & not make any minglemangle or corruption. And that is the cauſe why Moſes expreſly addeth the worde *ſtrange*, as though a woman forgetting her ſelfe to bee vnder couert baron, or that ſhe is bounde vnto her husbande by reaſon of the faith which ſhe hath plighted vnto him: ſhoulde goe make herſelfe common to ſuch as had no intereſt in her. In the ſame taking are wee, when wee inuent newe gods to worſhip them at our owne pleaſure.

Deut. 5. 9.

Moſes addeth *their abhominations*: meaning that as ſoone as wee ſteppe aſide from the liuing God, and from the doctrine whereby he woulde haue vs to bee ruled; all our life is deteſtable before him, what colour of good intent ſo euer wee ſet vppon it, as the vnbeleeuers beare themſelues euer in hande that they doe well when they corrupt the true religion with their owne fancies. They beare themſelues in hand that all ſhoulde be well: but God cleane contrarie wiſe auoweth that in thoſe doings of theirs there is nothing but curſedneſſe. And ſo let vs marke well, that God alloweth not any Religion which is not ruled by his worde, and that it ſhall be in vaine for vs to alledge that wee thought we did for the beſt, when we ſought patrons and aduocates and inuented newe gods of our owne heade. All theſe thinges may perchaunce goe for good on mens behalfe, who deceiue themſelues with their owne dotages and dreames: but yet hath GOD giuen his definitiue ſentence vpon them, which hee will not repeale.

And to aggrauate the euill, Moſes addeth *that they were newe gods, gods that were ſtart vp but a while agoo, gods whom their fathers knewe not*: and ſo in effect, that they had done ſacrifice, not

vnto

vnto God, but vnto the diuel. When hee speaketh here of newe gods, whome the fathers feared not, and which came vp but tother dayt thereby God doth the children of Israel to vnderstande, that they ought to haue sticked vnto him, because hee is the maker of the world, and there was none but hee onely from all euerlastingnesse, and that without him there is nothing firme and stable. Here therefore hee reproueth the peoples foolishnesse in forging newe gods to themselues, euen such gods as had neuer beene knowen of afore. And heere wee must note, that Moses termeth al things by the name of *Nouelties*, which are inuented by men, though the error haue continued neuer so long time. For it is a fondnesse to alledge that men haue done so heretofore a hundred yeares ago, and that things haue beene helde and obserued so beyonde all remembrance of man. For God passeth not for that. And why? Wee must goe to the euerlastingnesse which hath beene before the creation of the worlde. Men then can not preiudice Gods trueth by their long possessing of their abuses. For God will still vse such style as wee see heere, namely, that it is still but newe stuffe. For in deede the ydols of whome mention is made heere, had beene worshipped long time afore. As for example, the Egyptians boasted themselues to haue beene of ten thousande yeares continuance before the creating of the worlde: they bare them selues in hande that they had their kingdome long afore the Moone was created in the skye. But what coulde all this boote them as in respect of their superstitions? Let vs marke well then, that the children of Israell, intermedling themselues with the abuses and corruptions of such as boasted themselues to haue liued after that fashion by the space of fiue hundred, a thousande, three thousande, yea and (as I sayde) ten thousande yeares before the creation of the worlde, are (notwithstanding all this) condemned of denying of newe gods. Coulde not they haue replyed thus? This is not newe: for let it bee inquired, and it will bee founde that the Egyptians haue euer liued so: and Gods lawe may bee called newe in comparison, at leastwise to outwarde seeming. But (as I sayde afore) Moses had an eye to Gods euerlastingnesse. For if yee seeke there for the things that men haue deuised; yee shall finde them to bee nothing. And why so? For (as it is sayde in the Psalme) a thousande yeares are but as one day in Gods sight. In deede wee make great account of a thousande yeares: but that is because wee passe away in post through the worlde. For after a two or three turnes, wee bee fayne to returne from whence wee came. By reason of the shortnesse and brittlenesse of our life, wee make a greate matter of it if a thing haue continued fourtie or threescore yeares, and much more if it continue a hundred yeares. And if it holde out to a thousande: then wee thinke wee shoulde neuer make any more sticking at it, nor any more gaynesay it: but in deede all this is but mockerie, as I haue declared before.

And truely GOD created the worlde to the ende that his maiestie shoulde bee seene both aboue and beneath, as in a looking glasse, and hee hath taught men that it is hee, to whome they ought to come. Adam knewe that. Neuertheless, most men haue falne away to superstition, insomuch that wee see that the seruice of GOD was imbaced euen in the life of Adam, and that it was fayne to bee reformed againe as it were by miracle. When the floude came, God cleansed the earth newe againe. And whereas hee reserued but one onely housholde wherein there were but eight persons: it was a meane to bring home the worlde againe vnto him: that whereas they had all beene backeslyders afore, and had turned away from him, they ought as then to haue come to reason, and to haue reformed themselues by the thinges which they had seene with their eyes. But beholde, there followed a newe falling away euen in the life of Noy. His owne children forsooke the seruice of GOD, and forged ydols to them selues. Nowe this ought of reason to bee taken for newe. But the mischiefe continueth still, and wee see that ydolatrie reigned euen in the time of Abraham. Foure hundred yeares mo had passed at such time as the lawe was giuen, yea, there were passed about a fiue hundred yeares since the time that Abraham had beene an ydolater at home with his father. Superstition therefore had beene auncient, and was become as it were rotten. Men had weltered in it so long time, that they might well say, We in these dayes are not the first beginners thereof. No: but though an errour bee once waxen olde, yet must not men make a custome of it, neither must they of a wicked custome make a continuall lawe or rule. Loe howe men beguyle themselues by sticking too stiffely to things that are growen into euill custome. For why? They beare them selues in hande, that if a thing haue beene vsed of long time, then it is lawfull for man to doe it. But an euill custome is nothing else than an errour forgrowen. And it is so much the woorse and the more to bee mislyked, because God hath beene the grieuouslyer offended by it. Wherefore let vs beware that wee drawe not thinges to a consequence, because they haue beene abused of long time: but let vs still returne backe to the originall.

Gen. 7. 17.

Iosua. 24. 2.

And this is a verie necessarie poynt for vs in these dayes. For the Papistes affirme that the thinges which wee doe, are newe, and that they were inuented but a whyle agoe. Yea, but if wee aske them a proofe of their antiquitie, what say they? That such thinges haue beene done nowe these fiue hundred yeares. Truely they lye most commonly with full mouth. For the thing which they holde as chiefe and most resolute, is not of so long continuance. If yee seek for their confession, or shrift, about a foure hundre dyeares agoe, there was no lawe at all thereof. If yee looke for their transubstantiation, it is in like case. They make men beleeue that the breade is no more a materiall

thing, but that it is God whome wee ought to worship. And that is spycke and spawne newe, I meane euen in accounting after the manner of men. In like case is it with all the residue. If wee looke vppon all the fashions which they holde at this day, surely they bee but a renuing of the thinges that were in olde tyme, and yet there is little or no resemblaunce in them. But let vs put the case it were to bee graunted them, that the forme of religion which they holde hath beene obserued by the space of a thousande yeares or mo. What will a thousand yeares helpe when wee come before GOD? They will not bee reckened for a day, no nor for a minute, as I sayde afore. And where is then our true antiquitie? In Iesus Christ who is the beginning of all thinges, and to whome all things are to bee brought backe againe: In the liuing God, by whom our Lorde Iesus Christ is sent vnto vs, to make his will knowen vnto vs. There must wee bee grounded, if wee will haue the auncient faith. For in holding our selues to men, wee shall haue nothing but noueltie. Score wee vp neuer so many yeares, they will stande vs in no steede; for all passeth and glydeth away. But wee must haue him, which hath neither beginning nor ending, and his vnchangeable trueth must bee our rule. When wee rest vppon that, then haue wee the auncient faith. And therefore wee at this day may well protest against the Papistes, Turkes, and Iewes themselues, that they bee backeslyders, and haue withdrawen themselues from the true and pure religion, and that wee continue in the doctrine which hath beene followed in all ages, worshipping the God which created vs, which gaue foorth his lawe by the hand of Moses, and which hath vttered himself most perfectly by the Gospel. Bring wee here any newe thing? Say wee that men must haue newe rules and newe fashions inuented by men as the Papistes doe? For all their Religion is grounded vppon these poyntes, namely, that they must keepe the traditions of their elders, that they must obserue the lawes of their mother holy Church, that the same must bee taken in equall authoritie with the holy Scripture, and that the holy Ghost was not giuen fully ynough to the Apostles, but that the perfection of thinges was reuealed afterwardes to a sort of hypocrites and I wote not to whome else. Those are thinges whereon the Papistes rest. The Turkes are altogether Renegates. The Iewes haue peruerted the lawe, and haue no more of it but the dead letter, because they haue refused Iesus Christ who is the soule thereof as Saint Paul termeth him. So then, wee may well protest, that our faith is auncient, for as much as it is grounded vppon Gods trueth, who neuer chaungeth ne varyeth, and that men haue not taught vs any thing on their owne head, but that wee haue the same God which hath vttered him selfe in all ages, and that wee follow the doctrine whereunto hee woulde haue men to holde themselues, which likewise is euerlasting. Thus much concerning the first poynt.

Psal. 90. 4. & 2. Pet. 3. 8.

2. Cor. 3. 6. 7. 8.

And as touching the mention that is made of the fathers, let vs marke that in this behalfe wee must in any wise vse discretion, that wee take not those indifferently for our fathers, which could not beget vs by the worde of God. For the Egyptians and all the Infidels of the worlde couldе welynough say. Our fathers liued so, so haue they taught vs, wee holde our religion of them: and such sayinges might wel bee set as a sheelde to defende them. But because God disclaymed their fathers, therefore couldе that excuse stande them in no steede. For God presupposeth heere that hee had called to him both Abraham and the Patriarkes, and also that they had holde the true religion, which thing did put a difference betwene them and the rest of the whole worlde.

Againe, whereas hee sayeth, *that they had worshipped gods whome their fathers feared not*: it is all one as if hee shoulde vpbrayd them, saying: What? I adopted and choose your fathers to bee my children, and they worshipped mee as their God, and will you nowe forsake mee? To bee short, wee must holde this for a generall rule, our fathers are those whome God hath reputed, and aduowed to bee his children. Therefore whosoeuer seeketh any other fathers than the children of God, shall finde nothing but bastardie. And at that poynt are the Papistes. For in speaking of the fathers, they consider not that the Apostles and such other as haue beene begotten by the pure doctrine of the Gospel, are our true fathers: but they call hypocrites, and dreamers, yea and scorners of GOD which haue turned all thinges vpside downe, their fathers. They alledge the greate Asses which neuer tasted any whit of the holy Scripture; so that if a man marke what maner of fathers they auouche, surely it is so fonde a thing, that they bee woorthie to bee laughed to scorne for it euen of little babes. True is is that for honours sake they will say that Saint Austine, S. Ambrose, and Saint Bernarde are their fathers: but if any good thing be alledged that is founde in them, they abhorre that: in so much that if they had them alive at this day, they woulde burne them as well as they doe the Martyrs, whom wee see them handle most cruelly. Therefore (as I sayde afore) it behoueth vs to walke discreetely in that behalfe, and to consider who bee our true fathers that wee may followe them: namely those whome God auoweth for his children, and haue begotten vs by his worde, which haue holde vs to it, and which haue taught vs it. But as soone as this incorruptible seede of saluation is marred, by 1. Pet. 1. 23. and by there is no more fatherhood. And herein wee must practise Saint Paules saying, which is, that all kinred proceedeth of God. Let vs Eph. 3. 15. then referre all kinred vnto God, and so shall wee not bee ashamed. But if euery man will needes followe his owne fathers without difference; hee shall finde that when the blynde followeth the blynde, both of them fall into the pit and breake their neckes together. At that poynt

poynt are all they which stande stiffely in their owne opinion against God, & leane to ỹ things which haue beene deuised by men. Therefore let vs bee well aduised, and seeing GOD hath graunted vs the grace to haue his gospel planted once among vs, let vs continue in all pureneſſe, holding our ſelues wholly vnto him, that there may bee a conformitie and agreement betweene vs and thoſe that haue ſhewed vs the right way. Thus yee ſee in effect what wee haue to remember vppon this text, where Moſes blameth the Iewes for ſtarting backe, & for deuiſing of new gods which had not beene feared among their fathers.

Yea and wee muſt bethinke vs of that which is ſayd in the ſeconde Chapter of Ieremy. Go your wayes (ſayth hee) into all the countryes afarre off, get ye ouer the ſea, ſeeke throughout all the yles, and ſee if there be any people that forſaketh their gods: yet are they no gods, they bee but ydoles and dead thinges: but you haue forſaken mee, euen mee who am the fountaine of liuing water. God ſheweth there that ydolaters are wilfull in their leaſings: inſomuch that although the diuell haue ſo bewitched them that they bee voyde of diſcretion and reaſon, & cannot iudge of any thing: yet notwithſtanding they be wedded ſtill to their follies. And becauſe they thinke they do well, they holde them to it, and they can by no meanes bee turned from it. Yee ſhall ſee them as greatly bent to their willes, as may bee, and yet they haue no foundation nor proofe thereof. Now then, that we which haue knowen Gods trueth, which are ſure that it is hee which created and ſhaped vs, and which hath vttered himſelfe to vs by his lawe, by his Prophets, and by his Goſpel: that wee which haue ſuch warrant and certeintie, that wee which haue the fathers & the greate clowde of witneſſes to guyde vs (as the Apoſtle termeth them in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes:) that wee which after the Apoſtles haue alſo had the Martyrs & thoſe which haue receiued the Goſpel with pure obediẽce, & followed the ſimplicitie thereof: that we (I ſay) ſhould yet notwithſtanding loue better the corruption, dung, & filthines brought in by men, & that we ſhould find in our hearts to haue Gods word falſifyed among vs: what a thing were that? Muſt it not needes be that wee be as it were mad, when we be ſo vnſtedfaſt & light mynded, as to ſtart away from that which is certaine and infallible? After that maner then muſt wee put this text in vre, to ỹ intent we be not accuſed before God, as ſeekers of new gods which were not knowẽ to our fathers, & which came vp but a while agoe.

The word that Moſes vſeth here betokeneth properly to ſtand in awe, to feare, or to tremble before God. Wherby he ſheweth that Gods maieſtie ought to bee ſo dreaded of vs, ỹ we ſhould ſtoope vnto it, & be caſt down & humbled at it. Not that God would haue vs to be afrayd of it, for we can neuer ſerue him with our good will, & with a pure & free heart, if wee conceiue ſuch a feare of him as ſhal make vs to flee from him. But there are two things in the ſeruice of God, as is ſhewed vs in the Pſalme which ſhalbe ſong vpon, namely that in comming vnto God, wee muſt bee touched with a certeine feare, to yeeld him his due reuerence. That is one point. And therewithall wee muſt alſo conſider his goodnes, that wee may take courage to come vnto him, & be bold to cal vpon him, not douting but that he heareth vs, & that we ſhalbe wel accepted at his hand. Marke wel therefore what this word *Feare*, importeth, that wee may learne to hold our ſelues vnder the obedience of our God with ſuch awe as none of vs may take leaue to runne aſtray, as wee ſee men do, whoſe boldnes is ſuch that they fling abrode euery where, becauſe they make but a ſporte & a dalyance of God. Therefore let vs beware that wee be not ſo rude as to daly with ſo great a Lorde; but rather let vs be ſeaſoned with ſuch a feare aforehand, as may alwayes hold vs in awe: and yet notwithſtanding not cauſe vs to ceaſſe frõ worſhipping of our God, in ſuch ſort as hee may be amyable to vs, and we may preaſe boldly to him knowing well that he will receiue vs with pitie, as a father doth his children, ſeeing hee calleth vs to him before we come. Pſal. 5. 8. Pſal. 103. 13

Nowe in the ende Moſes ſayeth, *that they offered ſacrifice to diuels & not vnto God.* This ſaying may ſeeme rough and hard at the firſt ſight. For if a man had asked the heathen concerning their intent, they would haue ſayd by & by, We knowe there is one chiefe God: but wee haue many gods becauſe the maieſtie of God is ſpred out euery where. And therefore foraſmuch as we cannot attaine to ſo high a thing, it behoueth vs to haue meanes. That is the cauſe why they forged ſuch a multitude of gods. As for the diuels, they abhorred them. The Heathen could as will skill as the Papiſtes to ſay, Wee intende not to haue aught to doe with the diuels, ſauing the ſorcerers, (for there haue euer beene ſome ſuch) but I ſpeake as touching their cõmon religion: and it is certaine that all of them woulde haue proteſted, Our will is to ſerue God. But what is anſwered them heere by the mouth of Moſes, who is appoynted iudge with full authoritie, and is as the inſtrument of the holy Ghoſt? Ye ſerue the diuel. Wee ſee then that all their excuſes ſhall ſtande them in no ſteede, and that this muſt holde to the condemnation of the whole worlde, namely, that as ſoone as men ſwarue neuer ſo litle from ỹ pure trueth, it is a ſeruing of the diuell, and the diuel hath a parte in all their doings: for God refuſeth euery whit of it. And it is a text well worthie to bee noted, to the intent that the ignorant wretches may bee wakened, and vnderſtande that in grounding themſelues vpon their owne good intentes, they doe nothing elſe but increaſe Gods vengeance vppon their heads, without amending their euſe thereby. Wherefore let vs on our ſyde vtterly abhorre all that euer is contrarie to the ſeruice of God, & make much of the fauour that hath beene ſhewed vs in his deliuering of vs from ſuch a bottomleſſe pit. We haue thought our ſelues to haue done maruellouſly well in ſeruing of ydols; we haue

esteemed it an Angels life to trot vp and down from altar to alear, and from chappel to chappel, to babble before puppets, to heare Masses, and to set our minds vppon such other gewgawes. But in the meane while, beholde, God telleth vs that wee serued the diuel. It is a horrible thing for vs to heare him say so. Therefore let vs looke that wee condemne our ydolatries, and bee sory that wee haue so prouoked Gods wrath against vs. And therewithall let vs consider the inestimable good which he hath done vs, in reaching vs his hande to lift vs out of the gulfe wherein wee were plunged. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vppon this Text. And therfore let vs be throughly settled in the pure doctrine, and in the simplicitie of the holy Scripture. For why? As long as wee holde that rule, wee bee sure that GOD will allowe of the seruice which wee doe vnto him. But if wee mingle any thing with it of our owne fancies, or if we borrowe any thing of men; all is marde and corrupted, and the diuel is foorthwith put in possession of all that euer wee doe, and God renounceth vs, according to this saying of his by the Prophet Ezechiel. Ezec.20.39 Hente (sayeth he) I giue ouer my part, I will haue neither little nor much to doe in this case, I require no more of you: yee thinke to serue mee and your ydoles together, but I renounce you and giue you ouer quite and cleane to the diuell: for I intende not that you shall so mingle mee with your dung and filthinesse. Thus you see in effect what Moses meant to declare heere.

Nowe hee addeth, *that the people forgate the God which had begotten them, and the mightie one which had created and shaped them.* Hee vseth still the same worde which I haue translated before, and which signifieth properly a *Rocke*. And God is so termed, because we be preserued, and mayntained by his power, as if a house were grounded and buylded vpon a rocke. Whereas hee sayeth that the people had forgotten the God which had begotten them, it is to bereaue them of all excuse of ignorance. For the Heathen might well haue sayde that they had neuer tasted a whit of the true religion, and that their welt'ring after that manner in their owne dorages, was for want of teaching, and that it is no woonder though a blynd man stumble or goe astray in the darke. The Heathen might haue alleaged after that sort for themselues. But as for those to whome the lawe had bin giuen, there was no such starting hole for them. For God had drawen their father Abraham Iosu.24.2. Exod.3.15. & 34.1. from the ydolatrie wherein he liued, as is declared in the last Chapter of Iosua. Hereupon, about a foure hundred yeres after, he put them the better in mynde againe that he was the liuing God. And afterward he did set down his wil euen in writing. It was his minde that it should bee a president of authoritie whereby to knit a mutuall agreement betweene him and them, as if hee shoulde say, I wilbee your father, and bee you my children. Seeing then that the people of Israel were taught after that fashion, and God vttered himselfe so familiarly vnto them; what can they say, or what excuse can they alledge, for their turning away to the superstitions of the Heathen, and for their peruerting of the trueth, which was so throughly knowen vnto them, and yet they turned it into lyes, insomuch as they fell to the quenching of the light of saluation, and woulde needes goe wilfully and wittingly astray, seeking their owne destruction euen after that God had reached them his hande, and shewed them the way of saluation? According whereunto wee haue seene the protestation that Moses made in the thirtith Chapter, saying: This is the way, walke therein. Is it not too shamefull a Deut.30.15 rebellyousnesse, when folke will so despise God and not sticke vnto him? So then, it is not causeles that they bee accused in this text to haue forgotten the GOD which shaped them. And therefore let vs marke well, that when wee haue once knowen God, the same ought to suffice to holde vs in continuall obedience towardes him, if wee were not too too vnthankfull. Nothing ought to holde vs so sure as the knowing of GOD. For then may wee say, This is our GOD, wee haue no dout nor misweening of him, as they haue which deceiue themselues by following their owne imaginations, but wee haue the certaine trueth which cannot beguyle vs. Had we therefore well profited in the knowledge of GOD, surely it woulde suffice to holde vs in awe. And although wee were neuer so sore turmoyled on all sydes, so as the diuell did cast neuer so many stumbling blockes in our wayes, and wee had neuer so many occasions giuen to turne vs asyde, and wee see neuer so greate diuersitie of opinions and whatsoeuer else is possible: surely if wee haue profited in Gods schoole, and knowe him as wee ought to doe, wee shall neuer bee turned away from him. And that is Saint Eph.4.14 Paules meaning where hee sayeth, that such as are well grounded in the Gospel, shall no more bee like little babes that wilbee allured at the shewing of an apple, and turne their heads this way and that way after it, and that if a man put a toye in their head, by and by they bee carryed away with it, and forget the thing which they were in loue withall a litle afore. S. Paul sayth that if wee be well settled in the Gospell, wee shall not bee any more so led by the billes, neither shall the diuell bee able to woorke vs such illusions, but that wee shall abyde vnuanquishable, and hee shall gayne nothing at our hands. For our faith shall be stedfast.

Also on the contrarie parte, if wee doe estrange ourselues from GOD, after wee haue once knowen him, it betokeneth a desperate malice in vs, it is not for vs to cloke the matter as then, for all that wee can alleage wilbee to no purpose. Then is it a thrusting of GOD vnder our foote, if after his shewing of him selfe vnto vs, wee corrupt the pureneſse of his woorde in chaunging the Religion which hee hath giuen vnto vs, and in

in leauing the rule which it behooued vs to follow. Nowe wee see the meaning of Moses. And therefore seeing that God hath beene so gracious to vs as to reueale his will vnto vs, and sheweth vs that hee is the liuing God: let vs take heed that wee wauer not any more, ne bee any more as reedes that yeeld to euery wynde, but that wee continue stedfast in the fayth wee haue receiued by his worde, least it bee cast in our teeth that wee haue forgotten him with all the benefites which wee haue receiued at his hande.

And heere Moses setteth not downe singly the worde *God*, but sayeth, *The God which begate thee, the mightie one which shaped thee.* Here Moses telleth the people of Israell, that they had good cause to holde him for their God, if they had not quyte and cleane forgotten the gracious goodnesse which they had earst founde in him by experience. And that is a thing well woorthie to bee weyed. For it is Gods will not onely to bee knowen in his beeing or in his name, but also to shewe himselfe to vs by his deedes, so as wee haue true recordes of his power, goodnesse, mercie, and iustice. Seeing then that God hath so shewed himselfe to vs, what is our vnthankfulnesse if wee knowe him not? Is it not too shamefull? Therefore wee must alwayes consider, that God hath caused it to be declared vnto vs, not onely that it is hee whome wee ought to feare, and to whome wee ought to be subiect without any further proofe, but also that therewithall it is hee that hath begotten vs. And this is to bee marked yet better of vs, than it was of the men of olde time vnder the lawe. For wee haue our Lorde Iesus Christ the onely sonne, into whose bodie wee be graffed that we may become the sonnes of God. Therefore the body of the tree and roote of our adoption, is that wee bee made the brethren of our Lorde Iesus Christ. For beeing begotten of God, wee bee nourished and sustayned by the doctrine of his Gospel. Nowe if wee consider what wee were before, namely, the children of Adam and heires of euerlasting cursednesse: and also if wee haue an eye to those whome God suffereth to runne into destruction, it will yeelde the greater glory to the fauour which hee sheweth vs. Seeing then that God doeth nowe drawe vs to him to bee his owne, and to bee of his household, shall wee fling away from him? Shall wee rather followe ydoles which wee are not acquainted with? Wee see then as nowe, that wheras Moses doeth so grieuously blame the children of Israell, hee doeth it not without cause, considering the experience which they had had of Gods goodnes, power and iustice, and yet that they had made no reckoning of it.

In respect whereof hee sayeth that *God sawe it and was angrie as it, euen because of the misbehauiour of his sonnes and daughters.* This sentence is a confirmation of my former saying. For whereas the Iewes are termed the children of God, it is not in way of honour, but rather to shewe that they were guiltie of such vnfaithfulnesse as to forsake their God, and to rebell against him, and to woorke him such spyte, as that they had leuer choose the deuil than him. Thus yee see howe wee ought to ioyne these two thinges together, namely, that God is the mightie one which begate vs, and of whom wee holde all thinges: and therewithall that hee hath receiued vs and adopted vs to be his children. But wee shall pay full deare for it, if wee continue not in his obedience. The thing then whereunto wee must come backe, is that if God cannot beare with the wickednes of the world, ne doeth forgiue the vnbeleeuers which haue sinned without the knowledge of his will: needes must wee bee dubble punished, and needes must more horrible vengeance light vppon our heads, who haue beene faithfully instructed to drawe nigh vnto him, and taught that hee hath nourished vs in his lappe as his owne children, and yet notwithstanding wee haue forsaken him. And that is Saint Paules meaning where hee sayeth, that they which haue sinned without the lawe, shall perish neuertheless for all that: and that they which haue offended after warning giuen by knowledge of the lawe, shall haue the sorer damnation, accordingly also as our Lorde Iesus sayeth, that the seruant which hath done amisse though it were through vnskilfulnesse, shall not fayle to bee punished for it; because hee ought to haue inquyred his masters will. If a seruaunt say; I wist it not: And knowest thou not that I am thy master? Oughtest thou not to inquire my will? But much more ought God to haue such prehemineuce ouer his creatures. And if they that haue offended so through ignorance are not excused, what shall become of vs which knowe the will of our GOD? If wee fall to stryuing against him, to spyte him as it were of set purpose and of prepensed malice and frowardnesse; if wee fall to dashing at him with out hornes, so as wee set our selues against his righteousnesse and transgresse his whole doctrine: must not so greate and so diueliish headdinesse bee punished much more grieuously? In that respect is it sayde heere that God was prouoked to anger with the transgression of his sonnes and daughters: as who shoulde say; True it is that God is greately offended throughout the whole worlde: but hee had reserued a people to himselfe, whome hee had gathered together for his owne inheritance, and euen they are growen out of kynde: and is not that a thing to moue Gods vengeance the more?

Rom. 2. 12.

Luk. 12. 48.

Nowe let vs apply this doctrine to our owne vse. And sith wee see howe the wretched worlde is blynded nowe adayes, let vs consider thus with our selues: Well, the Papistes shall not fayle to bee condemned. And if wee condemne them, can they scape the hande of GOD? That is vnpossible. But let vs first of all play the Iudges towardes our selues, and consider that GOD hauing called vs to bee his children, will bee knowen to be our father, and wilbe serued & worshipped at our hands. And therfore whensoeuer we happen

to ouershoote our selues, and to giue ouer ſ doctrine wherein we haue bin once trayned. Gods wrath must needs be kindled against vs, & without cõpariſõ much more grieuously than against the silly ignorant and vnbeleeuing sort. Seeing then that we be Gods children, & he hath set his markes vpon vs, & neuer ceaſſeth to allure vs by gentleness: let vs not turne away from him, but let his ſo doing prouoke vs to honor him and to ſerue him in ſuch wiſe, as he may take pleaſure in vs, and delight to doe vs good, and continue the increaſe of his grace and benefites more & more towardes vs.

But nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our ſinnes, praying him not to lay them to our charge, but to drawe vs to him continually as long as wee bee in this worlde, correcting our vyces and infirmities, and ridding vs from all the corruptenes of our fleſh, and ſtil bearing with vs till hee haue fully reformed vs according to his righteouſnes, and taken vs quyte & cleane out of this corrupcible life. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thurſday the iiij. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXIII. Sermon which is the ſixt vpon the two & thirtith Chapter.

20 So he ſayd, I will hyde my face from them, and ſee what ſhall befall them. For they bee a fickle generation, children in whome there is no ſtedfaſtnes.

21 They haue mooued mee to ielouzie by the thing that is not god, and they haue prouoked mee to diſpleaſure with their vanities. And I [likewiſe] will moue them to ielouzie by them which are no people, and by a fooliſh nation will I prouoke them to indignation.

22 For the fire is kindled in my wrath, and ſhal burne to the verie bottome of the pitte, and deuowre the lande with the fruite thereof, and burne vp the foundations of the mountaines.

WE ſawe yeſterday how God is more grieuouſly diſpleaſed, when ſuch as ought to honour and ſerue him, do forſake him, than when it is done by ſilly ignorant vnbeleeuers. And not without cauſe. For God adopteth vs with this condition, that his glorie ſhould ſhyne forth in vs: and therefore muſt it not needes be a dubbling of the offence, when wee be a reproche to him? If a father bee deſpyſed in his owne houſe, euen by thoſe whome he hath begotten, will it not grieue him much woorſe, than if ſome one of his neighbours ſhoulde miſuſe him? Seeing then that God hath vouchſafed to chooſe vs to be his children, and hath done vs the honour whereof wee were not worthie: let vs beware that our conuerſation bee ſuch, as our faultes and miſdeedes may not prouoke him, nor the thing befall vs which Moſes addeth here, namely, *that he will hyde away his face*. Nowe by this ſaying the Scripture meaneth that when GOD hath vſed patience in bearing long with men, winking at their vyces, and ceaſſing not to doe them good, and yet ſeeth that they bee altogether ſet vppon ſtubborneſſe and vnreformable: hee giueth them ouer for ſuch as they bee. Nowe all our welfare and happineſſe lyeth in Gods defending of vs, and in his caring for vs. For if hee forget vs and vouchſafe not to ſuccour vs, and to bee our defence, in what taking are wee? It were better for vs to bee deſtroyed out of hande, than to linger beeing out of the protection of our God. Therefore heere is a horrible threat, and ſuch a one as ought to make vs to quake, when as it is ſayde that when GOD hath tarryed a long tyme, hee will withdrawe himſelfe for our vtter alienating of him away from vs.

Wee haue ſeene heere afore, howe GOD vſed long ſufferance and gaue not ouer his people at the firſt daſh: but yet that at length hee was fayne to ſhewe that hee will not that his goodneſſe ſhoulde bee abuſed after that faſhion, nor that men ſhoulde harden their heartes by flattering themſelues, when hee puniſheth them not out of hande. Therefore let vs looke to ourſelues. For if wee

haue

haue offended God, although hee lift not vppe his hande to punishe vs for it at the first instant, yet must not that make vs to fall asleepe. Let vs (I say) preuent the vengeaunce of our God: for if hee be patient and beare with vs, it is to winne vs by his gratious goodnesse and gentlenesse, as S. Paul declareth in the second to the Romanes. The more then that God spareth vs, the more let vs take warning to turne againe vnto him, and let it make vs ashamed that we hauing so good a father, haue beene so stubborne against him. And if wee will needes still wexe in our owne filthinesse, and heape naughtinesse vpon naughtinesse, so as there is no ende nor measure of our transgressions: then must GOD be faine to execute the thing which he speaketh heere by Moses, namely; *Hyde away his face*; that is to say, that after hee hath hadde a care of our welfare, and continued in dooing vs good; he will at length giue vs ouer, and shew that he is no longer bounde vnto vs, and that although hee spared vs for a time, it is not his intent to bolster vs continually in our euill dooinges. Wherefore let vs bee afrayde of this threate: and so long as GOD maketh vs to perceiue that he beholdeth vs with pitie, let vs walke as before his eyes, as though he were euer present with vs, and in all our thoughtes, wordes, and deedes, let vs haue our eyes still vpon him.

But by the way we haue to marke, that God hydeth not his eyes in such sort, but that hee seeth and marketh all mens dooings, and dealinges. But it is so sayde, because God seemeth to shrinke away and to haue no more care of vs, when he succoureth vs not at our neede. For if aduersitie and afflictions oppresse vs, and wee flee vnto God, and yet finde no ease, but pine away still continually: it can not be but that according to our vnderstanding, we must needes imagine that GOD hath quite forgotten vs, and that he regardeth vs not any more. After this maner doeth Moses tell vs heere, that God hydeth away his face. Furthermore we must vnderstande, that when GOD hath once forsaken vs, there neuer happeneth any euill vnto vs, but it commeth from him: that is to say, all the afflictions which wee feele are punishmentes from his hande. We must not then thinke that GOD letteth men alone at all aduenture when he punisheth them for their offences, but rather that hee is then neere them, to make them feele his power, shewing himselfe a Iudge of their wicked deedes. But as for to holde them in his tuition, or to defende them; in that behalfe he threatneth himselfe to be absent, that is to say, that they shall not perceiue any more that he broodeth them vnder his winges, according to the similitude which he had vsed afore.

And it is sayde expressely, *That hee will see what their ende will be*. Heere GOD speakes after the manner of men: for hee knewe all thinges aforehande euen before the creating of the worlde, and he needeth not to be taught by time as mortall wightes doe. But forasmuch as we can not attayne to the height of Gods maiestie, hee is faine to make himselfe like vnto vs, and all for our instruction and edification. It is all one therefore as if he should say to such as despised him, Goe too, yee make no account for me, I behaued my selfe familiarly towardes you, and you haue abused that grace of mine; I haue required to be serued and honored of you, and you haue done mee all the shame ye coulde deuise: you haue borne yourselues in hande that I was tyed vnto you, and that I was of necessitie to continue a father towardes you without ceassing, notwithstanding that you played the rebellious children against mee. But nowe will I giue you ouer for such as you be: doe the worst yee can, and at length yee shall finde what it is to haue forsaken mee. *I will hide myselfe from you*, that is to say, I will giue you ouer. In steede of maintaining and defending you as I haue done heeretofore, I vtterly renounce all acquaintaunce with you. See nowe what your state shall be, and I also will see what your ende will bee, that is to say, it shall bee perceiued in what plyght men are, when I haue no longer care of them. GOD then speaketh heere not so much of his owne knowledge, as of that which shall be seene and perceiued in the ende by experience. For (as I sayde afore) GOD is not to bee taught by the chaunge of thinges, (for all thinges were present with him before the making of the worlde) but heere he declareth, that when folke are so forsaken, it will appeare by them that all the happinesse of man consisteth in beeing preserued by GOD: and that on the contrary part, they bee most wretched and vnhappie, when God hath giuen them ouer.

And hee addeth the reason. *It is a fickle and frowarde generation, Children in whome there is no truth*. The first worde that Moses vseth heere, commeth of a verbe which signifieth to turne and returne. And so it is as much as if he shoulde say, It is a generation of wickednesses; for he vseth the plurall number: and it importeth as much as if he should say, It is a frowarde and cursed generation, or else a mutable and chaunging generation, and whereof there is no holde, nowe heere; nowe there: whereby is vttered not onely the vnconstancie, but also the disloyaltie of that people. He addeth that there was no stedfastnesse in them. The worde betokeneth vprightnesse, whereby is meant both loyaltie and faithfulnesse. To be short, GOD declareth heere, that he hadde tryed his people too much, and that in the ende it appeared that there was no vprightnesse in them, but all manner of treason and trecherie. Forasmuch therefore as hee founde such leaudenesse in them, hee sayeth hee will hyde himselfe from them. But we must call to minde againe what I haue sayde afore; to witte, that for a time GOD may sauour vs and beare with vs, and spare vs though we deserue to haue rigour towardes vs: but when hee is so patient, it is to make vs diligent in examining our owne faultes, and to call our selues dayly to account, and to

looke neerely to the thinges which are to bee found fault with, in vs. Also let vs marke well the saying that hath beene alleadged out of Saint Paul, howe that God allureth vs to amendment by gentlenesse, when hee punisheth vs not at the first, according to our deseruinges. Sith the case standeth so, whensoeuer God sheweth himselfe fauourable and gratious towardes vs, let euery of vs consider howe hee hath liued; and if we haue abused the benefites which he hath bestowed vppon vs, let vs condemne ourselues for it, and be sorry for our sinnes, and returne to him with such sorte we as may appeare to bee vnfained. That is the thing which we haue to remember in the first place. But if we will needes discharge ourselues by flatterie, to take leaue to doe euill: then must hee needes execute his vnrenocable sentence of hyding away his face from vs after he hath borne long ynough with vs, and of seeing what will become of vs, and he must needes let vs rotte in our wretchednesse, forasmuch as we could not abide that hee should reach out his hande to helpe vs. And in any wise let vs marke that GOD can not away with hypocrisie in men: for among other thinges he requireth soundenesse and trueth in vs, that our conuersation shoulde bee vtterly voide of all dubble meaning, and that we should not be dissemblers before him. True it is that our nature is full of fainednesse, as we see howe Ieremy reporteth of mans heart, that it is frowarde and besnarled with all naughtinesse, and that it is euen as a bottomlesse pit. And therefore we must chaunge, if wee will haue God to admit and allowe vs for his children: and whereas we be inclined to euill, so as there is nothing but bitternesse and hardnesse of heart in vs, we must pray vnto God to indewe vs with his holy spirite, who is the spirite of constancie, and to ridde vs in such sort from all our naughtinesse and vnfaithfulnesse, as we may walke on before him in pure and vndefiled soundnesse. Thus yee see what we haue to remember vppon this place.

Rom. 2. 4.

Ier. 16. 16.

Nowe it is saide further, *That forasmuch as the Children of Israell had prouoked GOD to iealozie by the thing that was not god, and prouoked him by their leazinges through the superstitions which they hadde deuised: he also would prouoke them by a people which was no people, and moue them to iealozie by a Nation that was no Nation.* Heere GOD speaketh againe after the manner of men, like as if a man seeing his wife so wicked and leaudely giuen that he could not restraine her, should say, Well, I must needes diuorce her, and to doe her the more disgrace I will take some chambermayde in her steede, to occupie her place. Now then if a wife haue liued in honorable state with her husbande, and afterwarde behaue her selfe so naughtily and stubbornely, that hee casteth her off, and thereuppon taketh some poore wench that was of no estimation, and vseth her as his maried wife; his former wife will take the more spyte and griefe at it, as who woulde say, What? Shall such a one nowe occupie my place? Must I be thrust out for her? Must I be pointed at with euerie mannes finger and bee shamed and ill spoken of euerie where? After that manner is this text to bee vnderstoode. For thus doeth GOD vtter his minde. What? They haue prouoked mee to Iealozie by the thing that is no god: I am the liuing GOD, and besides that, they ought in reason to take pace for their father, because I haue shewed my selfe so towardes them, declaring howe dearely I loued them, in that I haue preferred them before all other Nations of the worlde: and yet hereuppon haue they forged Idolles. But there is but one GOD: and therefore when men turne away from him, they must needes forge ydolles after their owne imaginations. Thus haue they prouoked me to ielozie by the thing which was not god.

And afterwarde he addeth, *their vanities*. As if he shoulde say, If a man marke what their superstitions are, and whereon they bee grounded: he shall finde them to be nothing else but lyes and deceites. Yet haue they prouoked mee with them sayeth he: and nowe will I also haue my reuenge, for I will prouoke them by a people which is not a people, and by a nation which is not a nation, that is to say, which are not esteemed to be of any reputation. I will then take to me such folke as are nowe of no estimation, and set them in the same degree of honour wherein these thankelesse folke were before, which haue so abused the fatherly loue that I bare towardes them. This thing came not to passe out of hande, but was then accomplished when the Gospell was spredde through out the whole worlde. True it is that in part God gaue some tokens of these thinges aforehande, in exalting the Assyrians and Chaldees aboue those which boasted themselues to be the holy ofspring and kingly priesthoode: but yet was not this definitiue sentence performed to the full, vntill the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ. God (I say) shewed partly some signe heereof aforehande, at such time as the people of Israell were scattered, brought to desolation, carried away into strange countryes, and there kept as banished wretches without order vnder the slauerie of cruell tyrannie. For euen then did GOD beginne aforehande to make them perceiue, that his threatning of them to prouoke them by a people which was no people, was not in vaine. For first the Assyrians and afterwarde the Chaldees hadde the honour to reigne ouer the children of Abraham, which vaunted themselues to be at libertie, but they were bondeslaues of sinne. And forasmuch as they had withdrawen themselues from the obedience of GOD, it was good reason that they shoulde be vnder the bondage of Tyrans. GOD then gaue a certaine signe of fauour to those that hadde beene vnbeleeuers, when hee magnified the heathen so much, euen as though hee had beene minded to disanull the promise which he had made to those which had earst boasted themselues to bee his people, and had purposed to put them to vtter shame. Yet notwithstanding the Chaldees and Assyrians

Ezod. 19. 6.

did

did not so reigne ouer the children of GOD, that they could preiudice their saluation. Neither could the Syrians doe it, nor any of all the other nations that troubled them (as wee see in the time of the Iudges) & which inuaded the Lande of Chanaan and brought the children of Israell vnder tribute and subiection. For euen then although the children of Israell were oppressed, and cast downe, as it were, and thrust vnder foote, and their neighbours which were heathen and Infidelles had their full scope: yet notwithstanding, Gods adoption abode still in the linage of Abraham, and the case of those that reigned ouer them was neuer a whit the better for it, because they ceased not to serue their ydolles still. But when the Gospell was preached openly to the worlde, then did we succeede in the place of those which hadde beene heires of the promise afore, accordingly as Saint Paule likeneth vs to wilde slips which are grafsed into a good stocke, euen so is it with vs. For we be but thinges borne out of time, if wee bee compared with the Iewes who were after a sorte the naturall children of God. Howbeit forasmuch as GOD had promised Abraham that he would be the sauiour of his ofspring, the same belonged to all such as were descended of him, accordingly also as Saint Peter telleth them, You be the children of the prophetes, and heires of the promise: as who shoulde say that saluation belonged to them, euen by true and lawefull succession: but when as they did cutte off themselues from it by their owne vnthankefulnesse, then did GOD call vs vnto him. True it is that if the Iewes had receiued our Lorde Iesus Christ, yet had the doctrine of the Gospel bin spredde abroade neuertheless, throughout the worlde, and so shoulde wee haue beene ioyned and knit together in one. But forasmuch as the Iewes conueyed themselues out of the housholde and Church of God, and imbraced not the grace which was offered vnto them: their roome became emptie, and so wee entred thereinto, insomuch as GOD hath nowe banished them, to the intent to make as it were a new house: And therefore S. Paul applyeth this text to his owne time. For hee sayeth that as then the Iewes had too greatly prouoked Gods iealozie by their ydolatries, and that God was faine to raise vp a people which was no people, or a nation which was not reputed as a Nation, which thing was done to make them the more ashamed of their despising of the benefit which had beene profered vnto them. Truely, the Iewes had not at that time any outwarde ydolatry. When Iesus Christ came into the world, the Temple of Ierusalem was not defiled with any ydolles, sacrifices were made there according to the Lawe of Moses: and yet for all that there was nothing but contempt of God & wickednesse, it was a piteous case to see the great number of grosse superstitions, and all the pureneſse of the Lawe was corrupted.

Let vs marke well therefore ỹ men are counted ydolaters, not only when they haue puppets of stone, of wood, or of peinters worke, but also when they sticke not to the pure simplicitie of Gods word, but mingle their owne superstitions with the doctrine of saluation, ouershooting themselues and turning away to al euil. After that manner was GOD prouoked to iealozie by the Iewes, but specially by their refusing of Iesus Christ, who is the image of the father. For whosoeuer hath not the sonne (sayth Saint Iohn) hath not the father. And why? Because the whole fulnesse of the Godheade dwelleth in our Lorde Iesus Christ. Seeing then that the Iewes despised the onely sonne, who was the image of the father, seeing they would not accept him which was ordained to be souereigne king, and of whom also it is sayde in the Psalme, Kisse the sonne; whereby men are commaunded to doe him homage and to kneele downe vnto him as it is sayde in other textes: seeing that the Iewes haue so refused Iesus Christ, seeing they haue so giuen ouer the true Religion; they haue made themselues vtter strangers to the liuing GOD which had chosen and adopted them. To bee short, if we take not Iesus Christ for our GOD, surely wee haue nothing else but an ydoll. As for example, the Turkes at this day doe make greate bragges that they worshippe the GOD which created heauen and earth. What is their God? He is but an ydoll. The Iewes can well ynough say; our meaning is to serue the God which gaue vs his Lawe by the hande of Moses, and spake by the prophetes. Their God is but an ydol. And why? For the Godheade which is in Iesus Christ is vnknowen vnto them. But it is sayde that the whole fulnesse of the Godheade dwelleth in him, yea euen perfectly and in verie substaunce, without any manner of shadowes or figures. Seeing then that GOD hath fully reueiled himselfe to vs in our Lorde Iesus Christ, and will haue his face to bee seene there: surely we can not boast that we haue the true God, vnlesse our Lorde Iesus Christ reigne among vs, and be so honoured of vs that wee sticke throughly to him and rest wholely vppon him. Nowe the Iewes denyed him and vtterly disclaymed him: by meane whereof they prouoked GOD to iealozie, and there remayneth nothing with them but folly and false imagination whereby they haue deceiued and beguiled themselues. And therefore not without cause doeth Saint Paule alleadge this Text, saying: Seeing that the Iewes haue prouoked Gods wrath by refusing to imbrace his onely sonne: therefore hath he raysed vppe a people which was nothing afore.

Col.1.15. 1.Iohn.2.23 Col.2.9. & 29. Psal.2.12. Col.2.9. Rom.10.19.

And heere we see yet much better the thing which I tolde you afore, namely that GOD vsed long sufferaunce towardes such as were worthy to haue beene thundered vpon out of hande: for betweene the Lawe and our Lorde Iesus Christ there were about two thousande yeares. And if wee reeken the yeeres, the Iewes began to meddle with the infections & filthinesse of the heathen by setting vp of ydols by and by after ỹ death of Iosua. Ye see then how God suffered aboue eighteene hundred yeeres to passe, wayting still for some amendement.

Not

Not that he dissembled with them, for he chastised them to put them in minde of their faults. And they returned vnto him. But yet by and by after they fell away newe againe. Insomuch that when they had acknowledged that those harmes befell them for their sinnes sakes, and had giuen some token of repentaunce: by and by, or within a while after they fell to their olde byasse againe: and God likewise fell to punishing them newe againe. At the last came the captiuitie of Babylon which is described to haue beene so horrible and vnhappie, that it banished them out of the Lande which hee had promised them for their inheritaunce, and they were driuen out of their owne houses. Nevertheless, in the ende GOD pitied them and brought them home againe. Notwithstanding, they were no sooner come home into their native countrey, and restored to libertie, but by and by they became againe worse than before. Therefore was GOD also faine to punish them with punishment vppon punishment euen to the vttermost. Then came our Lorde Iesus Christ to remedie all their diseases, in respect whereof he is iustly called euen the resurrection of the dead. For although the Iewes had then beene all scattered abroade, yet would God haue gathered them home againe to him by the hande of his sonne, if they hadde knowen the day of their visitation. But they well bewray that they be wilfully bent against GOD, and that there is nothing but bitternesse and venime, yea and diuelish rage in them. For it sufficed them not to haue skorned the grace which was offered vnto them, and the redemption which they had pretended to haue longed for so greatly; but they did also crucifie the Redeemer which was sent vnto them. Forasmuch therefore as the Iewes did vtterly refuse all the grace of God: the Gospell was published through the whole worlde.

Iohn.11.25.

But (as I sayde) we must marke well the long suffering which GOD vsed towardes them, that it may keepe vs from sleeping in our sinnes. For if wee abuse the goodnesse of our GOD when hee spareth vs, and vseth not such vengeaunce as we haue deserued: we shall be driuen to pay the arrearages. Therefore let vs returne to him when hee threatneth vs. For it had beene much better for the Iewes to haue suffered temporall punishmentes, than to haue beene so borne with, and in the ende to haue had so horrible vengeaunce layde vppon them as woe befell to the Citie of Ierusalem. For if we looke vpon the aduersities that fell vppon it, wee shall not finde the like examples at any time since the beginning of the worlde, that the men of that countrey, and all other inhabiters were so afflicted. They played the madde men one against another for their victelles, and the veryest cutthroates bare the chiefe sway. They durst not go out of their citie to ease themselues because they were inclosed on euerie side: and yet they were more cruelly handled within by theeues and rakehelles. The ruffians were readie to cutte the throats of them that came once out of their doores. Thinges were so farre out of order and so horribly put to hauocke, that women were faine to kill their owne children for hunger and to eate them, and it spited the father to see the mother steale her owne children to deuoure them into her owne bowelles. Therefore let vs bethinke ourselues, and when thinges are so farre out of square, and wee perceiue it to be our Lordes will to giue vs such examples, to the intent we should liue in awe and feare, and yet notwithstanding that he giueth vs leasure to returne vnto him; let vs goe vnto him, yea and that with speede, & let vs not driue off frō day to day, for feare least the gate be shut against vs. That is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde.

Nowe let vs proceede to that which Moses addeth, namely: *That GOD did thereupon prouoke a people which was no people, and a Nation which was no Nation.* By these words we be doome to vnderstande, that vntill such time as GOD hath chosen vs, and drawen vs to the knowledge of his trueth: it is all one as if we were not at all. True it is that Gods setting of vs in this worlde is not a benefite to be despised, neither doeth he set vs heere as Asses, Oxen, and Dogges: but as reasonable creatures, and he putteth his image into vs. Inestimable is the benefit which he doeth vs therein: but yet for all that, forasmuch as we be corrupted in Adam, and all of vs are accursed; insomuch that sinne doeth so reigne in vs, that the Image of GOD is wiped out, and the vnderstanding which we weene our selues to haue is but brutishnesse, and our hearts are turned vpside downe, so as there is nothing but rebelliousnesse in vs: therefore it is sayde that wee bee not worthy to bee counted a people, that is to say, it were better for vs that wee were not at all. Not that GOD is not glorified continually in his creatures: but this is spoken in respect of vs. For we will needes glorifie ourselues and seeme great men, for we see howe men beleeue wonders of themselues, and they be so blinde that they surmise this and that of themselues. But let the children of this worlde esteeme of themselues what they lyst, and aduaunce their owne glorie as much as they list: yet doth GOD in one worde heere cut their combes, saying that their beeing is as though they were not at all. And it is not heere onely that the scripture vseth such speech: for Saint Paul sayeth generally, that GOD calleth the thinges which are not, as though they were. Rom.4.17. 1.Cor.1.28.
Ye see then howe our first being is when GOD calleth vs to the knowledge of his trueth: according whereunto Saint Paul sayth in an other place, y our being is of God in Iesus Christ, insomuch that we haue nothing at all before that time, because there is nothing in vs but corruption. Seeing the case standeth so, men can not looke for any thing but eternal death, vntil God haue reached them his hand, and gathered thē home to himselfe. That is the thing which we haue to remember in this text where it is sayde, that God would prouoke the Iewes to iealozie by a people which were no people. 1.Cor.1.30

Further-

Furthermore let vs marke, that whereas we haue beeing at this day, that is to say, whereas God hath aduaunced vs, (according also as hee sayth by his prophet Esay, I haue brought vppe children and aduaunced them) forasmuch as God dealeth so graciously with vs as to put vs in the place of them that were his naturall children, euen vs which were as children borne out of time: let vs assure our selues that if wee prouoke God to wrath, and make him as it were iealous, he will surely rayse vp other Nations in our stede, according to this saying of our Lord Iesus Christ to the Iewes; The kingdome of God shall be taken from you. This threat is spoken to vs nowadays. For (as sayth saint Paul) if God haue not spared the naturall braunches of the olive, but haue cut them quite and cleane off, and cast them into the fire: how shall hee spare the wilde ones? What shoulde wee haue who were barreine by nature? Could wee say we were the children of Abraham, and that God had adopted vs at the first? No. For as long as the doctrine of saluation was among the Iewes, our forefathers were as rotten members, they had no hope of saluation, they were without GOD in this worlde, as sayeth Saint Paul. But nowe wee bee come to the heauenly kingdome. Because the Iewes are departed from it, through their owne vnthankefulnesse, and fallen from the degree wherein they were, GOD hath aduaunced vs to it euen against nature. And thinke wee then that if wee become like those which were our superiours in dignitie, GOD will not in the ende powre out the like vengeaunce vpon vs as wee haue seene vppon them? Yes: and therefore let the Iewes bee a lookingglasse for vs to make vs behaue ourselues humbly, that we abuse not the grace of GOD. True it is that wee must be assured that GOD will holde out to the ende in the thinges which he hath begonne for our welfare, specially if we on our side be not so malicious as to disappoint his grace. But if we followe those which haue gone before vs, let vs not thinke to speede better than they haue done. Thus yee see what wee haue to beare away in this Text where it is sayde that God will prouoke his people to iealozie by such as were not a people aforetimes.

And Moses sayeth, *That they shall be a foolishe Nation*. And it behoueth vs yet againe to marke this well. For we imagine ourselues to be verie wise; and that is the thing which plucketh vs backe from submitting ourselues obediently vnto GOD, and disappointeth vs of the modestie to embrace by faith, whatsoeuer is propounded to vs in his name. But heere the holy Ghost bewrayeth vs what we be, to witte, that there is nothing in vs but starke folly, vntill GOD haue inlightened vs. What must bee our wisedome then? Euen that which we learne in Gods schoole. Heereby all selfe weening is beaten downe, that menne should not imagine themselues to be of sufficient abilitie to gouerne themselues, nor despise the doctrine of GOD, but yeelde themselues teachable thereunto.

And herewithall let vs marke also, that generally God ment to bereaue men of all glorie in that he sayth *that they be not as all, and that they be but fooles*, that is to say, that there is nothing in the but reprochfulnesse.

And hee addeth foorthwith, *that his wrath shall be kindled, and that it shall enter vnto the bottomlesse pittes, and consume the Lande with her fruites, yea euen to rootes of the Mountaines*. Heere Moses ment breefly to touch those yet better and neerer to the quicke, which were so bedoted, that they could not come to the knowledge of their sinnes. And he not onely spake to y people, whom he knewe to be stubborne and stiffenecked: but also through the power of Gods spirite he prophecied of those that were to come. As for Moses, he knewe them not to outwarde appearance: but GOD who knoweth what men are, gaue his sentence vppon them aforehande. And forasmuch as hee seeth them so blockish he handleth them in their kinde, saying, Goe too, I see you be not greatly moued at my threatning, and that ye proceede from euill to worse: but I tell you that my wrath will bee no light fardle to beare, as though I gaue you but a yerke with my rodde by the way. What then? It is a fire that burneth vp all afore it, as we haue seene heeretofore in the fourth chapter, where it is sayde, Knowe thou O Israel that thy God is a consuming fire. This was expresly spoken for the hardenesse of the peoples hearts. For it is certeine that God is desirous to shewe himselfe louing towardes vs, conditionally that we come vnto him with all meekenesse, and be readie to followe his voyce; taking him for our sheepehearde, and behauing ourselues towardes him as his sheepe. If wee doe so, then will not God fray vs, nor shewe himselfe terrible to vs. But if he see vs play the wilde beastes, so as wee can not by any meanes be tamed: then is hee faine to vse rigour, according to this saying of his in the eighteenth Psalme, that hee will bee harde to such as are harde, and that if men shew themselues vnreformable, hee also will come roughly against them, and they shall finde nothing in him but vtter terrour and dreadfulnesse. After the same manner is it in this text, where he sayeth, My wrath shalbe as a burning fire. Yea, and thinke not (sayth he) that I will burne but the chaffe and the strawe; for I will burne vp the verie grounde, there is not so hard a mountaine but it shall melt before me, yea euen to the verie bottome: and there shall not be so deepe a pitte, but I will go to the verie bottome thereof. Now we see what the purpose or intent of Moses was in this place.

And heereby let vs take warning, not to tempt God; accordingly as the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrewes applyeth the forealleaged text to the same purpose. My friends (sayeth he) knowe ye that God is a consuming fire: and therefore let vs liue in his feare, & not tempt him: as soone as he speaketh, let vs quake at it: let vs not tarry till hee smite vppon our heades with main blowes: but let vs go vnto him obediently: and let vs pray him to haue pitie vpon vs.

Exod. 34. 9.

Deut. 4. 24.

Psal. 18. 27.

Hebr. 12. 28.

For

For if we goe about to winne him by stoutnesse, surely we shall finde howe it is not sayde without cause that Gods wrath is a burning fire to consume all thinges: and wee shall feele that although we be neuer so stubborne, and that our heartes (to our owne seeming) bee as whot as fire through ouerweening, whereof wee haue made our selues as it were foretresses, towers, and bulwarkes for our great safetie: yet notwithstanding, God will so vndermine vs, that we shall find howe there is nothing in vs wherewith to make resistaunce, and that we haue no more power to stande before his wrath and vengeaunce, than stubble or hay which is consumed out of hande by fire: nay we shall be no better than towe. Thus ye see howe wee may benefite ourselues by this doctrine, if wee will not haue the sentence that God pronounceth executed vppon vs. That is to wit, that forasmuch as his wrath burneth so whot and is able to consume all: wee must turne vnto him as soone as he threatneth vs, yea and so returne, as he finde vs not to be foolishe and wilde headed folke, as in whom there is nothing but lightnes and vnconstancie.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to open our eyes more and more, that we may see our owne wretchednesse, and vpon the knowing thereof, bee also so touched by his holy spirite, that our heartes may stoope, and hauing felt what wee haue deserued, we may steppe to him aforehande to obtaine fauour and mercie of him: and so continue therein, that all our life long, our whole seeking may be to increase and to be settled in his feare and loue: that taking him for our father, and reposing ourselues wholly vpon him and his goodnesse, we may neuertheless yeelde him such reuerence, as to quake at his threatninges, and yet assure ourselues that hee will be so good a protector and defender of vs, that we shalbe safe from all daungers, when he hath once taken vs into his protection and safekeeping. That it may please him to grant this grace not only to vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the v. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXIIII. Sermon which is the seuenth vpon the two & thirtith Chapter.

23 I will heape euilles vppon them, and I will bestowe mine arrowes vppon them.

24 They shalbe burnt with hunger, and consumed with heate and with bitter destruction. Also I will sende them the teeth of beastes, with the venime of Serpentes that traile in the dust.

25 The sword shal rob them of their children without, and in their chambers shalbe fearefulnesse vpon the young woman and the mayde, the sucking child and the man with the hore head.

26 I haue saide I will scatter them abroade, and make the remembraunce of them to cease from among men.

27 Were it not that I feared the disdayne of the enemie, least peraduenture their aduersaries should wax straunge and say: Our hande is high, and it is not the Lorde that hath done all this thing.

WE sawe yesterday howe Moses hauing spoken of Gods vengeaunce to the people of Israel shewed how dreadful the same is, because men are not so moued at ỹ first as were requisite, at leastwise to consider their own naughtines, & to be displeased at it, ỹ they might humble themselues & be ashamed thereof before God. For inasmuch as men are slowe vnto that, our Lorde sheweth ỹ his threatning of them is not in sport, and therefore that it is not for thē to fall asleepe at it and to take their ease, but rather to treble and quake. Now pursuing the same matter, Moses addeth *That he will sende vpon that people all the euilles that can bee deuised, that hee will let fly his arrowes at them* to the vtter consuming of them, that he wil arme the wilde beastes against them, that hee will sende venemous serpentes among them, which though they glyde in the dust, shall neuertheless without fayle fasten vpon thē with their teeth, that they shalbe starued for hunger, that he will sende them burning diseases, enemyes without doores, and feare within doores, and that he will not spare their babes nor their olde men, nor any thing else. It might seeme at the first sight, that GOD were ouerrigorous. For seeing that God had chosen the ofspring

ofspring of Abraham from among the whole world, and his adopting of them was not grounded vppon any desert or worthinesse, but vppon the free goodnes of Gods owne will: shoulde he haue vsed so great sternnesse against those wretched creatures, though they had right greeuously offended him? Why did hee not rather spare them, and make the grace auailable which he had bestowed vpon them afore? Nay, we haue seene already the long sufferaunce which God had vsed towards them. And when men doe heape vp hoords of wrath a long time together after that sathiō by their abusing of Gods goodnesse, as who shoulde say they were minded to spite God wilfullie, and to defie him, to see the worst that hee can doe vnto them: it is good reason, that for their wilfull and stubborne hardening of their hearts, God should make them to feele that hee will not haue his gentlenesse so scorned, and finally turned cleane contrarie to his intent. Againe, after as God vttereth his fauour towardes vs, so must it bee the deerelyer solde vnto vs, if wee abuse it. Nowe he calleth the Church his house, and he taketh and admitteth vs for his children. Therefore if hee be dishonoured among vs, ought it not to greeue him worse (as I haue declared afore) than if those which belong not vnto him (in comparison) at all, had offended him a thousand times? Then let vs vnderstande that God did iustlie shewe himselfe so rigorous against the children of Israell, and let vs applie this doctrine to our selues because wee be succeeded in their roome. We haue seene alreadie heretofore, howe God hath cut them off, and graffed vs in, in their steade, to the intent wee shoulde bee partakers of the adoption that belonged vnto them. Nowe if God haue not pardoned them, what will hee doe to vs? For we be not of more worthinesse than they, neither is our state more excellent than theirs. Therefore let vs see that we liue warely, and that we make the grace effectuall which we haue receiued at Gods hand, so as he may bee glorifyed thereby, and our saluation more and more furthered and confirmed by meane thereof. Thus ye see in effect what wee haue to gather vpon this text.

And whereas it is saide that God will heape euill vpon them, and shoote out all his arrowes against them: let vs marke, here Moses meant to doe vs to vnderstand, that God hath mo sorts & meanes of punishing men than one, insomuch that when they think themselues to be escaped, then are they newe to beginne againe. And this is verie worthie to bee noted. For wee see what the negligence of them is which haue doone amisse. True it is that if they perceiue any token of Gods anger, they will be abashed at it at the first, but if they feele no further thā threatnings they shake their eares and make a mocke at it. But if God scarre them a litle; as soone as it is ouer, they thinke themselues quite rid of it. As for example, if there bee any noise of war, such as haue misbehaued themselues and led a wicked and loose life, wil begin to shudder at it. But as soone as the same is ceased, they be the same men they were afore. Likewise is it with them concerning famine, and all other afflictions whatsoeuer. If a man be stricken with a disease and pressed with the hande of God, hee wil play the holie man for the time: but as soone as hee is releeued, by and by he beginnes to set vp his bristles lustilier than afore. Yee see then at what point we bee. As soone as God withdrawes his hande, we beare our selues in hande that we bee quite and cleane discharged, and that there bee no mo meanes wherewith to punish vs. But contrariwise it is saide here, that if Gods shooting of one arrow haue not woūded vs to death, it makes no matter: for hee will shoote agayne, and in the ende so deale with vs, that wee shall find by proofe that it had beene for our behoofe to haue considered at the first, that he hath infinite meanes and incomprehensible to vs, wherewith to take vengeance of our sins. That is the cause then why he saith that he wil heape vp euill vppon them, as he will adde hereafter; saying: Are not these thinges laide vp in my treasures? And there this matter shall bee treated of more at large. And by this worde *Arrowes*, he betokeneth al the weapons of his wrath, the which he setteth downe more particularly by and by afrer, saying that *He will sende wilde beastes to deuoure all, hee will send Serpentes to consume men with their stingynge; hee will sende enemies with the sword abroade; and hee will sende terrour at home*. Heere GOD alledgeth some examples of the thing which hee had spoken, to wit, that when wee be escaped from warre, famine shall catch vs, and if God spare vs from famine, yet shall that nothing boote vs, for he will haue other weapons to pursue vs withall. And herewithall wee bee warned further that all creatures are in Gods hande, and that hee imployeth them to what vse hee liketh best. As for example, if hee list to haue the wilde beastes to serue for our benefite, they must needes doe it. For hee leadeth them by his secrete moouing in such wise, as they cannot but execute that which hee inioyneth. And on the contrarie part, whensoeuer it pleaseth him to arme the beastes: they must needes become our enemies, and wee cannot withstande them. For vntill such time as we bee at one with him, it is certaine that wee haue still the worse ende of the staffe. Secondlie hee addeth *the trayling serpentes*. Although wee despise these little beastes, such as the Serpents are which trayle in the dust as Moses saith expresslie here: yet wil God make the mischeefe of them to attaine euen to our heades. For albeit that the biting of a Serpent bee but on ones heele or his foote: yet the venime of it striketh vp through his whole bodie. The like is to bee saide of diseases. For vnder one kinde hee comprehendeth here all, when hee sayth, *That hee will sende bitter haues, and that the same shall destroy men*. So then let vs marke (according to that which I haue treated of heretofore) that when wee bee vexed by men, the same happeneth not without the ordinaunce of God. Such thinges are Gods chastisementes whereby hee calleth vs to the considering of our

sinnes, and whereby hee summoneth vs before him, not onely to indite vs of them, but also to the ende wee should doe it our selues aforehand, and euerie of vs play the iudge in condemning our selues, that by that meane wee might obtayne fauour at his hande. But if we will needs bee selfewilled, then are they as euidences aforehande to condemne vs with, and wee must not imagine that wee can further our case by replyinges. And whensoeuer wee bee so visited, if wee yeelde not GOD the honour to confesse that he is righteous in so doing: surelie the mischeefe shall bee doubled, and still increased vntill it haue consumed vs. Therefore although wee be troubled by men: yet let vs vnderstande that GOD serueth his owne purpose by them as by instrumentes, and that wee must haue recourse to him, and that if he were not prouoked against vs, wee should bee vnder his protection, and hee woulde not giue our enemies the bridle after that fashion. Let vs assure our selues that when sickenesse commeth vpon vs, it is to bee accounted as the hande of GOD, and that his sending of it, is to visite vs, and to make vs to turne againe vnto him. As much is to bee thought of the rest. For it is not to bee thought, that the creatures are led at all aduenture, that GOD shoulde not bee serued by them, and that they shoulde not bee at his disposition. It is for heathenish and faithlesse folkes so to thinke. But in acknowledging that GOD is the maker of heauen and earth, we professe therewithal that al things are at his commaundement, that all thinges are disposed by his appoyntment, and that nothing commeth to passe but by his iustice. That then is the thing which wee haue to beare in minde in this text when Moses saith that God will arme the enemie without, and sende feare within. Whereby hee meaneth that their needeth no more but a shadowe to fray vs, accordinglie as hath beene declared in the eight and tweentith Chapter. If GOD list to stirre vp great troubles and stormes against vs, he will doe it and it is meete that hee shoulde bee the ouerruler of all. But when hee intendeth to consume vs: then must our life needes hang as vppon a twyned threed, so as at euening wee shall sorowfully say, Who will cause me to see to morrowe morning? And (when night is gone) wee shall bee still in the same greefe of minde, wee shall bee as men besides themselues and much woorse. The thing then which this word *Feare* or terror importeth, is that God wil make men to be alwayes as it were besides themselues when they will not yeelde to his corrections to come to amendement, so as they shall bee wounded in their heartes, without his stirring vp of anie enemies, or his sending of anie inconuenience vnto them; and they shall not knowe why nor wherefore, but that their owne shadowe troubleth them and maketh them at their wittes ende. Therefore if wee intende to inioy the greatest and most desirable benefite in the worlde, that is to say, to liue in peace and rest: let vs learne that wee must not prouoke our God to make him our enemie. For as long as wee prouoke his wrath, all thinges must needes goe against vs. That is the thing which wee haue to garher vppon this place. And we must not thinke that wee haue profited anie whit, when wee haue put God out of our minde, or when wee haue turned our backes vppon him for a time, as these skorners doe which in such times doe take their pleasure in sporting with GOD at the full. Therefore let not vs deale so hardheartedlie: for there is not a worse thing than to haue rocked our consciences asleepe after such a fashion, that wee haue no more remorse nor heartbiting in vs. But let vs set our mindes to haue peace with God, that is to say to resort vnto him in such wise, as we may feele him to bee our father and seeke to stay our selues vppon his goodnes, that our so doing may keepe vs in rest. Thus yee see in effect howe wee haue to applie this worde *Feare or Terrour*, wherewith Moses threateneth here the transgressors of Gods law, and such as stand against him to the vttermost.

Deut. 28. 66

He saith further that *God will destroy euen the sucking babes, and the olde men which are already gray headed*, so as hee will not spare, neither sex nor age nor anie thing else; for hee speaketh of young folke and of maydes that are to bee maried. Nowe (as I sayde afore) wee must not thinke it straunge that God shoulde vse such seueritie: but wee must call to minde the vnreformable stubbornesse which was in the people afore. For wee knowe that Moses wrate this song to shewe the people their malicious and frowarde nature, yea and vtterlie vnamendable: in so much that when God had by all meanes vttered his goodnesse and mercie towardes them, they drewe all to the worst, and shewed themselues too too vnthankefull, shrinking continually away from him, and marring themselues with superstition and Idolatrie, so as the Prophetes streyning themselues to the vttermost, coulde not bring them backe againe into the right way. Is it then anie woonder that GOD after so long wayting shoulde vse so great extremitie as wee see? No. For after that GOD had winked at them, their iniquitie came to the full growth, according to the fore alledged text of Genesis which saith, that the wickednesse of the Amorrhites was not yet full growen: but within fourehundred yeares afterwarde, they shoulde bee vtterly rooted out. And why was that? For it was too much that those people were hardened alreadie in the time of Abraham. But when as at the ende of fourehundred yeares more, they were become yet worse, and ceased not to increase still the great heape of Gods vengeaunce: was it not meete that hee should then make them to pay the whole arrearages (as they say?) And seeing that the children of Israel comming into the same place and hauing so fayre a lookingglasse before their eyes, in those Nations whome GOD had vterlie destroyed; did neuertheless giue

Gen. 15. 16.

ouer

ouer themselues to the same superstitions, and thereby defiled the lande, which God had appointed to his owne seruice: was it not meete that they also should be made an example to others? Nowe this ought to serue vs. For wee be in possession of the inheritance which God promised to the children of Abraham: I meane not the land which they dwelt in, but the inheritãce which was betokened by that land as by a gage and figure. Gods will therefore is that we nowe shoulde bee his householde, and that we should bee gathered together into his Church and flocke, vntil he take vs into his kingdome. Nowe if in steede of honouring him, and of yeelding him his due seruice, we become vnrulie folke, giuen ouer to all lewdnesse, and moreouer doe match the same with wilfull stubbornesse, so as there is no meane to bring vs backe into the way of saluation: thinke wee that our Lorde will not bee reuenged of such vnthankefulnesse.

Furthermore let vs not thinke it straunge, that the young babes are here spoken of. For as touching maides that are to bee maryed, young men, and olde folkes: if a nation bee corrupted, and the mischeefe haue once ouerflowed his bankes (as they say:) they also must needes bee infected as well as the rest, and the worlde sees it is so. For when olde men are once saped in naughtinesse, and inured by custome to offend God: they wil rather haue their skinnes plucked off from their backs a thousand times if they had so many skinnes, than once to be reclaimed. For they become so blockish, or els so inraged, that their is no way to deale with thẽ. As for young folke, we see they be as it were set on fire to make war against God. Againe, where soeuer wickednesse reigneth, and all thinges are peruerted: there the young women become as wilde as Roes, so as there remayneth not anie honestie, and much lesse anie feare of God in them. This is apparant to all men. And therefore it is not to bee woondred at, though God doe threaten both young and old. But as touching little babes, that may seeme the more cruelne, because they haue not offended like the others. For will God punish the guiltlesse? Doth hee not say by his Prophet Ezechiel, that the parties which haue sinned shal beare their owne punishment, and that the Childe shall not bee punished for his father? Yes, but we must marke that God hath a reason of his iudgementes, though it bee vnknowen to vs. Wee then may thinke some chastisements of Gods to be ouerrigorous, but yet doeth he knowe why he doth so, and it becommeth vs to reuerence the things with all humilitie, which are incomprehensible to vs. For what a thing were it if wee should measure all Gods workes by our wit? Can wee attaine to them? Howe farre extendeth our vnderstanding? Let vs consider howe weake and small it is, and what rudenesse is in vs. But on the other side, what are the iudgementes of God? Euen a deepe gulfe vnpossible to be gaged: they be vncomprehensible as saith the scripture. Againe, whom did he euer cal to counsel? Therefore let vs content our selues with the thinges which God hath opened vnto vs, and be mindfull of the thing which wee haue seene not long since, namely that the secrete thinges belong to our God, and that the thinges which are in his Law belong to vs and to our children: that is to say, y we must hold vs to the measure which God giueth vs, and not be inquisitiue without ende & more than is lawfull for vs to know, but receiue the doctrine which hee giueth vs, assuring our selues that the same is sufficient for our saluation. Also let vs bethinke vs howe it is saide in Iob, that we see the brimmes of Gods workes, but we can neuer attaine to the bottome of thẽ. Therefore whereas the scripture speaketh nowe and then of some executions which God doeth: although the same may seeme to vs ouerrigorous, yet must wee bridle our selues and imprison our wits to honour God with such reuerence as he deserueth. Let that serue for one poynt.

Deut.29.29

Iob.9.10.

Furthermore as concerning that which is said here of Babes, let vs marke that if God lifted to rende vp the whole worlde by the rootes, hee coulde doe it, yea and that right iustlie. For euen from our verie birth, we bring nothing but wrath and cursednesse. If God take young babes out of the worlde, yea and damne them: yet is there no rigour in so doing: for wee be all forlorne afore hande by nature. In this case therefore it behoooueth vs to cast downe our heades and our eyes, and not presume to stande in contention with God by reasoning the matter with him, nor to control him as though he did wrong or iniurie to little infantes in taking them out of the worlde. For (as I saide) hee may not onely smite them with death, but also sende them to euerlasting damnation, because wee bee all cursed in Adam. Now then, when he hath withdrawen his grace from a whole Nation, and all of them are become reprobates: then must his wrath needes extende as well to the young infantes as to their fathers, according to this saying, that God casteth backe the wickednesse of the fathers, into the bosomes and lappes of their children. Not that the children be punished being guiltlesse: for God knoweth that they bee not so. Yea, but we perceiue not that they haue offended. As who woulde say, that wee were able to perceiue as much as God knoweth. Haue wee as sharpe a sight as hee? [No.] So then, although wee take little babes to bee faultlesse: yet notwithstanding there is a naughtinesse inclosed in them, and the seede of sinne is sufficient to condemne them before God. Wherefore let vs marke, that although hee root out young babes; yet in so doing he cannot be blamed of crueltie: but he executeth a iudgement which surmounteth the capacitie and measure of mans wit, whereat wee may well wonder, but yet must wee confesse it to bee rightfull, as it is indeede. Wee see howe it fell out both in Sodome and in other places where it was his will to haue all destroyed. When anie such thing happeneth, let vs vnderstande that GODS intent is to make vs to cast downe our eyes. For if it befall so to

Ier.32.18.

Gen.19.24.

Luke 23. 31. the greene tree, what shall be doone to the drie? Behold the litle Infants whom we imagine to bee innocent and faultlesse: and yet wee see that Gods vengeaunce wrappeth them in with the elder sorte, and with those that haue greatlie offended. Righteous is GOD in so doing. What shall wee say to it, but onelie that wee ought to quake at it? For there is none of vs all which hath not deserued a hundred times as much. If GOD spare vs, are we not the more bounde to his goodnesse? And againe, if it pleased him to deale with vs according to our misdeedes, shoulde wee not be afraide that we shal bee much more roughlie handled, than wee see litle babes are? Yes surelie. So then, insteede of contending as manie doe, and of entering into curious questions euen with diuelishe malapeartnesse to controll GOD, as I haue saide afore: let vs learne to be lowlie, in such wise that hauing giuen glorie vnto GOD by confessing that he is euer righteous and soothfast, and let vs also haue an eye to that wee haue seene, that so we may impute it to his free mercifulnesse that hee beareth with vs, and also bee the more incouraged to returne to him, so as wee may no more abuse the long time of his patience. Thus yee see what wee haue to remember vppon this text, where GOD saith that hee will destroy euen the little sucking babes.

Nowe hee addeth yet further, *I had saide or determined to roote out this people, but that I feared the prouoking of the enemie, leaste the Aduersaries might haue beene estraunged, and haue saide, Our hand is high, and it is not the Lorde that hath doone all this.* In this text our Lorde sheweth that hee is so farre off from vsing any vnmeasurable rigour against his people: that hee hath rather yet another respect not to roote them vtterly out, namelie leaste the Infidels should haue occasion to blaspheme him. That is the meaning of Moses. They will complaine and say that GOD ought not to handle his people after that fashion, but that hee ought to vse greater kindnesse and gentlenesse towardes them. Yea, saith hee, pleade on your case: but yet shal yee winne nothing by it. For if God had respected no further matter than you, hee had rooted you long agoe out of the worlde, and the remembrance of you had beene quite and cleane abolished long ere this. What letted him then? Not that you were not worthie to haue perished, for you haue not ceased to prouoke his wrath by dooing euill: but for that hee had a respect to your enemies, that is to say, to the Infidels. And why? For if God shoulde haue rooted out that people, whom he had chooseu: for asmuch as the renowne thereof was spread ouer all the worlde, and the deliuering of them out of Egypt was as a woonderfull miracle, and the Israelites themselues professed themselues continually to bee the worshippers of the God which had taken them out of the deepe gulfe: shoulde not his destroying of them haue opened the mouthes of the wicked to skoffe at the Religion which was held in Iurie, and to haue saide, Where is nowe the God which maintained them so long time, as they themselues haue reported? Either hee is falne asleepe, or else he hath lost his wittes, for he succoureth them not any more. After that manner woulde the Infidels haue rayled at God if hee had not euer reserued and kept still some seede of that people, to shewe that his couenaunt was not quite and cleane disanulled, but that it stoode still in full force. That is the verie meaning of this saying where wee reade, I had determined to root them, yea and to scatter thē abroade euerywhere. For the worde betokeneth such a scattering or rending asunder, as if one shoulde dismember a mans bodie, and cast the peeces thereof abroade here and there, so as nothing were left whole. Therefore, I had rooted them out [saith hee,] yea and that in such wise as they shoulde neuer haue beene spoken of anie more among men, *but that I feared the prouocation of the enemie.* Nowe the thing that is rehearsed here, is read of in Exodus. And so it shoulde seeme that God was restrayned by Moses from doing the thing which hee speaketh of here. For hee giueth the sentence, and addeth, Let me doe it, as though Moses had set himselfe against him. And yet for all that, it is verie certaine that God had determined aforehande to pardon his people: but yet it was his will that Moses shoulde make intercession for them, yea euen Moses, in asmuch as he was there & made supplicatiō in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ, and the people knew that they coulde not haue scaped except God had hearde the prayers of Moses. Exod. 32. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14.

But howesoeuer the case stoode, this text sheweth vs that God altered not his purpose: for hee is not variable, neither repealed hee his sentence, though hee saide, I will yet againe pardon this people for thy sake. For the thing which hee had determined in his owne minde, was performed, and yet notwithstanding it was his will that Moses shoulde steppe in as a mediator. And when God heareth vs, it is not for that we make him to chaunge his minde: but it pleaseth him to declare the thing to vs which hee had determined to doe, to the end that our faith shoulde bee exercised, and wee knowe, that to pray, is no labour lost or vnprofitable, for the fruite sheweth the contrarie. That is the cause then why hee graunteth those thinges at our request, which hee had determined in his euerlasting purpose afore. Yet notwithstanding we see in effect, that if God had not beene minded to stoppe the mouthes of all the wicked, and vnbeleeuing sort, he had destroyed that people. And that was done to correct § ouerweening of such as were euer ready to grudge against God. For such is the maner of men, that they neuer want replies: but as soone as God scourgeth them, by and by they stand in contention with him. And if he presse them double; then they not onelie grunt at it, but also spewe out their blasphemies against him. But here our Lorde sheweth, that whē men haue cast forth al their rage after that fashion, yet it shall bee prooued to their faces, that hee notwithstanding hath dealt ouergentlie with them, accordingly as it is certayne that euen

euen at this day, if God had not a further consideration than onely of vs, we deserue well to be wiped out of the worlde. For notwithstanding that wee haue receiued his worde, what doe we fare the better for it? We professe the hauing of the Gospell, and wee can well say that the Papistes are Idolaters, straungers from God, and men giuen ouer to all euill. And why? For they be blinde and walke in the darke. But yet for all that, wee that haue the cleare light of life, howe doe we order our doinges? If we be compared with the Papistes, shall a man finde vs better than them? Nay, wee are so much more blame worthie than they, because that for all our teaching yet wee despise God of a certayne malicious and determinate purpose. Sith it is so, if God had not a further respect than to vs, surelie wee shoulde bee consumed out of hand. But for asmuch as the Papistes woulde by and by set open their throates to scoffe at God and the pure Religion, therefore hee maintaineth vs still. Wherefore let vs not boast that wee haue holde out vnto this time by our owne power: but let vs consider that God woulde not haue his name blasphemed, nor make the trueth of his Gospell to bee a iestingstocke for men to scoffe at: and let that bee a meane to humble vs yet better. Wee see then that this doctrine belongeth vnto vs, and that Moses spake it not onely to the people of Israell, but also to all such as shoulde professe the seruice of God, and haue the pure doctrine of his worde: insomuch that if they play the naughtipackes, and prouoke Gods vengeaunce against them, and God neuertheless doe beare with them; it is not for their faire eyes (as they say,) nor for that they haue deserued it: but because our Lord will not giue such loose and vnbridled libertie to them that seeke occasion thereof.

And it is saide expressely, *That God feared the prouocation of the enemie, least hee shoulde estraunge himselfe, and say, My hande is high, and it is not the Lorde that hath doone this thing.* By this worde *Prouocation*, hee meaneth the pride that is in men, accordinglie also as hee doeth in the eight Psalme, where it is saide that God is glorifyed by the mouthes of sucklinges, in which place expresse mention is made of the enemie and of y auenger, because the vnbeleeuers are alwayes so proude and presumptuous, that there is nothing with them but crueltie & thundering. So likewise in this text it is saide that God feared to prouoke the enemie, that is to wit, least the Infidels shoulde proceede to such wickednesse as to scoffe at the Law and at the true Religion, God then preuented them. And wee must not imagine that God was afraide of men: for hee coulde well haue prouided for it by some other meane. Is it not hee that hath made mens tongues? And how can they then stirre to speak one worde, if he lifted to restrayne them? Could they moue to vtter one syllable? It should seeme then that the thing which Moses speaketh here is needlesse, namely that God shoulde bee afrayde to prouoke his enemies: for hee coulde wel haue remedied the matter if hee had would. I haue tolde you oftentimes alreadie, that God is spoken of after the manner of men. Therefore when God prouideth for a thing by anie worldlie meane, and such as is common among vs: it is not for that hee is tyed vnto it, & cannot of his infinite power doe otherwise: but because it pleaseth him so to doe. Thus are wee doone to vnderstande in fewe wordes, that when it pleaseth God to serue his owne turne by the inferiour meanes which hee hath ordeyned in this worlde; it is not for that hee cannot doe what he listeth of himselfe and without any other helpe: but for that it is his will to keepe that order. As for example. Hee coulde well sustaine vs without breade, wine, or water: and yet notwithstanding hee vseth those meanes. And why so? Euen because it pleaseth him. If we be sicke, he can well heale vs without any medicine: and yet will hee haue vs to vse medicines. In the time of warre he coulde wel represse all our enemies without our stirring of anie finger towards it; but yet hath hee ordeyned other meanes. Ye see then after what manner this text is to bee vnderstoode, where it is saide that God was afraide to prouoke the enemie: not that hee was vnable to let them or to withstande them if hee had would; or that hee was vnable to haue stopped the mouthes of the Infidels; but because hee sawe men so malicious, that their whole desire is to haue full libertie to speake euill of his maiestie. Which thing he, perceyning, intendeth to remedie it. And by what meanes? Euen by such as hee himselfe likes best of. Not that hee doeth it of necessitie (as I saide afore) or by anie constraynt: but that his good pleasure is so. And therefore God coulde well roote vs out of the worlde at this day: and on the otherside hee coulde well make the Papistes dumbe, and altogether senseleese, or else hee coulde make them blockes or stones, or else he could vtterlie ouerwhelme them, so as his name should not bee blasphemed by them: and therewithall hee coulde raise vp a newe people which should glorifie him in his iust destroying and consuming of vs. God coulde well doe all these thinges: but yet for all that hee holdeth still such order in his workes, as hee hath determined vppon in himselfe. That is the cause why on the one side hee spareth vs, and on the other side giueth not occasion to the Papistes to blaspheme his holy name if hee shoulde vse extreeme rigour agaynst vs.

And by the way, here wee bee put in minde of the nature of man. Indeede God speaketh of the aduersarie and enemie: but yet vnder them, he comprehendeth all such as haue not beene taught by his worde to yeeld themselues teachable vnto him. And what manner of disposition attributeth hee vnto them? That they estrange themselues: that is to say, that without inquiring or considering of Gods vengeaunce wherein he ought to be glorified, they turne it into a slaunder and say, It is not God that did it. Let vs marke well then, that if wee bee let alone to our owne nature, and that God guide vs not by his worde and spirite, to giue vs the true sound-

neſſe of vnderſtanding, diſcretion, and skill: although hee worke after ſuch a faſhion as his righteouſneſſe, power, and wiſedome may ſo appeare, that wee muſt needes be conuicted by it: yet we ſhal not ceaſe to caſt foorth blaſphemie againſt him. And why? For wee ſhall bee as witleſſe beaſtes. And this ſaying: *For feare leaſt the enemie ſhoulde eſtraunge himſelfe*, is to bee well weyed. For thereby God meaneth, that men inſteede of applying their wittes to the beholding of the thinges which hee ſheweth them, do wrappe themſelues in ignorance wilfully. Nowe it is certayne that although wee be blinde wretches, and that although by reaſon of Adams ſinne wee bee bereft of iudgement, reaſon, and vnderſtanding; yet there is malice ſtill in vs, ſo as our whole ſeeking is to bee ignoraunt of the thinges which our Lorde woulde haue vs to knowe. Therefore whenſoeuer men doe make a cloke of their ignorance, they ſhall euermore bee conuicted to haue refuſed the knowledge of thoſe thinges which might haue beene well knowen vnto them, if they had ſet their minds vppon them. And that is the verie cauſe why Saint Iude in his Epiſtle ſpeaking of theſe heatheniſh folke which deſpiſe GOD, and are groſſe and dulheaded as folke that haue no knowledge at all; ſaith that they knowe not the thinges which they ſhoulde know, becauſe they haue no liſt to knowe them. Then is it a curſed kinde of cloking, whenſoeuer men make not their benefite of Gods workes, but applie them cleane contrarie to his meaning.

Iude. 10.

Now looke what is ſaid here concerning the Infidels, the ſame belongeth likewiſe vnto vs. And were it not that GOD bringeth the light vnto vs, or vs vnto the light, and opened our eyes to ſee the thinges which hee ſheweth vs: ſurely we ſhould not onely continue ſtil blind, but alſo it ſhoulde cauſe vs to become worſe and worſe, accordingly as it is ſaide here, that the Infidels ſhoulde haue blaſphemed GOD, ſaying, *Our hande is high, and it is not God that hath done this.* On the one ſide then we let God alone as though he had done nothing: and on ỹ other ſide wee become ſo proude as to put ourſelues in his roome. For men contente not themſelues with their robbing of God of his power, & with their defacing of his maieſtie: but they will alſo needs deck theſelues with his feathers, & make themſelues verie Idols, and haue men to beleue them to haue beene the doers of the thinges which are peculiar to GOD. So then, ſeeing there is ſuch mad pride in vs, and ſo groſſe ſelfe weening: wee ought to bee the more warned to yeelde our ſelues vnto GOD, and to pray him not onely to ſhew vs his workes wherein his glorie may ſhine foorth and appeare: but alſo to open our eyes that wee may ſee them, in giuing vs skill and diſcretion by his holy ſpirit, ſo as we may learne with humilitie to honour him: and that when we haue confeſſed his iuſtice, goodnes, and mercie, we may conſider howe much we be bounde vnto him, and that when hee puniſheth other men, we may be drawen to repentaunce by their meanes, and vnderſtande that he beareth with vs, becauſe he might well confounde vs out of hande, were it not that he intended to vſe fauour and goodnes towardes vs, to the ende wee ſhoulde bee the more inflamed to honor him, and to dedicate our ſelues to him in the name of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Nowe let vs pray vnto him to vouchſafe to haue pitie vppon vs, and not to call vs to account for the great number of miſdeeds whereof wee be guiltie, becauſe wee knowe well that if hee liſted to deale rigorouſly with vs, we ſhould needes be confounded, yea and vtterly periſhe: and that although hee had not wayted for vs ſo long time, yet he had iuſt cauſe to haue deſtroyed vs as often as wee prouoked him to wrath: wherfore although we haue offended him without end or meaſure, yet notwithſtanding ſeeing hee hath ſhewed himſelfe ſo kindhearted a father towardes vs alreadie, it may pleaſe him to continue his mercie and fauour, and therewithall to reforme vs ſo by his holy ſpirit, that being guided and gouerned by him, our whole ſeeking may be to frame ourſelues to ỹ obeying of him, ſuffering our ſelues to be ruled by his word, and ſeeking nought elſe but to pleaſe him in all reſpects. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the vj. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXV. Sermon which is theeight vpon the two & thirtith Chapter.

28 For it is a Nation voyde of diſcretion, and there is no vnderſtanding in them.

29 But if they were wiſe, they would vnderſtande this, and take heed to their ende.

30 Howe ſhoulde one of them chaſe a thouſande, and two of them put tenne thouſande to flight, were it not that God had ſolde them, and that the Lord had ſhut them vp?

31 For

31 For their gods are not as our God, and thereof euen our enemyes themselues are Iudges.

WE saw yesterday how God hauing a respect to the Infidels & their blasphemies, had spared the people of Israel. And thereupon it was shewed, that God doth oftentimes pitie vs, & not punish vs so rigorously as we deserue, to ỹ end that his name should not be made a scoffing stocke, & a iesting stock among the wicked, who seeke occasion of skorning when they see God chastice his Church: & thereupon they fall to rayling at the doctrine and Religion it selfe. But now it is added here, *That this people were destitute of discretion, & voyde of vnderstanding.* Truly men thinke themselues wise ynough when they bee craftie and suttle in prouiding well for their businesse, and in practising this and that. And then fall they flat to despise God, as wee see that all these worldlings doe, who are forepossessed of this fantasie of selfwisedome, by reason whereof the whole worde of God, and the suffering of themselues to be gouerned by it, is to them but simplicitie and foolishnes. But yet for al that, the holy Ghost affirmeth, & that iustly, that all such as liue not in the feare of GOD, are witlesse. For our true wisedome is to yeelde our selues to him which can leade vs to saluation: and without that, wee bee blinde wretches and inclosed with darkenesse. And therefore wee can not but goe astray all our life long, and after tripping to stumble right downe, yea euen into a deadly fall. Wee must vnderstand then, that vntill we bee come to the submitting of our selues wholly vnto GOD, and to knowe that all our happinesse lyeth in him: wee bee voyde of discretion. But this cannot bee, but that therewithall men must also needes knowe themselues. And in deede, if a man haue gone about heauen and earth, and gotten the vnderstanding of al things in them, and in the meane time thinketh not vppon his GOD, nor yet vppon himselfe: I pray you to what purpose is all his vnderstanding? If hee were the skilfullest Astrologer in the world, and had all Philosophie inclosed in his braine, and were perfect in all other sciences, and yet in the meane while knewe not himselfe, nor had any regarde of GOD, but were so brutish that he wist not what Religion meaneth: were such a man to bee more esteemed, than a simple idiot which liueth in the feare of GOD, and knoweth to what ende hee is created? Then is it not without cause, that Moses condemneth all those of brutishnesse, which haue forgotten God, are gone backe from his worde, are intangled in superstitions, and to bee short, haue left the way of saluation, and the light which God offered them to guide them all their life long. As for those which haue so estraunged themselues, Moses not without cause doeth terme *witlesse and forlorne in their Discretion.* And by that terme he meaneth, that the despisers of God being giuen to their vanities and wicked lustes, haue in deed some discretion, and doe delight and glorie in their own reason, yea and are ful of pride, in so much that if a man speake to them to reclayme them into the right way, they despise all doctrine, bearing themselues in hand that they bee able ynough to discerne betweene good and euill. That doeth Moses meane. But what? It is a discretion of ouerthrowe and destruction. And therefore let vs suffer our selues to bee ruled by God, & let vs apply al our indeuour to the receiuing of ỹ thinges which he teacheth, if wee will haue an vnderstanding that shall doe vs good.

And for the confirming of the same matter, hee addeth heere, *O that they would learne, O that they had vnderstood this, and that they had considered their last end.* We see why God hath pronounced that there is no reason in men, and that they be vtterly dull and destitute of vnderstanding, when their lyfe is loose and vnorderly. And why? Wee haue seene whereto GOD called the people of Israel. Nowe his adopting of vs, is to the ende that our lyfe shoulde bee blessed and happie, and that after he hath preserued vs in this worlde, the inheritance of the heauenly kingdome should bee bestowed vppon vs. Yee see then that the true happinesse of men is to haue the fauour and loue of God. And wee be sure of his fatherly goodnesse towardes vs, if when hee calleth vs by his woorde, wee come vnto him, and accept that grace by faith. The vnseparable bond then betweene God and man, is that they receiue the record of his goodnesse which hee giueth vnto them. And that serueth as well for this present lyfe, as for their euerlasting life. On the contrarie part wee haue heard the threates which are giuen forth heere: that is to say, that GOD hauing long time borne with the Churlishnesse of that people, woulde bee reuenged of it. Now he addeth, Must it not needs be ỹ this people are destitute of wit and reason, when they consider not this thing, ne haue an eye to their owne ende? Not without cause doth Moses here point out what ỹ people ought to haue considered: for wee haue bin told afore, ỹ God hath so reserued to himself the matters which concerne his own incomprehensible determination, as yet notwithstanding, he hath made the doctrine of the lawe familiar vnto vs: and he will haue it to be obserued for ỹ exercising of vs therein all our whole life. Seeing then ỹ God hath spoken, and his will is set before our eyes: let vs mark that his so doing is not in vaine: accordingly also as hee auoweth by his Prophet Esay saying, We cannot allcage ỹ it is a darke thing & such as passeth our vnderstãding. We must not say any more, Who wil go ouer the sea? Who shall climbe vp aboue the cloudes? Or who shall go downe into the deepe? Seeing ỹ the word is in our mouthes & in our hearts, it ought verily to suffice vs. Neuertheleſſe it is true ỹ although God haue spoken, yet must he be faine to inlighten our wits with his holy spirit, or else we shall abide still without vnderstanding. But if wee consider the doctrine in it selfe, it is most

Deut. 29. 28

Esa. 45. 19

Deut. 12. 30

Rom. 10. 6

manifeſt vnto vs, and God reueileth himſelfe therein familiarly ynough. The thing then which we haue to remember vppon this text, is that Moſes vpbraideth the Iſraelites, that they had beene called to God after ſuch a faſhion, as they coulde not haue erred vnleſſe they had would: and moreouer that their end had beene ſhewed vnto them.

And by the word *End*, he meaneth al the happines that is promiſed to al gods children which addict themſelues to him and reſt vpon his promiſes, walking continually vnder his obedience: and contrariwiſe the confuſiõ and ouerthrow of all ſkornefull, and diſobedient perſons, which deſpiſe ſuch grace, withdrawing themſelues from him and corrupting his woord. To that intent and purpoſe then doth Moſes expreſſly ſpeake of the end of them. And now muſt we make our benefite of this leſſon. Firſt of al therefore let vs mark that (as I haue ſaid afore) we may be ỹ wittieſt folke in the world, and yet we ſhalbe counted as brute beaſtes and without reaſon at Gods hand, if we haue not a regard of him. The chiefe point then of our wiſedom, is to haue our eyes open to behold the light of life, to haue profited wel in the ſchoole of our God, ſo as we can worſhip him, and to be no longer as ſtray cattell, not knowing him that made vs and faſhioned vs, nor yet knowing our ſelues neither. And therefore let vs learne to receiue Gods word with all ſimplicitie, & not doubt but that there he commeth ſo familiarly vnto vs, as we cannot ſay ỹ we need make long iourneyes, or that the things are too profound and darke for vs. For our Lord doth (as ye would ſay) chawe our morſels aforehand to vs, becauſe of the rudeneſſe which he ſeeth in vs. And ſo he handleth vs lyke little babes, to the intent we may the eaſilier ſwallow down the foode which he giueth vs. Thus ye may ſee (I ſay) howe that when we haue Gods woord preached vnto vs, wee muſt not doe as the Papiſtes doe, which ſay, Oh ſir, this is to high for me, this geere is not for plaine folkes, this is to be reſerued for the clergie. But let vs aſſure our ſelues that God ſpeaketh both to great and ſmall, and daly eth not with vs when hee calleth vs to him by his word, but will haue vs to vnderſtand it. Then is it not long of any but ourſelues, if when his word is preached vnto vs, we be not dewly inſtructed in the things that are requiſite for our ſaluation. True it is that we muſt not ſteppe to it with preſumption, truſting in our own wiſedome: but we muſt deſire God to inlighten vs, and that as his voyce ſoundeth in our eares, ſo alſo he ſpeake to our heartes by his holy ſpirite. Let vs humble our ſelues, accordingly as we know how it is ſaid that God vttereth his wil to ſuch as are little and lowely. If we go to it after that maner, let vs not doubt but our Lord will make the things auaileable which are ſet downe to vs in his name, and giue vs acceſſe vnto him both familiar and eaſie ynough. Therefore let vs marke well this word *End*, whereof Moſes ſpeaketh heere, and let vs conſider whereunto God calleth vs. True it is that he maketh vs promiſes euen of this preſent life, ſo as wee ought to aſſure our ſelues that God will not fayle vs in this world, inſomuch that although he will haue vs exerciſed with many miſeries, and vexed with diuers temptations: yet notwithſtanding he ſayth he will hold vs vp with his mightie hand, ſo as we ſhall neuer bee deſtitute of his helpe at our neede. But yet the chiefe point is to conſider the heritage which is reſerued for vs in heauen, ſo as we tend thitherwards, and ſet all our affections thereuppon, without intangling our ſelues ſo in theſe baſe things, that wee cannot haue our hearres alwayes vpwards: and that for as much as our happineſſe and treaſure is aboue; wee bee not held downe in this worlde; wherein all things are brittle and tranſitorie. After that maner ought wee to conſider the worde *End*, whereof Moſes ſpeaketh here. For whoſoeuer they bee that ſeeke their happyneſſe heere beneath; ſurely they differ nothing at all from Oxen and Aſſes, but rather their ſtate is yet much woorſe. For the beaſtes go on ſtill, and are not troubled with the great number of luſtes wherewith men are troubled. There is no ambition to be ſeene in them, there is no Couetouſneſſe, there is none of all the other luſtes. If they be a thirſt, they drink; if they be a hungred, they eate. But men deſire not onely to eate and drinke, but alſo to glut themſelues and to follow all maner of exceſſe. Ye ſee then howe a man is more wretched than a beaſt, in that he is ſo caried away by his vnruly affections. Sith the caſe ſtandeth ſo, let vs tend to the end which god ſetteth downe vnto vs; and let vs vnderſtand that God doth ſo make vs to taſte of his goodneſſe in this earthly pilgrimage, ỹ he wil haue vs to be filled therwith aboue, & but onely to paſſe through this world, or to dwell in it as ſoiourners, and in the meane while not ceaſſe to be ioyned and vnited to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, knowing that he is our head, and the fountaine of all good things, and that all our ioy, contentation, reſt, and glory doe lye and conſiſt in him: and on the contrary part, that if God puniſh vs not at the firſt for our offences, we muſt not therfore fall aſleepe in the, nor take occaſion thereby to flatter our ſelues. And why? If we liue ſo from day to day without looking any further: muſt it not needes be ỹ we be ſtarke blocks? True it is that the faithfull are not vexed with ouergreat carefulnes. For why? They caſt themſelues as it were into Gods lap, as they be incouraged to do in the pſalm. Then ſhal we not be vexed w vnquietnes, as they be which haue no truſt in god. For when we cal vpon god, he is neere at hand, and we muſt not make long diſcourſes in that behalfe as the worldlings doe, who ſtand ſcanning of that which is to come a hundred yeres after their death. Yet notwithſtanding we muſt not be ſo wedded to ỹ things which we ſee before our eyes, that we ſhold not alwaies looke further off. But lyke as the promiſes of the heauenly lyfe ought to lift vs vp aboue the world: ſo ought Gods threatenings to quicken vs vp to walke in his feare, by rebuking vs for our ſinnes when wee haue done amiſſe, and by calling vs dayly to account: accordingly as it is ſayde, that by faith Noe beheld the floud when other men made great cheere and feaſting.

Pſal. 19. 9.

Mat. 6. 19.

Pſal. 37. 5. 145. 18.

Heb. 11. 7.

So

So then, let vs learne to haue an eye to our end: that is to say, when we haue offended God, let vs not fall asleepe vpon it, neither let vs foster our vices from morrow to morrow till we be growne hardhearted through vnreformable stubbornesse: but although God beare with vs and vse patience in winking at vs for a time: yet let not vs forbeare to bethinke vs of his threatenings, and to waken our selues that we may repent and aske forgiuenesse and turne vnto him with true amendment. Ye see then that the true wisedome is that men should not be tyed to the present thinges, but to lift vp their hearts and mindes to the things that are inuisible: accordingly as it is said that faith is a mirrour of the things that are not seene, and the ground of the things which are absent or farre from vs. Although then that our happinesse appeare not at the first, and it seeme that for all our seruing of God yet we be miserable, by reason whereof the vnbeleeuers flout vs, and set their feete as it were vpon our throats, so as we be persecuted by them: yet notwithstanding let vs not ceasse to conclude, that hauing once put our trust in God, we shalnot be disappointed. For why? The end of it wilbe good: and therfore let vs tary patiently til God deliuer vs from the afflictions and miseries wherin we be at this day. Let vs therfore set our minde vpon the end which God hath promised vs. And therwithall let vs also haue an eye to his threatenings, and let them hold vs in awe. And although the wicked prouoke God, and are not rebuked for it at the first, by cause God seeth that they be not worthy to be chastised by his hand: yet notwithstanding let not vs bee astonished therat, but let vs vnderstand that Gods threatening of the transgressors of his Law after that fashion is not in vaine. And therefore let vs frame our owne indirement, that we may preuent the condemnation which otherwise taryeth for vs. That (I say) is the thing which wee haue to remember vpon the word *End*, wherof Moses hath spoken heere.

And therwithall we see the goodnesse of God here expressed after a wonderful maner, in that he entereth into a complaning and sorrowing, as if he were a man that could suffer: *O that this people* (saith he) *had bin wel aduised.* True it is that our Lord is not subiect to our passions; but he vseth such form of speech, to shew that the loue which he beareth vs, surmounteth the loue of all earthly fathers. And therefore it serueth in effect to doe vs to vnderstand, that when we goe wilfully into destruction, and reiect the grace which was offered vs to our saluation: then doe we grieue the spirite of God, as is said in the Prophet Esay: and it is al one as if we strake God with a dagger, as he complayneth also by his Prophet Zachary. That is one thing in effect, which we haue to remember vpon this place. And were all this well graued in our hearts; I pray you woulde it not make vs to abhorre all our sinnes? When a man is tempted by Sathan to offend his God, if hee would bethinke himselfe of this point, and say, How now? Thou grieuest thy God, thou giuest him cause to enter into complaint and sorrowe, like a father that conceiueth griefe and anguish of mind when hee sees his children vnruly and vnreformable: It is a wounding of him at the heart, and so likewise God telleth vs, we grieue his spirite: If a man (I say) would bethinke himselfe throughly of these things: although he had a heart of stone, yet would they breake it and soften it. And this is the cause why that throughout all the holy Scripture hee complaineth of this, that we greatly grieue him, whē we are so wicked & vnruly. Therefore let vs aduise ourselues well: & for as much as hee is desirous to be our father, let vs bee to him as children. For it must needes be that Sathan hath more than bewitched vs, & that hee rageth most terribly in vs, if we be not moued at such kind of dealing. And it behoueth vs so much the more to marke well this text, by cause our Lord condemneth men for that they are too senseleſſe and brutish, and telleth them that they be too too blockish, in that they haue not eye to their ende: but specially for that hee proceedeth so farre, as to cloth himselfe with our humane passions, and lamenteth to see vs perish wilfully, and that we cannot abyde that hee should deale like a father with vs. That is one thing more which we haue to marke vpon this text.

Now if any man alleage, that God seeing men so destitute, could wel giue them vnderstanding, as we haue seene heeretofore where it is sayde, God hath not yet giuen thee a minde and heart to vnderstand. We must mark that God hath his secret purpose, which he reserueth to himselfe, (For he sheweth fauour to whom he listeth: and he hath pitie on whome he hath pitie) and it is not for vs to enter thereinto, but rather to doe him the honour to confesse that he is the fountaine of al goodnes, of al power, of al wisedome, and of all iustice and vprightnesse. Yet notwithstanding we must make hast when hee calleth & incourageth vs by his word. For if we come not, ne hearken to the things that are set forth to vs in his name, to receiue them obediently by faith: we shalbe condemned as persons that haue grieued his holy spirite by rebelling against him, and shewed our selues to be vnreformable children, that haue disdayned our father and made our selues straungers to him and to his house. That is the thing which is set forth vnto vs in this text. Therefore whereas God vpbraideth vs with our grieuing of him, let vs beware that wee enter not into these needeles curiosities: but rather let it suffice vs to behold him in his word, where he sheweth himself, and where he sheweth himselfe in such wise, as we shall finde that all they which frame themselues thereafter, shall haue a happy end: that is to wit, that for as much as they bee adopted of God afore, they cannot perish: and on the contrary parte, that they which turne their backe to God when he sheweth them his face, and which kick and spurne against him, shall for their sturdinesse reape nothing but confusion. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to gather vpon this place.

Deut. 29. 4.

Exo. 33. 19 & Ro. 9. 15

Now Moses addeth consequently, *Were is possible for one man to chase a thousand, or that two should put*

ten thousand to flight, vnlesse the Lord had inclosed thē, and shut their mightie one did hold thē captiue? Here he sheweth by effect, ỳ God had sufficiently warned his people, if they had but one spark of reason in them. And thereupō it is to be concluded, ỳ there was no more excuse of ignoraunce for ỳ people, but ỳ they were conuicted ouermuch, to haue hardened their hearts euen of wilfull malice, & so to haue withstoode God, & to haue letted him ỳ he should not bring thē backe into the right way. That was ỳ meaning of Moses. Now let vs mark, ỳ when God vouchsafed to shew his fauour towardes the people of Israel: then was his promise performed, ỳ is to wit, ỳ as soone as the people did but (as ye would say) remoue thēselues, by & by their enemyes were ouercome. We knowe what ouerthrowes they gaue, and by what meanes ỳ same came to passe. For we heare how it is said by ỳ Prophet Esay, ỳ whensoeuer God listeth to succour his people, & to vtter his power in their defence: it shall fall out ẇ them as it did in the voyage against Madian: for at ỳ time Gedeon gate not the victorie by mans policie, neither by vailancie, or strength of hand: but it was the sword of God & of Gedeon that did the deede. And yet it was so done, as it might seeme to be a play of young children. But our Lord saith ỳ he will maintaine his people after ỳ fashion. Againe in other texts he declareth that his sauing of his people shall be neither by sword nor by speare, but by his owne only hand. Ye see then how God hath shewed himselfe inuincible, as oft as he hath listed to defend his people. Cōtrariwise a verie shadowe was ynough to dismay those wretched people and to put them out of heart, so as they were ouerthrowen & brought in bondage of cruel tyrans. After what manner? A man cannot tell how. If a man looke vpon the ouercomming of them, it is a wonderfull and vncredible thing to the sight of the worlde, that there should haue beene so great a change. Now for this cause doeth Moses adde, *Were is possible that one man should put a thousand to flight, and that two shoulde chase ten thousand, except your God had solde you, and that he holde you shutte vp as prisoners?* For so long as he gaue you courage, and shewed you that he intended to maintayne you: your enemyes gayned nothing at your handes, but were vanquished by the onely looke of you, bycause your God fought for you. But as now yee see how your God taketh part against you, and howe it is hee that fighteth against you. And therefore impute not your rough handling vnto men, but consider howe it is the hand of God that pursueth you and is against you. Had the Israelites vnderstoode this, they had beene touched out of hand with their faultes, they had humbled themselues, & they had returned vnto God, acknowledging him for their Iudge. But they continued still in their spytefulnesse. Nowe then wee see the sturdinesse and also the more than beastly blindnesse which was in them. And this vpbrayding of them is to bee marked well. For wee knowe it is the hygheſt poynt of condemnation, when GOD wynneth nothing at our handes by chastising vs, but his scourges become vnprofitable, as if a man shoulde smite with a hammer vpon a stithy or Anuile. Therefore when GOD looseth his labour after that fashion in correcting vs; it is a token that our diseases are vtterly vncurable. And that is the cause why that in the first Chapter of Esay, hee playeth the sorowfull father, saying: Alas, what a thing is this? From the crowne of the head to the sole of the foote, there is not any sounde part in this people. I see they bee the same they were afore, they bee no whyt amended; and must I needes haue bestowed my labour in vayne? Wee see whereunto this tendeth: to wit, GOD sheweth that men are become starke diuels when they consider not that his correcting of them is to bring them to amendment. Nowe then if wee chafe vpon the bitte when God sendeth vs such warnings: surely wee bee vtterly vnreformable. Therefore let vs bethinke our selues better, and as soone as God lifteth vp his finger and maketh vs to perceyue his displeasure; let our sinnes come before our eyes, and let vs thinke vppon them with vtter misliking of them, and returne againe vnto him. The thing then whereof wee bee warned in this text, is that wee shoulde better regard GODS scourges, and not licke against the pricke: for wee shall gaine nothing thereby. Wee haue heard what is sayde in the Lawe, as I haue alleaged heeretofore, and as we haue read it in the eyght and twentith Chapter: that is to wit, that if wee march stoutly against GOD, hee also will strike crossely and ouerthwartly vpon vs. So then, let vs marke well the warnings which we heare. When there commeth a dearth of vittelles, let vs not thinke that God sittes asleepe in heauen. It is hee that tryeth vs, to the intent wee should thinke vpon our sinnes, and stand the more vpon our garde, knowing that they bee the Rodde wherewith he chastiseth vs. And hee doeth it not without cause; but of purpose to humble vs, and to further our saluation continually, vntill hee haue brought vs to it throughly. Therefore let vs learne to bee brought backe continually to the knoweledge of our vices and sinnes, when God calleth and exhorteth vs thereto. And for the bringing thereof to passe, let vs take good heede to ỳ afflictions which we suffer, assuring ourselues that they ought to serue for our instruction.

Esa.9.4.

Iudges.7.

Osee.1.7.

Deut.28.

Psal.18.

Esa.1.5.

And after this, Moses addeth further, *that their mightie one is not as ours*: that is to say, The Idols which the heathen worship, are not lyke to our God. And that it is so, *they themselues are the Iudges*. This place hath commonly beene expounded, as though Moses had complayned that the enemies of the Israelites had so surpryſed them, and so vexed them as no man might succour them: but it is cleane contrarie. For Moses declareth that if God were not against his people, they should not bee so scourged by their enemies: as if he should say, yee must not loke at your owne strength nor yet at your enemies, but consider that for as much as ye haue fought against your GOD, and prouoked his vengeance against you by your offences: all these troubles which

you

you do now indure, are of his ſtirring vp againſt you, and your enemies haue not any whit of ſtrength, but of his gift. Thinke not therefore that they ſhould haue ſuch power, vnleſſe hee had ſolde you, and that hee himſelfe held yee in captiuitie, and had deliuered you into the hands of your enemies. And for proofe therof, is he like their ydols? Strength ſtandeth not in men, but it commeth from heauen. Now then do not the heathen deſerue to be depriued of all ayd, when they worſhip their ydols and dead things? But you now doe worſhip the liuing God, hee hath ſhewed that he will keepe you in his ruition, and that then you ſhall be ſafe againſt all the world. Seeing then that your God is not lyke the ydols of the heathen; howe could you bee ouercome by them, if God did not afflict you, giue you ouer, and forſake you? And that it is ſo (ſayeth he,) euen our enemies are Iudges: That is to ſay, the heathen perceiue and finde by experience the power of our God, ſo as they muſt needs ſpite of their teeth confeſſe, that our God hath all power in himſelfe, and that their owne ydols are nothing. True it is that they abyde ſtill in their ignorance and beaſtlineſſe, but yet howſoeuer they bee diſpoſed they haue the experience thereof: and yet you conſider not that. Heere Moſes rebuketh the ſtubbornneſſe of the people yet more, in that they tooke not warning by the great number of chaſtiſements and viſitations. Wee ſee then in effect, that when wee amend not at GODS chaſtiſements, we muſt in the ende pay the arrearages: for there is ſo much the leſſe excuſe in vs. If God did lay the brydle in our neckes and warned vs not of our miſdoings, but rather dazeled our eyes by blindfolding vs in ſuch ſort as wee might not ſee one whitte: yet ſhoulde not all that diſcharge vs, but yet ſhoulde not our ſinne bee ſo heynous, ſo as it myght ſeeme to men that there were ſome little excuſe for vs: but he goeth about to bring vs home to himſelfe, hee ſheweth vs that wee haue liued amiſſe, hee draweth vs to repentaunce, and wee proceede on ſtill, as though wee had determined to reſiſt his hande. Nowe it is ſayde, Humble your ſelues vnder his myghtie hande. When GOD ſtaieth his hande ouer vs, it is good reaſon that wee ſhoulde ſtoope and relent vnto him, offering to him the ſacrifice which hee requireth, that is to ſay, the ſacrifice of a ſorowefull heart. If wee doe not ſo, but ſtand our ſtill with harde and ſtiffe neckes; ſo as although GOD proceede in calling vs to him, yet wee continewe ſtill the ſame wee were afore; and notwithſtanding his rehearſing of one ſelfeſame leſſon to vs, yet wee ſtande ſtill at one ſtaye: at length wee muſt needes come to account for it. That is the thing which Moſes meant in this text.

What remayneth then to doe? Beholde, to all ſuch as walke in the feare of GOD, and reſt vppon the truſt of his goodneſſe, and flee to him for refuge; he promiſeth proſperitie in all things, ſo as they ſhall not want any thing ſo long as they be ſo vnder his protection. But on the other ſide, what can the ydolles of all the heathen in the worlde doe, or of all ſuch as haue peruerted the true Religion? Shall they bee fauoured of God? No not a whit as in reſpect of themſelues, ſauing that hee will puniſhe vs by their handes. Therefore when wee ſee men ſo aduaunced aboue vs, and to haue the better hande of vs, ſo as they may tread vs vnder foote and deuour vs: let vs aſſure our ſelues that God perſecuteth vs, and that it is he with whom we haue to deale. Becauſe wee haue warred againſt him with our vices: he alſo nowe after long tarying for our amẽdment, is faine to ſhew vs and to make vs feele to our coſt, that for as much as he is our Iudge, he cannot abyde that his grace ſhould be ſo deſpiſed and ſcorned. To bee ſhort, whenſoeuer wee bee afflicted, let vs enter into the thing which Moſes telleth vs heere, and conſider thus with our ſelues: Notwithſtanding that our God haue promiſed vs that wee ſhall finde good ſuccour continually at his hand, yet doe wee now ſee the cleane contrarie. And of whom is that long? Are not wee our ſelues to blame for it? Yes: For it is certaine that GOD ſoadeth not his ſeruauntes with vayne hope; nay hee alwayes goeth beyond their hope when they imbrace his promiſes as they ought. Wee muſt conclude then, that by our ſinnes wee haue forſaken and put from vs the ſuccours which hee had promiſed vs, and by meanes whereof (as Moſes ſayeth in another place) wee bee ſtripped quite and cleane out of that good couerture wherein our welfare conſiſted. For in Exodus Moſes ſpeaking of the ydolatry which the people had committed in making the Calfe of golde, ſayeth that they had ſtripped themſelues naked: as if he ſhould ſay, that the onely ſhadowe of God is ynough for our ſafetie, and that wee neede not to bee afraide ſo long as GOD broodeth vs vnder his wings. But as ſoone as we fall to ſin, we vncouer ourſelues, laying ourſelues open for a pray to Sathan, and to all miſcheeſe. So then, we muſt conclude, that when our Lord doeth ſo ſet himſelfe againſt vs, it is bycauſe of our ſinnes. For why? His power is not abated, as ſaith the prophet Eſay. Wherefore conſume we ſo away in our miſeries? Is it that God hath deafe eares & heareth not them? call vppon him? Or is his arme is broken ſo as he cannot help them as he did at the firſt? No no: but bicauſe our ſinnes haue caſt a barre betweẽ him & vs, & we be not worthy to come at him to feele his helpe as afore.

Exod. 32.25

Eſa. 59.1

Beſides this, Moſes by way of compariſon toucheth the children of Iſrael yet neerer the quicke in that hee ſayeth, *Thãt their enemyes were Iudges thereof*. And thereby he meaneth that euen beaſtes myght perceyue it (as it is ſaid in the prouerb,) and that blindfolke myght iudge of it by groping. Nowe who were the enemyes of the children of Iſrael at that time, but the Infidels which had not any ſparke of lyght, euen ſuch as were ſotted in their ſuperſtitions? And howe coulde they then iudge of Gods power? Euen by the apparantnes therof, which was ſo great that it needed not

any

any great reason to conceiue it. So then, in effect Moses sayeth heere that God had so manifested his power in sauing his people, as that not onely they which were inlightened by the holy ghost, but also euen the brutishest in the world might perceiue it. And in deed, what myracles wrought God in deliuering his people out of the lande of Egypt, and in leading them through the wildernesse? Neede we any great sharpenesse of wit to conceiue so wonderfull power, which may rauish our wittes to be astonished at it? No: but for as much as God hath shewed himselfe so openly: both great and small and euen the grossest in the world must needes perceiue, that it is God. So then, whensoeuer the word is matched with experience, & God giueth vs as it were spectacles to help vs, so as if our eyes be weake or dimmed, his word may bee a guide to shew vs how to discerne his power towards vs: surely there will be no excuse for vs. For euen the Heathen must needes be Iudges or witnesses thereof, so as wee cannot aleage, Yea it is true that God hath done it, and we ought in deede to discerne it, but alas, wee perceiued it not, for he deale after such a darke fashion, as wee could not attaine thereto. Now, God telleth vs that if we were not so malicious as to shut our eyes, to stop our eares, & to dull all our senses when he sheweth vs y tokens of his goodnes and mercy: we should feele them with our handes, though wee had no eyes to see them withall. And on the contrarie part, when he teacheth vs, if we were not wilfully blind, that is to say, are contented to bee ignoraunt of the things which ought to bee best knowen vnto vs, it could not be but that vnlesse we continued, & that through our owne vnthankfulnesse, wrapped vp in ignoraunce, it could not bee I say, but that verie blind folkes themselues should be sufficient witnesses against vs, neither neede we to seeke any further startingholes in this behalfe, for it shall be in vaine. After that our Lord hath drawen vs to him as well by his goodnesse as by his chastisements, and we come not to him, nor persist to liue in his feare: then shall we come to the point to haue it cast in our teeth, and euen the ignorantest in the world, the Infidels which neuer tasted of Gods truth, must rise vp to beare witnesse against vs, and to condemne vs, and to cut off occasion of all excuses. Lo at what point we shall be then. But this is saide vnto vs to the intent we should not tarie to bee condemned after that fashion. Then seeing that our Lord maketh his woord knowen in these dayes, euen to such as are bewitched by Sathan: & seeing that vnto vs he giueth his word, not onely as a lamp, but also as a bright shining sunne to giue vs light, and wee bee put in minde euery minute of an houre to thinke vpon him, to benefite our selues by his works, and to take such warning by them as may confirme our trust in his goodnesse, and bring vs to his obedience: let vs on our side apply our mindes wholly that way, and euery of vs put his indeuour thereto, and giue another maner of iudgement vpon such as haue despised God, and scorned his goodnes. Let vs (I say) become their Iudges, according to that which is said, that being the members of Iesus Christ, wee shall iudge the whole world. The way then for vs to put this text in vre, is not to tarie till our Lord haue condemned vs by the testimonie of the vnbeleeuers, but to be so well disposed to walke vnder his obedience, as our whole indeuour may be to frame our selues to that which he sheweth vs, and euery of vs to make his profite in such wise thereof, as our Lord Iesus may acknowledge & auow vs to be members of his body, and we may boast our selues to bee his, when it commeth to the last day. 1. Cor. 6.

Now let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe to haue pitie vpon vs his fillie creatures, and that although we haue deserued to bee cast off by him, yet notwithstanding he wil not deale with vs according to our desertes, but rather shew foorth the treasures of his goodnesse, and for our Lorde Iesus Christes sake receiue vs into fauour, not only to pardon our faults past, but also to bring vs home againe to himselfe, and to reforme vs in such wise vnto his will, as all our whole lyfe may bee conformed to his righteousnesse. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Munday the xv. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXVI. Sermon which is the ninth vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

32 For their vine is of the vineyard of Sodom, and of the fieldes of Gomorrha, and their grapes are grapes of gall, and their clusters are bitter.

33 Their wine is the poyson of dragons, and the cruell gall of the Aspe.

34 Is not this layd vp in store with me, and sealed vp among my treasures?

35 Vengeance and requitall belong to mee. When time is, their foote shall slip. For the day of their destruction is at hand, and the things that should come vppon them doe make haste.

Heere

HEere our Lorde sheweth what manner of fruites the Iewes deserued to gather. As if hee should say, that the vengeance which hee intended to execute vppon them, coulde not bee founde to bee cruell, because there was nothing elsse in them but gall, bitternesse, and all manner of poyson. And because these figurative speeches might seeme somewhat obscure: hee addeth, *That they brought forth none other than the fruites of Sodom and Gomor.* Whereby hee doeth them to vnderstande, that their wicked deedes were as shamefull as the doinges of those two Cities, the which it was Gods will to destroy with lightening from heauen, to giue an euerlasting example to the whole worlde. Nowe wee see in effect what the meaning of Moses was. In deede some take this for punishment, saying that GOD woulde pay them with the like. As how? Namely that hee woulde giue them bitternesse, sowrenesse, anguish, and all manner of punishmentes to drinke of. And true it is that the Scripture speaketh oftentimes so: for it likeneth all the chastisementes which GOD sendeth vppon men, vnto drinkes. Thou shalt drinke of my cuppe. As howe? I will sende you of my spirit of giddinesse, and of the spirite of rage and madnesse. Likewise in another text he sayeth, I will feede you with heauinesse and sorowe, and I will make you to drinke of my wrath till yee burst. This kinde of teaching them is vyse ynough in the holy scriptures. But in this text God hath a higher respect. Indeede it is true that hee threatneth the Iewes, but yet therewithall hee sheweth that hee will punish them iustly according to their offences. They that referre this to the heathen and Infidels, deceiue themselues. For they tooke it, that God after he had punished his owne people, would turne his wrath against those by whom hee had serued his turne, accordingly as wee knowe that when God listed to execute his vengeance vppon the Iewes, hee vsed the seruice of the heathen, stirring vp someime the King of Egypt, somtyme the King of Assyria, and another while the King of Chaldie. Ye see then that the Infidels were the instruments of Gods wrath. Not that they minded to serue God in making those warres: but we know that God by his secret prouidence ouerruleth all thinges heere below, and applyeth them all to good vse, making men how wicked soeuer they bee, euen in despite of their teeth to execute and performe all his things that he hath ordained. Now when God hath so serued his turne by the heathen, then comes their turne also. For it is said that whe God hath done and dispatched all his woorke vppon mount Sion, then will he also ouermaister al those which play their pranks, and weene to scape Gods hand and to abide vnpunished: for he wil wel ynough find them out to pay them double. Howbeit, Moses in this place treateth not of the heathen, but rather proceedeth in his matter wherewith he had beganne: which is, that God would punishe the Iewes, which ought to haue bin as his children and yet notwithstanding had not ceassed to make warre against him, so as he held them and tooke them for his enemies. After which maner we see how he speaketh by his prophet Esay in the first Chapter, saying: Alas, must I needes bee auenged of mine enemies? Esa.1.24.

But now that wee know of whom Moses speaketh: let vs looke more neerely wherefore it is sayde that the vine of the Iewes is of the vineyard of Sodome and of the fieldes of Gomor. Wee knowe howe our Lorde lyketh his Church to a vineyard. And not onely in this place; but also in the fifth chapter of Esay it is most notably set downe, where he sayeth, I will sing a song vnto my beloued of his vineyard. There the Prophet taketh vppon him GODS cause, lyke as a friend vndertaketh a quarell of him for whom he is minded to dob it. I will goe sing a song, sayeth he. After I had brought thee out of the Lande of Egypt, I planted thee in a fat soyle, I husbanded thee, I made a presting fatte for thee, and I omitted not any thing that belonged to thee: and nowe whereas I looked to receiue good fruite of thee: thou hast brought mee foorth nothing but bitternesse. Yea and our Lorde Iesus himselfe had an eye to this song of Esayes, when he accused the Iewes of such vnkindeneese towardes God, that when hee hadde laboured by all meanes to saue them, yet they aduanced themselues so farre against him, as to murther his prophets whom he sent vnto them to gather vp his Rents, yea and in the end to murther his onely sonne and heire. Esa.5.2. Matt.21.33

But nowe let vs come to that which Moses sayeth heere; namely, *that they bee of the planting of Sodome, and of the fields of Gomor.* It be hooueth vs to marke these two contrarie thinges. The one is, that God had chosen that people for his heritage, tendering it as a vine, and husbanding it all manner of wayes. It was meete therefore that they should haue yeelded some good fruite vnto God, and that was the fruite of Sodom, that is to say, all manner of wickednesse wherewith Gods anger and vengeaunce were prouoked against them. And not without cause doeth Moses speake so: for hee foresawe in his minde, that that people woulde giue themselues ouer to all euill. And wee knowe also howe the prophets reproome them for it. For they blame them not for some meane faultes, but they tell them that they haue ouergone the wickednesse of the Sodomites and Gomorrites, & that whe the accounte commeth to be made, Sodom and Gomor shalbee their iudges, yea and bee counted innocentes in comparison of Israell and Iuda. For we must alwais remember that God had gathered that people to himself, and that the more fauour he had bestowed vppon them, the greater was their vnkindnes, and consequently the greeuouser was their fault, and the lesse were they to be excused. Now the Prophets had an eye to the things which Moses had prophesied afore. And so the whole matter commeth to this point, that the Iewes, who ought to haue glorified God, and

which ought to haue had none other regard nor other ſtudy all their life long, than to liue in all purenesse of conuerſation; ceaſed not to doe euill, and to yeelde all maner of bitternesse vnto God. Sith it is ſo, we muſt not thinke that God did them wrong, neither ought they to complaine though hee puniſhe them extremely, and lay farre greater and horribler vengeaunce vpon them, than vppon all other Nations of the world. Such fruite then as they had ſowed, and ſuch fruit as they brought foorth, ſuch fruit did they gather: and it was good reaſon that God ſhould deale ſo rigorouſly with them. That is the thing in effect, which wee haue to beare in mind.

And now to apply this leſſon to our benefite, let vs marke firſt of al, that if we weene our ſelues to haue done but a ſmall fault, as men commonly doe either cloake their offences through hypocriſie, or elſe go about to make them leſſe than they be indeede: God will take vs to bee like the folke of Sodom and Gomor. And why ſo? Thoſe blind wretches gaue ouer themſelues vnto ouerheynous and curſed ſinnes, and became beaſtly. But what? As for vs we haue the lyght of life; we haue GOD calling vs into the way which is ready made, ſo as we neede but to goe on; wee bee warned to walke in obedience to GOD, and to dedicate our ſelues wholie to him euen as hee hath choſen vs to be his heritage: now if after all this, wee offende him yet ſtill, although our ſinnes bee counted but ſmall before men, are wee not as blameworthy as Sodom and Gomor, conſidering the rebellyouſneſſe which is in vs, and that we make warre againſt God euen of ſet purpoſe? Yea: and therefore let no man beguile himſelfe, nor no man flatter himſelfe, but let vs conſider how our Lorde will condemne vs ſtill as he did Sodom and Gomor. For God did giue them their fill, ſo as they had abundance of all good things, whereuppon they waxed proud, and did ſhut their handes and vouchſafed not to ſuccour the poore and needy. To bee ſhorte, in that place hee accuſeth Sodome and Gomor of three thinges: firſt that when GOD preſerued them, they became vnthankefull to him, and conſidered not from whence their welfare proceeded, ſecondly that they grewe proude, and gaue themſelues to pompes and delyghtes: and thirdely that they were cruell, and had no pitie nor compaſſion of their neyghbours to releeue them, hauing wherewith. And nowe let vs ſee if our Lorde giue not vs occaſion ynough, to loue and ſerue him, ſeeing he bleſſeth vs ſo many wayes. We muſt not haue an eye to the things that belong to this fleſhefull and tranſitorie lyfe, and to the ſuſtenance of our bodyes: but let vs conſider howe God powreth out his ſpirituall benefites vppon vs. Hauing ſo our fill, what acknowledgement doe we make to him therof? Doeth not the world ſee that wee put all thinges out of minde? It ſhoulde ſeeme that our meaning is to deuour GODS benefites euen in mockage of him. As touching pride, doth not the world ſee howe great is is in moſt of vs? Doe wee ſuffer our ſelues to bee guided by the hand of God? Nay, as ſoone as any man ſhewes vs our faults, wee gnaſh our teeth at him, and there is none of vs that will bee meekened. True it is that wee will all generally confeſſe, that it is good reaſon that GOD ſhoulde gouerne vs, and that wee ſhould be guided and directed by his word: but when it comes to the proofe, none of vs will taſte of that ſauce: euerie of vs letteth the bridle looſe to his luſtes, and ſo wee drowne and become drunke in our delyghtes. Likewiſe wee bee full of cruelkie. Where ſhall a man nowe-dayes finde men that deſire to communicate ſo with their neighbours, as they bee conteined to releeue the neede of the poore? We ſee the contrarie. Thinke wee that GOD ſleepeth in the meane whyle? Thinke wee that hee hath a double meaſure to mete with? So then (as I haue declared afore) wee ſhall gayne nothing by flattering our ſelues: but GOD ſhall euer finde vs like to the folke of Sodom and Gomor, if we beelie his word, and in ſtead of dedicating our ſelues vnto him, doe leade a heathenish and looſe life. That is one thing which wee haue to marke vpon the firſt place.

Againe, let vs marke well alſo, howe hee lykeneth the fruite of Sodom and Gomor *to the gall or venim of the Aſpe, to the cruel or deadly poyſon of the Dragon, and to all maner of bitternesse.* For thereby hee doeth vs to vnderſtande, that when wee liue wickedly, it is all one as if wee offered GOD poyſon to drinke, or woulde goe about to poyſon him. True it is that God is not ſubiect to ſuch things: but yet it is not long of vs. But if a childe ſhoulde offer his father the gall of an Aſpe, and all maner of bitternesse: I pray you woulde not euerie man abhorre ſuch a monſter? Woulde they not ſay he deſerued to haue all men riſe vp againſt him to roote him out? Beholde, heere our Lorde complayneth that when wee yeelde not the fruite which hee requireth of vs, it is all one as if wee did giue him bitter thinges to drinke, or as if wee woulde make him to burſt with gall, or with the poyſon of an Aſpe. Were this weyed as it deſerueth, ſurely wee woulde ſtand more in awe than wee doe. When the diuel tempteth vs and prouoketh vs to euill, if wee beare this leſſon well in minde, [wee woulde ſay to our ſelues,] Howe nowe? Wilt thou prefer thy GOD the gall of Aſpes, and ranke poyſon to drinke? Truely wee are not ſo blockiſh but that our heartes woulde relent at it, and it woulde make vs to bethinke our ſelues. But alas, the diuell doeth ſo bewitch vs, that wee followe our wicked luſtes ſtill. Neuertheleſſe this is not ſpoken in vayne. So then let vs not imagine that Moſes hath heaped vp heere a deale of needeleſſe ſpeeche in that he ſayeth, Their vine is of the planting of Sodom and of the vineyarde of Gomor: and againe, their grapes are bitter, they bee the verie gall of the Aſpe, and their wyne is the poyſon of Dragons. His gathering of all theſe thinges together, is to ſhewe vs that wee cannot ſet our ſelues againſt GOD by leading a dil-

ordered lyfe as we doe, but that (so farre as is possible for vs) wee offer so him bitternesse and sowrenesse to drinke, as if wee should put venim and poyson into his cuppe. And euen for that cause also doth he complayne that such as haue rebelled against him, haue grieued his spirite. For (as I sayd afore) is subiect to any such passions: but therein hee sheweth mennes wicked doinges according to the saying: They shall put eine him whom they haue wounded. And how is that? Where are the daggers and swordes wherewith GOD can bee wounded? Mary hee sheweth that our sinnes are taken as farre as heare, as though they were daggers to wound him withall. Now seeing it is so, and that our God hauing chosen vs for his vine and flocke vs, doeth also take payne still to husband vs; let vs learne not to yeelde him so harsh and bitter fruite, but rather to regarde what hee demaundeth of vs, and thereunto apply our selues, that is the end we bee not condemned as haue bin as Sodom and Gomorre, whereto hee would haue had vs to haue him his holy citie, and he himselfe would haue dwelled among vs, as in his sanctuary and dwellinghouse.

Now hee addeth thereunto, *Is not this layd vp with mee? Is not this sealed vp among my treasures?* This text comprehendeth two thinges. For first of all God sheweth that sinners beguile themselues, imagining to scape his hand as though his eyes were blindfold, or as though he regarded not the things that men do here below. And secondly he sheweth that he also will therfore do his office, that is to wit, that forasmuch as hee knoweth their sinnes and wicked deedes, he will also punish them as they deserue. Those are the two poynts which we haue to marke. Now as touching the first, wee knowe that men doe alwayes surmise that God perceiueth them not. True it is that wee will not say it with open mouth, nay wee will abhorre to say so; for if it bee demaunded of the veriest naughtie packes, whether God gouerne not the world, or whether he knowe not all mens faultes: they will say yea. But yet for all that, it is certaine that such as prouoke him so boldly, are so dulheaded and brutish, that to their seeming God seeth them not: and the Scripture is full of that thing. Shall not he which hath made the eare, heare? Shal he be blind which hath created the eye. Shall not he which fashioneth mens harts vnderstand all their thoughtes? And they againe haue sayd on their parte, God shall not perceiue it. To bee short, experience sheweth that when men haue hardened themselues in their sinnes, they doe also beare themselues in hand that God thinketh not any more vppon them, but that he turneth his backe and forgetteth them. Loe at what poynt we bee. But our Lorde telleth here on the contrary part, that all those thinges are layde vppe in his treasures, and fast sealed. As if he should say, true it is that at the first dash I shewe not that your sinnes are come to my knowledge, I make as though I saw them not. Now because I vse such patience, you imagine that I sit idle in heauen, and let you alone, and minde not any more the gouernment of the world. Therefore ye abuse my goodnes when my vengeance is not seene out of hand: but yet are all those thinges layd vp in store by me, and fast sealed vp in my treasures.

Now to beare fruite our profite by this text, let vs haue an eye to that which is sayd in Daniell, that the bookes shall bee layd open when the Iudge holdeth his Assises. Therefore if our sinnes bee hidden as yet from the worlde, so as we be not accused of them nor no man reproueth vs for them, insomuch that we doe as it were fall asleepe in them: let vs not therefore forbeare continually to mourne for them before God, and to enter into account, and to quicken vp our selues, knowing well that the Registers must bee layd open, when the sentence shall bee giuen, and that as then our inditement must needes bee framed. We shall not bee made priuie to it aforehand, but as soone as the Trumpet shall haue sounded, and our Lorde is set vppon the benche, there shall needs neither Register nor secretarie to reade it, but euery mans conscience must accuse himselfe, and euery man beare witnesse against himselfe, and euery man must lay open his owne shamefull dealinges. Sith it is so, let vs take heede to ourselues, and not deceiue our selues by our vaine selfesoothing. For although God punish vs not presently, but beare with vs for a time: yet doeth it not therefore follow, that hee perceiueth not all our naughtie and wicked doinges. That is the thing then which we haue to remember in this text, wherein God sheweth, that all these thinges are layd vp by him, and fast sealed vp in his treasures.

Yet notwithstanding, no doubt but Moses had an eye to the punishmentes, as if it had bin sayd, that GOD can well reserue chastisementes to their due times, so that if he vtter them not at the first, hee knoweth wherefore hee delayeth them, and yet in the meane while they abide fast locked vp. Therefore whensoeuer GOD openeth his cheastes, hee will finde terrible manners of vengeance, which are incomprehensible to vs as nowe. Yea and let vs marke, that when GOD hath punished vs two or three wayes, if hee withdrawe his hand afterward and yet wee cease not to offend him still, but hold on from euill to worse: wee shall bee amazed to see what newe punishmentes hee will finde out, which wee neuer thought of. Therefore let vs not beguile our selues as though wee by our wit could measure both Gods punishmentes and all thinges belonging to his iudgements: but rather let vs vnderstande that they bee hoorded vp as treasures; and as often as wee beethinke vs of our faultes, let vs say with Dauid, Lorde who is hee that knoweth his owne sinnes? Truely Dauid played not the hypocrite in hiding himselfe, neither sought hee vaine and trifling shiftes to disguise his sinnes: but after he had wel examined himselfe, hee sawe that God is a farre other manner of

Dan. 7. 10

Psal. 19. 13.

Iudge than hee himselfe was, and (as Saint
1.Iohn.3.20 Iohn saith) farre greater than our owne consciences. If our owne consciences accuse vs, for euery fault which wee perceiue in our selues God knoweth a hundred. So then, there is no more for vs to doe but to cry out with Da-
Psal.19.13. uid, Who is he that knoweth his owne faults? Lorde cleanse mee from my secret sinnes. The way then which wee haue to deale, is first & formost to doe our indeuour to search well the euill that is in vs, and (when wee haue done all that wee can,) to conclude in the end that wee perceiue not the hundredth part, and that God must bee faine to cleanse vs from our iniquities, euen though wee perceiue them not at all. Let that serue for the one poynt.

Againe as touching punishmentes, if GOD maintaine vs in rest and at our ease, yea and thereunto doe also prosper vs: must not make vs to fall asleepe. For why? He hath his treasures in the meane while, which are hoorded vp. Therefore let vs bee afraid, and although the signes of his anger appeare not, but hee seeme rather to smile vppon vs: yet if any man finde himselfe faultie, let him flee to him and praie him to forbeare the putting forth of the treasures of his vengeance, and rather to cleanse vs from all our faultes, and to set vs so cleare from them, as we may come before his face without spotte, and vnblameable, not in respect of our owne perfection, but because hee hath forgiuen vs our offences, and so buryed them as hee will not call them to account. After that maner must wee put that text in practise. And so at a worde let vs marke well, that it behoueth vs to awake that wee may liue as in the presence of God. Seeing then that nothing escapeth him, nor nothing fleeth out of his remembraunce, except it bee when he vouchsafeth to vse mercie towardes vs: and lyke as hee marketh all our offences, so he hath wherewith to punish them, and hee can lay most horrible and dreadfull vengeance vppon vs: let vs not tary till hee execute such sentence vppon vs, but (as I tolde you afore) let vs rather pray him to cleanse vs from all our sins, and to vtter forth the endlesse treasures of his goodnes towardes vs.

Nowe to confirme this lesson, Moses addeth, *Vengeance is mine, and I will pay home in time conuenient. Their foote shall slip, the day of their destruction is at hand, the time thereof hasteth on apace.* We see that when Moses sayd, *This is layd vp in my treasures*, hee meant it not simply of mens sins, but also of the corrections which God sendeth vpon such as haue offended him too much, & to shewe that hee hath meanes wherewith to punish them, which are vnknowen to men, and which shall amaze them when they come to passe. In respect whereof hee sayth, *Vengeance is mine*: As if hee should say, what thinke yee mee to bee? For you call mee God, and yet in the meane while yee acknowledge mee not to bee the Iudge of the world: and that is a robbing me of my glory and maiestie. And in deede, what is GODS beeing, but that when men haue liued in this worlde, they shoulde come to account before him, and he bee their Iudge? If wee scape Gods hand, so as our faultes abide vnpunished, and euery man might runne at rouers as he listed, and in the meane while GOD should shut his eyes at them: what a thing were that? Shoulde wee not make as it were a dead idoll of him? Yes certeinly. Here therefore GOD chalengeth to himselfe the office of reuenging, as if hee should say, Thinke not that my diuine being or this name of GOD consisteth in I wot not what an idle toye: but that it importeth that I gouerne the worlde with my power, that all thinges are guided by my wisedome, that my righteousnesse reigneth, and that I haue the dominion of the worlde in such wise, as all thinges must needes come to account before mee, that such as haue serued and honored mee may not loose their labour, nor the wicked scape vnpunished which haue not ceased to breake all order and to worke mee despite. After this manner will I bee knowen to bee GOD, euen when you shall perceiue and feele my wisedome, power, and righteousnes. Now then, *vengeance is mine* (sayth hee) that is to say, I am the Iudge, and therefore beguile not your selues. It seemeth at the first sight that Moses sayth not any thing here, which is not knowen and confessed of all men. For who will deny that God is a Iudge? And yet for all that, (as I sayd afore) after wee haue confessed it generally, euery of vs intangleth himselfe in his owne imaginations, and wee thinke not vppon it when it commeth to the offending of GOD, wee make no account of it, all is one to vs, wee bee as bolde as mad men. And must it not needes be then, that the knowledge which wee had thereof is ouercast with a slumber? Now then forasmuch as men doe wittingly deceiue themselues, by turning away from this doctrine, that is to wit, that GOD is the Iudge of the worlde: therefore are men here put in minde that vengeance is his, and that hee will not forget to execute his office. And so wee see now to what purpose Moses vsed that lesson.

Notwithstanding this, Saint Paul alledgeth the same euen properly also, thereby to refrein Rom.12.19
vs from reuenge and from taking vppon vs the thing that GOD hath reserued to himselfe. Now then my friendes (saith hee) reuenge not your selues, but giue place to wrath: for it is written; Vengeance belongeth vnto mee. There wee see howe Saint Paul asswageth the choler and vnruly passions which carry men away, when they bee in a chafe. My friendes (sayth hee) reuenge not your selues, for yee must giue place to wrath, or else it is all one as if yee striued against GOD, and hindered him from dooing his office. But let him alone, for hee hath promised that forasmuch as he is the Iudge of the worlde, whensoeuer you bee troubled by your enemyes, hee will requite them with the lyke:

lyke: howbeit conditionally that yee beare all thinges patiently and meekely. For if yee will needes auenge your selues, it is all one as if yee did shutte the doore against GOD; as who woulde say, I will not tarie for him, but I will trie what I can doe of my selfe. Howe so? God is willing to bee your protector, hee is so gratious to you all as to take you into his tuition, and to auenge you of your wronges: and you bee so impatient and sumish, that ye cannot find in your heartes to tary his woorking. But whosoeuer hasteth after that sorte, doeth as it were thrust himselfe into Gods seate, and that is a blaspheming of his name. Nowe therefore bee well aduised (saith hee,) and looke that yee giue place to GODS wrath, that is to say, that yee suffer our Lorde patiently and with a meeld and quiet minde, to doe and performe the thing which hee hath promised, for as much as vengeaunce belongeth vnto him.

Thus wee see nowe whereto this saying tendeth, and that Saint Paule hath applyed this text wisely, as whereof two thinges may bee gathered: whereof the one is, that for as much as wee see our selues continually guien to shroude our selues vnder hypocrisie, wee shoulde alwayes liue in feare and warinesse, musing our selues thus when wee haue playde the beasts neuer so much, and when we be neuer so besotted in our sins, we shall haue made neuer the better market, but in the ende GOD will needes performe that which he speaketh heere. For why? Hee cannot bee God but that therewithall hee must needes bee iudge of the world also. Therefore let vs liue in awe of him. Secondly wee haue wherewith to comfort vs, in that wee see he will auenge vs of our enemyes; if wee indeuour to giue our selues wholly vnto him, and so keepe our selues brooded vnder his winges; for if wee suffer him to guide and gouerne vs by his holy spirit, and indeuour to follow his woorde, the vengeaunce which is to bee feared of all the despisers of his Maiestie and of all that striue against his woord, shall bee turned vppon our enemyes, and in so doing our Lorde will shew and confirme the fatherly loue which hee beareth vs. To bee shorte, on the one side this doctrine prouoketh vs to bee afrayde to prouoke the wrath of our GOD wittingly, for feare least wee feele his horrible vengeaunce. And on the other side it gladdeth and cheereth vs, bycause wee see that GOD vndertaketh warre against our enemyes, to reuenge our wronges as if they were done to himselfe. Now therefore if wee will obey Saint Paules exhortation, wee must note that we must not onely referre all reuenge vnto God: but also holde our selues as bridled or imprisoned, and not desire to haue GOD to execute all thinges which we haue imagined in our owne fantasie. For there are which wil not reuenge themselues with their handes, but yet they woulde haue GOD to execute whatsoeuer they haue conceiued in their owne braine, yea and they dare euen pray vnto GOD to thunder downe vppon their enemyes. But contrariwise wee bee commaunded to pray for the welfare of them that doe vs harme. Then must we not onely abstaine from reuenge, but also pray GOD to forgiue our enemyes, and to turne them, and to haue pitie vpon them. For if we auenge our selues, howe doe wee leaue it to Gods wrath to bee auenged? True it is that if our enemyes bee vtterly past hope of amendment, wee must put them into the hande of the Iudge. But vntill such time as there bee no more hope of recouerie, let vs alwayes desire their conuersion vnto GOD, and let vs further them thereunto, by teaching them as much as wee can. Therefore, to giue place vnto wrath, is not onely to keepe our handes tyed vp, that wee doe not murther men: but also to bridle our affections, so as wee wish not any euill to our enemyes; but rather (whyle they be conuersant with vs heere beneath,) to desire God to haue pitie and mercie vppon them, so long as there is any hope of them. Matt. 5. 44.

Let vs nowe goe forewarde with the saying of Moses. *To wee* (sayeth hee) *belongeth Reuenge and Requitall*, or *I will requite it*. For the woorde which Moses vseth may well be translated thus: *Vengeaunce is myne, and therefore I will requite it*. As if our Lorde shoulde say, I will doe my duetie: for I am not as mortall men, which doe often fayle, pretending great tytles and dooing nothing in effect. Seeing then that vengeaunce belongeth to mee, I will pay euery man according as he hath deserued. And so thereupon he concludeth, *Thus their foote shall slip in conuenient time*. Here Moses meant to shewe, that whereas God had spared the Iewes, it did not therefore follow that he had quite and cleane discharged them, but that his bearing with them was to see if they would at length returne to him againe, and that for as much as hee sawe them stubborne, they should catch a fall in the ende, yea euen in the turning of a hand. He addeth expressely *in time conuenient*, to shewe that hee knoweth that it behoueth him to moderate his roddes, and that it is not to bee sayde that hee forsloweth too long, when hee is not hastie. And why? Bycause hee doeth thinges in their due seasons. Therefore wee must lee him alone with the doing of his woorkes in such measure as he listeth: wee must not haste Gods vengeaunce after our owne fansie. And hee vseth this comparison, *Their foote shall slyde, or slip*. And why? For wee see howe the wicked misbehaning themselues against GOD, doe vaunt themselues aboue other men, and are not contented with their owne place and degree, but they suppose that without winges they can take the Moone with their teeth, as the common saying is. For as much therefore as they exalt themselues aboue other men, and would as it were set their foote in all folkes facings, yea and that they make countenaunce to bee no more subiect to GOD himselfe: Moses sayeth expressely, that their foote shall slip. As who would say, Thinke they that they shall keepe their footing? Thinke they themselues so wel rooted and grounded, that they shall neuer bee shaken? Nay, but as it is sayde in the tenth Psalme, They shall stum- Psal. 10. 6.

Psal. 37. 9. Psal. 73. 18. ble, and I will make them to slyde. According whereunto it is sayde in another place, Lorde thou hast set their feete in slipperie places. To be short, Moses meant to shewe heere, that God will ouerthrowe all the despisers of his woorde. When they haue long time looked aloft, and florished and prospered among men, yea and triumphed ouer others: hee will at length make them to stumble. Therefore let vs not trust to our state, neither let vs abuse our selues when wee bee vphelde and vnderpropped, so as the worlde fauoureth vs and wee haue stoore of worldly helpes to mayntaine vs. For why? Vnlesse God holde vs fast, and that wee rest vppon him, surely wee bee in slipperie places; for although wee perceiue it not, yet is there nothing but yce in this world. One speciall poynt then which wee ought to note well, is that wee must not thinke to haue any stay but in the grace of God. When he vouchsafeth to maintaine vs by his power, then may wee assure our selues that wee bee well grounded. But if he bee not fauourable to vs, if he vpholde vs not: let vs assure our selues that wee stand vppon yce, and wee shall not neede any thing to ouerthrowe vs. And although it befall vs not so at the first dash, yet let vs assure our selues that the conuenient times are in the hand of God, who knoweth well the fit seasons, and that if they bee not to day, they will bee to morrowe. And that is a thing which ought to waken vs well, and make vs to looke about vs for feare of this lesson.

Also on the contrarie part it ought to bee a comfort to vs to see howe our Lorde ouerruleth all thinges in this worlde, and that although the wicked which seeke our ouerthrowe bee now exalted, and haue such authoritie that they make all other men to tremble: yet our Lorde will giue them the slip, and trip vp their heeles. Yee shal see them vaunt themselues, ye shal see them looke as bigge as though they would swallow vp Gods Church, yee shall see them make stoute bragges, the thrusting foorth of their hand is ynough to sweepe downe all thinges a hundred leagues off, & yet ere they can turne their fooes, they are cast downe and all their attemptes gone quite and cleane backward. Now when wee see these thinges, truely it is ynough to astonish vs and to abash vs: but yet on the other side seeing it is sayde that they stande vppon yce, Psal. 73. 18. God will make them to stumble: The remembrance wherof being well printed in our mindes, woulde put away all impediments that keepe vs from fleeing vnto God, & from praying him to vouchsafe to hold vs alwaies vnder his protection, vnder the which, (do the wicked what they can against vs) they shall neuer bring it to passe. Thus much concerning the conuenientnesse of the time, and the slipping or slyding wherof Moses speaketh here.

Nowe to knit vp the matter withall, hee sayeth, *That the day of their destruction draweth nigh, and that their times are comming in hast.* This serueth still to touche those the better, which doe easily beare with their owne faultes, and cast the time behinde their backes, as they say. But GOD telleth vs that suddainly ere they thinke of it, yea and euen when they warrant themselues peace and rest, their destruction shall come vppon them, accordingly as the Scripture doth oftentimes put vs in mind thereof, and not without cause. For wee see howe men do take their aduantage, by cause they imagine that whē God hath borne with them a day, a moneth, or a yeere, it shall bee so still for euer after. By this meanes ye see how men doe reeken without their hoste, bearing themselues in hande that tyme is woorth monnie, according to the common prouerbe which hath raigned at all tymes. For this cause it is sayde, that the wicked *must feele Gods hand in such sorte*, as that they shal bee ouerwhelmed ere they thinke of it. And therfore the Scripture liketh them to a woman with Childe: for she is ouertaken in lesse than the turning of a hand: Euen so is it with those which are full of Gods wrath according to their feeding of it in themselues. And yet for all that, they go on still and keepe their olde trade, bearing themselues in hand that God is a great way off, and that they shall haue forewarninges a long time before they feele the blowes. But they be amased to see how God hath vtterly destroyed them.

1 Thes. 5. 3.

For this cause it is sayde, *Now doe we make hast, your time is at hand.* And that is the thing which Moses looked at. Therefore let vs now looke to benefite our selues by this lesson, and let vs make our cōmoditie of it in such wise, as we may walke in y feare of our God. Although things seeme to be in quiet, yea let vs not cease to haue an eye to his wrath. For this is a thing wherein our fayth must be exercised. If our lord spare vs and deale not roughly with vs as we deserue, let vs thinke, alas, yet haue we offended our God exceedingly, and thereby deserue well that hee should looke sternely vpon vs: and yet notwithstanding hee sheweth himselfe to haue pitie vpon vs, but yet must not that cause vs to fall asleepe. The first thing then which wee haue to remember vppon this place, is that wee must haue an eye to Gods wrath a farre off as though it were at hand. The second is that we must be of good comfort when God seemeth to be as it were asleepe and letteth the wicked alone, and toucheth them not so much as with his litle finger, but seemeth euen to fauor them. Let vs assure ourselues that their state is neuer the better for all that. For it shall amase vs to see how God will worke more in one day, than wee looked for in ten yeeres. Yee see then after what manner the faythfull ought to hold themselues in awe. Namely that when we haue bethought vs of Gods threatenings, and considered that his Iudgements make haste in comming: we may be sure that we shall not linger ouerlong in this world, but that God wil performe this saying of his by the prophet Abacuck, Abac. 2. 3. that although he shew not himselfe to haue pity vpon his children as y first: yet will he performe his promises: and although he doe it not out of hand, yet shall we perceiue in the end, that *he make hast*, that is to say that they be comming in time conuenient.

Now

Nowe let vs fall downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs perceiue them better than we haue doone, and in the meane while not to suffer vs to settle still in our leawde dealinges and offences, nor to yeelde him such bitter fruites, that in steede of beeing his inheritance wee shoulde become as Sodome where all manner of outrage was committed; but that being gouerned by his holy spirite, wee may bee cleansed from all our wicked affections, & hauing brought him foorth such fruite as heerequireth, we may be gathered vp into his glorie, to be taken and anowed for his children: And that whē he chastiseth vs we may so benefite our selues by his corrections, as wee may not become vnreformable, but returne to him out of hande, to the ende we may not onely bee exempted from the curses wherewith hee threateneth the skorners of his worde, but also be maynteined by his defence, and his wrath and vengeance bee turned vppon our enemies, to the better assuring of vs that he is our God and Sauiour. That it may please him to grant this grace, not only to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the xvj. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXVII. Sermon, which is the tenth vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

36 Surely the Lorde will take in hande the case of his people, and repent him ouer his seruantes, when he seeth their strength is so gone from them, that they be in a manner shut vp, and none of them left remaining.

37 And when it shalbe sayd, where are their gods, [euen] their God in whom they trusted:

38 The fat of whose sacrifices they did eat, and the wine of whose drinkeoffrings they dranke? Let them stepe vp and helpe you, and let them bee your refuge.

39 See nowe how it is I, euen I that am God, and there is no God with me.

SVch as thinke that God hath hitherto alreadie threatened the heathen & vncircumcised, which skorned the Iewes when they sawe them in aduersitie, expounde this text as though our Lorde shoulde say that hee will maintaine the case of his people, when hee sees them become such a skorningstocke to the Infidels, and that hee will reioyce in so doing. For the seconde worde which Moses vseth, betokeneth sometimes to comfort. But wee must remember what hath beene saide afore, namely that GOD continueth in threatening such as cannot bee subdued but by maine force, according to the hardnes of heart which wee knowe to haue beene in that people. It was not enough then for God to haue threatened them in a worde or twayne: but it stoode him vpon to holde them as it were imprisoned. And that is the cause why hee addeth nowe, *That God will iudge his people.* As if hee shoulde say, Those whome GOD hath chosen must not thinke to haue a priuiledge to be let alone vnpunished in their offences and wicked doings: it is cleane contrarie: for therein will God shew his Iustice. And although God be Iudge of the whole worlde in generall: yet will he be knowen to bee so cheefely in his Church as the which is his house, and it is good reason that he shoulde haue a care thereof and shew himselfe to watch ouer it. And therefore when they that haue beene trained in Gods worde, and are his flocke doe runne astray: he must needs reforme them first of all. And that is the cause why the Prophete saith that Iudgement shall beginne at Gods house, which thing Saint Peter alleadgeth also. And it is a verie notable saying, and such a one as may serue vnto great purpose. For we be abashed when wee see God lay his hand vppon them that call vppon his name, and are counted of the number of his seruauntes. When hee handleth them more roughly than he doth the Infidels, which belong no whit vnto him, it seemeth strange. But wee must note what I haue alleadged afore, namely that forasmuch as GOD acknowledgeth vs for his householde folke, hee must needes haue a speciall care of vs. Therefore when hee sees vs goe astray, hee reformeth vs, whereas in the meane while he makes as though he saw not the faults of those that are strangers to him, which neuer

1. Tim. 3. 15

knowe him, and which neuer had any instruction by his worde: hee giueth them the bridle for a time: not that they shall not be driuen to yeeld an accoumpt thereof in the ende, but for that (as I haue saide afore) God executeth his chastisements rather vpon his owne Church, than vppon all the worlde besides: Or at leastwise beginneth at that poynt. And that is the meaning of Moses in this place where hee saith: *The Lord will iudge his people*. As if he shoulde say, Consider vppon what condition God hath gathered you together, to wit, that you shoulde call vpon his name, and be his people and his heritage; his intent is to gouerne you himselfe, and to haue the guiding of you himselfe. Nowe then if ye be rebels against him, hee must needs haue his hand lifted vp, for to punish you. Know yee therefore that when ye transgresse his lawe, and that moreouer he sees you hardened in euil and cannot reclaime you by gentlenes, he must needs vse an other remedie, and deale with you by all kinde of rigour: for it is his peculiar office to iudge his people.

Esa.10.12. And hereunto also is referred the text that was alledged yesterday out of Esay, When God hath dispatched all his worke vppon mount Sion, then will he turne his sworde against the skorners of his maiestie and against his vtter enemies. There the Prophet meant to hearten the faithful which might be troubled when they sawe God punish them out of measure as men might deeme, and in the meane whyle beare with the heathen who had prosperitie and made good cheare as though God gaue them more libertie to doe still. The godlie therefore might be shaken, and what meanes this? What auayleth it vs to haue the promises? Where is God become? It were better for vs y he gaue vs ouer, and wee had no acquaintaunce with him. After that manner might a man bee tempted as in respect of the flesh. But the Prophet saith, No, no, spite not them which liue nowe in rest, for they shall haue their turne. Howbeit, God must first finishe his worke vppon mount Sion, that is to say, he must first beginne with you, because you be neerest him, insomuch that you ought to be linked to him by the bonde of his worde. But you haue fayled, you haue offended: and therefore hee is faine to chastise you, and that not slightlie as it were with his little finger, for he will doe all his worke throughlie. And it is not without cause that hee setteth downe the worde *all*, for it serueth to doe vs to vnderstande, that wee must haue our backes readie to receiue his strokes, vntill it please him to withdrawe his hande who knoweth when it is enough, and that hee haue chastised vs as much as needeth. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to remember vpon this text.

And the Apostle also helpeth vs to that construction in the tenth to the Hebrewes. For after that he hath shewed that if they which break the Lawe of Moses were condemned to death, wee in these dayes cannot escape Gods vengeance, if wee breake the couenaunt which hee hath made with vs by the bloude of our Lorde Iesus Christ, which ought to bee much holier to vs than the couenaunt which hee made, but by the bloude of brute beastes: after his speaking so, hee addeth, My friendes, yee knowe howe it is hee which hath saide, I will iudge my people, it is I to whome vengeaunce belongeth. Also hee noteth the text that was expounded yesterday, and likewise the same which we vrge of as nowe. And wee see howe this applying of them is to make vs to vnderstand, that if God spared not the despisers of the couenaunt which hee had made and contracted with them in old time; needes must wee be handled more roughlie in these dayes. For we bee worthie of it, considering that God hath shewed himselfe to vs after a farre more excellent fashion, by sending his owne sonne, through whome he would haue vs to bee the more confirmed in the promise of saluation, by meanes of his bloude which is the verie seale thereof. Nowe then, if wee in these dayes despise so great a good turne, God must needes shewe double rigour to vs, and execute the thing which Moses speakes of here, which is, that vengeaunce belongeth vnto him, and that it is his office to iudge his people, and that he will do it. Heb.10.30.

Now afterward Moses comforteth the faithfull, telling them that Gods rigour shal be none such, but that in the ende he will haue pitie vpon such as are not vtterlie past grace. *But will repent him ouer his seruantes*, saith hee. This is added as a qualification of that which he had saide afore, to the intent we should not bee too much dismayed when wee heare that in punishing sin God will beginne at vs. For that might put vs into such an vnquietnesse, as that wee had leuer he shoulde let vs alone, and neuer take or auowe vs any more to bee his people. Not without cause therefore doth the Apostle adde this qualification: My friendes (saith hee) true it is that wee must liue in feare, and beware that wee tempt not God in abusing his goodnesse. If hee beare with vs for a time, wee must not in the meane while play the loose coltes: for if wee bee his people, wee must receiue the first stripes. And why? Because he hath a speciall care of our welfare, and hee must needes call vs home againe to himselfe when hee sees vs runne at random. But yet must not wee thinke our case the worse, neither must it greeue vs to bee so chastised at Gods hande. For why? He will punish vs measurablie, and in the ende wee shall perceiue that hee hath not forgotten his mercie for all his shewing of such rigour. He will then repent ouer vs, because he seeth we be his people, and that hee hath entred into a couenaunt with vs and hath adopted vs for his children: and therefore hee will haue vs to bee his seruantes, to the ende hee may rule ouer vs: and so at the length hee will declare, that whatsoeuer hee hath doone in correcting vs, hath not beene doone in vaine, or without purpose. But when the worde is taken for *Comforting*, it is as much as if GOD shoulde say, that hee will take

take pleasure and delight in their vtter ouerthrowe and destruction. But here it is easie to be perceiued that Moses meant to say the cleane contrarie: For he addeth, *That God will repent him when he seeth the strength of his people consumed away, and that all of them are as folke discomfited*; so as there is none of them bee hee neuer so well garded and that vp in hold, or bee hee abroade in the fields, which is not forlorne and vndone. Therefore when God seeth his people so miserablie vnder foote, then will hee be sorie (sayeth he). For it might be sayd vnto them, *Where bee your gods?* Heereby Moses meaneth in effect, that GOD wilbee contented to haue so ouermastred the Iewes that they put not their trust any more in their Idols, ne bee any more blynded in their superstitions. For they shall well see that Sathan had beguyled and deceyued them. And on the other syde GOD may then saie vnto them, *Yee seemed how ye is I, euen I only that am GOD alone, and that there bee no other gods. Knowe ye also that when I haue stryken, I doe heale: and when I haue killed, I do quicken againe.* Therefore turne yee againe to mee, and by the way consider *that there is none which can deliuer you out of my hand*. God then sayeth that he will finde the meane to speake after that manner, and that when the people are well beaten, then they will be disposed to come to amendement. Now we see what is contained in this text of Moseses: it remaineth to apply the doctrine hereof to our vse.

As touching this worde *repent*, we must take it as it is taken through out the whole scripture, not that God is changeable, or that he hath any alteration in himselfe: but that it is so sayd in respect of vs. Moses reporteth that God repented that he had made man: which is not to bee so vnderstoode as though God had not bin well aduised at the first what shoulde insewe afterward. For whereof proceedeth repentance in vs, but that to our seeming we fore sawe not the matter well at the first, and therefore it greeueth vs afterwarde that we were no better aduised aforehand? But this can in no wise befall vnto God: for all things are present vnto him, and he cannot be ouerseene in any thing whatsoeuer. Why then sayeth he that he repenteth? (for surely it is a very cõmon manner of speech among the Prophets to say, Repent you of your sinnes, and I will repent me of the euill which I had purposed against you, I will discharge you of it saith the Lorde) As haue sayd afore, he applyeth himselfe to our vnderstanding. When we see any change or alteration in Gods works, to our seeming hee himselfe also is chaungeable. Not that hee is so in deede, but wee be so dull of vnderstanding that wee cannot reach to the maiestie of God, and we imagine of God after the manner and resemblance of our owne nature. Now God applyeth himselfe to vs. Howbeit not to bring vs asleepe in our owne ignorance, or superstition; but to drawe vs to him leasurely by degrees. That is the cause why hee sayth hee will repent him. Neuertheleese the worde signifyeth properly, to cease from

punishing of vs, [illegible] offences, [illegible] for a time the [illegible] rigour and [illegible] the [illegible] ryse [illegible] vppon the Prophets, [illegible] ryse [illegible] adde some comfortwherwith to sweeten Gods wrath, least the faithfull should be too much discomforted. For when wee feele that God is against vs, is it not a gulfe to swallow vs in his spoile? Who is hee that can stand our Iudge? hee thinketh that God is his enemie, and can taste nothing in him but verie rigor? Must we not needes bee stricken stark-wood with sleth fetche, that heauen and earth doe threaten vs? Is our lyfe becommeth odiferous to vs, that wee could finde in our hartes that the creatures should ouerwhelme vs [illegible] sayd by the Prophets? What should become of vs if there were nothing but such rigor in God? Could wee euer preace vnto him, to hope that hee would be fauorable to vs? No, but wee would flumme him as much as wee could; and we could find in our hartes that his maiestie were vtterly abolished. Now then, if wee bee desirous to fare the better by Gods threatninges, thereby to be drawen to repentance: wee must vnderstand also that he is mercifull, and that we shall finde him ready to receiue vs into his fauour. When we once tast of such goodnesse, then shall wee fare the better by his threatninges. The thing then which Moses teacheth vs here, is that when wee once knowe that GOD will not spare vs to feede vs in our vices and corruptions, but that forasmuch as he hath adopted vs to be his children, he will hold vs in awe and correct vs when wee haue done amisse: wee must also consider therewithall that hee forgetteth not to bee our father, but will repent him ouer his seruantes, and so measure his chastisements, that they shalbe as a medicine to vs, and we shall finde them to be to a good end. That is the thing which must comfort vs; that is the thing which must make vs to like well of all Gods chastisementes, that we bee not too sorrowfull in grecuing our selues, ne gnash our teeth at them as the faithlesse do, which martyr themselues with sorrowing, and play the madde beastes.

But let vs marke well that for the same cause Moses addeth *vnto his Seruantes*.

It is

It is true that the faithfull God will indeede by his people, that is to say, the people that call vpon his name, notwithstanding that the most part of them were hypocrites and wicked persons. But whereas hee speaketh of Gods Seruants, he meaneth those which follow the good way wherein they were called, and which cleaue vnto God to whom they belong, and who hath dedicated them to himselfe. Thus must we not onely haue the title of Gods people, but we must also indeuour our selues to serue him, and be zelous in yeelding vnto him our hearts, seeing he hath searched vs and knowen vs, that he will receiue no worke of vs, &c. Now we marke well the reason that Moses addeth, saying, For hee shall see that his power is gone, and there is none left. Here it is shewed vs that God will not forsake his seruants, but rather that when he hath once begunne to punish such as haue shrunke away from his obedience, but as such time as he perceiueth that their strength faileth. For when he seeth that his corrections doe not so much amend them at the first, [illegible] protest as soone as God toucheth vs, that we be cleane altered from that we were before. If a man fall into any sickenes, he will mourne & make a great confession of his former life, he will seeme to be wholy reformed, & that till the extremity his whole inclination shall bee to giue himselfe altogether vnto God. But be he once a foote againe, he falleth to his old byas, and there appeareth no chaunge at all in him: but rather we accomplish that which is sayd by the Prophet, namely that wee returne but onely while God spareth vs, and as soone as he giueth vs a little rest, we forget it by and by, and make no more account of it. So much the more needeth there for vs to marke well these wordes of Moses, where God taryeth till our strength vanish away. For as long as wee haue any courage in vs, we imploy it altogether to rebelling. Although GOD haue broken our armes, yet if we can stirre our legges, wee will bee still kicking and spurning against him. If our tongue be able to wagge, wee will occupy it either in chafing and fuming, or in grudging and blaspheming. To bee shorte, as long as men are strong and lusty, they cease not to striue against God, and to lift vp their hornes, and to push at him lyke Bulles and wilde beastes. Lo at what poynt wee bee. Therefore it is no wonder though GOD continue his chastisements, and that wee seeme to bee at the last cast, and that it might well suffice him to haue handled vs so roughly, yet hee layeth miserie vppon miserie still, it is nothing to bee wondered at. For why? Vntill wee be washed away lyke water, and that there remaine not one whit of strength in vs, it is certaine that wee will keepe some peece of stubbornesse still lurking within vs, which will shewe it selfe whensoeuer occasion is offered. GOD then knoweth good cause why hee withdraweth not the afflictions by and by which he sendeth vpon vs. For vnlesse it were expedient for our welfare, surely he taketh not delight to see vs so in anguish and sorrowe. But hee knoweth our secrete diseases which are vnperceiued euen to our selues, how that wee should be beguiled by them. For a man will diuers times imagine himselfe to bee so well reclaymed, that hee needeth no more, and that is the thing that beguileth vs. But GOD seeth much clearer than wee doe, and hee is faine to play the Phisition. If a Phisition being a mortall man, bee able to coniecture that there lyeth some further inconuenience lurking in the diseased person, and thereuppon doe giue him a stronger medicine: shall not our Lord from whom nothing is hidden, & to whome it belongeth to search mens hearts, perceiue it? there are yet still some naughty and wicked affections to bee remedied in vs! Yea: and therefore let vs marke well this sentence of Moses, where he saith that God will repent him, at leastwise when he seeth all the strength of his people to bee forespent. And therefore let vs not thinke that our Lorde will vtterly sinke vs, though he asswage not the afflictions out of hand which he sendeth vppon vs. For hee knoweth that it is for our behoofe to languish, and he seeth that wee would kicke at him againe, if hee left vs in our full strength. Therefore we haue needs to bee tamed, yea and to bee brocked and broken, or else hee shall neuer haue ioy of vs. That is the thing in effect, which wee haue to practise vppon this place.

Now it is expressly sayd, that GOD will see them all discomfited, *as well the man that is slow vp, as the man that is left abroad*. This manner of speaking is common enough in the holy scripture, as if yee would say the strong and the weake, that is to say, all one with another. For by this worde *Shut vp*, the Hebrewes betoken him that is in a fortresse, castle, or holde, and in good safetie as in respect of men. And by the man *that is left abroad*, they meane the poore man which goeth abroad in the fieldes without defence or safegard. We see then howe his meaning in effect is that all of them as well great as small, strong as weake, riche as poore, shall bee all discomfited. True it is that such as are already feeble to the worldward, ought to bee easily reclaymed vnto God and teachable enough. But herein is appereth howe much naughtinesse there is in our nature. For the miserablest of vs cease not to striue against God, and euen they which haue not whereof to bee prowd, but ought rather to hang downe their heads and to bee ashamed of themselues, euen they (I say) will not faile to swell with pride lyke Toades. When we see men fight after that fashion against nature: needs must we say, there is a terrible vntowardnesse in mans nature. Now if these cannot bee made to stoope at the first, but God must be faine to winne them by maine blowes, insomuch as hee may sooner break them than make thē obedient & subiect to his gouernment & authoritie, how much more needful is it for y rich, & for such as thinke thēselues to be well fenced, & for such as haue worldly meanes to stay vpon?

Howe much more neede haue they to bee tamed? For they doe euen burst for pride, accordinglie as wee see howe the riche folke and the great personages of this worlde, and all such as seeke to stande by themselues, are so besotted yea and bewitched with diuelishe selfeweening, that they thinke they may defie God, and that his hande cannot touch them, & that they haue made a league with death, so that although al the earth were afflicted, yet they themselues should scape. Wee see that men are blinded after that fashion vnder pretence that all thinges shall fal out as they woulde wishe. Now therefore let vs learne that all of vs as well small as great, haue neede to bee subdued by Gods hand, yea and to be so subdued, as that wee may bee brought in maner to nothing. For vntill God haue brought vs to that point, wee will neuer cease to put out our hornes at him like snayles. Albeit that we be nothing, yet wil we pretend some signe of pride. Seeing it is so, our Lorde must be faine to trample vs so vnder his feete, as wee may not be able to indure any more. Furthermore wee see how pride is a disease so rooted in men, that the remedying thereof must needes bee violent. Nay, which more is, God must bee fayne to vse as it were a poyson to cure that disease withall. Wee see what befell to Saint Paul. To the ende (saith he) that I should not boast of my selfe, God buffeted mee. As howe? After what manner? Hee saith that hee sent him a messenger of Satan. See heere howe the diuell is become a Physition. And howe is that? Wee knowe that he bringeth nothing with him but deadly poyson. That is true. But yet God serueth his owne turne by this poyson as by a medicine. And if Saint Paul were fayne to haue this doone vnto him, what haue wee neede of in comparison of him? So then, let vs not thinke it straunge, seeing we bee so vnrulie and so vnweeldie, that when we haue once done amisse, a man cannot tel at what end to beginne to reclayme vs. For asmuch then as we be so harde to bee tamed, we must not thinke it straunge that our Lorde shoulde beate vppon vs with mayne strokes, & continue still in chastising of vs, vntill wee be vtterly dismayed, and ashamed of our selues, yea and be brought as it were to nothing in ourselues. And nowe Moses declareth, whereat God aimed in all his scourginges of his people, to wit, to make them able to abide the hearing of the reproch that was to bee doone vnto them, and to touch them to the quicke, that they might accuse and condemne themselues, and make no mo replies and vaine excuses, nor be any more possessed of their own fonde fancies, so as they coulde not feele their owne harme and offence.

For this cause hee addeth, that it shoulde be saide vnto them, *Where are your gods?* Or where is the mightie one in whome you trusted? Yee haue eaten the bloude of the sacrifices, you haue drunke the wine of their drinkofferinges: nowe therefore let them steppe vp to helpe you and to succour you, and let them be your refuge. Ye see ye haue beene deceiued by your foolish imaginations. *Know ye now therfore that I am the Lord, I am he, and there is none other.* By these words which I haue declared, Moses doeth vs to vnderstande, first that God respecteth nothing else but the winning of vs to himselfe, to the end wee shoulde be meeke, and of a mielde disposition to receiue correction. That is the thing wherewith he is contented: insomuch that if we returne to him by repentance, it is enough. The let vs conclude, that when he sheweth himselfe rough and sharpe towardes vs, it is altogether for our welfare, and that although he put vs in feare by pretending the countenance of a iudge, yet he ceaseth not to be a father and a Physition vnto vs. True it is that all men cannot taste of this. For we may see a great sort of these braue laddes of the worlde, which will needes abide in their wilfulnesse, whatsoeuer come thereof. As for such, all Gods chastisementes must serue for summoninges, to warne them of their finall condemnation, howe it is as an entering into hell for them. But if wee bee not vtterly vnreformable, let vs marke as I haue saide alreadie, that Gods intent is not to sink vs, when he seemeth to thunder against vs: but to put vs in feare, that we may bee led to repentance & become pliable, to suffer him to gouerne vs, that hauing acknowledged our sinnes, wee may come to him with true humilitie, crauing pardon at his hand, that by that meane wee may be reconciled vnto him. That is a verie needeful thing for vs.

Nowe by the way wee see the fruite which the afflictions sent of God doe yeelde vs. Not that they bee profitable to all men, as I shall shewe hereafter: but vnto the faithfull, whom God maketh his corrections to serue. For by the he holdeth vs in awe, to the end we may not be moued with impatiencie when we happen to be chastised by his hande. For naturally wee bee inclined to impatiencie: insomuch that if wee feele anie smarte, by and by wee leape out of our boundes. And we heare what complaintes and grudginges are made continually in the worlde: when men see warres, when folke are pinched with famine, or when they bee stricken with plagues: what a number of blasphemies doe they spewe out against God? And although men dare not bee so bolde as to defie GOD in wordes: yet doe they gnashe their teeth at him, shewing thereby that they be no whit moued to receiue his chastisements with such mieldnes & meekenes as they ought to do. And whereof proceedeth that? Euen of that we fast not the thing which Moses telleth vs here, namely, that by Gods ouermastring of vs wee beginne to bee quiet towardes him, and to become teachable, and to receiue the warninges contayned in his worde, so as they profite vs to our saluation. Vntill GOD haue tamed vs, wee bee both deafe and blinde, yea and in a manner Lunatike. If a wretched man that is in a burning ague, haue anie strength in him, hee will caste him selfe into the fire or into the water: and if hee bee letted of his purpose, hee will fling himselfe downe headlong to breake his necke. Nowe if the Physicion do hold him downe in his bed, & seeme

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to deale violently with him: it is meete he should doe so, and hee doth no more than needs constreyneth him vnto. Let vs vnderstande then, that wee be like Lunatike folke, and that there is neither wit nor reason in vs as long as God spareth vs. By reason whereof hee is forced to tame vs euen to the vttermost til we can no more. For when wee be come to the poynt that there is scarce any more breath in vs, and that wee can scarce fetch our winde: then beginne wee to fall to the mieldenesse whereof Moses speaketh here, which is, that if a man vpbrayde vs with our offences and blame vs for them, wee keepe silence and holde our peace, and are not so hastie as to say by and by: It is not so, ye doe wee wrong, as wee see a number doe, who as soone as a man openeth his mouth to tell them of their faultes, they forne out their furiousnes, and cannot be reclaymed vntill God haue ouermaistred them. Therefore let vs consider the fruit that commeth of Gods corrections: namely that where as erst we did nothing but sooth our selues in our sinnes and vncleannesse, and welstred in them, and coulde not abide to bee drawen from them: then wee haue our eares opened to receiue good instruction, and we acknowledge our selues to haue done amisse. That is the thing whereunto the words of Moses tend when hee saith, *Where are your gods?*

For the same cause also doeth our Lorde by his prophete Osee liken Idolaters to Harlots. As long as a Harlot or Courtisan hath great resort vnto her, and hath great giftes, gaynes and rewardes, and is costlie apparelled, and mayntayned in her delightes and pleasures: she maketh more account of herselfe (notwithstanding her lewdnesse) than all the honest women of the worlde: and euen so is it with Idolaters. As long as they prosper in the worlde, they beare themselues in hande that their Idolatrie is the cause thereof, and thereuppon they growe hardhearted. Nowe if our Lorde let them alone in that plight, they seeke themselues continuallie more and more in their filthinesse: and therefore hee must bee fayne to vse violent remedies. In respect hereof hee saith that he will stripp them out of their clothes, yea and discouer their shamefull partes, so as they shall become like a Harlot that is smitten with fistulaes, Pockes, and such other filthie diseases, and in steede of her former brauerie, is lothed and shunned of all men, that whereas she went ruffling in her ragges before, nowe shee findeth not a man that will giue her a bit of breade, but is shaken off and scorned at al handes: whereby she perceiueth her miserie, and saith, Alas, I shoulde haue kept me to mine owne husband, and [because I did not] I know I haue the reward which I haue deserued. Nowe then a lewd woman that is giuen to such naughtinesse, will neuer bee reclaymed but by such necessitie. And euen so is it with Idolaters. That is the cause why Moses saith nowe, that when God hath so discouraged his people, that both great and small shall bee as it were vanished away: then it shall bee saide vnto them, Where bee your gods? Goe make your mone to your Idols, goe call vppon them as yee were woont to doe. And so let vs consider Gods goodnesse in that hee hath reclaimed vs from the Idolatrie wherein we were, and that with more gentlenesse than is spoken of here euen by his reaching of his hande vnto vs to drawe vs to him. And if hee vse nowe and then some sharpe chastisementes, let vs assure our selues hee doeth it not without cause, but for that he knoweth our diseases to be so deepe rooted, that wee haue neede to bee so purged and cured.

Hose. 2. 7. 8. 9.

Nowe it followeth, *Let them stepp vp to succour you, and let them vexe you.* Hereby Moses meaneth, that when Idolaters are bereft of al worldlie thinges, and finde themselues disappointed of their vaine imaginations which they had conceiued afore: then they fall to recouer their sight and their hearing. And in verie deed there is no accesse to Gods trueth, for those that are wilfull, vntill they see themselues at such an afterdeele, that for all the shiftes and windlasses which they can make, they perceiue there was nothing but deceite in all their deuices. As for example in these dayes, so long as the Papistes thinke they can preuaile by the diuelishe deuices of their Masses, Pilgrimages, and the rest of Satans illusions wherein they be plunged: who can perswade them to giue ouer any of all those thinges? What say they? Is it not good for a man to serue such a Saint, to call vppon such a patron or aduocate, to builde a Chappel, to cause a masse to bee said, or to mumble before such an altar? To bee shorte, as long as the Papistes thinke they may preuaile by their superstitions, they be so wilful that it is vnpossible to haue any entrance vnto them, except our Lorde set to his hande, as hee hath doone towardes vs, and touch them with his holy spirite. But I speake of the ordinarie meane, and I say that men are so forepossessed, that they shut the doore against God, and against all instruction, and against all warninges that can bee giuen. And therefore our Lorde had neede to smite vppon them with mayne blowes, yea and to bring them to such extremitie, as they may knowe that they doe but misspend their time to no purpose, in gadding after their Idols, and so fall to misliking of their offerings and other superstitions whereunto they were giuen afore.

But yet the knowing hereof is not all that is to be doone: the cheefe point is that which Moses addeth here, namely to returne vnto God, and to acknowledge that it is hee onely on whome we ought to rest. For euen the Idolaters themselues wil oftentimes through desperation defie their owne Idols. Wee see that when the Saint George of the Papistes or some other of their Idols haue beguiled them, so as there commeth some great frost, they fall to dragging of him about in a Corde, like a gallowclapper, whom they had worshipped a little afore. Wee shall see some, yea euen men of honour, which to spite their idole, doe breake downe their puppets, yea euen their blessed Ladie and all. And howe so? They play the madde bedlems, not

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onelie against their owne Idols, but also against whatsoeuer else they imagine to bee as a God. And the heathen haue shewed ful well, that their worshipping of their Idols was not for anie reuerence that they bore vnto them, but for that it seemed to yeelde some benefite vnto them: insomuch that when they were once touched to the quicke, then they vttered their poison to abolish the name and maiestie of God, ouerreaching themselues so far, as to say that there is no God at all. After that manner doe all Idolaters and all vnbeleeuers deale, vnlesse our Lorde take vppon him to worke and restraine them by his holy spirite. And that is the knowledge which Moses speakes of. Let vs marke wel therefore howe it is not saide here barely, that God would vpbraide the Iewes with their yeelding of themselues to their Idols in vaine, and that their Gods in whom they trusted, had stood them in no steede: but that hee addeth, *Beholde howe is it I my selfe, and there is no other God with me.* To bee shorte, it booteth vs not to knowe all the abuses and foolishe fancies wherewith men beguile themselues; but wee must also returne vnto God. And indeede what a sorte of skoffers are there noweadaies in the worlde, which make a skorning of all the dotages of the Papistes, and yet in the meane while are worse themselues than dogges, so as it were much better for them that they were Papistes. A man shall see (I say) the despisers of all Religion, which will say according as they thinke, that all the Religion which is in the Popedome, is flat mockerie, and a verie childishe toye. But what? They haue no feare of God, nor reuerence of his worde; it beareth no sway at all with them. Nowe (as I haue saide afore) it were much better for such that they were Papistes. And so let vs marke well howe it is to no purpose to knowe Idolatrie, and to perceiue and beleeue that all that euer is doone without the warrant of Gods worde or contriued by man is but abuse, filth, and corruption: vnlesse (which is the principall poynt) wee returne vnto God to doe homage to his maiestie, and come ashamed before him, acknowledging our faultes & crauing pardon at his hande, so as euerie of vs accuse himselfe and humble himselfe in such sorte as there bee no more replying in vs, but that wee yeelde ourselues to him with true repentance. That is the cause the why Moses hauing spoken of sacrifycing to Idols, and vpbraided the Iewes with their defiling of themselues with their abhominations, in eating the bloude and drinking the wine of their offeringes, and in intermedling themselues with the filthinesse of the heathen: after hee hath said all these things and shewed that in all those things there is nothing but illusion and deceitfulnesse: he addeth, Beholde, I am hee. Nowe God presupposeth that they which are so subdued with maine blowes, haue their eyes well opened. Hee had cast them in the teeth afore, that they were vtter blindfoolded as it had beene with a sowell: but nowe that they shall see themselues starke naked, now they shall see themselues vnarmed, their eyes shall be opened, there will be nothing to hinder their knowledge any more. What is to bee doone then? They must consider that there is but one onely God, and that it is he to whom we must turne againe, euen to craue forgiuenes of our sinnes at his hande, and consequently to put our whole trust in him, contenting ourselues with his protection, without troubling of ourselues to trot vp and downe as the wretched vnbeleeuers doe, who neuer haue any rest but are tossed and turmoyled with continuall vexations. Therefore let not vs bee caried away with such vnquietnesse, but let vs conceiue a right assurance, so as wee may rest all wholie vpon our God. The rest that followeth cannot be dispatched as now, and therefore it shall bee reserued til to morow. Deut.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe to make vs so to feele them, as hauing perceiued howe farre we haue ouershot ourselues, wee may seeke earnestly to be reformed by his hand, and that if it please him to chastice vs, wee may patiently abide all the corrections which hee shall send vs: or rather it may please him to make his worde to profite so much in vs, as wee may not tarrie till hee lift vp his hande to punish vs, but receiue the warninges that are giuen vs in his name, to reclayme vs wholy to his will, and that in the meane while he beare with vs in our infirmities, till hee haue rid vs quite and cleane of them, and in such wise reformed vs to the obedience of his righteousnes, as our whole seeking may bee to glorifie his name, euen till wee come to the immortal glorie which is prepared for vs in heauen & was purchased for vs by our Lord Iesus Christ. That it may please him to grant this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xvij. of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXVIII. Sermon, which is the eleuenth vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

39 See nowe howe it is I, euen I that am God, and there is no God with mee. It is I that kill and make aliue againe, I wounde and heale, and there is none that can deliuer out of my hand.

40 For I lift vp my hande to heauen: and as for mee, I liue for euer.

41 If I whet the edge of my ſworde, and my hande lay holde of iudgement: I will execute vengeaunce vpon mine aduerſaries, and pay them their hyre which hate mee.

42 I will make mine arrowes drunken with bloude, and my ſworde ſhall deuoure the bloudie fleſh of the ſlaine, and of the priſoners at the beginning of the vengeance of the enemies.

43 Yee nations prayſe you his people: for hee will auenge the bloude of his ſeruauntes, and yeeld vengeance to his aduerſaries: but he will be fauorable to his owne lande, and to his owne people.

WE ſawe yeſterday howe it is not enough to knowe, that there is nothing but vanitie and leaſing in Idols, and in al ỹ ſuperſtitions ỹ men haue deuiſed of their owne heades: but that the cheefe point is to knowe God to do him homage, to walke in his feare, and to conſider howe dreadfull his maieſtie is. Nowe heerewithall wee muſt marke alſo, that when we once knowe God to be too great a Lorde to bee dalied withall, if he chaſtice vs for offending him, we muſt taſte of his mercie to returne freely vnto him, beeing throughlie perſwaded and reſolued, that wee ſhall finde mercie at his hande, though wee be vnworthie of it. And that is the cauſe why he ſaith, *That is it hee which killeth and quickneth, and that it is hee that woundeth and healeth againe.* Nowe wee haue alwayes theſe two thinges to marke: The one is that wee ſhall bee holde in awe by conſidering (as I ſaide afore) howe dreadfull Gods maieſtie is, according to the Apoſtles treating thereof in the fore alleadged tenth chapter to the Hebrewes. That is the thing which maketh vs to liue in awe. For we be not ſo bolde to offende God, neither take wee ſuch libertie as they doe which fling out at all aduenture: but yet, when wee haue done amiſſe and God warneth vs of our faults, then haue we neede to reſort to his infinite goodneſſe, and to aſſure ourſelues that howſoeuer the caſe ſtand, we ſhall obtayne pardon of our offences. Truely theſe two thinges, namely, *That God killeth and quickneth againe; and that hee maketh a wounde and afterwarde healeth againe*: ſeeme at the firſt bluſh to bee contrarles: For God ſeemeth not to play the Phyſicion towardes vs when wee bee as it were deade and layde in our graues. Neither ſeemeth this to bee agreeable to his nature: to put vs to death, and to afflict vs: but (as I ſaide afore) hee muſt be faine to doe both the one and the other: and wee on our ſide alſo muſt bee faine to feele it. For as long as men take leaue to doe euill, it is meete that God ſhoulde hold them in awe, and ſhewe them that hee is their Iudge. And on the other ſide that wretched ſinners ſhould humble themſelues, and with griefe of minde turne againe vnto him to obteyne forgiueneſſe at his hande; and then will he bee forwarde and readie to forget all their offences, and ſhewe them nothing but all maner of gentleneſſe & friendſhip. To be ſhort the two thinges which Moſes noteth here, are to be conſidered well: namely that God vſeth rigor towards ſuch as take too much libertie to do euil, and alſo that his goodnes is ready to vtter it ſelfe towardes thoſe which returne to him with repentaunce. And ſo ye ſee howe we haue to marke alſo howe good and pitifull God is: and againe on the contrarie part, wee haue to conſider his rigour and ſeueritie. To be ſhort, as oft as wee be prouoked to euill, and the wicked luſtes of our fleſh do tickle vs and intice vs to ſin; let Gods iudgement come before our eyes, that we may be mooued with feare, and thereby bee reſtrayned from the euill whereunto we bee tempted. On the other ſide, when we fall through infirmitie, let vs not be afraide to turne againe to our God, neither let vs thinke that hee hath quite caſt vs off. Although his hande be ſore vppon vs, and he ſeeme vs as though he meant to vſe wrath and vengeance againſt vs: yet let that not make vs to ſhrinke from him, but rather let vs vnderſtande, ỹ as he hath made the wound, ſo he is at hand to heale it, ſo we ſeeke the remedy. Now the meane howe to ſeeke it, hath beene declared hertofore. And ſo ye ſee after what maner we ought to put this leſſon in vre, where Moſes ſaith that god hauing put to death, doth make aliue again. And herewithall let vs alſo beare in minde, that God playeth not with men as the heathen haue imagined, as who would ſay he toſſed and turned them like a ball: but ỹ reaſon is manifeſt why God doth firſt kill and lay in graue, before he reſtore to life againe: namelie becauſe we cannot find in our harts to ſubmit our ſelues willingly vnto him vntil he haue ſubdued vs by force: Nay the fernent heate of our boyling luſtes doth ſo carie vs away, and we be ſo blinded with them, that wee cannot conceiue howe terrible Gods iuſtice is, vntil he haue made vs to feele it by experience. Therfore it is needful for vs ỹ our Lord ſhould put vs as it were to death, to ỹ intẽt to make vs to taſt ỹ life which he giueth to thoſe ỹ returne vnto him.

Hebr. 10. 31

And for the ſame cauſe he addeth, *That none can deliuer out of his hand.* For we know how men doe alwaies beare themſelues in hand that they ſhall ſcape Gods handes: inſomuch that hee beginneth no ſooner to ſtrike them, but by and by they ſeeke ſtartingholes, and they will needes haue ſome pretie ſhift or other, and therupon they fal aſleepe, and ỹ is a kinde of contempt to God ward. To the end then that wee may go directlie vnto him, whether wee haue offended him, or whether we haue beene tempted to euill we muſt alwayes vnderſtande that there is no

deliuerance, there is no shift but we must make our account to him, vntill he of his owne infinite goodnesse haue receiued vs, and bee come to attonement with vs. The thing therefore that will perswade vs to come vnto God, is that we be fully determined and setled in our selues, that we shall gayne nothing by our running to and fro and by our seeking heere and there for starting holes, but that all is meere deceyte to beguile our selues withall. When we once knowe this well: then shall wee bee prouoked to submit our selues to God. Also it will hold vs in awe of him, and make vs to seeke forgiuenesse of our sinnes at his hand, when wee haue so giuen ouer our selues to him.

Againe we ought to wey well the wordes of Moses, *It is I* (sayth he) *it is I my selfe that am the onelyng, and there is not any other God.* For hereby wee see howe harde it is to holde men to the knowledge of the true God, because they be euer swarming aside to their owne foolishe imaginations. For wee be naturally inclined to the forging of Idols, and to corrupt our selues with superstitions, so as falshood doth alwayes beare sway in vs rather than trueth. A man would wonder how so many errours should be in the worlde. But let him consider what a workehouse our owne brayne is, and what thinges it forgeth and yeeldeth foorth; and surelie hee shall finde that we neuer cease forging of lies and deceites to corrupt our selues withall, and to turne vs away from Gods pure trueth. And so, because men are so wholy bent, yea and giuen ouer to leasinges: therefore doeth God confirme this matter the more by saying, *It is I, and there is not any other:* It is hee on whome wee must wholie rest. Nowe seeing it is so, it behoooueth all of vs to knowe that euerie of vs had needs to holde himselfe as it were by force in the pure singlenesse of Gods worde, or else wee shall bee ouercome by Satans illusions, and he will haue caried vs away here and there out of hande. And by the way, if wee see the worlde intangled in neuer so manie disorders, and all men possessed with false and wicked opinions: let vs not be too much troubled at such a stumblingblocke. For why? Wee see there is nothing harder than to holde men in the pure knowledge of God.

Nowe hee addeth consequentlie, *Surelie I will lift vp my hande to heauen and say, I am the liuing; and that I hauing sharpened the edge of my sworde, & hauing taken Iustice in my hande, will execute such vengeance that blonde shall run downe in streames euerie where,* so as all mine enemies shall be made to come to their aunswere, and I will spare nothing from one side to an other. Now here God confirmeth yet better that which hee had declared heretofore, and he confirmeth it with an othe: For this speech, *to lift vp the hand to heauen* is as much to say, as to Sweare; not that God can lift vp his hande after the manner of men: for besides that hee hath no hande, there is nothing higher than his maiestie: but it is a figure taken of the custome among men, and wee knowe it is verie common in the holie scripture. Because we comprehende not God as he is in deede, but finde him to be a thing farre passing our reach: therefore is hee fayne to applie himself to our rudenesse. Euen so in this text he saith that he will lift vp his hande, that is to say that hee will sweare. Now, there is no need, that God shoulde sweare: For the cause why we haue othes among vs, is our owne naughtines. There is so much craft and suttletie among men as is pitifull to beholde. They bee fleeting, they bee full of lightnes and vnconstantie, and it is harde to bring them to vpright dealing. In these respectes, and for that wee be so giuen to deceitfulnes, othes are faine to bee ministred to vs: But Gods swearing is for our infirmities sake. And truely wee bee greatly to blame in this behalfe, in that we compell God to sweare. For nothing is more peculiar to him than trueth, and if hee had not that, hee were not God. Seeing then, that hee is the infallible trueth it selfe, if when hee hath once spoken, wee stand doubting still, and examine whether it bee so or no: can there bee a more horrible blasphemie, than to call Gods trueth in question after that fashion? Is it not all one as if wee woulde bereaue him of his verie beeing? And yet for all that, wee see howe men stande as in a mammering when God speaketh to them. For if hee threaten vs, wee make no account of it: If we were throughlie perswaded that all that euer proceedeth out Gods mouth is of such certaintie as there ought to bee no replying against it, truely wee woulde tremble and quake out of hande for feare, as soone as hee threateneth vs: but wee know how hardhearted wee be in that behalfe. On the other side, if our Lorde promise to bee mercifull to vs when wee haue done amisse, and intreate vs as his children, and call vs to the hope of euerlasting saluation: wee bee so tangled in this worlde, that euerie thing of nothing holdes vs backe and we despise the inestimable benefites which God offereth vs. Wee see then that men do not the honour to God to count him faithfull. For then woulde they holde themselues wholie to his worde, they woulde bee touched to the quicke, yea they woulde quake at his threates, and they woulde set all their ioy and delight in his promises. That is the cause why GOD warranteth, and confirmeth his worde with an othe. Nowe in this case (as I saide afore) wee our selues are much too blame, seeing that God is faine to yeelde to such condition as to abace himselfe as though hee were a mortall creature, to the entent hee may winne vs, and that wee may no more wander away, but bee fully perswaded in our selues that this speaking to vs is in good earnest. Seeing then that our Lorde is faine to frame himselfe vnto vs after that fashion, thereby wee see our owne malice and frowardnesse: and yet doth God beare with vs in ỹ case. But when he sweareth, it is as much as if we sawe heauen and earth shaken, nature changed, the Sunne darkened, and all the starres bereft of their light. And therefore if wee bee not touched with ỹ othes which God maketh after ỹ maner: it is certaine ỹ the diuel hath as it were bewitched vs, and that wee bee become starke

blockes, or rather that wee be horrible and vglie monsters. Therefore let vs benefite ourselues by the othes which wee reade in the holy scripture. And when God sweareth that he will bee auenged at his enemies; let it abashe vs, as though we sawe his vengeance and wrath take effect out of hande, and as though we sawe him readie and in a forwardnes to execute the thing which hee hath vttered with his mouth. And when he sweareth that hee will be friendly to vs and take vs for his children, confirming with an othe the heauenlie heritage which hee hath promised vs: ought not the doing of those things to assure vs to withstande all temptations? Although Satan and the flesh tempt vs to distrust, yet notwithstanding let vs set this for a shielde against them, and say, No, seeing that God hath sworne, shall we doe him such wrong and dishonour, as to cal the truth of his word in question? Let that bee far from vs. That is the thing which wee haue to note in this text where God saith that he will lift vp his hande to heauen and say, I liue.

And he sweareth by himselfe, accordingly as the Apostle toucheth it in the first to ỹ Hebrewes. Hebr. 6. 13. When we sweare, we call God to witnes as our Iudge if we lie. But it is not so with God; he cannot finde a greater than himselfe to sweare by. He saith therefore, I am aliue, as if he should say, Nay, whosoeuer he be that holdeth not himselfe to the sentence which I doe nowe pronounce, he derogateth my glorie as much as if he meant to abolish me quite and cleane, and to declare that I am no more God. But if I be God, it must needs be perceiued in the execution of the thinges which I doe nowe speake. I am contented that men shall hencefoorth take mee but for an idol or a deade thing, if they finde not my sayinges true in deede. When God speakes after that fashion, ought it not to make the haire to stande vp vppon our heades, if wee esteeme not his worde to be verie certaine? Yes. And so we see my former saying yet better confirmed, namelie that it is not for vs to replie any more when God hath once spoken, but wee must take the matter to bee out of all crie, as though wee sawe the thing alreadie done before our eyes. But let vs see nowe whereat God aimed: for it is certaine that hee sweareth not but for our welfare. It is not for his owne sake, hee taketh neither good nor harme by it, but hee hath regarde of vs. And in token thereof hee saith, *That hee will whet the edge of his sworde, that is shall bee as a flaming sworde, and that hee will take Iudgement in his hand*, that is to say, that he will hold his assises to shewe himselfe to bee the Iudge of the worlde, and that as then all his enemies must bee confounded, and all aduersaries bee brought to nought. And whereas God speaketh here of the edge of the sworde, we must not imagine that hee vseth any material sword, for that cannot agree to him: but wee knowe hee hath all sortes of punishmentes to chastice men withall as seemeth good to himselfe. For in verie deede, all the swordes in the world do serue to execute Gods ordinaunce. When warre is to bee had, well may princes assemble great armies: but it is God that must beare the stroke. Then if there be fiftie thousand men in armes on the one side, and forty thousand on the other: wee must not thinke that God is that whyle asleepe in heauen: for all they are of his waging. And although the two armies bee set one against an other: yet shall not one stroke be stricken but by the disposition of Gods hand. The like is to bee sayde of pestilences, famines, & such other like thinges. To be short, all the scourges of this worlde are Gods swordes. And in that respect is it saide that God will sharpen the edge of his sworde, that is to say, hee will execute the chastisementes which hee hath in his hande. But if hee winke at things for a time and list to vse patience: hee seemeth to haue no regarde of the faultes that are committed here belowe. Yet doeth it not followe that all those things are not inregistred before him, neither is it to bee saide that hee hath forgotten his charge, or that his power is idle: for hee hath all kindes of punishmentes, which he can well shewe foorth whensoeuer it shall bee expedient to execute vengeaunce. And so yee see after what manner God is sayde to drawe his sworde.

Nowe the applying of this doctrine will giue vs yet a more easie vnderstanding thereof. Let vs consider to what ende it is saide: namely because it seemeth to vs, that when God punisheth not the wicked out of hande, hee letteth thinges goe at all aduenture, and that is ỹ thing which troubleth vs sore. When we be wrongfully afflicted on the behalfe of men, and wee see the Church of God to suffer manie slaunders and molestations: what say wee? Whereon doeth God thinke nowe? Hath hee not pitie vpon his children? Wee bee tormented with extremitie, and yet hee maketh as though hee sawe it not. Shall the crueltie of men haue such scope for euer? Shoulde hee giue heade to the wicked after such sort that wee shoulde alwayes bee made a pray to them? Such complaintes do men make, when God doeth not out of hande punish the outrages that are doone to his seruaunts. And therefore it is saide, *That hee will sharpen his sworde, and take Iudgement in his hande*, as though that to holde vs in patience, he should say, My friendes, trouble not your selues, let not your lustes be ouer hastie and inordinate. For I doe not this as vnmindfull of you. Although I suffer the wicked to doe manie thinges outragiously: it is not for that I haue no regarde of you, or for that I watch not for the welfare of my Church, or for that I pitie not those which suffer aduersitie, and are so molested: but because I haue my conuenient times, which I dispose at my pleasure; and therefore tarie you my leasure. For the wicked shall bee vtterlie amased at the whetting of my sworde to make warre against them. Be not afraide: for although yee see it not at the first day; yet will I not faile to shewe my selfe your protector and the defendour of your life. Nowe then wee see in effect, that all this is applyed to our infirmitie,

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euen thereafter as we be tossed with temptations: so that when it seemeth to vs that God thinketh not any more vppon vs, but that hee hath turned his back and is asleepe in heauen: we should notwithstanding that all this fall out, take it, as though hee had sayd: Cease not you to be patient and quiet, yea, hold your selues stil till I draw my sworde, for I will surely doe it.

And for the same cause he addeth, *that he will take iudgement in his hand*. Wee knowe that Gods maiestie and his iustice are thinges vnseparable. Sith it is so, let vs hardily conclude that hee is the iudge of the world, yea & although the same bee hidden from vs, so as wee perceiue not any signe or lykelyhoode thereof, yet let vs not forbeare to say continually, What? Is it possible for God to renounce himselfe, who is vnchangeable? Then must wee take him for our iudge, assuring our selues that although hee hide himselfe away, yet notwithstanding hee will shewe that hee sawe all, that all thinges lay open before him, and that he neuer changed his mind. Thus yee see howe wee ought to practise this lesson, yea euen at such time as our Lorde suffereth vs to bee as it were trodden vnder foote by the wicked, and all the whole Church is cruelly dealt with, and all thinges are out of order here beneath. For euē then we must not cease to hope & to put ourselues into ỹ protection of our God, because he hath sworne, and not only affirmed but also ratified with a solemne othe, that he will do iustice vpon his enemies, and that the execution thereof shal be so terrible, as ỹ there shalbe an vtter discomfiture of them, and all shall bee filled with bloud. And it is not to bee doubted but that in this place Moses meant to confirme the faithfull still in the hope which they ought to haue of Gods goodnes, although they seeme to bee as it were sunken. And hee proceedeth in the matter which he had dealt with before: which is, that in the end God will bethinke him of his seruauntes. Howbeit that hee beginne at this poynt, namely that while the wicked doe make great cheere, and liue in pleasure, & make their triumphes: God dooth say that hee will iudge his people, and that those which are his children and houshold seruantes, must be faine to indure hardnes, because hee reformeth them when they haue done amisse. Nowe it would seeme that their state is much woorse than the state of such as are vtter straungers to God and haue no acquaintance with him. And therefore dooth Moses adde, No, in the ende God will mitigate his rigour towards you, and therefore let it not greeue you to see the worldlinges spared, or to see them weltering in their pleasures, as though all things were lawfull which they lifted. If your God afflict you in the meane season, let it not seeme straunge vnto you. For hee must needes haue a speciall care of his owne children & chastice them seing he hath adopted thē. And as for your enemies, assure your selues that their turne will come about: and thereof your GOD assureth you here, in that hee dooth not simply affirme it, but also sweare it. Therefore you may trust vnto it. So then euen in the middest of our afflictions, let vs bee vpheld with this lesson. For it will bee a good stud for vs to leane vnto, when wee make it auaileable as it deserueth, and as God himselfe intendeth it. Now wee see the state of the faithfull to be too too miserable both generally and particularly: for many of them indure such miseries and reproches in this world, that to all seeming they bee vtter castawayes, and that God disdayneth them no lesse than the world despiseth them. Behold they which walk purely & simply before God, which loue righteousnesse and vpright dealing, which will neither deceiue nor hurt any man, euen they neuerthelesse are faine to abide hunger and thirst, and are greeued with many temptations and troubles, so as they wote not which way to turne thē. Now they might bee brought to despaire, if God withheld them not, by dooing them to vnderstand that they haue needs to be chasticed, and put in minde of their sinnes. On the other side they see the wicked and the despisers of God sporting themselues in all manner of disorder, and in the meane while they bee neither chasticed nor corrected, but seeme rather to be exempted and priuiledged from all harme, as it is sayd in the threescore and thirteenth psalme. Loe here a very sore temptation. We see generally that Gods Church is as a sheep in the midst of a great sorte of Woolues. For the power of our enemies is such, as they might swallowe vs vp out of hand, and we see there is no meane of resistance in vs, we be all scattered abroad. Seeing then that wee see such thinges, were it possible for vs to holde out one minute of an houre, if wee had not our refuge to this doctrine, that God scourgeth his owne, and that he beginneth at them, because he must needes haue a care of his owne household? But the wicked shall fare neuer the better for his bearing with them as now, neither is it to be sayd that their state is therefore better than ours. Therefore we must tary his leasure with patience, vntil he take the sworde in hand, and keepe his Assises. Let vs referre all vnto him, and in the meane whyle keep silence, without grudging against him. Let not the corrections which wee suffer set vs in such a chafe as to make vs play the desperate persons. Thus ye see how profitable this doctrine is to vs, if we can apply it to our instruction.

Psal. 73. 5.

Now it is sayd consequently, *that God will reuenge his enemies while he sleepeth, and pay them their hyre which haue him, but will make his arrowes dronke with bloud*, and make such a slaughter of them that they shall all bee discomfited. His speaking after that maner is to make his Iustice the more terrible to vs, because we be slow and dulheaded as I haue sayd afore, insomuch that wordes moue vs not a whit. Therefore doth our Lorde set downe a vehement kinde of speech here, to the ende to waken vs, and to make vs yeeld due honor to his iustice, and that (as I haue sayd afore) it might be to vs as though wee sawe both heauen and earth shaken. For after the same maner speaketh hee by his Prophet Aggeus; & the Apostle shewing vs the maiestie of the Gospell, alledgeth the same text, that as oft as wee

Agge. 2. 7. Heb. 12. 26.

heare the voyce thereof sound, it behoueth vs to call to minde, that God will bee heard and knowen both aboue and beneath. Now is it certaine, y the holy Ghost would not haue vsed such speach but for our blockishnes sake. Seeing then that our Lord setteth downe here so many figures and so many comparisons, let vs accuse our selues, and consider that hee doth it for the brutishnes of our nature, by reason whereof hee is faine to shewe thinges to vs aforehand, to the end we may finde some taste in them and be touched with them. But yet must we alwayes haue an eye to the end, and to the intent whereat this doctrine aimeth. And our Lord sayth *that it is for the elects sake, and for the prisoners sake*. Whereby he dooth vs to vnderstand that the vengeance which hee speaketh of is for the welfare of his Church, howbeit not for all that haue borne y name of faithfull, for wee know there are many which make false bragges of Gods name, & that is to their double condemnation. We know that the chaffe is mingled with the good corne, and the wicked are intermeddled with the godly. But yet they which falsly abuse Gods name after that fashion, must not looke that their hypocrisie shall any whit boote them: nay rather they shall pay full deere for it. They then which pretend to bee faithfull and are not, shall not be allowed before GOD for euer: but hee will make them cast for falsifyers of his truth. But our Lorde here comforteth such as are not altogether past grace, but which notwithstanding that they haue offended, doe neuertheleſſe turne againe vnto him, and beeing sory for their sinnes doe humble themselues to him and seeke to bee reformed by his hand and by his holy spirit. Those therefore which are so ouermastred, haue needs to be comforted as Gods hand, accordingly also as we see howe our Lord Iesus Christ speaketh to that sorte of men, saying, Come vnto me al ye that are wearie and ouerloden, and I will refresh you, and yee shall finde rest vnto your soules. So then, in this text our Lord hath an eye to such as might be drowned in dispaire, if he should not giue them some taste of his goodnesse to stay them vp withall. And therefore he saith that although hee haue shewed himselfe rigorous to his Church for a time: yet notwithstanding he hath not disanulled the couenant which hee had made with his seruaunt Abraham, but he will shew that the people whom hee had chosen and adopted are his own, and that seeing he is their protector, he will performe this saying of his; I will be a friend to thy friendes, and an enemie to thine enemies. That is the thing in effect, which Moses had respect vnto.

Matt. 11. 28. 29.

Gen. 12. 3. Exo. 23. 22.

Sith it is so, let vs learne to arme our selues with this lesson, and whensoeuer our enemies behaue themselues lyke wood beastes, yea and are as furious as flaming fire: let vs on our side vnderstand that our God hath power enough to maintaine vs, and that if he do it not at the first, it is to try our patience, and to make vs to ouercome all temptations. Wherefore let vs learn to proceede on still, yea euen though he shoulde leade vs vnto death, assuring our selues that hee dooth it to giue vs a better lyfe, and therefore let vs alwayes goe on still, whither soeuer it shall please him to lead vs. But yet howsoeuer we fare, let vs not beare any spite to our aduersaries. Although as now they execute their rage against vs, yet let vs be throughly perswaded, that in the end they must come to account, and that as the God will shewe how deere our welfare was vnto him, & that although he seemed to haue forgotten vs and to haue cast vs quite and cleane vp: yet notwithstanding hee did still esteeme vs as his flocke. God then will shew that he had vs alwayes in his protection. Therefore let vs in the meane time abide quiet, and let vs not be so cast downe with temptations that wee should be out of hope of our saluation, and giue ouer the promises thereof that haue bin made vnto vs. Thus doe we now see the meaning of Moses, and also in how great stead his doctrine may stand vs, if we can haue the skill to apply it well to our vse.

Now it is said for a conclusion, *Ye people (or nations) prayse ye the people of God*. Here Moses directeth his speech to all infidels and heathen folk, to the intent that the exhortation which he hath set downe heretofore, may haue the more force. Hitherto he had spoken to the beleeuers, and to such as haue eares to heare God withall, and to such as he calleth to his schoole. Howbeit forasmuch as there is so much troublesomnesse and scrupulousnesse in vs as is pitifull to see; Moses meane to giue vs yet one meane more for our better confirmation in respect whereof he sayth, Consider my friends & see how your God comforteth you in the middest of the chastisements which he sendeth you. Although ye haue offended him, & deserue to haue extreme rigor vsed towardes you, without any abatement of his corrections: yet notwithstanding, to shewe that hee would not haue you to perish, nor y you shoulde seele him but as a iudge onely; he sheweth again that he will haue pitie vpon you, and repent him of his smiting of you after that fashion, and that he will withdrawe his hand. And if you beleeue not this, yet neuertheleſſe, y infidels must needs beleeue it. Although they be destitute of reason, although there be not one sparke of light in them, although they be as brutish as beastes that neuer heard speaking of the liuing God: yet shall they perceiue this, and their experience shal be such, that they shall be driuen to say, Blessed is the people whose father & sauiour God sheweth himselfe to be: Euen they (I say) shal blesse you. Now, when the dumme are able to speake, the blinde to see, & the deafe to heare; shoulde not they that haue bin inlightned by Gods word, & to whom he hath giuen tongues to magnifie his name, should not they see nor perceiue a whit? What excuse then shall there be for them? Now then, wee see why Moses hauing exhorted the faithfull to repentance, & hauing shewed them that God will haue pitie & mercie vppon them after he hath corrected them for their faultes & offences, turneth his talke to such as were blind, & had not any knowledge or tast of the trueth, namely to the heathen, of purpose to make vs to

Psal. 33. 12.

perceiue

perceiue the better, after what sorte God causeth vs to feele his goodnes, euen by experience, sealing it vp in our harts by his holy spirit, which is named the earnest penny, and the seale of the hope of our saluation, & the causer of vs to take hold of all the good thinges which we receiue at Gods hand. Now then if we know nothing therof, & that the infidels by beholding Gods wonderfull working after a manner vnaccustonied among men, be inforced to say, O what a thing is it to be of the number of Gods people? ought not we to haue a more liuely knowledge thereof, & such as may comfort vs in our afflictions, so as we maynot cease to call vpon our God to hold vs continually vnder his obedience, and to haue alwayes wherwith to asswage the bitternes of our sorrowes? Truely the thing that Moses rehearseth here is shewed vs in the example of Balaam. For he was a false Prophet, hee was an enemie of God, hee was such a one as had his tongue to sale and his heart vppon his powch, seeking to turne the trueth into falshood, and yet for all this, as though God had held him vppon the rack, he was inforced to vtter this speech: *Let my soule dye the death of the righteous.* He speaketh there of the people of God, saying: Who art thou Israell? Who is hee that can doe any thing against thee, seeing thou standest in the fauor of thy God? Was a deceiuer and an vnderling of Satan faine to say so? Yea verely. For it is Gods will that his will which hee hath witnessed alreadie to his people by his lawe and by his word, should be knowen, and further confirmed euen by the mouth of his open enemie. Balaam was faine to say that the death of the Iewes was more to be desired, than the life of all other men, because God held them for his people. So then, let vs marke well, that whereas Moses sayth, Ye Nations or ye Gentiles prayse yee the people of God: it is as much to say, as declare ye that God hath wrought after such a fashion, as it is not for men to doubt any more, but that for his adoption sake, in that he hath vouchsafed to choose the linage of Abraham, he will haue it knowen that therein he hath layd forth the infinite treasures of his goodnes.

And forthwith he addeth, *that hee will reuenge the bloud of his seruauntes, and requite vengeance to his enemies, but bee mercifull to his land, and to his people.* Here are three thinges in effect, which I wil touch in few words, and it wil be enough to conclude this song withall. The first is that God sayth, *He will reuenge the bloud of his seruauntes.* Now vnder this saying hee sheweth vs that wee may well be afflicted for a time, so far forth that euen our very bloud shall not be spared, whether it be that God punish vs for the faults which we haue committed against him, or that his will be to try our patience. The thing then whereof wee bee warned, is that if God thinke good to haue our bloud shed, we must not thinke it straunge nor shrinke from the promises which he hath made vs, in auowing himselfe to bee our God, and the defender of our lyfe. Neither must we think that those promises are disanulled, though our God suffer vs to be handled so cruelly. But let vs tary the time till he reuenge our bloud: for hee will then shewe how deare and precious our lyfe is vnto him. Thus much concerning the first point.

As touching the second, he sayth *that God will requite his enemies with the lyke*, to the ende wee should knowe that all the felicitie of the wicked and of the despisers of God shall be accursed, & therefore that we must not repine at them therfore. Now then, if wee see Gods enemies to bee rich, to haue their ease in this world, and to welter in all pleasure: let vs let them alone, and not be desirous to enuie them, or to intermeddle our selues with the. For why? Gods vengeance which is yet vnseene, must come before our eyes, & be considered by faith, & we must also remember how it is said, Curssed be you laughters, for ye shal weepe. Forasmuch then as the laughter of the despisers of God must be turned into mourning & weeping, and gnashing of teeth: let vs choose to weepe & waile as now, that God may dry vp our teares, & wipe them away when the time shall bee come. That is the second point. Psal. 37. 2. Luke. 6. 25.

The third is, that wee must learne and take hart to rest vpon the promise that God will neuer forsake vs howsoeuer the world goe. Insomuch that although we haue offended God neuer so many wayes, yet he will euer be mercifull to vs. And why is that? *Because we be his people.* The very foundation whereupon we must build, is that being adopted of God into the number of his children according to his purchasing of vs by our Lord Iesus Christ, into whose body hee hath grafted vs, and wee knowe that his pardoning of our sinnes is for that he hath washed and shoured vs in the bloud of his onely sonne: wee alwayes haue recourse to this promise, that our God will be fauorable to vs. True it is that now and then we shall be so at our wittes end, that we shall not knowe what to say, but yet must wee hope beyond hope, that although God shew vs many tokens of his wrath, and we bee assaulted on all sides, so as we see no way to get out, but we seeme rather to be shut vp in the very bottom of y dungeons, yet notwithstanding we haue this stay to leane vnto, that God will be fauorable to his people and to his land. And therefore let vs goe on stoutely still, vntill God haue shewed vs by the deed it selfe, the thing that he had promised in word, as he declareth it here.

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe to make vs feele them better, so as we may bethink vs of them and indeuour to forsake our selues, that he may so reigne ouer vs, as it may appeare that it is very he which gouerneth vs by his holy spirit, and we may suffer our selues to bee so ruled by his hand, as we neuer bee disquieted and put out of patience for all the afflictions and miseries of this world, but that we may be more desirous to yeelde obedience vnto him, than to inioy all the prosperitie, ease and pleasure that the vnbelieuers can haue, which can serue them to no purpose but to their endlesse ouerthrowe and confusion. And so let vs all say, Almightie God, heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the xviii of Iune, 1556.

The CLXXXIX. Sermon which is the twelfth vpon the two & thirtieth Chapter.

44 Then went Moses, and rehearsed all the words of this song in the eares of the people, he and Hosea the sonne of Nun.

45 And when Moses had made an end of speaking all these wordes:

46 He sayd vnto them: set your myndes vpon all these wordes, which I protest against you this day: commaund you your children to keepe them, and to do all the wordes of this lawe.

47 For it is no vayne worde towards you: but it is your life. And by this word you shall prolong your dayes in the land whereinto yee goe ouer Iordan to possesse it.

I Haue told you heretofore how it was no very pleasant thing to the children of Israel, to heare the contentes of this song which I haue expounded. For therein God accuseth them to haue bin vnthankfull to him from the beginning: insomuch that whereas he had vttered all the treasures of his goodnes towardes them; they had abused the same most wickedly, and bin vnfaithfull to him, and that, not for once and away, but by shewing themselues alwayes vnreformable. Now, this might well haue greeued them: but yet was Moses faine to shewe them the will of God. And so we see that they which are set in office to teach the people, must not sooth them vp nor seeke to please them, according to the saying of S. Paul that men shall haue itching eares, desirous to bee fed with winde: but they whom God hath placed in the office of Shepheardes, must not bend themselues that way. Although then we see men spiteful against Gods word, and to conceiue an vtter mislyking of the thinges which we bee commaunded to declare vnto them: yet must we follow our commission, and discharge our selues faithfully of our duties. For although men lyke not to be reproued: yet is it for their benefite neuertheless. As for example, a sicke person will perchance refuse a medicine: but yet must he receiue it, for it is for his health. Likewise although the people of Israell were stubborne: yet notwithstanding they did patiently abide this doctrine which was rough and hard, as we see. And hereby wee be done to vnderstand, that if we cannot abide that God should blame vs for our sinnes, & reproue vs sharply when we haue deserued it; we be worse than those to whom God hath spoken heretofore. Now God calleth them a curled and froward generation: and what shall then become of vs? So then, if wee be not plyable to submit our selues to God willingly, or leastwise when we haue done amisse; Or if he finde such frowardnes in vs that wee haue needs to bee handled roughly: let vs beare it with all mekeneesse and meekenesse. Thus much concerning that poynt where it is reported *that Moses spake or rehearsed all the wordes of the song in the hearing of the people.*

Now here is yet thus much more, that therein wee may see howe God spake by the mouth of Moses. For it had not bin possible for that doctrine to haue bin retained, except the maiestie of God had matched with it. Had a mortall man handled the people as Moses did, vnauthorised from aboue: surely it had bin the next way to haue raysed a great sedition against him. Therefore is behooued God to shew that he had giuen power to Moses, and that he held the people in awe. And that serued to shewe that the Lawe was not coyned here beneath: but that God was the very author thereof, and therefore is to bee receiued with such reuerence as is due to thinges that proceede from him. That is an other thing which wee haue to remember vpon this text.

Hauing rehearsed the song, now he addeth an exhortation, *Set yee your myndes* (saith he) *vpon all the wordes of this Lawe*. Here he sheweth to what purpose and intent Gods will was to haue the sayd song published: namely, that the people might know their owne naughtinesse, wherein they had continued a long time, and be reclaymed from it, and learne to mislyke of their stubbornnes, and thereupon to meeken their hartes that they might liue in obedience to God. And this belongeth vnto vs, as whereof we may gather a generall rule: which is, that whensoeuer our Lorde entereth so into protestation & pleading against vs, discouering our vices and bewraying the corruption that is in vs: it is to the end to drawe vs to repentance, that knowing in what plight we be, we should humble our selues, and therewithall bee more ready to receiue the wordes of God, that whereas we were hard-hearted and full of venim before, so as there was no entring into vs to be found: our hearts might be disposed both to heare & to beleeue his sayinges, and to bee obedient to him in all cases.

The end (say I) whereunto all the rebukes which God giueth vs, in exhorting and quickening of vs vp, ought to serue to make vs the better disposed to heare his worde, because he seeth that naturally wee would rather goe backeward than forward. This thing is declared heere expressly by Moses, who hauing finished his song, sayeth, *Set your hearts vpon all the words of this lawe.* Nowe the maner of speech which he vseth, betokeneth that they should be attentiue or giue good eare. And not without cause: according to his former discourse, where he sayth that he wakeneth men after that fashion. For wee see what negligence is in vs. Although wee pretend some zeale of profiting in Gods schoole: yet notwithstanding the doctrine is no sooner preached, but that not onely the one halfe of it, but also the most part of it slippeth from vs: in so much that euen they that haue profited best, doe scarsely beare away the thirde part: and some others scarce one word. To be short, wee bee so light headed, that our wittes are continually rouing here & there, and we be at no stay to apply our selues wholly to the doctrine which is preached vnto vs in the name of God. But although wee vnderstand the thinges that are spoken, and can say them by heart: yet are not our heartes and affections euer the more giuen vnto them. Therefore wee must not thinke it ynough for vs to bee able to talke of it: but wee must haue an inward harkening vnto God, and euerie of vs must talke of it to himselfe, cheawing as it were his cudde, that is to say, musing vpon it in his minde by himself, as if he shoulde say; It standeth mee in hand to marke this well: but whereas we should indeuour after that manner to print the things in our memorie which haue bin taught vs in the name of God: we let it all slip away. For as much then as wee see such fault in our selues: wee ought to marke this text the better where it is sayde; *Set your hearts thereon.* As if Moses should say that Gods word requireth a singular affection, so as if we will vnderstand it well, wee must not heare it as some other thing of another mans telling: for it is a kinde of wisedome that surmounteth all our wittes. Therefore it standeth men in hand to straine themselues in this behalfe: but on the contrarie part we see the coldnesse that is in vs, in so much that when we haue once tasted a little thereof, wee passe not any more for it. Come wee to the hearing of Gods woorde? Doe wee reade it alone by our selues? Then let this warning alwayes stand before our eyes, that Gods woord is worthie to be receiued with such reuerence, as we should lift vp our minds on high & labour and indeuour to rid our selues of al things that may hinder vs from giuing our selues wholy thereunto. Thus ye see what Moses meant by this speech of *setting their hearts.*

And he speaketh not of some one part alone, but of *All the woordes of the Lawe.* Whereby hee doeth vs to vnderstand, that we must not so part stakes with God, as to perfourme some one saying slightly, and to let the rest alone: but that wee must doe our indeuour in all cases, to bee throughly learned in all the thinges which our Lord knoweth to be auailable to our saluation. For it is certaine that there neuer scaped any superfluous word out of the mouth of God. Wee must not thinke that Gods speaking is after the maner of men, who to attaine to some one good sentence, doe vse many serches about and many interminglings: so that if one good saying be rehearsed, a man must let passe three or foure other for it. But as I sayd afore, Gods speaking is in such wise, that all is profitable euen to the last word. And therefore not without cause doth Moses heere exhort the people of Israel to set their hearts vpon all the woordes of the Lawe. True it is that wee can neuer haue the full vnderstanding of Gods worde, but wee shall haue doone much when wee haue knowen some part of it. And wee heare what Saint Paule sayeth, who comprehendeth himselfe also in the number of those which see and knowe but onely in part, vntill wee may behold Gods glory face to face. But yet must wee receiue all, euen to yeeld our selues obedient to God without exception, so as wee may bee quiet in all thinges which he speaketh vnto vs. Then let vs not doe as many folke doe, which receiue Gods worde aloncly so farre foorth as it is to their owne liking, and as for the rest they let it alone. There are other some which beare their braynes about some one point, because their minde inclineth that way; and as for all the residue, they thinke it belongeth nothing to them. But let vs pray God to graunt vs the grace, that when wee once knowe any one peece of his will, wee may continually growe more and more in vnderstanding, and that wee perceiue (as sayeth Saint Paul) that all scripture is profitable. For he sayeth not that there wee shall finde wherewith to edifie our selues: but he sayeth that it is profitable to all thinges, so as there is there not only some thing that may doe vs good: but also that if we search throughout the things which our Lorde declareth there, wee shall finde from the very beginning, that nothing is set downe there without cause, but that GOD had alwayes a regard to giue vs good instruction in all thinges which he hath spoken. And so ye see to what purpose Moses exhorteth heere the people to set their mindes vpon all these wordes.

1. Cor. 13. 12

2. Tim. 3. 16

But nowe if wee consider howe many thinges there are to drawe vs away from it, and to thrust vs out of the way, yea and to pluck vs backe that we might not profite in Gods woorde: it may well teache vs further, howe greatly wee ought to straine our selues to bee quiet and peaceable, that our Lorde may bee heard, and wee giue heede to the thinges which hee vouchsafeth to teache vs. Howebeit we bee farre off from such perfection. For hardly can a man abyde steadfast one minute of an houre, without the comming of some toy in his head to turne him away. A hundred of them will come vnto vs in one houre: and how many moe then in a whole day? Yea and sometimes the conceite of our foolishe imaginations doth so cary vs away, that we wote not where we be. But beholde, our Lorde God woulde fayne assure vs of his sayinges: there is such

such a couenant passed betweene him & vs, that it is not heard for vs to hearken vnto him, insomuch that if we will giue eare vnto him, we shall finde that his doctrine is not vnprofitable to vs. And ought not this to prouoke vs to fight against all such imaginations as trouble our mindes and make vs to wander away? Yes: and so wee see how greatly this exhortation ought to preuaile with vs, considering that we be so fickle minded and lightheaded, as experience proueth.

Nowe after this, Moses sayeth *that the people must command their children*. Heerein it is shewed vs, that it is not ynough for vs to profite euery man himselfe in Gods schoole: but that when we our selues haue learned, we must also indeuer to bring others into the right way of saluation; specially wee to whom God hath committed the charge of such as want learning and instruction. As for example; fathers and mothers shall yeeld an account for their Children, bicause God giueth them with this condition, that they shall be brought vp in his feare. Lykewise Maysters and Mistresses haue to aunswere for their menseruauntes and womenseruauntes; and if they lay the brydle in their neckes, they must not thinke that our Lorde will let their negligence scape vnpunished. Therefore let vs take warning by this text, that such as haue children must haue a care to teache them, and to make it knowen that God is the father of all their whole offspring, if they themselues wilbe taken to bee the children of God. Lykewise they that haue menseruauntes and maideseruauntes must vnderstand that their house must bee so dedicated to the seruing of God, as he may haue all soueraintie in the same. After that maner ought we to take paines in the behalfe of those which are committed to our charge. For the more we see that the world fayleth in that behalfe, the more carefull ought wee to bee to doe our ductie therein. For it wil bee no excuse for vs to alleage ỹ it was a common vice, but it will rather turne to our sorer condemnation, bycause one corrupteth and marreth another. Nowe then, let vs learne to haue the zeale that is commaunded vs here; namely that where God hath graunted vs the grace to be drawen to ỹ knowledge of his truth, then to consider, that we must also indeuour to make all other men partakers thereof, that after our death Gods word may haue his course still, and not be buried with vs. For wee bee mortall creatures, and as touching this world we doe but passe away, and that very swiftly. But we knowe that Gods truth indureth for euer: and therefore wee must so deale as that Gods woorde may continue and bee knowen, and bee receiued of men from hand to hand, euen after that wee be departed out of this worlde. And those which haue any charge ought to bende themselues cheefely heereunto, according to this saying of Saint Peter concerning the same matter. I will cause you (sayeth he) to haue a remembraunce of my doctrine after that God shall haue taken mee out of this worlde. Although I liue not to speake to you any more with my mouth; yet to discharge my ductie, I must so deale ỹ when my mouth shalbe shut and I shalbe no more conuersant with you heere belowe to teach you, yet the same doctrine which I haue brought vnto you may haue his course still, so as you may keepe it to your benefite and edification. For although fathers and mothers bee bounde to teache their children, and maisters and mistresses to teache those that are vnder them, and likewise the ministers of Gods woorde according as the Lorde hath called them to speake in his name, are bounde to shewe the right way and to giue good example to other men: yet notwithstanding we ought all generally to indeuour that all folkes may hearken to God, and receiue his word, and that not for two or three dayes onely, but for euer. Thus yee see to what purpose Moses hath saide heere, that Fathers must trayne vp their Children in all the woordes of the Lawe.

Nowe hee saieth consequently, *To doe them and keepe them*. Heere Moses repeateth that which hee had spoken afore: namely that our Lordes speaking vnto vs, is not to the end wee shoulde alowe of his sayinges, and confesse the same to bee true, rightfull, and iust: but to trye our obedience. Gods word then must reforme our lyfe: for to that end and purpose is it spoken vnto vs. Neuertheleſſe, wee see howe many a one doe thinke themselues well discharged when they haue but ducked downe with their heades, in token that they gainesaie it not. And they thinke GOD to bee beholden to them if they blaspheme not his doctrine, and shewe not themselues to bee enemies to it; but confesse the same to bee good and holy, for they wilnot haue GOD to vrge them any further. But that were too easie a market. For if GODS woorde were preached but onely to the ende it shoulde bee receiued and confessed with the mouth: to what purpose shoulde it serue when in the meane while euerie man might take the brydle in his necke, and liue as though wee neuer had any rule of GOD? Were it not an vnhallowing and defiling of the holy thinges, and a disfeating of the power of GODS woorde? Let vs beare well in minde therefore, that if wee come hither to Sermons, and yet continue still lyke our selues, so as our lyfe bee not aunswerable to that which hath beene taught vs heere: wee shalbe dubble to blame, bycause it is but a mocking and skorning of the doctrine of saluation, when wee let it slip away, and haue but our eares beaten with it, without any touching of our heartes or any reforming of our liues thereafter. What is to bee doone then? Wee must vnderstande that GODS woorde is not named a Garde without cause, for as much as men are lyke wretched beastes without discretion, vntill God haue shewed them howe they ought to walke. Yee see then that it is our Gard or defence. And therefore if wee keepe Gods word, we also shalbe kept and garded thereby, and we shal haue our bonds certaine, so as we shal neuer erre while we liue: and moreouer we shall haue wisedome to iudge betweene good and euill.

Esa. 40. 8.

2. Pet. 1. 15.

And

And that is the cause why Moses saith, *Let your children keepe the woorde*; and againe, *let them obserue it*. True it is that wee can neither keepe Gods woord nor doe it; vntill hee haue written it in our hearts. But Moses presupposeth that God will shedde out his holy spirite vppon the people, so they shut not the doore against him, but bee readie to receiue the grace which our Lorde had promised them, as wee haue seene heretofore, where he sayth; Behold, the worde is nygh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart. And not without cause doth Saint Paul say that this worde is the same which is preached in the Gospell, bycause Gods speaking there is not to make a noyse in our eares onely, but also to ingraue the doctrine in our hearts by his holy spirit, which is brought vnto vs. So then let vs marke well, that whereas Moses treateth heere of the keeping of Gods worde, God also doeth bynde himselfe to his people, with condition that hee will gouerne them by his holy spirite, and write his worde in their hearts: and moreouer when hee hath so touched them, hee will also be fauourable to them in bearing with their infirmities and in forgiuing their sinnes. And after that manner doe wee perfourme GODS woorde: not that wee can accomplish it and do it throughly: for wee bee so farre vnable to perfourme the lawe, that wee cannot so much as thinke one good thought. Nay rather wee drag backe from that which God commaundeth vs: wee bee enemyes to all righteousnesse and vpright dealing. God therefore must bee fayne to bow vs, and to giue vs such teachablenesse as we may bee readie to heare his worde. And moreouer when hee hath graunted vs the grace to haue such zeale and affection, hee must also beare with vs in that we haue not done our indeuour to do the things which he hath appointed vs; & whereas we be disobedient, and therefore hee might iustly punishe vs, yet notwithstanding hee must bee faine to receiue vs to mercie, and to giue vs our pardon for our Lord Iesus Christes sake. And although the fathers of olde tyme had not so great and so euident teaching as we haue nowadayes by the Gospell: yet did they knowe that our Lorde had promised them both the grace of his holy spirite and also his mercie, to the forgiuing of their sinnes. For the sacrifices which were offered in those dayes, were not ordayned without cause. It was not a trifling matter, that the people came to the temple to offer sacrifices: but it was a sure president that God receyued them to mercie; in so much that when the bloud of any beast was there shed, it was a figure which ought to leade them vp to a higher thing. For there was alwayes a heauenly patterne which Moses had seene vppon the Mount. So then, let vs not thinke as the Papistes doe, that Moses vpholdeth heere the Freewill of men, of purpose, therewithall to set foorth their deseruinges, as though men coulde by their owne power and pollicie obtayne Paradise, and were able to serue GOD and to doe the commaundements of the Law: Moses went not that way to worke;

Deu.5.24
Rom.10.8.
Exod.25.40
Heb.8.5.

but hee knewe what promyse had beene made to the people, and that all thinges tended to the Couenaunt which GOD had made with them, notwithstanding that the time of the full opening thereof was not yet come as it was promysed afterwarde by Ieremie, Esay, and all the rest of the Prophetes, where it is sayd that GOD woulde make a newe Couenaunt with his people, which was that hee woulde write his Lawe in their heartes, and chaunge their stony hearts into heartes of flesh. True it is that this belongeth to the Gospell: nevertheless, it was figured also vnder the Lawe, and the fathers that liued in those dayes, had some taste thereof so farre as was expedient for them.

Esa.61.2.23
Ier.31.33.
Ezec.11.19.
& 36.26.

Nowe seeing that our Lorde hath nowadayes multiplyed his grace towardes vs, and made our state more excellent than the state of them that liued vnder the Lawe: surely wee be lesse to bee excused than they, for it is certayne that it maketh our offences and disobedience the more heynous. Therefore let vs bethinke our selues, and let vs marke well that seeing God doeth offer vs the liuing waters whereof Ezechiel speaketh, that is to say, seeing he sheddeth foorth the giftes of his holy spirit to make vs to walke according to his will: wee must assure our selues that if wee shut the gate against him, we shalbe much more worthy of blame than those which yet neuertheless were condemned vnder the lawe. And therefore let this waken vs, and make vs more willing to heare Gods word, to the end to keepe it, seeing he not onely speaketh to vs by the mouthes of men, but also prepareth vs to draw vs to him by the inward power of his holy spyrite, and on the other side spareth vs, and falleth not to examining of our liues with rigour, but accepteth our doinges as a father doeth his childrens, notwithstanding that there bee much infirmitie and many vices in vs. And to the ende this word may haue the more force, Moses sayeth that he not onely spake or vttered it, but also *shut he witnessed or protested it to the people*, as wee haue seene afore. And not without cause doeth hee repeate it heere againe. For we be so lasie and slouthfull in receiuing Gods worde, as is pitie to see. Therefore it is requisite that there shoulde alwayes bee some protestation, to make vs thinke the better thereon. Hee sayde heeretofore, I call heauen and earth to witnesse against you this day, that if the doctrine which I bring vnto you doe fall to the grounde, and that yee make no accounte thereof: the very Sunne and Moone and all other creatures shall cry out against you for vengeaunce of such contempt and negligence.

Deu.30.19.

So then he addeth now, God hath made mee a teacher, and I for my part will discharge my ductie, and that not with a colde and dead vtteraunce of the thinges which I haue receiued, but by protesting to you on Gods behalfe as though I were a publike notarie & had a proxie from him, assuring you that sith your God hath graunted you the grace to heare his word, if you

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bee negligent in receiuing it, yee must make a dreadfull account for it. Hereby we bee warned to receiue Gods worde with such reuerence, as the Angels of heauen may bee witnesses of our fayth, zeale, and constancie. Let vs goe with open hearties and mindes lifted vp to God, that wee may bee taught by him. And if wee doe so, wee shall bee turned away from all the impediments of the world, in so much that God shall no sooner haue spoken the word, but wee shall bee agreed to yeeld to his teaching, and we shall not bee zealous for a small time onely, but when we haue once begun, wee shall holde out to the ende. For woe to vs if wee turne head in the middes of our way, and start aside when we haue begun well, so as the diuell may finde y meanes to leade vs astray. Alas, what shall it boote vs to haue beene come into a good trade? So then, let vs marke well this worde *Witnesse*, which is set downe here by Moses, to doe vs to vnderstand that our Lorde speaketh not to vs to leaue our vnthankfulnesse vnpunished when wee haue despised the thinges that are tolde vs in his name, but that there shall be alwayes this solemne witnessing or protestation, vnlesse we benefite our selues by his teaching of vs.

Now Moses addeth consequently, *That the worde is not vaine towardes them*. This peece of text is misunderstoode if it bee taken for an exhortation. And yet for all that, it should seeme, that Moses exhorteth the people, when he saith: Let not Gods woord bee vaine towardes you, beware that yee receiue it not as a thing of no price, nay rather consider what a Maiestie it hath, when God appeareth to men by his worde which is his liuely image. But in the Hebrewe tongue, wherein the Prophet spake, it is thus: *The worde shall not bee vaine towardes you*. For so is it, worde for worde in the Text: when he sayeth, *towardes you*, he meaneth, that in respect of the people, *the word shall not bee in vaine*. And this will well bee perceiued by the saying of Esay in his Isa. 55.10. fiue and fiftith Chapter, which text is misexpounded likewise. But the right expounding of the one will bee a key to open the right vnderstanding of the other. It is sayd in Esay, my word shall not returne emptie vnto mee, but it shall yeeld his fruit there as I send it vnto. Some haue thought that our Lord meant there, that whensoeuer his worde is preached, it shall not bee in vaine, but that it shall yeelde profite by giuing fayth to the hearers. But the Prophet Esay ment not so by those wordes. What did he then? Hee confirmed or warranted Gods promises, to the intent that men should not doubt of the performance of the thinges contained in them. As for example, God promiseth vs to prosper vs by his blessing, to take vs into his keeping, and to defend vs against all the troubles and vexations of the world; so that if men persecute vs, he will bee as our buckler: if wee bee threatened and assaulted on all sides, he will bee our fortresse: in time of dearth he will haue a care to feede vs: against all the assaultes of Satan, hee will gard vs by the power of his holy spirit: to be short, Gods promises are infinite. And yet for all that, wee bee so weake hearted, that we conceiue not what he saieth, but rather wee thinke that wee shall be disappointed if wee trust to his promises. There needeth not any thing to tosse vs too and fro, for to our seeming all Gods promises are but deceites. For this cause he sayeth, No, like as the Raine falleth not in vaine, but moysteneth the earth, and the earth being moystened yeeldeth forth hir fruite, so as the raine hath as it were a secret vertue to giue nourishment to men: therefore like as yee see that in the order of nature, the raine ingendreth such a kinde of fruitefulnesse in the earth; so assure you your selues that my word shall not bee in vaine, but I will make it to yeelde profite, that is to say I will performe all my promises. Therefore bee bold to trust vnto mee, that I will performe and bring to passe al that euer I haue spoken by my Prophetes. So in this text Moses sayeth, *The word shall not be vaine towards you*, that is to say, so you receiue it, thinke not that God will leaue you with your mouthes open like silly hungerstaruen folke, so as yee should hang lingering and not knowe what shall become of you: for your God will make you to feele by proofe that hee hath not promised you aught in vaine. Now, when our Lorde speaketh after that manner, shall wee cast doubtes yet stil, and stand scanning whether his sayings shall be performed or no? *His wordes shall not bee vayne towardes you*: that is to say, ye shall finde the effect thereof, and hold ye hardily vnto this, that God will worke with such force, as yee shall perceiue that when his worde is preached vnto you, it is as much as if he himselfe were present, to put the thing in proofe and execution, which hee hath declared. Thus wee see now the meaning of Moses, to the intent that the people shoulde take some tast of Gods word and receiue it with all reuerence. He telleth them that when God speaketh, it is not a sound that vanisheth away in the aire: but that in that word lyeth and consisteth all our happinesse and chiefe welfare, and that wee haue wherewith to content our selues, when our Lord vouchsafeth to direct his wordes so vnto vs. For why? Wee shall not bee foaded with vaine hope; but we shall feele in deede how our Lorde meant to trie our faith in such wise for a time, as that he wil yet neuertheleese performe all that euer he hath spoken.

Now Moses confirmeth this exhortation yet better, by this which he addeth: *It is your life and your welfare, for in it shall your dayes be prolonged in the land which you goe to possesse*. Hereby we may easily gather that Moses made not an exhortation to the people, [to shewe] that the woorde is not vaine: but rather that he made them a promise, that the woorde shoulde haue force and vertue continually as it were without interruption. *It is your life* (sayeth he, and through the power thereof shall you prolong your dayes. Hee sheweth then, that vntill such time as our Lorde had giuen his Lawe to the people, they were as wretched folke, that wist not where to haue any rest, no more than all other men vppon the earth. True is it that Gods creating of vs and his setting of vs in this world, is to the ende wee looke

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at him, put our truste in him, and hope for al good thinges at his hand. But what? We be so earthly, that we can by no meanes come nigh him. And indeede he is too farre off, and though wee thinke vpon him, yet will he giue vs his worde, and vtter his fatherly loue towardes vs. Alas, wee muste needes euer tremble and bee abashed. Lastly, marke well whan that we shal neuer haue any assurednesse, vntil our Lorde haue giuen it vs by his worde. For our life is but a lingering, wee bee turmoyled with continuall troubles and vnquietnesse, and (which more is) wee muste needes finde GOD our deadly enemie, vntil he haue taught vs by his worde. And I pray you, can wee haue any taste of life when we perceiue that God is against vs? Nay, surely men deceiue themselues if they weene to haue Gods fauour, vntill they be grounded and setled vppon his worde. And therefore not without cause doeth Moses say, *that the worde is our life*. For thereby wee bee doome to vnderstande howe wretched our state is, vntill our Lorde haue drawen vs to him, and communicate himselfe to vs by meanes of his worde.

Nowe when we once knowe that Gods worde bringeth vs such benefites, to wit, that we knowe that God wilbe fauourable to vs, that he quickeneth vs, and that it sheweth vs wherein our ioy and felicitie consisteth, wee muste knowe also that it serueth vs for a Seale, & that the Lord will haue vs to take it as a gage, as though the thing were done already. And therefore whan soeuer God speaketh, let vs hold vs to him. For hee is no vniuste as mortall men bee, but is not free of promise, and a performer of nothing: therefore let vs boldly sticke to his worde, and sith it is our life, let vs assure ourselues thereof, it wil not deceiue vs, nor beguile vs if we trust vnto it. For why? It shall not returne void from vs: that is to say, when we haue once admitted it in, it wil take such roote, as Gods power shall euer be at hande to vs, and God shall sooner renounce himselfe than not performe his promises. True it is, that we shal not see it out of hand: but yet must we be fully resolued thereof, and patiently tarry til it time be come for our lord to shew that he meeneth not to iest or to dally, in telling vs that he would be liberall vnto vs. Now hereof it is we learne to loue the worde, and esteeme it deare (worde) in respect of the profite that is bringeth vs. For God thinketh it not ynough to shew vs the maiestie that is in his word, to the intent we should be humbled to obey it: but he vseth it also to allure vs, that we might be in loue with it. And to that ende doeth Moses speake it heere. He had magnified the word sufficiently before, shewing that it proceedeth from God, and that heauen and earth shall beare witnesse against vs if we refuse it: but now he addeth another reason to induce men the better to heare God, yea and to heare him diligently, namely, that God *will proue them* (saith he) *to the end they may teache their children*, at leastwise if they suffer themselues to be taught by him. And why? For we be all poore silly soules without hope of saluation, if we continue in the state of al mankind. All the life which men weene themselues to haue in this world, is but as a way to hell, vntil God haue turned vs to the better, and haue taught vs what is laide in his worde. As touching that which he addeth, saying, *That they shall teache their children*, we may see before, and I will reuise thereof to morow if it please God.

Now let vs fall downe before the Maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him so to make vs to feele them more and more, as wee may learne to curse & grieue vnto him, and make the great number of exhortations auailable which moue vs dayly to do so: and that when he layeth before vs our sinnes and threatneth vs with his wrath, we may be so conuicted, as we may not continue hardened in euil, but returne vnto him, and pray him to bee so gracious vnto vs, as not to suffer Satan to haue dominion ouer vs, but rather to make vs indeuour to reforme ourselues in such sort, as that our hearing of his word may cause vs to amende and bring vs backe to him, and frame our whole life according to his will. That it may please him, to graunt this grace, not onely to vs but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Frydaythe xix. of June, 1556.

The CXCI. Sermon, which is the thirteenth vpon the two and thirtith Chapter.

48 And the same day the Lord spake vnto Moses, saying,

49 Get thee vp into this mountaine Abarim, the mountaine Nebo which is in the land of Moab ouer against Iericho, and beholde the land of Chanaan, which I giue in possession to the children of Israell.

50 And thou shalt dye vpon the mountaine which thou goest vp into, and be gathered vnto thy people like as Aaron thy brother dyed vppon Mount Hor and was gathered with his people.

51 Bicause ye sinned against me among the Children of Israell by the waters of strife in Cades, in the wildernesse of Sin. For yee sanctified me not in the presence of the Children of Israell.

52 Therefore thou shalt see the land before thee, but thou shalt not enter into it, namely the land which I giue vnto the Children of Israell.

Deut.1.37. THis historie hath but touched already heretofore in the first Chapter, where Moses declared that he was depriued of the benefite which he had looked for, that is to say, of inioying the inheritance which God had promised to all the lineage of Abraham. Now the full time was come, and Moses had bin appointed of God to deliuer the people: by reason whereof there was great likelihood that he aboue all others should haue gone into that land. But when he was to haue set his foote into it, then behoued it him to die: and that was a verie hard case for him. Here made mention thereof afore, to shewe to the children of Israel, howe great and excessiue their lewdnesse was, seeing that he was punished for their sakes. For the mischiefe came not of himselfe, hee had not consented, neither to their murmuringes nor to their blasphemies, but rather had strayned himselfe to withstand them. Yet notwithstanding, his constancie was not so great as was requisite. Onely bicause hee was as a man amazed, and glorified not God with such stedfastnesse as hee ought to haue doone, hee was banished from the land. Thus doeth he charge them with to their reproch. And here he repeateth againe, howe that after he had pubblished the lawe, God told him againe that he should beare that punishment of not entering into the lande of Canaan: and therewithall he telleth him immediately of his death. Nowe first of all, if wee reade what is written by Moses himselfe, it will seeme that he ouerslipt not himself in the place which is called Meriba, which aforetime was named Massa. For there perceiuing the people to cry that they died for thirst, hee called vppon God. Moses doeth not take part with them that stormed after that manner, hee was no fellow with them, hee repyned not at God: but rather went to him with all humilitie, saying; Alas Lorde, I am a mortall man, and how may I satisfie this people, vnlesse thou prouide for them? Moses resorted vnto GOD, his meaning was not to prouoke him to wrath, & therewithall it should seeme that he looked that God should worke after his accustomed manner; that is to say, that hee should shewe foorth his power. Now then, if a man looke vppon the outward apparance of the matter, it will seeme that Moses behaued himself faithfully, and that he was not to be blamed. Yet notwithstanding, hee is condemned, both he & his brother Aaron. And why? Hereby wee see that wee must not alwayes weigh our sinnes in our owne ballance: for that will euer deceiue vs, according to this saying of Salomon, Prou.21.2. Man thinketh his owne wayes to bee right, but God weyeth mens hearts. Therefore when men haue acquit themselues, they haue gained nothing thereby. For sometimes the lewdnes lyeth hid within: God seeth it, and it is he y chalengeth to himselfe the office of searching of all thoughts. Then by the example of Moses we be warned not to flatter our selues. For although our sinnes be hidden from men, yea and that we our selues cannot comprehend them: we must not vnder colour thereof deeme our selues to be righteous, but put our selues into Gods hands, praying him to make vs vnderstand our secret vices, and to vouchsafe that as they bee buryed from vs, so they may be pardoned by him: & let vs vse Dauids, Lord who knoweth his faultes? Psal.19.13. Be cleanse thou me from the things which I haue not perceyued. Thus yee see what wee haue to remember vppon this place.

And nowe hereuppon let vs learne to discharge our selues of all pride, for there are many men to bee seene, which couldo finde in their hearres to stand in communion with God, and would neuer agree to his iudgement, vnlesse hee haue shewed them wherfore he doeth condemne this or that. But we must not lift vp bridles after that maner. We knowe there is but one onely iudge, and that wee must all come before his seate with reuerence, as sayeth Saint Paule. Rom.14.10. 2.Cor.5.10. Sith it is so, let vs keepe vs from attempting any thing beyond that which belongeth vnto vs, and let vs not take vppon vs the authoritie of God, to put difference betweene good and euill after our owne fantie; but let vs cleaue after the thing which our Lord alloweth, & hold it for good without gainsaying. And looke what he condemneth, let vs hold it for euill, without asking question why, vnlesse God shew vs y reason, and then must we accept thereof. For if hee once say the worde, wee must holde vs to it and keepe silence. To be shorte, let vs learne to glorifie God in all cases: and when hee hath once spoken a thing, let it suffice vs, and let vs all agree vnto it without any further adoe. For it shal not boote vs to striue, wee shall but double our condemnation continually. What should it haue profited Moses to haue made long processe, and to haue entred into particularities with God for the iustifying of himself, [& to haue said,] Why? What haue I said? Did any one word scape mee out of square? And on the other side, I meant not to consent to the wickednesse of this people. Which thing I haue shewed as much as might be in all my doinges. In so much y euen when they asked water, I knewe not howe to doe better, than to consider myne owne weakenes, and therefore I confessed it with mine owne mouth, and therewithal called vpon thee. Moses had many allegations to make: but if he had entered into them, it had bin the next way to haue prouoked Gods vengeance so much the more against him. Seeing then that hee did willingly yeeld to his condemnation, to the intent to obtaine mercie for his fault: let vs followe his example, and suffer God to vse his due authoritie ouer vs, and let all mouthes bee stopped before him as sayeth the scripture. Thus much for that one poynt.

Now

Nowe by the way we see what charge they take vppon them, which ought to gouerne a people. For it is not ynough for them to bee no partakers of the rebellions, mutinies, wicked compactes, & other offences that are committed against God. Although they protest that they bee not attaynted with them, nor had any minde or intent that way; yet shall they not goe quit nor be counted guiltlesse for all that. For it behoueth them to withstand it with all stoutenesse of minde and force, and to bee vtterly vnsaincible. If they shoulde see, not onely two or three naughtipackes set themselues against God: but also euen a whole people set vppon mischiefe: yet ought they to set themselues against them as open aduersaries, in the maintenance of Gods cause: and if they faile so to doe; their cowardlinesse will not be excusable. Oftentimes the Magistrats which haue Gods sword in their hand, and the Ministers of Gods woorde which are ordeyned to rebuke euill; thinke it ynough to bee but onely grieued when men offende God. But wee see contrariwise, that although Moses and Aaron medled not with the wickednesse of the people, but did euen shunne it, and would with all their hearts that God had beene honoured, & it was not long of them that things went no better foreward: yet notwithstanding, God imputeth it to them for a fault, bicause they were not stout and frecharted in striuing against them, as they ought to haue bin. So then, they which are set in publique office, ought to desire God to giue them such constancie and stoutnesse of mind, as they may not yeelde for any thing that can happen, but keepe on their course continually, without striking their sayle as they say. For surely as for vs, a small thing will shake vs, or rather throw vs downe at the first blow. Therefore must God be faine to worke in vs. Yet notwithstanding we shal not be discharged, except that euery of vs in his calling do put foorth himselfe in the maintenaunce of Gods quarel, to restraine the euill as much as hee can, so as our mouthes be open to rebuke vice, insomuch that if we see a whole people giuen to wickednesse, we cry out vnto them, & tel them of the vengeance that is prepared for them. Thus ye see what we haue to doe on our side.

Also let the magistrates straine themselues as much as is possible for them. For if we, considering what is happened to Moses and Aaron, doe step aside; let vs not thinke our selues to haue more priuiledge than they. But yet we haue to note heerewithall, that Gods punishing of Aaron and Moses was in such sorte, as he ceased not for all that to auow them for faithfull, and to allow their calling, and to yeelde them an excellent record euen after their deceasse, accordingly as we heare how it is sayde in the psalme, that Aaron and Moses were his true seruauntes. Ye see heere how the holy ghost magnifieth Moses and Aaron; and yet for all that they fayled not to be punished too. Yea, but God vseth but temporall punishment towardes them, and thereupon hee ceaseth not to be their father still. When God then punisheth our faults, although the corrections bee irkesome to beare; yet let vs bee contented therewith, so long as hee is mercifull to vs still, and that hee auowe vs to bee of the number of his children. So long as that remayneth to vs, let vs go on still, and let it not grieue vs though GOD scourge vs with his roddes, for wee haue neede of them. Wee see how the greatest, euen those which haue most excelled in all vertue and holynesse, haue shewed vs the way in this behalfe. Shoulde GOD spare vs more than hee spared Moses and Aaron? Yee see then howe the faythfull ought to prepare themselues to receiue chastisement for the offences which they haue committed, and that they must not thinke that bicause they bee GODS children, therefore they shoulde bee exempted from all afflictions, and GOD shoulde doe away all their faultes without making any countenaunce of misliking them. But rather they must bee fully resolued, that God will visite them and put them in mynde of their sinnes, and thereuppon submit themselues to him, and offer him their backes. Like as a child looketh for correction when he seeth his father angrie: so must wee haue the meekenesse in vs to submit our selues to God, and shame must not touch vs, neither we be ouermuch grieued when our Lord is minded to discouer our faultes, and to bring vs lowe before men. True it is that wee ought to be touched therewith, but yet with such sorow as S. Paul speaketh of, which wee must not shun, bycause it tendeth to our welfare. For if our sorowing be after a worldly manner bycause wee bee not honoured nor had in such reputation as we would be: it is a cursed and sinfull sorowing. But if wee bee sorie that we haue offended God, and all our griefe is for the euill which we haue done: that sorow is a sacrifice which God alloweth and well lyketh of. Howsoeuer the world goe, if GOD list to lay any note of infamie vppon vs; let vs not thinke it ouer straunge, sith wee see that Moses who had bin exalted as a figure of our Lorde Iesus Christ, who had deliuered the people of Israel out of bondage, and vppon whom GOD had shedde out his power, was faine for all that to bee set as vppon a scaffolde, and to bee put to reprothe, and to haue it made knowen that God did solemnely bereaue him of the land that was promised to the linage of Abraham, when a great sort of Rascals and a great many of people of none account entered into it, and in the meane whyle Moses was fayne to bee shutte out. Sith wee see this, shoulde wee thinke our punishment ouer harde and grieuous, when God will haue our sinnes laide open, specially when it may serue for example & instruction? Nay, we ought not to haue so great regard of our owne honour, but that we ought to esteeme the saluation of our neighbors much more. Moses for his part knew y this shold serue for a good president to the worldes ende, bicause that whensoeuer we compare our selues with him, we must needs hang downe our heads (as I saide afore) and put our selues into the handes of GOD. At the sight heereof Moses was contented. For he sought the welfare of the whole

whole Church; and so that God were glorified, he made no further reckening; but vtterly forgetting himselfe, he was not so chare of his owne renowne and good reputation in this behalf, but that hee did patiently beare the chastisement which it pleased God to denounce against him. That is the thing which wee haue in effect to remember in this place, where it is shewed vs againe, that Moses was thus out from the possessiō of the land which had beene promised for an inheritance, as well to him, as to all the rest of Abrahams ofspring.

And herewithall we ought also to marke well, that whereas God sendeth him vp into Mount Nebo, and telleth him that hee shall dye there; he (as we shall see in the end) resisteth it not, but prepareth himselfe to it. True it is that he pronounceth the blessings which shalbe seene hereafter in order, and which we wil go in hand withall to morowe if it please God. Also hee maketh as it were his last Will to all the people. And yet for all this he is not dismayed; but putteth himselfe into Gods hand, and prepareth himselfe willingly to dye. Nowe herein wee see, how the faithfull ought to be alwayes willing to goe whithersoeuer God calleth them, and how they ought to ouerleape al the difficulties of this world; insomuch that although they meete with neuer so many thornes, and neuer so many encounters: yet ought they to thrust forewarde still, & not to be driuen aside, nor to be put out of hart for all that. Also when God taketh them out of the world, it behoueth them to haue alwaies one foote onward on the way; as if they should say, Lo heere I am Lord, I am ready to come vnto thee. But this cannot be done, except a man haue profited well in Gods schoole, and specially that we know there is a better life prepared for vs. For wout that, we can neuer feele truly that we be but straungers in this world. For they which beleeue there is none other life than this which we inioy heere, and think to make their rest in this world; are so wedded to it, ỹ a man cannot pluche them from it but by force and spite of their teeth. But when we once know that our inheritaunce is in heauen: we conclude ỹ this world is but a pilgrimage, and that wee must passe apace through it. And he that passeth it so, shall finde it no hard matter to go through with his iourney, when he seeth that his saluation is on the other side, and that God calleth him thereunto. The thing then whereunto it behoueth vs to put our whole indeuour, is the minding of the heauenly life, and to consider that God allureth vs dayly to come to the immortall glory which he hath prepared for vs, to the intent that when we be to depart out of this world, we may not goe vnto him against our wils, nor make complaintes, nor say after the maner of vnbeleeuers, What shal I doe, or what shall become of me? For (as S. Paule beweth vs,) he that hath our gage in his handes, is faithfull. Our saluation is named a gage, so as God byndeth himselfe lyke a man that receyueth money or some other thing that hee is put in trust with to keepe. Nowe if a man haue taken a thing to keepe, it behoueth him to shewe his honestie and trueth. And thinke we that God will deceyue vs, hauing promysed vs to be the keeper of saluation? Seeyng then that hee hath vouchsafed to take it into his handes, and to vndertake the safe custodie thereof; let vs bee bold to trust vnto him, and let vs goe yeelde our selues into his handes whensoeuer hee shall call vs. Thus yee see howe wee bee to put this text in vre.

2. Tim. 1. 12

Yet must wee note further, that there is lesse excuse for vs nowedayes, than there was for Moses, or for all the fathers that lyued vnder the Lawe. For had they the promyses that are made vnto vs at this day in the Gospell? They dyd but see them a farre off, and vnder verie darke shadowes. Or did they see Iesus Christ raysed from the dead? In deede they knewe it, howbeit but by hope, as whereby they comprehended in a figure the thinges that were absent. But nowadayes, forsmuch as wee haue the Gospell, which openeth to vs the gates of heauen: GOD allureth vs to him as familiarly as can bee, wee bee alreadie entered into it in the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ: in so much that his going vp on high, is to drawe vs thither to him. For in as much as he is our head, he will drawe vs vp to him into the glory whereinto hee himselfe is entred alreadie, so wee bee not separated from him. Let vs beware then that wee disappoynt not that grace of GOD. But let vs bee so stablished in the fayth, that whensoeuer GOD shal call vs out of the world, wee may not sticke to goe willingly vnto him, and to doe that which wee see heere in Moses. When GOD tolde him that hee shoulde dye, hee strayned not courtesie to goe vp into the Mountaine, although that place were appoynted vnto him, as it were to offer vp himselfe in sacrifice to GOD. Moreouer, his sinne was layde afore him againe: and yet did not that discomfort him neither. And that is a poynt more which wee ought to marke well, for it importeth a verie good lesson. See heere, Moses is at deathes doore: it may seeme that at that tyme hee ought to haue had some comfort wherewith to asswage his sorowe. And yet for all that, God renueth the remembraunce of the fauls which hee had committed: and hee telleth him againe, that hee must take in good woorth the punishment which hee had hearde spoken of afore. Wee see then that Gods threateninges whereby hee layeth our sinnes before vs, ought not to trouble vs so much, but that wee ought to take occasion and matter to reioyce in them; bycause wee knowe (as I haue sayde alreadie,) that GOD doeth so temper his rigour, as that euen in his punishing of vs, hee ceasseth not to doe the office of a father still, so as the principall (that is to say the saluation of our soules) is reserued vnto vs, yea and the temporall chastisementes are beneficiall to vs, as by the meanes whereof GOD cleanseth vs, and maketh vs to taste the better how greatly it is for our behoofe to haue his fauour. That then is a thing which wee haue to marke in the person of Moses.

So

So then, if any man be blamed for his faultes, though it were when he is sicke, yea or at the last gasp when Gods iudgementes are set afore him to make him sory and to lamente: yet must he not thinke it straunge. For as we see, there are many which haue neede to bee so touched, and to be as it were touched with a launcer, that they may bee brought to God with such reuerence as is requisite. And although such corrections bee bitter at the first sight; yet must not men fall into despaire, but alwayes haue recourse to Gods goodnes, assuring themselues that his blaming of them after that manner, is not an vtter condemning of them, but is done to the end that they should be their owne iudges, and that hee therewithall is minded to receiue them to mercy. Therefore let vs suffer our Lord to deale after that manner with vs, and whensoeuer we haue any heartbiting, so as God toucheth vs inwardly with the remembraunce of our sinnes, or we see them in reading his word, or we heare them spoken of in sermons, or wee be warned of them priuately: let vs learne that the setting of them before vs is not to make vs conceiue any hartburning, or to cast vs in despayre, so as wee shoulde bee kept backe from God: but that wee shoulde therewithall imbrace his promises, and not feare to bee disappointed of the thinges which hee hath behighted vs: for his proceeding after that manner, is to the ende wee should set the more store by his grace, and accept it the better, and bee prouoked to seeke it, and also receiue it with the earnester desire. To that ende are his threatninges and iudgements set afore vs. And after that manner ought wee to practise the text that was treated of yesterday, and also that which remaineth yet stil therof. For it was sayd that the Lawe was the lyfe of all the people, and that it should maintaine thē in the land which God had promised them, and whereinto he led them to put them in possession thereof. And yet neuertheles wee see that in the lawe are many hard and sharpe threates: there bee the curses, which ought to make the haires to stand vp stiffe vpon mens heades: and there bee so many presidents wherein God bewrayeth and vttereth the iniquities of the people: that at the first it may seeme that they should bee vtterly confounded, and that the law serued but to smite them with maine blowes like a beetle, and to daunt them and scarre them in such wise, as they might not approch vnto God: but yet haue wee neede to bee so mortified. For let vs consider well the pride of our nature, and the false ouerweening and vaine selfetrust wherwith wee be puffed vp, and how stubborne wee be against God: and wee shall finde that if hee will doe vs good, he must bee faine to beate vs downe after that manner, and his worde must be as a twoo edged sword, so as there be neither thought nor affection in vs which is not searched by it, and it must enter into ỹ very marow of the bones, as the Apostle treateth thereof in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. Therefore let vs not thinke it straunge that God dooth here tell Moses againe of his fault, notwithstanding that it was forgiuen him. For although hee ought to be glad of it, because God did it in such wise as he was nothing hindred thereby to call vpon him quietly, and to cast himselfe as it were into his fatherly lap: yet was it good for him to thinke vpon the fault which he had committed. And why? To humble him, to the intent hee should yeelde the more honor to the infinite goodnes of God, and say, Alas, I might iustly haue bin sunken to the bottom of hell for ons only deede that befel me in lesse than the turning of a hande though I was grieued at the manifold grudgings of the people, yet intended I not to haue offended my God, but it happened vnto me through ouersight for want of thinking thereon. And now if this onely one fault was enough to cast me into endlesse cursednes; Alas what is due to my whole lyfe? I shoulde haue committed a thowsand thowsand offences, yea and I should neuer haue ceased to augment Gods vengeance vppon me still, if I had not bin restreined and holde backe. And yet must I nowe beare the punishmēt of my fault, which in the sight of the worlde seemeth very light; but God knoweth what maner a one it is, seeing that for it I must bee forestalled of the land of Canaan, and haue deserued to be banished, not onely from thence, but also frō the heauenly lyfe. Thus ye see how it was good for Moses to bee taught humilitie after that fashiō: And what is thē to be thought of vs?

Nowe moreouer our Lorde sayth vnto him, *that he should behold the land*: and that was to shew him (as I haue sayd already) that he is not so forsended of going thither, but ỹ God taketh him stil as one of the number & cōpany of his children. And his taking of possessiō of the land by eyesight, was also an admoniion vnto him, that ỹ land was not the cheefe heritage whereunto the children of Abraham were to attaine. Here therefore wee haue a sure record, that although the fathers which liued vnder the Lawe had not the heauenly lyfe so lightsomly & largely reuealed vnto them: yet did they grounde themselues thereupon, laboring to attaine thereunto, and were not wedded to this world as if that had bin the marke they aimed at and that they had bin wyed to it: to say, Well, God hath chosen and adopted vs to possesse a good and fatte land, to the intent wee should bee fostered therein. For if the people had but thought vpon that, what had become of Moses who was the excellentest prophet that euer God raysed vp vntill the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ, as wee shall see in the last Chapter? That is the cause why Moses beheld ỹ land and vewed it a far off. And although hee neuer ate one graine of the corne thereof, nor tasted one drop of the wine: yet did it suffice him to see that God had not disappointed his people. It is to bee concluded then, that Moses had a further forelook, and stood not musing vppon the transitorie inheritance; but considered full well that when wee be made the children of God, it is to the ende wee shoulde liue euerlastingly with him. Seeing then that Moses had that; let vs vnder-

Deut. 34. 1.

ſtand that the fathers were not without cauſe called the children of God; which thing they were not, vnleſſe they were heires with vs. And forſomuch as they tended to the heauenly lyfe, (which notwithſtanding was ſhewed to them but afar off) let vs take the more courage to vs, ſeeing that God is come neerer vnto vs after a more familiar maner, euen in the perſon of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Therefore let all theſe things moue vs, that our faith may waken vs and withdrawe vs frō all the impedimentes of this world, ſo as we may keepe on our way to the euerlaſting reſt which cannot faile vs.

Now whereas it is ſayd vnto Moſes, *that he ſhall be gathered vp with his people*: hereby our Lord meant, that hee was of neceſſitie to paſſe the common way (as they ſay,) of all mankinde, and that his eaſe ſhould be no better than of all the reſt of Adams children. Truely this woulde trouble vs, if there were no more than ſo. But I haue ſpoken already of ỹ ſpecial promiſe whereuppon Moſes was grounded. Neuertheleſſe, our Lord ſhewed him that foraſmuch as he was deſcended of Adams race, it behooued him needes to dye. And this accordeth ſtill with the matter which I ſpeake of euen now, namely that we ſhal neuer take ſufficient taſte of Gods goodnes and promiſes, vntil we be brought low in ourſelues, ỹ we may know our own needines, and what ỹ lyfe is which is promiſed vs, and which we obtein by Ieſus Chriſt. We think not vpon any of all theſe things, except we firſt know the death ỹ is purchaſed vnto vs by Adam, & that the ſame dwelleth in vs, and holdeth vs priſoners in his bands. If we knowe not that wee bee curſed of God by nature, and that we haue no other hope but rottennes as touching our bodies; and that as touching our ſoules we be reiected of God, & feele that he is againſt vs, and that he is our iudge, ỹ he will vtter forth all his maieſtie to our confuſion: vntil ſuch time as we feele all theſe things, & is certeine that we will neuer ſeeke the remedie that is offered vs in our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, nor receiue him with ſuch reuerence as to becomme lyke poore hungry ſoules. So then we ſee how we haue neede of this warning, *that we muſt be gathered vp*. With whom? With thoſe which haue gone before vs. *And without that*, what comfort ſhall wee haue? Leſſe than the brute beaſtes haue. For if we thinke vpon nothing but death, we goe all into rottennes; our bodies be in no better plight than the bodies of Aſſes and Dogges. And againe as touching our ſoules, we muſt needes bee ſeparated and cut off from God, and feele him to be againſt vs. That then is our ſtate.

And therfore whenſoeuer we heare any ſpeaking of death, let vs by and by bethinke vs of Adams ſin, of the corruption of our nature, and of all the vices that dwell in vs, which ſerue all to cut vs off as rotten members from Gods houſe and kingdome. When wee haue bethought vs thereof, and that we be ſo diſmayed as we knowe not where to become, for the terror that ſhall haue caught holde of vs: let vs repaire to Ieſus Chriſt, and ſith we knowe that hee is the reſurreſtion and the lyfe; let vs take courage to offer our ſelues vnto death, and let it not greeue vs to be done away, ſeeing wee haue promiſe that we ſhall be reſtored againe. And ſo, when wee haue bethought vs of all the nations of ỹ world, and of all Adams ofspring: let vs come to the people whom God hath ſanctifyed and choſen to be his heritage. Seeing then that we ſhall be gathered vppe with the righteous, ſurely it is a good gathering, and therein lyeth all our reſt & cōtentation, ſo as death ſhal be ſweete vnto vs. And although wee muſt of neceſſitie paſſe that way, with all other creatures: yet dooth God take vs and keepe vs as his choſen children, and to be ioyned to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who is named the firſt borne from among the dead. And to the intent we ſhould bee the firſt fruites of the reſurrection, and of the quicke, hee hath gathered vs to himſelfe, and matched vs with ỹ holy Patriarkes, Prophets, and Apoſtles. That (ſay I) is the thing which ſweeteneth all the ſorrowes that we can conceiue.

Now in the end it is ſayd yet again vnto Moſes, *That he ſanctifyed not Gods name among the children of Iſrael, and therefore hee ſhould not enter the Land which God had giuen to his people*. Here we haue to marke, that it is not enough for vs to abſteine from doing euill: but that we muſt alſo ſanctifie Gods name, when we ſee men miſuſe it through their leawdneſſe. And in very deede, the chiefe thing that God requireth, is that his name ſhould be ſanctifyed: for it is the firſt petition which we make. And by that order, our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſheweth vs full well, that wee muſt begin at that point; as for example when he ſaith, Firſt ſeeke yee the kingdome of God, what dooth that ſignify? That we ſhould ſeeke to exalt God, that all the world ſhoulde obey him, and that his maieſtie ſhould be knowen, to the end that all prayſe of wiſedome, righteouſneſſe, goodnes, and power might bee attributed vnto him. That is the thing whereunto euery of vs ought to put his indeuour. True is is ỹ we ought in deede to ſanctifie the name of God, that is to ſay, to dedicate our ſelues euery man for himſelf to his ſeruice, ſo as his glory may ſhine forth in vs: but yet is not that enough. For wee ſhall ſee men vnhallowe the name of God, ſome by blaſpheming him, and ſome by ruſhing out into all vices and enormities. Now therefore whē we ſee ſuch thinges, our zeale ought to be kindled to withſtand them to the vttermoſt of our power, & to ſhewe that we deſire nothing more, than that God ſhould bee honored, and abide vnappayred, ſo as men ſhould not abridge him of any thing. When wee haue this zeale, then ſhall we ſanctify Gods name, not onely in our owne ſoules and bodies, but alſo euen among thoſe which doe ſo vnhallowe and defile it. And for that cauſe are we commaunded to be as burning Creſſets in the mideſt of a froward & crooked generation. When wee dwell among the vnbeleeuers and enemies of Gods word, or among ſuch as deſpiſe it and make no account of it: then in ſtead of our accuſtomed ſeeking of vaine excuſes, with, I would faine ſerue God, but

Matt. 6. 9.

Matt. 6. 33.

Phil. 2. 15.

Iohn. 11. 25

but there are so many corruptions, that I must needes howle among woolues as they say: then (say I) is the time for vs to streyne ourselues so much the more, and to enforce our selues to sanctifie ỹ name of God. And where? Euen in ỹ midst of those among whom we be conuersant, That is ỹ thing which is shewed vs in this place.

True it is that Moses was most bound thereto; because God had chosen him aboue the rest. Yet neuertheless it behoued euery other man also to streine himselfe thereunto: And let vs vnderstand, that seeing hee taketh vs for his children, wee ought at the least to maintaine his honor as much as wee would doe the honor of our earthly fathers. And for that cause it is sayd, *that he and Aaron had mis-gouerned.* Whereby we see, that men may well acquit themselues, and besprinkle themselues with holywater as they say, but yet must they passe by the sentence which God hath pronounced; for only he is the competent iudge. Although then ỹ Moses was not ware that he had offended, and although also ỹ wee cannot discouer his offence: yet doeth our Lord say ỹ he had offended; so as it was not ynough for him not to haue done any euill deede, nor to haue abstained from murmuring, nor also to haue withheld his consent from the murmurings of the people: but he was a transgressor in that he was too cowardly & had not ỹ foresayd inuincible courage that I spake of, to set himselfe against the mischiefe, and to stoppe it as he ought to haue done.

Nowe for a conclusion we haue yet to marke this saying which is added: *Thou shalt not goe in thither, but thou shalt see it, euen the land which I giue to the children of Israell to possesse.* For here Moses had occasion to bee further out of patience, whē our Lord exempted him alone, saying, All ỹ rest of this people shall inioy ỹ land, but thou shalt be set beside it. If we be driuen to indure any cōmon aduersitie, we make ỹ lighter of it. But if a man be cut off alone, & see that God leueleth at none but him; ỹ is much harder and heauier. And at the same point was Moses. But it was Gods will to trye his obedience and subiection. Also hee meant to set vs a faire lookingglasse before our eyes, to the intent we should not be prouoked to rebel, though hee deale more roughly with vs than with our fellowes and neighbors. For we be wont alwayes to alledge, How now? Haue I offended more than others? I see God dealeth full roughly with me: and yet there are others which are no better than I; and what fault findeth he in me? Such complaintes shall a man oftentimes heare. But it is not for vs to looke how God handleth others. Let vs content our selues that he knoweth what is meete for vs; and let euery of vs beare his owne burden patiently, and not fall to vsing of such replyes: for we shall win nothing thereby. Thus ye see what is set downe here in the person of Moses, in that he was faine to bee banished out of ỹ land, when all the children of Israell and all the rest of the people went in; among whom neuertheless there were many despisers of God, and many hypocrites, to bee short, they were as a clowte patched together of many peeces. Yet notwithstanding, as in respect of possessing the land, they were to be preferred before Moses. And therefore let vs vnderstand, that when God hath once made vs to enter into the way of saluation, it is not enough for vs except wee straine vnto it, and that for the bringing thereof to passe, we hold out to the end.

I haue told you heretofore, that the land of Canaan was as a common Pawne which GOD gaue to all the children of Israell, of his calling of them to the inheritance of the heauenly kingdome, namely to as many as entered into the land, that is to say, to those which were newe sprong vp in ỹ wildernesse. For as for those which came out of Egypt, none of them all but onely two, did enter into ỹ land of Canaan. But those which were then little children, as it were about a foure or fiue yeeres old, all those entered in. Neuertheless there were many of them which serued not God faithfully, but played the naughtipackes and backslyders. Whereby we be done to vnderstand, that seeing God hath once reached vs his hand, it behoueth vs to liue in such sorte, as we quaile not ne turne not our backes vppon him, but continue still in his obedience, so as faith may euermore reigne in vs, to withdrawe vs from the lustes and cares of this world. And although we haue not the land of Canaan at this day for a visible signe; let vs resort to our Lord Iesus Christ, who is much more woorth without all comparison, than the outward inheritance which was giuen to the people of olde time. And seeing we be entered into the trace of Iesus Christ, that is to say, be put as it were into his body, and he accounteth vs as of his flocke, and is become our shepheard; let vs looke that we behaue our selues towardes him as sheepe, hearkening to his voyce, and following him whithersoeuer he calleth vs. And in ỹ meane while let vs pray this good God, to holde vs so vnited to him in the person of his onely Sonne, as wee may continually hold out to the end in all holynesse and all goodnes, and that at the last wee may be gathered vp by him, not as children of Adam in the generall curse, but [as children of Abraham] in the promise of saluation which was made to vs in our Lord Iesus Christ.

Num. 14. 29. 30.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God, praying him to make vs feele our faultes and offences more and more, and that for the more misliking of them, wee may exercise our selues continually in calling them to our remembrance, and in mourning for them, so as hee may haue pitie vpon vs, and not onely forgiue vs all our sinnes, whereby wee haue offended him, but also rid vs cleane of them, and redresse vs in such wise by his holy spirite, as our whole seeking may be to dedicate our selues vnto him, and that his name may be so sanctified among vs, as that in the end wee may come to his glorie as he hath prepared it for all such as doe here yeeld and submit themselues to his yoke. That it may please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the xx. of Iune, 1556.

The CXCI. Sermon which is the first vpon the three & thirtith Chapter.

HEere followeth the blessing wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death, and sayde:

2 The Lorde came from Sinai, and rose vp from Seir vnto them. He appeared brightly on mount Pharan, and came with ten thousands of Saincts, hauing at his right hand the Lawe giuen in fire for them.

3 Yet loueth he the people, and all the Saincles are in thy hands, and they bow downe to thy feete to receiue of thy wordes.

WEe knowe that Gods word is ordaind chiefly to this vse, that we shoulde be assured of ỹ good wil & loue which he beareth vs. For wout that also there is no hope of saluation, wee be vndone, and to be shorte, there is no religion. For how shall we feare God, vnlesse wee knowe that all our welfare lies in him, and that we dare seeke him with a right faith? But that is vnpossible, vnlesse he call vs vnto him, and that wee haue assurance that if wee come vnto him we shall be receiued. That is the cause why God in all ages ordeined, that those which are the teachers of the people, should blesse them in his name, that is to say, assure them that God receiued them and was mercifull to them. For so dooth ỹ worde *Blessing* import. True it is that wee blesse one another by prayer. And when it is sayd of a priuate person, that he blesseth his neighbor; it betokeneth that he wisheth him all good. But there is a speciall kinde of prerogatiue in those whom God hath appointed as in his owne person to beare abroad his worde and to preach it. For they in blessing are as witnesses of God and agentes in his behalfe. And in very deede (as we haue seene heretofore) as oft as Gods word is preached, it is a solemne act whereby he couenanteth with vs: and lyke as he will haue vs to professe our selues to be his children, and to giue our selues to his seruice, so dooth hee bind himselfe to be our father and sauiour. That is the cause why we haue now here ỹ blessinges of Moses, which he made before his death. And it is lykely that this was thē done when he was ready to yeelde vp his spirit vnto God. For he had bin commaunded afore to go vp into the mountaine, where he had nothing else to doe but to go seeke his graue, which notwithstanding remained vnknowen, as we shall see hereafter. At such time as he was to take his leaue of the people, he pronounced these blessinges here present. By what authoritie? As one appointed to yeelde record of Gods good wil. Also he ratified that which had bin done before by Iacob, to whome God had giuen the lyke charge & commission. For wee reade of the blessinges which Iacob made ouer his children, how they were not as a houshold prayer when a father making his last will beseecheth God to bee mercifull to his fatherles children; Iacob went not that way to worke; but being a Patriarke, and knowing whereto God had called him, hee vttered what was to come, accordingly also as we see how hee speaketh by the spirit of Prophesie. And in good sooth, yee see he was a poore man, such a one as was constreyned by famine to goe into Egypt, he possessed not a foot of land in ỹ whole world, and yet hee assigned inheritaunces to his children. Thou shalt haue such a portion by the sea-coast; Thou shalt haue the pasture grounds; Thou shalt be a delicate soyle for kinges, so as ỹ bread which shall be made there, and ỹ sweete fruits of thee shal bee their strength; thou shalt haue ỹ royall scepter; thou shalt be aduanced, & thou shalt reigne among thine enemies; As for thee, thou shalt be scattered, but yet shalt thou haue ease of body, although thou be faine to remoue here and there. Seeing then that he tooke order after that maner for the land of Canaan, that although he was driuen thence by famine, yet he alotted it out by portions to his children: spake he as a mortall man? Let vs knowe then that God gouerned him by his holy spirit, and there came not that worde out of his mouth, which was not as a heauenly oracle. Now hereby the people were edifyed, so as they knew that God had chosen them with condition that they should enter into the inheritance which he had promised them. When the children of Israell were in Egypt after the decease of their father, they were by this meanes certifyed ỹ God had not forgotten his promise, but that hee woulde performe it when the time came. They were fed with ỹ hope, and to hold them thereunto, God had giuen thē occasion enough, if their own vnthākfulnes had not letted thē. This being done, after that they had bin deliuered out of the land

Deut. 34. 6.

Gen. 49.

Gen. 49. 28. 13. 20.

of

of Egypt, and were to inioy the Land which had bin assigned them long afore: God made Moses to speake, and draue him to vtter that which he had determined to doe as touching the childrē of Israell. And in verie deede, wee see that the things which had bin spoken afore by Iacob, are partly rehearsed here againe for the larger confirmation of them. And againe, the things which were not reuealed at that time, are set downe here; so as the people of Israell might here beholde their owne state to come, whereby they were taught that God had a speciall care of thē. For seeing hee declared, first by the mouth of Iacob, and secondly by the mouth of Moses, all that hee meant to doe to the people of Israell: did hee not shewe that hee was neere them, and that hee tooke them to bee as of his flocke, and that hee preferred them before the rest of the whole worlde? For it was not with them as with those which are straungers to God. Although hee held and accounted those for his creatures; yet did hee not take them for his Children, to gouerne them and to direct all their steppes; so as nothing shoulde befal them but they might know howe it was God that wrought it, who did also tell them of it aforehande. Therefore let vs wel remēber what is conteyned here, as things that proceeded not from a mortall creature, but from God, who witnessed that he was the father and defendour of his church.

Nowe this concerneth vs. For although wee haue not the like propheties; yet hath God declared vnto vs, that we be euer vnder his charge, and that he watcheth for our welfare. And wee for our part haue no neede to bee trayned on in knowledge by such meanes, because God hath brought vs alreadie to an other manner of perfection. Therefore let vs holde vs contented with the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ, in whose person the thing is performed which was hoped for vnder the lawe. And therewithall let vs bee fullie resolued that GOD guideth our steppes, and that euen in the middest of all the disorders and troubles which are seene in the worlde, his Church is still deare and precious vnto him. And in good sooth wee see that before Iesus Christ came into the worlde, Daniell discouered all the chaunges which shoulde bee made, because it might else haue seemed, that God had gone from his couenaunt a hundred times within the space of foure hundred yeares, and that all shoulde haue goone in such wise to wrecke, as if God had forsaken that people, and been minded to haue no more to do with them. It was requisite therfore that these things should bee foretolde, that the faithfull might knowe that although they were shaken and tossed to and fro; yet were they still in the hande of God; and that when they sawe the kingdomes chaunged rounde about them, and the worlde so turned vpside downe as a man coulde not discerne anie thing in it; yet they shoulde alwayes be assured of that which God had promised them, namely of his sending of his sonne to redeeme them, and ỹ they should by that meanes bee restored, euen after ỹ vtter desolation of al things among them. Thus see wee now the vse of this Song.

Now whereas it is saide *That it was Moses the man of God that blessed the children of Israell*: that title was giuen to Moses as in respect that hee was the instrument of the holie Ghost. Then speake hee not of his owne motion, there is not anie thing spoken here after the flesh, but as proceeding from a man of God. And hereby wee be the better taught, to imbrace the record that is giuen vs here, as if God protested with his owne mouth that hee had a care of his people, and that he would euermore continue his goodnesse and gratious fauour towardes them. For in deed there was a blessing made by the Priests in the time of the lawe, according to this saying, Blesse yee, you that bee of the house of the Lorde. And it is the same thing which is written in the fifth Chapter of the booke of Numbers [where it is saide] that they which doe sacrifice to GOD, shall blesse the people in his name. And truely, where the Priestes and the tribe of Leuie are spoken of, this also is added, *To whom the Lorde hath giuen the charge of Blessing the people*. And this thing is not abolished at this day. For our Lorde Iesus Christ had in his person the thinges that were figured in olde time vnder the Lawe. Let vs knowe then that nowe dayes there is one euerlasting blessing of God, which is much better witnessed vnto vs, than all the blessinges that were so often repeated vnder the law; insomuch that as nowe God telleth vs by his onely sonne that hee taketh vs into his fauour, and that wee bee as his children, and that the preaching of the Gospell serueth vs to that ende, and wee must applie it to that vse. So then, whensoeuer wee come to heare the worde of God, let vs call to minde howe our Lorde Iesus Christ at his going vp into heauen, did lift vp his handes ouer his disciples and blesse them as is reported by Saint Luke. And that was done to make vs knowe what his office is, and to doe vs to vnderstande that at this day when the Gospell is preached in his name, it is all one as if hee shoulde say, Beholde, my father accepteth you, you be in his fauour. Nowe then, seeing we haue this, ought it not to make vs to loue the Gospel, considering that therein wee bee blessed by the mouth of our Lorde Iesus Christ, as in whose name and by whose authoritie that doctrine is treated of? Let vs vnderstande therefore, that if it behoued the fathers vnder the Lawe to bee contented with the blessing that was giuen them by Moses, by the Priestes, and by Iacob: if wee nowadayes bee faithlesse, and admit not the recorde with full certeintie which is giuen vs in the Gospell; wee bee worse than vnexcusable, because wee deface the trueth of Gods sonne, and (as much as in vs lyeth) accuse him of lying, as though hee were not a sure and infallible witnesse of the will of GOD his father. And when wee compare Moses who is called a man of God, with our Lord Iesus Christ who hath ỹ whole soueraignte of Gods house, as the Apostle saith: wee may bee yet the better assu-

Pſal.115.16 Numb.6.23

Leuit.9.22

Luk.24.50.

Hebr.3.2.

assured that he hath blessed vs at this day, and that hee vttereth vnto vs the loue of God his father, and therfore let our faith be so much the better certified, seeing it behoued this rule of Moses to content the people of olde time.

Nowe it is added, *That he did it a little before his death.* The worde which he vseth, is as much to say, as hee did it *before his death.* So then, by these wordes, *Before his death*, is not meant a yeare or two, no not yet a moneth, but at his death time, euen when hee was to die. And these blessinges are therefore of so much the more authoritie. For wee knowe that when a man makes his last will, it shall bee better receyued than the things which he spake during his life. Although then that Moses serued God as a Prophet and teacher all his life long, and had discharged his duetie faithfully: yet neuertheless his minde was to vtter these blessinges at the time of his death, to the ende they should be the better receiued, and men consider thus: Beholde Moses being readie to departe out of the world, hath told vs of the things that are to come: hee hath not doone it at aduenture nor vnaduisedly, but hee hath fully and wholy performed that which was inioyned him. To the intent therefore that the people shoulde receyue those blessinges the better, this circumstance is expressely added, *That he did it at the houre of his death.* But we at this day haue a farre better and more excellent confirmation, in that we be blessed by the mouth of our Lorde Iesus Christ. For he hath not onely doone it at his death, but also hath sealed Gods fatherly loue and adoption towards vs, I say sealed them with his precious bloude, and also with his rising againe from the dead. Seeing then that our Lord Iesus Christ hath blessed his disciples, to the end we should know that his office is to do the same to vs, and that his Church shall be blessed by his power euen to the worlds end, and that he hath done it by ratifying it with his owne death and passion, and by his rising againe to get vs victorie against the diuell, to the intent that all the cursednesse which we take as it were by inheritance by reason of our father Adam, shoulde be abolished: seeing that our Lorde Iesus Christ hath so ratified all things: let vs learne to magnifie the fatherlie goodnes of our God so much the more: and seeing he hath told vs that we shal be blessed, let vs be the better assured thereof by all these circumstances.

And because it behooued the people of olde time to knowe that Moses spake not in his owne person but by the authoritie of God: he addeth, *God came from Synai, his comming foorth was from Seir, hee shewed himselfe vpon Mount Pharan.* Here Moses setteth Gods presence before the eyes of the people, after the same maner that it had bin knowen vpon Mount Sinay, at the time of the publishing of the law. For he speaketh not of the Wonders which had beene wrought in Egypt, neither speaketh he of ỹ Miracles that had bin wrought by the space of fortie yeares in the wildernes: but his meaning is to bring them backe againe to the Law, to make them stay and rest there. For surely when the doctrine thereof slipeth from vs, all Gods miracles will doe vs no good. We may well muse vpon him, but all shall be but confused imagination, so as euerie of vs shal turne away to superstition and Idolatrie. To be short, it will be vnpossible to be truely vnited vnto God, and to sticke vnto him stedfastlie, otherwise than by the bonde of his worde, so as wee be restreyned by his teaching of vs, & that we hearken to his talke. And why? For we be ful of lying: and therefore it behoueth vs to receiue the trueth of him. That is the cause why Moses saith nowe, *That God came from Sinay, that he shewed himselfe vpon Mount Pharan, and that for his people, he came forth from Mount Seir.* For mount Pharan and mount Seir were neere to mount Sinay. Therefore hee meaneth one and the selfe same thing: but yet it serueth to imprint ỹ woonderfull comming foorth, the better in the remembrance of the people, & to make them to thinke continualy after what maner God appeared vnto them, and shewed them his maiestie visible. Not that they sawe him in his being, for that is vnpossible: but that they sawe the signes and tokens whereby they knewe howe it was God that caused the laws to bee set forth by *Moses.* And indeed we cannot see God as he is, but he sheweth himselfe to vs according to our abilitie and grossenesse. Yet notwithstanding, the people of Israell did easily perceiue at that time, that God was there, and that it was his will to haue the power of his glorie knowen. And truelie we see howe the Prophets made their benefite of this text of Moses. For when they sawe the people variable and starting too and fro, so as they were not sufficiently setled in the true religion: they did euer put them in minde of those signes and wonders which were wrought at the publishing of the lawe. And the Prophet Abacucke doeth in his song expressely borrowe these wordes of Moses. For he saith that God came from mount Theman, and appeared vppon mount Pharan. No doubt but hee had respect to that which Moses saith here, as though he shoulde haue spoken thus to the people which were then scattered asunder. Yee wretched people, why holde you not yourselues vnder the protectiō of your God seeing he hath once called you, and shewed himselfe to bee your heade, and woulde haue you to bee his bodie? Ye haue seene him vppon mount Pharan, that is to say, vpon mount Sinay. There his glorie shone forth in such wise, as yee could not but know that he hath authorised the lawe, and made a couenaunt with you to knit you vnto himselfe. And why then shoulde yee now start away, and become as members rent asunder?

Abac. 3. 3

Nowe seeing that the Prophetes vsed this doctrine after that maner, it ought well to serue to teach vs likewise nowadayes. Therefore whereas it is said that God came from mount Sinay, let vs vnderstand that seeing he hath approued and authorised his law by the visible signes and miracles which were seene at ỹ time: we at this day ought to receiue the law with like reuerence as if god were before our eyes: & whensoeuer his word is preached vnto vs, it is all one as if he o-

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pened his hart, & shewed vs his will, & that there were mutuall and (as they terme it) interchaungeable communication betwixt vs. The end (say I) whereunto Gods word should serue vs, is that he might common with vs and we with him, yea and that so familiarlie, as if hee came downe to vs because we cannot mount vp to him, so as hee is faine to shewe that his comming foorth is for our sakes. True it is that we shall not see the aire on fire, wee shall not see the fire burning on the mountaine, we shal not heare the thunder roaring nor the trumpets ringing in the aire: but it must suffice vs that those things were once done to the intent that the lawe shoulde haue his authoritie euen to the worldes ende, and that all the miracles which were seene at that time, shoulde be ingraued in the lawe of God. Againe, it ought to suffice vs that God moued both heauen and earth at the publishing of the Gospell: insomuch that as then his power was yet better vttered, and moreouer his maiestie hath beene seene in the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ, whereby hee was prooued to bee the onely son of God. Seeing that all these things are knowen vnto vs, let not our vnbeleefe keepe vs from receiuing his worde with feare and lowlinesse at this day, which is so well warranted vnto vs. Thus yee see what we haue to gather vppon this text, where it is said that God shewed himselfe from Mount Seir. And truely after the warninges of Moses did once beare sway, the children of Israel did not then any more see the mountaines of Seir, Theman, and Sinay; neither was it lawfull for them to returne into the wildernes; but the remembrance of those things ought to serue their turne for euer. And soothly, it was not enough for those which had seene those thinges, to bee able to speake of them: but it behooued the fathers to teach their children, that they also might vnderstand that GOD had appeared vnto them, and that by that meanes the law might alwayes bee ratified. Sith it is so, let vs vnderstande that wee also at this day ought to occupie our selues in the minding of the same things.

Nowe it is sayde expressely, *That God coming foorth is for the People.* This serueth to expresse the mutuall communion whereof I haue spoken. For it is not enough for God to shewe himselfe or to come foorth: but his comming foorth must bee for vs; that is to say, to make vs to knowe that hee calleth vs vnto him, and that it is his will to bee knit vnto vs in mutual bonde. And that ought well to touch vs yet further. For the worde which is giuen vnto vs, serueth not onely to make vs vnderstande that there is a GOD in heauen, and that hee hath the soueraintie ouer all his creatures: but also is a pledge that hee will dwell with vs. And forasmuch as God is inuisible, so as wee comprehende not any thing of him, because it is too high and hidden a thing: when wee haue his worde, wee may beholde him there as in his liuelie image, and see him as hee sheweth himselfe. And therefore let vs learne, that when our Lorde sendeth vs his word, he not onely intendeth to aduaunce his maiestie, but also doeth verily renewe his couenaunt to the intent that wee also on our side might approche vnto him. And thereby wee bee doone to vnderstande that if wee endeuour to profite in Gods woorde, wee will come vnto it with a right meaning and pure minde; so that when God sheweth himselfe, we must not be afraide as the Papistes are, which thinke it to bee too darke a thing. Such doubtes must not keepe vs from profiting in the schoole of our God, assuring our selues that he for his part will not fayle vs; but that he will make vs to perceiue that he speaketh not in vaine, but in such wise as we may know that hee is neere vs, and that his countenance shall shine vpon vs. It is saide, *That he appeared with ten thousand of Saintes.*

Some haue taken this for the children of Israell as that God came thither with them. And they call them Saintes, because God had shouled them out as himselfe; notwithstanding that the greater number of them was wicked and vnholie. But there is no reason in that, that so great a multitude as seuen hundred thousande men or there aboutes, should be termed ten thousande. No doubt therefore but Moses speaketh here of Angels. And truely when the holy scripture intendeth to set Gods maiestie before our eyes; it doth always adde that he is garded with his heauenly hostes, and that he hath his angels with him, which are thousandes of thousandes. For wee must not stand vpon iust the certaine number, because the scripture speaketh sparely of the thinges that are inuisible. And so a number certaine shall be put for an infinite number, as if it had bin said that God appeared euen with his heauenly Angels which serued to testifie his glory better. True it is that if the maiestie of God bee set simple before vs, it ought wel to suffice vs: and in good sooth, can the creatures adde any thing vnto it? No surely but that is spoken for our infirmities sake. For when God saith, Here am I; it toucheth vs not yet sufficiently, and therefore it behoueth him to set himselfe foorth as in his soueraintie, & to shewe by his angels that he hath a dreadful dominion, & that he hath his vertues & powers shed foorth euerywhere. For we know that his Angels are created to execute whatsoeuer he hath ordeined; so that they be as his hands, whereby he worketh and performeth whatsoeuer he listeth. To that end then doth Moses expressely say, that God appeared here, *with a ten thousand of Saintes.* And wee see also how the law was giuen by the hands of Angels, as S. Stephen declareth in the seuenth of the Acts. Likewise when S. Paul in the Epistle to the Galathians, intendeth to shew that God appeared to authorise his law the better; he setteth downe that the Angels were witnesses thereunto. Were there then ten thousand witnesses present at the publishing of the law? What a thing is it then, if we beleeue it not, ne receiue it not without gainsaying? If a bargaine bee passed before three witnesses, and signed by a Notarie: it is of authoritie, and there is no pleading against it. And how was the lawe giuen? God appeared there at in his maiestie, yea and Iesus Christ who was the heade of the Angels, was he that gaue the law;

Numb. 1. 46

Act. 7. 38.
Gal. 3. 19.

Gal. 3. 19.

as Saint Paul sheweth in the place which I alledged euen nowe. Looke me vppon Moses on the other side. His was glorified after such a sort, as hee seemed not to be anie more of the number of men: God made his face to shine, as if there had beene Sunne beames therein, so that hee was well seene to be a man sent of God. Against it skilled not for two or three witnesses, for there were twelue thousand Angels, yea rather an infinite number, where were Gods armies, to maintaine the authoritie of the Lawe. And what account is to bee made of men, which are but dung, when they will needes defame it, and come to quarell against it? Howe shall they be conuicted? So then, let vs make all things auayliable to the confirmation of our faith, and let vs assure our selues that in receyuing the doctrine which is conteyned in the law of God, we shall agree with all the Angels of heauen, and they will answere Amen to our faith, and bee faithfull witnesses before God, that we haue not beleeued at aduenture, but that wee haue bin well grounded. Thus ye see to what purpose this text ought to serue vs. And so we see, Moses had here good cause, to make mention of the infinite multitude of Angels, which were witnesses vnto God at such time as hee shewed himselfe to be the author of the Law.

Now is it added afterwarde, *That the Lawe of fire*, (or the fire of the lawe) *was in his right hand*. We see here againe the thing which I haue declared already, namely that all euer Moses hath spoken concerning the maiestie of God, is done to the ende that the Lawe shoulde not bee receyued as a doctrine deuised by Moses: but that wee shoulde consider that God auoweth it, and that hee hath shewed that is proceeded from him. And Moses doeth purposely terme it a *law of fire*, because the aire was then all on a flame. The burning of the fire then, was as a marke wherewith God sealed his lawe, as though hee had ruinished the people, and shewed them that they were not anie more as vppon the earth beneath, but that they were lifted vp aboue the corruptible thinges of the worlde. Therefore let vs beare well in minde, that the Lawe is termed Fire, because that by that meanes GOD made the presence of his maiestie the better knowen. And herewithall let vs also marke wel what is saide concerning the nature of the lawe and of the whole worde of God: howe it is a consuming fire. For it must needes bee answerable to the nature of him from whom it commeth. When the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrewes sheweth vs what the nature of Gods worde is, after hee hath declared that it ransaketh mens hearties, that it pierceth their thoughts and affections, and that it tryeth men to the quick: he saith, there is nothing hidden therefro. And why? For it is Gods will that it shoulde haue as it were his office. Seeing then that our Lorde is tearmed a consuming fire, let vs note that his worde also must needes be as fire. And that was shewed by a visible token, when it was giuen foorth vppon Mount Sinay: and it behoueth vs also to be prepared and readie to receyue the same. Moreouer wee must suffer GOD to purge vs and cleanse vs by the fire of his worde: and if we will not suffer our selues to be so purged, surely God will worke after an other fashion towardes vs, according to this saying of him by his Prophete Esay, Is not my worde as a consuming fire, and this people as stubble? Let vs mark wel then, that seeing Gods word is called a consuming fire, if we bee as stubble or chaffe, wee shall incontinently bee consumed therby. And therefore let vs pray God that we may bee as golde and siluer, that we may abide the fining, and be put to the vse of his owne seruice. Howsoeuer we take it, let vs alwayes marke that the Lawe is not a deade letter, otherwise than that men do quench it through their rechelessnesse: and yet for all that, it is not named a lawe of fire without cause. For it seemeth to shew that if wee receiue it not with such reuerence & authoritie as is due vnto it, it shall not faile to doe the office of fire towardes vs to consume vs. And therefore let vs learne so to bowe & frame our selues vnder the worde of God, and to yeelde such subiection vnto it, as wee may without anie repyning, receiue whatsoeuer is conteyned in it, and not open our mouthes but to say Amen, and so giue our consents to all that euer our Lorde appointeth.

Now Moses addeth immediatly, *The GOD loueth the people, and all the Saincts are in his hand*. True it is that heere is some change. For, worde for worde it is saide, *Yea surely, louing God loueth the People*. Or, *The one God loueth the people*. For the word which Moses vseth importeth both *the Sainctes are in his hande*, hee meaneth the person. For when as he saith, *his Sainctes*, no doubt but hee referreth it vnto God. Therefore hee shoulde say, *are in his hande*. But this maner of speaking is vse enough in the scripture, so as wee ought not to thinke it straunge. The meaning of Moses then is easie enough, namely that albeit God loue all people, yet that his Sainctes are in his charge or protection, yea euen those whome hee hath chosen. Vnlesse a man will refer these wordes, *the People*, to the twelue tribes: but that were harde and constreyned. Moses then doeth here compare all men and all the Nations of the earth with the linage of Abraham which God had chosen; as if hee shoulde say, that Gods grace is spreade our euerie where, as wee our selues see, and as the scripture also witnesseth in other places. And not onely men are partakers of this goodnesse of God, and are fed and maintayned by his liberalitie: but he doeth also shew himselfe bountifull euen to the brute beastes. Euen thither doeth his mercie extende according to this saying of the Psalme, Who maketh the fieldes and mountaines to bring foorth grasse for the feeding of Cattell, but God who hath a care of them? Seeing then that GOD vouchsafeth to haue so mercifull regarde of the beastes which hee hath created, as to giue them foode, it is much more to bee thought that he will bee a foster father to men, whom hee hath made and shaped after his owne image, which

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approche neerer vnto him, and which haue a thing farre excelling aboue all other creatures. God then doth loue all people. Yea, but yet not in comparison of his Church. And why? For all the children of Adam are enemies vnto God by reason of the corruption that is in thē. True it is that God loueth them as his creatures: but yet he must needes hate them, because they be peruerted and giuen to all euill. And that is the cause why the scripture telleth vs that God repented him that euer he made man, considering that he is so marred. And in the same respect also is it sayde, that we be banished out of Gods kingdome, that we be his enemies, that he shaketh vs off and disclaymeth vs, that he abhorreth vs, that wee bee the children of wrath, and that we be so corrupted, as there remaineth nothing but vtter confusion vppon our heades. When the scripture speaketh so, it is to shewe vs that although God for his part be fauorable and merciful to vs, for somuch as we be his creatures: yet notwithstanding we deserue well to be disclaymed and hated at his hande, and that he should not vouchsafe to haue a care of vs. Now then, whereas God loueth vs, let vs vnderstand that he ouercommeth our naughtinesse with his goodnesse, which is infinite. Howebeit as I haue touched already, his louing of other men is nothing in comparison of those whom he hath chosen and whome he acknowledgeth for his children. Now then, doeth he loue all people? Yet are we in his hande: that is to say, hee will shewe that we be farre neerer vnto him, and that he hath much more familiar acquaintance with vs beyonde all comparison, than he hath with all the rest of the worlde. For he hath called vs into his house, he dwelleth among vs, he will be knowen to be our father, he will haue vs to call vpon him with full trust and libertie, so as we neede not to dout but that his power is spred out to defende vs. Lo how Moses ment to magnifie Gods goodnesse in this place, after the maner that he hath made himselfe to be felt in his Church and to his flocke.

Nowe sith it is so, let vs learne to benefite our selues by this sentence; and whensoeuer wee open our eyes, let it be to beholde the bountifulnesse of God, who sheweth himselfe both aboue and beneath by his goodnesse. We see howe the brute beastes are sustained by his hande: and therein we ought to consider what his goodnes is. Againe, as touching the wicked which despise him, and doe nothing else but prouoke his wrath; when yet for all that, wee see the Sunne shine vpon them to giue them light, they eate and drinke, and they bee maintayned at Gods cost, & by his liberalitie: let vs consider that although men deserue to be vtterly forsaken, yet notwithstanding God spareth them & beareth with them, and ouercommeth their wickednesse with his goodnesse, in that he rooteth them not out at the first, but vouchsafeth to foster thē still, and to shewe a fatherly care towardes them. Let vs consider these thinges, that we may be rauished with wonderment, and glorifie God for his mercy, which is knowen and apparaunt vnto vs euery where. And thereupon let vs come to our selues, and consider y seeing God hath called vs to the knowledge of his trueth: it is all one as if he had adopted vs to be his children. Ye see thē that we be sanctified by him. True is, that in respect of nature we be no better thā other men: yea and there are yet still so many wantes & imperfections in vs, as is pitie to see. But yet doth our Lord accept vs for his children, when we receiue his word by faith, & doe stedfastly beleeue that our Lord Iesus Christ hath not suffered his passion in vaine, but that as we be reconciled to God his father by his meanes, so he wil gouerne vs still. If we be fully perswaded hereof, let vs not dout but that God will acknowledge vs and auowe vs to be of the company of his Saints: & that seeing we be vnder his custody, he wil guide vs and keepe vs vnder his wings and in his protection. And so we see that Moses spake not for the children of Israel only, but meant that Gods Church should receiue common profite thereof to the worldes ende, to the intent y being troubled with so many stormes and tempestes, and hauing so many perils before our eyes, & being so often threatned with death, we should yet notwithstanding haue sure footing, and not cease to fasten our eyes vpon the safegarde of God. And seeing it is so that he sheweth his loue euen to the vnbeleeuers, let vs not dout but he will make vs to perceiue, that his hande is strong & mightie ynough to maintaine and defende vs, euen though it seeme to vs that we should perish euery minute of an houre.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to correct vs more & more, and to forgiue vs the offences and sinnes wherein we be guiltie before him: & that forasmuch as it pleaseth him to edifie vs dayly by his worde, we may be ready to receiue it, and hee make vs to perceiue the maiestie which is therein, and that we may continually acknowledge that it is hee that speaketh vnto vs, euen to certifie vs of his will, and of the hope of our saluation, so as wee may be drawen to the feare & obedience of him, and more and more profit therein, euen vntill we see him face to face, whereas wee see him nowe but in that mirrour or lookingglasse which hee setteth before vs. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not only to vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Munday the xxix. of Iune, 1556

The CXCII. Sermon which is the second vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

3 They bowe downe to thy feete, to receiue of thy wordes.
4 Moses hath commaunded vs the Lawe for an inheritaunce, vnto the congregation of Iacob.
5 And was as a king among the righteous, when they gathered the heades of the people together, together with the tribes of Israel.
6 Let Ruben liue and not die, and let his people be fewe in number.
7 As touching Iuda he sayde, O Lorde God, hearken to the voyce of Iuda, and bring him in to his people: let his handes suffise him, because thou wilt bee his helpe against his enemies.

HEeretofore Moses had exhorted the people to receiue the Lawe with all obedience: for he hadde sayde that they did cast themselues downe at Gods feete. And it is a kind of speech that is verie rife in the Hebrewe tongue, because the man that is a learner sitteth downe at his maisters feete to receiue learning at his hande. Nowe we haue seene howe it behooued the people to bee as it were at Gods feete. To what ende? To heare the woordes of his mouth. And heereby we see that GOD hath the whole souereinetie in his Church, and that although he speake by the mouthes of mortall men, yet doth not that abate any whitte of his right, that men should therefore vsurpe his authoritie, or thrust themselues into his place; but that they ought to deliuer the thinges faithfully which they haue receiued of him. To be short, heere it is shewed vs that the Church of God is to be guyded alonely by his worde, and not by the thinges which men shall haue dreamed and deuised of their owne heades. And heerewithall we be also exhorted to obey God, and not to striue against him when he speaketh to vs, but to stoope and to yeelde ourselues wholly to that which he sayeth. At a worde, heere wee bee brought backe from the bondage of men, to the ende that our fayth should not depende vppon this man or y man, but be grounded vpon God. And by the way it is shewed vs, that it is our dutie to humble ourselues vnto God, and to profit vnder his worde and in his schoole, so as wee may suffer our selues to be gouerned by his doctrine.

Nowe heereupon it followeth, That Moses *gaue the Lawe for an inheritaunce to the Congregation of Israell*. This serueth to expresse better what worde it is whereof he had made mention. For euery man can well ynough graunt that GOD deserueth well to be hearde and obeyed: and the wickeddest folke in the worlde will magnifie Gods worde; but in the meane while there are very fewe which by their deedes doe shewe themselues throughly willing to doe that which they say. And why? They woulde haue God to come downe from heauen, and to sende vs his Angelles to tell vs his will. But he will trie our fayth after another fashion. True it is that he ratified his Lawe in olde time, and shewed that it came from heauen, and that it was not deuised by men. But nowe hee will haue his Lawe preached vnto vs by meanes of men, and that the same shalbe of as great force, as if hee himselfe were present in his own being and maiestie. As for the Gospell, wee knowe it hath had his confirmation, and that it is not for vs to dout whether it be Gods trueth or no. But now, what are they that bring vs the Gospell? They be mortall creatures, so as this treasure (as sayth Saint Paule) is in brittle vesselles; like as if a man should put a two or three thousande Crownes into a potte that is not woorth aboue a cupple of pence, euen so is it in that our Lorde will haue the doctrine of saluation which is an inestimable benefite, to be declared vnto vs by men like our selues, which beare no great showe, nor are of any estimation to the worldewarde: and yet notwithstanding he will haue his worde to be of as great estimation among vs, as if he himselfe were personally present with vs. And for that cause he sayeth, He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that refuseth you, refuseth me. For in that place, our Lorde Iesus Christ meant not to exalt men: but to shewe that Gods worde ought not to be the lesse esteemed, although there bee no man to giue estimation thereto. For we must not haue an eie to the messenger, but to him that sendeth him. So then, we see how Moses hauing spoken of Gods worde, and hauing shewed that they which call themselues faithfull, ought to submit themselues thereto; addeth, *Moses gaue the Lawe*, meaning thereby that we neede not to goe to the newfounde Iles to seeke Gods worde, nor to passe ouer the sea (as we haue seene already,) nor to goe downe into the bottome of the earth; but that Gods worde is in our mouth and in our heart, at leastwise if GOD worke there by his holy spirite. For well might we haue

2. Cor. 4. 7.

Luke. 10. 16.

Deut. 30. 12

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our eares beaten therewith, but our heartes should not be touched at all, vnlesse God gaue force thereto. But when our Lord inlighteneth vs, and maketh vs to feele that it is he that speaketh; then haue we his word in our heart; and againe, we haue it also in our mouth, to confesse it to be the infallible trueth. And if we set our delight therein, wee shall no more stand in doubt whether it were best for vs to receiue it or not, but wee shall be fully resolued thereof. Wherefore let vs learne by this text, that if we will honor God and obey him, and quietly receiue both his lawe and his Gospell when they bee preached vnto vs by the mouths of men: we must not forbeare to doe him the honor to submit our selues vnto him, although hee appeare not after a visible maner, ne send vs his Angels from heauen. For it is a true tryall of our faith, when for the honor of him, we forbeare not to accept of men which cary not any great countenance, nor haue any estimation at all. That is the thing which we haue to beare away here in the first place.

Now immediatly he saith that the lawe belongeth vnto vs, because it serueth for the whole congregation of Israell. For we knowe that God hath gathered vs together with the Iewes, and that in the end when they had shut out and banished themselues from the promise of saluation, we succeeded in their place. Seeing it is so, looke what was spoken concerning the children of Israell, which were come of the race of Abraham as in respect of the flesh: ỹ same ought to be applyed vnto vs at this day. And therefore it is no superfluous speech, when it is sayde *that the law was giuen*. Let vs learne then, ỹ seeing our Lord will haue vs to receiue his word, assuring our selues that it is spoken to vs, and dedicated to vs for the health of our soules, it is not as a seed that is throwen into the ayre; but that God speaketh in such wise, as he sheweth that it is for our profit to be so taught, and that he will so approch vnto vs, as we may be knit vnto him. Now then whereas we haue heard, that folke must cast themselues downe at Gods feete to heare his word: let vs vnderstand ỹ wee be those folke. Sith we know that Gods word lyeth and consisteth in his lawe; let vs assure our selues that it is the treasure & benefite which God hath prepared for ỹ food and sustenance of his children accordingly also as he speaketh thereof to the woman of Chanaan, where he saith ỹ men must not giue the bread of children vnto dogs. True it is that at ỹ time we were as dogs, ỹ is to say, al the heathen men of ỹ world were reiected. And our Lord Iesus Christ sheweth, ỹ as in respect of our first state, we be no more worthy to be partakers of this benefite; than a dogge is to go to a mans table. None but the children are to take their sustenance and refection there. Howbeit forasmuch as at this day God hath called vs, & we be his true Church & flocke; this breade is therwithal giuen vs for our sustenãce. And therfore let vs not suffer Gods word to slip away, whẽ it is preached vnto vs, but let euery of vs applie it to our vse.

And Moses declareth expresly *that it is for an inheritance to the Church of Israel*, to do thẽ to vnderstand ỹ it was not giuen for a time, but to the intent it shold be receiued frõ age to age, and ỹ al men shold giue thẽselues to it, so as there might be one consent of faith betweene the fathers and the children, accordingly as it is saide thereof in the song of Zacharie, & as the Prophet Malachie also had sayde thereof afore. Mal.4.6. Luk.1.17.18
Let vs marke then, that this worde *Inheritance*, or *Heritage* importeth a perpetuitie of Gods word, so as it must not bee receiued alonely by such as liue at some one time, and afterward bee buryed: but the fathers must haue a care to make their children agree thereunto after their decease, that all men may obey God and honor him to the ende. If a man haue goods, he will keepe them with great care for his children; and when he dyeth he is well apayd that he leaueth them not vnprouided for, but that they may haue some inheritance. But in the meane while we consider not which is the principal good thing which ought to be left to those which come after vs: which is that they may be partakers of Gods adoption, and accounted among the company of his children. That is the cause why Moses warneth here ỹ people which had bin duely trayned vp in Gods word, that it serued not for them alone, but ỹ God bound thõ to leaue the same inheritance in possession to their posteritie, and would haue his Lawe to be knowen continually, & that it should abide frõ age to age in full force and authoritie for euer. And therefore whẽsoeuer we come to a Sermõ; let vs vnderstand ỹ our Lord calleth vs to him, to the intent that our childrẽ should be drawen thither with vs. And forasmuch as he of his infinite goodnes receiueth them afore they bee borne, and declareth that he will be their father and Sauiour, and putteth them aforehand into the aray and company of his, accordingly also as they be baptised in ỹ vertue of that promise: needs must we be worse than vnthankful, if we haue not a care to teach them, whẽ they come to discretion: and let vs assure our selues that this inheritance is oftẽ lost through the leawdnes of men, or through their careles nes and coldnes, so as their childrẽ are depriued thereof. We see what is happened to the world. Wee see the horrible disorder which hath bin euery where, and is yet still in a number of countries, which make great account of themselues, and deeme themselues to be of great worthines. If a man should aske the Italians, the Frenchmen, and a great sort of the Almaines, of what worthines they be; they will set so great estimation vppon themselues in their pride, as ye would maruel: and yet are they all banished from the inheritance of God, they are all disherited, they be depriued of the foode of saluation which God hath ordayned for his children. Seeing it is so, let vs see that we be more diligent in keeping this inheritance, & sith our Lord hath put it as a gage into our handes, let euery of vs inforce himselfe to teach the younger sort, that the trueth may bee receiued continually from hand to hand, and that GOD may reigne among vs euerlastingly. And to the intent wee may haue the more zeale and good will thereto, let vs call to minde that which I haue

Gen.17.7. 1.Cor.7.14

sayd afore, namely that if wee should compare all the goods in the world, and all the riches that fathers can leaue to their children, with this: they be nothing in comparison of this heauēly treasure of Gods auowing of vs to be of his household, and of his declaring that he will dwel among vs, to make vs partakers of his glorie. Seing then that our Lord assigneth vs so great a good thing; is it reason that he should bee preferred before all the thinges which are to be desired in this world, and which rauish all our wits and willes from vs.

Now he addeth afterward, *That he was a king among the vprights dealers*; that is to say, in Israell. This sentence is commonly vnderstood concerning Moses, because he was spoken of in the last verse. For he had sayd, Moses gaue vs the Lawe: and now he addeth, he was a king in Israel. But we knowe it was not the custome of Moses to call himselfe king. For the time was not yet come wherein God should haue chosen and ordayned a king to haue preheminence. Saul was the first: yea and that was through a rebellion of the people. But God chose Dauid, to the intent that the kingdome should bee stablished in his person. And vntill that time, the people were at libertie, and God named himself their king, and called the people a royall priesthood. So then, no doubt but that here Moses continueth the matter which hee had begunne already; namely that the people should sit downe at the feete of God to heare his word. He declareth after what maner wee should sit downe at Gods feete to be his scholers, and that hee may be our maister, and we be taught at his mouth: *It is* (saith he) *by being our king therewithall*. Hee sheweth that whereas God abaseth himselfe so farre as to be our teacher; his so dooing ought not to cause vs to despise him, or to diminish his maiestie: but therewithal he must also be a king. Let vs beare in minde then, that the doctrine which wee receiue of God, is as the speach of a king, and it behoueth vs to tremble vnder him: so as wee may not onely be as little children ỹ record their lesson vnder a maister, but also that both great and small doe come to heare what God speaketh, and giue eare vnto it with all humilitie, and that his lawes may preuaile and haue their force amongest vs. The thing then in effect which Moses meant in this place, is that hauing shewed that God stoopeth so lowe vnto our meanesse, ỹ he maketh himselfe as a schole-maister, and vouchsafeth to haue vs sit at his feet, to the intent we should be familiarly taught at his hand; yet ceaseth he not therefore to bee a king, and to keepe still his dominion and degree, so that what excellencie soeuer bee in men, they must not presume to skorne the doctrine that is preached vnto them, but euen the very kinges of the earth ought all of them to submit themselues to it, and hee as the onely head ought to haue all preheminence and soueraigne dominion ouer vs.

2.Sam.10.1.

To be short, we haue two things to consider in Gods word, the one is his infinite goodnesse, in that he commeth downe to vs, and becōmeth familiar with vs, and (as yee would say) dandleth vs, and speaketh to vs as kindly as a nurse woulde speake to her babe. Seeing then that God doth so fashion himselfe to our small capacitie; wee ought of right to loue well his worde. But yet therewithall let vs marke also, that hee will not bereaue himselfe of his right, that hee should not continue King for euer, and wee tremble vnder him, and bee subiect to his lawes and commandements. Thus the thing which we haue in effect to beare in mind, is that Gods word ought to bee as sweete to vs as honie, and as precious as Gold and Siluer, as Dauid speaketh thereof. And he doth expresly name the people of Israell by the terme of *vprights persons*, as he had done afore; to shewe vpon what condition wee be Gods Church; namely that vprightnesse and Iustice should reigne among vs. For we knowe that God wil not be intangled in our disorders, if we should rush out into any maner of euill: for in so doing it might seeme that wee would driue God farre from vs. So much the more then ought wee to marke well this text, that God was king among the vpright. For it serueth to the end that we should first vnderstand, that if wee obey Gods Lawe, his kingdome flourisheth. And againe, when wee serue him, he maketh vs to be righteous, & certesse, our true righteousnesse dependeth vpon our hearkening vnto God, & ought to be esteemed thereafter. As for those then which are disobedient to the lawe and the Gospell; doe well shewe that they cannot abyde that GOD should gouerne them; and that is all one as if they defied him, and would not admit him for their king and Prince. True it is that none of the wicked sort of this worlde will confesse that their intent is to alienate thēselues from God after that maner: but yet is it so indeede, and it is not for them to pleade to the contrarie, because the soueraigne Iudge hath giuen definitiue sentence thereof. Also let vs marke by the way, that God neuer reigneth among vs, except our conuersation bee conformable to his worde, so as wee forsake all our owne wicked affections to obey him. And therewithall let vs beare in mynde likewise that there will bee no righteousnes when euery man wilneedes serue God after his owne deuotion as we see ỹ world doeth which museth vppon these pelting fonde toyes: insomuch that the Papistes seeme to thēselues to be halfe Angels, so long as they haue daunced their common trace, that is to say, haue played the brute beastes. But the very true righteousnes which God alloweth and accepteth, is to suffer our selues to bee gouerned by his hand, & to haue none other leader than his single worde.

He sayeth immediatly, in *gathering the heads of the people, and the Trybes of Israel together*. Heere hee expresseth the concorde which ought to bee in Gods Church, euen from the greatest to the least. Whereas hee sayeth in *gathering or assembling*, hee sheweth that as soone as GOD hath spoken, there ought to be a conformitie and true vnion among vs.

Psal.19.11.

Wee

We must not be at variaunce, one drawing one way and another another; but euery of vs must yeelde & assemble together, that none but God may haue any preheminence ouer vs, and that we may be gathered together in one, as it were vnder his winges. That then is the gathering together which Moses speaketh of heere. And therfore we may conclude thereupon, that when Gods word is not preached, although we agree together, yet their agreement is cursed, & there is nothing but confusion in it. Will we then be so knit together, as God may allowe of the concorde that is among vs? Let him be alwayes our head; let his word be the meane to fashion vs one like an other; let there be no brotherhoode but because there is one father comon to vs al, and ỳ wee be his children together by one common accorde. And herein it is to be seene, that all the fond bragging of the Papists is but smoke & leasing, when they say that they agree among themselues. For it is alwayes to bee considered what the bonde is. Now the Papistes agree in all disobedience, so as they must needes bee stubborne in refusing Gods worde, and trample his truth vnder their feete; or else we see that without that there is no accesse to be had vnto them. Seeing then that their linking in together is but to withdrawe themselues from God: woworth that vnion. But if we will haue a holy and commendable concorde, such as God may allowe of: let vs begin at this point, namly that we hearken to his voyce, and ỳ we followe it, shewing therby that we bee his true sheepe, & that we take him for our sheepeheard. And in so doing let vs take him also for our king (as it is sayde in this text,) that he also may take vs for his people and Church; and then we may be bolde to defie all such as behaue themselues after their owne inuentions and fancies.

Nowe therewithall Moses sheweth that there is no man which ought not to submit himselfe to Gods worde, when he sayeth *in gathering the heades and all the Trybes together*. Heere then is no exception: neither ought ỳ great ones to alleage either their authority or their power: for they be the folke which ought to shewe the way, and which ought by their exãple to induce the meaner people to obedience. Therefore when our Lord speaketh, let the heads be as lowely as the inferiour sort, & let them lead the daunce and reach their hands to all the residue. For in very deede when the great men and rich men of this worlde, and such as are in any estimation despise Gods worde & set light by it: it is a dubble stumblingblocke, because men haue an eye to them, & they be as it were set vp on a hygh stage. The disorder therefore which they make is such, that they must yeelde dubble account vnto God, for ỳ they haue bin the cause of the backesliding of many simple & weake soules. And therfore let vs learn ỳ whensoeuer God speaketh, those to whõ he hath giuen ỳ greater giftes of grace, & which haue any dignity or excellency, must shewe that Gods prouoking of thẽ to come vnto him is not in vaine, & they must be the first that obey him. And on the other side the rude & vnskilful must not alleadge, We be no Clerks, we be no men of great vnderstanding; for it is sayde that all the *Tribes of Israell* must *be gathered together*. Let vs conclude then, ỳ as the great ones must shew the way to the litle ones, so all the people generally and without exception, must submit themselues to God, & al of vs must become his scholers, seeing he vouchsafeth to be our schoolemaister, and al of vs must be his people, seeing he doth vs the honor to set his royall seate among vs. That is the effect of the thing which we haue to remember vpon this place.

But let vs come to the blessinges which Moses giueth to the Tribes of Israell. I haue tolde you afore that they be not single prayers, made as by a priuate man but that forasmuch as God had appointed him to be his deputie, he declareth that the state of the Church shalbe alwayes blessed, & that God will haue a care therof. Moses then speaketh heere, not in his owne person, nor of his owne authoritie, but as one gouerned by the holy Ghost, and as one whom God caused to shewe foorth the fatherly care which he would alwayes haue of his Church. To be short, there is nothing heere which ought to be fathered vppon a mortall man: but by the mouth of Moses God sheweth that hee hath not chosen the children of Abraham in vaine, but that hee will continue his goodnesse towardes them to the ende, and shew in very deede that they be a people whom he hath adopted to himselfe and dedicated to his owne seruice, and of whom he wilbe the defender. Howebeit, forasmuch as these thinges shalbe layd foorth more at large; I doe but touch them shortly as nowe.

Let vs come to that which is spoken of Ruben: *Let Ruben liue, and not dy*. We know that Ruben was Iacobs eldest sonne, and ought to haue obteyned the right of the first begotten, and ought to haue had a double portion, and to haue reigned among his brothers: but he was bereft of it by his owne leaudenesse. For he committed incest, which was a crime worthy of more than death: he deserued to haue beene wyped out of the worlde, and to haue had his name reprochfull for euer. Neuertheless God pardoned him. Yea, but not without chastisement, as we see by the blessing which was giuen him: and he seemeth rather to haue beene accursed. For Iacob his father sayde vnto him, Ruben, thou wast my first borne, the beginning of my force and strength; but thou hast also beene the beginning of my sorrowes. And therefore thou must slippe away like water, and drie vp. For thou diddest loose the title of thy birthright, when thou wentest vp vpon thy fathers bedde, and committedst incest, which is a horrible crime. Forasmuch therefore as thou hast beene a greefe and sorrowe to me whereas I ought to haue receyued ioye and comfort of thee; thou must be banished and excluded from thy birthryght, and from the dignitie which thou shouldest haue had. It shold seeme ỳ Iacob taketh too great displeasure against his eldest son, when he ouerwhelmeth him so with infamie, & thundereth so against him. Howbeit, ỳ is but a temporall

Gen. 35. 22.

Gen 49. 3.

correction. For notwithstãding this, yet he continueth stil a Patriarke. And soothly it is a great honor, that a detestable villaine hauing broken the whole order of nature, yea and committed aduowtrie with his own fathers wife, did yet for all ỹ, liue still vpon the earth. But God maketh him a Patriark in his Church, & he wil haue his name holy & his posteritie holy. Lo here a wõderful mercifulnes of God. Yet must he be faine to humble himselfe, & haue his fault knowen, ỹ hee may no more flatter himselfe. That is the cause why Iacob speaketh so roughly, and (as ye would say) chundereth against him being his eldest sonne as I sayd afore. Now the comfort which Moses setteth downe here, may seeme straunge, as why he should say, *Let Ruben liue and not dye*. It was to the end that the tribe of Rubẽ, (that is to say, the people which came of him, for there were at that time a great number of heades of howses, as it were about a fiftie thowsand men,) should thinke with thẽselues, we bee after a sort cue off frõ gods house. For inasmuch as our father was after a sort banished & bereft of his byrthright, and wee be succeeded in his place; what is our inheritance now but vtter infamie? Thus ye see how ỹ Rubenites, (that is to say the people ỹ came of Rubens line,) might haue bin ashamed, if they had not bin vpheld, by putting their trust in God, to serue him with a pure and freehearted affection, or if their heartes had failed them so as they had not stil imbraced the promise of saluation which had bin made vnto them, and knowen themselues to be the children of Abraham, a linage which God had accepted and separated from the rest of the world. It behoued the Rubenites to haue that. And for that cause it is sayd, *Let Rubẽ liue & not dye*: as if Moses had sayd, true it is ỹ Rubẽ deserued to haue his lyfe thrust downe to the bottom of hell: but yet shall he liue; for his fault is forgiuen; and God hath giuen him lyfe, & that not such a common lyfe as all the sonnes of Adam haue, but Ruben shal liue in the Church of God, he shall haue place among the Patriarkes, & the people which shall come of him shall be a member of Gods Church, and of the number of those people whom he hath chosen and sanctifyed. Thus then wee see now the meaning of Moses.

And here we be taught, that it ought to suffice vs when our Lord taketh vs to mercie, to reserue vs to be of his people. When we haue offended him, so as we deserue to be cast off, & to be vtterly disclaymed at his hand: it ought well to suffice vs if wee may but haue a place still in his Church, & be taken & admitted for his childrẽ. Moreouer, if we be chastized for our faults, let vs take it in good worth & beare it patiently, & let vs not doe as they doe which grudge & grinde their teeth when God chastizeth thẽ, & think they haue great wrong if they be not dãdled, when they haue more neede to be handled roughly. Let vs then beare all ỹ temporal correctiõs which God sendeth vs, with such mildnes & meeknes, as it may suffise vs to be cõforted, in ỹ he dooth not rase vs out of the register of lyfe, but are accounted still among his childrẽ. Doth God then smite some with sickneslle, some with pouertie, and some after some other sorte, so as they pine away in this world, & wote not where to become? Well let all this bee easie for vs to beare, so long as we haue stil wherwith to sweeten our sorrowe: that is, when God sheweth vs ỹ notwithstanding our imperfections & miseries, yet he ceaseth not to be our father still. So long as we haue that; let vs ouergoe all the temptations in the world. Well, I must bee heare as a wretched creature, skorned, an outcast of the world, shamed & despised; I shall see no end nor measure of miseries: but what for all this? Yet is it enough for me so I bee auowed for the childe of God. Thus ye see what we haue to gather vpon this place, when God doth continually put vs in minde of our desertes, and toucheth vs with thẽ, & maketh vs to feele them by proofe and experience: For whereas he sayth: *Let Ruben liue and not dye*: it is to shewe them what he were worthie of, & that it was needefull in deede that God should haue pitie vppon him; insomuch ỹ if he had lifted to haue vsed rigor, hee deserued to haue bin vtterly rooted out. That then is the first poynt which wee haue to remember vppon this place.

Moses addeth, *let his people be fewe in nũber*. In deede a man might here repeare the former saying thus, *let him not dy & let not his people be few in number*. But that were constrained & forced. The naturall sense then is, that the Rubenites should be *small in number*: not that they should not be a great multitude of folke, for (as I tolde you afore) they were fiue and fortie Thowsand men besides women & children: and that is an incredible multitude to come of one man alone. But Moses meaneth small in number, because Ruben & all his ofspring, which ought to haue had preheminence ouer all the children of Abraham, was basely & slenderly esteemed, and placed in a very lowe degree. Therefore it is all one as if he had sayd, Although Ruben be not restored to his honor, but dooth still beare the marke of his reproch, and is faine to holde himselfe among the common aray of the children of Israel, and to be subiect to his brother Iuda; & to yeelde reuerence to him as to his superior: yet notwithstanding, let him liue. To be shorte, Moses confirmeth that which I haue declared already, that is to wit, that although Rubẽ was put from his byrthright because of his wicked doinges, and so became vnworthy of the honor which had bin done vnto him: yet notwithstanding his linage ought not therefore to bee dismaid, but rather take comfort in that God held them still in the number of his people. And although they be not Capteines, ne haue ỹ kingdome in their tribe: yet ought they not therefore to fret & repine, but rather to abide in their degree, & to be glad that they haue God still to their father, & to set their whole felicitie & joy there: & in the meane season to beare the correction patiently which God sendeth them as a medicine, and to make their benefite thereof. And moreouer they ought not to bee out of

hope

hope, as though God had diſclaymed them: but aſſure themſelues that they were ſtill reſeyned for the linage of Abraham, which was bleſſed & had the promiſe of euerlaſting ſaluation.

Immediatly after hee ſeeketh downe concerning Iuda. *Let it be ſhew vnto Iuda*, ſaith he. And he ſaith, *Lord heare the voyce of Iuda*. Moſes magnifieth not the tribe of Iuda ſo greatly heere, as he did in Geneſis in the perſon of Iacob. For there he is likened to a lyon whom no man dareth waken vp. And againe he ſaith he ſhalbe Lorde of all his brethren, ſo as all of them muſt ſtoope vnto him, and bowe their knees to him: and finally that the ſcepter ſhall not depart from his houſe, nor the Lawgiuer frō betweene his knees, vntill God haue ſent the Redeemer whom he had promiſed. Seing that theſe things were ſpoken of the tribe of Iuda; it is marualle that Moſes ſpeaketh ſo ſhortly of them heere. And againe, hee maketh no mention of the fruitfulneſſe which God promiſed him: As that his teeth ſhould be whyted with milke, that is to ſay, that he ſhoulde haue good and fat graſſinggrounde, ſo as hee might drinke milke his belly ful; that his eyes ſhould be red with wine, that is to ſay, that he ſhould haue goodly vyneyardes. Heereby he meant to ſhew, what ſhould become of the tribe of Iuda, and of all his people. And why then doth Moſes ſpeake heere ſo ſparely thereof? It behooueth vs to marke, that by the bleſſings which Moſes vttereth heere, hee meant not to deface the remembrance of the things which he had written afore concerning the ſtate of Iuda, in the teſtament or laſt will of Iacob: but to make as it were a Codicill vnto it, as men terme that which is added to a laſt will that is made afore. And when there is ſuch a Codicill, it ſerueth not to impeach the former laſt will, nor yet to burie it ſo as it ſhould not be knowen. For it is but an appendant, and the Codicill it ſelfe were nothing worth without the will, and that it were added to it. Truly a man may well make a will alone by it ſelfe: but as for the Codicill, it is but as a thing belonging thereto or as a ſhort matter that is added to the will. After that manner doeth Moſes deale heere. For hauing ſet downe there the laſt will of Iacob, as an authenticall matter, and ſuch as ought to haue his full force and effect: nowe for the larger confirmation thereof, hee addeth this comfort which we haue ſeene concerning Ruben, and the comfort which wee ſhall ſee to morrow concerning Leui and ſuch like. Nowe his ſpeaking of the tribe of Iuda, is to confirme the thing which had beene ſpoken afore by the mouth of Iacob. True it is that they be two ſundrie perſons which ſpeake: but yet is all done in the name of God, and by his authoritie. Iacob was not a priuate perſon when he bleſſed his children: but he was Gods deputie. As much is to be ſaide of Moſes. Therefore he repreſented alwayes the perſon of God, who declareth that he hath choſen his people, and will maintaine them to the end, and haue a fatherly care of them. To be ſhort, this ſhortnes ſerueth not to abate the dignitie that was giuen to the tribe of Iuda, but to continue the thing which he had ſaid afore, to the intent we ſhould knowe that God meant not to diſappoint Iuda of the promiſe which he had made vnto him, but that it ſhoulde bee performed in his children. And therefore hee ſaith, *Lorde heare the voice of Iuda*.

Heereby Moſes ſheweth, that the tribe of Iuda ſhoulde not attaine to the kingdome without impediment. True it is that Iacob had ſaid, that the ſcepter ſhoulde not depart from the tribe of Iuda. And where is this king? Yee ſee that the tribe of Iuda ſurmounted all the reſt of the tribes at ſuch time as God deliuered his people out of the lande of Egypt. It is true that Nahaſſon had the preheminence, when the offerings were made in the ſanctuarie. It is true that when God diſtributed his hoſt among the fower captaines of his people, Iuda was the formoſt. Howbeit, that was but a very darke ſhadowe, he had neither kingdome nor principalitie. It ſhould ſeeme then that the things which are ſpoken here concerning the ſcepter and the kingdome, are to no purpoſe. For thoſe thinges were not yet ſeene. Againe, let vs conſider what happened to the people after the deceaſe of Moſes. Ioſua ruled them, and the Iudges ſucceeded him. The came Saul of the tribe of Beniamin, who was made king. And what ſhall become of Iuda? The thinges that Iacob had ſpoken ſeemed to bee but a ieſt. And yet it is God that ſaide that the kingdome ſhould come from thence. Nowe Moſes ſheweth heere, that Iuda muſt bee faine to call vppon God, that is to ſay that the tribe of Iuda muſt ſigh and grone and indure much hardneſſe, ere it attained to the degree of honour, and vnto the thinges which God had promiſed them. Wee ſee then that things ſhall not [alwayes] come to paſſe out of hande, immediatly after that God hath promiſed them. Beholde, Iacob appointeth Iuda to haue the birthright in his houſe, by reaſon whereof hee hath the right of the firſtbegotten ouer all his brethren, and it ſeemeth that all ſhould bee ſubiect to him. And yet for a time there was no whit of it ſeene, but rather Iacob ſeemed to haue doted, and that theſe things ſerued to no purpoſe. Afterward at the end of fower hundred yeares or thereabouts, (for there were not full fower hundred yeares,) came Moſes. But at the ende of three hundred and fiftie yeares or thereaboutes he came and ſaid, Iuda, pray to God, hee will heare thy voyce, and herken vnto thee. As if he ſhould ſay, My friendes, ye haue a promiſe of the kingdome in the tribe of Iuda, and trouble not your ſelues though it be not performed preſently before your eyes, but tarie till God worke, and he in the end will performe that which he hath promiſed. Be of good hope therefore and poſſeſſe the kingdome now by faith, vntill God ſhewe openly by the effect, that it was hee that ſpake by the mouth of your father Iacob. Thus we ſee now in effect, what the meaning of Moſes was. The reſidue we muſt reſerue vntill to morrowe.

Nowe let vs kneele downe before the maie-

ftie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to for beare to haue respect of the multitude and greatnes of them, & but onely to correct them by his holy spirit, and so to increase his strength in vs from day to day as we may fight against all temptations, and be reformed in such wise to his obedience, as nothing may let him to reigne as king ouer vs, nor vs to doe him homage by dedicating our selues to him in all iustice, holinesse, and righte-

ousnesse, but that they may bee the true marke whereby we may be knowen to be his children, and that we may feele him to reigne among vs, and we more and more finde fauour in his promisses, so as we may be drawen to the kingdome of heauen, and drawen away from this world, and not holde backe to it any more as wee haue beene too much afore. That it may please him to grant this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

On Tewsday the last day of Iune, 1556.

The CXCIII. Sermon, which is the third vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

7 As touching Iuda, O Lord God, &c.

8 Also hee saide of Leui, Thy Thumim and Vrim belong to him towardes whom thou diddest shewe thy selfe gratious, whom thou diddest trie in Massa, where ye had debate for the waters of strife.

I Tolde you yesterday that the thinges which are conteined in Genesis as touching the blessing of Iuda, are comprehended briefly heere. For where as Moses desireth that Iuda may be hearde, it is to the end hee should obtaine that which had beene promised vnto him, that is to wit, the setting vp of the kingdome there, accordingly also as he sheweth in that he saith, that he shoulde be the leader of his people. For it belonged to none but the tribe of Iuda, to haue the people vnder them and at their guiding. We see then in effect, that Moses meant heere to confirme that which had beene spoken by the mouth of the Patriarke Iacob, to the end that God might be knowen to be stedfast in his worde. The kingdome was promised vnto Iuda, & that was a matter of great importance: for not onely the state of the people was grounded thereuppon, but also the saluation of the whole worlde depended vppon the same. To what end was it Gods will to stablish the soueraintie in the tribe of Iuda, beginning it in the person of Dauid and continuing it in his house, but that the Redeemer of the worlde shoulde come from thence? And that kingdome was to continue for euer, as it is said in the Psalme, that the Sunne and Moone shalbe good and faithfull witnesses thereof in heauen. Seeing it is so, it was very requisite that this promise should be certaine, that it might bee holde vnfallible of all the faithfull. Yet notwithstanding there passed a long time wherein the tribe of Iuda was mingled with the rest of the people, without hauing any authoritie. It was not perceiued what was the meaning of the thinges that had beene spoken, and therefore they might haue beene esteemed as a vaine thing. And therefore Moses addeth now the confirmatiō thereof which is set downe heere, saying that in the end, *God would beare the vayes of Iuda, and that by the meanes he should haue the leading of his people*, and obtaine the royall mace which had beene assigned vnto him.

Heere wee see how our Lorde exerciseth the faith of his children, in that he doth not out of hande performe the things which he had promised them. And this thing ought specially to bee applyed to the reigne of our Lorde Iesus Christ. God had declared aforehande, that the Redemption of the worlde should be wrought by one that was to come of the tribe of Iuda. And yet hee deferreth and delayeth it so long, that it seemed to bee but vaine to looke for it. And why? Of purpose to trie the patience of them that hoped for him. Let vs learne then that to bee setled vpon our Lorde Iesus Christ, and to be well assured of the saluation which he hath purchased for vs; wee must not onely beleeue the things that are tolde vs concerning the Gospel; but we must also euen linger in patience, till God performe the things which we see not at the first sight. And we must not bee so hastie as to start away, when our Lorde answereth not our desires. If God passe ouer a day or a yeare, so as we perceiue not that he is minded to put the thing in execution which hee hath spoken, yet is it not for vs to giue ouer, but we must in the meane season pray, & not doubt but ỹ he heareth our voyce. We shal see oftentimes, that ỹ kingdome of our Lord Iesus Christ shall seeme to be abolished out of ỹ world. And euen at this day, although the Gospel be preached in some places; yet we see the power of the enemies to be such as is able to ouerwhelme it vterly. We see so little order as is pitie. As for vs which say we haue receiued the pure doctrine; we be yet farre off from hauing such policie & perfection among vs as were requisite. To be

short

short, we heare of nothing but disorder; which might make vs to quaile; were it not that with calling vppon God we did patiently awayt that he will in the end set vp the kingdō of his sonne and maintaine it, though it seeme as now to be put out of order, and men see it not florish and prosper. Were it not for that, surely a man would iudge that all Gods promises were vaine. It is not without cause then, that Moses speaketh here expressely of Iudaes prayers and supplications: as if he should say, that all they which belong to the kingdome of our Lord Iesus Christ ought to exercise themselues in calling vpon God, that he suffer not his kingdome wherein lyeth all our happinesse and welfare, to go to decay, and to fall to ruyne; but rather that he set it vp, and preserue it, and defend it. And therewithall let vs assure our selues that we shall not lose our time, nor finde God deafe to our requests, so we resort to him for refuge, as we be warned to doe. To be short, this text declareth vnto vs, that the kingdome of our Lord Iesus Christ shalbe stablished by myracle, and after a strange maner incomprehensible to the worlde; and that God will worke after such a fashion in that behalfe, that we shall knowe it to be his worke; and therefore that wee must not in that case bring the iudgement of our eyes; but continue from time to time in prayer and supplication, and rest vpon the promise thereof which is giuen vnto vs.

Also it is sayd, *That God will succour Iuda against his enemies, and that his hands shall suffice him.* This was no more than needed, forsomuch as the kingdome of Iuda was to be diminished after the decease of Salomon. And from that time foorth, he was to haue but one trybe and a halfe, so as a man would haue thought that all that euer had beene done in the person of Dauid, had beene but a puffe. True it is, that when Dauid was crowned king, God in one instant shewed there so great power, as all men wondered at it. In the time of Saul the people were extremely oppressed, and seemed like to haue beene altogither swallowed vp. But yet there were so excellent victories, as it appeared well that God was the author of that change. Dauid not onely drane away all those which had possessed any part of the lande of Canaan, and had subdued the people to their taxes and tributes, whereby he purchased libertie to those of whom hee had the charge; but also conquered all his neighbours, and made them tributarie vnto him. Therefore in that case wee see an open miracle of God. When Salomon succeeded him, gold and siluer were of no more estimation than grauell, as the holy historie reporteth thereof. But what? As soone as Roboam succeeded, there was a backesliding, so as almost all the people turned backe. There was no more but the trybe of Iuda with a piece of Beniamin, that abode in obedience to the house of Dauid. What was to be sayd hereupon, but that for aught that men did see, there was verie fickle hope to be had, when all passed so slightly away? Besides this, that small kingdome being so diminished, (as wherof remained but a piece) was so assayled on all sides, that it seemed to be as a sheep alone among a dozen wolues. A man then would haue thought that God had forgotten his promise. And therefore it was requisite that Moses should ad this for the comfort of the faithful, to the intent they should not be shaken from their faith, when they saw that kingdome so diminished.

That is the cause why he sayd, *The handes of Iuda shall suffice him, and God will giue him succour against his enimies.* And so let vs marke well, that this kingdome was stablished with great difficultie in the person of Dauid; and that in the end it was diminished, and came to such decay, that to all seeming it should haue beene vtterly abolished: whereby it was Gods will to shewe in a figure, what was to befall to the spirituall kingdome of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And in deede wee see, that when the time drewe nigh wherein Iesus was to be shewed to the worlde; there was nothing but horrible disorder among that people. Who then would haue looked for the redemption at the comming of Iesus Christ? For the people were scattered abroade and vtterly cast downe. Yet notwithstanding, God wrought therein after a manner vnknowen to men. Insomuch that although the Gospel was preached; yet was it not seene out of hand that the Church triumphed in this world; but cleane contrarywise that there was nothing but tormenting, persecuting and oppressing of it, so as the name of Christianitie seemed to be the irksommest thing that could be spoken of, & that all Gods children were but as the doung & filth of the world, as Saint Paul speaketh therof. To be short, that kingdome was to be set vp with sighing and sorrowing; & it behooued the faithfull to pray vnto God, and yet notwithstanding, great was the griefe of minde wherewith they wayted for the setting abroad of the doctrine of the Gospell, to the intent that Iesus Christ might be worshipped of the world, and all men submit themselues to him to do him homage. And yet did not that continue any long time. For the vnthankfulnes of the world deserued that God should haue withdrawen his hand and power; and we see howe the worlde stroue to haue driuen Christ away. For on the one side there were hypocrites which scorned al religion, and abused it falsly. Also there were despisers and worldly folk, which tooke to them an vnbridled libertie (as we see still at this day) vnder pretence of the freedome that was preached vnto them. Againe, there were Sects, and Heresies, and rebellions, so as a great sort stepped vp and could not abide to beare the yoke which it was Gods will to lay vpon their necke. Yee see then that the reigning of our Lorde Iesus Christ was as it were brought to nothing. And therefore let vs mark well, that this text not only serued for the Iewes, but also is profitable for vs at this day, as whereby we be done to vnderstand, that it behoueth vs to make earnest sute vnto GOD to set vp the kingdome of his only sonne; and to stablish it with his power euen in the

1. Cor. 4. 13.

the middes of the trubbles which wee see, notwithstanding that it seeme that al things should goe to wracke; & to succour vs against our enemies, because we see so many men inraged against vs; & to hyde vs vnder the shadowe of his hand, & to shewe vs his helpe when wee be in extremitie and euen at the last cast, and can no longer hold out. Againe, although the kingdome of our Lorde Iesus Christ seeme nothing to the world, & that the proud & the vnbeleeuers do scorne it & despise it: yet wil God shewe that his own hand suffiseth him, that is to say, that his power which is hidden & of no reputation to the worldward, shalbe of such force, that in the end the wicked shalbe driuen to confesse that they were too blockish & dulwitted, in that they tooke not hold of the grace wherof mention is made here. As for vs, let vs be stil more & more confirmed to trust in this great Sauiour, & to put our selues into his protection, and to seeke all our succour at his hand. That is the thing which we be taught in this text.

Now let vs come to the trybe of Leuye. *Thy Vrim & thy Thumim* (sayeth he) *belong vnto thy meeke one*, or vnto the man of thy mercie. The Thumim and Vrim were a parcel of Aarons brestlap, and of the brestlap of the high priests. Besides their robe, there was another piece ioyned vnto it, which was of great pryce, beset with pearles & imbroydered. Moreouer in this piece there was a tablet of precious stones hanging at little cheynes, which was placed full vpon his brest: and this piece of the brestlap was called *Iudgement*, that is to say rightfulnes. Also there was another part, which a man cannot well distinguish, and that was named Thumim and Vrim. The former of these words signifieth perfection; as if a man should terme them perfections in the plurall number. And the other commeth of light or flame; if yee referre it to doctrine. Then if a man list to take these words in common speech, he may say *perfitions* and *teachings* [or instructions.] But I in reading of the text, haue kept still the verie wordes of Moses; because it is not to be douted, but that he speaketh of that portion of the brestlap which was so termed as appeareth in the eyght & twentith of Exodus. And he directeth his speech vnto God. But some haue misexpounded this text, in saying, *thy Thumim & Vrim belong to thee & to the Man*, which is cleane contrary. For Moses saith: *O Lord God, whom hast thy Thumim & Vrim in thy hand.* That is to say, the things which thou hast giuen to thy high priest, are things holy & dedicated to thy name; they be thy perfections and teachings. To whom belong they? To thy meeke one, or to the man of thy mercie; for so is it word for word. But the word *Meeke*, may be taken after the same maner that the holy scripture calleth Gods children meeke ones; that is to say, such as ought to resemble him who is the fountaine of all mercie & goodnes. For if wee wilbe knowen & auowed to be Gods children, it is good reason that we should resemble him, by hauing a meeke & myld spirit in vs, so as we indeuour to do men good. For it is the propertie of God to be liberal to al men, yea eun to those which are not worthie therof: insomuch that he maketh his day Sunne to shine both vpon good & bad. After his example we ought to do our indeuer, & to straine our selues to the vttermost of our power, to benefite al men, & to do al men good. And so it is the common style of the holy scripture to name the faithfull meekes ones; & specially we see it is as rife a thing as can be in the Psalmes. But forasmuch as he sayth, *to his meeke one*, it may be taken for *the man of thy mercie*; that is to say, for the man whom thou Lord hast elected and chosen through thy goodnes. For Aaron attayned not to the dignitie of the priesthood by his owne desertes; but because God vouchsafed to choose him. Now then the name that is attributed to him here, may be taken as if a man should say in the passiue signification, that God vouchsafed to make him a mirrour of his free election; yea and that hauing so chosen him & exalted him to so high and excellent honour, he would haue him to shewe that wee depende wholly vppon his goodnes, so that of al the things which we haue, none proceedeth of our owne power or vertue, but of his pitying of vs, for that he is mynded to shewe his gracious goodnes towards vs. But howsoeuer the case stand, Moses ment to declare here, that the trybe of Leuye should alwayes serue God with the dignitie of priesthood, and that the high priest should bee clothed with the ornamentes that were giuen him to goe into the sanctuarie. And in that case hee was not as a mortall man, nor as one of the degree of creatures: but as the mediatour betweene God and men, whereby he surmounteth the very Angels of Heauen. For the priest of the lawe was in his office more excellent than all the Angels of heauen. And why? Because he was to represent the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is the head of the Angels as well as of men, and hath soueraigne dominion ouer all principalitie, not only on earth, but also in heauen. Yee see then how the meaning of Moses is, that the priesthood should be in the trybe of Leuy.

Exo. 28. 14. 15.

Mat. 5. 45.

Psal. 16. 10.

And let vs marke nowe, that Moses magnifieth heere the trybe of Leuye, of purpole to wype away the dishonour that was there afore. For wee knowe howe Iacob had sayde, Yee Simeon and Leuye, yee bee instruments of wickednesse, yee haue destroyed a towne, and yee haue slayne the men like murderers as yee bee; I will not haue to doe with you, neyther in speech nor in heart, I refuse you. And thou Leuye shalt bee dispersed among my people; for thou art not woorthie to haue any heritage. Loe after howe terrible a fashion GOD speaketh against Leuye and all his ofspring. Hee seemeth to bee quyte rased out, as one that was not worthie to haue any place or degree in the Church. But what reuerence nowe had there been in the priesthood, if the trybe of Leuye had continued in that reproch? For seeing that their father was disgraded by Iacob, who was Gods deputie as I haue declared afore; what should haue becom of al those which

Gen. 49. 5.

were

were descended of his race? Nowe then it was requisite that this tribe of Leuie should bee reestablished, to the intét that the order of priesthood might not be despised, least it might keepe men backe from hearkening to the doctrine of their mouth. What will become of it if they which haue the charge of teaching the people, be pointed at with mens fingers, set light by, skorned or blemished with any marke of reproch in themselues, so as men disdaine them? Surely they shall neuer profite men, they shall not be able to edifie them; men will vtterly mislike of them. Nowe we knowe, and it shalbe declared more fully heereafter, that the Leuites were ordeined of God to teach all the people. Then if they had beene reputed as men of no valour, it woulde haue caried great preiudice with it, so as the lawe it selfe should haue had no great reuerence, men would haue made no accoune of it, and the very common people would haue shrunke away from the expounders therof. Therefore it is not causeleſſe that Moses telleth them, that *The Thumim and Vrim of god*, that is to say, his perfections and teachings are in that tribe, and God will haue it knowen, that there remaineth not nowe any such reproch there, as there did before, but rather that hee setteth his antsignes there. For in Aarons Mytre was Gods name, euen the name of the *Euerlasting*: and that was a thing exempted from all the would. Also there was *the iudgement*, as I saide afore. And for what cause was Aaron apparelled after that manner, but to shewe that in him there was a myrrour of Gods glory? Sith it was so, it behooued the people to forget Leuies fault, and the punishment thereof which had beene laide vppon him and his ofspring, and to receiue Gods Lawe at the mouth of the Leuites, and to haue them in estimation, and to honour them as Gods messengers, or rather as Angels as they be termed in the Prophet Malachie. True it is that Moses was of the same tribe: but yet did God so prouide, that the skorners could not alledge that he had fauored his owne linage or house. And why? Who is hee that pronounced that sentence against Leuie? Euen Moses himselfe: for it was he that compyled the booke of Genesis, wherein hee spared not the fault of his own auncetor. For it behoued him to be as Gods notarie, to set down ỳ sentence both vpon Leuie and vppon all that came of his race. Heere then wee see that Moses behaued not himselfe after the manner of men; but executed faithfully the charge that was committed vnto him. Again, the highpriesthood was not in his owne house, though it were in his owne tribe. He was a greater man than his brother Aaron, and hee had children which might haue succeeded in his place. And yet for all that, hee made none of them prince of the people, he made none of them a gouernour, neither had they any preheminence aboue the others: nay, they had not so much as any portion of inheritance, but were faine to be contented with the first fruits, Tythes, and Offerings, after the custome [of the rest] of the tribe of Leuie. Moses then gaue not the Highpriesthood to his owne children, neither tooke he it to himselfe. What were Moses his children then, and al his successours? They were but vnderseruants of the meanest in the Temple, and they were faine to serue there, euen without being in any degree of honour. God (say I) ment to prouide, that Moses should not bee subiect to any slaunder. And therefore the thinges which hee speaketh now of the tribe of Leuie, are not spoken in respect of his owne auncetrie: for (as we see) he is not led by fleshly affection, and that doth the verie thing it selfe shewe, insomuch that all the malicious sort and all the skorners of God must needes haue their mouthes stopped heere, considering his wonderful prouidéce in cutting off occasion of all slaunder as I saide afore. Moses then had none other respect, but that God shoulde be honoured, that the doctrine of the Lawe should be receiued with al reuerence, and that forsomuch as Leuie was chosen thereunto, and the Priesthood was to continue in his house; those which were so set in office shoulde not be hindered in their proceedings for the building vp of the Church, nor haue any blemish in their persons, which might diminish the authoritie of the doctrine which they broughe. That is the thing in effect whereat God amed.

But nowe let vs lay forth the whole by percelmeale. He saith first of all, *Thy Thumim & thy Vrim*. I haue tolde you already that these two words betoken Gods perfections, and his lights or doctrines. Now in effect we be done to vnderstande heere, that Aarons apparell was no vaine thing; it was not an actyre to giue a glittering shewe to mens eyes: but God intended to figure a greater and more excellent thing thereby; which is, that the Priest should not be as a common man, but should haue in him things which could not be comprehended. And in very deed, his bearing of Gods essétial name in his Mytre, Exod. 28. 36 serued to shewe that hee surmounted all the worlde and al the creatures therein. There was in his Mytre, *The Euerlasting*: and that name agreed to none but to God himselfe. Needs then must it bee, that the highpriest was a figure of our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is God manifested 1. Tim. 3. 16. in flesh. God therefore intended to shewe, that none of all the Ceremonies of the Lawe, were as toyes for babes to play withall like the trash of the Papistes, who haue a great sort of pelting gewgawes, and in all their Ceremonies doe nothing but make as it were maygames or stageplayes; after which manner the heathen folke also haue store of murlymewes and trifles, and yet all is but a hotchpotch. And why? For there is no doctrine, there is nothing but daseling of mens eyes, it cannot bee saide vpon knowledge that God hath commaunded them, or that hee hath appointed them to such ende or such vse. I graunt that the Papistes contriue good store of gay thinges in their Masse, as who would say, this figureth such a thing, and this such a thing. And yet for all that, all is but leasing: for they haue forged them of their owne heads. But God had as it were his lampe lighted in all the Ceremonies

monies of the Lawe, to the intent that the people shoulde be furthered by the helpe of them: insomuch that they knewe wherefore Aarons Brestlap was named *Righteousnesse*, and why these parts [of *Thumim and Vrim*] were named *Perfections and lights*. It was to doe vs to wit, that God tooke no pleasure in outward things; for he is not like men, which are rauished with the outwarde appearance and gay shew of things. God hath no such thing in his nature. But by those Ceremonies, he meant to betoken farre greater things, vntill the trueth of them appeared in Iesus Christ. Likewise all the things that were done in the Lawe, had a respect to the paterne which Moses had seene in the mountaine, and so consequently all things were spirituall, as is saide of them in the 25. of Exodus. Let that then serue for one point.

Exo. 25.40. Heb. 8.5.

Much more reason is it that we nowadayes shoulde abstaine from all trifling Ceremonies, because our Lorde Iesus Christ is come, & hath brought vs the trueth of the things which were set downe in shadowes vnder the lawe. In the time of the Lawe, it behoued the highpriest to bee appareled [after his peculiar manner,] yea and all the whole lyne of the priestes had certaine markes to be knowen by, as who woulde say, We be sanctified to God. But specially when the highpriest was to go into the sanctuary, hee was then as it were to bee altogether disguised, there were not the thinges to bee perceiued in him which had beene in men afore: and that order was to bee obserued in the absence of our Lorde Iesus Christ. But nowe all those thinges are abolished. Nowe if men inuent thinges of their owne fancie, (as we see there is an infinite gulfe of gewgawes in the popedome): what will become of it? The things which God inioyned with his owne mouth tooke their ende at the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And why? For we haue no mo lightes, or teachings in pictures; wee haue them not any more in Aarons brestlap, but wee haue them in our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is the liuely image of God his father, in beholding of whom face to face, we bee there as it were transfigured into the glorie of God. As sainct Paul saith, there is no more any veyle in the Gospel, as there was in the Lawe. Moses was to haue his face couered with a veile to shewe that the Lawe did not yet discouer things so plainly as the Gospel doth at this day. If men the take vpon them to inuent figures of their owne braine, what can they be but illusions from Satan? Wherefore let vs conclude, that when the Priestes do apparell themselues [with their trinkets] in the popedome, they be but maskingroyes; and wheras in so doing they will needes resemble the Iewes, it is all one as if they trode Iesus Christ vnderfoot, or else would burie him, that men might no more looke him in the face, not he be neere vnto vs, nor wee any more perceiue the worthines that is in him and in his office. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vppon this text where Aarons ornamentes are termed perfections and teachings.

Exod 28.12 Colos. 2.15.

2. Cor. 3.14.

And it is saide *that his perfections and teachings* are of God, to shewe that in the gouernement of the Church, it is not for vs to inuent what seemeth good vnto vs; but that that matter lyeth simply in the will of God, and that whatsoeuer he ordeyneth ought to bee held, and that it is not lawfull for men to attempt any thing in that behalfe, yea and that such additions and minglinges are mere corruptions. Therefore when Moses sayeth, *Lord God thy Thumim and thy Vrim*, thereby he openly witnesseth, that when men do so farre passe their bounder, as to frame a gouernement after their owne fancie, and to ordaine lawes and statutes in the church, to say this is good, for it liketh me well; it is but a tradition that commeth from some one man; and when men do so presume of themselues, it is a taking away of Gods right, and a committing of diuelish treacherie. And why? Because the Thumim and Vrim belong to none but God. If the figures of the law, which seemed to be small things, were reserued vnto God, so as it was not lawfull for the world to adde any thing, no not so much as a pins point vnto them; but that the builders of the sanctuarie and the makers of the priestly garments, were to bee gouerned by the holy Ghost: seing that God declareth thereby that he will haue all things grounded vppon his authoritie: What is to be saide to it, if they will nowe binde mens consciences, and set vp a newe seruice of God, as if they woulde say, Thus shall God be honoured, and so men become lawgiuers, insomuch that God shall not be heard, nor any account bee made of his sayings, but that euery man may bee his owne ruler, or else say after the common manner, Our mother the holy Church hath so decreed? In what plight should we be then? And yet we see this horrible disorder throughout all the Popedome. Therefore wee may well conclude that there is nothing but vtter defiling of Gods seruice; and that all that euer is so intytled there, is but meere idolatrie; and that Gods name is altogether vnhallowed in that behalfe. That is one thing more which we haue to beare in mind concerning the saying of Moses in that he attributeth the matter concerning the priestly apparell vnto God alone.

And as we haue seene afore, hee calleth Aaron *Gods meeke one*, or rather *the man of his pitie*: this latter interpretation is the fittest. Yee see then how Aaron was exalted to high dignitie. And why? To the intent men should not seeke any reason thereof in Aarons owne person, Moses setteth downe Gods freegoodnesse aforehande, after which manner we see how sainct Paul also speaketh. He confesseth that hee was 1. Cor. 15.9 sometime a murderer a persecuter, a blasphemer; for he had consented to the sheading of guiltlesse blaude: hee was a deadly enemy to the Gospel; hee was full of bitternesse, full of rage, and hee inforced the weakelings to blaspheme the name of God. Nowe if hee were a rauening woolfe, was hee worthy to bee made a sheepherde in the Church? Verily hee confesseth him self vnworthie, yea and that he was the least

of

of all others. But yet in the meane while hee shrowdeth himselfe vnder the grace of God, saying, *Paul an Apostle*. As howe? According to the wil of god the father, according to the grace of our Lord Iesus Christ, according to the euerlasting purpose of God. Heere hee stoppeth the mouthes of all such as woulde enter into contention with him, to abase the dignitie of his Apostleship: protesting that it is not grounded vppon his owne merits, nor gotten by his owne purchase, and therefore he cannot boast thereof, but that all commeth of God. As much doth Moses heere, saying that the *Thummim & Vrim*, of God belonged vnto him, because God had chosen him, yea euen meerely of his owne gratious goodnesse. Although Aaron had neuer obtained so excellent a stave, if God had respect to the thinges that were in him: yet neuertheless he was placed in the degree of Priesthood. And why so? Because it was Gods good pleasure, and further men must not dispute thereof. And heereby wee see that when God giueth his gratious giftes to men to serue him in any honourable office, his so doing is euermore of his owne louing kindnesse, for hee is not any whit bounde to vs. And specially when the case concerneth the preaching of Gods worde, who is hee that shalbe found meete for it (saith Sainct Paul)? The thinges are so high that hee crieth out, who is he that can be able thereto? There is none but God (saith he) that giueth abilitie. For without him we should not haue so much as one good thought. And so wee be doone to vnderstande, that we on our side are vnprofitable, vntill God haue chosen vs, and disposed vs to serue him. That being done, we be good, we be readie, we be fit for y purpose. Not for any worthinesse that is in vs, but that euerywhit of it proceedeth of Gods free goodnesse & mercy.

By the way, heere is an exception taken against Aaron, *that God tried him in Massa, and that hee stoode in contention at the waters of strife*. True it is that this may be taken as though Aarons faith had not failed, when God rebuked him. And it is certaine, that at that time, in the deede which is reported heere, Aaron shewed a commendable stoutnesse: and yet for all that hee swarued aside, for God condemned him. The place was named Massa, that is to say, *tentation or triall*, and after *Meriba*, which signifieth strife, contention, debate. It was the place where the people required water, yea and they required it with grudging and repyning against God. There Moses & Aaron were as it were ouercome: after y fastening of so many incounters, they wist not what to say or what to do. Ah lord, what shall we do to this people? Now surely there was some faultie infirmitie in them: and God who is the competent iudge thereof, declareth that it was so. Yee see then that Moses and Aaron ouershot themselues, so as they fell insomuch that they were in verie deede banished out of the Lande of Chanaan: they might not enter into it, God excluded them from it: they sawe it a farre off, but they might not set their feete in it. And the reason is added expressly, because (saieth hee) yee sanctified mee not before the people: for there ought to haue beene a farre greater constancie in them than there was. And although Moses and Aaron were sore grieued, and were touched with zeale to the quicke when they sawe the spitefull dealings of the people, and although they laboured to cause them to honour God: yet were they not courageous ynough. This would be counted no fault at all in the iudgement of men, as wee haue seene heretofore: but God looketh more deeply and cleerely into things, and wee must holde our selues to the thinges which he telleth vs with his owne mouth. Yee see then how Moses and Aaron are condemned, and yet was there courage in them. For Moses rebuked the people, saying, Come on yee faithlesse folke, is not God able to make water to come out of this Rocke? Yes, and that shall you see in despite of you. The people were at that time on a great rore, insomuch that they would euen haue stoned him. Yet notwithstanding hee behaueth him still as Gods proctor to maintaine his quarell, he entereth into the case in Gods behalfe, and he hazardeth his life for it. So then there was excellent corage and stoutnesse in Moses and Aaron. But yet were they put to their triall, so as on the one side the weakenesse of their faith bewrayed it selfe, that there was some default in it; and they were faine to acknowledge it with humilitie, and patiently to beare such chastisement as God sent them for it: howbeit, on the otherside also they shewed y they were not so greatly dismayed, but that they had still an affection to serue God. And soothly we shal diuers times see Gods seruauntes sore shaken, and y forasmuch as they be men they be moued when there commeth any great tempest: but yet for all that they do not vtterly quaile. Euen so stoode the case with Moses and Aaron.

Deut. 32. 51

Num. 20. 12.

Exod. 17.

And for that cause is it saide in this place, *Thou strouest him in Massa, and madest him to striue* [or contend] *at the waters of Meriba*. And in that respect did I say, that this might be taken as though Aaron were taunted for not being obedient ynough vnto God at Meriba, and for that hee sanctified him not by endeauouring himselfe as he ought to haue done. Neuertheless, it may also be noted, (as truth is), that Aaron was tryed as in respect of men, and that being so tried [or tempted by men] he was found faith full, in that hee stoode so in contention with them. For wee see not that he for his part murmured against God, neither escaped there any worde of grudging from him. Was hee caried with so diuelish rage as to say, Shall we die heere for thirst? No: he would rather haue died a hundred thousand times, than once haue opened his mouth to cast forth one word of murmuring against God. What befel him then? By reason of the spitefulnes of the people, there was a fault committed. For Aaron himselfe held alwayes on Gods side: and therefore although he did amisse, yet the same proceeded not of himselfe. And it is the very same thing wherewith we haue seene Moses vpbraid the people, saying

that he himselfe was punished for their rebellions sake. You be the cause (saith he) that God hath disappointed me of going into the land of Chanaan. Hee saieth not, I am shut out of it for mine offence; but hee casteth the people in the teeth with it, saying, you were the cause of it. And so it is declared yet once againe in this place, that Moses and Aaron ought not to be the lesse esteemed of the people, nor the priesthood the lesse honoured for that there was some infirmitie in them which was faultie before God. For therewithall they had also a wonderfull stoutnesse of minde, which is ynough to stoppe the mouthes of all the worlde, whereby Moses and Aaron shewed themselues faithfull at the same time, so as a man might well see that what feeblenesse so euer was in them, it could not cause them to be corrupted and caried away by the leawdnesse of the people, or make them to forsake their charge; but they continued in welldoing, and stoutly withstoode all temptations and incounters, shewing that their desire was nothing elle but that God should haue his due deserued authoritie among the people, and bee obeyed of all men.

Deut. 1. 37.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe to make vs perceiue them more and more, and that hauing rid vs of all our wicked lustes, he drawe vs fully to himselfe, and that we may dayly profite and increase in his grace, vntil being departed out of this world, we be come to his heauenly glorie: & forasmuch as we be now a priestly kingdome, it may please him to cloth vs with the righteousnesse & vncorruptnes of our Lorde Iesus Christ, not in figure as the priestes of the Lawe were; but by renewing vs in such wise by his holy spirite, that although wee bee not perfect at the first day, yet we may at least wise attaine to that perfection which he calleth vs vnto. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

1. Pet. 2. 9.

On Wednesday the first of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCIIII. sermon, which is the fourth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

9 Which hath saide of his father and of his mother, I haue not seene them, nor hath knowen his owne brethren, nor also hath knowen his owne children. For they shall keepe thy sayings, and obserue thy couenants.

10 They shal teach thy iudgements vnto Iacob, and thy Law vnto Israel. They shal send vp perfumes to thy nosethrils, and lay whole burnt offerings vpon thine Altar.

11 O Lorde, blesse his substance, and make the worke of his hands pleasant vnto thee. Breake the backebones of such as hate him, that they may not rise vp against him.

WE be to proceed with the blessing of the tribe of Leui, which I began to declare yesterday. I tolde you in fewe wordes, that there Moses intended to stablish those whom God had chosen to bee his priestes, because it was verie needefull to keepe them from contempt of the people, least men might haue made none account of the doctrine which they were to deliuer vnto them: and therefore it behooued them to be in good estimation as Gods seruaunts and representers of his person. And that is the cause why Moses declareth that although Aaron was tried in Massa, and suffered some trouble: yet notwithstanding God ceased not to retaine him still in his seruice, yea euen him and all his offspring. And nowe Moses sheweth whereunto God had called the house of Leuie, and what was the office of the highpriest. He saith first of al, *That they knew neither father nor mother, that they had forsaken their owne children, and that they vnto their brethren they will not vnto any vse.* And that is to shewe, that forasmuch as God had chosen them, it behooued them to forget all things, that they might giue themselues wholly vnto him. Nowe wee knowe that when the Priestes were presented at all other oblations were; men laide either their one hande or both their hands vppon them; to betoken that they were no more at their owne libertie, but that they were sacrified to such a vse, as it behooued euery one of them to imploy themselues wholly to their office, and to be altogether at the appointment of God. True it is that the same condition is required of all the faithfull, for we ought to bee dedicated vnto God in sacrifice. But yet must the preachers of the worde leade the daunce, and consider themselues to bee double bounde, yea and more straitly. The thing then which Moses meant to betoken in this text, is that seeing God had so highly honored

Num. 3. 11.

Rom. 12.

noured the tribe of Leuie, as to haue them all to be his Priests: it behoued them to forget both father and mother, & to be vnaddicted to their fleshly affections, yea and to giue ouer eué their owne children. Not that God intended to alter the order of nature, but to shewe that when the case standeth vppon the performance of their charge, they must not bee turned from it by any worldly respect, neither must any thing withholde them from executing throughly & faithfully whatsoeuer God commaundeth them. Now then, he that will serue God must not forget his father & mother by forbearing to do his natural duetie towards them: but he must preferre God before all men, according to this ge-
Mat.10.36. nerall saying, that we cannot be the disciples of our Lord Iesus Christ, except wee hate both father and mother. The word *hate* is yet somwhat harder than that which is conteined heere in Moses: but the meaning is not darke at all. For our Lord Iesus doth vs to vnderstand, that wee must make such account of him, that both father & mother must be as nothing in comparison of him, that the husbande must leaue ỹ loue which hee beareth to his wife, and the father must set aside the care of his children, that wee may keepe on our way roundly: insomuch that when the case standeth vppon yeelding record to the Gospell, and of cleauing to our Lord Iesus Christ, all worldly thinges must be quite and cleane wyped out of our hearts. And so we see nowe the meaning of Moses. And in very deed, the same appeared as well in himselfe as in his brother Aaron. At such time as the Calfe was made and the people had defiled themselues with ydolatrie, we see with what zeale Moses was carried, and likewise all the tribe of Leuie. For hee willed euery man to take his
Exod.32.27 sworde in his hande. Let vs goe (saith hee) and sanctifie you your handes to the Lorde. For in so doing yee shall shewe your selues to be rightly zealous of Gods seruice, in that yee kill your owne brethren without sparing, so as in this case the order of nature be put vnderfoote, to shewe that God is aboue all, and ought to beare chiefest sway. Seeing then that Moses maketh such an execution, that hee carieth with him the whole tribe of Leuie: wee see it is not saide in vaine that the Priestes executed vengeance both on father and mother, that they did shut their eyes against al that euer might coole them or restreine them, and that God had so rauished them, as they sought nothing but the maintenance of his honour, and the executing of his vengeance vpon such abhomination as had bin committed against him for to deface his honor in Israel. Neuertheleſſe we must note that no one deede is spoken of heere alone: but Moses meant to shewe in fewe wordes, that God had chosen that tribe, with condition that it should be holy vnto him, and that they all should shewe the way to all the rest of the people. But wee know it is vnpossible to please God, so long as wee bee too much affectioned towardes men. And therefore we haue heere a rule, that if wee intende to walke aright, and not to halt before God, we must not be intangled in our fleshly affections, no not euen in those which are most commendable, or at leastwise which may haue most excuse. Men cannot condemne him which honoureth his father and mother, for it is a vertue, and wee knowe that God hath commaunded it with a promise. The man that loueth his
Exod.20.12 Ephe.6.2. wife, shall not bee the lesse esteemed for it: but what shalbe saide of the man which hath not a care of his children? He were worse than a brute beast. And Saint Paul saith that such folk shal-
1.Tim.5.8. be condemned by the vnbeleeuers, because the vnbeleeuers do shewe them their lesson. Then is it a commendable vertue for a man to loue his father and his mother and his neighbours: but yet must all these bee forgotten when God commeth in place, and when his honour is put into the balance to be compared with the duety which wee owe to all creatures. For then, (as I saide afore) God must go formost, and al the residue must follow. Insomuch that if we shoulde be turned quite away from them for the doing of such things as God commandeth to be done for his honour, the order of nature ought to beare no sway in that behalfe, but rather to bee vtterly ouerthrowen.

True it is that here he speaketh of the Leuits which were in olde time: yet notwithstanding, they which at this day do preach Gods worde are bound to the like, and ought to vnderstande that Gods putting of them in that office & degree, is to the intent they shoulde so giue themselues vnto him, as that they should not be turned away from him, neither for regard of their owne persons, nor for any earthly affection, nor for any loue of the world. Then must they fight against those thinges: and although there bee great hardnes in it, yet must they inforce themselues netherthelesse. For we shall not so fully ouermaster our selues at ỹ first, that we shalbe able to forget both our wiues and children. But yet is it no excuse to alledge that we be weake, and ỹ the things which we haue by kind cannot be so soone forgotten: we must fight against the neuertheleſſe. For if we be recheſſe, heere our condemnation is giuen vppon vs. How then shall the ministers of Gods word performe their duetie faithfully? Euen by hauing the one foote continually lifted vp to depart out of the worlde, so as neither household nor any thing else do hold them backe from dedicating themselues wholly vnto God, be it to liue or die. That is the end whereat we must begin. Now in very deede that cannot be done throughly: but yet must wee indeuour and inforce our selues to that ende, and dayly labour and take paines to profite, & to go forward in that behalf. Moreouer forasmuch as
1.Pet.2.9. nowadayes al of vs are Leuits & a kingly priesthood, as the people of Israel were: let vs note ỹ this matter belongeth partly vnto vs all. For we
Esay.66.21. heare how it is saide by the Prophet, that in the reigne of our Lord Iesus Christ, those which afore were but Leuits, to be porters of ỹ temple, or to make cleane the vessels, or to doe the residue of the base seruices, shalbe high priests: and that the common people which durst not enter

into the Temple afore, shalbe of the order and degree of Leuits. And in very deede, at this day the sanctuarie of God is set open vnto vs by the bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ, the veile is rent asunder, and wee go in vnto the maiestie of God, as the high priestes did of olde time vnder the Lawe. Seeing that God hath so greatly honoured the faithfull vnder the Gospell, that hee hath set them in equall degree with those which were Leuits in the materiall tabernacle which was but a figure: it behoueth vs well to consider what hath beene said concerning the Priests of old time; and all of vs from the highest to the lowest, ought to know that we cannot serue God without forgetting our father and mother, according to the forealledged saying of our Lorde Iesus Christ, who speaketh there not of his disciples onely. True it is that it behoued them to be the foreleaders, and by their example to induce the faithfull to the restreining and dispatching of their owne affection, and of all that euer they haue of nature; but yet our Lord Iesus sheweth that no man can followe him, nor come vnto him to continue stedfastly in ỹ Gospel, but with condition of forgetting his father and mother, and of forsaking his wife, and of giuing ouer his own children. After what manner? Not that we do it of our owne head, for euery man ought to discharge his dutie as much as he can. But if a man bee called to forsake his wife and houshold for witnessing of ỹ Gospel: he must be turned from them as if he had his bowels plucked from him; and yet for all ỹ hee must rather choose to haue the one halfe of himselfe taken from him, than in any wise to shrinke away or to estraunge himselfe from Iesus Christ. That is the thing which we haue to gather vpon that text.

Heb. 10. 19. 20.

Now hee addeth thereunto, *That they shall keepe the lawes of the Lorde, and holde fast his couenant.* True it is, that forasmuch as the Law was giuen to all the children of Abraham without exception, the thing that is spoken here belonged alike to all the other tribes. And wee haue seene already, that the Leuites were not the onely folke which were commaunded to keepe the doctrine conteined therin: but it was saide [indifferently to all the rest.] Yee shall keepe my Statutes. When God said so, hee directed his speech to all the children of Israel. Yet notwithstanding (as I saide afore) it behooued the priestes who had the charge of drawing the people, and of holding them vnder the obedience of God, to shewe them the way, and to haue a more ardent zeale to keepe the lawe faithfully. That is the cause why Moses giueth them that title. But wee must note that these wordes, *keepe* and *maintaine*, importe two thinges; that is to wit, that the Leuites shoulde teach the people the Lawe (as shalbe shewed more at large); and also holde them in awe, that the religion might be preserued pure, so as the people might not start away to ydolatrie and superstition, nor leade a wicked and loose life; but that God might bee honoured and serued. That is the first keeping which wee haue of the doctrine. And for the same cause doeth Moses adde, *They shall teach thy Lawes vnto Israel, and thy Commaundements vnto Iacob.* Then was it not ynough for the children of Leuie to walke vndefiledly and according to the doctrine of the Lawe; but also it behooued them all to haue the doctrine in their mouth, to giue instruction to their brethren, & to bring them alwayes to the knowledge of God, and to make them continue therein to the end.

Deut. 27. 1.

The seconde manner of keeping was in good life, by shewing example and by being zelous to holde the people still in order when they sawe them start aside, as we knowe that the worlde is ouer fraile, yea and that we be so inclined to naughtinesse and vice, that it is a great matter to vs if we be not vtterly dissolute. Therefore it stoode the children of Leuie in hande to imploy themselues thereabouts. And here we see, first that God meant not to make ydols in his Church, when he ordeined Shepherds and other men to haue some ouersight and authoritie there. And if it were so in the time of the Lawe; much more ought it to bee so at this day. For (as wee shall see againe anon) the Priestes had the Ceremonies and manie like thinges, so as they were sufficiently occupied about them, although they had not medled at all with teaching. But nowadays al those things are ceased, and there remaineth no more but ỹ preaching of the Gospel, and the ministring of the sacraments, which are but feaw in number, and haue not so much adoe as was vnder the figures of old time. That is the cause why I said, that if the Priestes which were before the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ were bound to be Gods messengers in preaching his word and in giuing good instruction to the people, or else they were after a sort disgraded from their office: what shall become of it nowadayes, when such as are ordained shepherds in the Church, haue none other charge but to teach false publikely and priuately, and therewithall to minister the sacraments? Seeing it is so, then is there no excuse for such as say they haue any charge or spirituall gouernement in the Church, if therewithall they haue not the doctrin in their mouth. Wherby it is apparāt, that in the Popedome there is nothing but confused disorder, and that all those which nowadayes doe name themselues Bishops and Prelates, are but scarebugs set vp by the diuell to bleare the eyes of the ignorant, and are folkes vnworthy to bee counted of ỹ flock, forasmuch as they haue peruerted Gods order, and made such a boroomles pit, that a man cannot discerne any remnant of that which our Lord Iesus Christ had ordained among the faithfull. Seeing they haue altered and imbaced all thinges after that fashion, they bee not worthy to bee of the number of Gods people, but rather of his deadly foes, and much lesse ought they to be reputed for Sheepeherds. But forasmuch as this deserueth to be laid forth more at length; let vs begin at those which are spoken of heere.

It

In this sense, *That the children of Leui shall keepe the statutes of the Lorde, and maintaine his lawes, and preach the Lawe to Israel*: Heere we see how heedily the worlde is forwarde, and so easily turned away from God & from the right way: it is requisite that Gods word should be preached, and that there should be men appointed thereunto. It might be said that euery man may be his owne teacher, and that there needeth not any choosing of some small number of men to guide the rest, for seeing we haue the Law and the holy scriptoures, are not they ynough to gouerne vs? A man might so say. Yea, but they which giue our such speeches, did neuer examin their owne weaknesse, or rather how wicked the inclination of their nature is. For our Lord hath set downe an order, which he knoweth to be profitable for vs, and thereby he hath showed vs, that of our selues we should be caried away out of hande vnto euill, if wee were not restrained by the meanes which he hath giuen vnto vs. And therefore it was requisite that there should alwayes be men appointed in the church to preach Gods word, to admonish the people, and to holde them in awe, and so wickednesse them from disorder, for as the Religion might not be corrupted. We see then how God condemneth our wilfulnesse in this behalfe, for we laugh at that if we be not held backe as it were by force vnder his yoke, we will by and by play the lose colters, and euery of vs will fling away after such a sort, that we shall become as fiery beastes. Seeing then God teacheth vs hereby to learne to humble our selues, and to consider what neede we haue to hearken to his doctrine, and to rest thereon. But there are a great many of fantasticall persons, which thinke it enough for them to haue taken some taste of the Gospell, and thereupon to conceiue that the world is now a dayes full of vngodlynesse, is to seeke euery where, insomuch that the most part of such as haue heard the Gospell become ruffianly, worldlings, and naughtipackes, euen like dogs, contemning all religion, or else loosing it lyke wilde (as they say) for as they vse not to vomite till they be ill, yea and verily full sicke. The world at this day is full of such vermin and doung. And whence the cause thereof? The forenamed reasons, & finally euen pride, where through a great number do beare themselues in hand, if they haue knowledge ynough to rule their owne wit, & that it is needelesse now to learne any more, and if euery man may gouerne himselfe as he liketh. By reason whereof doctrine is despised, & god is vnregarded, and therefore he must needes withdraw his spirit from such folke. So then let vs learne to submit our selues with all lowlynesse and carefulnesse to this generall rule which god hath set in his church euen for euer, which is, that there should be men which should haue the charge to teach vs, and that we should hearken vnto them, and by that meanes continue fast knit together in the obedience of our faith with indissoluble bond, & become one body in verie deede, agreeing all in Gods truth and in the pure Religion. Marke is therefore for a speciall point, that we haue then the true token that we be of Gods flocke, and of his Church, when his word is purely preached among vs, and we apply our selues quietly to receiue the doctrine at the mouth of such as haue the charge to preach it. And therein shall we haue litle aduantage, if behoueth those which are called vnto that seate, to looke well to their callings thus they surmount vs in the selues & in all worldly dignities in this world, to make themselues yolde. For wherefore be we shepherds, but to giue men the foode of life? In respect whereof in babouerth vs to bring soules vnto God, and so holde them still vnder his gouernment. And that is vtterly impossible to be done, vnlesse gods word doe sounde and ring loude and shrille in our eares, for as soone as folk may haue their eares beaten therewith, and be daily preached to come vnto God, and so stitched vnto him with such firmenesse and constancy, as we may neuer flie away againe. For in all ages men haue missed things which were ordained for their welfare, & specially vnto the people of God. We see how the Priesthode hath stopped away vnder the law. That is, the false Prophets crie out against them, thus they be dumbe dogs, they be blinde watchmen, God hath set them as on a high stage or watch house, to the intent they should keepe good watch for the preseruation of the people & of the true Religion. But they were blinde. Again, he would haue their mouthes open to teach & where soeuer they saw any misbehauiour, they should crie out against it with open throat, as it is said in the Prophet Esay. But they liue him as dumbe dogs, they haue done nothing but fill their bellies, and as for the people, they past not though they were also to destruction & decay. We see then how vnder the Lawe, the Priestes did wickedly abuse their vocacio, insomuch that whereas they were vtterly corrupted, yet neuerthelesse they would needes take vpon them to be men of great valor, & be named Priestes of the Church. Howbeit in fine, when God had well rebuked them, he giueth definitiue sentence of condemnation vpon them by his Prophet Malachie, who was the last of them. No, saith he, I will pretend no more the name of your father Leui, (I say not any more) God hath chosen you to the dignitie of Priesthood, for Leui walked in the feare of God, & kept his law: and the verie condition wherevpon God called you, is that the lawe should be in your mouth, so as men might seeke for learning at your hands, and you be as Gods messengers and Angels. But you haue corrupted and falsified all things. And therefore I also doe renounce you and disclaime you. After that manner did God speake to the priests of old time.

Likewise let vs not thinke it strange nowadayes, that the lyke hatred be vsed of the Popedome doe still retayne the title of Prelates and Bishoppes, and dell amongst them, vnder colour of vsurping themselues to haue the gouernment of the Church, which indeede is a flatte lye: for it behoueth vs to consider whether they be set vp by God or no, & whether they haue thrust in themselues or

no. They haue no sure grounde. For as it is saide
Heb. 5. 4. in the fifth Chapter to the Hebrewes, No man
ought to take authoritie vppon him in the
Church, for it is not for any man to intrude
himselfe, but it behoueth vs to be called. Cer-
taine it is that our Lorde Iesus Christ declar-
ing the will of God his father, and his owne
will also, ordeined not dumbe folke thereunto,
which shoulde but vaunt themselues with a two-
horned Myter and such other gewgawes. Hee
meant not to play a pageant, that men shoulde
disguise themselues, and in the meane while no
man know to what purpose those things serued.
Hee intended not that men shoulde play morli-
mewes, as one that coulde well skill to mocke at
God and all his doctrine by making of Crosses
and blessing of Altars. Our Lorde Iesus Christ
did not put forth any such defilementes in his
Church: but Satan corrupted all things. And
therefore they which at this day doe terme
themselues Prelates in the Popedome, cannot
alledge that they be sent of God, nor that they
ought to haue any authoritie or credite in the
name of Iesus Christ. For hee disclaimeth them
because they haue not any likenesse to his insti-
tution. Sith it is so, we may boldly conclude, that
in Popery there is no Church at al, but a hellish
Synagogue: and that whosoeuer meddleth there
or thrusteth himselfe in among them, forsaketh
Iesus Christ, and cutteth himselfe off as a rotten
member from his Church. Loe at what point
the Papistes are. It may bee that they will
call vs heretikes and Schismatikes as they doe
indeede. Yea, but they bee not our Iudges,
and wee may boldly laugh at the sentence
which they giue vppon vs, as vaine. For wee
haue our warrant in heauen, who alloweth
vs, and holdeth them as accursed. For we know
that the true marke of sheepeherds is to preach
Gods worde, that men may inquire at their
mouth howe to behaue themselues according
to Gods will, knowing that it is hee which
sendeth them vnto vs. And therefore when-
soeuer wee haue the Gospell purely preached
vnto vs, and that wee agree in vnitie of faith:
God doeth vs to vnderstande that hee dwel-
leth among vs, and our Lorde Iesus Christ
doeth then shewe himselfe to bee the heade of
that whole bodie. That is the thing which
wee haue to gather vppon this text, where it
is saide that the children of Leuie shall keepe
Gods couenant. And why? For else it might
perish in the worlde, according whereunto
1. Tim. 3. 15. Saint Paul saieth, that the Church is the Arch,
the Piller, and the vpholder of Gods truethe.
And howe is that? Because that men (as I haue
saide afore) are so inclined to vanitie and lea-
sings, that they shoulde bee alienated out of
hande from the pure Religion, if they were held
fast by that meane. The Church then is as a
Garden as God saieth, to the ende it shoulde
not bee dasht away, but that we shoulde alwayes
haue the light among vs, and that wee might
vnderstand that where preaching is, there Gods
voice ringeth in our eares, so as if wee were ne-
uer so fore stricken too and fro, yet doeth God
giue vs a sure staye wherewith to resist all temp-
tations. Yee see then how the keeping of Gods
couenant is committed to the Leuites, and gene-
rally to all such as haue the office of sheepherds
among Gods people.

Moreouer, for the better maintaining of the
pure Religion, it behoueth them to haue a
zeale of Gods honour; they must all their life
long indeuour to maintaine the doctrine, and
therewithall they must haue their mouthes o-
pen to preach the worde that is committed vn-
to them, to the ende that that treasure bee not
lost nor buried, but that all men may bee made
partakers thereof. *They shall preach thy lawes vnto Iacob, and thy doctrine vnto Israel,* so as Gods
worde must needes be published if we will shew
our selues to bee a people dedicated vnto him.
Againe, let vs marke also that here is speciall
mention made of Gods worde and of his lawe,
to doe vs to wit, that God will not haue men
inuentions to reigne among his people, but will
haue men to hold themselues wholly vnto him,
and (as yee woulde say) to hang altogether vp-
on his mouth. Nowe then, the children of Le-
uie haue not hetre a libertie giuen them to forge
lawes after their owne liking, and to set foorth
whatsoeuer they list as the Pope and al his kinde
done. And it is to be seene yet still at this day
howe the same tyrannie reigneth in such sort,
that whatsoeuer is termed by the name of Gods
seruice in Poperie, is but a confused heape of all
manner of dotages, whereunto euery man hath
put to his peece, and yet they cannot alledge
one syllable of holy Scripture to shew that God
alloweth their doings. But men haue stepped
foorth through their owne diuelish rashnes, &
haue made Lawes and Statutes to binde mens
consciences vnder paine of deadly sinne: and
moreouer haue coyned articles of faith at their
owne pleasure. From whence then hath all
the doctrine of poperie beene taken? Not from
the fountaine of y truth, but from the hellish &
stinking puddle of Satan, where there is no-
thing but confusion. Where haue they fonde
their prayers vnto Saincts, but in their owne
braines, or rather that Satan hauing forged it
in his shoppe, hath besotted them therewith?
Againe, where finde they any of the things
which they speak concerning works of supere-
rogation, Merits, the Apes toyes of their Masse,
and all their Ceremonies in generall? It is cer-
taine that al these things were set forth by men.
But contrariwise our Lorde hath tolde vs here,
that he meaneth not to haue those to put forth
any thing of their owne, whom hee hath ap-
pointed to beare abroade his worde. For the
commission which hee gaue to the Leuites,
was to set those thinges abroade which they
had receiued of him, and to deale them forth
plainly and rightly to the people, taking
good heede that they did not alter or falsifie
any thing. And therefore let vs marke, that
we shall then bee allowed for Gods people,
when our faith fluttereth not, after the lure
of mortall men, without knowing why wee
beleeue, but that wee rest wholly vppon God;

and

and that when wee knowe that wee haue his worde to rule vs by; then will hee vpholde and auowe vs to bee his Church. But yet must wee alwayes come backe to this, that it is not ynough for vs to haue the lawe written, and to haue Gods worde in our handes, and to make a priuate reading thereof at home in our houses: but the same worde must also bee preached and expounded vnto vs. And why so? Because Gods will is that it shoulde be so, and therefore wee must not dispute vppon it. For why? The order which God hath set among vs, is not to bee broken. Neither hath hee doone it without cause and iust reason (as I haue saide alreadie) considering the frailtie that is in vs, and how easily wee be led to swarue aside.

Moses addeth heereunto, *That they shall put vp the perfume vnto the nostrilles of the Lorde, and lay the whole burnt offering vppon his Altar.* This concerneth the Ceremonies. For vnder the Lawe they had thinges which we haue not nowadayes, namely the figures of the things which were fulfilled in the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ. For the Priesthoode did vs to vnderstande, that the people coulde not haue any accesse vnto GOD, without some meane. And when the people came to worshippe God, and to offer sacrifices; they belde themselues in ỹ outmost court. There was the first part wherein they all held themselues and it was not lawfull for them to preace any further. There was also ỹ sanctuarie for the priests, and lodgings for the tribe of Leuie. Also there was the great Sanctuarie whereinto the high-priest entered all alone with great solemnitie. And all this serued to shewe yet more liuely the death and passion of our Lord Iesus Christ. But nowe all those things are come to an end. For there is no more shadowing, the veile (as it is saide) is broken asunder, and we haue the beauenly sanctuarie wherunto we be called right forth, and Iesus Christ hath set it open for vs. And so there needeth nowe no more burntoffering, there needeth no more sacrifising for sinnes: for our Lorde Iesus Christ hath by his one only sacrifice wiped away the sins of the world, & made an euerlasting atonement, the vertue whereof can neuer be diminished. As often then as we will preace vnto God, it is not for vs to bring thither either calfe or sheep, but we must resort to the bloudshed of our Lorde Iesus Christ, because that thereby the euerlasting redemption is purchased vnto vs. Nowe we see wherein the Priestes of the olde lawe differed from vs. Yet notwithstanding, those which are ordeined at this day to preach Gods worde ought to knowe that God will haue them to shewe the way in praying to him. And to that ende serued the perfumes that were made in the Temple. Let vs not thinke that God taketh pleasure in any sweete scents, though mention bee made of his nosethrilles after that manner; for wee knowe hee hath no bodie, and therefore wee must not imagine him to bee like our selues: but the holy scripture speaketh after that fashion, because we comprehend him not in his maiestie. As for the perfumes then which were vnder the lawe, they signifie nothing else but the sauour that is in our prayers and petitions, when wee come to offer our selues into the presence of our God. True it is that all of vs both great and small may blesse the name of our God and yeelde him thankes. True it is that wee may with Rom. 8. 15. full libertie and open mouth call vppon him as our father, because that in Iesus Christ hee auoweth vs for his children. But howsoeuer the case stande, yet was that charge committed specially to the ministers of Gods worde, as is saide thereof in the sixth Chapter of the Actes of the Apostles. It is saide that wee must Act. 6. 4. giue our selues to preaching and praying. And howe? Belongs it not to the whole bodie to doe so too? Yes verilie. But (as I haue saide) it is requisite that those to whom GOD hath committed the charge of his Church, and ought to watche ouer it, shoulde bee carefull to praye, as who shoulde say, yea Lorde, This is a charge which I were neuer able to beare, except I were vpholde by thy power: wherefore I pray thee vouchsafe to direct mee and strengthen mee; and therewithall vouchsafe also to maintaine those who thou hast alreadie gathered together vnder thy banner, and to drawe those thither which are away from it. Yea and shewing other men the way to pray, wee ought to frame our wordes after such a sort, as other men may take them as at our mouth. When the Minister is in the pulpit, hee is to vtterfoorth the common prayer, and all the residue are to say Amen, accordingly as Saint Paul speaking thereof in the fourteenth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, saieth that 1. Cor. 14. 16 when prayer is made in the name of the whole congregation, there ought no moe but one to speake, and all the rest ought to answere Amen; because that they which ought to teach in Gods name, ought also to rule the rest, and to prouoke them to prayer and supplication, by their example. And therefore let vs marke, that whereas heere is mention made of perfumes and sacrifises; let vs (say I) mark the thing ỹ was peculiar to the Priests, namely how God would haue thē to guide the people to hope that there should be a redemption wrought by the blessed seede of Abraham; and that the people were to be inured thereunto. As for vs, we haue not that office, ỹ is to wit to be as in ỹ person of our Lord Iesus Christ to make sacrifices. But we haue the Sacramentes; we haue Baptisme, which serueth to shewe howe we be made cleane before God: and wee haue the Lordes supper, wherein it is shewed vs that wee bee nourished with the substance of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Nowe then let vs vnderstande, that as the Priestes were ordeined to represent in the Temple the Mediator which was to come, so we at this day doe represent him after another manner. Not by doing as ỹ Papists do who haue plaid ỹ Apes: For in their Masse (say they) they make a sacrifice: but it is an abhomination which serueth to

abolish the death and passion of our Lord Iesus Christ. Nowe the vse of the Sacramentes is cleane repugnant thereunto: For they serue vs to shewe in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, that we haue bin once washed & made cleane, and that by meanes thereof men are reconciled by the sacrifice of his death which was offered vp for them. Also when wee minister the Lords supper, we rehearse what was said by our Lorde Iesus Christ: This is my body which is deliuered for you: this my bloude which is shed for the saluation of the world. Seeing then that we nowadayes do minister the Sacraments after that manner, we take not vpon vs the thing that belongeth to our Lorde Iesus Christ or to his office: but rather we sende the people to the euerlasting sacrifice whereby we be reconcyled vnto God, so as we neede not any other meane or helpe than that. Moreouer in steede of the materiall perfumes which were in the Temple, at this day wee offer vp prayers vnto God, as thinges that cast a sweete smell vnto him.

Matth.26.26 & 1.Cor.11.24.

Furthermore whereas it is saide *that God blessed the Tabernacles of Laule, & accepted the workes of his hands*, and that hee *breaketh the backebones of all the that set themselues against him*: therby Moses doth vs to vnderstande that wee haue neede to pray our Lord Iesus Christ to maincaine those whom hee hath chosen and shoulded out to preach his worde. For all Satans seeking is to plucke vp all the seede, as wee see is come to passe. For the diuell hath founde out sotle shifts to make many sorts of shepeherds, Churchmen, and Clergimen. Wee knowe that the number of the Popish Clergie is infinite. There are such a sort of offices, and so many liueries of men of the Church as they termie them, that a man cannot tell at what point to bee. If a man should recken vp the orders of Friers, hee shoulde bee at his wittes end, there is such a rabble of them as woulde amaze a man. Yee shall see their gray Fryers, white Friers, blacke Friers, and Friers of all sortes. Againe there is such a howge heape of states and offices in the Popedome: as Patriarks, Archbishoppes, Bishops, Archdeacons, Deanes, and other inferiour offices; as woulde make a man to wonder. Besides this, there are a sort of Sacramentes, to deceiue men the better, and to giue a pompe and maiestie to al their gewgawes, which are but slights to serue Satan withall. For they bee all illusions framed in his workehouse. And of all this rout there is not so much as any one taste that doth his duetie in teaching Gods worde. Wee see then howe Satans wylynesse is such, that hee will bring in maskingroyes ynowe, and iugglingtrickes ynowe to holde still the worlde in errour and superstition, vnder pretence that they may say, wee haue prelates, wee haue men of the Church, wee haue Clergimen. And in the meane while the thinges which our Lorde Iesus Christ ordained are abolished.

For this cause Moses saieth, *That God maintaineth Laules substance, and that hee breaketh and confoundeth all such as set themselues against him*. They that intende to serue God faithfully and to preach his worde, shall neuer want enemies to make warre against them, according as it is tolde vnto Ieremie, Goe thy wayes, I haue appointed thee to fight. Insomuch that the man which serueth God in bearing his worde abroade faithfully shall neuer haue peace, nor goe vnpitched and vnuexed, nor bee without good store of enemies. But what? Heere Moses comforteth all such as imploye themselues this way. Although the worlde bee against them, and it seeme that they shoulde bee ouerwhelmed euery day: yet will GOD maincaine them, and breake the beades of all their enemies, according to this which is saide vnto Ieremie, Goe thy way, thou must fight: but thou shalt haue the vpper hande. Thou must bee faine to haue a foreheade of brasse, that thou maist set thy selfe against the whole worlde and withstande them. For in the ende they shalbe all broken and ouerthrowen before thee. Seeing wee haue this promise, let vs hold our owne & be stedfast, though wee see the whole worlde steppe vp against vs, knowing that God will beate downe all that set themselues after that fashion against them which indeuour to serue him faithfully. Moreouer let vs knowe also that this is spoken for all the faithfull, to the ende they shoulde bee desirous to haue Gods worde maincained, and men to preach it, and that they should all reach their handes vnto them. Let euerie man in his degree doe the best he can, that such as do the duetie of Sheepherds, (such as doe it, I say, and not such as bragge and boast of it), may be stablished and helped, so as there may bee an accorde betweene such as report themselues to bee the Children of God, and such as feede them with the foode that God giueth them. That then is the thing whereat Moses aimed. Let vs note further, how it is not without cause that Moses exhorteth the people to make such instaunce for the blessing of Leuie and of his substance. For why? If wee bee desirous that God should continually prouide for his church: it behoooueth vs to haue a care to pray for those to whom he hath committed the charge thereof. And if wee through our vnthankfulnesse cause not God to bereaue vs of so great a benefite; let vs assure our selues that wee shall neuer want good Sheepeherds. Nowe then if our vnthankfulnesse cause not the contrarie, let vs knowe that our Lord will alwayes prouide vs of fit and able men, and that he will hold them vnder his safekeeping, and maincaine them in spite of Satan and all the force of the worlde.

Iam.1.22.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe to make vs to feele them more and more, that wee may mislike them: and therewithall to worke so mightily as we may not be turned away from him as wee haue beene, but that wee may proceede still in the renewment which he hath commanded vs, vntill we haue throughly attained thereunto, & that our Lord Iesus Christ do so reigne among

among vs, as we may bee true priests vnto him, because that by his meanes wee also doe obtaine that grace and dignitie before God his father. And so let vs all say, Almightie God heauenly father, &c.

On Thursday the second of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCV. sermon, which is the fifth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

12 Also he saide of Beniamin, The beloued of the Lorde shall dwell safelie by him. He shalbe a shadowe ouer him all the day, and he shall dwell betwixt his shoulders.

13 Also he said of Ioseph, His Land is blessed of the Lorde, through the heauenly sweetenesse of the deaw, and of the waterspringe lying beneath,

14 And through the sweetnesse of the fruits of the Sunne, and the sweetnesse of the influence of the Moone,

15 And through the toppe of the auncient mountaine, & through the sweetnesse of the euerlasting hilles,

16 And through the sweetnesse of the earth, and the plentifulnesse therof. And the good fauour of him that dwelt in the bush, shall come plentifully vppon the heade of Ioseph, and vpon the Crowne of the Nazarits head among his brethren.

17 His beawtie is as the first borne of a bull, and his hornes are as the hornes of an Vnicorne. With them shall hee dash the people together vnto the ends of the earth. These are the thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasses.

YEsterday in the blessing of Lewie, we sawe this promise, that God will maineteine such as preach his worde faithfully, insomuch that although they haue many enemies in this world, and bee assailed on all sides, yet are they sure that God will shewe himselfe on their side, and strengthen them when he seeth that Satan streyneth himself by all meanes to make cleane riddance of them: And therein he hath an eye to ỹ welfare of all his people. For Gods Church shoulde perish, if it were not preserued by good and pure doctrine. God then must bee faine to reach out his mightie hande ouer all those which preach his word, to the intent they may be mainteined though all the world striue to ouerthrow them.

Nowe he speaketh of Beniamin, and he saith, *That he shall dwell safely by God, and be his welbeloued; and that God will shelter him and dwell betwixt his shoulders.* I haue told you already that heere Moses confirmeth and warranteth the promises which God had vttered afore by the mouth of Iacob; or else that where there was any hardnesse in them, Moses mitigateth the same, to the intent that the faithfull should not bee troubled out of measure. As touching the tribe of Beniamin, Iacob had saide that it shoulde bee like a woolfe that snatcheth vp his pray in the morning, and diuideth the spoile at night. For that is the natiue sense. Beniamin then shalbe as a rauening woolfe, alwayes giuen to the pray: insomuch that when hee hath robbed in the morning, he shall diuide the spoile at night also. It is a harde condition that a people shoulde liue vppon robbing and rauening: and it might seeme by that meanes that they were disgraded. For we knowe that all men will hate them that vse such violence and liue vpon the spoile of other men by doing them harme and anoyance. To be short, it seemeth that the tribe of Beniamin shoulde become as robbers. Truely this was spoken in respect that in the ende they shoulde bee placed in the borders or marches of two kingdomes; which thing came to passe when the kingdome of Israel was departed from the tribe of Iuda. For then the one halfe of the tribe of Beniamin abode on the one side, and the other halfe on the other side; by reason whereof they were as members rent in peeces. And because the first brunts lighted vppon them, so as they were faine to beare the first blowes it behooued them also to be men of warre. That was the thing which Iacob had an eye vnto. Yet coulde it not bee but that the Beniamits must bee grieued, seeing that God did set them there, to maintaine themselues by violence, and to bee alwayes with sworde in hande. It was a verie harde case, whereat the faithfull might be sore grieued and disquieted. Heere therefore Moses qualifieth the thing which might seeme ouer sharpe in ỹ Prophesie of Iacob; in respect whereof he saith ỹ

Beniā-

Beniamin ſhalbe Gods darling, and that he ſhall dwell ſafely by him. Soothly it was requiſite that the Beniamits, (at leaſtwiſe the faithfull ſort of the) ſhould be comforted, becauſe there befel horrible enormities, ſo as it might haue ſeemed that God had appointed that houſe to bee as a lookingglaſſe of his wrath. At one time all the people of Iſrael were faine to ſet themſelues againſt them to roote them out. Iudg.20. And in very deede there was a ſolemne othe taken to haue ſlaine them all ſo as one man of them ſhoulde not haue beene left aliue: and they were driuen to deuiſe meanes howe to ſaue fower hundred men which were not in the battell, but were by chaunce in a Towne neere by. Ye ſee then how the tribe of Beniamin ſhould haue beene rooted out of the world.

Now it might ſeeme that by this meanes Satan had made a breach which God foreſawe not before it was come to paſſe, or elſe that hee had failed of his promiſe in maintaining the ofſpring of Abraham. This (ſay I) was a great temptation. And therefore not without cauſe doth Moſes preuent it, and giue a good remedy to ſuch as could patiently beare the puniſhments that God ſent vpon them: and he ſaith that yet for all that, that tribe ſhould not ceaſe to be beloued of God, and to dwell by him in ſafetie as vnder his hande. But wee muſt note that this profited not al of them in general. For the tribe Iudg.20.15 of Beniamin was great, and we ſee there went a great armie of them to the fielde: And needes muſt it bee that they were of great force, when all the people of Iſrael were faine to go to battell to puniſh the curſed deede which had bene Iudg.19.25 committed in murthering the Leuites wife, and the abhominable ſinne of Sodome which had reigned in the Citie of Gabaa; which had beene ſuffered by all the Beniamits; inſomuch that to mans ſeeming, God was minded to haue thundred downe vppon them, to ſhewe the like vengeance as he had done afore in Sodome & Ghomorre. It was not therefore for any ſmall number to haue done this. And ſo wee haue to gather, that when God maketh any promiſe to a Nation, a great number of them ſhal not faile to periſh; but yet thoſe which call vppon his name purely ſhalbe preſerued, as it is ſaide in Ioel.2.32. Ioel. Although there ſeeme to be ſome waterſhoude to ouerflowe all; yet will God finde incomprehenſible meanes to drawe his ſeruantes out of it, ſo as they ſhall not periſh with the multitude. And therefore when wee haue any promiſe, let vs bethinke our ſelues, and receiue it with pureneſſe of faith: and then let vs not doubt but it ſhalbe performed. But if we thinke that God ſhould be bound vnto vs, becauſe we haue heard ỳ promiſe: and in the meane while bee diſordred and careleſſe of him, ſo as it may rather ſeeme that we would haue nothing at all to doe with him: ſurely hee can well ſhewe himſelfe to be faithfull and performe his ſaying, & yet wee notwithſtanding ſhall periſh, ſo as the ſame ſhall ſtande vs in no ſteade. And indeede, we ſee how God worketh after that manner for the preſeruation of the ſtate of his Church. He ſaith generally ỳ he is our defender: & yet notwithſtading we ſee ỳ the greateſt number goes to wrecke, and that the number which remaineth is very ſmall. Yea, but yet doth God continually bring to paſſe, that his Church abydeth vnquenched, and that there is ſtill ſome remnant left, according to this ſaying of Eſay, Eſay 1.9. that he will reſerue ſtill ſome little ſeede. And therefore let vs beware that we be of the ſeede which God reſerueth to himſelfe, when hee puniſheth thoſe which turne away from him, notwithſtanding that they did erſt beare the name and title to bee of his houſe, and in deede God did direct the promiſes of ſaluation vnto them, but they receiued them not. Wherefore let vs take heede that wee run not into diſorder with the greater number.

And it is ſaide expreſly, *that God will ſhrowde him, dwelling betweene his ſhoulders.* Heere Moſes ſheweth why God will maintaine the tribe of Beniamin, which notwithſtanding might ſeeme to be vtterly periſhed: namely for ỳ he would dwel vppon his ſhoulders. For the temple was builded in the tribe of Beniamin. Although the kingdome was in the tribe of Iuda, and that the kinges houſe alſo was ſet there: yet in the parting of their inheritances, the mountaine of Sion fell to the lot of the Beniamits. God then dwelt vpon his ſhoulders or betweene his ſhoulders; as if a man ſhould beare ſome burthen vpon his necke, ſo doeth God declare that Beniamin did partly beare him as I haue tolde you, becauſe it was his will to dwell vpon him and to haue his Temple there. And he ſpeaketh of his ſhoulders as in reſpect of mount Sion. And ſo foraſmuch as Beniamin did beare God vpon his ſhoulders, that is to ſay, becauſe the Temple wherein it was Gods will to be ſerued, was builded in the tribe of Beniamin, and the people were to aſſemble on Sion to doe homage vnto God, and Beniamin ſerued to that purpoſe: therefore it is ſaide *that God was (after a ſort) vppon his ſhoulders.* That then is the reaſon why *Beniamin was well beloued of God.* Not that he had any whit deſerued it: for wherof came it ỳ God choſe mount Sion for his dwellingplace? Euen of his owne free loue, which hee bare to Beniamin. So then let vs not dreame that Beniamin preuented Gods grace with any worthineſſe: but Moſes declareth, that Gods vttering of his loue and fauour towards the tribe of Beniamin, & that there ſhould be a manifeſt recorde and token thereof in the building of the Temple there, and that the tribe of Beniamin ſhoulde euer continue vnder Gods protection; are thinges linked together. Inſomuch that although that tribe ſeemed to bee left vp to the ſpoile, and that their enemies had gotten the ouerhande of them: yet woulde God ſhewe himſelfe pitifull to maintaine them ſtill. True it is that in the ende all that Countrie was harryed, and wee ſee howe the Prophet Ieremie ſaieth thereof, that Rachel mourned for her children (for Beniamin came of her) and ſorrowed to ſee ſuch deſolation & waſt made, & could not be cõforted becauſe all were Ier.31.15 deſtroy-

destroyed, and no tydings coulde bee brought vnto her of any residue that remained, but shee sawe that all her bloude was shed, whereuppon shee was in anguish and as a woman forlorne. Surely Rachel was at that time deade: but the Prophet Ieremie speaketh of her in way of a similitude, and setteth her as a mother vppon a scaffolde weeping and lamenting to see one cut the throats of all her children. Thus ye see what befell; but that was an vtter extremitie. Yet for all this, God ceased not to performe his promise; but at the ende euen in the middes of Babylon, euen in that gulfe, he reserued a remnãt of Beniamin, which returned home with the tribe of Iuda. They that were much more excellent in dignitie became as banished folk, and God forsooke them as rotten members, so as they returned not any more into the inheritance of ỹ land of Chanaan, & the resting place which god had foreappointed to their fathers. Ye see then how God continued still his grace towardes the tribe of Beniamin; not that they had not horrible punishments, as it fell out afterwardes, but that God by his infinite goodnes ouercame the naughtinesse of men.

To bee short, let vs note, that when God giueth vs his promises after that maner, they shal seeme to be disappointed of their effect and performãce through the vnthankfulnes of ỹ world, for ỹ there are a great many which refuse Gods goodnes & shut the gate against him, so as they be not partakers thereof. That is the cause why God sheweth not himself liberal towards vs any more. For if we could skill to inioy his goodnes, surely he would alwayes outgo our expectation, & all our wishes. But what? We will haue him to contens vs, and to please vs in all cases: and in the meane while it should seeme that wee haue conspired against him, to keepe him back from doing vs good. Therefore let vs not thinke it strange if God perform not his promises which he hath made vnto vs with his owne mouth, for we our selues be ỹ cause thereof. Neuerthelater, although the world be so malitious and froward, that (to all seeming) men woulde wilfully disappoint all Gods gratious dealings: yet notwithstanding let vs not doubt but that there shall euer be some smal number whom God wil maintaine. Onely let vs indeuour to liue vnder Gods wings, that we may be preserued by him, & suffer him to dwell betweene our shoulders. Wee heare what warning S. Paul giueth vs thereof, how he saith ỹ we must beare the Lorde both in our bodies & in our soules. True it is that there is not now any material tẽple builded any where, wherein to do sacrifice: but euery of vs is ỹ temple of God, and that is with condition that wee shoulde beare him, according to S. Pauls saying, who vseth the same word. And how do we beare him? In knowing that it belongeth to him to be the soueraine & to raigne ouer vs, and to haue al preheminence; & that it behoueth vs to bow downe our neckes to receiue his yoke, and to obey him in al respects. And if we do so, let vs nor doubt but that God watcheth for vs cõtinually, so as all the assaultes and temptations of the world shall not preuaile any thing at all against vs. Insomuch that although we be like to perish a hundred times, yea and to bee ouerwhelmed; yet will he vtter forth his power to preserue vs, and we shalbe saued in the mids of death, so as we may keepe on our course stil. When thunder seemeth to come downe from aboue, & nothing is to bee seene vpon earth but confusion euerywhere; then let vs not doubt but God giueth vs incomprehensible safetie. Thus much concerning the tribe of Beniamin.

Now commeth Moses to the tribe of Ioseph and saith: *That his lande shalbe blessed of God with the deletable fruites of the Sunne, with the fruites of the Moone, with the pleasures of the Dewe from aboue, and of the depths from beneath*, that is to say, of fountaines and water springs which giue moisture and nourishments to the earth. *That his beauty shoulde be as the firstborne of a bull, that he shall haue excellent hornes, wherewith to push against his enemies; that he shall haue the olde mountaines, and the pleasant hilles, where shalbe nothing but sweetenes.* And afterward in the end it is saide, *That all these things shall come vpon the heade of Ioseph, & vppon the Crowne of the heade of the Nazarite of his brethren.* Here we may see how the intent of Moses was to confirme the things that Iacob had spoken afore: for he vseth many of the same words which are in the nine and fortith Chapter of Genesis. Partly then Moses doeth but make a rehearsall of the things which had beene written in the person of Iacob: and that is not superfluous: but God reneweth and ratifieth his promises, to the ende they should be the more assured. And such confirmation also was needfull, to the intent that the other tribes shoulde not grudge against the tribes of Ioseph. Wee knowe that the people of Israel were verie full of quareling and rebellion, and that it was a verie harde matter to holde them in awe. Nowe, Iacob had giuen dubble portion to his sonne Ioseph, because hee had two children, Ephraim and Manasses. Hee had saide that Ioseph shoulde represent two heades in the house, because the tribe of Leuie was excluded and had no portion in the Lande, but onely tooke the tenthes and Offerings. Their successours therefore might haue saide, In deede it was the will of our father Iacob to giue this aduantage to his sonne Ioseph, howbeit that was vppon ouer earnest affection, because Ioseph had succoured him in his neede, and fedde our fathers in the time of famine. But what? Shoulde they therefore haue two heads here, and we here so much abated? Because the people might still haue pleaded for the partition which had bin assigned, and haue striuen when they had bin come into the Land of Chanaan: Moses confirmeth the thing which had beene declared afore; that is to wit, that Ioseph should hold still the portion ỹ had bin giuen vnto him, & represent two chiefe houses in ỹ linage of Iacob, & that there should be ten thousands of Ephraim & thousãds of Manasses. We see now to what purpose Moses rehersed ỹ words of Iacob.

And let vs marke also that whereas he saith,

that he is the Nazarite among his brethren, the word which he vseth may bee taken for a Crowne, as if he shoulde say, Hee shall be the glorie of his brethren. True it is that this continued not for euer; it was but a temporall dignitie, because that in the end it behooued the tribe of Iuda to attaine to the royall sceepter, and to haue the soueraintie ouer all the whole bodie. And then was Ioseph also brought vnder obedience. But yet for a time hee was the crowne of his brethren. Yet notwithstanding, he setteth downe the worde of *Separation*. So then, he was separated from among his brethren; not in that hee was solde into Egypt as some haue expounded it, for that is cleane contrarie. But rather hee is termed a Nazarite in way of honour, for that God had chosen him and shouled him out by himselfe, so as hee was not of the common sort, but had as it were a first begottenship, in respect whereof he tooke double portion of inheritance. That is the cause why hee was called a Nazarite.

And here we haue to marke first of all, that al that euer hath beene rehearsed by Moses, or said before by Iacob, was a very prophesie that came from God, so as it could not haue bin vttered by the mouth of mã, except God had gouerned him by his holy spirite. And why? For Moses neuer came in the land of Chanaan, as we knowe. And as for Iacob, he dyed more than three hundred yeares before the partitiõ of the Land was made. How then coulde he make it? And euen hereby wee see, that there was no casualtie or chaunce in the matter. For Iacob (as wee shall see againe in due place,) assigneth vnto Nepthalim the countrie on the seacoast, and pointeth out euery man his portion there. And howe is it possible that he should hit so right vpon it? Surely he did it not of his owne imagination; but God who holdeth the lottes in his hand (as saieth Salomon,) and who by his wonderfull prouidence which is hidden from vs, disposeth of the things which seeme to come by chaunce, vttered by Iacobs mouth what he intended to do. And nowe he sheweth that when the people are come into the lande, nothing shall happen but by his direction. Nowe wee know that the tribe of Ephraim and Manasses were planted in so fat and fertile a soile, that it was the very storehouse of the Lande. True it is that other of the tribes, as the tribe of Aser, had great Cornecountries; but these countries were stored with all kinde of commodities beside: they were the pleasantest and plentifullest Countries of all the lande of Iurie. Nowe then we may easily gather, that in this case Moses hath not set forth any thing of his owne braine; but that the holy Ghost did in very deede gouerne his tongue. And therefore we haue a great warrant of all his doctrine, in that wee see that vnder the name and authoritie of God, hee setteth such order in things to come which a man wold neuer haue thought of. Sith we heare this, it is all one as if God reached out his hand from heauen, and came to authorise ỹ doctrine which Moses deliuered, and to shew that he is ỹ author

Prou. 16. 13.

thereof, and that it proceedeth from him, neither ought men to doubt thereof as though it came from some creature. And let vs marke that wel. For we knowe that by nature we be inclined to distrust: and were it not that we be holde vp, we should continually be shake downe, & we should not neede any thing to turne vs aside from the right way, & from the certaintie of our faith. For this cause therefore let vs marke well howe it is told vs heere, that God in these Prophesies hath shewed vndoubtedly, howe it was hee that was the guider of Moses: and that he vsed his seruice in such wise, as we may well say that we receiue his doctrine from God, and that it is grounded vpon his vnchaungeable power, & ỹ it is the vnfallible truth. And why? For it was not inuented by man.

But nowe let vs come to the contents of this blessing. It is said *that Ioseph's Land shalbe blessed of God, as well with the dewe from aboue, as with fountaines and welsprings from beneath*; that is to say, that God woulde so water the land both from aboue and beneath, that it should be fat & fruitefull. Nowe here we see howe it is not for nought ỹ we be commaunded to seeke our dayly breade at Gods hande. For howe commeth it to passe that ỹ earth bringeth forth fruites for our sustenance? It is because God moysteneth it. It is not said ỹ the earth hath substance in it selfe, neither is it said that ỹ heauen or the fountaines do giue it simply of themselues: but it is God that sendeth the deaw, it is God that maketh the water springs to shead out, so ỹ he is to haue the praise of all the substance which we haue, whensoeuer we be fed and nourished therewith. Ye see then how God hath such a care of our bodies, and of this corruptible life, that we cannot eate one bit of bread which commeth not from him & of his meere liberality. And indeede it standeth vs in hande to acquaint our selues well herewith. For sith it is told vs ỹ we cãnot haue so much as one slie mite of these goods, no not euen of these transitory goods, but we must receiue it at gods hand: What shal befal in the things ỹ are much more excellent? If I want but a bit of breade, I ought of duety to aske it of God, & to acknowledge ỹ it is his peculiar office to feede me. And when ỹ case concerneth the attainment of ỹ heauenly life & the euerlasting saluation, shal I thẽ go seek it elsewhere thã at Gods hand? Or shall I thinke to haue it in my selfe? What an ouerweening were that? We see then how the bread and the bodily foode which is giuen vs, ought to be as a meanie to lift vs vp higher, to make vs to thinke our selues beholden to God and to his bountifulnes for all ỹ we haue, both of body and soule and all. Marke that for one point.

Againe, whereas in this place Ioseph is called *A Nazarite among his brethren*: we see howe God bestoweth his gracious goodnes where hee listeth, euen contrary to the opinion of men, yea & cleane contrary to al expectation. Ioseph was indeede separated from his brothers; yea and ỹ was as by being appointed vnto death, they had conspired against him to kill him. And whereas he was yet saued, it was but to bee cast into a pit and

Gen. 37. 24. 28.

and there to pyne away, which was a crueller death than if they had cut his throte out of hād. In the end, the greatest fauour that hee founde, was that he was sold into a barbarous nation to strange & vnknowen persons. Againe, when hee came into Egypt, he was thrust into the bottom
Ps.105.18. of a dungeon, & he was put into the stockes, according to this saying of the Psalme, ỳ the iron wounded him & nipped him to the heart. Yee see then how Ioseph is separated not only from his fathers house, but also from ỳ whole worlde; he is cut off from mankind as a dead person; he is like to rot in a dungeon. But God separated him after another maner in his wunderful counsel. And therefore it is sayd, that hee was as a starre which was to be worshipped of ỳ Sunne & of the Moone, and of all the rest of the starrs.
Gen.37.9 Which was as much to say, as that all his house should stoope to him & be subiect to him, so as his sheafe should haue preheminence, and all the other sheaues fall downe: euen because god had decreed it in his own counsaile. And so we see that when all the worlde thought to haue thrust Ioseph downe into the pit: then God exalted him in spite of men. Thus yee see howe God succoureth his seruauntes after a wonderfull fashion. If wee looke vpon our state as it appeareth to the viewe of men: we may seeme as it were reiected, death seemeth to threaten vs, and we seeme to be beseeged with it on al sides, it seemeth that we should be ouerwhelmed euery minute of an houre, & that we should be eaten vp quyte & cleane. Lo at what point wee be! But God who hath sanctified vs, & doeth as it were broode vs vnder the shadow of his wings, if we put our trust in him & flee to him for refuge; will shew that his blessing of vs is not in vaine; but that he hath so separated vs, ỳ though all the earth were moued, & that we were afflicted as wel as the wicked, & wrapped with them in the same curse; yet notwithstanding hee will maintaine vs by his grace, & euen in the middes of death alwayes find meanes to draw vs out to saluation. That is the thing which wee haue to marke in that Ioseph is called a Nazarite amōg his brethren. So that if we haue any aduantage or priuilege, if we be exempted from any perill, if we be enriched w any goods be it of body or of soule; all those things proceed of Gods sanctifying & choosing of vs to himself, & we ought to yeld ỳ praise therof to his only free goodnes.

And to the intent these things may be taken to be ỳ more certaine, it is said *that they shal light vpon the head of Ioseph*. Moses then declareth that these things are not a sound which vanisheth in the aire: but ỳ God wil giue effect to his word so as his blessing shalbe poured out vpon the linage of Ioseph. For thereby he assureth vs as if he should say, Nowe I speake nowe in the name of God, let no man think that I gesse at aduenture concerning things to come: for God will performe al things vpon Ioseph's head; ỳ is to say, either vpon Ioseph's own person or else vpon his children. For here the case concerneth those ỳ come of his race. God therefore wil shewe by ỳ effect, how it is he ỳ hath spoken by my mouth, & how it is he ỳ hath declared ỳ things which he had concluded in his own counsaile afore.

Now in the ende, he doeth also compare his beautie to a yong Bull & an Vnicorne: to shewe that he shal not onely haue abundantly wherewith to liue, but also that he shall haue strength to withstand his foes & be preserued. For wee know we haue neede of two things; the one is that we desire God to blesse vs & to giue vs sustenance: & againe that wee may bee defended from our enemies which assayle vs. Both these things are here comprised in the image of Ioseph. For it is sayd that God will blesse him in his lande, so as it shalbee verie fruitfull: and also that he will giue him strength, whereby hee shall haue the vpper hande of his enemies, yea, and driue them away to th' vttermost borders of the world.

For a conclusion Moses addeth *that there shal be ten thousands of Ephraim, & thousands of Manasses*. His meaning is that these two trybes shall come to be headhouses. For by this worde *thousands*, the Hebrues are woht to betoke as it were Bayliwikes & Prouostships; like as when it is said, And thou Bethleem in the land of Ephrata, art of the least among the *thousands* of Iuda; Mich.5.2. that is to say, if a man consider thy Prouostships and Bayliwikes, thou art the least of all: but yet shall the redeemer come of thee. I alledge this text to shewe what this worde *thousand* importeth. Now then, when Moses speaketh here of [thousandes] he meaneth briefely that Ephraim who was one of Iosephs children, shoulde make a headhouse or trybe, so as he shuld haue his state of gouernement & officers by himself: and also that Manasses who was another of Iosephs sonnes, shoulde likewise haue his order and state of gouernement with vnderofficers as wel as Iuda, Beniamin, Issachar & the rest of ỳ other trybes had. Let that serue for one poynt.

But by the way it is sayd, *the thousands of Ephraim, & the thousands of Manasses*. Here he maketh Ephraim tenfold greater than his brother: yet was Manasses in verie deede the elder sonne Gen.48.19. of Ioseph: but at such time as their grandfather [Iacob] blessed them, he declared that Ephraim should be greter than his brother Manasses. Thus was the order of nature quyte changed, in that God gaue the birthright of the firstbegotten to the yonger sonne; to shew ỳ we bring not any thing of our own vnto god, but ỳ we receiue al things of his mere goodnes, & ỳ he disposeth of vs at his pleasure, without being boūd therunto. And this hath God shewed by a figure in ỳ persons of Manasses & Ephraim. For it lay not in Iacobs power to make Ephraim greater than Manasses: the matter concerned not ỳ inheriting of ỳ countrey only, but also the having of a Tribe. And ỳ same is called a special gift of God. Although riches also do come of him, yet wil he haue mē to acknowledge, ỳ to haue issue is a peculiar gift which cannot be gotte by cunning nor by any other meane. The scripture then in speaking so, doth wel shew that it lyeth not in the power of any creature, to say, This man shall growe into a great people, as Iacob

ſaid, & yet he could not then diſcerne them aſunder by outward ſight. For he was blinde for
Gen 48. 10. 13. age. And when Ioſeph came & brought him his two children, he did ſet Manaſſes the elder to his right hand, & Ephraim to his left: to the end that Iacob in bleſſing them (as the faſhion and ceremonie then was) ſhould lay his right hand vpon Manaſſes, & his left vppon Ephraim. But Iacob putting his hand acroſſe, did lay his right hand vpon the yonger, & his left hand vpon the elder. Whereat Ioſeph ſayd, Sir ye miſtake them. No, no, ſayd Iacob, let mee alone, I do it not through ignorance: for he that is the inferior by nature, muſt be the greater: God hath ſo ordeined it. Behold here a ſilie blind ſoule, an old man, ſuch a one as ſeemeth to dote for age: he ſpeaketh of things vnknowen, & yet for all that, hee dealeth in that behalfe as if hee were God ſitting in his ſeat. And in very deede (as I haue told you afore) He was Gods depute and ſpake by his authoritie. So then, to confirme the propheſies which had bin vttered by the mouth of Iacob, Moſes ſayeth, theſe bee the ten thouſands of Ephraim. Although he be the yonger brother, yet ſhall he exceede his elder brother in number of people, & in al other things: and according hereunto, in the end there was ſuch preheminence giuen to that trybe, that the other ten trybes of Iſrael were comprehended vnder it. When the Prophets name Ephraim, it
Eſai. 7. 2. & in other places. is a comprehending of all the ten trybes togither: inſomuch that euen Ruben who was the eldeſt of all, lay hid vnder the wings of Ephraim. And who knew that? Our Lord did ſo vtter it by the mouth of thoſe whom he had appointed in his place. And ſo we ſee againe the thing that I ſaid afore, namely that in this caſe Moſes was not a priuate perſon, ne ſpake at randon, nor of his owne head; but was directed by God, to the intent it might be knowen, that that people was gouerned by ſpeciall meanes as a people choſen and picked out by God from the reſt of the world. True it is that God is the generall creator of all mankind, and that all people are his. Yet notwithſtanding, foraſmuch as he had choſen the linage of Abraham; it was his will to haue his power the better knowen there, & to holde them as his houſhold folke, & neerer alyed vnto him. And therefore it was good reaſon that the things which are declared here, ſhould be knowen of al ỹ Iewes, & that by that meanes they ſhould be prouoked to bleſſe the name of God, acknowledging howe greatly they were bound & tied vnto him, for that he had ſo withdrawen them from al other nations, & vouchſafed to make them feele him to be their father, ſeeing he had adopted them to be his children.

Now let vs come to the things that befell. True it is that God hath wel perfourmed al that he had ſpoken. And thereby wee ſee that the children of Ioſeph were not diſapointed of their expectation, neither was any of al thoſe promiſes void. But yet for al that, they tooke no great benefite by them, but rather it came to paſſe through their own lewdnes, that they were of neceſſitie turned to their harme and vndoing. Wherin we ſee ỹ men are ſo vntoward, ỹ they change all ỹ euer God had ordeyned for their welfare: in ſo much that when he bleſſeth them, they turne his bleſſing into a curſe; when he offereth them life, they turne it into deth; & they not only dim ỹ light, but alſo turne it into darknes. But what befell to the Trybe of Ephraim? It was aduaunced as it were by miracle, and againſt the order of nature, through the onely bleſſing of God. And yet for all this, it cauſed ỹ body [of the commonweale] to be rent & torne aſunder, Gods ſeruice to bee corrupted & peruerted, ydolatry to reigne in the holy land, God to be defrauded and bereft of his inheritance, and all manner of infections to be brought in. Whereupon inſued foorthwith all manner of miſchiefe, ſo as they did eate vp one another like dogs and cattes, and there was ſuch deadly enmitie betweene the two kingdoms of Iuda & Iſrael, that they went to ſeeke help of the Heathen & Infidels to ouerthrow one another: and was not ỹ a diueliſh rage? & yet all this proceeded from the trybe of Ephraim. If a man ſhould ſay ỹ Gods bleſſing was the cauſe thereof, then is there a double malice to be ſeene in ỹ behalf. For they ought the rather to haue bin incouraged to magnifie Gods name, & to walke in his feare, ſeeing he had ſo greatly bounde them to him. But they turned ỹ benefite to the contrary, as I haue ſhewed alreadie, & therfore it was of neceſſitie ỹ all thoſe bleſſings were taken from them, & moreouer ỹ they were vnto them an occaſion of decay; I ſay they were the occaſion, howbeit not the cauſe. Yea, but yet was ỹ blame to be imputed vnto them, becauſe they themſelues were the alterers of Gods order. What is to be done then? Let vs vnderſtand that when God ſhal haue ſed vs fat in this world, ſo as wee haue the fruits of the earth, yea & be as it were made drunken with the things that delight vs; yet if we haue not the chiefe poynt, the reſidue ſhalbe ſold vs ful deere. Then let vs not ſo greatly eſteeme the temporall & tranſitory goods, that we ſhould not euermore haue an eye to ỹ chiefe point; which is ỹ God receiues vs for his children, that we abide vnder his gouernement, that wee call vppon him as our father, howbeit truely and vnfaynedly, reſorting rightly vnto him and ſubmitting our ſelues wholy to his wil; knowing that as ſoone as wee bee neuer ſo litle ſeparated from him, it cannot bee but that miſerie and confuſion muſt needes fall vpon vs. So then, let vs eſteeme of the tranſitorie benefits which god beſtoweth vpon vs in this world; but let vs eſteem them in their degree, ſo as we be not tyed to them, ne ſet not our chiefe deſire vppon them. If God giue vs of them, let vs enioy them with all ſobrietie; and let vs not ſet our minds too much vpō them. Again, if he giue vs them not, let vs beare our pouertie patiently, & keep on our way ſtil. And in ỹ meane while let vs take our cōtentatiō & reſt in ỹ ſpiritual goods which God granteth vs, in ỹ he vouchſafeth to certifie vs ỹ he is our father, in ỹ he calleth vs vnto him daily, in ỹ he telleth vs ỹ we ſhal finde fauor at his hand for our lord Ieſus Chriſts ſake.

Let

Let the hauing of these things suffise vs, and let vs not repyne at the aduersities, griefes, & troubles which we haue in this world: neither let vs enuye such as are here in better case than wee; but when we see the vnbeleeuers liue at ease, & haue all their pleasures, so as they want not any thing: let vs haue an eye to the tribe of Ephraim, & consider the great wealth both of the same, & also of the tribe of Manasses. They were fed at their pleasure, but what? They glutted themselues with Gods benefites, and were choked with them for their owne vnthankfulnes. Now then, let this serue to restraine vs frō repyning at those with whome God dealeth so liberally in this world, and to whom he sheweth himselfe so bountifull. Let not vs bee grieued thereat. For why? We haue the goods which are of farre greater value: that is to wit, the things that concerne our saluation. For seeing y God hath begunne to worke after that fashion in vs by his holy spirite, let vs seeke for the heauenly riches whereunto he calleth vs from day to day till we haue the ful fruition of them at the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ. Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs perceiue them more & more, and that the rich all who do enioy here neuer so many benefites, and heapes of goodes by his hande, wee may not bee so vnthankfull and slouthful, as not to haue our mindes continually lifted vp to heauen, to giue thanks to him for all his benefites, and to serue him with the earnester good will and that by these thankfull benefites, we may be put in mynde to seeke all things in him which belong to y heauenly life, knowing that we shalbe vtterly destitute & barreine of them, vnlesse he vouchesafe to impart them vnto vs, at leastwise according to the measure & portion of his meere goodnes, because that wee on our side deserue not any thing at all. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not only to vs, but also to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Fryday the iij. of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCVI. Sermon, which is the sixth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

18 Also he saide of Zabulon, Reioyce thou Zabulon in thy going out: and thou Issachar in thy Tents.

19 They shall call the people into the mountaine, where they shall sacrifice the sacrifice of righteousnes. For they shall sucke the abundance of the sea, and the hidden treasures of the sand.

YEsterday in the blessing of Ioseph, we saw how Moses referred all things to Gods grace, which men are cōmonly wont to attribute vnto fortune. And it is a doctrine well worthie to be marked because of our vnthankfulnes. For vnlesse wee bee enforced to acknowledge Gods goodnes, it shall alwayes lye buryed for vs, and wee seeke things here belowe to busie our wits vpon, in so much that when God shall haue giuen vs neuer so sufficient occasion to magnifie his grace, yet do wee make none account of it. Therefore it behoueth vs to be warned to lift vp our wits and mindes aloft, that wee may doe homage vnto God, for all the benefites which we receiue at his hand. Also we haue to marke herein the thing that is set downe by Moses. He sayeth that all the good which Ioseph and all his whole linage shall haue, shall come of the free fauour of him *which dwelt in the bush*. And no doute but that therby he meaneth God. Why then doeth hee mention the bush here? For at the first sight it seemeth a fond thing, & serueth to no purpose but to leade the ignorant and the weaklings into superstition. We knowe that the holy scripture speaking of God, sayth that hee dwelleth in heauen. Not that his maiestie is inclosed there: for, his beeing is infinite; it containeth all creatures, as is sayde in other textes. But this worde *Haamn* serueth to plucke vs from the worlde, when wee thinke vppon God, to the intent that when wee goe about to worship him, wee imagine not any earthlinesse in him, but consider that hee surmounteth all things, and that wee ought to thinke of him farre otherwise than wee can conceiue. Nowe seeing that the holy Scripture pitcheth Gods tent in heauen, to the ende wee should be lifted vp aboue all the worlde & aboue all creatures when wee thinke vppon him: why doeth Moses in this place set him in the Bush? It is because God had there shewed himselfe vnto him. And it behoueth vs to note that thet are two dyuerse fashions of speaking in the holy scripture, when God calleth vs vnto him. Neuertheles, this diuersitie is not to draw vs into contrary opinions: they meete both in one. As how? Sometimes God sheweth vs what his glorie is, to the intent wee shoulde bee fully resolued of this poynt, that hee is incomprehensible, and that wee ought to worship him with all humilitie, & that we must not looke to forge him after our fancie, or to

make him like to our selues, by transshaming after our own imaginations. Therfore when the holy Scripture speaketh vnto vs of Gods maiestie so high as we be abashed at it, yea & euen the very Angels of heauen, accordingly as it is said that the Cherubins hyde their faces, because they cannot abyde to looke vppon the maiestie so great and infinite as it is in God: therein it is shewed vs that we must needes stoope vnder Gods greatnesse and highnesse. But yet therewithall God considereth how it is for our benefite to haue some familiaritie with him: & therevpon he yeeldeth to our rudenesse, and taketh vppon him as it were a newe shape, howbeit not which is contrarie (as I said afore,) but to the intent that we should not bee stirred nor take occasion to shrink from him. Now when he alureth vs gently, and therwithal hee stoopeth to vs & maketh himselfe as it were meane vnto vs. And so that ment haue the sacramentes bin referred at all times. Like as at this day still in Baptisme we see the water, and in the Lordes supper we see the bread & the wine. And what is the cause that our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is the liuely image of God his father, & in whome dwelleth the whole fulnesse of the godhead bodily, what is the cause (say I) that hee sheweth himselfe to vs in corruptible things, and in the elements of the world? It is for our infirmities sake, because we cannot approch to his spirituall power. That is the very cause why he figureth his grace vnder the visible elements: & in them ought we to behold the heauenly power of his holy spirite. That is the seconde fashion which God vseth in reuealing himselfe vnto vs, the which is answerable to our rudenesse. But wee see howe hee shewed himselfe to the fathers of old time vnder certeine shapes. As for example when he talked with Iacob in Bethel, it was because Iacob needed such confirmation. True it is that he ceassed not to looke vp to heauen stil whom he worshipped God. But yet for all that, he had the more familiar accesse vnto God by his comming downe so lowe at that time. And for the same cause also, when Iacob was to remoue from one place to another, he offered sacrifice to the God of Bethel. Why to the God of Bethel? Was there a God shut vp there? No, for we see that euen they which would needes make a God in Bethel, that is to say, which would haue builded vp a temple there, & offered sacrifices there, were abhominable vnto God. Insomuch that God sayth that it is Bethauen, the place of wickednes, and no more his house: he forsaketh & disclameth it vterly, euen because they abused the reuelation that was giuen to their father Iacob in that place. As for Iacob, he knewe howe to benefite himselfe by it. For he knewe that God had not changed his nature, he was inclosed in any certaine place, but that by that meane he meant to draw him vnto him familiarly. Iacob then receiued the gage that was giuen vnto him, to the intent it might be knowen that he worshipped not some God at aduenture, as the Heathen did: but that his faith was sure and vnfallible. That is the cause why he expresly mentioneth Iacobs worshipping of the God of Bethel, that is to say, not a God which was vnknowen to him, nor a God that was forged of mortall mans braine, a God but in fantasie & opinion: but the God of whom he was fully assured, because he had the certeintie wherof he was throughly sure. And euen so is it now in the case of Moses. He saith, *the God which shewed himselfe to me in the bush*, euen that God shew his fauour towardes the tribe of Ioseph. In saying so, Moses protesteth that he seeketh not downe some idol that had bin forged of late time, nor bringeth in the superstitions of any heathen folke, Infidels, or idolaters after which maner we see the Papistes & Turkes do, who speake much of God, but in the mean while they haue no assurance, all their good deuises are grounded but vpon suppositions, and all their Apes toyes are founded but vppon their owne good intent as they terme it. For it is starke diuelishnes when men presume vpon their owne selfelikings, and it is an opening of helgates to them to plunge themselues in the bottomlesse pit. Lo what commeth of that which men terme good intent, & of the things which they haue imagined & dreamed in their own brayne. But as for vs, we must haue a sure leaning stocke, & such a one as wil not swarue, so as we may say, we haue a God which is not vnknowen nor hidden from vs. Now then in speaking of the God that had appeared to him in the bush, he meant here to certifie the promise yet so much the better: as if he should say, I speake not at random, my words are no flying tales: but it is God that hath ordeined mee, & at such time as it pleased him that I should deliuer his people out of the land of Egypt, he appeared to me in the bush, & there I knew his maiestie. So then, the certeintie which I haue of my calling, & of the things which I haue hitherto done by his commandement, ought to make mee continue stil, to shew that the same God wil perfourme his promises which are conteined here, & specially his fauor & free goodnes shal rest vpō the tribe of Ioseph.

Now of this text we haue to gather, that when we speake of God we must not wander too and fro, but to the intent we may be throughly assured, & that we may hold our selues in awe, we must consider after what manner God hath reuealed himself vnto vs. But I haue told you already that our lord Iesus Christ is his liuely image; & therefore it behoueth vs to seeke him there. And the very cause why the wretched worlde hath bin beguyled by the deceites & illusions of Satan is that they haue not held themselues simply to our Lord Iesus Christ. Whence spring so many disorders at this day in the popedom, but of this, that (as they themselues say in their prouerb) Iesus Christ is not knowen, nor can be discerned from among his Apostles: For they haue bereft him of the glory, power & grace which God his father had committed vnto him. To be short, forasmuch as our Lorde Iesus hath bin as it were buried, therfore superstitions haue increased more & more, so as ther hath bin no end nor measure of thē, & therfore no marvel though

Phil.2.11.

Col.2.15. & 2.9.

Gen.28.13.

Gen.35.3.

Amos.4.4.

Ose.4.15.

Exod.3.6.

Colos.1.15

though there haue beene so horrible a Babylon [that is to say confusion] there. Let vs learne then to know the liuing God as he sheweth himselfe vnto vs, & to imprison all our wits. And forasmuch as he hath most perfectly reuealed himself in our Lord Iesus Christ; let vs not seeke any other knowledge than that, neither let vs swarue one way or other from the same.

But now let vs come to that which Moses addeth concerning Zabulon and Issachar. He saith of Zabulon, *Be glad in thy going forth*: and of Issachar, *Reioyce thou in thy tentes*, or in thy couerts, or in thy houses. And thereupon he attributeth as common to them both, *That they shall call folke into the mountaine* (that is to say) *of Sion*, there to make sacrifice to the liuing God, and therefore that God wil blesse them, in so much that they shal skim off the fat of the sea, that is to say, they shalbe enriched by trade of marchandise. And that although their countrey was sandy (as the seashores comonly be) so as there was no fruitefulnes of corne & wine; yet should they not faile to be rich for all that: for the sand (that is to say the Sea) should giue them sufficient abundance. That is the summe of the thing that is spoken here. Now (as hath beene touched heretofore) we see that Moses spake not of his owne head, but that God himselfe vttereth here the things which he had determined afore: for Moses could not haue gessed what was to befall in the portion of Zabulon. I haue told you afore, that the Israelites were not their owne caruers. True it is that the trybe of Gad and a parte of Ephraim had their portion beyond Iordan as shalbe declared hereafter: but all the rest of the portions were made by lot, so as it was not for any man to say, Such a thing shall befall mee. It behooued God him selfe to bee the whole doer, as wee see he was in this text, so as he might be acknowledged aboue all his creatures. Therefore when Moses declareth that the trybe of Zabulon shalbe planted by the seas side, he doeth vs to vnderstande that God had reuealed vnto him things vnknowen, and that his speaking was by the holy Ghost. When he sayeth that traffike and merchandise shalbe in the trybe of Zabulon, and that Issachar also shal go by sea; no dout but y therein God vttereth things which men would neuer haue thought. And so wee haue an infallible proofe, not onely of the promises that are set downe here, but also of all the doctrine of Moses. For to what ende did he so blesse the trybes of Israel, but to holde them vnder obedience of the lawe, and vnder the religion which he had taught them, not of himselfe, but as he had beene inioyned from aboue? Seeing it is so, let vs learne to apply all the testimonies to the setling of our selues in Gods trueth, that wee swarue not aside one way nor other, ne be doutfull in faith, but imbrace the things with all reuerence which are contained in the lawe. For without that, we be miserable, as all they be which haue their fantasticall deuotions, of which sort wee see the Papistes are, and likewise the Turkes, and also all the Heathen of the world. For they be verie wilfull in the things which they haue once conceiued. O (say they) I hold mee to this, because it is an ancient religion: but in the meane while they bee nothing sure of it. And why? Because that as long as men rest vpon their own opinion, all is but vanitie and smoke. Then can wee haue no sure faith vntill wee be come vnto God, & know that it is he which guideth and gouerneth vs. And therefore it standeth vs in hande to haue the lawe warranted vnto vs, so as wee may bee able to say that it is no doctrine of man, but that God is author thereof. The like is to bee saide of the prophesies and of the Gospel. Thus yee see what wee haue to marke in the first part of this text.

Now here are two things set one against another in Zabulon and Issachar. *Zabulon*, (sayeth he) *Reioyce thou in thy going out*: and vnto Issachar he sayeth, *Reioyce thou in thy rest*. Here the one goes abroad and seekes from place to place; & the other taries quietly and peasably at home like a snudge as they say. And yet Moses saith that God will make them both to prosper, though their cases be nothing like. And by *Zabulon going out*, he meaneth not his *end* (as some haue expounded it,) but the voyages which the people of that trybe were to make, as folke that should traffike into farre countries. His saying then is, *God will prosper thee in thy goings abroade*. When thou goest in danger by sea, and makest long voyages; thou shalt be guyded & gouerned by God, and his blessing shall accompanie thee. But as touching Issachar, because he was fearefull and cowardly, it is saide *that God will yet haue pitie vppon him, and blesse him though he loue his ease*. And it is not without cause that he speaketh so to Issachar. Wee see howe it is saide of him in the nine and fourtith Chapter of Genesis by Iacob, Issachar is as a strong Asse or a Mule of burthen which sleepeth (sayeth hee) betweene his packes. Hee sawe that ease was good, and he bowed downe his shoulders, and choose rather to bee a seruant and to pay taxes and tallages, than to trye his force in resisting his foes. Here wee see howe the nature of that people was strong and sturdie, but yet that they wanted heart, and were cowardly, so as they played the burdened Mule, which coucheth downe betweene his packes, and there falles asleepe, that is to say, Hee was like a great packehorse which careth not for libertie: in so much that although men loade him with heauie and intollerable burthens, yet he ceaseth not to yeeld to them still, as if a Mule should fall asleepe beeing loden with his packes. He bare then taxes & trybutes and passed not greatly for it: he was at a point for all other things, so he might eate and drink his fil; as ye shal see some lubberly loores, which so they may alwayes haue meat & drinke, do make no further reckening, neither can they any skil of freedome, they be in that behalfe as Oxen & Asses, so as they haue no care of any thing. And euen so was it with Issachar.

And Moses intent is not to sooth him in his vices when he sayeth, *that God will blesse him in*

the reſt of his: but it ſerueth to comfort the faithfull which were of that trybe; becauſe that elſe they might haue been diſcouraged, as hath bin touched afore. For God might ſeeme to haue vpbrayded them ſaying, Yee be not worthie to enioy the common freedom which I giue to my children; for yee be of a flauiſh nature, yee be great lubbers, which ſuffer your ſelues to bee made vnderlings. It might ſeeme then ỹ God gaue them a marke of reproche, to caſt them off from the aray of his children. Howbeit his intent was that the faithfull ſhoulde knowe, that although they had a hard burthen to beare as in reſpect of the worlde: yet notwithſtanding, God would not ceaſſe to bleſſe them. That was the verie meaning of Moſes.

And here wee haue to note in generall, that although men be able to trauell, and they haue skill alſo, ſo as they want not any thing: yet muſt all their proſperitie come of God and of his meere grace. For it is not without cauſe ỹ Moſes here ſendeth the trybe of Zabulon vnto God. They were men that ſpared not themſelues, they hazarded their liues, they traffiked into ſtrange countreys; and therefore a man woulde ſay it is no wonder though they were riche, for they were men of courage, they were vigilant, they were painfull, they had all worldly meanes to helpe them ſelues withall. Yea, but when all comes to reckening, it is ſhewed vs here that without Gods bleſſing all were to no purpoſe. So then let vs learne, not to preſume any thing vppon our owne trauel & skill, or any thing elſe, but let euery man referre himſelfe to God, that he may guyde vs in all our doings, according to this ſaying which we haue heard heretofore, Thou ſhalt not ſay, it is mine owne hand that hath gotten mee my foode, but know thou that it is God, who fed thy fathers by the ſpace of fourtie yeres in the wildernes; it is hee at whoſe hande thou receiueſt thy foode at this day. Thus much concerning that point. Deut.8.17.

Furthermore, as touching the trybe of Iſachar, wee haue to note that if it pleaſe God to bereaue vs of any earthly benefites for our imperfections ſakes, we muſt not be greeued out of meaſure therefore; but paciently beare the yoke, contenting our ſelues with this, that God in the meane ſeaſon turneth ỹ things to a good end vnto vs, which of themſelues were as a record that he reiecteth vs; and that he maketh them to ſerue as furtherances of our ſaluation. As for example, it falleth out that ſome folke haue ſome peculiar fault in them: as we ſee how ſome bee groſſewitted, ſo as they ſet not their mindes vpon a great ſort of things which might be good and conuenient for them: Others are fainthearted and rechleſſe, and other ſome, although they ſpare not them ſelues, yet haue they ſome other fault which is a let to them that they cannot throughly ſeeke their owne profit & commoditie. Wel, our Lord alſo bereaueth them of many things which he giueth to others that take paines, & his hand is ſtretched out to bleſſe the labors of ſuch as are painfull & imploy their wittes about it. It may wel be then that our Lord wil puniſh thoſe rechleſſe folke w the want of ſome earthly commodities, for not doing their indeuor as they ought to do. But yet doth it not followe that he taketh them not for his children ſtill, although he make them feele ſome temporal chaſticement, which he cauſeth alſo to ſerue to their ſoulhealth. They ſhal then receiue chaſticement for their infirmities, but yet ſhal they not ceaſſe to be Gods childrē ſtill. That is ỹ thing which we haue to gather where it is ſayd of the trybe of Iſachar, that through his cowardlines he ſhall keepe home, and bowe downe his ſhoulders to receiue the great burdens, tributes, & taxes that men lay vpon him, making no reckening at all of them. Well: and doth God ſee ſuch rechleſnes in them? He ſuffereth them to ſmart for it to the worldwarde; but yet howſoeuer they fare, he telleth them ỹ he wil not ceaſſe to be merciful to them. *Reioyce thou* (ſaith he) *in thy Tents.* Wee ſee nowe more clearly the thing that I ſaid afore; namely that Moſes intended not to flatter Iſachar in ỹ thing for which he was to be condemned, that is to wit, for the cowardlines whereof I haue made mention. Neuertheleſſe, becauſe that fault was vnreformable, & in the meane whyle God was to chaſtice that people with bondage, with tributes, and with tallages; therefore Moſes had a care to comfort them, ſpecially the faithfull, which might fall into deſpaire when they ſawe theſelues ſo puniſhed at Gods hand. Well (ſaith he) beare ye this burthen paciently, for yee be worthie of the puniſhment which God layeth vpō you. But howſoeuer the world go with you, be not out of hart, for he wil not faile to be a father to you ſtil. Although yee ſeeme to be ſubiect to many burthens, & he ſeeme to haue with drawen his hand from you & vouchſafe not to ſuccour you: yet notwithſtanding he wil haue pitie vpon you ſtil. Therfore be glad in your wretchednes & diſtreſſes. Lo how the faithful ought always to aſſuage their ſorowes when God chaſtiſeth them in this world, for ſmuchas his chaſtiſing of them is after ſuch a ſort, that yet neuertheles he eſtrangeth not himſelfe vtterly frō thē, but reſerueth them ſtil as of his houſhold & Church.

Moſes hauing ſpoken ſo of thoſe two trybes, addeth in cōmon, *that they ſhal cal folke vp into the mountaine, to offer vnto God the ſacrifice of righteouſnes.* No doubt but Moſes meant this of mount Sion: & that is yet one other propheſie. For no man could foreſee that God would haue his tēple to be builded in that place: & yet Moſes ſetteth it down expreſſly that it ſhalbe ſet vpon a hil. In deed he ſayth, Thy God will chooſe him a place where his name ſhalbe called vpon: but yet it was a hundred yeres after, yea, foure hūdred or rather Six hundred yeres after, ere any man knewe where that place was. But Moſes aſſigneth it to a mountaine, and that was by force of the ſpirite. For it muſt needes be that God guyded him thereto, ſeeing he could ſay, Vppon a mountaine ſhal my temple be builded. True it is, that hee nameth not mount Sion: but Deut.12.

but yet we see there was a comformity between that which was reuealed vnto Dauid, and that which had beene spoken so long aforehande by Moses. Heere therefore we haue yet againe an infallible proofe, that Moses deuised not any thing of himselfe, but that the liuing God vsed him continually as his minister, and as the instrument of his holy spirite. Againe, heere the two tribes of Isachar and Zabulon are commended for exhorting folke to the seruice of God. And it is a praise well woorth the noting. For thereby we be done to vnderstande, that it is not ynough for euery man to occupie himselfe in the seruice of God; but that our zeale must extende yet further, to the drawing of other men thereunto, accordingly also as is sayde thereof, specially when the prophet Esay treateth of the kingdome of our Lorde Iesus Christ, at which time euery man shall reach his hande vnto his neighbour, saying; Let vs goe vp into the Lordes hill to worshippe him. Heere Moses declareth that Isachar and Zabulon shall do the like, and draw their neighbours to the serving of God. But in very deede it were to small purpose for vs to incorage our neighbours to yeeld God his deserued honour, vnlesse wee ourselues did beare them companie.

And for that cause it is expressly sayde, *That they shall call folke, and offer Sacrifice with them.* The thing then in effect which we haue to gather vpon this text is, that we must as much as in vs lyeth indeuour to drawe all men on the earth vnto God, that all men may serue him and worship him with one accorde. And in deede if we haue any kindnesse in vs, sith we see that men goe to destruction till God haue gotten them vnder his obedience: ought we not to be moued with pity, to drawe the silly soules out of hell, and to bring them into the way of saluation? Againe on the other side, sith we knowe that God is our father; should we not be desyrous to haue him knowen to be the like to all men? And if we can not find in our heartes that all creatures should doe him homage; is it not a token that we haue no great regarde of his honour? Ye see then howe that one of the thinges whereunto we ought to apply our mindes and indeuours is, [first] to procure the silie ignorannt soules to serue God: and secondly to be alwayes incoraging of such as are in the right trade. As for example, when we see blinde wretches runne astray; surely if we be able and can haue any accesse or meanes to doe it, we ought to giue them a tast of the true religion, that they may submit themselues to God. Againe, we knowe wherein the seruice of God consisteth, namely in learning his woorde that we may put our trust in him, and therewithall call vpon him, yeelding him thankes for all the benefites which he hath bestowed vpon vs, and dedicating ourselues vnto him all our life long. Nowe at this day his seruice is spirituall; it consisteth not in the shadowes and ceremonies of the Lawe. Therefore let vs prouoke eth other to resorte to the hearing of Gods worde, let vs treate of it togethet to the edifying one of another, and let vs also giue good exaple of putting our trust in him, of being patient in our aduersities, and of walking vnder his feare. Afterwarde let vs call vpon him, as which is the chiefe Sacrifice that hee requireth at our handes; let vs flee to him alone for refuge; let vs yeelde him the prayse that is dewe to him for al his benefits, and let vs prouoke all others to do the like. That is the thing which is declared vnto vs in the example of Zabulon and Isachar. Psal. 5. 12.

But as I sayde afore, we must not teache our neighbours, and tarrie behinde ourselues, but we must beare them companie. And for y cause is it sayde *that they shall all worshippe.* Now then, if we will discharge our duetie, we must not say to others, pray you vnto God, put your trust in him, giue him thankes for the great number of benefites which he hath bestowed vppon you, dedicate your liues vnto him with all pureneſſe: it is not for vs to shift off the matter in such sort. What then? We must ioyne with them, and say, let vs serue our God, let vs worship him, let vs call vpon him, yea and let vs shewe the way to such as haue neede to be prouoked by vs. That is the thing then, which in the seconde place we haue to practise out of this text.

But heere a man might demaunde wherefore Moses speaketh this of Zabulon & Isachar rather than of the other tribes. It is likely that it was because of the situation of the place. For first they were farre ynough from the Temple, and therefore it was the harder for them to offer Sacrifices, because the iourney was painefull, or else they might easily haue growen out of kinde being so farre off & intermingled among the heathen, by reason whereof they might haue become hardehearted, and haue made no great account of Religion or of the Lawe. That is the cause why Moses doth purposely attribute vnto them the sayde title of zeale of prouoking folke to the seruing of God. True it is that the tribe of Gad (of whom mention shalbe made heereafter) and also a part of Ephraim should haue their portions allotted vnto them beyonde the Iordan. But although they were farre off from the temple, yet might they haue the Religion simple; they were not so mingled with the Heathen, they had not so great corruptions as were in the tribes of Zabulon and Isachar. For we knowe that these were neere vnto Galilie, and that a part thereof was called the Galily of the Gentiles. And when Salomon was in the greatest prosperitie of his kingdome, we see howe he gaue Cities in that Countrey vnto king Hiram, by meanes wherof it was like ynough that those people should bee corrupted. And vnder the worde *Folke*, Moses comprehended not onely the Tribes of Israell, but also those which erst had no acquaintaunce with God but were vtterly separated from the true and pure Religion. Of them is it sayd that Zabulon and Isachar should doe their indeuour to bring them into the right way, and to the doctrine of saluation. Numb. 32. 1. King. 9. 11.

Nowe by this example we be taught, that although the worlde and the flesh do diuers waies withdrawe vs and hinder vs from giuing ourselues to the seruice of God; yet is that no suffi-

cient excuse for vs, but wee must fight against it. And it is a very profitable warning. For wee see that euery strawe (as they say) will stop vs, when we be towardes the seruing of God. If a flye doe but whirle afore our eyes, wee take occasion to turne aside, O (say we,) I hadde good will, but there happened such a thing, and that disappointed mee: and so by that meanes we thinke ourselues quit and very well discharged. Then let vs consider, that although this worlde haue many lettes to plucke vs backe and to turne vs out of the right way; although wee haue many temptations; and although there be snares layd for vs by Satan, so that when we would goe one step forwarde, it seemeth that at euery pase we should meete with a mountaine: yet must we inforce ourselues, and howsoeuer we fare, we must not cocker ourselues in our delightes nor thinke that if we haue some harde and troublesome incounter to ouercome, that that will serue to discharge vs: But that seeing it is sayde of Zabulon and Issachar, who being placed in the borders or outleets of Iewry were mingled with the Gentils and heathenfolke, that they should not forbeare to prouoke their neighbours to serue God: we also ought to followe that which is sayd heere of them. And specially let vs put this in practise when we be among ydolaters, which would faine infect vs with their corruptions, and bring vs into a misliking of Gods seruice, to plunge vs in their ydolatrie. When we see such thinges, let vs followe the constancie and stoutnesse of those whō Moses cōmendeth & prayseth heere. For he setteth them as lookinglasses before our eyes, to the intent that we should followe them. Bee we then somtimes among the ydolaters? Let vs labour as much as in vs lyeth, to winne them to God and to the Gospell of our Lorde Iesus Christ. At leastwise when we shall haue done our indeuour, let vs continue still in the pure simplicitie which we holde of God and of our Lord Iesus Christ, and let vs not be turned from it by any maner of occasion. And in any wise when we goe about to win any ydolaters, let vs alwayes shewe them our good ensaple; that so farforth as is possible for vs, we may drawe them to the fayth, euen by shewing them that our Religion is warranted by our conuersation. Thus ye see in effect what wee haue to gather vppon this text.

And heere is speciall mention made of *the sacrifices of Righteousnesse*, to shewe that euen in the time of the shadowes and figures, Gods will was not to be serued with countenances onely, but that he would haue men so come vnto him with truth and righteousnesse: for hee hath euer hated hypocrisie. Truely the diuersitie betweene the fathers of olde time and vs is this, that when they worshipped God it behoued them to ad sacrifices, and to set vp lightes, and to haue many other ceremonies, all which thinges are layde downe at this day. But yet it was Gods will in all ages that men shoulde offer themselues to him with pureneſſe of heart, according to this saying in Ieremy, Lord, thine eyes regard the thing that is right. And therefore we must not thinke that God did euer take pleasure in any of these outwarde thinges which are spoken of in the Lawe. For he commaunded them for mennes sakes. He did it not in respect of himselfe, but to keepe the people in order who were like to litle children, vntill the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ. Nowe seeing that vnder the Lawe and ceremonies Gods will was to be serued in truth: let vs vnderstand, that as nowe when his seruice is altogether spirituall, (as our Lord Iesus Christ sheweth in the fourth of Saint Iohn where hee sayth to the woman of Samaria, that God would no more haue the things y were required vnder the Lawe, but would be serued altogether in spirit and truth:) if we will serue him duely, it is not for vs to haue any store of pelting gewgawes before men, as who would say, wee woulde please him with murly mewes, but we must offer him the sacrifices of righteousnesse. And this is a doctrine too much corrupted by the world. For we see what men doe commonly terme Gods seruice at this day. I ouerpasse the doctrines of the papistes, they be but mens inuentions wherin there is not one syllable of Gods worde. But let vs put the case that GOD accepted the thinges which they doe; yet are they nothing worth, because there is nothing in them but corrupt of God and hypocrisie. When the papistes haue babbled very much when they haue trotted on pilgrimages, when they haue lighted vp tapers, when they haue bedecked their puppets and ydols, they beare themselues in hande that God is well payd. And why? For they transforme him with their dotages, and thinke they may serue him after their owne fashion & pleasure. We see then that the wretched worlde is become brutish. And we haue so much the more needē to marke well this text, where mention is made of the sacrifices of righteousnesse, to shew that we doe but vnhallowe the name of God, when we bring not our heartes to him, to offer him a pure and cleane oblation. Yea and we see that Dauid also did practise the same doctrine in his time. For whereas he sayeth, Offer vnto God the sacrifice of righteousnesse, it is a rebuking of them that had peruerted the Religion. And because his enemies had their full scope at that time, and he himselfe was chased and banished in that while, & the wicked vaunted themselues as the papistes do at this day, with, What? We be the Catholike Church; wee haue Gods temple; we haue all the titles which belong to the Church: therefore Dauid skorned all such abusers of Gods name, and tolde them that all their dealinges were but leazinges. And why? Offer vnto God the sacrifice of righteousnesse. He vseth the selfe same word which Moses hath set downe heere, to shewe that God neuer ment that men should discharge themselues towardes him with Ceremonies and such like thinges, but that he intended to bring them to his spirituall seruice, that is to say, to put their truste in him, to call vpon him, and to yeelde him the glorie and prayse of all good thinges. That is the thing which he requireth, and the marke whereat hee would haue vs to leuell.

Iohn 4.23

Psal. 4.6.

Ier. 5 3.

And

And so we haue one good lesson more in this text, which shall serue for an ende and conclusion, because the time will not beare any more. Let vs marke well then, that Moses hauing spoken so of the zeale which should be in the tribes of Isachar & Zabulon, sayth that God will blesse them. True it is that nowe hauing the kingdome of heauen opened vnto vs by our Lorde Iesus Christ, by reason whereof it behoueth vs to looke vp higher; wee shall not alwayes be riche in this worlde; we shall not occupie the trade of marchandice by sea, we shall not flie off the fatte thereof: for it is euen good for vs that our Lorde should keepe vs vnder in lowe state. But yet shall we be blessed of him, if wee bee his children; according as Saint Paul declareth that the trewe Religion and feare of God haue promises both of the present life and of the life to come. And therefore if we intende to be gouerned by Gods hande, and that he should sende vs prosperitie conuenient for our welfare: let vs learne to dedicate ourselues vnto him, let vs all indeuour to serue him, and let vs worshippe him with one accorde. If we doe so, surely wee shall finde that God hath not forgotten vs, and we shall also see what force there is in his grace, when it is vttered vppon vs. And that is the meaning of our Lorde Iesus Christ where hee sayeth, that we must first seeke the kingdome of God, that is to say, we must first indeuor as much as is possible, that God may be honoured, & that the world may be gathered vnto him; and wee ourselues must come formost. When we once haue this zeale, all other thinges shalbe cast vnto vs. But if we beginne at the present life; if we be ouercarefull for our sustenance and foode; if we be so wedded to this worlde that we make none accoumpt of the kingdome of heauen: wee may take peynes and toyle night, yea euen till we breake our armes and legges asunder: but yet it shall so litle boote vs, that it shall rather turne all to our vtter confusion. Therfore let vs marke vpon this text, that first of all God must be knowen of all: and then thereupon wee may looke that he will haue a fatherly care of vs, not only in calling vs to the heauenly inheritaunce, but also in prouiding vs of thinges necessarie, euen while we be as pilgrims and wayfarers in this worlde.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good GOD with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to vouchsafe to touche vs more and more with them to the quicke, and to draw vs to such repentaunce, that we misliking our sinnes and being sorie for them, may obtaine the grace to be throughly reclaymed vnto him; and that although we be estraunged from him, and doe dwell in the middest of so manie temptacions, stumblingblockes & impediments, as long as wee bee compassed with our mortall flesh: yet notwithstanding he may not faile to preserue vs, and to giue vs such strength as wee may maintaine battell against all thinges that may turne vs from him, vntill wee bee come to the heauenly rest, and that all our ioy and contentation may be there, and that in the middest of the miseries of this worlde, we may patiently beare his chastisements & corrections, vntill he haue made it knowen vnto vs that they haue benefited vs towardes our saluation. That it may please him to graunt this grace; not only to vs, but also to all people & Nations of the earth, &c.

On Saturday the iiij. of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCVII. Sermon, which is the seuenth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

20 Also he sayde of Gad, Blessed bee he that inlarged Gad: hee dwelleth as a lyon and snatcheth away the arme with the head.

21 He looked to himselfe at the beginning, because a portion of the Lawgiuer was hidden there; yet shall he come with the princes of the people, and execute the Lordes iustice, and his iudgement with Israell.

22 Also he sayde of Dan; Dan is as a Lyons whelpe, hee shall leape from Basan.

23 Also he sayde of Nepthali; O Nepthali which hast thy fill of [Gods] good pleasure, and art full of the Lordes blessing; take possession at the west and South.

24 Also he sayd of Aser; Aser shalbe blessed with children, and acceptable to his brethren, and shall dippe his foote in Oyle.

25 Thy Inclosures shall be yron and brasse, and thy life shalbe according to thy dayes.

Heere

HEere wee haue to treate of the blessednes of the tribe of Gad, to whom that name was giuen, because that whereas his mother had erst beene despised & as it were reiected of her husband Iacob, now after many other children had by him, reioycing that GOD had made her so fruitefull, shee sayde of this Gad, *In number, or in hande* [or *Hoste*]: And for the same cause also when Iacob blessed this his sonne, he sayde, An armie shall rise vp against Gad, but hee shall get the vpper hande. Whereby he ment, that as the mother of him was fruitefull in children, so Gad should become a great tribe, and be so multiplied, that he should be able to ouercome his enemies. This promise doth Moses confirme and ratifie, saying, *That God will inlarge Gad*. We see then how that in this promise Moses hath shewed, ℣ the blessing which was giuen to Gad himselfe was not in vaine, but that God continued the same fauour towardes all the whole tribe, so as he had alwayes a speciall care of that people, to performe all that euer hee had sayde, as well to Abraham as to the other Patriarkes. Now we must apply this to our owne vse; and although the same matter belong not vnto vs nowadayes; yet haue we a generall lesson to gather thereupon; namely that we may well apply vnto ourselues al the promises which are giuen in the holy scriptures; yea and wee may apply them in such sorte, as we may euermore conclude, that not so much as one mite of them shall fayle vs.

Gen. 30. 11.

Gen. 49. 19.

Nowe Moses addeth, *That he shalbe as a Lyon tearing his pray, as well the hand as the arme*. Whereby he betokeneth that those people shall haue enemies, but that they shall giue them the repulse by force. To be short we see how it behooued that people to be exercised with diuers battelles, but yet that God would alwayes ayde them and giue them meanes to ouerthrow their enemies. And therefore let vs learne, that although our Lord suffer vs to indure many troubles, yet doth it not follow thereupon that he shaketh vs off, or that he will not be mercifull to vs & make vs to feele his goodnesse. For what else are the blessinges which Moses rehearseth heere, and which Iacob vttered in the foresaid alleged place; but a sure warrant that God woulde shewe himselfe gratious to the tribes of Israell? And yet is this no impediment but that they should haue many troubles, many warres, and many temptations. And therefore let vs not thinke that because God accounteth vs for his children, and hath pitie vpon vs, therefore wee be exempted from all vexation, so as we shall liue at our ease, and all thinges shall fall out to our lust and liking: for yet notwithstanding wee shalbe afflicted and molested. Wherefore let it suffise vs that we haue God on our side, who will at length set vs vp, and giue vs such deliuerance and issue out of all our miseries, that wee shall throughly perceiue that he holdeth on our side. As long as we haue that, let vs passe patiently through all the tribulations which it behoueth vs to suffer.

It followeth *that God saw that he had a portion of the Lawmaker hidden, and yet neuerthelesse that he should go with the Princes, to execute Gods Iustice and Iudgements*. Moses rehearseth that which was alreadie come to passe concerning the tribe of Gad, and excuseth them for desyring to haue their portion beyonde the Iordan, that is to wit the countrey of Og king of Basan, and whatsoeuer else had beene conquered before the death of Moses. It might seeme that in this case the two tribes of Gad and Ruben were to bee condemned, for their ouerhastie eagernesse in desiring to haue portion made afore the people were come into the Lande of promise. But yet doth God allowe of it, with condition that they should require that partition. And how was that? That Countrey had else lyen desert, and had serued to no purpose. Hereupon the two tribes alleaged that they had great heere of cattell, and that the sayde countrey was a Countrey of very good pasture, so as they might leaue their wiues and children there, and not be in charge with the whole hoste. Againe they alleaged that in the meane while their cattell should prosper, & the Countrey be inhabited. As touching their owne persons, they offered to go with the rest of the people, and to die there rather than not to discharge their dutie in ℣ right of brotherhood. Moses then excuseth the request made by the tribe of Gad that they might dwell beyond Iordan, and haue their portion and inheritance there. Therefore he sayth, *That they had a hidden Portion of the Lawgiuer*. [or at the Lawgiuers hande]. This text hath comonly beene expounded thus, He sawe that this should be the graue of Moses the Lawgiuer: but that is ouercolde & not worthy to bee spoken of, notwithstanding that some sticke vnto it. And why? Because wee should bee neuer the suter of the sense, which yet notwithstanding is as fit as any can bee. For to what ende is the excuse of Moses comprised heere? namely that he should haue a portion at Gods hande in that Countrey. As if he shoulde say, that God was led by good discretion, when he desyred his dwelling place beyonde Iordan. If a man should reply, How so? Was it not Gods will to reserue ℣ distributing of the inheritances to his people by the hand of Iosua? And againe, was it meete that the Countrey should haue bin conquered afore? But that was not doone: and therefore there was rash dealing in this case, or at leastwise there was ouerhastie desire. If any man reply after that maner, Moses sayeth that the portion was hidden, and he termeth it *a portion from the Lawgiuer*. Whereby hee signifieth that God attempted not any thing but ℣ which was lawfull & permitted. For it was well knowen that it was Gods will ℣ the sayd Land should be conquered after an extraordinary fashion, & that it should be possessed & put to good vse, & ℣ some benefit should be made of it while all the rest of the people went to conquere the Lande of Canaan. So then, the worde *Lawgiuer* may better be referred vnto God than vnto Moses. For so God be obeyed, all thinges shall goe well. Men

Num. 32. 6

will

will perchaunce finde fault with our doings; but let it suffice vs to haue God for our warranty, when we shall not haue offended him, nor withstood his ordinance. The meaning then of Moses is, that God knewe he demaunded not aught which was not conformable to the purpose of God: and yt in so doing he was not to be blamed, forasmuch as he had followed Gods ordinance.

Againe, he termeth it *a hidden portion*, meaning that he did not take his part by violence, but that he tooke it as a thing belonging to him, and which was lawfull for him to doe. For although it fell not to him by lot, but by consent of the people and of al the other tribes: yet notwithstanding, God declared that it was his will it should be so, and that it was good. And why? For it was a hidden portion; that is to say, God had foreappoynted it to that vse; and he would not that in that behalfe they should followe the common rule, nor that they should tarry till the common partitions were to be made by lot. And thereupon it is sayde, *that he should goe with the Princes*, that is to say with the rest of the tribes, to execute Gods Iustice and Iudgement vnto Israell: so as his dwelling in that countrey shoulde not holde him backe to deceiue his brethren, and to fayle them at their neede: but that notwithstanding that they saw they might haue a bidden in a fat and fertile Countrey, yet hee would not inioy his state, but followe ye warres still vntill all were at an ende, and that the Lord had giuen rest to all the other tribes. Nowe we see what Moses meant in effect.

And by this place we be put in minde, that in all our doings we must haue an eye to Gods will. For as soone as we swarue from that, there remaineth no excuse for vs, what colour or couere soeuer we pretende. Heere then is a good rule to discerne betweene good and euill: namely, if men submit themselues to Gods ordinance, so as they attempt not any thing, ne take libertie to do one thing or other, except they knowe it pleaseth God it should be so: then shal all things go well. And it is a lesson well worthy to be marked, to the intent we wander not in our life, ne stande in doute and grudge of conscience, to inquire of the thinges that are to be done. Then let vs alwayes haue Gods will before our eyes, to do whatsoeuer he cõmandeth vs, and to followe whithersoeuer he calleth vs: and then let vs not passe though men slaunder and condemne vs; so we may be acquit before God, that ought to suffise vs. For we see whereupon the acquitall which Moses setteth downe heere to iustifie the tribe of Gad, is grounded: namely *that he saw that he had that Portion from the Lawgiuer*: that is to say, that he might require the present partition, without gainestanding the will of God. For it is Gods iustifying of vs that maketh vs to stande vpright: & contrariwise as soone as he pronounceth the word to condemne vs, we must needes fall downe though al ỹ world should hold vs vp.

And this word *Lawgiuer* is to be marked well: for it is the same whereunto S. Iames had an eie, where he sayth that there is but one Lawgiuer, who can condemne and destroy, and who can also saue. He sheweth vs that it is not for vs to giue sentence against our brethren; for else we take too much vpon vs. Why so? Because (sayth he) there is none but God to whom it belongeth to condemne or to acquit. And why? For he is the only Iudge, and we be his vnderlingues: let his office to lay Lawes vpon vs, and so put vs to the yoke, vnder the which he will haue both great and small to humble themselues. After the same maner is it sayde in this text, that God knowing how there was a portion layde vp for him with the Lawgiuer, might lawfully require to haue his partition made there, (that is to wit vpõ the hill of Basan,) & hee might not continually driue his cattell from place to place. Now then we see, that in the person of those whõ Moses speaketh of, we haue a generall rule, to shewe that when we followe the thinges which God liked of, and passe not beyond our boundes; it is a good warrant for vs to defie the whole worlde when they finde fault with our doinges. And on the contrary part, when we haue not Gods worde to guide vs and rule vs by, our warrant of his will al that we can alleage wilbe to no purpose. And why? For we be set in this worlde to none other ende, but to do homage vnto God with our life. Now if we intende to obey him vnfainedly; we must shewe it by the obedience which we geilde vnto his woorde. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to gather vpon this place.

Note it is sayde, *that he shall followe the Princes of Israel, to performe Gods Iustice and Iudgements*. Hereby Moses sheweth that God should not be turned away from God by the cõmodities which he was to inioy. For although hee had already gotten him a certaine dwelling, and was nowe in a place of rest: yet notwithstanding he should not forbeare to go suffer cold and heat, to lye vpon the hard ground, to followe the wars, to put himselfe to all maner of daunger, and to indure trauaile and all maner of peines of warfare. Seeing he ceased not to serue GOD in his calling, surely he was to be excused. And we haue a good lesson to gather vpon this place; which is, that we may then well inioy the aduantages which God giueth vs, when they holde vs not backe from the discharge of our duties, and from employing ourselues faithfully in the things which God inioyneth. For although a thing be lawfull of it selfe: yet dayly we abuse it when we be hindered by it that we keepe not on our way, whither our Lorde appointeth vs. And herein wee see howe there are very few nowadayes, which are not guilty of peruerting the vse and right vse of all the benefits which God bestoweth vpon them. We may well say we haue nowe riche, and yt we do iustly possesse the things which God hath giuen vs: but yet for all that, who is he which is not ouerencombred with earthly cares, when he hath goods & ease? Who is he which is not too much wedded to them? which resteth not too much vpon them? Who is he which doeth not so giue himselfe vnto them, that he minideth not ỹ heauenly life? Yee shall see a great number which become cold, when God hath once giuen them goodes: and others some become altogether blockish.

kinde. How many rich folke shall ye find, which are disposed to giue themselues wholly vnto God? Nay, we see they be held backe as with lines and ropes, in so much as they be not able to step one stepp right forth, because their goodes do hinder them. And euen therin do we see a manifest condemnation, so as there is no excuse to be sought for, wherewith we shielde ourselues afore God. To be short, so soone as God giueth vs any forehand in this worlde or any commoditie, by and by we be as it were tyed heere beloweth, and we draw backe from him, whereas we should rather goe vnto him. We can not set forth one step to goe vnto him; it is pitifull to see how lasie we be in doing our dueties. And we see that scarsely the hundreth man doth determine with himselfe to follow God: and if he doe, it is so lasily as may be. Alwayes the fault shalbe layd vpon y goodes of the world for plucking vs backe from following the good which God calleth vs vnto. But heere it is sayde on the contrary parte, that God will then like well of our vsing of his benefites, when we be his people, and when we seeke to do Iustice and Iudgement; that is to say, when we shroude not ourselues vnder pretence of our impediments, or vnder pretence of want of vnderstanding, as we see the common maner is to alleage such fonde excuses as these, I haue boughte a yoke of Oxen, I haue purchased a Manour; Luke.14.18. and another sayeth, I haue taken a wife, and because I am maryed, I can not go thither as God calleth me. Forasmuch then as we perceiue that Gods benefits which of their owne nature ought to be spurres to pricke vs forewarde, are hinderaunces to plucke vs backe to the intent we may come to him with the earnester desire, let vs inforce our selues the more stronglye to ouercome all thinges that may hinder vs or plucke vs backe. Moreouer where mention is made of Iustice and Iudgement, let vs marke that it is meet concerning the conquest of that Countrey. Moses termeth it Gods Iustice & Iudgement, after the fashion vsed of the holy scriptures, for these words heere do signifie that rule which God giueth vs. And that is yet one other notable point. For sometimes we may gather good doctrine out of one worde. It is not for nought, that the holy Ghost vseth these so excellent wordes, of executing Gods Iustice and Iudgement, in stead of saying, obey God. For thereby hee sheweth that as long as men deale after their owne fancy, they go crossely and crookedly, so as there is no right dealing in them. I graunt they beare themselues in hande that their life is well ordered, so as no fault can be founde with it, for euery man Prou.21.2. standeth in his owne conceit, he sayth Salomon. But yet for all that, heere God telleth them from heauen, that there is none other righteousnesse or Iustice, than that whereof he himselfe is the author, and (to be short) that we do but go astray, and behaue our selues like wandering beastes, if we be not grounded vpon his worde. Now let vs see how the worlde hath discharged it selfe heereof. It is as hard a thing as may be to hold ourselues vnder the obedience of God, that we flatter not ourselues to inuent some one thing or other. For howsoeuer the worlde go, this can neuer be altered, that is to wit that we obey God when we do Iustice and Iudgement: and that in following our owne fancies wee take crooked & vntowarde wayes, and (to be short) that we do but raunge heere and there, without going forewarde.

And truely this circumstance destroyeth well to be noted. For at the first a man would not say, it were Iustice and Iudgement, to goe to put all to the swerde. For the very purpose for which it is sayde that God should followe the tribes of Israell, was to goe with naked swordes, to kill all the males of that Countrey both great & small. And therefore in that case it might seeme there was some cruelty. Yea; but yet for all that, it behoued it to be executed; for it was the iust vengeaunce of God. Fourehundred yeeres afore, he might well haue rooted out those people, who were so frowarde, and so excessiue in all wickednesse, that although God punished them with extreme rigor, yet must it needes be confessed that he had iust cause so doe it. Yet did he spare them and beare with them. But when their wickednesse was once ripe, and come to the full growth, as had beene sayde thereof vnto Abra- Gen.15.16 ham fourehundred yeeres afore: then was it for God to execute his last sentence. And so let vs marke, that although the thing which God commaundeth vs may seeme straunge vnto vs, and we may alleage some reasons against it and cast doutes of it: yet is it not for vs to be wiser than he, or to make any replying to shrinke from obeying him: but wee must goe through with it. For it is a true proofe and tryal of our subiection, when God commaundeth vs a thing that may seeme scarse good, and yet notwithstanding because he speaketh it, we hold our wittes captiue, so as we take not leaue to say, I am of a contrary opinion, I thinke it not to be reasonable. Let vs not bee so presumptuous as to dispute against God, but though a thing seeme euill vnto vs, let vs thinke it good if he allowe of it. That is the thing wherein we shewe that we be rightly obedient vnto him in all pointes. Therefore when we heare Gods Iustice & iudgement spoken of, though the case concerne the vtter rooting out of all that euer is to be found in a whole Countrey, and the putting of all thinges to the sword without sparing: let vs assure ourselues that it is not for men to be iudges of good and euil in that case, but that looke whatsoeuer God speaketh it, behoueth them to holde them to it, and to rest wholly thereupon. Forsith the tribe of God is accused heere for not enterprysing any thing against God, and commended for doing Iustice and Iudgement in warre: much more reason is it, that we should indeuour to obey God when he inioyneth vs things which do much more proue themselues to be iust and rightfull, as when he will haue vs to be dedicated to him in al holines, to pray vnto him, to put our whole trust in him, to liue in good loue with our neighbors, indeuoring to doe seruice to euery man, and to be sober and stayed in all our conuersation. For in those

cases

cases his lustine is apparant ynough. We cannot reply, that it is too strange a thing; for wee haue this record ingraued in vs aforehand, that God requireth not any thing of vs, which wee owe not vnto him. Nature driueth vs thereunto. Although wee be vnwilling therto, and that we haue a malicious & froward lust in our harts which draweth vs cleane backe: yet can we not say but that the things which are conteined in Gods law be iust, good & rightful. Sith it is so, let vs set our mindes vpon this lesson, that wee may giue our selues vnto him, and breake al the bonds that might hold vs backe, & specially ỹ the gracious benefites which he bestoweth vpō vs, may not be so peruerted, as to take occasion therby to deale leaudly, to as we should not still do our indeuour to giue our selues to the obeying of him.

Now it followeth afterward, *that Dan is as a Lyons whelp, & that he shall go out of Basan.* No doubt but ỹ here Moses intended to strengthen ỹ tribe of Dan, & to giue them courage because they were few in number. They were a tribe of no great reputation, & they seemed not worthie to be made account of. Now, they which are so despysed of the world, & are of no force, credit, or countenance, are alwayes in doute, & thinke that one time or other they shalbee put to the spoyle, or rather that men shall set their feete vpon their throtes. Forsomuch therfore as me beholding their own weaknes, do distrust after that fashiō: Moses meant to exhort the tribe of Dan to put their trust in God, & not to dout but that he would maintaine them, notwithstanding that they were fewe, & had not wherof to get any great authoritie to the worldward. And that is the cause also why Iacob in blessing him
Ge.49.16. sayth, Dan shall iudge his people as the other tribes of Israel. The word *Dan* signifieth *to iudge*: & that name was giuen to the Patriark *Dan*. For it seemed vnto Rachel, that God had condemned her; or rather that men had condemned her vniustly. Oh (sayd she) God hath taken my
Ge.30.6. case in hand, he hath iudged me; & thereby it appeareth that my quarell hath been maintained of God: for he hath shewed in the end, that he condemned me not. Iacob then taketh holde of that speach & sayth, *Dan shall iudge*. And in the Hebrew, this worde *Iudge* signifieth, not
1.Sam.4.19 only to giue sentence in matter of controuersie as it doeth in our language, but also to rule or gouerne, & to haue preheminence. And that is the cause why it is sayd, *Such a one iudged*, that is to say, gouerned or ruled. And thereupon also doth the booke of Iudges take that name; because the Iudges, that is to say the gouerners had al the preheminence ouer the people. Thus then we see what Moses meant in saying *that Dan should be as a Lyons whelpe*: that is to say, that although he seemed neuer so weake, & wanted wherewith to maintaine himselfe to ỹ worldward, yet notwithstanding God would giue him strength, & he should be as a Lyons whelp that leapeth frō Basan (it was the place that was assigned him for his portiō) & stregthen himself in such wise, ỹ he should be maintained & defended.

To be short, wee haue to marker vppon this place, that our Lord at pleasure him, is well ynough preserue vs, inasmuch that although we be without defence & vtterly spurnished of these inferiour helps, as we haue neither any great number of people, nor great riches, nor great scope of ground, yet we needs not bee afraid for any of the enemies of God, ỹ are ynough to preserue vs, so we put our trust in him. Will we then be safe & sure? We must not haue any eye to our own power: for that is a thing that spyteth God & kindleth his wrath, inasmuch ỹ when men thinke themselues well assured, because they haue wherewith to repulse their enemies, & are rich, welthie & strong: that presumption of theirs must needs make God to bereaue them of all, that he may shew vnto them that it is in vaine for them to turne away from him, & to put their trust in corruptible & transitorie things. And it is a iust vengeance. For we cannot put one drop of trust in any creature, but Gods right is diminished therby: for we withdraw our faith from him, which ought to be wholly shut vp & as it were tyed there. Againe, on ỹ other side when we be weake, let vs vnderstand that it behoueth vs in any wise to flee to Gods protection, that we may be brooded vnder his wings. And God seeing vs to be litle ones will helpe vs. Wherfore let vs therupon consider, ỹ hee hath power ynough to withstand al our enemies; insomuch ỹ whereas to outward seeming we haue not the strength of a Gnat, hee will giue vs the strength of a Lyon, or rather he himselfe will be a Lyon for vs, as he vseth the same similitude be- Deut.20.
fore, & as he speaketh therof by his Prophet Esay, saying that he will rore like a Lyon, to repulse the furie and violence of his enemies: and that he will snatch vp the pray, & no man shall be so bolde as to come neere him to take it frō him. Now then, when wee bee thus assured of the goodnesse of our God; wee shall euer haue wherwith to repulse all the practises of ỹ worlde against vs, how many perils so euer wee see at hand, and as it were hanging ouer our heads. And wee haue good cause to put this lesson in practise. For we see the malice of the enemies of the Gospel, wee see also how all things nowadayes are so farre out of order, that by all likelyhood wee shoulde bee deuoured euery minute of an houre. And although a greate sort doe neuer thinke vppon it, yet in very deede the knyfe is continually vppon our throte. And it is not for any man to flatter himselfe in this behalfe, for then shoulde wee bee too dulwitted. It standeth vs in hand to consider our owne daungers, that wee may bee quickened vp to call vppon GOD, and to flee vnto him for refuge. Then if wee looke well to our state; wee shall perceiue that our lyfe hangeth as at a threede, so as death threateneth vs on all sydes, and wee haue no power to withstande it. The onely remedie whereof is this, that forasmuch as God hath promised to mayntaine the feeble and weake things, and that when in sight of the worlde, all thinges are like to slippe away,

yet neuertheleſſe he will haue his hand reached out, to helpe ſuch as are ſo vile and deſpiſed, & ſo bold them vnder his tuition, that they may be inſtructed: we muſt reſt wholly vpon him, and learne to leane vnto him, and beare all things patiently through the power of that promiſe, & with our glorying in God, not bee aſhamed to confeſſe our weakneſſe, to the intent that he may vtter foorth his power, and make it the better knowen, when the worlde ſhall ſee that there was nothing at all on our ſide, and therfore that we play not the vainglorious fooles who would alwayes couer and hide their own weakneſſe although it be knowen. And what a fondneſſe is it to bee deſirous to beginne ſomewhat, when we haue nothing in vs? Is it not a fighting againſt nature? And yet in ſo doing we fight againſt God. For it is a darkening of his glory, when we will needs bleare mennes eyes, and beare them in hande that there is that in vs which is not. Therefore let vs learne to acknowledge our meaneſſe with all humilitie, that we may prouoke one another to reſort vnto our God; and that although wee be but a ſmall handfull of people, and as it were vtterly without ſtrength of our ſelues; yet notwithſtanding, wee ſhalbee defended from aboue, euen when we be caſt vp to all perils here beneath.

After that Moſes hath ſpoken of Dan, he addeth concerning Nephthalim, *that he ſhall haue ouer his fill of Fauour*, or of good will, or of free good will: for the Hebrewe word ſignifieth *Free-beſtowed loue*. Then ſhall he haue his fill of Gods free fauour, & be repleniſhed with the bleſſing of the Lorde. Nowe as concerning Nephthalim, it is ſayd in Iacobs bleſſing of him, that hee ſhalbe as a hynde that can skill to ſcape daunger, a fine Hynd that is brought vp deintily, & that ſhall giue goodly wordes, ſuch as will well content men. Hereby Iacob meant to betoken that this trybe ſhould not bee ſo greatly troubled with warre as the other trybes were: but that it ſhould maintaine it ſelfe after another faſhion, namely by being mylde and amiable, & that his ſpeech ſhould be full of gentleneſs and courteſie, and that no man ſhould moleſt him. And in ſteed hereof it is ſayd in this place, that Nephthalim ſhall haue his fill of Gods free fauour. The ſtate of this trybe then was better than the ſtate of Dan or of Gad who had enemies, and were continually aſſayled, becauſe God had not giuen them a peaſable ſtate. Now wee knowe that all the riches of the worlde, & all that euer wee can deſire beſydes is nothing woorth; if wee enioy them not in peace. To be ſhort, the chiefe good thing that men can wiſh, is to be voyde of griefe and miſtruſt. This is promiſed to the trybe of Nephthalim, at leaſtwiſe in comparſon of the other trybes. Not that that countrey alſo was not waſted in the ende becauſe of the vnthankfulnes of the people. But God ſheweth here, that whereas hee intended to ſtabliſh the people of Iſrael hee would giue vnto euery of them his portion, & the bleſſings which hee woulde beſtowe vppon them ſhould be diuers; accordingly as we know well, that hee dealeth not alike with all men, no not euen with his owne children, whome hee hath choſen. Albeit that hee loue them all, and be father in common to them all, yet doeth hee handle them diuerſly. After the ſame ſort was it with this people. Here then wee ſee as in a mirroir, that God is not bounde to gouerne his Church after ſuch a ſort, that euery faithfull man ſhoulde haue the ſame thing that the others haue. For God knoweth what is meete for vs. One is handled after one faſhion, [and another after another.] And doth God (ſayth ſome man) take pleaſure in ſuch varietie? For hee knoweth that thoſe things are for our behoofe. Although wee knewe none other reaſon, euen this were ſufficient, that he doeth not any thing but with perfect righteouſnes & wiſedome: and that ought to content vs. But we ſee moreouer, and finde it proued to vs by experience, that it is not good that all men ſhould be dealt withal alike. And why? For we haue diuerſe diſpoſitions & diuerſe complexions; al méare not to be fed with one kind of meate, nor all diſeaſes to be cured with one medicine. God therefore vſeth diuerſitie of dealings towardes vs, after as hee perceiueth it expedient for vs. And that is the cauſe why I ſayd that the whole ſumme of Gods bleſſings is a mirror vnto vs to ſhewe vs that hee ſo diſtributeth his gracious giftes vnto his Church as that euerie man hath his meaſure and qualitie, and yet notwithſtanding that howſoeuer wee fare, wee muſt with all humilitie giue thankes vnto GOD, for that it pleaſeth him to bee our father: [aſſuring our ſelues] that although he giue vs not all that our fleſh craueth; yet will he ſuccour vs at our need, and turne our ſorrowes to good, making them to ſerue to our ſaluation.

Gen. 49. 21.

But it behoooueth vs to marke well the word that is ſet downe heere by Moſes, where he ſayeth, *that Nephthalim ſhall haue his fill of Gods fauour, and that he ſhalbe repleniſhed with his bleſſing.* This word *Bleſſe* (as wee knowe) is taken diuers wayes in the holy Scripture. Sometime it is taken for praying. As when wee bleſſe one another, it is as much to ſay, as wee wiſh well one to another. And when it is attributed vnto God, it is alſo taken for benefiting or dooing good. For when God ſayeth the words, the deede goeth ioyntly therewith. God then needeth not to wiſh vs any good, if hee doo but ſay that hee will doe vs good, wee ſhal haue our fill thereof, and whatſoeuer is expedient for our ſaluation. Nowe then, Gods bleſſing is a teſtimonie and effect of the free fauour, good will, and loue which hee beareth towardes vs. But yet this free loue of God is as the fountayne: and then his bleſſing is as the Conduit pype. Therefore whenſoeuer wee receiue any good or proſperitie; let vs aſſure our ſelues that it commeth of Gods bleſſing of vs, that is to ſaye, of his vttering of his fauour towardes vs; but yet muſt wee euer reſort to that free loue of his, when ſo euer wee bee ſo bleſſed at his hande. For hee would giue vs no ſhow of his fatherly goodnes, if

if he had not receiued vs alreadie for his children. And that is the cause why he dealeth so gently and kindly with vs. Moses then hath kept here a verie good order, in saying *that Nephthaly should haue his fill of Gods fauour, and be replenished with his blessing.* Hee setteth downe *Fauour* in the first place, for (as I saide) that is the very welspring: and afterward he addeth *the blessing* which proceedeth thereof, that is to saye, the record which God yeldeth by effect, that he loueth vs, and that hee hath adopted vs for his children, in respect whereof hee vouchsafeth to powre out vpon vs all the stores & treasures of his goodnes.

Now haue wee a good lesson to gather vpon this text: which is, that if wee bee desirous of prosperitie, wee must seeke it at Gods hand; & not do as they do which wish ynough, but in the meane whyle cannot lift vp their hearts to call vppon God. Looke vppon the wishes of this world, how they flee in the aire; euery man coueteth whatsoeuer most liketh his flesh; & there is no ende of wishing, with I woulde, I woulde. And whereas men speake after that fashion, yet shall yee scarse finde one among a hundred, which directeth himselfe to God, to say, Lorde thou knowest what is meete for mee, vouchsafe I beseech thee to sende it mee. Forasmuch then as men are so gadding, and that their nature leadeth them but to flickering in the aire after their wishes; and in the meane while they occupie not themselues in prayer and supplication: therefore it behoooueth vs to marke well the texts, where it is shewed vs that all prosperitie commeth of God. And moreouer we must vnderstand that when God vttereth his fauour in that wise, it is because that hee of his owne free goodnes hath vouchsafed to loue vs: so as we must not seek the cause therof in our selues, as though we had preuented God, or as though wee had gotten aught by our owne deserts: but [wee must vnderstande] that God is fauourable vnto vs, because hee hath loued vs, notwithstanding that wee were vnworthie of it. Thus yee see then that from the conduit-pype whereat wee drinke, wee must goe vp to the fountaine and to the springs head, that is to wit, to Gods free goodnes which is highest in degree, as the onely cause of all the benefites which wee receiue at his hand.

Nowe last of all it is sayde of Nephthaly, *that hee shall possesse the South and the West*, that is to say, the Sea; for so doeth the speach import. Wherein Moses prophesieth againe of the state of that trybe. And let vs alwayes beare in mynde howe it is God that speaketh these things, to shewe that hee hath a care of that people. And that people was as a Mirrour of the Church; yea, and in olde time it was the Church, in whose roome wee bee nowe succeeded. Wherefore let vs assure our selues that GOD will alwayes haue a fatherly care of vs. And although hee gouerne all the nations of the worlde in generall by his prouidence: yet is hee neerer vnto vs, and that shal wee feele in that wee shalbee vnder his direction, and that hee will so maintaine vs as wee shall knowe that nothing happeneth vnto vs by his will, in so much that one hayre shall not fall from our head, but by his appoyntment. Luke.21.7.

In the ende hee concludeth with Aser: True it is that Iacob in his blessing of Aser, sayeth that hee shall haue a country that is fruitfull of corne. Here it is sayd that hee shalbe honoured for his children, and that hee shalbee acceptable to his brethren. Wee see then howe God hath distributed to euery of them according to his owne will; and therewithall that it was not lawfull for any of the trybes to murmure against him, but that it behooued all of them to bee contented that euery of them shoulde receiue the portion that was giuen him. And againe, that all of them shoulde thinke thus with them selues: Wee haue all one GOD and one father: although hee deale dyuersly with vs as touching our bodyes; yet will hee haue vs to abyde all fast knit together, as whome hee hath called all to one selfe same inheritance. Lo what wee haue in effect to beare in mynd. Gen 49.20.

But here is no mention made of the trybe of Simeon. It is alledged that they were ydolatera. And what else were all the other trybes also? Wee knowe that all the Israelites were alienated from God, they were all backslyders, all the whole countrey was infected with abhomination, and in the ende the very trybe of Iuda was corrupted. It was meete then that all should be buryed. Others say that Simeon was companion to Leuy, and therefore that Moses had already repaired that which had beene spoken against Leuie and Simeon, which ought to suffise; and that God gaue him no peculiar blessing, because of the cruell deede which they had committed togither: but that it was ynough for him that hee was comforted in the person of Leuye. Howbeit we haue not a better, or a more likely coniecture than this; that although Simeon was then accounted as of the body of that people; yet God gaue him no seuerall blessing, but left him to languish; and yet notwithstanding, that hee was not destitute of all comfort, forasmuch as hee knew ỹ his fault was forgiuen him, as we haue seene afore. In likewise our Lorde doeth sometime giue an incling of his fauour though somewhat dimly, so as we be not named, nor haue ỹ thing so cleare as we could wel find in our harts to haue it; but our Lord maketh vs as it were to licke vp his grace, like poore hungry soules; wee shall haue some darke promises, and wee shall finde them very leane: but yet howsoeuer wee fare, wee must vnderstande that wee must not bee out of heart. Therefore when our Lorde sheweth not his goodnes so largely as we would desire; wee must fall to the examining of our faults, whereby it is possible that wee haue prouoked him in such sort, that wee bee vnworthie to haue him returne vnto vs out of hande; but hee is fayne to deale with vs as a father that will shewe some signe of displeasure Deut.33.8. Gen.34.25. Deut.33.8.

to his childe, insomuch that although hee say, well, I forgiue thee; yet will he not take home his chyld to him to make him a cockeney in his house: he will not say vnto him, I wil take thee home; but he will say, I will not vtterly disclaim him, I will take him stil as one of my household: and yet for all this, the chyld shall daunce attendance, he shall see his fathers countenance very strange towards him, so as he shall dwell still in dout and in suspence. Euen so was it betweene Simeon and God. Our Lord shewed not openly vnto him that hee was mynded to receiue him: but yet for all that he did not in the meane while vtterly cast him off. Although he gaue him not such warrant as was requisite, to shewe that he would admit him to mercy; yet (as we haue seene afore) he might perceiue by the blessing which belonged to them both and was as it were common to them both, because it was vttered in common by the mouth of the Patriark Iacob: that God did not banish him altogither out of his house. Howsoeuer the case stand, wee see that to reioyce in God & to receiue his gracious giftes in such sort as we may haue our mouthes always open to glorifie god, and also to bee disposed thereunto all our life long; it behooueth vs to behold heere as in a mirrour, that seeing God is our father, and that we be partakers of the adoption which is made in our Lorde Iesus Christ, by whome hee hath drawen vs out of the destruction and gulfe wherein wee were plunged, and hath receiued & chosen vs to be of his flocke: the same ought to suffise vs, and to make vs to call vpon him, & to beare the afflictions patiently which he sendeth vs, and to learne also to giue him thankes for his maintenining of vs in this mortall life; & not to be so grosse in gobbling vp his benefites, as not to consider that hee continually giueth vs some taste of his goodnes and fatherly loue towards vs. Therefore let vs haue the skill to apply all these things to our profice, that wee may be more and more confirmed in beliefe of the immortall inheritance whereunto wee bee inuited.

Gen. 49. 5.
Deut. 33. 8.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him so to refourme vs, as wee may not be sotted in our wicked lustes & affections; nor Satan so bewitch vs with the pleasures of this world, that wee should bee estranged from our God; but that seeing he hath once vouchsafed to call vs to the knowledge of his trueth, and that his whole seeking is to drawe vs vnto himselfe; we on our side may come vnto him, and euery of vs so do his indeuer, as our liues may be dedicated to his honor, and men may knowe that he reigneth among vs in verie deede, and that wee shoote at none other mark but to frame our selues in all pointes and all respects according to his lawes & holy ordinances. That it may please him to grant this grace, not only to vs, but also to all people & nations of the earth, &c.

On Munday the xiij. of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCVIII. Sermon, which is the eighth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter.

26 There is none like the God of Israel, who rideth vpon the heauens to help thee, and whose glorie is in the clowdes.

27 Thy dwelling place is the Euerlasting God, & vnder his armes shalt thou be for euer. He will put thine enemies to flight before thee, & say, destroy them.

28 Israel shall dwell in saferie alone. The eye of Iacob shall dwel vpon a land of corne and wine: and his heauens shall drop dewes.

WE can welynough confesse in one worde the greatnesse and highnesse of God: but yet yee shal scarcely find one man of a hundred, which yeldeth vnto God that which belongeth vnto him. For euery man will needes haue his share of it, as though it were a bootie or a pray. For proose whereof, who is hee that presumeth not eyther vpon his owne vertue, or vpon his riches, or vpon his courage, or vppon his credit and authoritie? And by these meanes God is robbed of his glory. On the other side, if wee perceiue any danger, which of vs trusteth and resteth vpon God? which of vs setteth his heart vpon him? Nay, we be vtterly dismayed. And what else betokeneth this, but that after wee haue declared with our mouth that God is almightie, that he gouerneth the world, that nothing can let him to perfourme what he listeth; we shewe by our doings that wee beleeue none of all those things, or else that wee be not fully & throughly persuaded of them? And therfore it is not for nought that the scripture doeth so magnifie God vnto vs, declaring vnto vs that wee cannot sufficiently consider his infinite highnesse and power which is in him to doo whatsoeuer hee hath ordayned.

And

And that is the thing whereunto Moſes had an eye in this text where he ſayd, *There is none like vnto God, ô right.* This worde is taken for Iſrael or for the Church, as wee haue ſeene heretofore. Now at the firſt bluſh a man would thinke that this doctrine were ſuperfluous: ſpecially being directed to ſuch as euen from their childhood were trayned vp in the lawe, and had the doctrine preached vnto them. [A man woulde thinke (I ſay) that it were needleſſe] to tel them that there is none like vnto God. For who denyeth it? But (as I haue ſayd alreadie) it coſteth nothing to ſay ſo; but yet for all that, wee be ſo forepoſſeſſed with the leaſings and darkneſſe of our vnbeleefe, that wee cannot glorifie God in ſuch ſort as to reſt vppon him, to call vppon him, and to holde our ſelues perſuaded and reſolued, that all ſhall go well with vs, ſo God doe pitie vs. Deut. 33. 5.

Let vs marke then that in this place Moſes ſpeaketh not to the vnbeleeuers, ſuch as neuer wiſt what the maieſtie of God is: but to ſuch as had heard the lawe, to ſuch as had had their eares beaten with teaching. And wherefore doeth hee it? I haue tolde you alreadie that wee be ſo inclyned to diſtruſt, that euery little temptation will ouerthrowe vs out of hande. Nowe wee ought to reſt vppon the promiſe that is giuen vs; namely that God will guyde vs, & defende vs, ſo as wee ſhall not be ouercome. But wee ſee howe wee be diſmayed euery minute of an houre, and wee haue neede to haue Gods power ſhewed vnto vs to confirme vs, and to knowe that which is ſaide heere, that is to wit, that there is not any like vnto God. And therefore when wee ſee the worlde ſet it ſelfe againſt vs, and Satan ſtill practiſing one thing or other, let vs alwayes reſort to this concluſion, that if God be on our ſide, who ſhall then be againſt vs? Not that we ſhall not haue many enemies, or that as in reſpect of our ſelues wee ſhall not haue much adoo to reſiſt them: but that yet notwithſtanding, God will win the vpper hand of them. The way then for vs to put this leſſon in vre, is that when wee ſee all the force of the world bent againſt vs, wee conſider with our ſelues that all is but ſmoke in compariſon of the inestimable power of our God, who wil alwayes be in a readineſſe to ſuccour vs. Rom. 8. 29.

Nowe hereunto Moſes addeth, *that God rydeth vppon the heauens for our ayde, and that his maieſtie is vppon the clowdes.* This ſeemeth to confirm the doctrine which wee haue heard afore. And although it be ſufficiently expreſſed alreadie in one worde, that God hath not his like, and that hee deſerueth to bee ſo exalted aboue all the worlde, that when hee is ſpoken of, all things ought to ſtoope; according as it is ſayde in the Prophecy, that as ſoone as his maieſtie appeareth, the Sunne muſt loſe his light, & the Moone muſt bee darkened. Yet I ſay: Howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth foraſmuch as wee conceiue not his infinite glorie and power: therefore it is ſayd *that God rydeth vppon the heauens, and that his maieſtie is about the clowdes.* As if it were tolde vs that all creatures are vnder his feete, that they bee ſubiect vnto him, and that hee can weelde them as hee liſteth. For if God were mingled with the worldly things, there would be a combate betwixt them, there woulde bee many incounters, and there woulde needes be ruſhing againſt him. When one man commeth againſt another, it muſt needes bee knowen which of them is the ſtronger to driue backe his enemie. If God then were in equall and like degree with his creatures, what woulde come of it? But whereas it is ſayde, *that he rydeth vppon the heauens, and that hee ſurmounteth all things:* thereby it is done vs to vnderſtande, that hee hath ſubdued to him ſelfe and to his dominion, whatſoeuer things may make vs afrayde. For although Satan bee called the prince of this worlde, although it bee ſayd that hee fighteth againſt vs from the aire, and that hee is aboue ouer our heades: Yet notwithſtanding hee commeth not at all at God, hee is fayne to ſtoope vnder him. So then in this text wee ſee our vnbeliefe. For when we haue gotten the knowledge of all thinges, if wee knowe not God, what is there in vs but vtter ignorance and beaſtlineſſe? For is it not the chiefe poynt of our wiſedome, to bee ſo grounded in our God, that wee can call vppon him, and flee vnto him for refuge in all our needes? That wee dout not of the aſſuredneſſe of our ſaluation, ſo hee kept vs? If wee haue not that, all our life is but wretchednes. Iohn. 12. 31. Ephe. 2. 2.

And by the way we haue to note, that where as the holy Ghoſt taketh ſo greate paynes to perſwade vs what manner of one God is, and that his power is infinite: it is becauſe wee bee alwayes doutfull and wauering, ſo as there is no ſtayednеſſe in vs. In ſo much that although wee haue heard that God gouerneth all things, and that hee hath ſoueraigne dominion; and although men aſſure vs thereof, and it be tolde vs neuer ſo often times; yet ceaſſe wee not to haue ſtill ſome fancies or others, which darken our vnderſtanding; wee enter into I wote not what ſpeculations, and therewithall wee bee toſſed and turmoyled with a great ſorte of troubles that come vppon vs: And beeing ſo ouerraught by our owne fantaſticall imaginations, wee knowe what it is for vs to truſt in God, and to leane vnto his power. Let vs vnderſtande (I ſaye) that in this text, the holy Ghoſt meant to put vs in mynde of the beaſtlineſſe that is in vs, to the ende to waken vs, that wee may learne to magnifie the glorie of our God, better than we haue done, ſpecially conſidering that all the things which are wont to make vs afrayde, are nothing in reſpect of him. For he is able to ſubdue both Satan & the worlde, and whatſoeuer elſe is againſt our ſaluation: yea, euen all thoſe things muſt yeld themſelues to his ſeruice whenſoeuer he liſteth. Pſal. 18.

But let vs alſo marke well the ſpeeche that is ſet downe here, *that God rydeth vppon the heauens to our ayde.* If there were but mention made only of Gods maieſtie, and that he were exalted aboue all; wee ſhould already haue ſome matter to make vs to leane vnto him: but yet

might we inquire whether he would haue pitie vpon vs, and whether he would disappoynt the things that are against vs, because wee bee not worthie that hee should vtter his power to our benefite. But here Moses saith expresly, ỹ looke what greatnes & power God hath, he wil apply it to our welfare, that we may be maintained & defended. Therefore when wee heare that God wil be almightie to the intent to ayde vs, & to prouide for al our needes, it is a thing whereon we take a sure & infallible resolution. Here then is nothing omitted or forgotten; for on the one side Moses thrusteth downe all that euer may seeme high, shewing that God hath all things vnder his feete, and that he can wel weald them as he listeth. And therewithall he sheweth [on the other side] that God will be fauourable vnto vs, that he will helpe vs, and that he will alwayes be readie to succour vs. So then, if wee conceiue God in his high maiestie, although hee seeme to be farre off from vs, and we to bee as wretched wormes creeping on the grounde, and he surmounting al that can be seene howe great excellencie so euer be in them: yet neuertheleſſe, let vs assure our selues that he vouchsafeth to succour vs, and will haue that mightie power of his linked in vnseparable bonde with our welfare.

And that is the cause why Moses addeth, *that his dwelling place shal be on high, or that the soueraigne God shalbe his dwelling place, and that his armes are alwayes vnder him.* Truely, this worde *dwelling place* is expounded as if it were meant that God is ỹ harbor of his seruants, after which manner it is sayde in the song of Moses in the nynetith Psalme: Lorde thou hast bene our refuge from generation to generation. And this kinde of similitude is verie often set downe, to shewe that we should be set open to wynde and rayne, heate and cold, if our Lord preserued vs not, and that we were not harboured vnder his wings. This interpretation then were very conuenient and profitable, namely that the dwelling place of the soueraigne & euerlasting God is a sure abode, and therefore that it is for our behoofe to get vs vnder him, for there we shall be in safetie, and wee shalbe well lodged as it is said therof in the fourscore & eleuenth Psalme. And (as I said afore) it is a doctrine which is to be seene almost in euery leafe of the holy scripture. Howbeit forasmuch as ther is great briefnesse in the wordes, and there is no more sayde but *the dwelling of God euerlasting*, it will come al to one poynt if it be taken, that Gods abyding is euerlasting, so as he fleeteth not as we see that we do, who are fayne to trot vp and down here beneath in the worlde, without any certayne stay. What is the life of men, yea, euen of those which thinke themselues to bee lodged in their nest, neuer to go out of it? Yet must they walke here & there. And in very deede there passeth not one minute of an houre without some change of vs. Though a man sit stil or lye still, yet beareth hee changes continually with him, and hee himself changeth in the conceits of his mynd; and he is euer as a shadowe. Like as wee see a shadowe continually fleeting to remoue from the one side to the other: euen so is it with men. I say they be continually fleeting, which sheweth wel that their life slippeth away. But contrariwise it is sayd, that Gods abyding is euerlasting, according as S. Iames sayeth that there befalleth no shadowing vnto him. It is God (sayth he) in whome there is no trouble, so as he is not to bee compared to vs nor to any other creatures. For we be variable, & in continuall mouing; there is a certein stirring which carryeth vs frō place to place: But in our God there is a sure stayednes, which wee comprehend not here. To be short, the intent of Moses was to shewe, that if wee put our trust in God, then come there neuer so many turnings and returnings, that heauen & earth may seeme to runne togither, so as to day there is report of warre and to morrowe of famine, enimies approche, and sudden incounters come, insomuch that wee bee beseiged with a thousand deathes, & the world is continuall wauering; stormes arise on all sides, & we be as on the sea, where is no stay for vs to rest vppon: yet neuertheleſſe we may wel be alwayes in quiet. And why? For the dwelling of our God is euerlasting, & therfore being vnder his hande and protection, let vs not be afrayd of al the things that may happen vnto vs from elsewhere. For wee must not measure our God by the things which wee see with our eyes, & which beset vs here beneath.

Now remaineth that we apply this doctrine to our benefite: and although wee be driuen to liue as pilgrims in this world, & to be subiect to many changes: yet notwithstanding let vs not cease to put our selues still into the custodie of our God. And for as much as wee know that he wil maintaine vs, let vs ouerpasse al the stormes that rise against vs, and let vs ouercome all tẽptations. By what power? Because he that dwelleth in heauen hath taken vs into his keeping, he wil defend vs, for his abode is euerlasting. So then, he is so gracious vnto vs, that wee shal not perish, though it seeme ỹ we should be swalowed vp euery day, by the dangers that appeare vnto vs. And to the end we should be the surer hereof, it is said, *That his armes are below for euer.* Some referre this to the people of Israel, so as ỹ arms of that people should neuer faint, so long as they were vpholde from aboue: that is to say, they shall haue an inuincible force so long as God is their ayd. Which thing is true. But the wordes of Moses import it not. His intent and meaning rather is, that Gods armes are here beneath. And why doeth he set Gods armes beneath, seeing he hath alreadie told vs that God rydeth vpon the heauens? These things seeme to be repugnant. For if God haue his seat on high, how shal he haue his armes so lowe? It is because hee filleth all thinges, so as not onely his essence is infinite, but also his power: and it is spoken of set purpose, because he wil haue vs to perceiue it by experience. If it were sayde that Gods armes are in heauen; it would well serue to maintaine the Angels; but as for vs, wee shoulde neuertheleſſe quake and

Psal. 90. 1.

Psal. 91. 2.

Iames. 1. 17.

be

be afrayd whensoeuer we were threatened with any mischiefe, we should looke heere and there, and continue dismayed without any remedie. Heere therefore the holy Ghost remedieth such temptations, and sayth that Gods armes are heere beneath. Although then that God sit aboue in his maiestie, although that as oft as we thinke vpon him, we must needes bee rauished with all reuerence to worshippe him with humilitie, seeing that we be nothing, and he is aboue all: although it behooue vs to worship God after that manner by abasing ourselues vtterly: yet ought that to be no impediment vnto vs, that we should not knowe his power to be neere vnto vs, that his armes are reached out vnto vs, and that he will make the strength of them to be felt euen heere, and shew the open proofe thereof. And why? For he will haue a care to keepe those whom he hath chosen and elected, euen those which trust in him, which rest vppon him, and which flee altogether vnto him. It is then a notable point of doctrin, when Moses maketh such a description of God, that on the one side hee sheweth vs how wee ought so behaue ourselues lowely in thinking vppon him; and on the other side comforteth vs in saying that our God disdaineth not to succour vs: and that for proofe thereof hee putteth downe his armes heere beloweb, not that he is not also in heauen as I haue sayde afore, but for our saythes sake, in respect whereof mention is made of these neathermost parts. If we looke vpon our life, truely there is nothing but frailtie in it. Againe, we be besieged with so many enemies, as is horrible to see: and moreouer infinite deathes doe manace vs. But when Gods armes are rounde about vs, we be fenced with them, and that for no dayes than one. For as God is vnchaungeable, and hath an euerabyding seate: so his armes also abide heere for euer, and he will neuer be weary of succouring vs. Let vs trust to that, and then may we alwayes haue full boldnesse, euen in the middest of all the troubles of this worlde, because our saluation is in Gods hande, so as we needs not to be afraide or to doute.

Nowe after this, it is sayd, *That he will driue away the enemie before vs, saying, Destroy them.* We haue seene heeretofore howe Gods Church is neuer without enemies, because Sathan who is the prince of this world, doth moue the wicked continually to vexe the children of God. If the deuill were quite and cleane doone away, then truely we might haue peace in the worlde. But forasmuch as he hath the greatest multitude of men in his hande, which are frowarde by kinde, & we knowe that his whole seeking is to destroy vs: therefore we must prepare ourselues to haue warre as long as we be in the worlde. The condition is harde, but yet must we beare it patiently, seeing that our Lorde hath so ordained, and therefore seeing he will try our faith and obedience by stirring vp enemies vnto vs; let vs yeelde our neckes vnto him. But yet moreouer wee haue needs to bee succoured at his hande, yea and to haue him fight for vs: or otherwise what would become of vs? In that therefore ought we to haue full trust. Wherfore let vs be contented, and although wee must needs be troubled, and susteine many bruntes, and liue in continuall care forasmuch as our enemies cease not to prepare newe battels against vs: yet notwithstanding let vs stay our selues vppon this, that our Lorde will not leaue vs in our neede. The meaning then of Moses is, that God will so stretche our his arme, that all our enemies shalbe put to flyght; insomuch that although they come with neuer so great violence against vs, so as it may seeme that they should beare downe all thinges afore them, yea and ouerthrow all thinges with their breath: yet notwithstanding God will step afore them, as in respect whereof he is heereafter termed our sheelde. To be short we see after what manner Gods armes are heere belowe. They bee not idle; but they bee occupied in driuing our enemies away. And we be warned not to vexe ourselues out of measure, when God exerciseth vs with store of temptations: but to stande alwayes vpon this ground (as I sayde,) that our Lorde will fight for vs, and that by resting vppon him, wee shall gette the vpper hande.

Nowe he addeth, *that he will say, destroy them.* If God put them to flight or driue them away; why sayth he that we shall destroy them? Heere may seeme to bee some contrarietie. For if God doe all, it seemeth that hee leaueth nothing for vs. But Moses hath very well expressed, how it commeth to passe that we get the victorie of our enemies, to deede it is God that fighteth, but yet will he haue vs to bee instrumentes of his power. As for vs, we could not abide any one assaulte, valesse we were strengthened fro aboue, and (to be short) that God himselfe gouerned vs. For we be vtterly vnprofitable, insomuch that there is not one droppe of strength in vs, & that strength which we weene we haue, is but leasing. Yee see then how God worketh in such wise, that we be maintayned by him, whatsoeuer we haue be it welfare or life, we must father it all wholly vpon him, and acknowledge ourselues to haue it from thence. And if we will needes make such a partition as the papistes do, and say that we worke together with God, so as there is a concurrence [or meeting together], and that we do helpe him: it is a reproouing of his ayde. So then, let vs learne to let God alone with that which is his, namely that all our welfare consisteth in him. Yet notwithstanding, he applyeth vs to his seruice, so as we seeme to be doers thereof. And that is a thing wherein the papistes beguile themselues. They speake of Freewill, and of mans abilities, and (to their seeming) we worke wonders. They confesse in deede that we had need to be holped by God, and that he had neede to succour vs with his grace: but yet doe they alwayes make vs companions with GOD. And why? Because they see well, that to serue God, to resist temptations, to walke in vprightnesse of life, and to eschue the corruptions of the world, the faithfull are faine to inforce themselues, to take paines to bridle themselues, to become as captiues, and to fight against themselues

selues; which can not be done but with great difficultie. For, to be patient in their aduersities, they are faine to holde themselues as locked vp, and so to brydle and ouermaister their passions, as they may be tamed. Nowe then, when the Papistes see the faithfull take such paines; they imagine that they do it of their owne power. But the matter is not whether mē take great paines, and whether they labour till they pant or not but to knowe from whence that proceedeth. Now we say it is of God: and so there remaineth not any share for men, nor aught whereof they may glory. God driueth away his enemies afore him, and yet neuertheleſſe sayeth, *Destroy them*. Lo howe God on the one side destroyeth our enemies; and therewithall also commaundeth vs to vanquish them. How can these agree? O, yet is it God that doth all. And although he seeme to set vs a worke; yet are we able to do nothing. No, but yet do we indeuour. Yea, so farforth as he giueth vs it, and according to the measure of his grace, so as wee must not thinke we haue it of our owne growing. To be short, man hath nothing of his owne in this case, neither doth the holy Ghost leaue him any thing. But yet are not we ydle: for our Lorde keepeth vs occupied, and maketh his grace auailable in vs, and causeth it to bring forth fruite, and wee be the instrumentes thereof. So then, we haue howe the meaning of Moses; which is, that although heere belowe wee liue not in an earthly Paradise, but our enemies do vexe and trouble vs on all sides, and it seemeth that we should bee swallowed vp by them: yet ought wee to walke on constantly vnder the protection of our God. And why? For his armes are come downe to vs, to succour vs by his power, which shall vanquish all that euer is against our welfare; sowe on our side doe suffer him to vse his power in vs, and we behaue ourselues as his instrumentes. For although he be the doer of all; yet (as I sayd afore) he doth vs the grace to doe it, & will haue the worke to be as it were ours. Not to puffe vs vp with presumption & ouerweening as though we thought ourselues to haue any thing but that we should so much the more acknowledge his goodnesse towardes vs, in that hee attributeth and imparteth vnto vs the thing that is his, yea and will haue it to be reputed as our owne.

Hauing spoken after that fashion, he addeth, *that Israell shall dwell safely alone by himselfe*. Heere Moses had an eye to the state and condition of that people, because God had culled them out, to set them there as in a nest by themselues. True it is that the Countrey of Iewry was not separated out from all other Countryes: but yet had God cast his mercelines there, as we haue seene in the last chapter going afore: and that he had set the boundes and borders thereof, of purpose to harbour that people there. Howesoeuer the case stande, the people of Israell were separated from all other Nations. They had in deede some trafficke with their neighbours; but yet had God gathered them together, as who would say, yee shalbe purified, that ye may no more liue in the corruptions of this worlde. And that could not be done, but that the rest of the world must haue them and shake them off. For when men despise vs, we also on our side do disdaine them againe. The neighbours of the Iewes then, desyred nothing so much as that the memory of the Iewes might haue perished. To this state of theirs had Moses a respect in saying, *that Israell should dwell safely, though he dwelt alone by himselfe*. As if hee should say, In deede it is like ynough that yee shalbe in perill of many daungers, because our Lord wil not haue you to be mingled with other nations, but wil haue ye to be as a litle body close knit together: It may wel seeme y ye should be afrayde; but it is ynough y your God hath you in his custody: therfore be contented with him and with his ayde, and ye shall dwel safely. Furthermore it is not to be douted but that heere Moses ment to giue a continuing lesson to the whole Church; which is to thinke her selfe safe and well assured of her saluation, although shee see not her selfe fenced in the worlde, ne to haue fortresses, walles, weapons, or any other such thinges wherein men are woont to trust, but rather is vtterly destitute of them all. And why? For we be in the hande of God. Then if we will yeelde God the honour which hee deserueth when we see nothing heere beneath, that may assure our safetie; let vs learne to go streight vnto him, and to make such account of his power, as to conclude that wee neede not to feare any thing so he be on our side. For if wee will haue our safegarde heere beneath; our Lorde will bee nothing to vs, neither can we say that it is he in whom we put our whole trust. If we seeke the inferiour meanes, and y as soone as they fayle vs, by & by our hearts quaile, then is there nothing but hypocrisie in vs, and we shall euer bewray our owne distrust. Ye see then howe the true tryall of our fayth, is to hope in such sort for succour from our God, that although all the worlde fayle vs, and we see nothing about vs that may giue vs corage, yet we assure ourselues of safegarde [at his hande]. That is the thing which this text importeth.

When we haue digested this lesson, we shall fare much the better by it al the time of our life. For on the one side wee shalbe drawen away frō the vaine imaginations which deceiue vs. As soone as we haue any thing heere beneath that makes for vs, or if we be any thing aforehande: we doe as it were despise God, that is to say, we thinke not that we haue any more neede of him. Will they that haue their Garners and cellers well stored, call vppon God to bee fedde at his hande? In deede they will say their Paternoster as other men doe: but yet there is nothing but filth in them, they beare themselues in hande that they be sufficiently prouided for, so as they come not to God for any neede. In like case is it with them which are healthy and strong: they consider not the brittlenesse of their life. To be short, so long as thinges fall out to our minde and desire in this worlde, we be so daseled with it that we resort not vnto God, ne knowe what it is to be guided and gouerned by him. And therefore let vs exercise ourselues in this lesson,

Deut. 32. 9.

that

that it behoooueth vs to dwell in heauen: that whensoeuer God listeth to leaue vs alone, that is to say to bereaue vs of al mainteynance, so as we be destitute of all helpes to trust vnto: yet for all that we must not be out of heart. And the reason is, because our safetie consisteth not in any of the thinges which we discerne with our naturall senses; but in Gods defence. True it is that we perceiue not his hande but by fayth, for it is inuisible. But yet will he make vs to perceiue his succour continually, if we receiue his worde: and when he sheweth his goodnesse vnto vs, his power goeth ioyntly therewith. And therefore first of all, let vs be withdrawen from all the vaine selfeweeninges which are woont to deceiue vs: and secondly let vs doe this honour vnto God, that we put our trust in him, knowing that sith he hath care of our welfare, we shalbe in safetie. And this ought to preuaile more now adayes, than euer it did. For it is sayd expresly of the reigne of our Lord Iesus Christ, that euery man shall dwell safely vnder his vine and vnder his figtree. Seeing then that our Lord Iesus Christ calleth vs nowadaies vnto his protection, let vs boldly rest vpon him. Albeit ỹ all thinges goe against vs, and worldly helpes faile vs; yet howsoeuer we fare let vs stande fast, and let this saying bee well printed in our remembraunce, that Israell shall not fayle to be safe though hee be alone. And why? Because God is his keeper; his welfare dependeth not vpon ỹ stayes of this world; it is ynough for him that God hath taken him into his custodie.

And hee addeth immediatly, *that the Eye or Fountaine of Iacob was vpon a land of Corne & Wine, and that the heauens should droppe downe dewes.* Heereby Moses betokeneth in effect, that if we be Gods people, he will haue a care to sustayne vs: and that because wee haue neede of sustenaunce, hee will prouide vs thereof according to our necessitie, so as hee will giue vs meate and drinke sufficient. True it is that the Hebrewe word which he vseth, may bee taken both for an *Eye* and for a *Fountaine*. And in deede the Hebrewes call Fountaines Eyes, because the springes of the water (if yee marke them) haue the shape of the eye in a mans body. If we take it for an eye in his proper signification; it is as much to say as that Gods people shal haue their sight continually vppon corne and wine, and that God will giue them sufficient sustenaunce. For the deawe shall come downe from heauen, which shall make the grounde to yeelde fruite. If we should take it for a Fountaine; that were somewhat harde. I grant it is sayde in ỹ Psalme, You that be of the fountaines or welsprings of Iacob: but that is because the Patriarke Iacob was the welspring of that people. And it could not agree to the present text. And therefore let vs content ourselues with the naturall sense of Moses: which is, that God will make vs feele & shewe vs by experience, that wee shall receiue sustenaunce at his hande as long as wee bee in this worlde. Of a trueth, breade and wine are not the chiefe thinges which we ought to seeke at Gods hande: yet is it much when we see he hath a care of this corruptible life. And that ought to make vs to flye vp higher. For when we see that God vouchsafeth to feede our bodies, ought wee not to conclude that it is much more likely that he will feede our soules which are much more deerer vnto him? The good then which we receiue heere beneath, ought to serue to make vs to sende vp our trust aboue the heauens, to seeke a better life at his hand, which we can not as nowe comprehende. And therefore of no smal importance is this promise where it is sayde, that God will alwayes make his people see and feele that he is their foster father, that he giueth them corne and wine for their sustenaunce, and that he will sende them deawe from heauen to keepe the grounde frō parching vp, so as it may haue moysture to susteine those which otherwise should abyde a hungred. Ye see then that the thing which we haue to remember vpon this place, is that if we be of Gods flocke, we shall not be destitute of any needefull thing. For euen as in respect of this transitorie life, we shalbe fedde and nourished at his hande. And when we obtaine sustenance at Gods hande; it is to incourage vs. Let such as are poore take paines, and pray vnto God to blesse their labor, because it belongeth hto him to susteine those that are his. Lo howe the poore ought to bee stirred vp vnto prayer. And if they haue litle wherewith to susteine them, let them consider that God intendeth to trye their patience; and yet that in the meane while hee maketh that sustenaunce of theirs as slender as it is, to turne into Manna, so as they be susteyned therewith. Let not the rich sort be puffed vp with pride, vppon that they haue their life in their owne hande; but let them vnderstande that it behoooueth the to haue recourse vnto God with all their goods. For if they haue not a regarde of him; let them assure themselues that he can well consume the Corne in their Garners, the grist at the mill, & the batch in the Ouen: yea he will consume the bread in their bellies, so as in stede of receyuing nourishment by it, they haue nothing but corruption. Let vs know then, that God must be faine to performe ỹ which is declared heere, that is to wit, that our eye may be vpon a Land of Corne and wine: and that it behoooueth vs to consider that it is he to whome we be beholden for all thinges. I graunt it may fall out that wee shall not haue such abundaunce as wee would wish, and as our flesh lusteth for: but yet (as I haue sayd already) God sheweth that he forgetteth not his seruauntes; and that although hee giue them but a small and slender pittance; yet they haue wherwith to content themselues, because they receiue sustenance at his hand. Therfore as long as webe to passe through this world, let it suffise vs that God vouchsafeth still to susteyne vs, and that in so doing he sheweth himselfe a father towards vs to the intent we should go on still, and keepe on our way to the heauenly heritage whereunto he will bring vs, to make vs inioy the thinges fully and perfectly, whereof we haue knowledge as nowe but in part.

After that maner ought we to put the sayde lesson

leſſon in practiſe. For when the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh of the temporall bleſſinges which God ſendeth to his children: he meaneth not to hold them there, as if he ſhould ſay, ſeeke no greater thinges: but contrariwiſe, becauſe wee be reckleſſe and ſlowe, and can not ſtep one ſtep without ſtumbling except wee bee vpholde by God; and ſpecially we could not haue the ſtedineſſe and conſtancie to ſay, Let vs put ourſelues into the handes of our God, let vs yeelde vnto him, and in our paſſing through this world, let vs not be held backe, aſſuring ourſelues that Gods prouiding for all our neceſſities, is to none other ende but that we ſhould looke vppe vnto him: That (ſay I) is the ende whereunto we ought to referre all the promiſes wherein our Lord ſayth that he will haue a care of our life. Wherefore let vs make this leſſon nay leable wherein it is ſayde, *That his eye ſhalbe vpon a lande of Corne and Wine.* True it is that we ſhall be threatned with many neceſſities, ſo as we ſhalbe in continuall anguiſh: yet notwithſtanding, if we haue an eye to Gods bleſſing, we ſhall hope) he will guide vs vnto the end, and that he will make vs to perceiue that he hath goods ſufficient wherewith to maintaine thoſe that are of his houſholde: yea and to ſuſteine them in ſuch wiſe, that by the abundaunce which he will giue them, he will ſhew them alſo that he is able to ſuſteine them euen as it were with nothing. For when God giueth vs abundaunce and fruitefulneſſe, there we ſee that he layeth foorth his treaſures, and that (as hath bin declared heretofore) he will lay abroad the treaſures which were (as it were) hidden vnder the earth. But when wee haue a very deere and ſcarſe yeere, which ſeemeth vnable to finde almoſt the one halfe of the poore people: If our Lord make the ſame to ſuffice, and wee paſſe it cleane ouer: in the ende we know that our Lord prouided for vs, and ſhewed a farre more wonderfull prouidence, than if hee hadde giuen vs wherewith to fill our bellies, & that we had wanted nothing. So then, howſoeuer the world goe, let vs learne to call vpon our God. If wee haue ſuſtenaunce, let vs vnderſtande that it is not for vs to truſt thereto, but to do vs to wit, that when God is liberall vnto vs, wee muſt conſider that he laieth forth his riches becauſe he hath a care of our life. And when we haue not ſufficient prouiſion, let vs reſort vnto him, aſſuring ourſelues that he is not diminiſhed: and that although he ſhewe not his bountifulneſſe to the vewe of our eyes; yet he hath wherewith to ſuſteyne his ſeruauntes. And therefore let vs call vpon him, & put the thing in practiſe which is ſhewed vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, which is to craue of him our ordinary bread from day to day. Math. 6.11.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs perceiue them better, and that we may be ſo touched with repentance, as it may make vs to ſubmit ourſelues wholly to his trueth, and to fight in ſuch wiſe againſt our owne affections, as our battaile may be ſpirituall againſt Sathan and againſt all his attemptes, vntill we haue obtained the victory that is promiſed vs, at ſuch time as wee ſhall be perfectly knit vnto our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, to bee partakers of the glory of his reſurrection. That it may pleaſe him to graunt this grace not only to vs, but alſo to all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

Deut. 28. 12.

On Tewſday the xiiij. of Iuly, 1556.

The CXCIX. Sermon which is the ninth vpon the xxxiij. Chapter, and the firſt vpon the xxxiiij. Chapter.

29 Bleſſed art thou O Iſraell. Who is like thee O people which art ſaued by the Lorde the ſheelde of thine ayde, and who is the ſworde of thy mightineſſe? Thine enemies ſhalbe weakened towardes thee, and thou ſhalt march ouer their toppes.

The foure and thirtith Chapter.

THen Moſes went from the plaine of Moab vnto the mountaine Nebo, vp to the top of Phaſga, which is ouer againſt Iericho. And the Lorde made him to ſee the whole Lande, the Countrey of Galaad vnto Dan.

2 And all the Lande of Nephthaly, and all the Lande of Ephraim and of Manaſſes; and all the Lande of Iuda vnto the vttermoſt Sea.

3 And the South and the leuell of the medowes of Iericho, the citie of Palmtrees, vnto Zoar.

4 And

4 And the Lorde sayde vnto him, This is the Lande whereof I sware to Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, saying, I will giue it to thy seede; I haue made thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go into it.

5 And Moses the seruaunt of the Lorde dyed there, in the Lande of Moab, according to the word of the Lorde.

6 And he was buried in the valley in the Lande of Moab, oueragainſt Bethphogor, and no man hath knowen his graue vnto this day.

AMong the other matters which were layde fourth yesterday, there remayned how Moses toldthe people of Israel, *That there was not then any Nation vpon earth, like vnto them, because they were saued by God:* and that is to bee marked well. For although God do by his power and grace preserue all creatures; yet will he bee knowen to be the Sauiour of his people. Therefore when wee be saued in him it is a priuiledge which can not be sufficiently expressed & magnified. For we differ not from other men in respect of any worthinesse that is in vs; neither haue we it by inheritaunce, but it commeth of Gods free goodnesse. And therefore whensoeuer we be spoken to concerning our saluation, let vs vnderstande from whence it procedeth, and that God giueth vs that beautie. For we be like all the rest of Adams ofspring. If we should bee esteemed according to our nature, we be no better woorth than those whom God forsaketh and vtterly casteth away. Wherefore then hath he chosen vs, but for his owne meere goodnesse sake? The thing which we haue to remember vpon this text, is that God will haue his grace so much the better knowen, because saluation is not common in generall to all men, but is a peculiar gift. And Moses sheweth by the way, what this sauing is; namely when God is *our shielde and our defence.* As if hee should say that without him we can not be maintayned: for wee be layde open to many deathes, and haue not wherewith to resist. It is like as when a man is assayled on all sides, and hath neither weapon nor armour, but is starke naked. Euen so is it with vs, if God fence vs not. Therefore he is called our shield and our help. Wherby we be done to vnderstand, that we can not succour ourselues of our owne power, neither haue we the meane to doe; but it must come of God. Hee is termed *the sworde of our glorie.* In deede men glorie ynough in themselues, they flatter themselues, and they perswade themselues the thing that is not. But heere we be plucked backe from all the vaine hopes which deceiue vs and beguile vs, to the ende we should learne to set all our glorie in God, and to conclude that we haue none other power than his, whereby to be maynteyned.

Now hereupon Moses addeth, that the Iewes *should march ouer their enemies bodies, or ouer all their gallantnesse* (for there is no more but the word *Top*, or highest part), *and that their enemies shall flatter them with lowring* [*or bing*]: for this worde *Lyz* in holy scripture, is taken for to set a good face or countenaunce vpon a matter, and to play the hypocrite by force, as when it is said in the eighteenth Psalme (where the great victories are spoken of, which God would giue vnto Dauid) *Thine enemies shall lye vnto thee.* Nowe then, the summe is this, that God will be the sauiour of his people. Insomuch that although they haue many enemies, yet shall they not bee able to match them, but shall be driuen in the ende to confesse themselues to bee the weaker. And that although their so dooing be but counterfaite; yet notwithstanding, Gods power shall shewe it selfe therein. And now proceeding with this lesson, let vs learne first to knowe that wee be vtterly naked, and that wee want all thinges: & when we knowe that, let vs humble ourselues so as there may not be one droppe of hautinesse or foolish selfeweening in vs. And therewithall let vs vnderstande, that God will not suffer vs to quaile in any case. For if we haue neither sword nor shielde, he will serue our turne for both of them. If we be in daunger of vndooing, hee is our preseruer. If we be plundged heere in neuer so many miseries with the rest of all mankinde; we shalbe recouered again by his grace, because he hath chosen vs for his people. That is the point whereon we must rest. Psal. 18. 3.

Nowe haue we heere a rehearsal of the death of Moses, whereof mention was made in the end of the two and thirtith Chapter, and heere it is repeated againe; namely that God *made Moses to goe vp into the mountaine Nebo*, which otherwise is a part of the Mountaine Abarim. And he addeth afterwarde *Gay*: In deede this worde *Gay* signifieth a valley. But we see it was a part of the mountaine in diuers respectes, and that appeareth in many places. Moses then went vp as he was commaunded of God, and there beheld all the Lande which had bin promised for an inheritaunce to the linage of Abraham, euen vnto the Sea which was right ouer against it, that is to wit the midland Sea. He viewed the Countrey, to the intent he should be certified before his death, that the promise which God hadde made fourehundred yeeres afore, was not in vaine, but euen at the point to bee performed: neuertheleſſe it was not Lawfull for him to goe Deut. 32. 50. Gen. 12. 7.

into

into the Lande, but only to see it. And (as hath beene treated heeretofore) God punished him
Deut. 32.51. because he had not glorified God at the place of
Exod.17.7. Meriba, that is to say the place of Strife, which was so named because the people were on an vprore there.

And heere we haue to cal to minde the thing which hath beene sayde foorth already more at length; that is to wit, the obedientnesse of Moses. For he knewe well that his going vp thither as God called him, was to the intent he should die. Death then was not so greeuous vnto him, but that he prepared himselfe vnto it when hee sawe it was Gods will it should be so. And by this example wee be taught to liue in such sort, as wee may alwayes haue one foote lifted vppe to goe, whensoeuer GOD listeth to take vs hence to himselfe. And in deede, what win the stubborne sort by their desyrousnesse to eschewe death, but to bee ouercome by force when they haue fretted and chafed neuer so much? It is a point of slender discretion when men consider not that as God hath sette them heere, so he ought also to haue authoritie to take them away againe when he listeth. Wee shewe ourselues to be destitute of wit and reason like brute beastes, if we haue not such consideration w vs. Wherfore let vs learne to finish our course in such wise, walking as Pilgrimes vppon earth: as we may euermore be ready and weldisposed to depart from it, whensoeuer God sheweth vs that our houre is come. But truely that can not be done, except we conceiue a hope of a better
2.Cor.5.4. life. For (as sayth S. Paul) naturally we be loth to be vnhoused; there is no man but hee would faine continue still. Therefore it standeth vs in hande to knowe that our true dwelling place is not heere in this worlde, and that we be but only to passe through it. So then, without fayth
Hebr.11.13.14. we can neuer obey God, specially when we bee to depart out of the worlde; but we will alwayes grynde our teeth at it, so as if it were possible, we would fight against God. But when we once conceiue that our inheritaunce is aboue, and that God hath a better life in store for vs: then doe we determine and prepare to submit ourselues vnto him, whensoeuer hee giueth vs any token that we must depart hence. After that manner shall we followe the example of Moses.

I graunt he had a promise that God accepted him for one of his; but yet the same belongeth
Iohn.12.25. to vs also, and we haue this aduauntage more, that our Lorde Iesus Christ who is our life, hath shewed himselfe vnto vs, to the intent we should boldly followe his steppes. And he entered into death, to bring vs to the glorie of his resurrection. Therefore let vs not sticke to followe the Lorde Iesus, because that if we die with him, we
Rom.6.8. be sure (as sayth S. Paule) to be partakers of his life, and to be companions with him, because it belongeth vnto vs. For he was not raysed againe, for his owne profite, but for the assuring of our saluation. Therefore let vs not dout therof, but let vs cleaue vnto him. And in so doing let vs as-
Rom.4.25. sure ourselues, that his resurrection shall be manifested in vs also. Thus ye see howe we haue to put this text in practise, where it is sayde that Moses went [vppe to the mountaine] knowing well that when he came there, God would take him out of the worlde. And yet (for all that) he shunned not the place, ne made any resistance, but prepared himselfe to death with true obedience, yea and with such frowardnesse, that he needed not to be ledde, nor to be haled forth by the handes of sergeauntes. God sayde the worde, and Moses went thither with a good will.

Againe, let vs marke also what hath been declared as touching the punishment that was layde vpon Moses: namely that God had shut him out & banished him from the lande which was promised to all Abrahams posteritie: and that was a verie greeuous thing to him. But yet did he beare it patiently, acknowledging the fault which he had committed; though it came not of himselfe. For he had alwayes serued God faythfully: yea and in the very selfesame deede, there was no more but this, that it spyted him to see the leaudnesse of the people. Howbeit forasmuch as he was cast downe, and stoode not so stoutly to it as was requisite, God layd that fault to his charge, and punished it with such rigour as we see, in not admitting him into the lande of promise. To be short, let vs vnderstande (as I haue sayde afore) that whereas we thinke wee haue not done amisse, our offences shalbe grosse and exceeding great before God. Wherefore let vs learne, not to be our owne Iudges, but to referre ourselues vnto God, and to suffer him to acquit vs or condemne vs by his worde. When we shall haue doone any thing, albeit that our conscience reprooue vs not, let vs assure ourselues that God seeth more clearely than we do,
1.Iohn.3.20 as sayth S. Iohn in his canonicall Epistle. And if we thinke the fault small, our Lorde will account it great. If we should iudge after the imagination of men concerning this deede of Moses, what is to be sayde but that he shewed great stoutnesse? For he resisted the people, and vsed very rough and sharpe wordes. Thinke yee (sayth he) that God is not able to make water to
Num.20.10. issue out of this Rocke? See howe Moses stryueth with them through fayth, with obedience to God, and he glorifieth him. To be short, in all his words there is nothing to be seene, which is not worthy prayse: and yet notwithstanding he did amisse; and seeing that God pronounceth it so, it is not for vs to gainesay it. Therefore let vs learne to walke in humilitie, for feare leaste it happen vnto vs according to this saying
Prou.21.2. of Salomon, that whē we haue weyed our waies and thoughtes, and that to our owne seeming there is nothing amisse, God will not agree to our balaunce, for hee hath another measure, whereby he will iudge more vprightly. And we haue his worde to iudge vs. Let euery man then examine himselfe, and when we finde that our Lorde reproueth any thing, let vs assure ourselues it is not without cause. Againe when we once knowe our faultes, let vs assure ourselues that there are a hundered thousande times moe than we can perceiue, and we must cry out with

Dauid

Dauid, Lorde, who can tell the number of his faultes? Cleanse thou mee from my secret sinnes.

Moreouer, wee haue to comfort ourselues in all the temporall punishmentes which God sendeth vs, because they serue to bring vs lowe, whereby God ceaseth not to further our saluation continually, and to holde vs euermore in the hope which we haue that he acounteth vs of his houshoulde and Church. So long then as we be sure that we belong to our God, and that he acknowledgeth and auoweth vs to be his; it ought well to content vs, as wee see heere that Moses was contented with the onely sight of the Land. Truely he neither possessed nor inioyed it; but it sufficed him that he was a partener in the promise, to the ende he might attaine to the heritage of heauen. Forasmuch as Moses had that, it was a comfort and ioy vnto him. And it behoued him thence foorth to forbeare the making of that requeste any more afterwarde. So then, although the punishmentes bee harde vnto vs when God chastiseth our sinnes, & that we may desire him to deliuer vs from them: yet if we see that his will is not so, but that it is good for vs to be corrected, let vs strengthen ourselues to it, and pray him to giue vs power to holde out vnquailed. And therewithall let vs vnderstande that our strength consisteth in faith, in ỳ we haue an eye to the hope whereunto we be called. True it is that we possesse not in deede the thing that is promised vs; but yet God giueth vs such a tast thereof, as ought to suffise vs: we haue the certeinetie thereof printed in vs by his holy spirite. Therefore let that bee a meane to holde vs in, that we may patiently beare all the corrections which God listeth to lay vpon vs. That is ỳ thing which we haue to gather here vpon the example of Moses.

Now in the ende it is sayd, *That God buried him.* In deede the word [*God*] is not expressed, ỳ text sayth only *Moses dyed, and he buried him in Nebo*; but yet it setteth down also, *according to the mouth of God, and buryed him in Gay*. Hee went vp into Nebo, & on the other side of the hill, there was a place named the valley of Gay; and there was his sepulchre. We see then ỳ it is spoken of God where it is set downe that Moses dyed *according to his mouth*. For Gods mouth signifieth nothing else but his worde. In deede God declareth not the dying time of euery of vs, he reserueth that to himselfe. We haue our boundes which wee can not passe; but we shall die euery chone of vs, and we be to die according to Gods decree. The only difference betweene vs and Moses is this, that God telleth vs that we be mortall as soone as we come into the worlde. Heerewithal we see also how short & slyghtfull our life is, insomuch that we haue but a shadow which slippeth away. We see it; but we haue not a day certaine assigned vs: God prolongeth the life of one, & shorteneth the life of another]. And in that case is behoueth vs to submit ourselues to his determination. All of vs then die according to Gods decree: but Moses dyed according to his mouth, that is to say, according as hee had declared it afore.

Nowe as touching his buryall, it behoueth vs to see wherefore Moses was not buried after the common fashion of men, and why he would haue his sepulcher to remain vnknowen. Soothly we must not expounde the worde so grossely which is set downe heere, as to say ỳ God made a pit to burie Moses in: but hee so ordeined that he was buried by his power. God needeth not to set his hande to a thing when hee will haue it done: it is ynough that his power bee knowen. For all creatures must needes obey him, the earth will open when it pleaseth him, as the which was made of nothing. God then may cõmaunde, and the thing is by and by done & performed, accordingly as it is saide in the Psalme, Psal. 33.9. that his commaundement is of as great force as all the executunges of the worlde. Ye see then that ỳ burying of Moses by God, was that God willed the earth to open to giue him buryall, & to hyde his body in, such sort as neuer man might knowe what became thereof. And it was not without cause, ỳ God would haue the graue of Moses so hidden. Nay rather, wee haue to note what S. Iude sayth thereof in his epistle, ỳ is to wit, that Michael tharkeangell fought with Iude.9. the deuill for the graue of Moses. And that bartell was not stirred vp by Satan for nought. For needes must it be that hee pretended some aduauntage, if the graue of Moses had bin knowen: and that had bin a meane to beguyle men with superstition. So then Gods purpose and intent is nowe manifest vnto vs; which is that he would not haue men to abuse the body of Moses in ydolatrie. And seeing that God prouided for it; it is a signe that he knewe mens inclinations to be such, as they would hardly forbeare to make ydolles, if they had any occasion at all. Beholde, Moses excelled all Propheres, as it is said of him in the ende of this booke, & as (by Gods will) we shall see to morrow. Insomuch that after his death there came not a prophet in Israel like vnto him. All of them were as expounders of the Lawe; but yet had he as it were the principall authoritie. Againe, we knowe howe God wrought by him, how he deliuered the children of Israell from the bondage of Egypt, howe hee ruled them by the space of fortie yeeres in the wildernesse: yea and that he was taken vp into the mountaine to set foorth the Lawe, and had Exod.19.3. tarryed there fortie dayes and fourtie nightes together without eating or drinking, liuing like an Angell of heauen, as one that was no more Exod.24.18 subiect to mortall state. For we knowe that men can not continue if they want sustenance. Yee see then howe Moses was caught vp to the glorie of heauen. Moreouer, when he came to the people, he had beames streaming from his face so as men could no more abide to looke vppon him than vpon the Sunne. The brightnesse of God shewed it selfe in such wise in him, that the people were astonished at it, and hee was fayne Exod.34.29 to put a veyle before his face, to shewe that he 33 was no more a common man, nor ought to bee taken as he was afore. Seeing then that Moses had done so notable thinges, and God had so hyghly inhonored him: no dout but the people

would haue beene led to some superstition, and haue made an ydol of his bodie. That is y cause why his body was hidden, and God would not haue it to be perceiued.

Nowe wee haue in this text a very profitable warning. First of all how great fraude there is in vs, if wee bee not restrained and bridled by God: and that aboue all things our nature is so giuen to superstition, that God is faine to reclaime vs from that vyce as it were by force. Therefore let vs suspect our selues in that behalfe, and consider that it standeth vs in hande to remoue all obiectes and all other things that may intyce vs to ydolatry, because wee be so much giuen vnto it already. Marke that for one poynt. But if men had wel considered this, there had neuer beene so great and horrible confusion, as is to be seene in the Popedome. What is the cause the Papistes are so whot after their ydols and puppets? Whereupon haue they taken so great libertie to fillall their Churches with them without ende or measure, buylding so many altars and chappels, and making so many images and pictures? It is for want of the knowledge of that which is tolde vs heere, that is to wit, that as soone as men haue neuer so litle occasion to commit ydolatrie, by and by they bee rauished with it, and as it were starke mad. They knewe not this. They bore themselues in hande that they might buylde altars, make images, and fill all places with the filthines of their ydolatrie, and yet not offend God. They perswaded themselues so. Howbeit they shewed by experience, that God doth not without cause condemne all mankinde to bee giuen to superstition. Seeing then that wee perceiue this mischiefe to bee come to passe; let vs the rather take warning to liue soberly; and (as I sayd afore) let vs distrust our owne nature, seeing it is so sinfull and corrupted. Also let vs note, that God meant to shewe by his owne authoritie, howe greatly all ydolatries and superstitions displease him. Hee hath hidden the graue of Moses; and shall men nowe pleade against it? No: for it is a fighting against God, when wee will nowe dispute whether it be good to haue meanes of ydolatrie. For our Lord pulleth them away from vs, because he seeth well that wee shall by and by bee snarled in Satans snares, vnlesse hee take from vs all obiectes. Seeing then that God declareth the matter so plainly; it behoooueth vs to agree fully thereunto.

And specially wee haue to note, that heere God condemneth all the superstitions which are committed in the persons of Prophets or Apostles, as well as vnto Idols which the Heathen haue made. And that is yet one other thing wherein the Papistes do ouer grossely ouershoote themselues. For when ydols are spoken of, they beare themselues in hand, that if a man worship not the gods which were renowmed among the Heathen; it makes no matter, & that it is no ydolatrie at all. For if the virgin Marie should bee called an ydol among them, what a thing were it? If the Saints as well Apostles as Martyrs, & euen those whom they themselues haue imagined, should be called ydols: it were a cursed speech among the Papists. And why? For they take none to be ydols, but those which were so vsed among the Heathen. Yea, but in the meane time they perceiue not that ydolatrie may as wel be committed in the person of an Angel, yea & euen in the person of God, as in the persons of these pedinels which were forged among the Infidels. I say that ydolatrie may be committed euen in the person of God. Let a man followe all the abominations that are committed in the world, & how be they coloured? There is a thing in the Popedome, which they terme Gods seruice; and what is that? The Masse. But we knowe it is most lothsome & detestable ydolatrie that can be, specially, because y name of God is intermedled with it. So then we may wel say, that we serue God, & that we worship him: & yet in the meane while there shalbe shameful & excessiue ydolatrie, as when men turne away from Gods worde, & followe their owne inuentions & fancies. But as for the Papists, it is certeine that of the virgin Mary they make an ydol. For whereas they attribute vnto her the office of an Aduocate, to make intercession betweene God & men, & terme her their life, light, & hope: what remaineth more to our Lord Iesus Christ? Is he not by that meanes bereft of his Priesthood which was giuen vnto him of God his father? As much is to bee said of all the rest of their Patrones as they beare themselues in hand. So then we ought to marke well this text, where God would haue the body of Moses to be hidden. And why? Because that if the people had giuen themselues that way, it had bin no lesse abhomination, than their receiuing of strange gods, & their intangling of themselues in the superstitions of the Heathen. I grante there had been a more apparant throwdingsheete: For they would haue sayd, he was seruant & Prophet of God, who published the law: and therefore in the honor of God whom he serued, hee must nowe bee worshipped and haue his bodie aduaunced among vs. And if the rod which he bare had such vertue in it; howe much more shall his bodie haue? Therfore whe we would bee heard of God, wee may resort to his tumb, and there pray vnto God. For needes must he be present with y bodie of Moses, seeing that so great & notable miracles were wrought by his rod only. Such things might they haue alledged. But yet for all that, where are so many enticements of Satan, there ought we to be the more afrayde. When Satan hath illusions, and the things which he faceth vs withall doe carry some likelihood: then must wee (say I) fight the more manfully: or otherwise wee shalbee carryed away by and by into manie dotages, from whence it will bee vnpossible for vs to retyre.

Moreouer, as touching the text which I alledged out of S. Iude, let vs mark that in all ages it hath bin Satans policie, to face men with the things y might corrupt them, or drawe them to ydolatry: like as the Fowler or Birdcatcher

Exod. 7. 20. & 8. 17. Num. 20. 11.

hath

hath his snares and nettes alwayes set; so hath Satan his sleights to beguyle vs. And he knoweth that he hath wunne the goale of vs; when he can once turne vs awey from the pureneſſe of Gods seruice, and trayne vs to some superstition; for then runne wee headlong into wickednes, and hee carryeth vs whither he listeth. That is the cause why he taketh so much paines in this behalfe, and wee see it as in respect of the bodie of Moses; yea, we see it by experience the which is vsed too much. And herewithall let vs marke well howe S. Iude sayeth, that Michael the Archangel withstoode him. Yee see here howe there is a stryfe betweene the Angels of God and the diuels, the Angels fighting to maintaine vs continually in the purenes which God requireth, that is to say, that we should worship him alone, and not put our trust in any creatures. That is the desire of the Angels. On the other side, the diuel being enemie to our saluation would faine that the maiestie of God were quite defaced. And when he cannot do that, he laboureth to darken it, practising continually to cast fooles babies before our eyes, that wee might haue toyes to occupy our heads withal here below, & neither go nor once looke vnto God. And here we be put in mynd, first what a care God hath of our saluation, in that it is his will that the Angels shall fight to draw vs out of all the temptations of Satan. Which thing ought to prouoke vs to bee of the better courage, sith we see we haue such helpes. Now then, if we be weake as of our selues, and cannot put from vs the temptations of Satan when we be assayled with them; let vs trust that God wil not faile vs, but that he wil imploy euen his Angels, who be champions valiant ynough to resist all Satans attempes, & whatsoeuer else he can practise against vs. Here yee see vppon what trust wee ought to stande to our tackling, when Satan assaileth vs & laboureth to wirt vs. True it is ỹ we should euermore be ouerthrowē & ouerwhelmed out of hand, if God succoured vs not. But seeing wee haue the Angels of heauen to relieue vs, and God armeth them with his owne inuincible power to the intent we should neuer faile; it ought to make vs take courage, as I said afore.

Now moreouer we see also, what pleasure the ydolarers do to the Angels, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, & (at a word) to al the seruants of god, when they will needes aduaunce them aboue their degrees. The Papists thinke they doe well aduaunce the virgin Marie, when they call her their aduocate, when they terme her the life & welfare of the worlde, when they bid her commaund her sonne, and when they cast foorth such other horrible blasphemies. But if they had troden her vnder their feete when shee was in this world, or if they had dragged her by ỹ haire of her head; they should not haue done her so great outrage. And why? For wee knowe howe exceedingly God hateth al ydolatries. A church that is infected with images, is worse than a brothelhouse to Godward. And shal men go & abuse the name of the holy virgin? And whereas the Apostles and holy Martyrs haue shed their bloud to keepe holy the name of God, whereas (say I) they despised all the abhominations and ydolatries of the world, and shed their bloud for the maintenance of Gods trueth and Gospel, shal men now in steede thereof goe vnder their shadow, to deface Gods honour, to vnhallowe his seruice, and to rend him in pieces and gobbets? Let vs marke wel then, that the Papistes haue not any worser or forer enemies than the Saintes whome they thinke to honour, because they do them so much wrong as to set them for contrarie parties against God. And how see we that? Euen by S. Iudes reporting that the Angels of heauen with their captaine, did striue for the bodie of Moses. And let vs not thinke that the virgin Marie, the Apostles and Martyrs are at variance with the Angels: nay, they bee all of one mynde: And that shalbe knowen when the bookes shalbe layde open. Yee see then how that all the seruants of God doe fight to keepe the Church from beeing corrupted, & from turning away or slipping aside into any ydolatrie or superstition. Seeing it is so, let vs also on our side ioyne with them in fighting, & sticke to our tackeling, that Gods seruice may continue vnappayred, and that there may bee no mingling at all to alienate vs from God; and let vs occupie our selues wholly therein, seeing it is the peculiar office of Satan to set himselfe continually against our saluation, so as he ceaseth not euen now to hinder the same, but holdeth out stil. And his striuing was not then only for the only bodie of Moses; but he hath striued euer since to set vp all the bodies of the holy Prophets. When Ieremie serued for ydolatrie in Egypt, where was his bodie? To whome shall that bee imputed but to Satan, which inuented a newe meane of ydolatrie to the holie Prophet? Againe, whence came all the illusions and false miracles that haue bin wrought in the Popedome, but from the same shop? Wee see then how Satan hath alwayes strayned himself to cast some obiect before our eyes, to draw vs away from Gods seruice, & to busie our heads about other things, that being wrapped in superstition, we might be vtterly marde. Sith it is so, let vs keepe the better watch and stande at our defence. For seeing our enemies come neere vs, and are alwayes watching to spye vs at some aduantage: surely it will waken vs though wee bee neuer so loth. But it is said that Satan neuer resteth, and that he is euer practising what he can possibly, to catch vs vnawares in ydolatrie. Wee see it; the thing bewrayeth it selfe. Sith it is so, should wee fall asleepe? Nay rather let vs looke narrowly about vs (as I sayde afore,) and let vs take good heede that wee bee not intrapped. I sayde that wee see howe Satan practiseth all meanes to corrupt vs. For hee hath fought, not onely for the bodies of men, but also for al other things belonging to them, euen such as a man would not think, insomuch ỹ the very haire of their heads, their kerchiefes, their shirts, their panoples, and diuerse other things haue bin worshipped!

To bee short, they haue worshipped thinges so fonde, as that euen litle babes might haue mocked them for it. Yet notwithstanding, euē the wisest folke haue beene doted with them, & the spirit of giddinesse hath reigned ouer them. And it hath beene Gods will to make men so brutish. For when they would not hold themselues simply vnto him, but were carryed away with their fickle lustes; it was meete that they should come to that poynt. For as much then as it is so; let vs vnderstand that our Lorde giueth vs so many warnings the mo, to the intent to hold vs in such awe, as we may be well ware that wee be not by any meanes seduced. Thus yee see what wee haue to note as in respect of the things which S. Iude teacheth vs concerning the body of Moses.

Now there is yet this saying further set down in the text, *No man hath knowen his graue vnto this day.* Wee knowe not which of the Prophets wrote this last Chapter. The Iewes say it was Iosua: but their coniecture hath no ground. It is much more likely that the same Prophet which gathered the booke of Iosua, did therewithall write the death of Moses also. Neuertheless it is not without cause sayd, *that no man knew his graue this day.* For it doeth vs to vnderstand that it was not for one day onely that God woulde haue the bodie of Moses so hidden: for then it might haue beene sayd, true it is that the body of Moses was vnknowen to men, but that was but at the beginning. For the first boylings are somewhat too headie, and God sawe that the people might haue beene moued with too great affection, and by that meane they might haue corrupted themselues. It is not then to be wondered at, if Moses sepulchre had beene vnknowen for two or three dayes, or for a moneth, or for a yeare: for these people were too farre in loue with him: but when he was once buryed, then it came to knowledge. But our Lord sheweth that hee knewe well that men are subiect to ydolatrie, and that, not for a day onely; but euen vnto the ende; and that the same sinne is so rooted in vs, that as soone as wee haue neuer so little an obiect, by and by wee start out of our boundes. Let vs marke well then that it behoueth vs to stande vppon our garde; for ydolatrie is not for a time, but for euer. And wee take this cursed inclination from our mothers wombe, so as wee bee easily allured away from the seruice of God. That is the thing which wee haue to remember vppon this part of the text. And therefore let vs indeuour al the time of our life, to walke according to Gods ordinance, and let vs also beware that wee bee not caried away after the illusions of Satan. And when we our selues shall haue continued in the seruice of God: let vs teach our children to doe the like, that it may for euer be reteyned in the worlde, so as God may be serued of al men with one common accord. For if wee be reckeles in that behalfe, it wil abash vs to see howe the diuel will incontinently get the forehand of vs: & in the turning of a hand there wil followe a horrible change which will corrupt and marre all. Sith wee see this, let vs be steddie and constant, and let vs bee so zealous to bring to passe that God may bee purely worshipped, as it may continue, not for one day onely, but euen vnto the ende, so as we may from age to age protest, that Gods name is called vppon ouer vs, and that he hath the whole preheminence; and that the creatures howe excellent so euer they bee, doe abyde in their degree and place, and that they haue not occupyed the roome of God nor his soueraigne dominion.

Now let vs fall downe before the maiestie of our good God which acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs perceiue them more and more, that wee may be so cast downe in our selues, as our whole seeking may bee to receiue mercie at his hand, and hauing receiued it, to bee so guyded by his holy spirite, as we may giue our selues wholly vnto him to dedicate our selues fully to his obedience, and to serue him with all pureneſſe both in body and soule, and that hee impute not our imperfections vnto vs which are yet still in vs, but that he rid them from vs day by day, and reclaime vs of them more and more, vntil he haue brought vs to the perfection whereunto he inuiteth vs. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but also to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

On Wednesday the xv. of Iuly, 1556.

The CC. Sermon, which is the second vpon the xxxiiij. Chapter of Deuteronomie, and the last vpon that booke.

7 Moses was a hundred and twentie yeres olde when he dyed, his sight was not dimmed, nor his liuelinesse abated.

8 And the children of Israel mourned for Moses thirtie dayes in the playne of Moab. And after that, the dayes of mourning and sorrowing for Moses were ended.

9 Then

9 Then Iosua the sonne of Nun was filled with the spirite of wisedome, for Moses had laid his hand vpon him. And the children of Israel obeyed him, and did as the Lord had commaunded Moses.

10 And there arose not vp a Prophet in Israel thenceforth like vnto Moses, which knew the Lord face to face,

11 In all signes and woonders, for which the Lorde sent him to do them in the Land of Egypt before Pharao, and all his seruants, and all his Land.

12 Nor in all the strong hand, and al the great vision, which Moses did before the eyes of all Israel.

IT was needefull that after the death of Moses, the Iewes should know the good that God had done them by the meanes of such a man. For we know that Gods gratious dealings are by and by forgotten, and it is the point wherein men doe chiefly shewe their leawdnesse. For although it be prooued to them that God hath helped them, yea euen with signes and myracles: yet woulde they passe it ouer slightly. In this respect it is saide expresly heere, *that Moses had his limmes firme, and all his strength vnto the age of a hundred and twenie yeares*. Nowe wee knowe what is written in his song, in the fowerscore and tenth Psalme, That after a man commeth to threescore yeares, there remaineth nothing but sorrowe paine and griefe, and he doeth but linger and pine away. Loe what our life is. Although we haue beene strong, yet doe wee decay in the twinkling of an eye, when wee once passe threescore yeares, and it is a great matter for a man to attaine thereto, I meane in such strength. But nowe whereas it is reported that Moses attained to double those yeares: thereby it appeareth that God strengthened him aboue the common rate of men. And that was not for his owne sake onely; but to the intent he might be able to susteine the charge that was committed vnto him. Had not the people bin vnthankfull, they shoulde ere that time haue beene conueyed into the lande of promise, and then had Moses gone in with them. But his life was prolonged a great time, because of the leawdnes of the people. Heere we see a wonderfull goodnes in God. For seeing that the people (that is to wit, as many of them as were then of discretion to knowe good from euill,) were condemned to die in the wildernesse: it had beene a great discomfort to them if Moses should haue dyed out of hand. But God reserueth him: and although he chastise the people, yet notwithstanding hee moderateth his rigour. Heere then we see in effect, that when God tolde the people that they should die in the wildernesse, hee meant not to punish them with such extremitie, but that hee prouided them first of y principall point, which was, y they might haue a good loadesman: For that is an inestimable treasure. And againe we see, howe God wrought in Moses by a power that was not common to men; that is to wit, that at the age of Sixscore yeeres, there was in him still all that euer was requisite in so difficult and weightie a charge as wee knowe was committed vnto him. True it is that he had Iudges with him; but yet for all that, no one man, no nor a dooseu men had beene able to haue gone through with that charge, though they had bin chosen of the excellentest men in the worlde. Needs must it be the that God aided him. Now whereas in so old age men are wont to be drooping and halfe dead, or at leastwise in such case as they can scarsly crawle, and are halfe doted, and yet Moses continueth still in his perfect state: therein it appeareth that God had compassion of his people. And this is expresly declared that the children of Israel shoulde knowe that God neuer forsooke them, & that although they had grieuously offended him, and were worthy to be cut off from his house, and to bee stripped out of his gratious giftes; yet he ment not to vse such rigour: for hee reserued Moses, and gaue him wherwith to go through with his charge continually. To be short, in this text it is shewed vs, that if God giue vs such men to bee our guides as behaue themselues faithfully, and haue abilitie matched with their will, and that they bee maintained to doe their office to the full: it behoueth vs to perceiue therin, that God hath pitie vppon vs, and we must acknowledge such a benefite, vnlesse we wil be condemned of vnthankfulnesse.

Exod. 18.25

Nowe it is saide, *that the children of Israel mourned thirtie dayes for the death of Moses*. It was a common thing to make such sorrowe for the deade. But forasmuch as Moses was a father to all the whole people, it was verie requisite that not some one house or kinred, but that all those which had beene gouerned by him, shoulde weepe for him. Euerie man is to be mourned for in his owne house by his kinsfolke and neere friendes: but there was another speciall reason in Moses, because God had giuen him to all the people, and he had guided them with a fatherly care as we knowe. The people therefore doe witnesse openly howe much they were bounde and beholden vnto Moses, and al of them shewe themselues as his children. But here it might be demaunded, whether it be lawfull to make such lamentation for a man that is departed: for it shoulde seeme to bee an incountering of Gods will. Wee knowe that the life and death of men is in Gods hande; nowe if hee call vs away, it behoueth vs to goe, without any gainesaying, as I saide yesterday. They that outliue vs must not sorrowe for our death; for

it were a kinde of striuing against God. But wee must euer haue an eye to the end of our sorrowing, when wee mourne for the decease of men: and againe, we must come to the measure thereof. Those two things then must we obserue to the intent that our sorrowing may bee lawfull. The first thing is that our mourning for a parte departed be vpon iust cause. For we haue good occasion to weepe, because death is a common lookingglasse and record vnto vs of Gods curse, not vppon one or two folkes, but vpon all mankinde. When we see any man deade, God sheweth vs to the vew of our eye, that we be all of vs cursed of him, and that wee be all of vs inclosed in that curse, because of Adams sin. For whence comes death, but of the estraunging of vs from the fountaine and welspring of life? God then giueth vs good occasion to weepe when any man dyeth: but that must bee done because of our sinnes, so aswe feele what we haue deserued, and bee ashamed of our selues, and bee touched with the feare of Gods vengeance, and bee so wounded therewith, as it may prouoke vs to make sorrowe. But this ende is ill regarded, welneere of all men. For when wee weepe, we wote not why wee weepe: and scarsly shall yee finde one among a hundred, which is mooued and stirred vp to acknowledge the punishment of sinne & the curse of God which is spred ouer all the sonnes of Adam. That then is the thing which we haue to remember in the first place.

There is another seconde ende. That is to wit, when God taketh away a man that was able to doe seruice in his Church either publikely or priuately, wee ought to bee sorie for it forasmuch as our Lorde chastiseth vs. If there bee a good Sheepeherd, a good Prince, a good Magistrate, a man of counsell, or any other that is fitte to serue the whole bodie; and God taketh him away: we ought to bee sorie for him, and not without cause: for it is a signe that hee is minded to diminish his grace in vs. And ought wee not to bee grieued in feeling Gods wrath? On the other side we see how it is said, Esa. 57.1. that our Lorde taketh away the righteous, when he hath any vengeance in a readinesse: hee calleth away his seruaunts to rest, that they may be free from the mischiefe which is at hande. Therefore when God taketh away the excellent men from among vs, it is alwayes a threatning vnto vs. For it is all one as if he told vs, that wee bee not worthie to haue him to dwell in our companie, according to this saying in Heb. 11.38. the Epistle to the Hebrewes, that the worlde was not worthie to haue the men that serued God with such vertuous conuersation. True it is that men mislike of them and thrust them out of their company, as though they were not worthie to goe vppon the earth. But yet on the contrarie part, God telleth vs that we forgoe the company of the good men, and of those whom hee hath reserued to himselfe. Therefore when we bewaile the death of honest men, which haue liued in the feare of God, which were indewed with excellent vertues and gifts of grace, which haue done seruice to the building vp of the Church, and which coulde haue continued in doing the same still: that is a well ordered mourning. But yet must we also come to the measure. For it may bee that a man shall mourne for iust cause; and yet if he giue his sorrowe too much scope, then is it a fault and a vice. As howe? If wee sorrowe for our sinnes without comfort, wee shalbe swallowed vp of heauinesse: and thereuppon oftentimes spring grudgings and repynings against God. But saint Paul telleth vs that when we mourne so for the death of our friends and kinsfolke, or of such as serued in the Church, we must not resemble the vnbeleeuers, who (saith he) haue no hope, and therefore can haue no comfort. In that place, S. Paul saith not that it is sinne to weepe, hee doth not vtterly condemne the thing: but hee sheweth that our sorrowing must be moderated, because God giueth vs comfort by calling vs to ỹ hope of the heauenly life, wherein we shalbe renewed. So then let vs vnderstande that GOD humbleth vs by death, and that we must goe into corruption like stinking carions, yea and eũ our soules must seeme to vanish away, and that all shalbe forlorne. Nowe although wee must needes bee sorrowfull when wee consider these things and specially our sinnes; yet (I say) wee must euer come backe to this point, that God of his infinite goodnesse pitieth vs still, and wil not haue vs to perish in death, but rather that it bee vnto vs a passage into the euerlasting life. And this hope is ynough to comfort vs in the middes of all our heauinesse: at leastwise it ought to be a bridle to restraine our sorrowing that it passe not the bounds, and so we fal to fretting against God as we see the vnbeleeuers do, who storme and howle and yell, and cannot by any meanes be held in order. And why? Because they haue no comfort, which is the mother of patience. But forasmuch as God calleth vs to the hope which hee giueth vs; therefore after wee haue wept and mourned, we haue wherefore to giue him thanks, to blesse his holy name, and to cõtent our selues that he vseth not extreme rigor against vs. Now then, although we weepe when we see that our Lorde hath taken those from vs which might haue stoode vs in great steede: yet must we not fall into despaire, as though God had no way to succour vs. For he can raise vp euen the stones, if he thinke it good. Therfore we must resort vnto him when wee perceiue any signe of his wrath; and when we haue acknowledged our sins, and asked forgiuenes of them at his hand; we must also waite his leisure vntil he shew vs fauour, that in finding mercy wee may also find remedy of all our griefs. Thus ỹ measure which hee speaketh of, is that hauing sorrowed to a good end, because our Lord hath taken such folk out of ỹ world, as we ought to long for & desire; wee must also haue some stay of our selues, & not be caried away to fretting & chasing in our sorrowe: but rather assuage our sorrowes, because wee know ỹ when God hath chastised vs; he will moderate his mightie hand, and not stretch it out to the full against vs, but chastise

1 Sam. 9. 14. stise vs with the rodde of man, as is said thereof. Sith wee see this, let vs learne to comfort our selues and be patient.

But herewithall we haue yet one point more to obserue: which is that our forefathers had no ceremonies than wee haue, because they had not so euident a recorde of the euerlasting life. And the selfesame reason was of burial vnder the lawe, for they buried men with greater pompe than they do nowadays. And what was the reason? forsooth because the resurrection was not yet so well witnessed as it is now. I grant that the fathers knew well what was requisite to their saluation: howbeit, ỹ was vnder shadowes and figures. But behold, nowadayes God himselfe calleth vs from heauen; our Lorde Iesus Christ sheweth vs that as he himselfe is risen to glorie, so we also shalbe made like to his image, and therefore that wee haue no more needs of such helps as ỹ fathers of old time had. So then, it were a mockery at this day, to counterfeit the thinges that were obserued in the olde Testament. And that is a thing wherein the fondnesse of the Papistes appeareth vnto vs. For they woulde needes counterfeit al things without cause or reason. And yee see that in their burials they haue so many gewgawes and pelting toyes, that a man woulde bee ashamed of them. And what is the cause thereof, but that they knowe not the difference that is come in since the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ; namely that the ancient ceremonies are come to an end? Yee see then that the Papists are become Iewes, howbeit but bastarde Iewes. For not without some reason did the Iewes vse that custome, because it behooued their ceremonies to supplie the want of doctrine. But nowe that our Lord Iesus Christ is come, and we haue the resurrection manifested in his person; if we set our mindes stil vppon shadowes and figures, what is it but a defacing of the resurrection of our Lord Iesus Christ, & an vtter quenching of ỹ light of the Gospel? That is ỹ cause why I said that the Papistes are not worthie to bee called Iewes, but bastarde Iewes. But whereas it is saide *that the people made lamentation by the space of thirtie dayes*: let vs on our side learne that it behooued the auncient fathers to bee kept vnder, because God had not giuen them so large a testimonie of the euerlasting life; and that for their rudenesse sake, they were gouerned like little children, as Saincte Paul speaketh of them to the Galathians. Let vs nowadayes learne on our side to make the resurrection of our Lorde Iesus Christ auailable, that when any man dyeth, there bee plainenesse vsed in his buriall, and thase pompes eschewed wherewith GOD is mocked, and the people intangled in manie errours and superstitions. And not without cause is it saide that our Lorde Iesus Christ was buried after the manner of the Iewes, to shew that that custome ought nowadayes to bee chaunged among vs, and a newe to bee put in the steede. Also let vs moderate our mourning, and let not our sorrowe bee excessiue, but such wee haue whereuith to comforte our selues; which thing the folke that liued vnder the Lawe had not at all, or at leastwise not so largely as wee haue: let vs practise the doctrine which we bee taught in the Gospell, and also by S. Paul to the Thessalonians. Thus much concerning that point where mention is made of the lamentation that was made for the death of Moses.

Gal. 4. 3.

Mat. 27. 59.

1. Thess. 4. 13

Now it followeth, *That Iosua the sonne of Nun was filled with the spirite of wisedome, because Moses had layde his handes vppon him.* Heere againe the people are put in minde, that God had not forsaken them though they were worthy of it. And it is a very profitable lesson for vs, to know that God gouerneth his Church, and neuer forgetteth it. For without that, what faith coulde be in vs? Wee shoulde bee as folke forlorne. For as long as God gouerneth vs, if wee rest vppon him, wee boldly proceede and keepe on our course. But if God withdrawe his hand, and we perceiue not that hee guideth our steppes, or that hee hath a care of vs, and that we be vnder protection: wo will be vnto vs, and men are too dulheaded if they be not then vtterly dismayed. Behold then, our happinesse is to haue God to be our watchman, and to be gouerned vnder his hand and protection. Indeede hee appeareth not alwayes visible to shewe his presence, but he giueth vs men to be the ministers of his grace. True it is that at that time there were visible signes, to shewe that he dwelt among his people. Neuertheless as he had bin serued by Moses, so was it his will that Iosua should succeede in his place.

And in that respect is it saide *that he was filled with the spirit of wisdome*; to doe vs to vnderstand that God hath alwayes shewed himselfe mercifull to his Church, and that as a father hath a care of his children, & prouideth the all things meete for them: so God hath alwayes prouided aforehande for the necessities of his people. This doctrine (as I said) doeth concerne vs also. For wee haue a promise that God will neuer faile vs if wee be of his flocke and come to him to shrowd our selues vnder his wings, that wee may be guided by him: and we knowe hee hath giuen that office to our Lord Iesus Christ. And for the same cause also hee saieth to his disciples, that hee will bee with them to the worldes ende: and that saying extendeth to the whole bodie of the Church. Seeing then that our Lord Iesus Christ hath said that he will neuer bee separated from vs, let vs knowe that in him wee haue God, who will vtter forth all his power to maintaine vs: But yet it is verie much, that besides the promises, we haue moreouer testimonies thereof, so as hee pointeth vs with his finger to the thing performed, as it is spoken of heere, where wee reade that Iosua was filled with the spirite of wisedome. For to what end was that done? It happened not by chaunce, neither had God regarde of Iosua alone: but it was because he would shewe himselfe to bee the safetie of the Iewes. We nowadayes are in the same taking. For if they had abidden in Gods house, we should haue bin ioyned with them. And be-

Mat. 28. 20.

cause they bee banished thence and cut off as rotten members, we take their place, as saith S. Paul. Now then, let vs assure our selues that God will neuer suffer vs to want any thing requisite for our saluation, but continually shew his loue and fauour towardes vs, and prouide vs of the things that are for our behoofe, if wee flee to him for refuge; yea euen though wee bee not worthie thereof. Rom.11.24.

For as for this people, we knowe what manner of folke they were, and howe many faultes and offences they committed; so as it had beene no wonder though God had vtterly destroyed them. But nowe seeing hee prouided them of men that were fit and meete to defend them; thereby we perceiue that God strooue with his mercie against the malice of that people. So then, whensoeuer wee bee tempted to distrust because wee bee rebuked for our sinnes; let vs resort to Gods mercie, and pray him, not to looke vppon our sinnes, but to proceed continually in his goodnesse and fauour towardes vs, whatsoeuer vnworthinesse there be in our persons. Thus much concerning that point.

Heere is nowe a question that might be demaunded, howe it is saide, *that when Moses had laide his hands vppon Iosua, hee was filled with wisedome*, whether a mans handes haue that power or no? [No.] but when the signe of a thing is spoken of, wee must go to the thing it selfe. Weeknowe that in all solemne blessings, there was this signe of the Laying on of handes. Nowe this was not an inuention fondly contriued after the manner of men, which haue many Apes toyes: but it was a rescede allowed of God; as if an oblation had beene made of the partie that was so blessed. When the holy Patriarks blessed their childre, it was as though they had giuen them assurance that the inheritance of saluation belonged vnto them, & that the promise should stand & abide in full force to their posteritie. Likewise at this day when a man selleth lande or house, one putteth a feather into his hand, and he deliuereth it ouer to the purchaser; and in some countries the custome is, that he which selleth any inheritance and maketh the surrender deliuereth a sticke or wand to the purchaser in token that he may thence forth possesse and inioy the same. And euen after the same manner was it with this signe of laying on of handes. For (as I saide) it was not a fonde and foolish deuice; but it was Gods will that it should be a kinde of warranting, to the intent that the faith of the fathers might be the better helped. This is the cause then why it is saide in this place, that God gaue the spirit of wisedome vnto Iosua, because Moses had laid his hands vppon his head. Nowe in so doing he inuested him in the charge that was committed vnto him.

Let vs nowe see first of all, whether Moses chose Iosua vppon his owne heade or no. No: but he knew him to be first chosen of God. And afterward when he laide his handes vpon him, did he attempt any thing vpon his own fancie? No: but contrariwise God only was the orderer or disposer thereof. He knew that Iosua was to be set in his place. And this is spoken not of that man onely; but also when the Apostles did lay their handes vpon the faithfull, by and by the gifts of the holy Ghost were made visible to the eye. After that manner did the faithful receiue the gift of tongues, & interpretation of tongues, the healing of diseases, and the raising of the dead. And how receiued they it? They did but lay their hands vpon them. Yea, but had that Ceremonie such vertue? No: but because it was Gods will to haue his grace so declared, & that & laying on of hands was as a gage of it; it was not a vayne and vnprofitable thing. And in that respect is it that saint Paul saith vnto Timothy, That he should make the grace auailable which was giuen him by laying on of his hands. Seeing it is so (saieth hee) looke that thou indeuour thy selfe to serue God, and labour to builde vp the Church, and that the grace of God which is giuen thee by the laying on of my handes be not hindered. Saint Paul challengeth not to himselfe & thing that is peculiar to the holy Ghost, neither meaneth he that he had the holy Ghost in his sleeue to giue him to whom hee listed by the reaching out of his arme: but hee sheweth vs that the signe which God had appointed vnto it, was not vaine or vneffectuall. Act.19.6. 1.Tim.4.14.

Moreouer, the same is to be considered more in all the Sacramentes whereof the Scripture speaketh, than in all other signes that are to be had in the world. I haue alreadie alleadged a similitude of & deliuering of a feather or of a wand to him & purchaseth an inheritance: but there is yet much more in the Sacraments; we must go yet one step higher. For there our Lord worketh that by his power, which men cannot doe. True it is that when such a ceremonie is once done & performed, the lawe will maintaine a man in possession of the thing that he hath purchased: howbeit, that is not all. For (as I saide afore) God performeth by the secret power of his spirite, whatsoeuer hee sheweth and witnesseth to the eye. So then wee must euer come to this point, that the sacraments are effectuall, & that they be no trifling signes which vanish away in the aire, but that the trueth is alwayes matched with them, because that God who is faithfull, sheweth that he hath not ordained any thing in vain. And & is the cause why & in baptisme we receiue truly the forgiuenes of our sins, we be washed and clensed w the bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ, we be renewed by & operation of his holy spirit. And how so? Hath a little water such power when it is cast vpon & head of a child? No: but because it is & will of our Lord Iesus Christ, & the water should be a visible signe of his bloud & of & holy Ghost: therfore baptisme hath & vertue & whatsoeuer is there set forth to the eye, is forth with accomplished in verie deede. If wee come to the Lordes supper, it is certaine that a little cantle of bread and a drop of wine cannot quicken our soules, for they be corruptible thinges: but thereby we haue a record & we be fed with & body & blud of our Lord Iesus Christ: & by & record we know & our Lord Iesus Christ sheweth & he will

will not deceiue vs in his promises, nor holde vs downe with our nebbes in the water as they say; but that he performeth all that euer is tolde vs there: insomuch that when we come to that holy table, we must assure ourselues that our soules are nourished with the spirituall foode which we see not, and that our faith must mount vp vnto heauen, there to be ioyned with our Lord Iesus Christ.

Heere then wee haue to note, that when the scripture speaketh vnto vs of the signes which we haue in vse according to Gods ordinance, the very truth of them is present with them. And why? For (as I haue sayde) our Lorde alloweth of our faythin that behalfe, shewing vnto vs that the thinges which proceede from him are not deceiueable. And as we ought to be fully resolued heereof in the Sacramentes, so let vs marke on the contrary part, that when men inuent things of their owne heades without the ordinance of God, they be but toyes and maygames and no better. As for example, in the Popedome they haue many signes, which they would haue men to accepte as hygh mysteries. What a sort of fonde thinges are in the Masse? And yet (if a man will beleeue them), there is nothing which is not well worthy to bee commended. They would haue it, that there they be as it were ranished vp among the Angelles, when they play their prettie pageantes. And yet all is but vtter vanitie, and a blearing or daseling of mens eyes. And why? For if a man demaunde from whence those thinges come, he shall finde that men forged them, and that there is no warrant for them from God; yea and euen we ourselues doe see that they haue defiled baptisme. True it is that they could not vtterly dispatch it out of the way, but that (euen in spyte of their teeth, and in spyte of Satan who stirreth them thereunto, and reigneth ouer them yet still at this day), our Lorde Iesus Christ hath brought to passe that his baptisme continueth still in his Church. But yet we see howe it is infected with many spottes among the Papistes, so as the baptisme it selfe is nothing in coparison of the rest. For they esteeme not a childe to bee baptised with the water [as it is of it selfe]; but the water must bee charmed aforehande, and it must haue coniurations made ouer it: and then must other inuentions be mingled with it, as Spittle, Saulr, and Tapers, & a number of other gawdes which would make a man amased. And what importeth all this? Euery whit of it is but doung taken from Satan and held still: and yet the Papistes set all their holinesse therein. Againe, they haue inuented Sacramentes of their owne brayne, as their Sacrament of confornation as they terme it, and their Sacrament of Anealing, and al their other pelting toyes. And to be short, what else are all the Ceremonies which we see among them, but vtter illusions of Satan? Therfore let vs learne to discerne the thinges which God ordeyneth and alloweth by his worde, from the thinges that men haue puttoorth at aduenture, and after their owne fancies. And let vs vnderstande that as Gods truth is alwayes certaine and infallible, so ſ things that are brought vp by men, can not proceede but of vntruth and falshoode. For they be gouerned by Satan who is the father thereof. That is the thing in effect, which we haue to beare in minde.

And let vs marke further, that when men are chosen to gouerne Gods Church, (so it be by orderly proceeding according to his word) they shalbe guyded and gouerned by him, and hee will furnish them with his gratious gifts as farre as shalbee needefull for them. (And whereas wee perceiue not nowadayes the thinges by experiences which are conteyned heere, it is by reason of our vnbeleefe and leaudnesse.) For had wee such order of election as ought to be in choosing ministers to preach Gods worde, and that wee went about it with such reuerence as is requisite, with calling vpon the name of God, & with obseruing the order in such sort as hee hath set it downe by his worde, and againe if the like were done in the choosing of magistrates and officers of Iustice: it is certaine that GOD also would shedforth the gratious gifts of his holy spirite, and we should see that his blessing should not be vayne in those elections. But what? Because we be oftentimes puffed vp with presumpcion, and euery man deales after his owne fancie, and a great sort of vs neuer passe for the obseruing of the thinges which God sheweth vs by his word therfore he also withdraweth his grace from vs: whereas if we had ſ zeale to gouerne his Church according to his worde, and teaching, and did put our indeuour thereunto, and that in choosing men to guide the people, we proceeded to it with such sobrietie as I haue spoken of: it is certaine that God would doe his part. For his hande is not shortened; but looke what is tolde vs heere, we should surely finde it among vs by effect.

Nowe it is sayde in the ende, *That the children of Israell obeyed Iesus, and that they did according as that which God had commanded by Moses.* Heere is the first place we see, that among the gifts of the holy Ghost Authoritie is one, accordingly also as the holy scripture maketh mention thereof in other places. Put the case that a man were as fit and meete to gouerne as were possible, yet notwithstanding hee shalbe of no authoritie or reputation, except God set him in authoritie, & giue him as it were a marke to the end that men may stande in awe of him, and stick to him, and receiue the doctrine which he bringeth. Then is it a speciall gift of God; and on the other side we see that men are despised and vnregarded vnlesse our Lorde doe so auowe them, and make folke to imbrace them, and inable them to performe their charge, and to acquit themselues thereof. That is the cause why it is added expresly heere, *that the children of Israell obeyed Iesus*. It is not onely sayde that he receiued the gifts that were necessarie for his office; but also did therewithall girde him with the sworde, according as it is sayde in Iob, that when he will haue a man to be honored, it is like as if he gaue him a sworde. And contrariwise when hee will haue a man to be despised, it is all one as if hee Iob. 12. 18.

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tooke the sword girdle from him. God then did set Iosua after that maner in honour, and it behoued the people so obey him. Now we knowe the pride that is in all men, and we knowe that the people of Israell were giuen to rebelling a-bouue all other people. Therefore God was driuen to holde this in, that Iosua might reigne ouer them, not in way of tyranny, but to discharge himselfe of his office. That is the thing in effect which we haue to remember.

Now heerby Magistrates are put in mind to pray vnto God that when he hath giuen them courage and power so do his commandements, he will also not suffer them to be impeached by the practizings of their people, but that if there be any rebelles, he will worke safe to represse them. For it is certaine that euen the very flyes will rise vp against a man, vnlesse our Lorde do giue him authoritie. Therefore let Magistrates liue warely and in feare, and let them assure themselues that they shall neuer stande sure in their estate, vnlesse God set his marke vpon them, and that they be had in reuerence by his meanes. Also let the ministers of Gods worde pray him, that the doctrine may be receiued as from his mouth, & that he suffer them not to be despysed and skorned, as we see howe the world is so vnthankeful that it coueteth nothing so much, and that the deuill also desyreth nothing more than that the ministers should be had in contempte, to the end y the word which they bring might be despised. What haue we then to doe, but to pray God to worke in such sort, as we may do men good, and as our labour may edifie them, because he hath giuen vs authoritie to speake in his name? Thus ye see how we ought to put that part of this text in practise.

Nowe heerewithall it is shewed vs, what maner of obedience it was which the Iewes yelded vnto Iosua. And thereupon we may gather howe farre foorth we ought to obey men: namely so farre foorth as God haue the dominion & chiefe soueraintie, and men be but his ministers. True it is that if God permit Tyrantes to reigne ouer vs, it behoueth vs to yeelde our neckes to the bearing of that yoke. Yea, but yet must we not in the meane while swarue aside from his word. If the Princes, the Magistrates or the Pastors of the Church will turne vs away from the thinges which our Lorde telleth vs: we must rather dye a hundred times. Why so? For y obedience which we owe vnto men, ought alwayes to bee led by this rule, that God holde still his place, and euery man submit himselfe to him, both great and small. Let vs marke well then, that if wee will haue our Lorde to allowe this lowlinesse of ours, which we shewe in being obedient vnto men, we must not bereaue him nor rob him of his right, but that he may gouerne vs by the hande and meanes of men. And herein we see how a great number doe ouershoot themselues nowadayes. For they beare themselues in hand that they be excused, if their fathers and mothers, or their elders, or at leastwise their Princes doe like and allowe of their doinges. But yet shall they not fayle to be condemned at Gods hande, for if the blinde leade the blind, both of them shall fall in to the ditch, and the first shall not saue the last. Mat. 15.14
Wherefore let vs take the to obey our superiours in such sort, as God may neuertheles holde vs vnder him and vnder his guiding, and so be ruled by his word. And specially let vs haue this regarde to the spirituall gouernment of the Church. For it is playe, Papistes, who alleage that they followe their Prelates, and do as they haue commanded them: we shalbe Apostates. For wee see that God hath reserued this obedience to himselfe, that he will gouerne vs after his owne will, and not haue his word in any wise corrupted. He will so reigne ouer vs, as he will haue none other to meddle, nor to put any thing of their owne inuenting, to that which he hath ordeyned. The way then for vs to practise that which is set downe here, is to obey those which haue superioritie ouer vs: that first wee haue an eye to Gods commandements and ordinance, and then serue men as his ministers who he sendeth, and by whose meanes he will haue vs to be guyded. That is the thing in effect which we haue to gather heere.

Now finally he sayeth, *That there neuer arose any Prophet in Israell sounde like vnto Moses, whiche knew God face to face*, that is to say, to whom God reuealed himselfe so familiarly. Heere we see in the first place, that God keepeth not alwayes one rate in vttering forth his grace as we would haue him: but that he doth and dealeth in that behalfe according to his owne will. God then is not bound to any certaine lawe, as who would say, that because he hath sent an excellent man to day, he must do the like to morrowe too. No. Sometime we shalbe depriued of a man, whose match we shall not finde againe. And why? Because God reserueth that to himselfe, to giue the greater glorie to his grace. That is the thing which we haue to note in the first place: and it serueth to teach vs that wee should not be abashed. Notwithstanding, if our Lorde do sometimes diminish his gracious giftes towardes vs, let it not cast vs in despayre. For why? It ought to content vs that our Lorde is liberall. And againe we haue seene already that he ceased not to haue a care of his people, though Moses did farre surmount Iosua, and had not his equall or match. Not that Gods intent was to magnifie Moses as in respect of his person, but to the end that the Law should be receiued with y greater reuerence, and the people knowe that Moses was sent of God. And God also meant to giue some confirmation to the doctrine of the Lawe, to the intent to print the same the better in the hearts of the Iewes, and specially the excellent deliuerance that had bin wrought [by Moses]. For we see howe all the other prophetes also do beate about that marke, when they rebuke the people for their vnthankefulnesse. When they blame them for their vngodlinesse, they set before them their deliuerance out of Egypt: for it was a deede worthy of eternall memory. To the intent therefore that the people might bee the better prouoked thereunto, it is sayde that Moses was the excellentest of all men. And Ios. 2.8.12 alsoheere.

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therewithal the people were to be holde in obedience to the Lawe, vntill the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ. And that shalbe the conclusion in one worde.

Although God rayſed vp great prophetes after the deceaſe of Moſes, yea and ſuch as ſpeake more loftily than he; (as in Eſay we ſee a doctrin which at the firſt ſight ſeemeth more ſtately thā the doctrine that is contained in Moſes:) yet notwithſtanding it is certaine that Eſay was but an expounder of the Lawe, and that the thinges which he wrate were but dependentes thereof, ſo as he and all the reſt drewe light at the things which had beene taught afore by Moſes. And therefore (as I haue declared already) it behoued the people to haue a continuall regarde of the Lawe that was giuen vnto them, that they might neuer forget it. And although our Lorde had ſo well prouided for it; yet we ſee how negligent they were. It is a horrible thing that the Lawe ſhould be loſt, as we knowe it was found againe in the time of Ioſias. And yet it was a treaſure which God had committed to the cuſtodie of the Prieſtes, there was a tribe choſen to that purpoſe, as who ſhould ſay, keepe yee well the Lawe that it periſh not. The people (as we haue ſeene heeretofore) were warned to haue the lawes written vpon the poſtes of their houſes, to write them vppon tables about their beddes, to carrie thē about vpon their hands, and to weare them as bracelettes about their armes. Whereas other people haue Iewels to decke them withal, you (ſayth God) ſhall euermore haue my Lawe before our eyes, that ye may neuer forgoe the remembrance thereof. Yet for all this, the people forgate it, whereby we ſee howe needefull it was that the authoritie of Moſes ſhould bee ſo magnified, to the intent that the Lawe might abide vnimpeached. And that is ſhewed vs by the prophet Malachie where he ſayth, Remember the Lawe of Moſes which was giuen you in Oreb. After that maner ſpeakes Malachie to the people, telling them that they ſhould be deſtitute of prophetes. For he was the laſt from that time foorth to the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. There was not after him any prophet, there was a horrible deſolation. Notwithſtanding, to the ende that the people ſhould not fall away, and forſake the couenaunt of God: Malachie ſendeth them backe to the Lawe of Moſes; as if he ſhould ſay, All the teaching that yee haue had, tended to none other end but that yee ſhould abide vnder the Lawe of God. And was it of neceſſitie that Moſes ſhould abide in his ſtate for ye doing thereof? No: the Law was giuen by Moſes but we haue grace and trueth by Ieſus Chriſt. Iohn. 1. 17.

Now whereas it is ſayde, That *no prophet was like to Moſes, who ſawe God face to face*: let vs vnderſtande that it is to the end to bring vs to this cōcluſion of S. Iohn, That our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who is the only ſonne of God, is come from the boſom of his father to diſcloſe his ſecretes vnto vs, and to accompliſh all the thinges which had beene foretolde by the prophetes: and that many kinges and prophetes haue beene deſyrous to ſee and heare the thinges which wee heare and ſee, and haue not obteyned it. So then, let vs vnderſtande that Ieſus Chriſt was not ſimply a prophet, but the liuing God himſelfe, manifeſted in fleſh & nature of man, to the intent that we ſhould learne to reſt wholly vppon him, and beare in minde this ſaying of the Apoſtle in the beginning of the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes, that God in time paſt ſpake many and diuers wayes to our fathers, and that now we haue one concluſion of all, in that he hath vttered his wil vnto vs by our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. Iohn. 1. 18. Luke. 10. 24. 1. Tim. 3. 16 Hebr. 1. 1. 2.

Now let vs fall downe before the maieſtie of our good God with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs ſo to perceiue them more and more, as wee may be ſory for them, and reſort vnto him to be rid of them by him; and that in the mean ſeaſon he beare with vs of his infinite goodneſſe, vntill ſuch time as hee haue fully renued vs. And ſo let vs all ſay, Almighty God, heauenly father, &c.

FINIS.

Heere ende the Sermons which were made vpon the fifth booke of Moſes called Deuteronomie by M. Iohn Caluin miniſter of Gods word in the Church of Geneua, and were gathered by Dyonis Raguenier, borne in Bar, ſtanding vpon the riuer Seine.

Tranſlated out of French into Engliſh by Arthur Golding.

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The Printer of Deuelin to Englysh Iohn Gelling.

A TABLE OF ALL AND SINGVLAR THE DOCTRINES OF MASTER IOHN CALVIN

deliuered in his tvvo hundred sermons vpon Deuteronomie,

Gathered and laid together orderlie by the letter in the forme of a Concordance, by

ABRAHAM FLEMING.

A

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Wee must not seeke to bring in any Change or alteration into Gods church: Read the whole 95 sermon, and page 481.b 30.40
That it is in GOD to Change mens hearts, and how. 1052.a 50.1053.a 10 b 50

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How it is meant that God is as it were Changed, when wee humble our selues: seeing the Scripture sayeth, hee neuer altereth his purpose. 394.b 50 60. and 395.a 10.&c.
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Chappel.

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Why Charitie is treated of in the first table, seeing it belongeth properly to the second. 103.b 50
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With what rule the exercising of our Charitie should accord. 580.b 50 Looke Compassion, Mercie, & Pitie.

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Why God sometimes doeth Chastise vs sharply. 180.b 50.60
God neuer lifteth vp his hand to Chastise vs but vppon good deliberation. Read how. 594.a 50.60
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God doth Chastise and tame vs, when soeuer he doth any thing that misliketh vs; Read to what end. 198.b 60

Looke Afflict.

Chastisement.

How the wicked behaue themselues, so soone as they feele but one yirke of Gods Chastisement. 143. b 10.20

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Chastisements.

All the Chastisements of God are curse, yea euen vpon the faithful. 947 a 60. & b 10

The cause why God continueth & prolongeth his Chastisements vpon vs, and withdraweth them not, when he hath once punished vs. 116. a 10 all.

The Chastisements of God on ỹ faithfull, by the example of Isachar. 1218 a 60. b 10. 20. 30

Of diuerse chastisements which God sendeth vpon some, but not as punishments for their sinnes: as for example. 976. b 50. 60

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The scripture likeneth all the Chastisements which God sendeth vpon mẽ vnto drinkes, & how. 1153. a 20. 30

The end of Gods Chastisements layed vpon vs. 42. b 60. & 43. a 10

Gods Chastisements tend to bring vs to repentance & humilitie. 50. b 50

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The fruite of the Chastisements which God doth send vs. 1050. b 10. 20

God reserueth Chastisements till their deuise, and knoweth why he delayeth them. 1155. b 40. 50. 60

The qualitie of Gods Chastisements laid vpon vs, & whereto they serue. 1141. b 50. 60. 1142. a 10

Whereto the minding of the Chastisements which we haue perceiued to haue beene done by Gods hande, should serue vs. 462. b 10

Wee must not goe about to burie the Chastisements that God shall haue sent vpon vs: Looke on that place. 434. b 10. 30

The diuerse and sundrie Chastisements that God vsed to the Iewes, for their diuerse sinnes. 458. b 10

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What things God doeth reach men by his Chastisements laide vpon them. 60. a 40

Of the Chastisements that God layeth on others, and that they ought to be documentes vnto vs. 116. a 40. 50

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It behoued the Iewes to be vnder Gods Chastisements a long time, & why. 60

Wee must profit as well by Chastisements as by teaching: Read how. 110 a 40

The causes why God subdued the Israelites by so manie Chastisements. 109. b 50

What we must do if God layeth Chastisements on vs in respect of the flesh. 53. a 30

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Men be not able to be Chaste: what is then to be done. 227. b 30. 40

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What Chastitie it is that God requireth at our hands. 392. a 50

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Maides ought to make as great accoũt of their Chastitie as of their life, and why. 791. b 10. 20

How precious a thing the Chastitie & faith plighted in marriage is to God 781. b 60. 792. a 10. Looke Honestie.

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How the Cherubims be described in the scripture, & what wee are taught by that description of theirs. 1108. a 10

The Cherubims painted vpon ỹ vaile of the temple, and these two likewise that couered the arke, inferred of ỹ Papists to proue images lawful: and what is truelie and simplie meant thereby 138. a 20. 30 40

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Childe.

Read the doctrine vpõ these words, If thy Child aske hereafter what these cõmandements meane, &c. 297. a all.

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Children.

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With what condition Children are giuen vnto vs. 755. a 10

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The duetie of Children towards their fathers & mothers purgeth by no meanes. 758. b 10. 20. &c.

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We be Gods Children euen by nature because we beare his image. 1113. a 10.20
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FINIS.

To the Reader.

TOuching the vse and vnderstanding of this table, this briefe aduertisement is to be marked; that the first number directeth thee to the page or side of the leafe. The letter (a) leadeth thee to the first columne or partition of the page; the letter (b) to the second. The other number noteth the place, where the matter is conteined within the page, as it is diuided by Decads or Tens; from 10. to 60. This I thought not vnnecessarie to recorde, hauing forgotten to place it in the title of the table.

FINIS propositi, laus Christo nescia FINIS.

To the Reader.

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FINIS propoſiti, laus Chriſto reſtia FINIS.

ANOTHER TABLE OF THE PLACES OF THE OLDE AND NEVV TESTAMENT alledged, and properly applied and expounded, by Master Iohn Caluin in his Sermons vpon Deuteronomie, of the which the first number noteth the Chapter, and the second the verses of the Bookes of the Bible, from whence they are taken: and the third number noteth the Pages of this Booke. a for the first colum, and b the second.

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		908.
	23	558.
LI.	6	88.b
		393.b
		416.
		1086.b
	7	416.b
	19	448.
LIIII.	8	576.a
LVI.	7	738.a
LVIII.	8	75.b
LXII.	10	374.b
		776.
LXIV.	4	637.a
LXVIII.	9	162.
	12,	654.a
	13	654.a
LXIX.	10	188.b
		540.a
		542.
	12	49.a
	23	954.a
LXXII.	5	1196.a
	10	537.a
		654.a
	11	537.a
	15	653.a
	17	43.b
LXXIII.	2	988.a
	5	361.b
		1169.b
	6	361.
	12	320.
	17	989.a
	22	989.a
LXXIIII.	12	1124.a
LXXVIII.	10,	
	11	
	25	355.a
		384.
		1020.b
	34	531.a
		1162.a
	36	551.a
	49	689.b
	67	496.b
LXXX.	16	300.a
LXXXI.	8	1050.a
	11	484.b
		619.a
LXXXII.	6	644.b
		1113.
LXXXIII.	15	374.b
LXXXIIII.	10	418.a
LXXXV.	10	296.a
LXXXVI.	5	155.a
	15	969.a
LXXXIX.	31,	384.b
	32,	384.b
	33	384.b
XC.	1	1230.a
	3	150.b
	4	1129.a
		1130.a
	5	75.b
	10	1241.a
XCI.	1	1230.a
	2	40.a
	11	491.b
		1908.a
		1123.a
	13	314.b
XCIIII.	9	349.b
		1155.a
XCV.	6	377.b
	7	45.a
		893.b
		910.b
	8	61.b
		893.b
		515.a
	9	1057.a
	10	383.a
	11	92.b
		347.b
XCVI.	6	1179.a
XCVII.	1	146.a
	3	146.a
	4	162.a
	5	146.a
		162.a
		337.b
C.	3	1113.b
CII.	8,9	192.b
	12	1073.a
	17	192.b
CIII.	8	304.b
		320.a
		337.a
		393.b
		975.b
	13	317.a
		858.
		1131.b
	14	317.a
	20	1187.b
CIIII.	14	782.a
	15	469.a
	22,	207.a
	23	207.a
	27	383.b
		877.a
	28	341.b
	29	341.b
		1048.a
		1071.a
	30	1021.a
CV.	6	315.a
	18	1213.a
	25	76.b.
		80.b
	38	960.a
	41	1120.a
CVI.	23	395.a
	30	400.a
	31	400.a
CVII.	14	300.a
	25	300.a
	34	921.
		1093.b
	35	1116.b
	37	921.a
CIX.	17	80.a
CX.	2	647.
		648.b
	8	721.b
		794.a
CXI.	7	318.a
CXII	1	915
CXIII.	5	310.a
CXIIII.	7.	161.a
CXV.	3.	146.a
		1107.a
		1215.b
	4	102.b
		146.a
	5	135.a
	8	102.b
CXVI.	6	624.
	9	169.b
		187.b
	10	276.b
		487
	11	171.b
	12	1124
	15	374.
CXVII.	2	22.b
		181.a
CXVIII.	17	118.a
	26	1185.b
CXIX.	1	925.a
	16	1038.b
	18	1043.a
	31	747.b
	36	652.a
	37	652.a

C.	V.	P.
	104	563.b
	109	1010.
	130	1060
	142	181.a
	151	357.
CXXVI.	1	1048.a
CXXVII.	1.	370.
		953.a
	2	134.b
		367.a
		570.b
		845.b
		958.
	3	953.
CXXVIII.		756.
	2	292.
		345.b
CXXX.	3	906.b
	4	468.b
		763.b
	7	275.b
		275.b
CXXXI.	13	269.b
		289.b
	14	269.b
		275.b
		289.b
CXXXII.	10	418.a
	13	499.
	14	336.
		415.a
		492.a
CXXXIIII.	1	660.a
CXXXVII.	4	660.a
	6	801.b
	7	69.b
CXXXVIII.	4	537.a
	8	8.a
		35.a
		415.a
CXXXIX.	20,	731.b
	21	731.b
CXLI.	3	747.
CXLIII.	2	763.
		905.
		906.
	6	957.b
CXLV.	8,	156.b
	9	156.b
	17	357.b
	18	59.a
		123.a
		1148.b
	19	155.a
		157.b
		291.b
		398.a
CXLVI.	6	181.a
CXLVII.	9	383.b

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I.	7	266.b
		1112.b
	16	961.
II.	17	225.a
		225.a
VIII.	15	2.b
		642.a
	16	642.a
	31	261.a
IX.	10	266.
X.	12	237.a
XI.	20	631.b
XII.	10	770.a
XVI.	13	1212.a
	14	925.b
XVII.	15	305.b
		329.a
		708.
		762.a
XIX.	17	857.a
XXI.	1	75.a
		477.b
	13	585.b
XXV.	2	397.a
		1178.a
	22	80.a
XXVIII.	1	478.a
		1009.a
		1010.a
	14	965.b
		1010.b
		1034.b
	26	1112.b
XXX.	9	282.a

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II.	26	623.a
IIII.	17	188.
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X.	1	1083.a
	14	128.a

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I.	2	147.b
		1139.
	3	775.b
	5	1150.b
	6	117.a
	8	986.b
	9	45.b
		152.b
		439.b
		1210.
	11	300.b
		944.b
	13	894.b
	15	226.a
		516.a
		741.b
		797.
	23	230.a
	24	969.a
		1005.
		1153.b
II.	3	457.
		647.
		665.a
		671.b
		889.a
		1219.a
	4	671.b
III.	9	914.b
	15	782.b
IV.	1	1153.b
	2	1205.b
	4	676.a
	24	1188.b
	25	151.a
	26	619.b
		668.b
VI.	2	183.b
		254.b
		1108.a
		1111.b
		1216.a
	5	194.a
	9	77.a
	10	1205.b
	20	741.a
VII.	1	1214.b
	2	1214.a
	13	118.b
	12	713.b
	14	500.b
		642.a
VIII.	18	336.b
		663.a
		984.b
IX.	4	720.b
		1150.a
X.	12	1153.a
		1160.a
	20	1049.b
	22	45.b
		436.b
XI.	1	1004.b
	2	405.a
		1018.b
	6	712.a
XII.	2	996.b
	5,6.	300.a
XIII.	8	1158.b
	10	1219.a
XIIII.	12	1113.a
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XVI.	3	817.a
XIX.	1	146.a
		185.a
	14	81.a
		524.a
	19	509.a
XXII.	12	1034.a
	13	1034.a
	14	1307.a
XXIII.	24	509.
XXV.	4	734.b
	9	146.a
		147.a
		269.b
		485.b
		960.b
XXVI.	9	117.a
	27	534.a
XXVIII.	1,2	150.a
	10	903.a
	11	1061.b
	12	684.b
	15	150.b
		320.a
		980.
		1037.b
XXIX.	10	524.a
	11	4.a
		1061.b
	12	1061.b
	13	250.a
	14	526.
	15	169.b
		985.
XXX.	1	712.b
	2	55.a
	15	338.b
	21	391.b
		684.b
	24	663.b
XXXI.	3	651.b
		713.b
XXXIII.	1	230.b
	6	655.b
	19	979.a
	22	525.
		945.a
XXXV.	3	36.a
XXXVII.	33	93.b
XXXVIII.	15	59.b
		294.a
XXXIX.	2	362.a
		654.b
	6	654.b
XL.	6,7	129.a
		616.
	8	1174.a
	15	135.b
	18	134.b
		372.a
	25	184.b
	27	169.b
	33	1143.a
XLI.	8	1073.a
	23	534.a
		669.
XLII.	1,2	363.a
	3	290.a
	7	1018.b
	8	197.a
		270.b
		490.b
	13	1056.
	18	123.b
	19	270.
	20	123.b
		124.a
XLIII.	3	808.a
	7	917.
		1065.b
		1113.
	21	1065.b
	26	382.a
	31	1.a
XLIIII.	9	1043.a
	15	136.a
XLV.	7	964.a

C.	V.	P.
	8	157.a
	9	157.a
	16	102.b
	19	1043.b
		130.b
		529.a
		543.a
		1046.a
		1059.b
		1078.a
		1147.b
	21	102.a
	23	216.b
	11	197.a
	20	888.a
	22	907.a
	7	537.a
	8	154.
		484.a
		910.b
	15	41.a
		116.a
	23	537.a
		655.b
	1	315.b
		453
		1116.b
	2	168.b
		315.b
		453
		1116.b
	17	1153.a
	21	988
	22	1010.b
		1153.a
	4	810.a
	5	984.a
	11	427.a
		888.a
	2	765.a
	4	1018.a
	5	763.a
	13	678.a
		1083.a
	3	515.a
	4	637.b
	6	154.a
	10.	1176.a
	11	270.a
	11	521.b
	3	797.
	21	1158.b
	1	1242.a
	7	68.a
		210.a
		516.a
		580.a
		610.b
		724.b
		750.b
		772.a
		867.b
	13	210.a
		251.b
		339.b
	1	1151.b

C.	V.	P.
	13	226.a
	7	961.
	16	1123.b
	19	320.a
	21	674.b
	8	677.a
	17	718.a
	2	1175.b
	2	718.a
		1175.
	3	1175.b
	10	1052.a
	6	1095.a
		1149.a
		1156.a
	1	184.a
	3	184.a
	4	1063.b
	1	298.a
	10,	270.a
	11	270.a
	15	286.a
	23	58.a
		98.b
		122.b
		155.a
	1	618.a
		894.a
	2	183.b
		199.b
		250.b
	5	183.b
		199.b
		662.a
	21	425.b
		426.b
		658.b

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C.	V.	P.
	5,7	253.a
	10	1208.b
	19	1208.b
	2	253.a
	5	1095.a
		1112.a
	6	1246.b
	10	488.b
		1041.b
		1131.a
	11	148.b
		488.b
	13	1110.a
	21	119.a
		619.b
	1	1050.a
	4	222.a
	5	93.b
	3	194.b
		225.b
		284.b
		434.b
		580.a
		936.a
		1220.a
	8	444.b

C.	V.	P.
	26	580.a
	4	43.b
		147.b
		498.a
	11	618.a
	12	498.b
	21	381.a
		1001.a
		991.a
	23	451.
	24	979.
	2	669.a
	8	136.b
	13	250.a
	20	241.a
	1	1109.a
	3	319.a
	16	195.b
		958.a
	22	102.b
	16	1136.a
	17	170.a
		894.b
		241.a
		285.b
	21	202.a
	22	202.a
	24	202.a
	25	457.a
	27	573.a
	28.	202.a
	2	1161.a
		456.b
		1001.a
		1039.a
	19	970.
	14	1153.
	8	538.b
	11	538.b
	9	534.a
		538.a
		681.a
	14	999.b
	9	133.b
	15	1210.b
	18	93.a
	28	314.a
	31	132.b
	32	404.a
		421.b
	33	132.a
		404.a
		421.a
		912.a
		959.b
		1029.a
		1054.b
		1175.b
	34	483.b
	2	93.b
	18	861.b
		1143.b
	39	260.a
		519.b
	11	588
	26	483.

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	28	483.b
XLII.	15	591.
	16	991.
XLIIII.	18.	1043.

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C.	V.	P.
XXIX.	16	353.a
		986.a
	16	353.a
	1,2	113.a
	18	498.
XI.	19	252.
		255.a
		260.a
		404.
		421.b
		519.
	8	611.a
	9	612.a
		959.
		1069.
		1175.b
XXIX.	16	938.a
XVI.	3	482.a
		797.
	8	1119.a
	20	1110.
	46	1153.b
	49	1154.a
		1634.b
XVIII.	2	189.b
	4	861.b
		1040.a
	19	189.b
	20	104.a
		1143.a
	21	306.a
		1521.a
		155.b
XX.	11	155.a
		181.b
		207.b
		587.b
	13	153.a
		573.a
	18	489.a
		1041.b
	21	201.a
	39	117.b
		272.b
		490.b
		1132.a
XXII.	8	201.a
XXV.		69.
XXXIII	31	323.
XXXIIII.	4	113.a
XXXVI.	26	404.
		421.b
		1054.
		1175.b
	27	261.b
		519.
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4 218.a
5 218.a
6 218.a
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24 521.b
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18 814.b
4 1125.b
18 1122.b
19 806.
24 332.
407.b
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381.a
302.b
666.a
677.a
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11 829.b
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19 140.b
29 321.a
925.a
25. 190.a
9 764. b
22 97.a
43 148.b
37 112.a
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5 276.
784.a
9 129.a
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23 212.a
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25. 517.a
26 517.a
37 41.a
281.a
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24 534.
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33 129.a
40 569.
11 585.b
26 93.a
299.a
1056.a
28 298.a
60, 239.
61 239.b
24 740.a
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45 257.
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51 257.
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18 481.a
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27 1191.a
42 50.a
24 97.a
30 272.b
15 181.a
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17 1191.
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78 854.
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11 257.a
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21 93.a
25 612.a
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35 582.
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8 1083.
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16 256.a
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469.
1190.b
24 180.b
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1079.b
27 272.b
9. 198.
10 298.a
19 529.
28 1057.b
3 126.b
7 685.a
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47 289.
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48 289.b
1133.b
26 1203.a
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15 294.b
396.a
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16 666.a
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9 594.a
10 900.b
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31 581.b
1144.a
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2 481.a
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29 287.a
31 466.a
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16 167.a
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30 918.b
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33. 1136.b
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31 55.b.
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46 1018.b
48 1100.
2 1063.b

6 311.b
13 485.
15 191.a
19, 604.
20 604.a
30 82.a
3 312.a
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2 610.b
3 504.b
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23 765.b
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38 1187.b
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11 819.a
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10 302.
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300.b
21 300.a
22 246.b
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23 246.b
270.a
24 270.a
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301.b
26 370.a
27 301.a
2 Cor. 9 376.b
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14 939.b
943.b
15 77.b
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1061.b
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17 420.b
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18 337. b
373.b
19 166.a
20, 373.b
21 373.b
22 302.a
25 35.b
26 1136.a
29 376.b
1 Tim. 1 1011.a
2 1015.b
5 1008.b
8 142.a
10 141.b
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12 142.a
14 186.b
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18 319.a
29 418.b
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2 Tim. 1 323.b
2 112.a
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3 421.a
4 93.a
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5 166.b
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6 362.a
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13 303.b
14 112.a
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1015.b
18 114.b
140.a
Titus. 283.a
5 374.b
4 193.b
7 1148.b
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10 231.a
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12 179.b
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607.b
15 203.a
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19 203.a
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464.b
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607.b
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506.a
Philem. 2 114.b
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176.a
7 37.b
88.a
114.a
132.a
191.a
200.b
201.b

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		322.a
		376.a
		411.a
		417.a
		480.a
		483.a
		721.b
		727.a
	8	228.b
	9	405.a
	11	35.b
	14	62.b
	15	62.b
		192.a
		338.a
		556.b
		671.a
		674.a
		836.b
		1114.b
	16	62.b
		167.a
	23	33.a
	26	325.a
	28	334.a
		1089.a
	29	334.a
		335.a
		341.b
		375.a
		950.b
	30	451.b
		464.b
	31	88.b
	32	186.b
	38	1123.a
IX.	3	402.
	4	124.a
	7	316.a
		797.b
		1110.b
	11	168.
		169.a
		377.b
	12	68.a
		316.a
	13	62.a
	15	167.b
		318.b
		1149.b
	19	372.a
XI.	4	112.a
		164.a
		269.a
		405.a
		1062.a
	5	112.a
		181.
		301.a
	6	1061.a
		1062.a
		1100.b
	7	29.b
	8	463.b
		1061.b
	9	941.b
	10	310.b
		1096.a
	13	105.a
	14	397.a
		417.b
	17	146.a
	17	87.a
		397.
	19	151.b
		1137.a
		1137.a
	16	170.b
	17	124.a
		148.a
		170.b
		797.b
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		1139.a
		1141.a
	24	798.a
	29	1047.b
	33	1143.a
	34	1143.a
XII.	1	346.a
		426.a
		445.a
		454.b
		556.b
		593.
		596.b
		630.a
		794.b
		820.a
		820.b
		900.a
		1073.b
		1202.b
	2	963.a
		1058.a
	3	131.a
		512.b
	4	51.b
	5	94.b
		95.a
	6	611.b
		680.a
		926.a
	16	214.b
	17	785.a
	18	79.b
		87.a
		725.a
		953.b
	19	306.a
		695.b
		800.b
	20	80.a
	21	714.b
		733.b
XIII.	1	19.a
		213.a
		215.a
		218.a
	2	214.a
		216.a
		218.b
		579.a
		642.b
	4	305.b
		308.a
		620.a
		712.a
	5	218.b
	8	214.b
	9	231.b
	10	231.b
	14	511.a
		616.b
XIIII.	7	186.b
		1073.b
	8	171.b
		186.b
		553.b
	9	186.b
		489.b
		553.
		593.a
	10	49.b
		1178.b
	23	510.a
	23	446.a
		502.b
XV.	16	426.a
		428.a
XVI.	20	88.b
		340.b
		477.a

1. Corinthians.

C.	V.	P.
I.	9	177.b
	10	177.b
	12	177.b
	25	1107.b
	26	537.b
	27	51.a
	29	51.a
	28	454.a
		1138.a
	28	420.b
	30	420.b
II.	5	388.b
	8	481.a
	14	664.a
		1015.b
III.	1	110.a
	2	249.a
	7	369.a
	9	82.a
	16	289.b
		308.b
		336.a
	18	76.b
	19	120.b
IIII.	2	258.b
		261.b
		49.b
	4	285.b
	5	194.b
		284.b
		289.b
		286.a
	7	314.
		378.a
	9	712.a
	13	30.a
		977.b
	16	47.b
V.	2	841.b
	5	50.b
		325.a
		793.a
		850.b
	6	198.a
		546.a
		548.b
	7	597.b
		602.b
	8	603.b
	10	308.a
		556.b
		743.b
	11	771.
	13	636.b
VI.	2	288.b
		1152.b
	9	788.a
		933.b
		1211.a
	11	234.a
		240.b
	12	559.b
	15	226.a
		289.b
		405.
		793.a
		934.a
	18	226.a
		229.b
	19	225.b
		289.b
		405.b
		427.a
		493.a
		557.b
		619.a
		744.b
		934.a
	20	226.b
		229.b
VII.	2	749.b
	4	840.a
	5	227.b
	7	227.b
	9	227.b
		229.a
	11	876.b
	14	1191.b
	17	819.b
	20	186.b
	23	847.b
	24	186.b
	29	844.b
	30	430.a
		511.a

C. V. P.

658.b
31 950.b
34 225.b
229.b
VIII. 4 190.b
260.a
5 230.b
6 730.b
934.a
IX. 7 583.
9 739.b
20 770.a
877.b
21 514.b
23 429.b
564.b
658.a
24 514.b
25 514.b
27 7.b
28 369.b
X. 2 41.b
6 93.b
116.b
787.b
8 226.
9 1123.b
21 45.b
73.a
83.b
168.b
431.b
459.b
22 625.
23 59.a
87.b
27 505.b
30 343. a
25 559.b
31. 198.b
32 198.b
353.b
XI. 5 773.a
29 529.a
24 299.b
894.a
31 143.a
381.a
448.a
487.b
634.b
689.a
701.b
966.a
32 50.b
143.a
XII. 3 683.b
4 166.a
7 612.b
23 98.a
137.a
220.a
592.a
29 617.b
21 94.b
25 95.a

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336.b
28 916.a
XIII. 5 240.a
21 182.
249.a
461.b
618.b
952.b
1173.b
XIIII. 21 95.a
26 1107.b
24 239.a
25 239.a
536.a
967.a
29 678.a
38 1046.b
XV. 3 200.b
20 175.b
193.b
22 1265
25 241.a
26 1200.b
20 35.a
33 227.a
343.b
56 112.a

2. Corinthians.

I. 22 1171.a
24 1058.b
II. 4 414.b
9 1063.b
25 77.b
484.a
26 77.b
79.a
484.a
2047.a
2071.b
2105.a
III. 3 112.b
132.a
252.a
255.a
405.a
412.a
436.b
483.b
518.b
611.a
653.b
5 912.a
943.a
1024.a
1053.b
1175.a
1201.a
6 405.a
429.b
485.b
610.
653.b
1190.a
7 3.a

C. V. P.

131.a
403.b
610.b
1073.b
1100.a
1130.a
8 131.a
1130.a
11 281.a
252.a
436.b
13 231.b
403. b
14 123.b
403.b
586.b
1100.a
15 164.a
182.b
16 123.b
18 56.b
211.a
221.b
224.a
231.b
263.b
282.b
270.a
538.b
474.a
485.b
504.b
537.b
628.b
XIII. 4 485.b
504.
628.b
667.b
1016.a
5 422.a
7 156.a
717.b
1190.b
8 1008.b
10 359.a
13 487.a
V. 1 616.a
4 617.b
6 312.b
340.b
430.
604.b
615.
1005.b
8 604.b
10 1178.
17 1054.
18 158.a
973.
1028.b
19 158.a
187.a
676.a
718.a
20 77.b
158.a

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419.a
727.a
21 550.a
VI. 2 910.b
978.b
5 466.b
14 307.b
16 289.b
313.a
556.b
619.a
797.a
17 417.a
812.b
VII. 1 556.b
8 612.a
10 1179.b
VIII. 14 866.b
867.b
21 904.a
IX. 7 192.a
375.a
581.a
606.a
830.
867.b
20 577.a
X. 4 56.b
239.a
918.a
5 239.a
687.a
6 239.a
XI. 2 270.b
392.a
14 124.b
535.a
24 876.a
XII. 7 104.b
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Galathians.

I. 8 684.a
13 242.
II. 19 201.a
20 201.a
208.a
III. 939.b
7 797.b
797.b
10 245.a
464. b
487.b
905.b
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11 464.b
13 167.b
196.b
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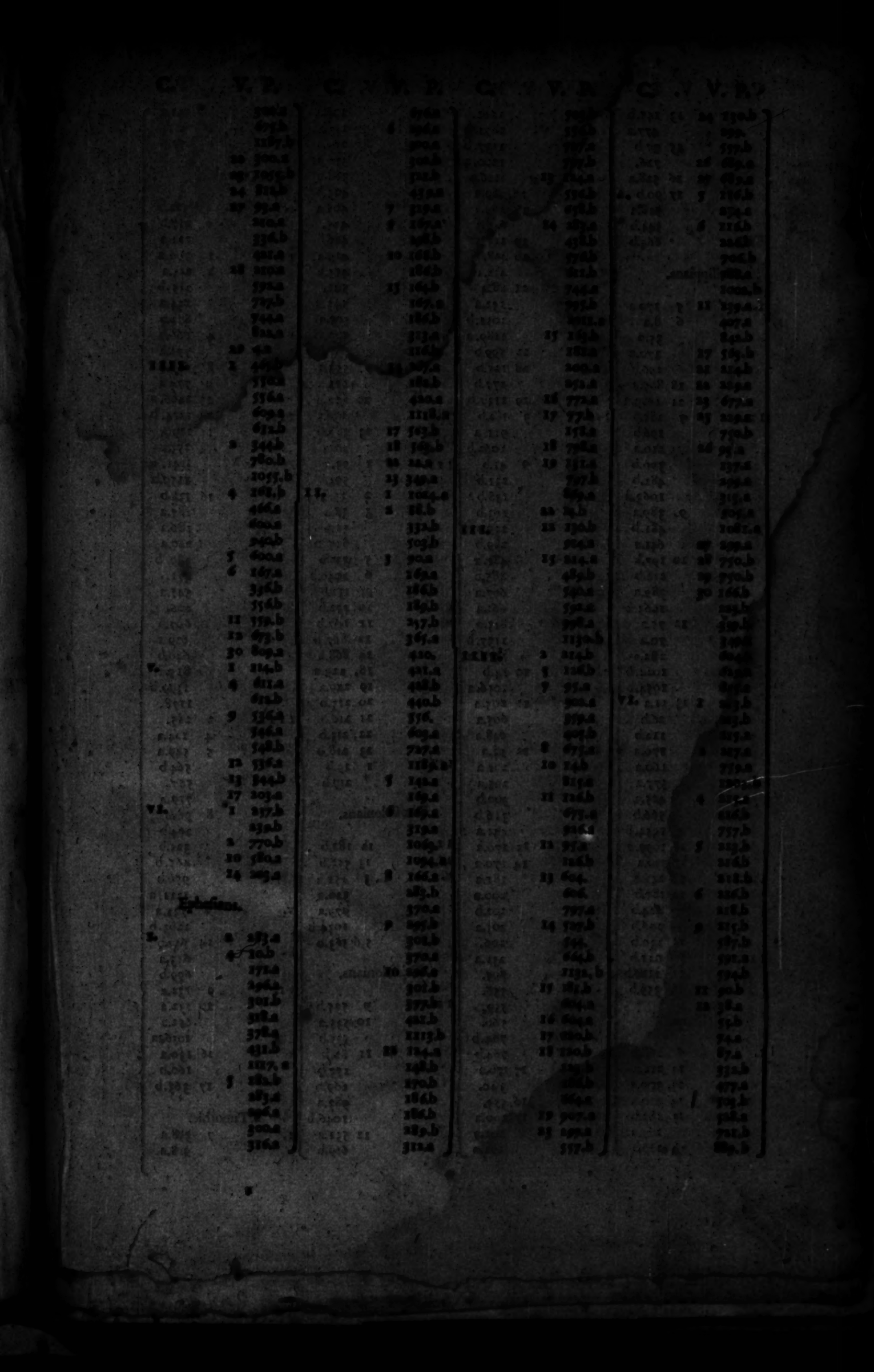
940.a
16 880.a
19 5.b
252.a



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23 145.b
477.a
25 77.b
726.
26 518.a
27 30.b
718.a
544.b
664.b

Philippians.

2. 5 170.a
6 8.a
35.a
170.a
296.b
28 805.a
31 1089.a
3. 7 185.b
196.b
210.a
390.b
481.b
1063.a
9 389.a
481.b
641.a
10 197.a
216.b
589.a
1063.b
12 75.a
70.a
281.a
1014.b
1054.b
13 11.a
26.b
112.b
170.a
160.a
577.a
405.a
566.b
1054.b
15 1099.a
17 739.a
1 Thes. 5.6 241.a
12 181.b
464.b
906.b
25 130.b
1 Tim. 7 611.b
11 1116.b
12 359.b

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1. 6 268.b
23 112.a
23, 300.a
24 300.a
25 182.b
269.a
269.b
1062.b
1071.b
1137.b
1200.a
1216.a
26, 389.a
27 389.a
648.a
19 1137.b
20 428.b
432.a
21 88.a
132.a
1051.b
1189.a
22 599.b
28 125.b
177.b
29 1137.b
2. 3 182.b
911.a
1062.b
9 41.b
232.b
238.b
163.b
239.b
289.b
481.a
485.b
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661.a
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1137.b
1216.a
20 24.b
1056.a
11 205.a
607.a
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22 93.a
201.a
205.a
300.b
316.b
441.a
23 170.a
24 170.a
181.a
200.a
202.b
205.a
206.
251.a
505.
556.
559.
560.
764.b
764.b
25 170.a
340.
26 555.
27 200.a
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415.
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502.
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23 389.b
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1 Tim. 1 93.a
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5 332.b
6 1040.b
9, 132.b
10 132.b
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20 213.b
21 216.b
22, 213.b
23 218.b
2 Tim. 1 19.b
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1 Thessalonians.

1. 12 182.b
1 Tim. 13 553.b
v. 3 151.a
320.a
979.a
1034.b
5,6 563.b

2 Thessalonians.

1. 9 535.b
10 535.a
535.b
11 82.b
153.b
669.b
983.a
1046.b
12 531.a
669.b
1 Tim. 3 341.a
15 731.b
14 850.b

2 Timothie.

1. 4 322.b
5 217.b
221.a
2 Tim. 1 396.a
2 215.a
215.b
224.a
872.a
4 660.b
772.a
8 612.b
9 774.a
15 1206.a
1 Tim. 14 1244.b
15 229.a
255.a
1141.a
1159.b
16 138.b
185.a
186.a
240.a
389.b
471.
545.a
606.
607.b
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640.b
815.a
1199.b
1178.
2 Tim. 2 255.
4 124.a
5 549.a
564.b
567.
719.a
8 90.b
264.b
325.b
465.b
950.b
1221.a
v. 8 732.a
1203.b
24 547.b
633.a
699.b
VI. 9 132.a
10 132.a
652.a
1036.a
16 130.a
160.b
17 363.b

2 Timothie.

1. 7 318.a
918.a

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9. 187.a
10 187.a
11 318.a
1180.a
II. 2 1080.a
13 191.b
397.b
506.b
19 197.b
1038.b
1091.a
25 306.a
26 186.b
III. 7 672.a
1063.a
16 1044.a
1083.a
1173.
23 670.a
IIII. 3 1178.a

Titus.

I. 15 227.a
325.b
344.a
512.b
711.a
16 937.b
II. 11 11.a
12 224.a
III. 9 512.b
10 536.a
11 642.a

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I. 1,2 131.b
249.b
371.a
2 165.b
182.b
481.a
505.a
642.
719.a
3 182.b
269.a
269.b
354.
481.a
504.b
4 1106.a
5 647.b
8 641.a
642.
13 641.a
14 476.b
1123.a
II. 2 1114.b
9 765.b
13 663.b
14 212.a
340.b
17 642.a
III. 2 1185.b
5 666.a
666.
6 675.b
7 45.a
13 526.a
IIII. 3 202.a
7 61.b
525.a
910.b
8 209.b
9 1005.b
10 202.a
11 209.b
12 281.b
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V. 1 424.a
2 424.a
4 1076.b
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6 426.b
429.a
VI. 4,5 150.a
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16 194.a
19 537.
VII. 18 252.a
19 242.a
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24 270.b
326.b
603.b
25 674.a
VIII. 1 326.b
5 393.b
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502 b
509.b
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1200.a
6 133.a
378.b
8 181.a
9 181.a
10 912.a
13 181.a
IX. 7 389.a
8 252.
164.a
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11 163.b
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418.a
607.a
11 629.a
640.b
12 418.a
13 264.a
14 171.a
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15 186.a
19 418.b
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22 284.a
23 461.b
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431.a
25 619.a
26 311.a
509.a
27 676.a
28 465.b
X. 3 299.a
302.a
4 660.a
18 299.a
19 426.b
658.b
1203.a
20 26.a
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28 675.b
29 675.b
30 306.a
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1166.a
37, 338.b
38 338.b
XI. 1 1149.a
2 133.a
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7 57.a
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950.
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186.a
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430.a
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615.a
1005.b
XII. 1 37.a
701.b
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9 319.b
11 637.b
999.
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Iames.

I. 5 625.b
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6 97.a
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6,7 98.b
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C. V. P.

20 308.a
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2. Peter.

2. 3 83.a
302.b
603.a
5, 1064.
415 532.a
1 186.a
7 61.b
10 440.a
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19 186.b

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21 13 1073.a
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22 140.b
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17 225.b
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21 349.a
21 359.
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5, 219.a
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9 140.b
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19 141.b
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C. V. P.

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2. Peter.

2. 10 300.a
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1. John.

1. 7 163.b
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C. V. P.

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15 173.a
219.a
1114.
306.b
316.b
560.a
687.a
734.a
776.a
11 901.b
955.a
1111. 1 957.b
10 812.b
V. 4 327.a
14 396.
19 100.b
20 1012.b

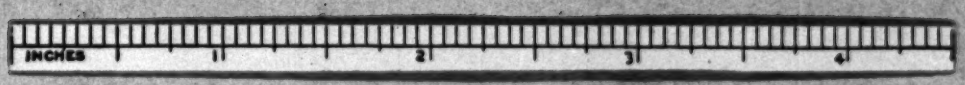
Jude.

1. 9 1137.a
10 1146.a
25 1150.a

Apocalyp.

1. 3 36.a
1111. 13 312.a

FINIS.


INCHES
1
2
3
4